

Motion for consideration by council on 9th February 2022

Proposed by: Bob Platt

Seconded by: Mike Croker

This Council notes:

- the powerful evidence which demonstrates the link between people's homes and their health, wellbeing and life chances;
- that the COVID-19 emergency has reinforced the need for healthy environments which provide space for recreation, children's play and walkable streets;
- that well-designed homes that meet all our citizens' needs over their lifetimes can radically reduce costs to NHS and social care budgets;
- that people have a basic right to live in environments free from unacceptable pollution;
- that homes must be affordable to heat and must be built to zero carbon standards;
- that recent changes to permitted development rights are leading to the creation of thousands of substandard homes through conversion of existing buildings into homes without planning permission;
- that the government's Building Safety Bill, in response to the Grenfell Tower disaster, is, as currently drafted, inadequate to ensure safe and healthy homes.

We further note that these are the 11 Healthy Homes and Places Principles, as promoted by the Town and Country Planning Association:

All new homes;

1. must be safe in relation to the risk of fire.
2. must have, as a minimum, the liveable space required to meet the needs of people over their whole lifetimes, including adequate internal and external storage space.
3. must provide access to natural light in all main living areas and bedrooms.
4. must be designed to be inclusive, accessible, and adaptable to suit the needs of all, including the designed surroundings.
5. should be built within places that prioritise and provide access to sustainable transport and walkable services, including green infrastructure and play space.
6. must secure radical reductions in carbon emissions in line with the provisions of the Climate Change Act 2008.
7. must demonstrate how they will be resilient to a changing climate over their full lifetime.
8. must be built to design out crime and be secure.
9. must be free from unacceptable and intrusive noise and light pollution.
10. must not contribute to unsafe or illegal levels of indoor or ambient air pollution and must be built to minimise, and where possible eliminate, the harmful impacts of air pollution on human health and the environment.
11. must be designed to provide year-round thermal comfort for inhabitants.

This Council resolves to:

- strive to ensure that the principles of Healthy Homes and Places are met, both through our planning system and in our own homes building, in order to create the highest quality places for residents which will be a fitting legacy for future generations;
- review related council policies, processes and procedures as part of the current Local Plan review, and develop and adopt new policies, to ensure that all new development is in line with the Healthy Homes and Places Principles;
- make the Healthy Homes and Places principles an integral part of Council decision making on housing and planning;
- ensure the next review of the corporate plan includes healthy homes and places as a priority.

This Council also calls on the Government, (via a letter from the Leader of the Council to the Secretary of State and to our local MPs) to:

- return full planning powers regarding the conversion of commercial buildings to residential use to council planning authorities;
- support amendments strengthening and extending provisions in the Building Safety Bill to enshrine the 11 Healthy Homes and Places principals in statute, or, failing that, to support the Healthy Homes Bill being promoted by Baron Nigel Crisp.