

Press release: Nearly £10 million cash boost to bring hundreds of homes to Festival Gardens

- £10 million for iconic Liverpool site at heart of the city
- Funding comes from Government's £450 million Local Authority Accelerated Construction (LAAC) programme
- Homes England to share office space with combined authority to help realise housing ambitions

Up to 1500 family homes will be built at the Festival Gardens in Liverpool thanks to a multi-million pound funding boost from Homes England, the agency announced today (February 28).

The Government's housing accelerator – which brings experts and funding to areas to tackle the housing crisis – will give a grant of £9.9 million to Liverpool City Council.

The cash injection– which comes from Government's £450 million Local Authority Accelerated Construction (LAAC) programme – will allow essential remediation work to take place on the site, paving the way for residential development to begin.

The news comes as Homes England officially opened new offices in the same building as Liverpool City Region Combined Authority at Mann Island, Pier Head – a move designed to help the two organisations collaborate more effectively to get homes built.

Sir Edward Lister, Chairman of Homes England, said:

“We are determined to use all the resources available to us to make homes happen across England – so I'm thrilled our funding means work can move forward rapidly at this historic site, providing homes for hundreds of families.

“And with Homes England and combined authority experts now working side by side, we expect to further accelerate the construction of new houses across the region.”

Minister of State for Housing, Kit Malthouse MP, said:

“Delivering the homes Liverpool needs is a crucial element of our plan to build a successful and vibrant Northern Powerhouse.

“I was born and brought up in Liverpool and went to the original garden festival as a child, so I know how much this investment will regenerate a key area of this great city, transforming Festival Gardens site with desperately needed family homes.”

The council has long held ambitious plans for the site but, to date, a lack of funding has meant crucial remediation works have been unable to take place. Now, activity is expected to begin on-site in the spring, with the first homes being available by 2022.

In addition to owner-occupied houses, the site will also include privately rented apartments.

Joe Anderson, Mayor of Liverpool, said:

“We welcome this essential financial injection from Homes England. Festival Gardens is a much-loved waterfront location and people have very fond memories of spending time there. We are fully aware of the potential the Festival Gardens has and its transformation will be a game-changer for this city’s economy in terms of new homes, construction jobs and growth.

“Thanks to this funding, the council can start essential remediation works on site and move forward with the vision of creating a significant number of new family homes in South Liverpool at an iconic destination.

“Alongside this, we are testing feasibility for a leisure element on site – Festival Gardens will not only deliver a much sought-after housing development, but also a first class visitor and cultural destination.”

Steve Rotheram, Metro Mayor of the Liverpool City Region, said:

“I welcome today’s announcements from Homes England which demonstrate a real and ongoing commitment to the Liverpool City Region.

“I am particularly pleased to welcome the co-location of Homes England staff with the Combined Authority, which is the first arrangement of its kind in the country. Being physically based together in the same building will facilitate even closer joint working and present opportunities for further projects across the whole city region.”

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The Homes England press office can be contacted on media@homesengland.gov.uk or 0207 874 8262.