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### Summary and recommendations

In summary, our research in Birmingham found a “residualisation” of social housing stock, which is increasingly used only to house those with the most acute needs. However, without funding to maintain access to the support services that such individuals require, such as mental health or substance addiction treatment, the instability of a significant number of tenants makes it difficult for them to enter employment and become more self-sufficient. The concentration of large numbers of deprived individuals in social housing estates, many of whom have complex needs, also has implications for the wider area and community. Participants in our research suggested that mixed tenure developments and the construction of new social housing in less deprived areas would be a positive step to overcome this concentration of deprivation. There also needs to be an acknowledgement that residents in different kinds of social housing have different needs, and local authorities should be empowered to gather information on communities and tailor their responses accordingly.

- **Recommendation 1:** additional funding for support to social housing residents that is tailored to their specific needs, for example mental health and substance dependency services. This will build the stability required to work or access skills training.
- **Recommendation 2:** further devolution, for example of urban planning and housing policy to the combined authorities, so that the city regions can develop responses to their own problems incorporating local knowledge and expertise.
- **Recommendation 3:** recognise that different types of social housing estates have different needs. Inner-city estates in Birmingham are more ethnically diverse and barriers to work can include insufficient knowledge of English, thus necessitating funded or subsidised language classes. Estates on the urban periphery typically have issues with accessing reliable and affordable public transport in order to commute. Community research models, such as the [USE-IT! model](#) developed in Birmingham, can enable local authorities to gather information on the needs of residents at a relatively low cost but with high impact.
- **Recommendation 4:** local authorities are often best placed to lead the response to issues faced by social housing residents, or to facilitate collaborative multi-agency working projects. However, the instability of staffing and attrition of expertise, both caused by continued austerity cuts to council budgets, makes creating preventative platforms difficult. Levelling up the UK requires renewed financial support for local government, cancelling planned further budget cuts, and greater recognition of councils’ role as [anchor institutions](#) supporting the local economy in their areas.
- **Recommendation 5:** participants in our research confirmed that the mono-tenure of social housing estates has exacerbated the problems faced by tenants. Local government should be supported to invest in new developments with a mix of tenures, bringing more social mix into currently deprived areas but also to less deprived and gentrifying areas.