



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

# Planning for the Future



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# Contents

Supporting communities to deliver more homes for local people	4
Helping first time buyers onto the housing ladder	8
Creating beautiful, sustainable places	8
Ensuring affordable, safe and secure housing for all	9
Laying the foundations for affordable, green and beautiful homes for everyone	10

1. A home is more than four walls and a roof – it is a symbol of security and a stake in our society. The expansion of home ownership over the twentieth century created a fairer Britain, with prosperity and opportunity spread more evenly among its people. It meant that wherever people grew up, they had the chance to save for and buy a safe place to live. A home where they could spend time with their friends, raise their families and be part of a community.
2. This government believes in supporting people who are working hard to own their home and we are making progress. Last year, we delivered over 241,000 homes, more new homes than at any point in the last 30 years; the proportion of young homeowners increased after declining for more than a decade; and since 2010, 1.5 million more homes have been delivered. Yet, for many who are still trapped paying high rents and struggling to save for a deposit, home ownership seems like a dream which is increasingly out of reach.
3. Our children should be able to put down roots in the places where they grew up, rather than being priced out and forced to move away. That's why this government is committed to rebuilding a home-owning Britain: a country where the young and future generations have the same opportunities as those who came before them. The simple truth is that this will not be possible unless we work together, across the country, to build more homes and take action to remove the barriers to getting onto the housing ladder.
4. We must ensure security for those who do not own their homes. We need to deliver a rental system that is fit for the modern day – one that protects tenants and supports landlords to provide the homes the nation needs. We also need to prevent people from falling into homelessness by building more affordable homes and ensure that those living in social housing are treated with the dignity and respect they deserve. It is also why we are working to end rough sleeping and supporting the most vulnerable in society.
5. To achieve this mission, the government will bring forward a series of major publications and legislate to deliver lasting change. This will start with an ambitious Planning White Paper in the Spring to modernise our planning system, ensuring it supports the delivery of homes that local people need and creates more beautiful and greener communities. We will introduce a Building Safety Bill to bring about the biggest change in building safety for a generation and a Renters' Reform Bill to provide greater stability for those who rent their homes. To ensure that residents in social homes are treated fairly we will publish a Social Housing White Paper. Taken together these will form the bedrock of a housing strategy to be published later in the year, setting out our longer-term plans to deliver the homes this country needs and create a fairer housing market.

## Supporting communities to deliver more homes for local people

6. Technology, the way we work and live and our understanding of the value of the environment have been transformed since the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947. The planning process has failed to keep pace. It is now complex, out-of-date and fails to deliver enough homes where they are needed. We will act to change this.

7. In the Spring, we will publish an ambitious Planning White Paper which offers creative solutions to establish a planning system that works for the next century. We will take a fresh and sensible look at planning rules to support local areas to plan, especially in the urban areas where they are most needed. We will also modernise the system, accelerate planning decisions and make it easier for communities to engage and play a role in decisions which affect them.
8. In advance of this, the government is now setting out a number of reforms that will encourage local authorities to take a more proactive approach to enabling home building across the country. This includes supporting them to consider innovative options, such as housing-led regeneration of their high streets, building upwards on already developed land and stations, densifying gently in existing residential areas and making the most of their under-utilised brownfield land. Alongside this, the government will introduce measures to encourage authorities to put ambitious plans in place now and incentivise them to play their part in delivering the homes this country needs.
9. As set out in the Budget yesterday, these planning changes will be underpinned by an additional £10.9 billion of funding. This will support communities to regenerate brownfield land, invest in new infrastructure and provide more homes for local people, with better access to jobs, schools and opportunities. Together, these changes will:
10. Promote more, well-planned development where homes are needed. The Government will back brownfield, encouraging greater building in urban areas. We will introduce new tools to support communities to densify and make best use of their underutilised brownfield land. These will include:
  - **Investing £400m to use brownfield land productively** – the Government will work with ambitious mayors and local leaders to regenerate local brownfield land and deliver the homes their communities need on land which is already developed.
  - **Launching a national brownfield map and a call for proposals for building above stations** – the government will launch a national brownfield sites map in April 2020 and will conduct a call for proposals to seek evidence on the barriers to, and opportunities in, building above stations in urban areas. It is vital that we make the most of existing transport hubs, encouraging modern, green communities where people live close to public transport.
  - **Reviewing the formula for calculating Local Housing Need** – we will introduce a new approach which encourages greater building within and near to urban areas and makes sure the country is planning for the delivery of 300,000 new homes a year.
  - **Introducing new rules to encourage building upwards, increasing density in line with local character and make the most of local infrastructure** – we will introduce new permitted development rights for building upwards on existing buildings by summer 2020, including to extend residential blocks by up to two storeys and to deliver new and bigger homes. We will also consult on the detail of a new permitted development right to allow vacant commercial buildings, industrial buildings and residential blocks to be demolished and replaced with well-designed new residential units which meet natural light standards.

- **Supporting community and self-build housing** – we will support those who want to build their own homes to find plots of land and provide help to parish councils and neighbourhood forums who wish to build a small number of homes to allow their communities to grow organically, providing homes for the next generation and those wishing to downsize.
- **Backing the Oxford-Cambridge Arc, including a new spatial framework and up to 4 new development corporations** – the Arc has the potential to be a world-leading green growth corridor, with high-productivity jobs and environmentally-friendly developments. The Spatial Framework will give certainty to businesses and developers about where new housing and employment will be delivered until 2050 and support planning for the right infrastructure to meet social, environmental and economic needs. The government is also going to examine and develop the case for up to four new Development Corporations in the Ox-Cam Arc, subject to necessary public consultation, in or around Bedford, St Neots/Sandy, Cambourne and Cambridge, which includes plans to explore the case for a New Town at Cambridge, to accelerate new housing and infrastructure development.

11. Ensure that communities make land sufficiently available to deliver homes in the right places. A plan for local housing need is only as good as the results it delivers. We will introduce new changes to ensure that land, sites and homes come forward on time and incentivise authorities to deliver more homes. This includes:

- **Setting a deadline for all local authorities to have an up-to-date local plan** – the government will require all local planning authorities to have up-to-date local plans by December 2023. The government will prepare to intervene where local authorities fail to meet the deadline in accordance with the existing statutory powers, considering appropriate action on a case by case basis.
- **Continuing to drive supply through the Housing Delivery Test** – we will continue with plans to raise the Housing Delivery test threshold to 75% in November 2020, incentivising local authorities to deliver on their local plans.
- **Reforming the New Homes Bonus (NHB) to reward delivery** – those authorities who strive to build more homes where they are most needed should be rewarded. The government will consult on reforming the NHB in Spring to incentivise greater delivery and ensure that where authorities are building more homes, they have access to greater funding to provide services for those who move into them.

12. Deliver on our commitment to infrastructure first. We will provide local authorities with greater funding for infrastructure, ensuring that those who strive to build enough homes for their communities and make the most of brownfield land and urban areas are able to access sufficient resources. This includes:

- **Investing another £1.1 billion in local infrastructure to unlock almost 70,000 new homes** – our infrastructure-first approach to building new homes means putting in the transport, utilities, digital connectivity and community services like schools and hospitals early, so that new developments do not put strain on local services. The Budget set out that over £1.1 billion will be provided to fund key infrastructure schemes from Surrey to Sunderland, including new roads, transport links, flood defences, leisure and healthcare facilities, digital and power networks and schools.

To date we have allocated over £4 billion through the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) to unlock up to 340,000 new homes.

- **A new £10 billion Single Housing Infrastructure Fund** – as set out in the Conservative manifesto, we will also build on this infrastructure investment with a new long-term, flexible fund which will give confidence to communities, developers and local authorities. Details of the funding will be announced alongside the Spending Review. Homes England will engage with local authorities and the wider market to build a pipeline of opportunities up and down the country.

13. Speed up the planning system. In the Spring, we will publish a bold and ambitious Planning White Paper. It will propose measures to accelerate planning. It will maximise the potential of new technologies to modernise the system. It will make it easier for communities to understand the planning system and play a role in decisions that affect them. Together, the measures it puts forward will set out a pathway to a new English planning system which is fit for the future. The White Paper will reflect international best practice, create more space for innovation and new approaches and ensure that planning reflects our aspirations to level up across the country. We want a planning system that supports beautiful design; and, meets the challenges of climate change as well as building the homes this country needs. As part of this the government will:

- **Reform planning fees to create a world-class planning service** – we will introduce a new planning fee structure to ensure that planning authorities are properly resourced to improve the speed and quality of their decisions. This will be linked to a new performance framework to ensure performance improvements across the planning service for all users.
- **Automatic rebates where planning applications are successful at appeal** – to promote proper consideration of applications by planning committees, where applications are refused applicants will be entitled to an automatic rebate of their planning application fee if they are successful at appeal.
- **Ensure land for housing is built out** – we will act to make it clearer who owns land by requiring greater transparency on land options. We will explore wider options to encourage planning permissions to be built out more quickly.
- **Expand the use of zoning tools to support development** – the government will outline further support for local areas to simplify the process of granting planning permission for residential and commercial development through zoning tools, such as Local Development Orders. The government will trial the use of templates for drafting LDOs and other zonal tools to create simpler models and financial incentives to support more effective use. The government has also launched a consultation on a new UK Freeport model, including on how zoning could be better used to support accompanying development.
- **Improve the effectiveness, take-up and role of Compulsory Purchase Orders to help facilitate land assembly and infrastructure delivery** – MHCLG will introduce further support and expertise to LAs to give greater confidence in using CPO powers and will consult on legislative reforms to speed up the decision-making process. The government intends to consult on: introducing statutory timescales for decisions; ending the automatic right to public inquiry; encouraging early agreements on compensations; and exploring the scope to remit more decisions back to LAs; as well as wider reform.

## Helping first time buyers onto the housing ladder

14. This government will reset our national homeownership offer, providing new routes to home ownership and ensuring that local people and key workers can have the opportunity to build a life in their own community. To support more people into home ownership, we will:

- **Cut the cost of new homes through the new First Homes scheme** – the biggest barrier to ownership is saving for a deposit, and we are consulting on a new First Homes scheme that will address this. The scheme will cut the cost of many new homes by a third, creating a new generation of homeowners. This will lower the cost of buying a home by an average of £70,000 for eligible first time buyers, improving the prospects for people who find the market unaffordable. The discount will be locked into the property in perpetuity – meaning that future generations will continue to benefit from the discount offered. All homeowners remember getting the keys to their first home, and this Government wants people to realise this moment as quickly as possible. Over the coming weeks and months, we will be looking to partner with developers and local authorities to be the front runners in delivering the first wave of first homes.
- **Explore encouraging a market for long-term fixed rate mortgages** – the Government will work with lenders to explore what can be done to encourage a market in long-term fixed rate mortgages. We will also look at what benefits these could bring to consumers, including whether they have the potential to keep deposits low for first time buyers looking to get on the housing ladder.
- **Make the route to ownership simpler and more affordable through a new national Shared Ownership model** – we want to have an ownership offer available to people on different incomes so it's important to us that people on lower incomes who want to own their own home, but cannot see a route to achieving that goal, are helped onto the housing ladder. Our new national model for shared ownership will be more consumer friendly, fairer and more accessible.

## Creating beautiful, sustainable places

15. Giving people a stake in society also means ensuring that we are delivering the sorts of homes where people want to raise their children, to grow old together and can be good neighbours. Collectively, we need to remember how to build beautiful homes and create beautiful places. The government will take action to encourage more beautiful design and to ensure local authorities have the support they need to demand higher standards. We will:

- **Revise the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to embed the principles of good design and placemaking** – this will make clear that high-quality buildings and places must be considered throughout the planning process. The framework will expand on the fundamental principles of good design to define what is expected of local authorities and developers to support the creation of beautiful places.
- **Respond to the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission's report** – we will look to take forward many of the Commission's recommendations, which include



calling for urban tree planting and giving communities a greater opportunity to influence design standards in their area. This will put tree lined streets at the centre of future plans, so that they become the norm not the exception.

- **Give local authorities the ability to ensure that new homes conform to local residents' ideas of beauty through the planning system** – using the National Model Design Code we will set out clear parameters for promoting the design and style of homes and neighbourhoods local people want to see. We will ask local places to produce their own design guides and codes, informed by listening to local people and considering local context. This will embed standards in planning policy and give local communities the confidence to demand that they are met.

16. We will also work tirelessly as part of this Government's wider commitment to net zero emissions by 2050, delivering a green housing revolution of attractive and environmentally friendly homes. To achieve this, we will:

- **Review our policy for building in areas at flood risk** – alongside our £5.2 billion investment in additional flood defences announced yesterday, we will seek to ensure that communities across the country know that future development will be safe from floods. We will assess whether current protections in the NPPF are enough and consider options for further reform, which will inform our wider ambitions for a new planning system.
- **Introduce a Future Homes Standard (FHS)** – from 2025, the FHS will require up to 80% lower carbon emissions for all new homes. This will help bring an environmental revolution to home building – tackling climate change while keeping household bills low. This will ensure everyone, including developers, is doing their bit to protect the environment.
- **Establish a Net Zero development in Toton in the East Midlands** – we will explore options for regeneration around Toton, including potential delivery vehicles such as Development Corporations.

## Ensuring affordable, safe and secure housing for all

17. We are committed to improving access to safe and high-quality housing, improving affordability and putting in place measures so that all homes are built properly with the right materials and that residents, whether they are home owners or renters, have access to a simple and consumer-friendly process for making complaints. To achieve this, we are:

- **Renewing our commitment to affordable housing** – in the Budget we announced a £12 billion investment in Affordable Homes – the biggest cash investment in affordable housing for a decade. This is expected to bring in around a further £38 billion public and private investment. This new 5-year investment will deliver more affordable housing, help more people to own their own home, and build more social rent homes, helping those most at risk of homelessness in areas of the country where affordability is most acute.
- **Publishing the Social Housing White Paper** – this will bring forward reforms to ensure that residents in social homes are treated with dignity and respect. These

measures will empower tenants, provide better redress and regulation and improve the quality of social housing. This will include a simple and effective end-to-end process when tenants have complaints.

- **Making a further £1 billion available to support remediation for building safety** – Prior to the new regulatory regime, the government will be investing an additional £1 billion in 20/21 to support the remediation of unsafe non-ACM cladding in private and social residential buildings above 18 metres. This will be over and above the £600 million ACM remediation fund. This intervention is based on the advice of experts such as Dame Judith Hackitt, and we are clear that this will be the limit to the Government's funding support for remediation. In the private sector this investment will be for the benefit of leaseholders and in the social sector it will focus on those landlords who are unable to pay, ensuring the necessary works take place and cost is not a barrier to remediation. We expect building owners who have already committed to fund remedial works without passing on the costs to leaseholders to stick to these commitments.
- **Protecting new homeowners through the New Homes Ombudsman** – we must raise the game of house builders across the sector and stop rogue developers from getting away with shoddy building work. The New Homes Ombudsman will ensure that homebuyers can access help when they need it and get them the compensation they deserve.
- **Ensuring renters are treated fairly through the Renters' Reform Bill** – we will improve security for tenants by abolishing the use of 'no fault evictions' so that tenants can put down roots in their communities and plan for their long-term future. We will introduce a new 'lifetime tenancy deposit' and support good landlords to continue to provide the homes the country needs.
- **Commencing a review and pledging over £640 million to end rough sleeping** – rough sleeping is a moral shame which we must address head on. The government is committed to ending rough sleeping in this Parliament. We are now bringing the total funding for 'move on' accommodation to £381 million which will enable refurbishment, acquisition and leasing of properties specifically for rough sleepers, together with vital support that will enable them to sustain those tenancies where otherwise they may be at risk of falling out of housing. We are also pledging an additional £262 million for rough sleeper substance misuse services; because we believe that the root causes of rough sleeping are as much substance misuse, alcohol dependency and mental health, as they are housing. And the urgent review, led by Dame Louise Casey, will advise on what additional action is required to end rough sleeping within this Parliament.

## Laying the foundations for affordable, green and beautiful homes for everyone

18. Over the spring and summer, the government will work with local authorities, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise (SME) housebuilders, local groups, the construction industry and others to shape a long-term programme of reform for the country's planning system and housing market.

19. This will be a comprehensive review of what does and does not work currently and will inform our new Planning White Paper and our housing strategy, to be published alongside the Spending Review. In these the government will set out a detailed vision of what the country's housing and land markets should be like come 2030, as well as plans for how we will get there.
20. The work will include, but not be limited to considering:
- how to restore the dream of home ownership to more people;
  - how to modernise the sector and its workforce;
  - how to partner with places to build beautiful and go green;
  - how to ensure affordable, quality, safe housing for all; and
  - how to align housing with wider infrastructure to boost productivity and growth.
21. In the next year, the government will bring forward major publications and legislation, including:
- Setting out a detailed housing strategy, including our plans to create a housing market that works for people across the country;
  - The Planning White Paper to deliver common sense planning reforms to get Britain building, and our response to the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission report and recommendations;
  - The Building Safety Bill to ensure we have one of the safest building safety regimes in the world;
  - The Renters' Reform Bill to provide stability to those who rent; and
  - The Social Housing White Paper to ensure that residents in social homes are treated with the dignity and respect we all expect.
22. We will pursue these challenges by looking at the needs of local places, different models of delivery and funding, and how to balance measures to boost supply with measures to improve existing stock. To underpin this work, we will continue to transform Homes England, into a more muscular agency that is better able to drive up delivery. Critically, the work will also answer the question of how to ensure the housing sector meets the country's ambitious targets on decarbonisation.
23. We will give people the chance to own their own home. We will seek to build more homes, and we will do so as members of a responsible society – proud of the places and the environment we inherited, eager to care for and enhance it and determined to give the next generation the capital and the stake in our country a successful economy and democracy demands. We will ensure affordable, safe, quality housing for all as part of our mission to level up, unite and unleash the potential of this country, support towns and high streets, and ensure communities have a real sense of place.