# Sadiq Khan proposes easing green belt rules to build nearly one million homes in London



# Sadiq Khan's Bold Plans to Address London's Housing Crisis

London's growing housing crisis has reached a critical juncture, prompting Mayor Sir Sadiq Khan to propose a radical overhaul of the city's longstanding green belt protections. In a recent speech, Khan outlined plans to develop nearly one million new homes by easing restrictions on land traditionally shielded from urban development. This initiative aims to directly address the severe housing shortages facing Londoners, where demand greatly outstrips supply.

The green belt, instituted in 1938, spans more than a million acres across Greater London and surrounding counties, serving as a buffer against urban sprawl and a means of preserving open spaces. However, Khan argues that the conception of the green belt as a pristine landscape of beautiful countryside is outdated. He highlighted that much of this land is "low-quality," often poorly maintained, and infrequently accessed by residents. The mayor stated, “The reality is very different… the green belt can often be low-quality land.”

Khan's bold stance comes in the wake of alarming statistics that reflect a deepening housing crisis. The number of homes required in London is estimated at 88,000 annually over the next decade, a target that is increasingly untenable under current regulations. He noted that over 180,000 people in London are currently living in temporary accommodation, including 90,000 children, a situation described as “a generation of Londoners now simply can’t afford to rent, let alone buy a home.” These figures starkly illustrate the pressing need for an innovative solution to housing shortages in the capital.

The economic landscape contributing to this crisis is dire, with median house prices in London having increased at double the rate of wages since the turn of the century, while private rents have soared by 40% in the past decade. This has resulted in entire families being forced out of the city, a demographic shift that threatens to alter the fabric of London’s communities. As Khan poignantly noted, young professionals find themselves unable to leave their childhood homes, and many families are pushed into unsuitable living conditions, amplifying social inequality.

Despite the anticipated backlash from environmentalists and other critics, Khan's proposal has garnered political support. Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner acknowledged the stark realities of London's housing crisis, stating, “We all know someone who has been affected by the acute and entrenched housing crisis we’ve inherited.” She welcomed Khan’s determination to confront these challenges head-on.

The Generation Rent campaign also weighed in, with CEO Ben Twomey commending the mayor’s ambition as essential for addressing the dire housing situation that forces many into poverty and homelessness. He underscored the importance of building homes where appropriate, even in parts of the green belt, to meet the urgent demands of London’s residents.

However, the path forward will likely be contentious. The tension between urban development and environmental conservation is fraught with complexity, and Khan's plans to alter green belt regulations will face significant scrutiny. For many, the challenge lies in striking a balance that meets housing needs without compromising vital green spaces. As London stands at this crossroads, the implications of these decisions will undoubtedly resonate for generations to come, impacting the very essence of life in this bustling metropolis.

In a city where the cost of living continually escalates and housing remains an elusive dream for many, Khan's commitment might represent a pivotal moment in the long-standing debate over the future of London's green belt. Whether his plans will materialise into effective solutions or become a political flashpoint remains to be seen. Nonetheless, the urgency for action is clear as Londoners continue to grapple with the daunting realities of an acute housing crisis.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/sadiq-khan-green-belt-housing-crisis-b2747188.html)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/sadiq-khan-green-belt-housing-crisis-b2747188.html)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/sadiq-khan-green-belt-housing-crisis-b2747188.html)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/sadiq-khan-green-belt-housing-crisis-b2747188.html)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/sadiq-khan-green-belt-housing-crisis-b2747188.html)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/sadiq-khan-green-belt-housing-crisis-b2747188.html)

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## Bibliography

* <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/sadiq-khan-green-belt-housing-crisis-b2747188.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data