# Balnagask homeowners reject council offer as RAAC crisis deepens



The challenge of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in the Balnagask area of Aberdeen has escalated into a harrowing crisis for homeowners. Approximately 500 council homes constructed with this material, which became popular between the 1950s and 1990s, are now at risk due to its inherent structural vulnerabilities. Residents have begun receiving letters from Aberdeen City Council highlighting both safety concerns and the potential devaluation of their properties, compounding an already complex situation for families hoping to secure their futures.

The council has proposed a voluntary purchase scheme, offering market value compensation alongside home loss payments of up to £15,000 for affected homeowners. However, this initiative has seen meagre uptake; as of now, only four out of 138 private homeowners have accepted the offers. Many residents feel that the evaluations and compensatory measures fail to reflect the true economic impact of their predicament. To make matters worse, the council’s approach has sparked accusations of aloofness and insensitivity during a deeply personal crisis, as families grapple with the unsettling prospect of leaving their homes.

Community sentiment is rising against the council’s seemingly dismissive stance. Substantial public frustration was evident during a recent interview, where co-council leader Christian Allard faced pointed questions about his engagement with affected residents. His responses, notably evasive, highlighted a deeper disconnect between the local authority and the community. Homeowners in Balnagask argue that the offers do not adequately compensate for the loss of their homes nor the ongoing uncertainty regarding their housing future. Moreover, the possibility of legal action looms as they seek to assert their rights and push for more substantial reparations.

The very fabric of the Balnagask community, once vibrant, is now under threat, as some residents express a resolve to remain in their condemned homes until they receive a fair resolution. The council’s current dismissal of their pleas could potentially create a community that resembles a battle-scarred landscape, particularly undesirable as Aberdeen positions itself as a welcoming destination for cruise ship tourists. Apart from addressing the immediate concerns of safety and financial recompense, leaders must consider the implications of leaving a once-thriving community to languish in uncertainty.

Historical parallels are drawn with past failures, notably when another Scottish council identified the dangers of RAAC homes almost a quarter of a century ago—warnings that appear to have gone unheeded in Aberdeen. The frustrations echo loudly within the community, where one local remarked, “When they really want to do something, they’ll always find the money,” identifying a stark contrast between funding for ideological projects and the recourse available for those impacted by structural failures.

As the community waits for tangible action, questions remain: What is the council’s plan for addressing the housing crisis? Can they unlock funds or become more creative with their budget in order to truly support those affected? The challenge ahead is not merely an administrative one; it is fundamentally about community restoration and a commitment to righting past wrongs. A roof overhead is more than just shelter; it carries the weight of lived experience and the dreams of families. The urgency for resolution has never been greater, as the resilience of the Balnagask community meets the relentless march of bureaucratic inertia.

Residents are determined to see justice, and as the walls made of RAAC threaten to crumble, the necessity for council accountability becomes paramount. The myriad voices of the community serve as a resolute reminder of the stakes involved—not only for the homes themselves, but for the very essence of what it means to belong to a neighbourhood.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/opinion/6768821/david-knight-raac-balnagask/), [[2]](https://news.stv.tv/north/aberdeen-community-facing-housing-crisis-as-around-500-homes-built-using-flawed-concrete-raac), [[4]](https://inews.co.uk/news/housing/forced-out-homes-raac-concrete-nightmare-2951856)
* Paragraph 2 – [[3]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c3vkvk9epgpo), [[5]](https://aberdeenbusinessnews.co.uk/raac-and-ruin-continues-only-four-aberdeen-homeowners-accept-purchase-offers/), [[6]](https://www.thenational.scot/news/24668067.aberdeen-raac-homeowners-refuse-purchase-scheme/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/opinion/6768821/david-knight-raac-balnagask/), [[4]](https://inews.co.uk/news/housing/forced-out-homes-raac-concrete-nightmare-2951856), [[6]](https://www.thenational.scot/news/24668067.aberdeen-raac-homeowners-refuse-purchase-scheme/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/opinion/6768821/david-knight-raac-balnagask/), [[2]](https://news.stv.tv/north/aberdeen-community-facing-housing-crisis-as-around-500-homes-built-using-flawed-concrete-raac), [[3]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c3vkvk9epgpo)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/opinion/6768821/david-knight-raac-balnagask/), [[5]](https://aberdeenbusinessnews.co.uk/raac-and-ruin-continues-only-four-aberdeen-homeowners-accept-purchase-offers/), [[7]](https://news.stv.tv/north/residents-living-in-raac-affected-properties-in-aberdeen-consider-legal-action)
* Paragraph 6 – [[5]](https://aberdeenbusinessnews.co.uk/raac-and-ruin-continues-only-four-aberdeen-homeowners-accept-purchase-offers/), [[6]](https://www.thenational.scot/news/24668067.aberdeen-raac-homeowners-refuse-purchase-scheme/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/opinion/6768821/david-knight-raac-balnagask/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://news.stv.tv/north/aberdeen-community-facing-housing-crisis-as-around-500-homes-built-using-flawed-concrete-raac> - Residents in Aberdeen's Balnagask area are facing a housing crisis due to the discovery of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in approximately 500 council homes. The material, used between the 1950s and 1990s, poses structural risks. Affected homeowners have received letters from Aberdeen City Council, leading to concerns about the safety and value of their properties. The council is conducting risk assessments and seeking guidance from the Scottish Government to address the issue.
3. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c3vkvk9epgpo> - In Aberdeen, residents whose homes contain potentially dangerous RAAC are refusing to participate in a voluntary purchase scheme offered by Aberdeen City Council. The council's offers include market value compensation and home loss payments up to £15,000, but deduct the cost of repairing RAAC roof panels. Homeowners argue that these offers do not fully compensate for the structural issues and potential devaluation of their properties.
4. <https://inews.co.uk/news/housing/forced-out-homes-raac-concrete-nightmare-2951856> - Homeowners in Aberdeen's Balnagask estate are facing potential displacement due to the discovery of RAAC in their homes. The council has informed tenants of the need to vacate, but private homeowners are considering legal action over the council's handling of the situation. They express concerns about financial hardship and the uncertainty of their housing future, as the council plans to demolish and rebuild affected properties.
5. <https://aberdeenbusinessnews.co.uk/raac-and-ruin-continues-only-four-aberdeen-homeowners-accept-purchase-offers/> - Only four out of 138 private homeowners in Aberdeen's Balnagask area have accepted purchase offers from Aberdeen City Council for properties affected by RAAC. The council plans to demolish and rebuild the 504 affected homes at an estimated cost of £130 million. Homeowners express frustration over undervalued offers and the slow progress of the council's demolition plan.
6. <https://www.thenational.scot/news/24668067.aberdeen-raac-homeowners-refuse-purchase-scheme/> - Dozens of Aberdeen homeowners affected by RAAC are refusing to participate in a voluntary purchase scheme offered by Aberdeen City Council. The council's offers include market value compensation and home loss payments up to £15,000, but deduct the cost of repairing RAAC roof panels. Homeowners argue that these offers do not fully compensate for the structural issues and potential devaluation of their properties.
7. <https://news.stv.tv/north/residents-living-in-raac-affected-properties-in-aberdeen-consider-legal-action> - Residents in Aberdeen's Balnagask area, whose homes are affected by RAAC, are considering legal action due to financial hardship and potential homelessness. While most council tenants have been rehoused, many private homeowners remain, unwilling or unable to leave. They argue that the financial burden of paying mortgages on uninhabitable properties could leave them destitute.