

New £4 million fund launched to increase community led affordable housing

Communities will be given more opportunities to build homes in their neighbourhood thanks to a new £4 million fund launched today.

Today's new grant programme, launched by Housing Minister Christopher Pincher, gives community-led housing groups better access to high quality, affordable housing that meets the needs of local communities. The money will help community groups meet a range of costs incurred in trying to develop housing. This could include paying for searches, administration costs or legal advice, design work and planning applications.

The community-led approach involves community-based groups taking responsibility for local housebuilding. It delivers housing that is affordable locally and remains under the control of the community through land trusts or housing co-operatives.

For example, the Granby Four Streets group have rebuilt their area in Toxteth, Liverpool including refurbishing derelict housing, producing homes for affordable rent, shared ownership and discounted market sale to protect and sustain the area they care about.

Housing Minister Rt Hon Christopher Pincher MP said:

Community-led housing is about local people playing a leading and lasting role in solving their housing problems, creating genuinely affordable homes and strong communities where mainstream housebuilders are unable to deliver.

The Community Housing Fund has been set up to support housing schemes that are truly community-led and will last for generations to come, helping ensure we build back better.

The Community Housing Fund Revenue Programme 2021 to 2022 is funded by Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and will help community-led housing groups in the latter stages of pre-development.

The Community Led Homes Partnership (CLH) will manage the grant programme, assessing all applications and administering the grants. CLH is a partnership of 4 leading community-led housing organisations:

- Confederation of Co-operative Housing
- Locality
- National Community Land Trust Network
- UK Cohousing Network

Tom Chance from Community Led Homes added:

Community led housing groups are rooted in their communities and truly understand local housing needs. There are so many fantastic community led housing projects planned across the country. This programme will help many of these projects come to fruition.

Tony Armstrong from Community Led Homes said:

It is well known that there is a shortage of genuinely affordable, high quality housing in England. We believe community led housing can, and should, play a central role in solving this problem. The CLH partnership is proud to be managing this programme on behalf of MHCLG.

Applications will open on 23 August 2021 and will remain open until all funds are allocated or until 31 December 2021, whichever occurs first. The programme will close in March 2022 – all work funding by the grant must be completed by this date.

To apply for the fund, groups will need to complete an eligibility checker on the [Community Led Homes website](#). If eligible, groups will be emailed an online grant application form.

Today's announcement follows the publication of the Bacon Review which recommended that reigniting the Community Housing Fund will create more opportunities for communities to build.

Full guidance on the application process, who can apply and how you can get support to apply can be found on the [Community Led Homes website](#).

This Programme is not suitable for groups who are just forming or are at an early stage of pre-development. For other funding available to the sector groups can visit the [Community Led Homes funding page](#).

[Community Led Homes](#) exists to make community led housing a mainstream housing option. We provide training, funding and practical support to local groups, councils and developers. By bringing people together from the grassroots to those in power, communities can create the homes they want and need.

[Apprenticeships, then, now and next](#)

News story

Blog summarising the work experiences of GAD apprentices.



In the most recent blog, we find out about the experiences of GAD's apprentices. This includes people who've just joined the department and those who have completed their training and moved into other roles. [Apprenticeships, then, now and next.](#)

Published 23 August 2021

[UK signs deal with Pfizer/BioNTech for 35 million vaccines](#)

The UK has agreed a contract for 35 million more doses of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine, to be delivered from the second half of next year.

The government, through the Vaccine Taskforce, is putting in place preparations to future-proof the country from the threat of COVID-19 and its variants through safe and effective vaccines, as the UK's world-renowned vaccination programme continues to protect the population.

These include robust plans for ensuring the country remains ahead of the virus for years to come and for any future booster programmes, as well as working to make the UK a global centre of excellence for the next generation of vaccines.

The Vaccine Taskforce has contracts in place with multiple vaccine manufacturers.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

The UK's phenomenal vaccination programme is providing tens of millions of people with protection from COVID-19, saving 95,200 lives and preventing 82,100 hospitalisations in the over 65s in England alone.

While we continue to build this wall of defence from COVID-19, it's also vital we do everything we can to protect the country for the future too – whether that's from the virus as we know it or new variants.

I am pleased we've reached this agreement with Pfizer for more doses as part of our robust preparations to future-proof our vaccine programme, ensuring we have plans in place to keep the nation safe for years to come.

The UK is committed to supporting global recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and improving access to vaccines, and will be donating 100 million vaccine doses within the next year. The donation of the first 9 million doses was announced last month.

The UK is also one of the largest donors to the COVAX facility, the global mechanism to help developing countries access a coronavirus vaccine, and has committed £548 million in UK aid to help distribute 1.3 billion doses to 92 developing countries this year.

The government is preparing for a booster programme this year to ensure those most vulnerable to COVID-19 are protected. The booster programme will be based on the final advice of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), expected in September.

COVID-19 vaccines have saved 95,200 lives. They have also prevented 82,100 hospitalisations and 23.9 million infections in England alone, according to the latest data from Public Health England and Cambridge University.

The contract will be published on Contracts Finder in due course.

[Applications for 2022/2023 Chevening Turkey awards are now open](#)

Chevening is the UK government's international awards programme aimed at developing global leaders.

Funded by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and partner organisations, Chevening offers two types of award – Chevening Scholarships and [Chevening Fellowships](#) – the recipients of which are personally selected by British embassies and High Commissions throughout the world.

Chevening offers a unique opportunity for future leaders, influencers, and decision-makers from all over the world.

Chevening provides fully-funded scholarships, leaving you free to focus on

achieving your academic goals and enjoying the experience of a lifetime. You will live and study in the UK for a year, during which time you will develop professionally and academically, grow your network, experience UK culture, and build lasting positive relationships with the UK.

Applicants from Turkey can choose any course of study at any UK higher education institution.

If you have ambition, leadership potential, and a strong academic background, we encourage you to apply before 2 November 2021.

Chevening award in Turkey includes:

- University tuition fees (Chevening applies a tuition fee cap of £22,000 to MBA programmes)
- a monthly living allowance
- travel costs to and from the UK
- an economy class return airfare to the UK
- additional grants and allowances to cover essential expenditure

To be eligible for a Chevening Scholarship

To be eligible for a Chevening Scholarship you must:

- be a citizen of a Chevening-eligible country or territory
- return to your country of citizenship for a minimum of two years after your award has ended
- have completed all components of an undergraduate degree that will enable you to gain entry onto a postgraduate programme at a UK university by the time you submit your application. This is typically equivalent to an upper second-class 2:1 honours degree in the UK but may be different depending on your course and university choice
- have at least two years (equivalent to 2,800 hours) of work experience
- apply to three different eligible [UK university courses](#) and have received an unconditional offer from one of these choices by 14 July 2022

The Chevening English language requirement has been removed. However, candidates must meet all requirements of their chosen university and secure an unconditional offer from one of their three course choices by the Chevening deadline.

You are not eligible for a Chevening Scholarship if you:

- hold British or dual British citizenship (unless you are a citizen of a British Overseas Territory or hold BN(0) and are applying from Hong Kong)
- hold refugee status in a non-Chevening eligible country. Applicants who are citizens of a Chevening-eligible country and who hold refugee status in a Chevening-eligible country are eligible for a scholarship
- are an employee, a former employee, or relative* of an employee of Her Majesty's Government, or have been within the last two years from the

opening of Chevening applications (including British embassies/high commissions; the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy; Department for International Trade; the Ministry of Defence; and the Home Office), or a staff member of the Association of Commonwealth Universities

- employees, former employees, or relatives* of an employee of Chevening Partner organisations are eligible to apply, but if the employment took place within the last two years, you cannot receive a Chevening Partner Award from the organisation from which you work, previously worked, or are affiliated with through relatives
- have previously studied in the UK with funding from a UK Government-funded scholarship

How to apply

All applications for a Chevening Award must be made through the Chevening designated online application system, which can be accessed through www.chevening.org/apply

If you have a question related to Chevening Scholarships and Fellowships applications please visit the [frequently asked questions page](#)

Chevening Scholarship applications will close on 2 November 2021 at 12:00 UK time.

[PM announces new Trade Envoys to boost British business around the world](#)

Prime Minister Boris Johnson has today [Monday 23rd August 2021] appointed ten Trade Envoys who will boost British business in dynamic markets such as Australia, Brazil and Canada.

These Trade Envoys – including Lord Botham, David Mundell MP and Conor Burns MP – will use their skills, experience, and market knowledge to help UK businesses find new export and investment opportunities and promote UK trade in their allocated market.

The Government already has Trade Envoys in more than 60 countries, drawn from a cross-section of parties, with Baroness Hoey, Stephen Timms MP, Lord Walney and Sir Jeffrey Donaldson MP being appointed in this round.

Trade Envoys will build on the UK's strong relations with key trading countries and work with the Department for International Trade's global network to break down barriers to trade.

International Trade Secretary, Liz Truss, said:

“Our Trade Envoys play a key role in delivering our ambitious global trade agenda, and I am delighted the Prime Minister has appointed ten Trade Envoys who will boost opportunities for British businesses in some of the world’s fastest growing markets.

“By boosting exports, promoting inward investment and creating high-value, high-paying jobs, our Trade Envoys will help us build back better from Covid-19, ensuring every part of the UK benefits from our trade strategy.”

Trade Envoys are parliamentarians appointed by the Prime Minister, drawn from both Houses and across the political spectrum. The roles are unpaid and voluntary. These new appointments bring the total number of Trade Envoys who help support the UK’s trade and investment agenda to 36, covering 76 different countries.

They work alongside the joint No.10-DIT Office for Investment to encourage greater inward investment across the UK.

Minister of State for Trade Policy, Greg Hands, said:

“From Norway to New Zealand, Pakistan to Brazil, our Trade Envoys will help increase UK trade with some of the world’s most exciting and dynamic markets and showcase the UK as a great place to invest.”

In 2020/21, Trade Envoys supported over £16 billion of UK exports as part of DIT’s export promotion activity. Exports are central to the government’s ambition to level-up the UK and build back better, with government-led research estimating that exports support 6.5 million jobs across the UK, 74% of which are outside London. The full list of new appointments is below:

- Lord Botham appointed to Australia
- Baroness Hoey appointed to Ghana
- Stephen Timms MP appointed to Switzerland and Liechtenstein
- David Mundell MP appointed to New Zealand
- Mark Eastwood MP appointed to Pakistan
- Marco Longhi MP appointed to Brazil
- Conor Burns MP appointed to Canada
- Lord Walney [John Woodcock] appointed to Tanzania
- Felicity Buchan MP appointed to Iceland and Norway
- Sir Jeffrey Donaldson MP appointed to Cameroon, in addition to his role as Prime Minister’s Trade Envoy to Egypt.