

# Press release: Government investment to unlock more homes across England

- a further 44 areas shortlisted for funding for major infrastructure projects worth £4.1 billion and with the potential to deliver over 400,000 homes
- almost £300 million funding in total for housing projects in Greater Manchester, the West of England and Oxfordshire

Almost £300 million government investment in Greater Manchester, the West of England and Oxfordshire is set to help deliver thousands of much-needed new homes for local communities, Housing Secretary Sajid Javid announced today (21 March 2018).

Greater Manchester is set to receive £68 million funding to support the Mayor's ambitious target of delivering 227,200 homes by 2035 and boost economic growth across the Northern Powerhouse.

Government support for the West of England will help to nearly double the number of new homes being delivered historically, increasing from around 4,000 homes to 7,500 homes a year. This will deliver much-needed homes and support the local economy.

Ministers have also approved a housing deal with Oxfordshire worth £215 million that will help deliver a further 100,000 new homes for local people. This follows a similar deal agreed with the West Midlands last week to support the Mayor's ambitious plan to deliver 215,000 homes across the region.

This latest announcement comes as the government has also announced that [Housing Infrastructure Fund bids](#), from a further 44 areas for projects to help unlock more homes across country, have been shortlisted to the next stage of the competitive process.

A potential £4.1 billion funding will be available for vital infrastructure like roads, bridges, new schools and medical centres, which are needed for new communities.

Housing Secretary Sajid Javid said:

This government is determined to build the homes this country needs. That's why we're working with ambitious areas across England and backing them with investment and support.

This new housing investment in Greater Manchester, the West of England and Oxfordshire will help build much-needed homes, giving more people the opportunity to get on the property ladder.

We're also investing in local infrastructure like schools, roads and hospitals, so that we can help unlock even more new homes in the areas where they're needed most and build a Britain fit for the future.

## Greater Manchester housing package

This funding will support a focus on developing brownfield land for housing and getting more homes built on small sites.

The [government package](#) includes:

- £50 million for a Land Fund to help councils in the region to prepare brownfield land for housing development
- taking 4 Housing Infrastructure Fund projects through to the next stage of assessment for funding
- up to £8 million for capacity funding to boost support for housing delivery across the region
- £10.25 million funding to help regenerate the Collyhurst Estate in north Manchester
- new flexibilities on the existing £300 million Housing Investment Fund to allow more homes to be delivered through loans to developers

Mayor of Greater Manchester Combined Authority Andy Burnham said:

I welcome this Housing Deal from government and the £50 million Greater Manchester's Leaders have secured that will allow us to build on more of Greater Manchester's brownfield sites.

It brings us closer to our ambitions and is a clear statement of intent as we move towards publishing the rewritten Greater Manchester Spatial Framework.

As we look to build the homes Greater Manchester needs, we must do everything we can to make sure as much brownfield land as possible is made available for development. This is the best way to ensure we minimise the impact on our green spaces.

But this isn't just about numbers of homes and land for development. I've been clear that I want to see more truly affordable homes built and more homes available for social rent across Greater Manchester.

I also want the rewritten Greater Manchester Spatial Framework to specify a date by which all new homes built across Greater Manchester should be net zero carbon. This is all part of my ambition.

## West of England housing package

The West of England – covering Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset – is a high housing demand area. Across the region, the average house prices are more than 8 times average incomes, with Bath more than 10 times the average income.

The government's [interim package](#) supports the Mayor's with ambitious plans to deliver more homes and tackle affordability challenges. It includes:

- £3 million of funding for specialist support to help the region deliver large housing development
- taking 2 Housing Infrastructure Fund projects through to the next stage of assessment for funding
- exploring the potential for a deal with housing associations in the region to deliver more affordable homes

West of England Mayor, Tim Bowles said:

We have worked closely with government to secure this announcement, which will see millions of pounds invested in delivering new homes in the West of England. We know that we need more homes, to buy and rent – homes where they are needed at prices people can afford.

This deal will support us to work with our constituent councils, and North Somerset council, to build homes and communities that are well-connected.

## Oxfordshire housing deal

The first completed government [housing deal](#) has been confirmed with Oxfordshire's 6 local authorities – Cherwell, Oxford City, South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse, West Oxfordshire, Oxfordshire County Council – and the Local Enterprise Partnership, OxLEP.

The deal, which is worth £215 million, will:

- deliver 100,000 homes by 2031 – which is significantly above the Local Housing Need figure in the draft National Planning Policy Framework – playing a key role in the emerging Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford corridor where the government recognises the need to build up to 1 million new homes in the area by 2050 to maximise its economic potential
- provide £150 million of the funding to build much needed bridges, roundabouts and roads
- deliver more than 1300 affordable homes by dedicating over a quarter of the new funding, £60 million, to support these new homes

Oxfordshire is also home to 3 garden towns and villages – at Bicester, Didcot and Oxfordshire Cotswold – where government has invested almost £4 million to deliver an additional 30,000 homes.

Cllr Bob Price, Chair of the Oxfordshire Growth Board said:

I'm pleased that so many councillors of all parties and from all parts of the county have backed the deal. It represents a comprehensive and integrated approach to addressing Oxfordshire's severe housing shortage and infrastructure challenges.

It demonstrates the government's commitment to working with Oxfordshire and recognises the critical role the county will play in driving forward the UK economy post-Brexit, attracting global investment.

The government has said the deal represents a 'downpayment' on a pipeline of infrastructure investment for Oxfordshire – and we in the county will work with them to ensure that happens.

## **Housing Infrastructure Fund**

With the government committed to building 300,000 homes a year by the mid-2020s, the £5 billion [Housing Infrastructure Fund](#) is part of a comprehensive programme to fix the broken housing market.

Last month, ministers confirmed 133 council-led infrastructure projects that received a total of £866 million funding to support local work that will make housing developments viable and get much-needed homes built quicker.

The latest bids from 44 areas across England are for high-impact infrastructure like key roads, rail links and schools with the potential to deliver over 400,000 homes.

They will now move to the co-development stage, where government officials will work with these areas to further develop their bid and assess the projects. However, not all projects will receive funding after this stage or funding amounts could change to the amount originally bid for.

Without this financial support these projects would struggle to go ahead or take years for work to begin, delaying the homes these communities need.

Together with the government's Industrial Strategy, this funding will provide high-quality infrastructure to support economic growth.

Successful bids will be announced from autumn 2018 onwards and local authorities would then begin building the necessary infrastructure to help speed up new homes being built.

## **Further details**

See [further details on the housing packages](#).

The [Housing Infrastructure Fund](#) is a government capital grant programme to

help unlock new homes in areas with the greatest housing demand. Funding is awarded to local authorities on a highly competitive basis.

The £5 billion fund is divided into 2 streams:

- a Marginal Viability Fund – available to all single and lower tier local authorities in England – to provide a piece of infrastructure funding to get additional sites allocated or existing sites unblocked quickly. Bids have a soft cap of £10 million
- a Forward Fund – available to the uppermost tier of local authorities in England – for a small number of strategic and high-impact infrastructure projects. Bids have a soft cap of £250 million

The government will be progressing Forward Funding projects to go through to co-development in the coming weeks, with final funding announced from autumn 2018 onwards. Find more information on the [areas being taken forward to co-development](#).

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