

Public Estate funding aims to create 19,000 jobs and 17,000 homes

Funding has been awarded for over 160 projects across England, which will aim to deliver over 17,000 new homes, 19,000 new jobs and save taxpayers £34 million as the UK government continues on its mission to build back better and level up across the country.

- £30 million of investment will see 160 projects supported across England.
- Plans for better use of public sector land will aim to unlock 17,000 new homes, 19,000 new jobs and save taxpayers £34 million in running costs.
- Funding has been awarded through the Land Release Fund (LRF) and the One Public Estate (OPE) programme, which works with 97% of councils in England.

One Public Estate – a national programme run by the Cabinet Office, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, and the Local Government Association – has awarded £30m to successful cross-public sector projects as part of its levelling up agenda.

Funding and support from the OPE programme will help with the creation of feasibility studies and design work for potential development sites.

Meanwhile the LRF funding will support councils to regenerate mainly brownfield sites by providing capital funding for the provision of infrastructure work which will enable them to bring these sites forward for much-needed housing.

The Minister for State for Efficiency and Transformation, Lord Agnew, said:

This government is committed to levelling up across the country as we build back better from the pandemic, creating new jobs and homes in our towns and cities.

The latest projects to benefit from £30 million of One Public Estate funding will not only help unlock under-used public sector sites for homes but also help deliver jobs, better public services and save taxpayers' money.

£20m has been awarded as part of the Land Release Fund, which aims to enable

the redevelopment of a large number of local authority brownfield sites for housing. The sites are spread across England and demonstrates how seriously the UK government is taking their commitment to level up across the country. Projects include:

- £1.04m for projects in North Yorkshire for land remediation and infrastructure works to bring forward land for around 140 homes in Harrogate, Skipton and Knaresborough.
- £776,000 for a project in Gloucestershire to redevelop the derelict Brimscombe Port site in Stroud which will deliver around 150 homes as part of wider canal regeneration creating jobs, new enterprise opportunities and a nationally-important destination for canal tourism.

£10m has gone towards projects that support collaboration between local and central government and the wider public sector, aiming to achieve greater levels of efficiency and improve service delivery. Awards include:

- £360,000 for projects in Cumbria, including bringing local authorities, the NHS and other key partners from the leisure sector together to deliver shared leisure and health services that will free up much-needed space in hospitals, reducing running costs by an estimated £390,000 per year.
- £95,000 for a project in Norfolk to redevelop a town centre site in Great Yarmouth. It will deliver a library and lifelong learning hub, while also bringing together library, children's and advice services, adult and community learning. It will include higher education provision and also release land for up to 89 new homes.

Cllr James Jamieson, Chairman of the Local Government Association, said:

One Public Estate will play a crucial role in supporting the local and national economic recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. This funding will support local authorities to make better use of their assets, release surplus land for new homes and help join up local services.

It is a unique programme, which for almost a decade has been helping local authorities and public sector bodies to transform and reconfigure their services. This latest news is more proof that One Public Estate is working, it is helping local government to build on innovative work, and it is having a demonstrable impact on our local communities.

Housing Minister, Rt Hon Christopher Pincher MP, said:

It is a priority of this government to deliver more new homes and create vibrant communities for people to live and work. Last year alone we delivered more than 240,000 new homes across England, which is more than any point in the last 30 years.

We want to build on this. That's why I am delighted part of this funding will be used to unlock often unused and derelict land, transforming them into the new homes our country needs.