

Mr John Myers comments

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In general, we support the draft New London Plan and its ambition to strongly increase the rate at which London builds high-quality homes. The analyst Neal Hudson has shown that since WW2 this country has never got back to the rate of percentage growth in the number of homes achieved in the 1830s, let alone the 1930s. London has never remotely got back to the build rates of the 1930s, as the Outer London Commission has demonstrated. As a result, homes have become ever more unaffordable. Tenants are increasingly squeezed into tight, poor quality, insecure and needlessly expensive living conditions. The many who cannot afford to live in London are deprived of opportunities for the best jobs and training.

The analyst Matt Rognlie has shown that housing is the main cause of inequality. We estimate that failure to build enough housing and infrastructure over the last 40 years in places like London has impaired GDP per head by approximately 25%. If true, that represents more damage to GDP than any other single event since the Black Death of 1348-9 – including both World Wars. (See <https://capx.co/the-housing-crisis-an-act-of-devastating-economic-self-harm/>)

We desperately need more housing to make London a more walkable, fairer and more liveable place. That can and should be done without any loss of quality. In fact, we should be able to do it while making London better for nearly everyone.

London YIMBY is a grassroots campaign to end the housing crisis with the support of local people.