



Homes: for Every Future

The Role of a National Development Corporation

With over 170,000 homes already and 75% of additional affordable homes delivered by housing associations this Senedd term, the sector is ready to deliver for communities across Wales. Behind every headline about the housing crisis, there are solutions ready to go. We need bold, long-term action if we are to build on the progress to date and end the housing emergency.

As part of our campaign for change, *Homes: For Every Future*, we are calling for the next government to take decisive action and launch a National Development Corporation that can operate across housing tenures to unlock, enable and scale up the provision of homes for Wales.

THE CHALLENGE: OUR HOUSING EMERGENCY

The housing crisis in Wales is a national emergency that touches every part of our lives—undermining our health, our children’s schooling, and the strength of our communities.

- **The Human Cost:** Today, almost 11,000 people are trapped in temporary accommodation¹. This includes more than 2,500 children who are starting their lives without the foundation of a permanent home.
- **The Delivery Gap:** While we are seeing progress, we are not yet building fast enough to ensure everyone has a safe, affordable place to live.
- **The Cost to Us All:** When our homes are poor quality, our health suffers. This puts an avoidable £95 million burden on the NHS in Wales every year.

¹ <https://www.gov.wales/homelessness-accommodation-provision-and-rough-sleeping-december-2025-html>



THE OPPORTUNITY: A CATALYST FOR WELSH RENEWAL

We are not starting from scratch. We have already proven that when we match political will with the right investment, we get results. We must now turn "record delivery" into a baseline to scale.

- **Record Delivery:** In 2024–25, Wales delivered 3,643 additional affordable homes—a 12% increase and a modern record. Not-for-profit housing associations built 75% of these. Housing associations also work closely with private housebuilders who provide affordable housing via section 106.
- **A Milestone Within Reach:** We are on track to meet the 20,000-home milestone. This is the springboard we need to go further and end the housing emergency for good.
- **The Multiplier Effect:** Meeting the **60,000 affordable homes target** by 2036 would create **over 14,000 jobs**. Currently, **85% of housing association spend** remains in Wales, contributing **£1.49 billion** annually to our economy.

A National Development Corporation has the potential to work with not for profit housing associations to build on the progress to date. It should operate across all housing tenures and if constituted with the right powers, staffed with the right skills and supported by enabling conditions it could significantly support the provision of affordable homes at the pace and scale needed to end the housing emergency. This note sets out key actions and considerations for such a body.

1. The National Development Corporation (NDC): Our "Master Developer"

- **Strategic Land Assembly:** The NDC should use proactive Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers to reclaim "stuck" or neglected land to ensure that Welsh soil serves Welsh needs.





- **The "Spine" Infrastructure Model:** The NDC should handle the high-risk "heavy lifting"—installing roads, utilities, and green space—to create "oven-ready" plots. This should be focused on very large or complex regeneration schemes. It could play a critical role to engage with key infrastructure providers such as Dwr Cymru, the National Grid and digital infrastructure to ensure capacity and ambition aligns.
- **Empowering Welsh SMEs & housing associations:** By sub-dividing large sites into smaller plots, the NDC should allow local Welsh builders and housing associations to start building immediately, without the multi-million-pound risk of upfront infrastructure costs.
- **Commercial DNA for a National Cause:** Staffed by "deal-makers" who can negotiate complex land deals and act as a ring master for larger more complex sites - bringing together private investment to stretch public money further.
- **Guaranteed Pipelines:** An NDC that encourages and supports Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) on sites, giving Welsh modular factories an "order book" to scale up and hire locally, supporting high performing homes and reducing carbon throughout the life cycle of the building. Enablers could include more extensive use of standardisation tools such as pattern books, exploring procurement opportunities that drive economies of scale and greater opportunities for the use of sustainable materials such as Welsh Timber.
- **Strengthening Delivery Capacity:** The NDC should map and monitor the capacity of contractors and the construction supply chain, identifying risks to delivery early. It should take targeted action to stabilise and grow the sector through securing pipelines, supporting expansion, and ensuring Welsh firms are equipped to deliver at scale.

2. Radical Planning: From "No" to "Go"

A NDC needs to be supported by a planning and consenting system that is resourced and agile with a shared ambition to end the housing emergency.

- **The "National Interest" Presumption:** Legislate for a Presumption in Favour of development. If a site is already in a Local Development Plan (LDP), the principle of building is settled. No more re-litigating sites while families wait in B&Bs.
- **Deadlines that support delivery:** Implement, monitor and enforce statutory deadlines for statutory consultees and default to a 'yes' if no response is received within the timescales. Require statutory consultees to undertake a multi-agency approach to unlock complex or stalled sites.
- **Advice you can rely on:** End the merry go round of advice which repeatedly sends planning applications back to the start of the process. Once advice has been given and responded to as part of the pre-application and planning process that matter should be considered settled.





- **Tackle the capacity constraint:** RTPI Cymru report² that over 60% of planners report a frequent lack of capacity. A national apprenticeship or bursary scheme and secondments should be considered alongside action to share resources across planning teams.

3. Unlocking the Pipeline: The NDC as a Strategic Land Accelerator

- **A People-First Public Land Map:** A live, transparent register of all surplus public land including its suitability for housing.
- **An NDC that supports and agitates for appropriate surplus public sector land release:** Acting as an expert adviser, the NDC could provide an injection of impetus and skills to ensure surplus public sector land is released quickly and efficiently.
- **Social Value Over Market Peak:** Support public bodies to dispose of surplus public land suitable for housing at a price which fully reflects the social value of increased affordable housing. This should include consideration of a statutory presumption of value in line with the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 which would enhance the framework provided by the Well Being of Future Generations Act and give confidence to public bodies when making disposals.
- **Reintroduce the safety valve:** Local Planning authorities should be required to have a sufficient supply of land which is viable and suitable for housing. In its absence additional weight should be given to the lack of housing supply when considering housing applications.

4. Breaking the Environmental Deadlock

- **Ending the Nutrients deadlock:** Provide emergency funding and developer exemptions to unlock the 2,000+ homes currently frozen by river nutrient restrictions, ensuring environmental and housing goals work in harmony. Recognising that long term investment in our water infrastructure and nature based solutions is the route to balance action on the environmental and housing emergency and this is not an either/or.

² <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/policy-and-research/state-of-the-profession-2025/state-of-the-profession-2025-wales/>



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