



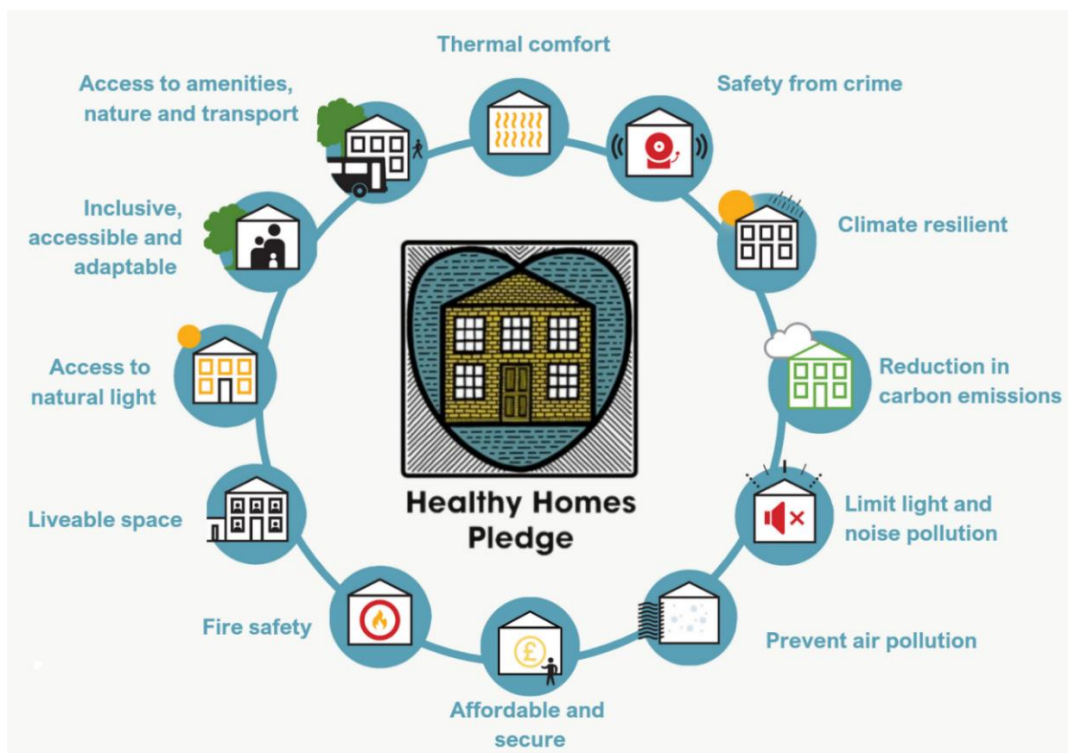
Healthy Homes Principles: a briefing for local councillors

June 2024

Healthy homes are essential for people to live healthy, happy lives. There is strong evidence showing how the quality of our homes and neighbourhoods affects our mental and physical health. However, around one in ten people in the UK (over 6 million) are living in poor quality homes. Local councils are at the sharp end of this debate, partly because they bear the increased costs that arise from the social care costs of poor housing, and partly because they have the insight and will to drive lasting change to secure healthy lives.

The government's deregulation of the planning system, through the massive expansion of Permitted Development Rights (PDR), has made the job of local government much more difficult. PDR allows former office blocks and other commercial buildings to be converted with no consideration of people's health and wellbeing and no meaningful oversight by local councillors. The T CPA is not opposed to using empty buildings to help deliver new homes, but by side-stepping the democratic planning system, very poor quality homes are being produced. Some have described these as the 'slums of the future' - with some of the worst examples depicted in the [These are Homes photobook](#).

The [Campaign for Healthy Homes](#) was launched with the aim of improving the quality of all new homes. A coalition of housing, development and health organisations created the Healthy Homes Principles, which act as a benchmark for what we should be achieving in new homes. The coalition has called for the Principles to be made a legal requirement for all new homes through the Healthy Homes Bill.



The Healthy Homes Principles go beyond bare minimum building regulations which largely focus on preventing people from harm. They aim to provide a clear and attainable approach that can be adapted to fit local contexts. Through adopting strong policies, local authorities can bolster the construction of new homes which proactively promote healthier outcomes for everyone.

We are asking local authorities to adopt the Healthy Homes Principles as the first step on a journey to transform the lives of ordinary people, to build the foundations of a future with health and opportunity at its heart.

The TCPA has produced a technical guide which explains in detail why and how the Healthy Homes Principles can be applied in local policy and practice. The guide is mainly written for local authorities, but is also relevant to parish and town councils, as well as neighbourhood forums.

The guide covers three areas:



The guide outlines several ways to help secure high quality homes that will promote health and wellbeing. These include adopting the principles via:

- A council motion.
- The corporate plan.
- Local Plans and policies.
- Supplementary Planning Documents.
- Design Codes.
- Neighbourhood Plans.
- Permitted Development tools.

It explores these approaches in more detail, along with good practice examples that have already been applied by local authorities. It includes contributions from the Building Research Establishment, the Health Foundation and the Royal College of Physicians.

You can access the full technical guide for free, online at:

www.tcpa.org.uk/resources/healthy-homes-principles-a-guide-for-local-implementation

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