

20 town and city centres in England transformed through ambitious regeneration projects

- 20 places in England to be transformed through an ambitious regeneration programme with Wolverhampton and Sheffield the first areas selected
- Homes England to turbocharge regeneration and deliver new housing as part of Levelling Up White Paper
- £120 million for Mayoral Combined Authorities will deliver 7,800 homes in the North and Midlands on disused brownfield land

Towns and cities across the country will be transformed thanks to a radical new regeneration programme that will breathe fresh life into disadvantaged communities.

Under plans set out in the Levelling Up White Paper, due to be published next week, derelict sites in towns and city centres will be transformed creating new homes, jobs and beautiful new communities across England.

Wolverhampton and Sheffield will be the first of 20 places that will be supported by government to deliver ambitious regeneration projects that will boost local communities and create urban areas people will be proud to live and work in.

In Wolverhampton, local leaders are being given the tools that will catalyse the revival of the city and the wider Wolverhampton to Walsall corridor, building on the government's £20 million Levelling Up Fund investment and the new DLUHC headquarters in the city centre.

In Sheffield, new regeneration opportunities will capitalise on the government's £37 million Levelling Up Fund and the upcoming Integrated Rail Plan electrification and upgrades which will cut journey times between Sheffield and London to just 87 minutes.

The 20 areas will be prioritised within the new £1.5 billion Brownfield Fund. In addition, to kickstart regeneration efforts in these regions, and as part of a wider package of brownfield funding worth £120 million, £28 million will be allocated to the West Midlands Combined Authority and £13 million for the South Yorkshire Combined Authority, to fund the projects most needed to support local levelling up ambitions.

The regeneration programme will be spearheaded by the government's housing delivery agency Homes England, which will be refocused and tasked to support the Levelling Up agenda. It will use its extensive powers and expertise to help local leaders deliver the regeneration of large areas of towns and cities, as they adapt to economic trends like the rise of online shopping.

The UK government will also welcome working in continued partnership with the

devolved administrations to explore how to best support places across the UK to reach their full potential.

Homes England will partner with local leaders, the private sector and community groups to turbocharge regeneration and deliver new housing, health and education and leisure facilities, roads and railways.

Local authorities will be helped to ensure that the record government investment in infrastructure worth over £96 billion is used to its full potential. This includes £12 billion in affordable housing, the £4.8 billion Levelling Up Fund and a £2.6 billion Shared Prosperity Fund as well as access to DLHUC's £1.5 billion Brownfield and Land Fund.

The 20 areas will benefit from developments combining housing, leisure, and business in sustainable, walkable, beautiful new neighbourhoods.

Levelling Up Secretary Rt Hon Michael Gove MP said:

We are on a mission to regenerate the nation, transforming derelict areas in our towns and cities into thriving places people are proud to live and work in.

We are refocusing Homes England and empowering local leaders to support levelling up, delivering Kings Cross style transformational regeneration projects across the country – starting in Wolverhampton and Sheffield.

This huge investment in infrastructure and regeneration will spread opportunity more evenly and help to reverse the geographical inequalities which still exist in the UK.

Homes England chair Peter Freeman CBE said:

A sense of a place and indeed a pride of place are crucial to thriving communities. Our expanded mandate will allow us to further support ambitious local leaders in delivering placemaking and regeneration alongside a wide range of public and private sector partners.

We have many years of experience undertaking a broad range of brownfield land and regeneration projects which combined with full use of our statutory powers and funding means we're well positioned to transform places and communities.

Andy Street, the Mayor of the West Midlands, said:

Here in the West Midlands we have been the real pioneers of a brownfield-first approach to housing, using government cash to remediate derelict old industrial sites and turn them into thriving

new communities – all whilst protecting irreplaceable greenbelt land.

So I am absolutely delighted that the government are continuing to support our work, putting further funding on the table so we can build on the progress we have already made. I am particularly pleased to see the new funding for Wolverhampton, which is really at the heart of the brownfield revolution taking place in the West Midlands.

Dan Jarvis, the Mayor of South Yorkshire, said:

I warmly welcome this support for regeneration in Sheffield and South Yorkshire. It's a much needed recognition of the potential of our region.

Giving Homes England a wider focus on regeneration is also a very positive move, as is their commitment to support local and regional leadership. We've always argued for a more joined up approach, and lasting progress can only be driven from our communities. The key challenge will be ensuring that this comes with the long-term, transformative investment we need, and that it connects not just housing and buildings but skills, public services and environment.

We're looking forward to working with the government to realise the ambition we all share to create a better future for Sheffield and South Yorkshire.

The government will also launch a £1.5 billion Levelling Up Home Building Fund next week, providing loans to small and medium sized builders and developers to deliver 42,000 homes with the vast majority going outside London and the South East – helping to rebalance the economy and spread prosperity and opportunity more equally.

A total of £120 million of funding will also be given to 7 Mayoral Combined Authorities to transform derelict brownfield sites into vibrant places where people want to live and work. Seven MCAs – West Midlands, Greater Manchester, West Yorkshire, Liverpool, South Yorkshire, North of Tyne, and Tees Valley stand to gain 7,800 homes.

A further £30 million is being awarded to 3 Mayoral Combined Authorities in Greater Manchester, Tees Valley and West Midlands on disused brownfield land. Meanwhile, £8 million from the Brownfield Land Release Fund (BLRF) is being allocated to 13 councils which will release land for a further 898 homes. The BLRF has so far awarded £69 million to support councils to release their brownfield land for 6,856 homes by March 2024.

The government has already made significant investment into Levelling Up and regenerating much loved towns and cities. Through programmes like the £900 million Getting Building Fund, the £400 million Brownfield Housing Fund, the

£150 million UK-wide Community Ownership Fund, and the £3.6 billion Towns Fund – the government has supported places to grow their local economies.

The £4.8 billion Levelling Up Fund is investing in Infrastructure that improves everyday life across the UK, including Sheffield, Aberdeen, Aberystwyth, and County Antrim. Future rounds of the Levelling Up Fund and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund will build on this investment.