

# [Press release: New fund launched to increase community-led affordable housing](#)

Community-led housing groups can significantly increase the delivery of affordable homes and create a lasting legacy, through a new Community Housing Fund launched by the Housing, Communities and Local Government Secretary of State James Brokenshire on 2 July 2018.

The £163 million fund is available to community-led groups across England to support delivery of new affordable homes up to 31st March 2020.

Specifically, it will expand the housing supply through community led sectors, provide housing that's affordable for local incomes, and aims to deliver a lasting legacy for the community housing sector through building an effective body of expertise within the housebuilding industry.

Funding outside London is being allocated by Homes England across two phases. A separate programme for London will be delivered by the Greater London Authority. This is in addition to £60 million of funding that has already been allocated directly by Government to 148 councils in December 2016.

Homes England Chief Executive Nick Walkley said:

“Community-led housing is about local people playing a leading role in solving local housing problems to provide affordable homes and strengthen communities in ways that aren't always possible to achieve through mainstream housing.

“At Homes England, we're determined to increase the supply of homes across all tenures and increase capacity in the housing sector. This is a really important fund, which will offer lasting impact and we look forward to receiving bids from community groups across England.”

Homes England has been working with leading organisations in the community-led housing sector to shape the new fund.

Tom Chance, Director at the National Community Land Trust Network, said:

“We're delighted the Government has recognised the vital role community-led housing can play in delivering much-needed affordable housing. It's the fastest growing new form of housing in the country. The new Community Housing Fund will provide long-lasting opportunities for communities everywhere so they can go out and build the homes they really want and need.”

Bidding is open to a range of organisations. Local authorities or Registered Providers of social housing may apply on behalf of community groups to support them through this process.

Phase one of the Community Housing Fund will support applications for revenue grants to assist community groups with the costs involved in the pre-development stage of community-led housing projects. Local authorities can also bid for revenue funding to support capacity-building activities for community-led groups in their areas.

In addition, local authorities can bid for capital funding for small-scale infrastructure projects, such as roundabouts or pumping stations, to unlock sites that the community can then develop for housing.

Bidding for Phase One of the Fund is now open on a Continuous Market Engagement basis via the Homes England Portal. Bidding will remain open to new applications until funding is fully committed or until 31 December 2019, whichever occurs first.

[Further details on the Fund are available in the Prospectus published on Gov.uk.](#)

A second phase of the fund will be launched later this year by Homes England, who will invite bids for capital funding to develop community-led affordable housing schemes.

## **Ends**

For further media information please contact: Shaun Harley in the Homes England press office on 07989 203272 or [shaun.harley@homesengland.gov.uk](mailto:shaun.harley@homesengland.gov.uk). Or Patsy Cusworth 0796772328 [patsy.cusworth@homesengland.gov.uk](mailto:patsy.cusworth@homesengland.gov.uk).

## **Notes to Editors**

In order to ensure that the schemes supported by the Community Housing Fund are truly community-led, proposals should ensure that:

- Meaningful community engagement and consent occurs throughout the development process. The community does not necessarily have to initiate and manage the process, or build the homes themselves, though some may do;
- The local community group or organisation owns, manages or stewards the homes and in a manner of their choosing, and this may be done through a mutually supported arrangement with a Registered Provider that owns the freehold or leasehold for the property; and
- The benefits to the local area and/or specified community must be clearly defined and legally protected in perpetuity.

Bidding is open to all organisations which are, or intend to become, constituted as a body corporate, or an equivalent form of constituted body. Eligible organisations include, but are not restricted to:

- Registered charity;
- Company Limited By Guarantee;
- Community Benefit Society
- Co-operative Society;
- Community Interest Company;

- An organisation of another type operating as a social enterprise and principally reinvesting their surpluses for social benefit;
- Registered Provider of social housing; or
- Local authority.

Local authorities or Registered Providers may apply on behalf of community groups and other organisations and, in those cases, the lead bidding organisation will remain directly accountable for the funds, where appropriate. For applications not directly submitted by community-led organisations the applicant must demonstrate how the identified community will be engaged in the development proposal and how this will support the objectives of the Fund.

All organisations applying to the Fund will be required to submit details of the proposed activity through the Homes England bidding portal:

<https://bids.homesengland.org.uk>

Homes England is the new housing delivery organisation that has been created to adopt a more commercial approach to respond to the long term housing challenges facing this country. The new, expanded agency will play a far bigger role in investing in supply and intervening in the market to help deliver 300,000 homes a year by the middle of the next decade.

Homes England will act differently from its predecessor, bringing together money, land, expertise and planning and compulsory purchase powers to accelerate the supply of new homes and address affordability issues in areas of highest demand.