

# Shoosmiths-Radix Commission on England's Housing Shortage

## Executive Summary:

This is a Commission to address England's Housing Shortage. The Commission brings together industry experts, policymakers, academics, and stakeholders to provide a well-rounded and authoritative review of the housing crisis and propose policy solutions.

Think-tank Radix Big Tent (RBT) spearhead this initiative, preparing discussion papers, facilitating consultations, and producing a final report to guide future housing policies. RBT is registered charity and you can learn more about our work here: [www.radixuk.org](http://www.radixuk.org).

We are delighted that Shoosmiths LLP are supporting the project and we welcome the expert contributions of their team, but the policy work and outcomes will be responsibility of Radix Big Tent and the Commissioners.

## Approach

- Radix is overseeing the work of the Commission, organise meetings and agendas, commission discussion papers, manage publication and handle publicity.
- David Boyle (Radix Policy Director) and Lesley Yarranton have been retained to 'hold the pen' on the project and will draft the final report for review and revision by the Commissioners.
- RBT and the Commissioners through their chair will retain editorial control.
- Individual commissioners are not necessarily endorsing all the recommendations made and all are serving in an individual capacity.

## Process

- Over ten months, the Commission will convene approximately six times.
- Discussion papers, covering specific topics and created by Radix, will guide each meeting, introducing the topic, setting out principles and objectives, and posing key questions for discussion.
- A green paper to white paper approach will facilitate wider consultation by evolving discussions from introductory stages to specific proposals and options.
- These papers will progressively build towards a final report.

## Further Consultation and Evidence Gathering

- Consultation and evidence gathering sessions will be held in conjunction with industry events. There are numerous third-party opportunities for evidence-gathering and consultation, also providing a context for networking. Amongst the key dates are:
  - 21-23 May: UKREiiF
  - 25-27 June: Housing 24
  - September/October: Party Conferences (provisional)
- For invitations to any of these consultation sessions please email [ben.rich@radixuk.org](mailto:ben.rich@radixuk.org)
- Online submissions can also be made via this dedicated Commission website.

## Publication and Launch

- RBT will use the discussion papers as a foundation for drafting the final report.
- Commissioners will review and finalise the report, recognising that not all Commissioners will support all the recommendations.
- Press launch will be held towards the end of 2024, potentially at a live event.

## Policy Topics

The Commission will hold six meetings, the first was a closed meeting in March (19<sup>th</sup>) to agree the detailed methodology and for the Commissioners to meet each other, and a further closed meeting in October to draft the final report. In between, we are hosting four roundtables which will be open to experts from outside the commission by invitation (spaces are very limited to keep discussions manageable). To express an interest please email [ben.rich@radixuk.org](mailto:ben.rich@radixuk.org).

The roundtables will consider the following topics:

### **April: How do we free up more land for development?**

This roundtable will consider issues such as the use of greenfield land, the greenbelt/"greybelt", the potential for more brownfield regeneration and parcelling land for development. How does/can the planning system help/hinder?

### **May: Sustainability and retrofit of existing housing stock**

This session will consider the balance between green regulation/ESG and increasing housing stock. It will focus on increasing housing supply through the retrofit, repurposing and upgrading of existing housing stock.

### **July: Role of specialist housing**

This session will look at the role of and models for specialist housing including student housing, retirement properties and tied stock for NHS workers, teachers etc. What are the planning implications of such approaches? Funding models? How do we assess needs and deliver against these effectively?

### **September: Ensuring affordability**

What's the model to ensure affordability while still ensuring developments are commercially attractive? What is the right target for affordability and who pays? What is the role of housing associations and of local authorities in this process? What role can Homes England play?

### **Commission**

### **Membership**

The Commission comprises 16 members drawn from industry representatives, planners, interested voluntary sector representatives, academics and policy experts, as well as representatives of Shoosmiths and Radix. Other Shoosmiths staff will be able to attend meetings as observers.

The Commissioners are:

Chair: **Dame Kate Barker CBE**, Chair of the 2004 'Barker Review' on Housing Supply for the then Labour Government, and subsequent review on Land Use Planning (2006); author of *Housing: Where's the Plan* (2014), non-exec Director at Taylor Wimpey plc and formerly member of the National Infrastructure Commission

Members:

- **Lord Best**, Social Housing leader and member of House of Lords Built Environment Committee
- **Richard Blyth**, Head of Policy, Royal Town Planning Institute

- **Paul Brocklehurst**, Chair of the Land, Planning and Development Federation and former head of Catesby Estates
- **Tom Chance**, CEO, Community Land Trust Network
- **Rick DeBlaby**, CEO, Get Living - leaders in the Buy to Rent sector
- **Melissa Mean**, CEO, We Can Make, a community-based project to create affordable homes by unlocking micro-sites for development
- **Alex Notay**, Placemaking and Investment Director, Thriving Investments
- **Elsie Owusu**, Founding Chair of the Society of Black Architects
- **Vicky Pryce**, Chair of Radix Fellows and leading economist
- **Ben Rich**, CEO, Radix Big Tent and former secretary to Lord Rogers' Urban Taskforce
- **Dr Catriona Riddell**, Expert in strategic planning issues working with local authorities
- **Jackie Sadek**, Director Urban Strategy and leading expert in Urban Regeneration
- **Andrew Taylor**, Group Planning Director, Vistry
- **Lisa Tye**, Partner & Joint-Head of Living, Shoosmiths
- **Doreen Wright**, Commercial Director, A2 Dominion

#### Researchers

- **David Boyle**, former editor of *Town & Country Planning*, co-director of the New Weather Institute, policy director of Radix UK, and co-author of *Edge City UK Abomination or new urban form?* published in 2022.
- **Lesley Yarranton**, Former journalist, television researcher and translator, co-author of *Edge City* with David Boyle, contributor to EuroProperty magazine and author of a number of Radix reports

#### Support

- **Sophie Cheadle**, Radix Big Tent administrator