

Better Housing Better Business

January 2023



An Ibec Campaign

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Key Recommendations

To bring a stronger collective momentum to addressing the housing crisis

1. Intensify work through the Labour Employer Economic Forum (LEEF) to address sustainable solutions for the delivery of adequate supply of affordable housing in the private market and through public provision.
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To increase public housing delivery

2. Set a more ambitious role for local authorities and Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) through the delivery of social, cost-rental and broader affordable homes with a target of 20,000 units annually before the end of the decade, with greater delivery of affordable and cost-rental units.
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To reduce purchase costs to buyers

3. Create a State fund, ultimately funded by the Local Property Tax (LPT) but initially by the exchequer, to subvent the cost of Section 48 and 49 special and supplementary levies for new residential units, where the infrastructure benefits users across the local community rather than just the new home purchaser.
 4. Introduce a VAT refund order worth 5% of a new home for purchasers of new build homes on a temporary basis under Section 103 of the VAT Act to help offset the rising costs of construction and supply chain challenges in the sector.
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To address the funding deficit

5. Significantly increase funding through the Irish Strategic Investment Fund (ISIF) and Home Building Finance Ireland (HBFi) to ensure adequate development finance in the market.
 6. Improve access to domestic sources of funding for affordable residential development, linking domestic savings to the development of affordable homes, by implementing a risk appropriate income tax incentive for investments in designated residential development funds, mirrored on the Employment Investment Incentive Scheme (EIS) and in line with the 2017 report of the 'Working Group On The Tax And Fiscal Treatment Of Rental Accommodation Providers'.
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To improve delivery timelines

7. Progress the Planning and Development Bill which has the potential to improve the timeliness and efficiency of the current planning system and ensure bodies such as An Bord Pleanála, the soon to be established Planning and Environment Division of the High Court and other relevant agencies have the resources needed to recruit and retain significant numbers of additional staff with relevant expertise in order to reduce planning backlogs and improve timeliness.
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To maintain a functioning rental sector

8. Implement improved tax treatment of landlords' expenses, while also ensuring greater security for tenants – through the multiannual rollout of greater resourcing for local authorities and the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) to meet a 25% annual rental inspection target, a deposit protection scheme, and an national car testing (NCT) equivalent scheme for the accommodation rental sector.
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To boost offsite construction activity

9. Engage and collaborate with manufacturers and the construction sector to ensure that a portion of future social and affordable housing be completed using offsite construction methods, to create a strong level of demand certainty for investment in modern methods of construction.
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To address skills shortages and productivity

10. Continue to increase investment in Further Education and Training Centres to address waiting lists as quickly as possible, build out digital and other relevant skills in modern methods and introduce accelerated capital allowances for investments in advanced automation, Building Information Modelling (BIM), robotics and digital technologies in the construction sector.
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