



**All Party Urban Development Group**  
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## **Press Release**

**MONDAY 10 SEPTEMBER 2007 – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **NEW PARLIAMENTARY HOUSING INQUIRY LAUNCHED**

A cross-party committee of MPs today launches a public inquiry into the future of Britain's housing supply. Submissions on the reforms needed to deliver the 3 million homes promised by the government will be invited from public and private stakeholders.

Although the government's house building targets have been backed with £3bn of extra funding, ministers urgently need to find new ways to provide more homes and meet challenges that vary drastically across the country.

In many urban areas – especially across the North – housing needs to be addressed as part of wider regeneration, taking into account the area's economic development. A different approach for each region is essential, and the inquiry will examine how this can best be achieved.

The parliamentary group, made up of MPs and Peers from the three main parties, will examine:

- housing challenges faced by northern and southern towns and cities
- the most effective ways to deliver urban housing
- options for improving housing quality and supply
- what role the private sector must play

The committee will hold a public inquiry session in November, and will make its final report and recommendations in early 2008.

#### **Urban Development Group Chair Clive Betts MP, said:**

“The government has set out targets for new homes – but the current system will not deliver what's needed. Our Inquiry will provide recommendations for ministers, who are right to have started a national debate on housing policy.

“We must now find better ways to build new housing – and the solutions will involve both public and private sector players. And we need to help towns and cities across the country to deliver decent places to live. Our Inquiry is intended to provide some of the answers.”

#### **CALL FOR EVIDENCE: WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS**

Public and private sector stakeholders are being invited to provide written evidence on a range of areas, including:

- the powers city leaders need to meet housing needs in their areas

- the best ways to deliver supporting infrastructure such as schools and healthcare
- the most effective local delivery tools
- how to improve private sector involvement

Specifically, the UDG invites written evidence from interested organisations and stakeholders on the following questions:

- What are the key housing challenges facing the 'North' and the 'South'?
- Is the government right to aim to increase home ownership? How could the private rented sector and Buy to Let help meet housing needs?
- How can infrastructure supporting housing growth be more effectively delivered? What are the key actions for central Government and for city leaders?
- Do towns and cities need more strategic and financial freedoms to deliver local housing offers? Can existing powers be better exploited? Will the proposals in the Housing Green Paper improve the situation?
- Are there mechanisms that would boost the private sector's contribution to housing delivery, for example through leveraging investment, public/private partnership or ongoing property management?

**The deadline for written submissions is 22 October 2007.**

Following receipt of written evidence, the committee's chairs, Clive Betts MP and former Minister Nick Raynsford MP, will invite key public and private sector witnesses to appear before the cross-party group of MPs and Peers at a public inquiry session in Parliament to be held in November.

The Centre for Cities at ippr is leading independent research for the Inquiry. Written submissions should be sent, preferably by email, to:

**Catherine Glossop,  
Centre for Cities,  
30-32 Southampton St,  
London WC2E 7RA.  
Email: [c.glossop@ippr.org](mailto:c.glossop@ippr.org)**

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

The Government has started a national debate on housing policy:

- The **Housing Green Paper** sets out clear targets for increasing the supply of new homes, and earmarks £3bn of new money for affordable housing for 2008-11, and a **New Homes Agency** is mooted to improve planning and delivery of new housing.
- There are two independent **reviews of the house building industry** reporting over the next year.
- The **Local Government White Paper** and **Sub-National Review of Economic Development** proposes new powers for towns and cities over place-shaping, regeneration and growth – including housing policy.

Current arrangements for delivering new housing face a number of challenges, including:

- **North vs South** – household growth is running ahead of housing supply in almost every region, especially the Greater South East. But many Northern areas need to remodel their housing offer, not just build more homes
- **Affordability and mixed communities** – the Government is promoting home ownership, but affordability is a major issue in many places. Many inner urban neighbourhoods need a better mix of housing types and tenures
- **Infrastructure** – city leaders and developers struggle to get schools, healthcare and transport delivered at the same time as new housing is being built
- **Institutions** – towns and cities want greater strategic freedoms to meet local housing needs, but must also work better with the private sector on delivery
- **Delivery tools** – many innovative local housing delivery tools are being developed, but could be used much more widely.

About the group:

The All Party Parliamentary Urban Development Group was established to provide a forum for MPs and peers from all political parties to come together to raise awareness of matters concerning urban renewal and sustainable development.

The group's officers include:

- Clive Betts MP (Labour – Sheffield Attercliffe – Chair)
- Lord Richard Best (Cross-bench – Vice Chair)
- Andrew Pelling MP (Conservative – Croydon Central – Vice Chair)
- Baroness Scott of Needham Market (Liberal Democrat – Vice Chair)
- Rt Hon Nick Raynsford MP (Labour – Greenwich and Woolwich – Hon Chair)

The British Property Federation has been formally registered by the Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards to provide secretariat services for the Group in partnership with the Centre for Cities, the independent research unit carrying out the Group's research

## CONTACTS

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