



## Press Release: 'Principles for Social Housing Reform'

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**There should be a fundamental reform of social housing, with a focus on tackling concentrated areas of deprivation and a move away from bricks and mortar subsidies, according to a new report published tomorrow by Localis.**

The independent report, written by Stephen Greenhalgh and John Moss, calls for a statutory duty on Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and Councils to fix broken neighbourhoods and would give them the "right to manage" their housing stock to allow them to achieve this.

The paper also advocates that social housing tenants should be given real choice through higher personal subsidies, replacing the current capital grant regime, which should lead to higher financial gains to RSLs and Councils allowing them to build as many, if not more, new homes than are currently being built.

In addition it calls for the restoration of meaningful incentives to encourage tenants to buy part or full shares in their homes, with the proceeds directed to the re-building of the most deprived estates, without increasing government spending.

The key recommendations in the report are:

- Councils and RSLs should be given a statutory 'duty to fix broken neighbourhoods' where there are concentrations of deprivation and be set free to manage their housing assets in a more sensible way based on what is right for the local area.
- The role of social housing should be defined - separating this between a 'duty to house' and a 'duty to help'. This policy would continue to house those who need it most, but give most tenants greater power and control through higher personal subsidies.
- There should be an end to the varying of tenure and rent levels between the private rented and social rented sectors - to promote greater understanding and transparency.
- Social housing tenants who cannot afford to buy market housing or pay private sector rent should be encouraged to buy part shares of housing - helped through the provision of substantial incentives - with the proceeds used to re-build the most run down estates.

The final outcome of the recommendations will be an increase in the number of homes built by Councils and RSLs and substantial additional funding for improving areas of deprivation - without increases in government spending - and a subsidy system which seeks to help people build a share in their home and a stake in their neighbourhood.

Author of the report Stephen Greenhalgh comments - "As a Council Leader I know the frustrations faced by housing managers and RSLs across the country, trying to work within a system which requires urgent reform. We need to address the growing alienation and deprivation in areas, and to do so must grasp the nettle and stop tinkering around the edges".

For further information or to interview the authors please contact  
**Mike Morgan-Giles** on **0207 340 2660** or [mike@localis.org.uk](mailto:mike@localis.org.uk)