

This blog is written by a member of the independent Commission. These views do not necessarily represent the views of the Archbishops' or the Church of England.

This year everyone is invited to join in the online Project Lab 2020 final on 9th November at 7:30pm – a chance to find out about and support five church-led projects that are meeting local housing need in creative and effective ways. [Please register here.](#)

As the 2020 Cinnamon Project Lab final approaches, we explore why this competition is so important.

In early 2020, Britain was already in the midst of a housing crisis. It is a crisis which affects people's material, physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing.

Over the past few months, we've become much more aware of where we live. However, far too many people still don't have somewhere safe to call home.

The Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Housing, Church and Community is seeking to re-imagine housing policy, with a focus on building better communities and homes, not just houses. As well as making recommendations for Government and others, it is looking at what actions the Church can take to help tackle the crisis.

Back in February, the Commission announced that it was delighted to be partnering with The Cinnamon Network on this year's housing-themed Project Lab competition, in order to find innovative church-based projects that are responding to housing need and helping to build community. A few weeks ago, we [announced the finalists](#) for the competition. We want to grow these successful projects quickly to respond to the country's increasing need.

Right now, this issue is more important than ever.

Before the pandemic, an estimated [8.4 million people in the UK](#) were living in unaffordable, insecure and unsafe accommodation.

The past few months have highlighted the inequalities in our society as those who live in unsafe and crowded homes have been **disproportionately affected by COVID-19.**

Analysis by the [New Policy Institute](#) shows the top five most-crowded areas in the country have seen 70% more coronavirus cases than the five least-crowded.

Beyond the practical challenges, we know that poor accommodation and uncertain housing situations have a hugely detrimental impact on

people’s mental, emotional and physical health.

We believe local churches can be part of the solution.



Whether advocating for the rights of tenants, offering education and tenancy training, or providing early intervention to prevent homelessness, churches can and are making a difference.

Through the Project Lab competition, we've been searching for innovative solutions that other churches can replicate to benefit their communities.

On **9 November** our five finalists will go head to head to pitch their ideas at the Project Lab final. Two winners will receive a £30,000 development grant and all five projects will be offered a place on the Cinnamon Project Incubator.

Through the Incubator, projects will spend two years growing and developing the foundations and infrastructure they need to grow and replicate their work through churches across our nation.

You can support innovation

Guests at the online Cinnamon Project Lab final will have the opportunity to support one or more of our incredible finalists financially, on the next phase of their growth and replication.

Our nation faces challenges on a scale most of us have never seen before and, through the Church, we can help to respond to them.

If you would like to attend, register [here](#). [Want to receive occasional updates from the Commission on our work and stories from around the country? Join our mailing list here.](#)

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