

How to contact local media

If your housing association is getting involved with the Homes at the Heart campaign, you might want to tell local media about what you have been doing. Whether it's highlighting a politician's visit to your site or explaining the impact that investment in social housing could have on your area, local newspapers or websites could be interested in what you have to say.

Elsewhere in the campaign pack you can find a template press release to promote an MP visit. This may be a useful starting point when putting together your own media materials, but we would also encourage you to create your own content to showcase the particular work your housing association does for your community. The statistics included in this guide may be useful when shaping your own media stories.

If you manage to get media coverage as part of the campaign, please do let the NHF know. You can get in contact at PRteam@housing.org.uk, where we are also happy to answer any other questions about media work for Homes at the Heart.

Key stats for media

Using statistics in your media work is a great way to make an impact. You can find data at a regional and local level on [Housing Counts](#) or the [Local Economic Impact Calculator](#), or [our constituency data tool](#). You may also find the below NHF national statistics useful.

- To meet current levels of housing need, NHF research with Heriott-Watt University shows England needs to see 145,000 affordable homes built every year until 2031, including 90,000 social rent homes for those on the lowest incomes.
- Last year housing associations built more than a quarter of all homes in England. This added an estimated £2.4bn to the national economy and supported more than 43,500 jobs.
- Through the day-to-day management of their existing homes, housing associations and local authorities add an estimated £12.7bn to the national



economy, supporting almost 210,000 jobs.

- Housing associations had planned to invest over £19bn in new and existing homes during 2020 – around 1% of England's GDP. The coronavirus crisis has undoubtedly put this investment at risk.
- The English Housing Survey shows that on average social housing is of higher quality than any other tenure.
- In 2015, BRE Group calculated that inadequate housing was costing the NHS at least £1.4bn per year, a figure only likely to have increased as the effects of the housing crisis have deepened.

Top tips for getting in touch with media

- Contact details for journalists can usually be found on a newspaper's "contact us" page. You may want to send your material to a specific journalist who covers housing or politics, but you could also send it to the general news desk email address.
- If you have a pre-existing relationship with a journalist, try contacting them first rather than emailing the general news desk. They are probably more likely to pick up your story if they already know you.
- Keep emails to journalists succinct. They are likely to be busy, so will be more likely to read your message if it is easily digestible.
- If local journalists are particularly active on social media – especially Twitter – you could consider reaching out to them via your housing association's social media accounts.
- Include photos with your press release or letter to editor. If they include people, make sure to include their names and role, as well as checking you have their permission to use the photo.
- Give journalists contact details for your PR or media team, or whoever it is best to contact at your organisation about the story. If they have questions or want to know more about your work, this will make it easy for them to follow up.
- If you don't get a response to an email, you can try phoning the newspaper instead. Journalists are inundated with press releases, so a call might help yours to get noticed.



- Remember that visits with politicians or any other media events need to be organised in accordance with social distancing guidelines. See our guidance on organising an MP visit to your housing association in the campaign pack for more advice on how to do this.

Find out more about our campaign

- Follow [#HomesAtTheHeart](#) on social media
- Visit www.housing.org.uk/HomesAtTheHeart
- Contact HomesAtTheHeart@housing.org.uk

