

SOCIAL HOUSING AND NET ZERO

Hannah Charles
University of Manchester

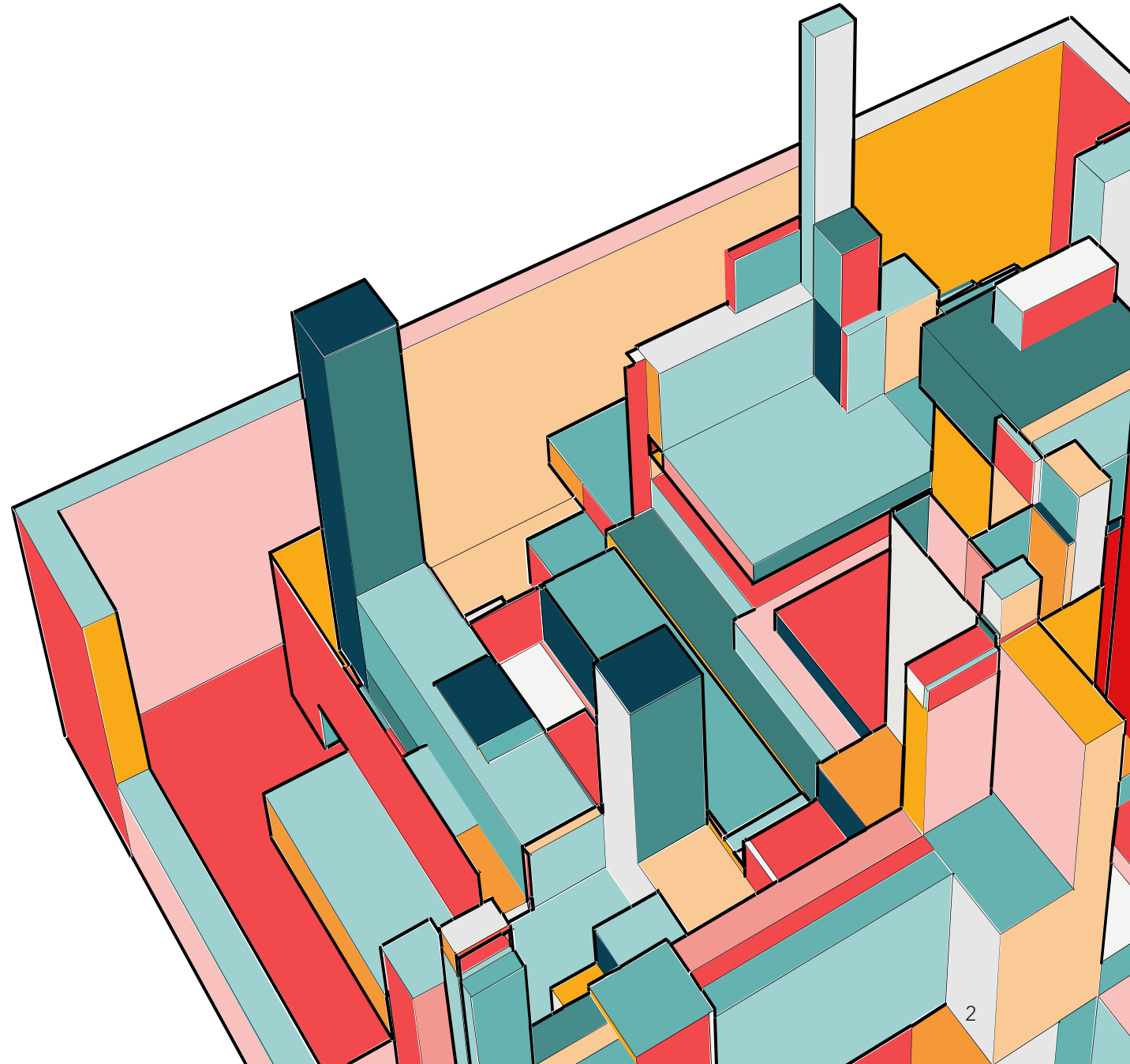
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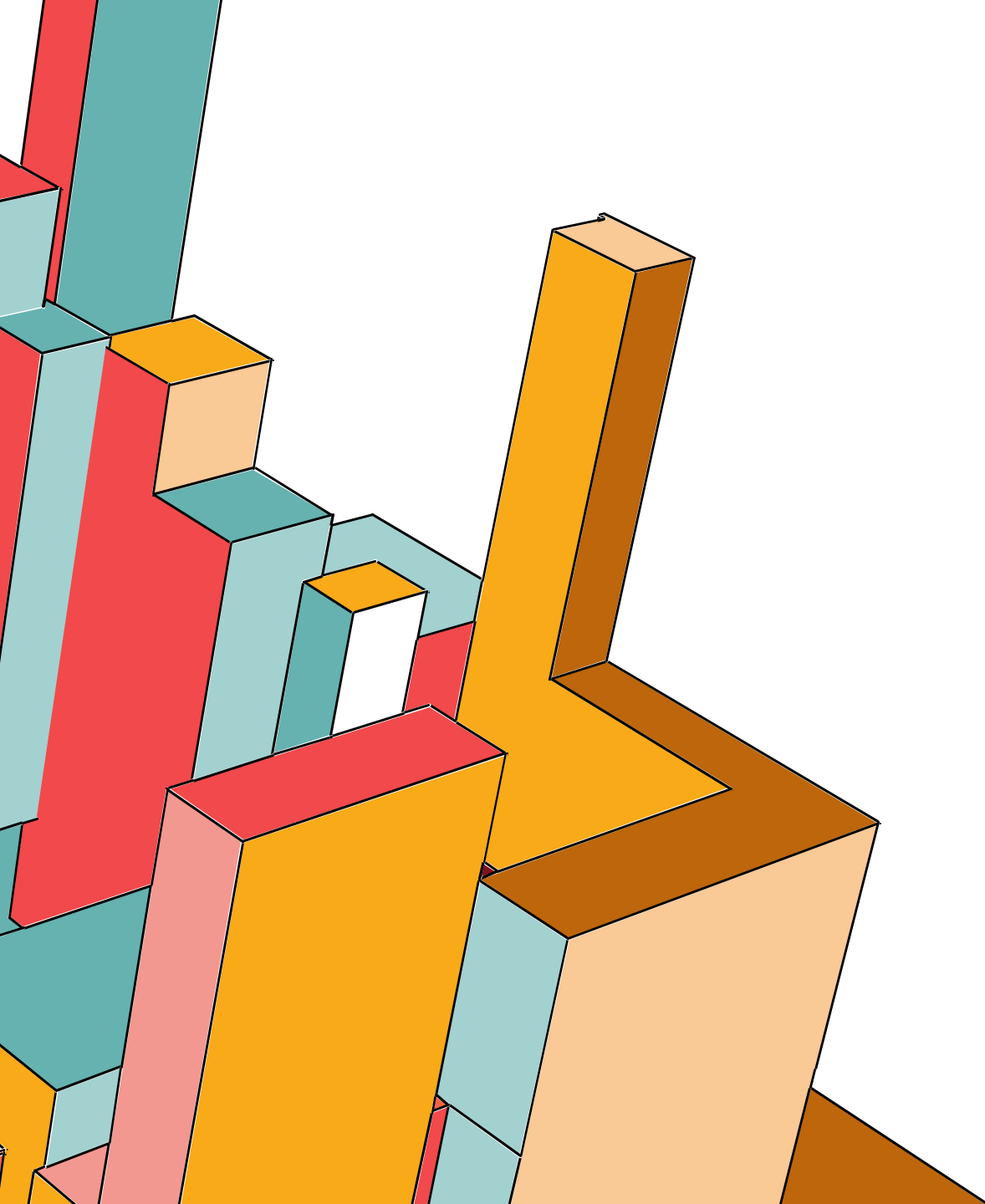


Economic
and Social
Research Council

PROJECT BACKGROUND

- Large scale retrofit project in a social housing estate
- Examining how the retrofit project has impacted people's exposure to energy vulnerability
- Assessing the opportunities/barriers to completely decarbonising social homes (and wider housing sector)





RETROFIT

Making existing houses more energy efficient through insulation and changing the heating systems in homes.

Similar to modernisation or refurbishment, but generally used to refer to energy efficiency changes in the home

Reduce fuel poverty; reduce energy demand in buildings and meet climate change goals

METHODS

Resident interviews

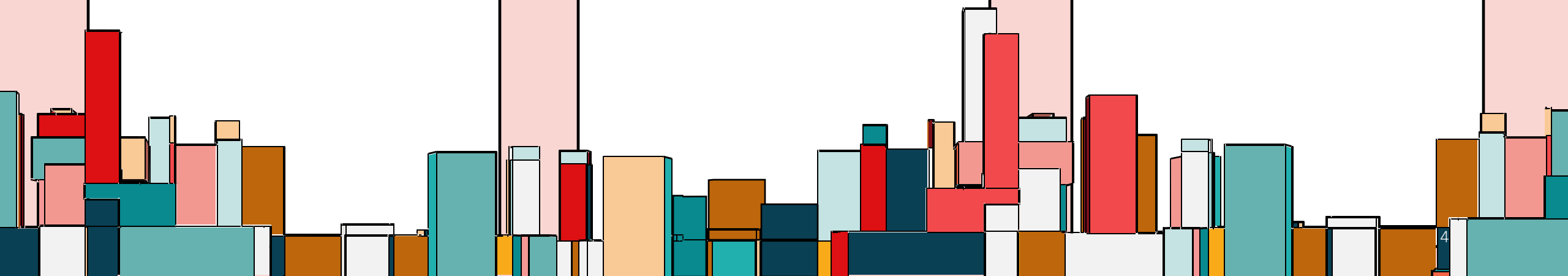
Interviewed residents in their homes regarding how they felt the retrofit project took place

Organisational ethnography

Case study housing provider was profiled to see how an organisation can undertake retrofits

Stakeholder interviews

Interviewed people who work in fields around decarbonising social housing to find out what sector wide issues exist



RETROFIT IMPACT ON RESIDENTS

Price

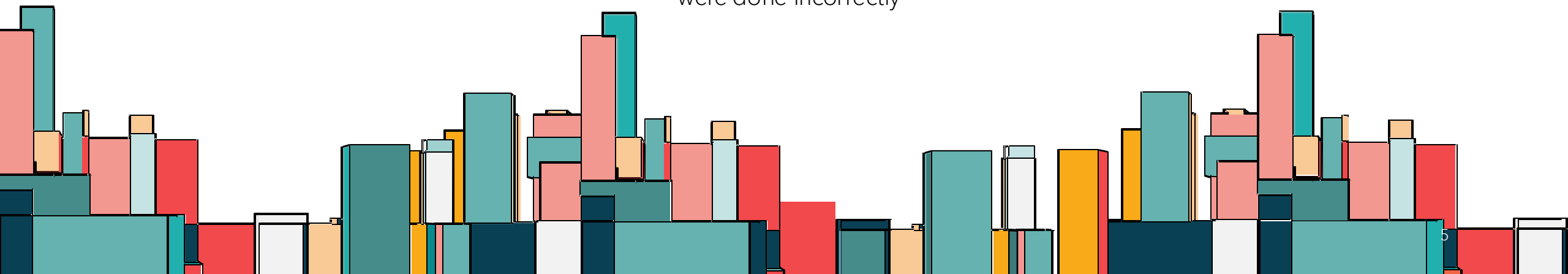
When retrofits are undertaken correctly and heat pumps are installed, energy costs tended to go down/stay the same during energy price increases

Technology

Most people with heat pumps felt comfortable using them, but some found them confusing
Some experimented to see what worked for them, but others kept the settings the installer added

Efficiency

People felt warmer in their homes even if the bills didn't go down - except people whose retrofits were done incorrectly



IMPACT RETROFITS ARE HAVING ON HOUSING PROVIDERS

High pressure

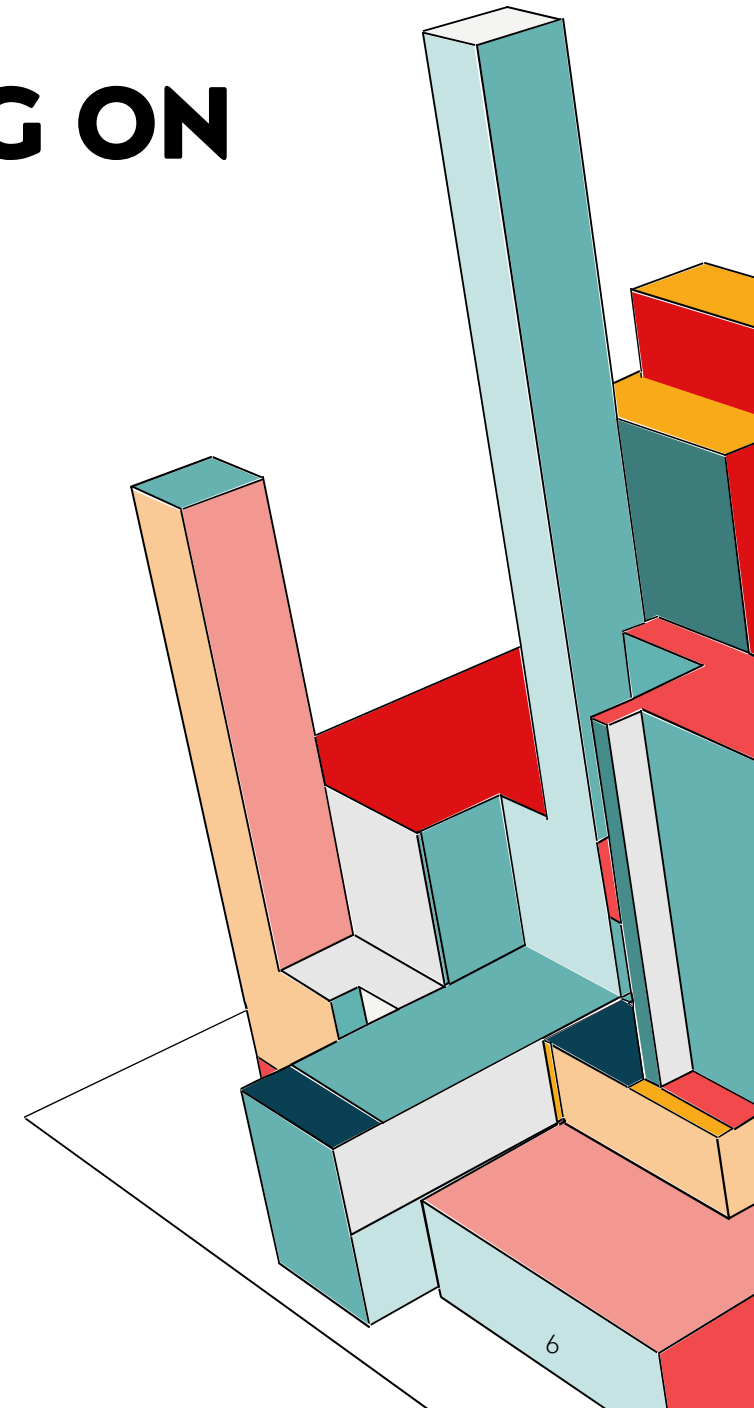
Social housing provision is a high-pressured sector due to underfunding

Experience

Housing provider staff found it challenging to undertake the retrofits

External staff

Skills gaps and labour shortages meant it was challenging to complete the retrofits



BARRIERS TO DECARBONISING SOCIAL HOUSING



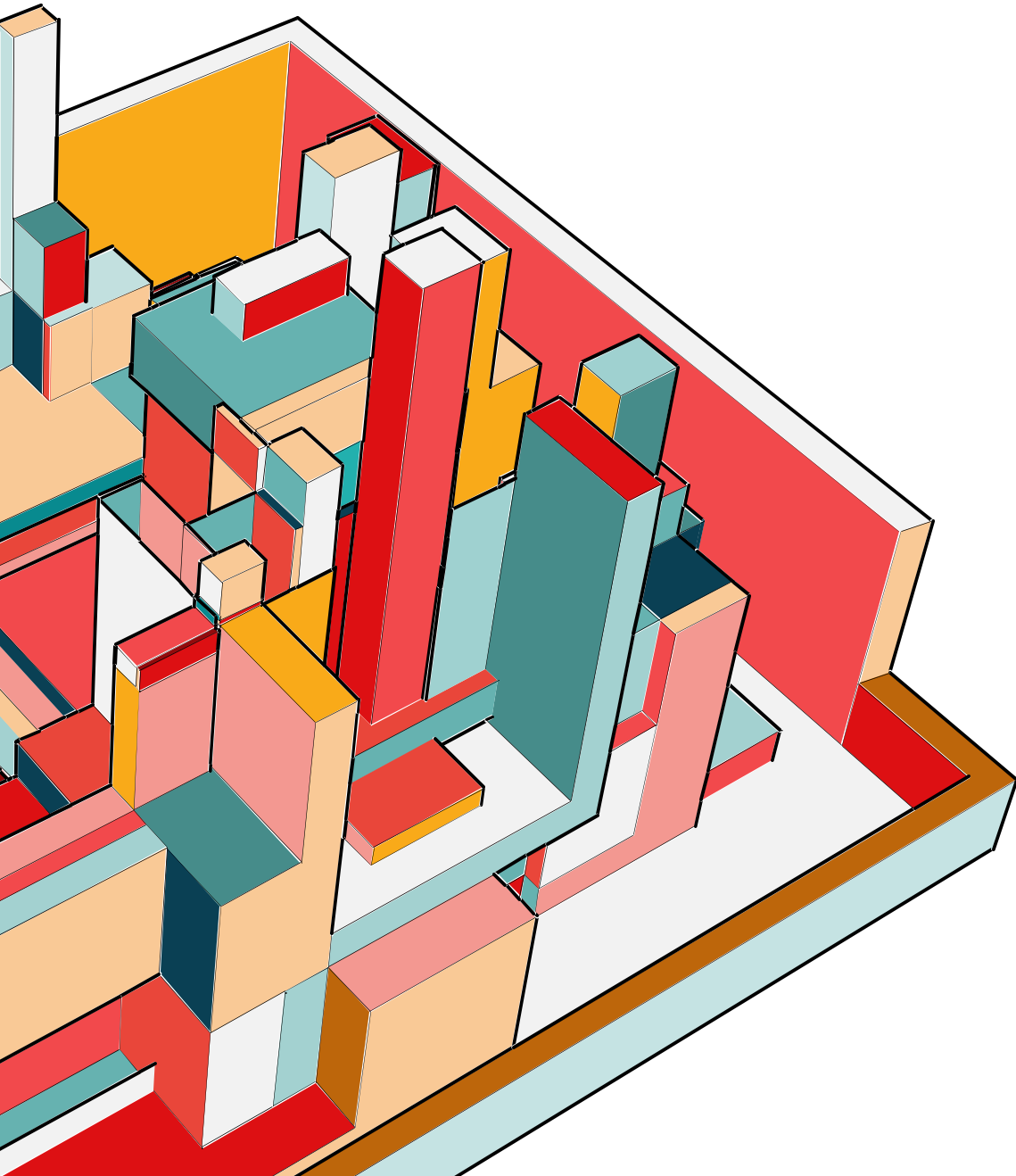
Cost of retrofits is high, and government support is relatively inconsistent



Mix of tenures within a social estate causes issues



Few available specialist staff who can do retrofit works



OVERALL LEARNINGS

- Energy vulnerability issues won't be dealt with by retrofit alone - electricity prices need to come down to improve access
- For retrofit to scale up and for housing to be made more efficient, the UK needs to invest in training and retaining qualified construction workers
- Decisive policymaking from central government and long-term funding/planning is needed to scale up retrofits

THANK YOU

Hannah Charles

Hannah.Charles@manchester.ac

[.uk](#)

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