

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Empty Spaces to Homes Coalition

Purpose

The Empty Spaces to Homes (ES2H) coalition brings together both individuals and organisations with a shared interest in tackling the housing crisis by repurposing empty or unused buildings into social and affordable housing. With over 131,000 households in temporary accommodation in England alone and over 1.5 million households on social housing waiting lists across Great Britain more widely, we need innovative solutions to ensure everyone has access to a safe and decent place to live.

The purpose of the coalition is to influence policy on both a national and local level, share best practice and build practical partnerships to encourage, support and bring awareness to ES2H.

Objectives

- Advocate for changes in policy and practice that encourage the conversion of empty non-residential buildings into high quality, social or genuinely affordable homes
- Seek finance for ES2H projects, develop joint project proposals and secure funding opportunities by leveraging collective expertise and resources to implement impactful housing initiatives.
- Provide a space to discuss issues around delivering affordable housing and develop partnerships and new initiatives together
- Share best practice to support coalition members and the wider community to deliver ES2H projects through the forums, the ES2H toolkit, case studies and public-facing events

Membership

Coalition members can be from charities, Local Authorities, housing associations, Government/ public bodies, professional services firms, campaign groups, membership bodies, philanthropists, construction and architects, research bodies or other relevant housing backgrounds. Members can also be individuals with an interest in supporting ES2H and coalition activities.

To find out more about joining the Empty Spaces to Homes coalition, please contact our Empty Spaces to Homes Programme team at es2h@habitatforhumanity.org.uk When joining the coalition on behalf of an organisation, please ensure you seek the necessary approval to do so.

Representatives from Habitat for Humanity include:

- Director of Impact & Influence

- Director of Programmes
- Director of Fundraising and Communications
- UK Housing Advocacy Manager
- Head of Corporate Partnerships
- Empty Spaces to Homes Programme Manager

Governance

The Empty Spaces to Homes coalition is managed by Habitat for Humanity GB, who will act as secretariat, oversee membership, facilitate meetings and send invites to upcoming events.

We encourage coalition members to share input on the policy recommendations that we will advocate for, findings from our research, and advise how we can bring awareness and create sector/ policy change. To do so, we will invite members to roundtables, events and working groups on various topics and encourage attendance where possible. Members will be named on any joint research, bids, resources or events delivered as part of the coalition.

Coalition format

By joining the Empty Spaces to Homes coalition, you agree to work collaboratively with Habitat for Humanity GB and other members to support our objectives. This includes:

- Displaying your name/ organisation on the Habitat for Humanity GB coalition webpage as a member of the coalition.
- Promoting and sharing ES2H messages and communications through websites, social media and newsletters as appropriate. This could include sharing research, articles and events or producing original content to promote ES2H policy positions.
- Attending coalition meetings and events on the topics you find relevant to your area of work. This includes working groups, research roundtables, online and in-person events or conferences.
- Providing support to coalition members to support their ES2H conversion projects, including on a pro-bono basis.

We understand that partners will have varying levels of time and capacity to support with coalition activities. Habitat for Humanity GB will consult with each coalition partner to understand how you wish to be involved in the coalition, your expertise and areas of interest to ensure you feel able to contribute in the way you'd like to.

Meetings and events

Habitat for Humanity GB will host 6 coalition events throughout the calendar year focused on housing topics, research and policy recommendations. We also aim to host an in-person conference for both coalition members and wider housing partners, hosted by Habitat for Humanity GB, to share learning, showcase completed ES2H projects, research findings and other relevant topics. These events will provide partners with an opportunity for collaboration, networking and learning, and we will invite coalition partners to present during these meetings where appropriate.

Communication

- Habitat for Humanity GB will circulate a quarterly newsletter to coalition members via email with details of upcoming working groups, research publications, events and advocacy updates.
- Habitat for Humanity GB will also manage the Empty Spaces to Homes coalition webpage and hosting of digital resources such as the Empty Spaces to Homes Toolkit.

Date of next ToR review: Dec 2026