

Press release: Funding boost for local authorities to transform local communities

The package comes as part of a new cross-government partnership to make smarter use of government-owned property.

DCLG's £45 million 'Land Release Fund', launched in partnership with the Cabinet Office and Local Government Association's One Public Estate programme, will ensure local councils release some of their unused or surplus land for housing. This will help to meet the ambition to unlock enough council-owned land for at least 160,000 homes by 2020.

Councils can now bid for funding for land remediation and small-scale infrastructure, which will help bring sites forward for housing that would not have otherwise been developed.

Alongside this, One Public Estate is making £9 million funding available to support more councils to deliver ambitious property-focused programmes.

The programme channels funding and support through councils to deliver ambitious property-based projects. By 2020, councils on the programme are expected to deliver £615 million in capital receipts, £158 million running costs savings, create 44,000 new jobs and release land for 25,000 new homes.

This partnership between DCLG and One Public Estate will give local authorities greater access to support from across government and help them to release more land, more efficiently.

Minister for Government Resilience and Efficiency, Caroline Nokes, said:

One Public Estate is enabling local authorities to make better use of their land and property and deliver tangible benefits to their communities. I am delighted that this new funding round will enable even more councils to deliver the homes, jobs and services that local people need.

Housing and Planning Minister, Alok Sharma, said:

To build the homes this country needs, we need to increase the supply of land available to build more homes, more quickly.

As a major landowner, local authorities have a crucial role to play in this task.

Through this innovative cross-government partnership, we will be

able to work with councils much more effectively, helping them to meet local housing needs and transform local areas.

LGA Chairman, Lord Porter, said:

Through One Public Estate councils have shown that they are perfectly positioned to act as leaders of place and deliver effective cross public sector asset management. It is great to see in practice how the programme is delivering more integrated services, local economic growth, and supporting more sustainable local government.

Councils are committed to building the new homes their communities need and I'm pleased to see the announcement of the Local Authority Land Release Fund as part of this next funding round. It's great to see two government programmes aligning to offer a more coherent programme to our local communities.

OPE already works with over 70% of councils in England to transform local communities and services through large scale economic growth, delivering new jobs and new homes.

Such partnerships also deliver substantial efficiency savings for the taxpayer, joining up public services under one roof and making it easier for communities to access them.

Through this partnership between DCLG, Cabinet Office and the LGA, and the variety of different funds available, local authorities will be able to combat multiple barriers to land development and deliver many more homes at a faster pace.