

Dear Minister

At the latest meeting of the All-Party Group on Homelessness on Tuesday May 28, the Minister for Communities Gordon Lyons MLA discussed his plans to develop and introduce a Housing Supply Strategy. As you will be aware, this incredibly important strategic document had been consulted on the Department for Communities in the last Assembly mandate. However, unfortunately the draft Strategy did not receive Executive sign-off before the collapse of the Executive in 2022.

Minister Lyons stated that his officials have provided him with what he described as an “advance draft” of the Strategy. However, before seeking Executive approval, he wanted to ensure that every relevant Department had bought in to the Strategy. He indicated that he wants to engage with relevant officials and Ministers over the summer months to ensure that the Strategy has support across the Executive.

CIH Futures, a young professionals’ group of the Chartered Institute of Housing, believes that increasing the supply of high-quality, affordable housing is imperative to efforts in this society to prevent and reduce homelessness. Put succinctly, this society will not be able to reduce homelessness without an adequate supply of housing. As a group, we believe budget cuts to the housing sector will have a significant impact on young professionals working within it, creating a challenging future. With fewer resources, this increases the risk of burnout to existing staff levels, leading to high turnover and further straining the sector.

Overall, budget cuts create a vicious cycle for both young professionals and the future of the housing sector. A drained workforce with limited career prospects can make it difficult to attract and retain talent, which ultimately impacts the sector's ability to provide essential services. One central element of the Strategy is ensuring that this society has the workforce to ensure that we have sufficient supply of high-quality, affordable housing. We strongly believe that it is of the utmost importance that the Executive collectively agree this strategy and provide the resources for its implementation in the near future.

At the meeting on the 28th, the Minister asked people in attendance to do everything they could to encourage other Executive Departments to support the Housing Supply Strategy. As a group of young professionals who see our future in the housing sector, we are writing to urge you and your officials to engage in a meaningful and constructive way so that this strategy can get over the line in short order.

[CIH Futures](#)

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“Supporting housing professionals to create a future in which everyone has a place to call home.”

It is our understanding that officials from the Department for Communities have already sought meetings to discuss the Housing Supply Strategy. We hope you ensure they are a priority for your Department in the weeks to come.

Kind regards

Michaela McCusker,
CIH Futures NI, Chair