

London School of Economics and Political Science - Five Minutes With Danny Dorling



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What is the housing crisis in the UK?

The housing crisis is a crisis of affordability. The biggest part of the cost of living crisis isn't gas bills or food bills, it's your rent or your mortgage. Rents have increased, and prices have increased in the South-East. Elsewhere prices have fallen and people are in negative equity. It's issues with housing that are probably going to keep people awake at night in worry more than anything else. Beyond the cost, it is also the unpredictability, the fear and lack of any certainty about what's going to happen to you depending on how you're housed. Many people are not particularly well housed. Many don't have much of an idea of how they're going to be housed in three or four or five years time.

What are the roots of the problem?

Housing was the one of the big three issues - the others being education and health - that the UK didn't sort out in terms of having a decent state support; a control on the quality of what happened and a control on people profiteering. For instance we don't allow people to make massive profits, or largely we haven't, out of education. Private schools are non-profit making. Housing, on the other hand, is a massive source of profit-making.

The rise in income and wealth inequality that began from the 1970s onwards has

become a housing problem in the end. If you have one part of society becoming wealthier and wealthier, and everybody else sees their average income drop and their wealth levels fall to a lower proportion of national, it gets expressed in housing.

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