

The Archbishops' Commission on Housing, Church and Community has today issued a landmark report, *Coming Home*, about housing provision in the UK which calls for a national plan to tackle the crisis.

Coming Home makes recommendations which the Church, government and others can collectively take to alleviate the crisis, including the role the Church Commissioners might play. Loretta Minghella, First Church Estates Commissioner, has made the following statement, in which she offers the Church Commissioners' response to the report and highlights the Church Commissioners' experience in housebuilding on its land.

Loretta Minghella, First Church Estates Commissioner, said:

- The Church Commissioners welcome this landmark study of the UK's housing crisis from the Housing Commission, which comes at a critical time for the nation, when so many people are struggling with inadequate homes and living conditions in an environment worsened by the pandemic.
- The Church Commissioners fully support the Commission's proposal to define what good looks like – sustainable, safe, stable, sociable and satisfying – as an important step in building thriving communities.
- We recognise the need for long-term planning to tackle the housing crisis and create truly affordable housing, and that cross-party collaboration is vital to making this happen.
- The Church Commissioners will reflect carefully on all the recommendations of the Commission relevant to its work and review what more it can do to increase the supply of affordable homes.
- The Church Commissioners are keen to explore the Housing Commission's innovative suggestion of making a portion of its funding available through distributing some land instead of money as a grant-in-kind, including investigating any necessary change in our governing rules this may require.
- The Church Commissioners look forward to working with the Housing Commission, the Church, government, and other policy makers to forge a sustainable solution to the housing crisis.
- The Commissioners have a long history of contributing towards housing provision in England. Since 2015, we have secured planning permission for 3,820 new homes of which 820 are affordable homes.
- The Commissioners' strategic land portfolio has land which is suitable for the delivery of 28,500 new homes across England, of which we anticipate around 8,600 will be affordable.
- The Church Commissioners endorse the Commission's suggestions that any plans to alleviate the housing crisis should go beyond the number of houses built to a holistic approach which creates sustainable communities that nurture a sense of belonging and where people can flourish.

We are committed to working with developers to build homes and communities.

- The Church Commissioners have enjoyed in-depth engagement with the Housing Commission over the past year. As a result of these exchanges, we have been considering how we can do even more. Supporting the need for a holistic approach to the housing sector, and in response to the Housing Commission's work, the Church Commissioners are developing a framework with independent specialists which we will use to assess the environmental, social and governance (ESG) aspects of our development land holdings.
- This ESG framework will underpin our management of development land in our portfolio and ensure it is used in the most sustainable way possible, thereby reinforcing the Commissioners' mission to support the Church of England's ministry.
- In addition, the Church Commissioners intend to become a signatory to the 2020 UK Stewardship Code and will submit a Stewardship Report to the Financial Reporting Council in line with the principles of the 2020 Code, which for the first time requires reporting on our responsible investment approach across all asset classes.
- The Church Commissioners invest in a diversified portfolio of assets, seeking to generate excellent returns in order to provide the maximum possible sustainable funding stream to support the mission and ministry of the Church of England in all its forms. In the current three-year funding period (2020-22), the Church Commissioners will make available approximately £930million, paying pensions and supporting the work of bishops, dioceses, cathedrals, and churches.

Notes to editors

1. Case studies about the Church Commissioners' housing developments can be found via this [link](#).
2. The Church Commissioners are developing a rigorous framework to identify key ways it can improve the environmental, social and governance impact of its strategic land in a sustainable way. Please see the Strategic Land ESG Integration document available via this [link](#).

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