

Flagship housing scheme hits the market in the north east

- First Homes come onto the market in Newton Aycliffe, County Durham to support local people who struggle to afford market prices in their area
- Housing Secretary Robert Jenrick visits the site and meets key workers and families set to benefit from the scheme
- Scheme is part of the government's pledge to build 300,000 new homes a year as we Build Back Better and level up opportunity across the UK

Families and key workers are set to benefit from First Homes, the new flagship government housing scheme being made available today (26 August 2021) in Newton Aycliffe, Durham.

First Homes will support local people who are struggling to afford market prices in their area but want to stay in the communities where they live and work.

The Housing Secretary today visited the development in Newton Aycliffe which becomes the third early delivery project of the scheme following launches in Bolsover, Derbyshire and Cannock, Staffordshire.

The scheme offers homes at a discount of at least 30% compared to the market price.

That same percentage will then be passed on with the sale of the property to future first-time buyers, meaning homes will always be sold below market value – benefitting local families and key workers like NHS staff and forces veterans, for generations to come.

Housing Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

Enabling more people to own their home is central to the mission of this government, and First Homes will offer a realistic and affordable route into home ownership for even more people.

It's fantastic to be in Newton Aycliffe to see the new First Homes become available to local people here in the North-East. By offering the chance to buy a home at a 30% discount, we are giving local people, families and key workers like NHS staff and forces veterans, a route into home ownership where they already live.

Further sites are set to launch across the country in the coming months. A further 1,500 will join the market through a government-funded pilot launched this year, with up to 60,000 First Homes projected to be built across England and Wales by 2029-30.

Delivery of the scheme is part of the government's wider pledge to build

300,000 new affordable and attractive homes a year and help put home ownership within reach for people across the country. This is part of the government's promise to Build Back Better and level up opportunity across the UK.

Major high-street lenders Lloyds and Nationwide, along with local building societies and community lenders, announced that they are offering high loan-to-value mortgages against First Homes to support the roll-out of the scheme. This follows on from the 95% mortgage guarantee scheme announced in the spring which helps first-time buyers secure a mortgage with just a 5% deposit.

It was also announced earlier in month that home builders [can bid for a share of £150m to support roll-out of the new First Homes scheme](#) helping local first-time buyers onto the housing ladder and supporting jobs across the country.

First-time buyers can find the right home ownership scheme for them, including Help to Buy: Equity Loans, via the [Own Your Home website](#) which provides a single gateway for all routes on to the housing ladder.

The website is an easy and accessible way for first-time buyers to start their home ownership journey and find the right government scheme for them.

Chief Executive of Keepmoat Homes Tim Beale said:

We are delighted to be working with our partners in government, Homes England and Durham County Council, to officially launch the First Homes scheme at our Elder Garden development.

Keepmoat Homes is one of the UK's leading home-builders for first-time buyers so it is great to be part of this initiative which will help even more people realise their dream of owning their own home. This is a true example of how working in partnership helps to support local people and communities.

Durham County Council's Cabinet Member for Resources, Investment and Assets, Councillor James Rowlandson said:

We are very pleased to have been involved in the First Homes pilot. This is a fantastic opportunity for first-time buyers and key workers across County Durham who aspire to own their own home.

Ensuring that our residents have access to affordable housing is a key priority for us. This pilot puts people and communities first, allowing residents to buy their dream home in their local area. Furthermore, as this discount will always be passed on, it is helping to meet the needs of future buyers in addition to those currently looking to get on the property ladder.

The Elder Gardens development is on the edge of Newton Aycliffe and will deliver 12 new First Homes on the site.

Each individual local authority can set a local connection test to determine who should be prioritised for the scheme based on the needs of their communities.