

Preface

This book is the product of nearly a decade of work and thinking on housing policy, from the perspective of a Local Government Political Advisor to the City of Salford's elected Mayor, Paul Dennett. As Paul's advisor, I worked closely with him as a researcher, organiser and confidante while he held several political portfolios within the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, in particular his five-year stint as political lead for Planning, Housing and Homelessness. Through this time, I also worked closely with local government officers and civil servants at the coal face of delivering practical solutions for the housing crisis engulfing our country, dealing closely with the limitations of budgets, the imposition of politics and the absurdities of legislation in the attempt to deliver meaningful change for Greater Manchester's residents. The content of this book is borne largely from this experience, and the struggle of delivering practical policy solutions on housing for Salford and Greater Manchester residents. That, and the kindly imparted wisdom of some of my esteemed and dedicated colleagues, many of whom have worked for decades within the world of housing policy and delivery.

The main part of this book provides a fairly contemporary assessment of the present state of UK housing policy. Wherever possible, I have utilised the most up to date instances of government documentation, legislation, national datasets and political commentary to contextualise my historical assessments and predictions for the evolution of both the UK's housing crisis, and our policy response. Much of the material is very current. It's possible that by the time it has come to print, some parts will already be out of date. In any case, I believe that as a 'snapshot' of the UK's housing crisis today, and the state of housing policy, the book will continue to provide a useful insight into both the history behind and the practical limitations of housing policy.

The book is also fairly short – at least, much shorter than it could have been. Each section could easily have merited a book in itself. It is separated into four parts: the introduction provides a definition and historical clarification of the book's central thesis. [Part I](#) deals with the nature of our housing crisis, as we are experiencing it as a country today. [Part II](#) delves into the policy failings which sit beneath the crisis, taking a long view back encompassing much of the 20th century. The third and final part, rather optimistically, proposes a set of policy solutions. By the end, my hope is that the reader will have a decent and relatively thorough knowledge of the present housing policy landscape in the UK, its immediate antecedents and insight into our direction of travel.

