

Local Authorities announced as trailblazers for social care charging reform

- Five local authorities across England will trailblaze adult social care charging reform
- Trailblazers will implement the new adult social care charging reform system early
- Charging reforms will mean no one has to face unpredictable care costs

Government has announced that five local authorities in England will implement a new and improved adult social care charging reform system which caps the cost of care.

To ensure a smooth transition from the current charging system the five trailblazing local authorities – Wolverhampton, Blackpool, Cheshire East, Newham, North Yorkshire – will put the charging reform plans in place in January 2023 ahead of a national rollout in October next year.

This includes a new lifetime cap of £86,000 on the amount anyone in England will need to spend on their personal care, alongside a more generous means test for local authority financial support.

The trailblazing areas were selected to ensure a cross section of communities are represented and so any insight, evidence and lessons learned from this initiative will be useful to providers and authorities in all parts of England.

The Health and Social Care Levy will raise more than £5.4 billion for adult social care reforms which includes including £3.6 billion to reform the way people pay for their social care charging reform to ensure the new system is fair and responsible, balancing government support and the need for people to be responsible for their future care needs.

From October 2023 no-one starting to receive care will pay more than £86,000 over their lifetime, and no-one with assets of less than £20,000 will have to make any contribution from their savings or housing wealth – up from £14,250. Anyone with assets between £20,000 and £100,000 will be eligible for some means-tested support with the upper limit more than four times the current limit.

The trailblazers will shape the government's approach to implementation by allowing the Department of Health and Social Care to test key aspects of the reforms.

The initiative will generate valuable evidence and insight to help the government to monitor progress, identify challenges and improve understanding of how this will work in practice.

These five local authorities will co-produce documentation to educate and inform other local authorities with a series of events to be planned before the final rollout.

The launch of the operational initiative is running in parallel with the ongoing Parliamentary discussions on the Health and Care Bill, which includes charging reform.

This is necessary to make sure England is operationally ready for charging reform.

[PM call with President Xi Jinping of China: 25 March 2022](#)

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to China's President Xi Jinping earlier today.



The Prime Minister spoke to China's President Xi Jinping earlier today.

The Prime Minister expressed again his sympathy with the victims of the flight that crashed in China last week.

President Xi asked the Prime Minister to convey his best wishes to Her Majesty the Queen on her Jubilee.

The leaders discussed a range of issues of mutual interest – including the situation in Ukraine.

It was a frank and candid conversation lasting almost an hour. They agreed to speak again soon.

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Charity Commission finds misconduct and mismanagement at Humanity Torbay

Press release

The Charity Commission has identified misconduct and/or mismanagement at Devon-based charity Humanity Torbay.



The Charity Commission has identified misconduct and/or mismanagement at Devon-based charity Humanity Torbay, in relation to political campaigning and the trustees' failure to properly control the use of its social media.

The regulator has also secured a voluntary undertaking from the charity's founder and former CEO not to act as a charity trustee or hold any office of employment with senior management functions in a charity for 4 years.

Humanity Torbay provided a drop-in centre for the local community in Torbay, offering advice on health, wellbeing, housing and employment, as well as referrals to local food banks.

The Commission opened a regulatory compliance case into the charity in August 2019, after concerns were raised about the use of its social media platforms for political campaigning. The regulator also identified concerns about the charity's financial management and governance and opened a statutory inquiry in June 2020.

The inquiry found multiple instances of misconduct and/or mismanagement, including:

- the trustees' failure to maintain appropriate financial controls for the charity
- the trustees' failure to control and prevent inappropriate material being posted on social media pages in the name of the charity
- the trustees' breach of their legal duties and responsibilities concerning political campaigning and activity

In August 2021, the charity's founder and former CEO, Ellie Waugh, agreed to accept the terms of a voluntary undertaking which means she will not act as a charity trustee or hold any office or employment with senior management functions for any charity in England or Wales, for 4 years.

The charity's trustees decided to wind up the charity in July 2020, and the charity was removed from the register in March 2021.

Amy Spiller, Head of Investigations at the Charity Commission, said:

The Commission's intervention in this case sends a strong message that charities should not be misused as a vehicle to express an individual's political views.

Charities' independence from party politics is not just required by the law, it is also essential in upholding public trust and confidence in charities.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

1. The Charity Commission is the independent, non-ministerial government department that registers and regulates charities in England and Wales. Its purpose is to ensure charity can thrive and inspire trust so that people can improve lives and strengthen society.
2. The Commission opened an inquiry on [9 June 2020](#). The full inquiry report can be viewed [here](#).
3. The charity was removed from the Charity Commission's [register of charities](#) on 15 March 2021 and is recorded as a removed charity.
4. Mrs Ellie Waugh signed a voluntary undertaking on 18 August 2021, from which point the 4 year agreement not to act as a charity trustee begins.
5. The Commission plans to consult on new social media guidance for charities later this year.

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[New appointments and a fresh focus on hearings for the Planning Inspectorate](#)

The Planning Inspectorate has made three appointments to senior leadership posts, with all successful candidates coming from within the organisation.

They are:

- Sean Canavan – Director of Strategy
- Rachel Graham – Chief Digital and Information Officer
- Richard Schofield – Head of Planning Inspector Profession

Sean will take over the role of Director of Strategy from Christine Thorby who leaves the Planning Inspectorate at the end of this month.

Rachel Graham's new leadership role for digital and information has been created to reflect the increasing importance that data and digital continues to have in all aspects of the Planning Inspectorate's work including contributions to the reforms of the planning system.

As Head of Planning Inspector Profession, Richard, a highly experienced inspector, will lead on all professional development of inspectors, and he will be the main liaison with Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and other key stakeholders.

Sarah Richards, Chief Executive of The Planning Inspectorate, said:

"I am pleased that these are all internal promotions. These appointments reflect the impressive skills and expertise of our staff and the benefits of nurturing and developing talent across the Planning Inspectorate. The knowledge and expertise of each will be invaluable in continuing the work of the Executive Team and delivering our priorities in future."

The appointments come at an exciting time as delivery of the revised [five-year strategic plan](#) continues and with important work taking place currently to improve key areas including the following:

Digital Improvements

Appeals Service

We are working on digital improvements to the planning appeal journey so that it is easier, faster and more cost effective to appeal a planning decision.

We have been piloting the service for householder appeals with three local planning authorities (see our [previous blog post](#)). This has provided useful data and we are now looking to expand the pilot from late April/early May when we will include further types of planning appeals with a selected group of Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) and enable the service to be accessed via GOV.UK

This is a big step forward as it enables us to increase the number of appeals being submitted via the new service meaning we learn quicker about what works and what needs improving. This is critical not only for improving the service we offer to customers but so that we can use that feedback when developing the appeal submission process for all our other types of appeals; work that is planned for the next 6 months.

Applications Service

The Applications Service covers any application dealt with by the Planning Inspectorate and the work to modernise our applications service has been progressing well. The majority of applications are National Infrastructure planning applications, with other applications including Common Land, Drought Orders and Permits, Compulsory Purchase Orders, and Necessary Wayleaves.

The National Infrastructure service is the first of our applications services being developed. We are planning to go live with a first public pilot in early April 2022 with a new 'Register to have your say' service. This will streamline the service to deliver value to users and bring us one step closer to our vision of "Making the National Infrastructure Consenting process inclusive, efficient and understandable for everyone."

Our performance: improving and a new focus on hearings

During the second half of 2021 we focused on proposals for national infrastructure, examining local plans and deciding more appeal cases requiring hearings or inquiries. This work is most likely to be of greatest community interest or greatest economic significance as the country rebuilds its economy after the pandemic.

- we recently submitted reports to the Secretary of State for a new power station at Sizewell and for improvements to the A47 between Blofield and North Burlingham in Norfolk
- we continue to receive new Local Plans for examination, including the plan for the Manchester Combined Authority area
- we have closed more than 700 cases through inquiry in the last year and reduced the number of cases awaiting an inquiry by nearly a quarter

Over the last few months, we have successfully held more site visits, hearings and inquiries than in previous months. We are now deciding more cases than we are receiving. Our decision speeds will improve as our overall caseload falls.

We are now implementing further improvements for planning appeals decided after a hearing. We know our decisions on appeals requiring hearings have, for quite some time, taken longer than our customers expect. Although we have made progress in reducing the overall number of live appeals needing hearings, the average time it takes to decide these cases is still around a year.

From April 2022 we will be aiming to decide these appeals in an end-to-end time of no longer than 24 weeks, using many of the approaches we used to improve the inquiry process after the Rosewell Review. We will:

- validate hearing appeal casework within five working days of submission
- start the appeal and assign an inspector within a week of validation
- set out and require all parties to follow the timetable from the start

- have a stronger focus on the timely submission of evidence and documents by parties, including agreed statements of common ground and draft developer contribution/S106 agreements
- hold the hearing within 10 to 14 weeks of the start date
- engage with parties early in the programme. The inspector will identify if elements can be addressed through written representations and what elements require discussion in the hearing itself

We will continue to progress existing appeals on their current timetables. These improvements for new appeals will provide much needed certainty, with the appeal process being an essential part of a fair planning system.

New fund gives communities power to deliver affordable homes

Over 1,200 new affordable homes will be delivered across England with communities put in charge of where and how they will be built, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities announced today, Friday 25 March 2022.

The £4 million Community Housing Fund (CHF) programme helps community groups build homes in their local area by covering a range of costs incurred in the process – including renting the town hall for a public meeting, paying for searches, administration costs or legal advice, design work and planning applications. Once planning permission is granted, community groups can fund the build through the government's Affordable Homes Programme, a Housing Association or developer or via a bank loan.

The fund will help level up the country by regenerating derelict areas and delivering homes that are affordable for local people, so more residents can live in the places they love.

The new houses will be part of locally-based organisations such as land trusts or housing co-operatives meaning they stay under the control of the community.

Housing Minister Rt Hon Stuart Andrew MP said:

Part of our Levelling Up mission is to build the quality homes that communities want and need. Community led housing is a great way to ensure local housing needs are met by putting local people in the driving seat.

It is about residents playing a leading and lasting role creating genuinely affordable homes which regenerate and restore pride in

communities.

Community led housing also helps improve the design and construction quality of homes using modern methods of construction and gives more opportunity for smaller house builders to work on projects, growing local economies.

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.

The fund will help deliver 52 housing projects in England, from Cornwall to Berwick-upon-Tweed. Bradford's Greenwood Community Led Housing group, will build 62 supported homes for people with autism, learning disabilities or dementia. In Leeds, 34 affordable homes are being built to regenerate a deprived part of the city following extensive involvement of residents in the design of the buildings.

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.

-The Community Housing Fund Revenue Programme 2021/22 is funded by DLUHC 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 four leading community-led housing organisations: Confederation of Co-operative Housing, Locality, National Community Land Trust Network and the UK Co-Housing Network.

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities will be publishing its response to the Bacon Review soon.

[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.

Full regional breakdown

Local Authority	Organisation	Project name	Funding amount (£)	Postcode of project site	Affordable homes
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Bristol City	Ambition Lawrence Weston	Astry Close Community Led Housing	21350	BS11 0RA	34
West Sussex	Angmering Community Land Trust	Mayflower Way	113770	BN16 4AY	12
Bristol City	Ashley Vale Action Group Limited	Bridge Farm	50000	BS16 1BQ	22
Northumberland	Berwick Youth Project	Old Grammar School	32000	TD15 1HF	8
Rother	Bexhill Community Land Trust	Cemetery Lodge / Turkey Road	109323	TN39 5JE	22
Brighton and Hove	Bunker Housing Co-operative Limited	Hinton Close	71743	BN1 7BT	10
Calderdale	Calder Valley Community Land Trust Limited	High Street, Hebden Bridge	37966	HX7 6AZ	20
County Durham	Canney Communities	Canney Communities: Project 1	44630	DL14 8QH	16
Stratford-on-Avon District	Claverdon Community Land Trust	Curlieu Lane, Norton Lindsey – Affordable Housing Development	47960	CV35 8DL	10
Cornwall	Cornwall CLT Limited	Ennor Farm St Mary's Isles of Scilly	59091	TR21 0LP	12
Cornwall	Cornwall CLT Limited	Trekersby	49937	TR16 5AG	10
Cornwall	Cornwall CLT Limited	Gwennap	38499	TR16 6BD	10
Kingston upon Hull	Cosmo Community CIC	Cosmo Community CIC	51087	HU5 2DD	20
Eastbourne	Eastbourne Community Land Trust Limited	Bibbenden Close	71310	BN23 7HX	5
Stroud	Eastington Community Land Trust Limited	Eastington CLT: Project 2	33189	GL10 3AQ	31
Holmfirth West Yorkshire	EcoHOLMEs CLT	The Chippings	67470	HD9 1SX	10
Manchester	Edward Mayes Trust	Mayes Gardens	22176	M4 7FN	2
Sheffield	Five Rivers Cohousing Company Ltd	Wisewood Cohousing	62040	S6 4TW	22

Bristol City	Furze Co-operative	Furze Co-operative	78326	BS7 9UH	15
East Riding of Yorkshire	Heron Educational Foundation	Heron Homes Humbleton	15830	HU11 4NN	6
Wealden	Herstmonceux Community Land Trust Limited	Strawberry Field	122507	BN27 4RT	9
Liverpool City	Homebaked Community Land Trust CIC	Homebaked	22450	L4 0UF	8
Gateshead	Hospital of King James Gateshead	The Hospital of St James at Gateshead	191399	NE8 3PA	51
Bradford	Inspired Neighbourhoods Housing Trust	Greenwood Community Led Housing	330192	BD2 1JX	62
Birmingham	Kajans Women's Enterprise Ltd	Kajans Community-Led Affordable Housing	67207	B18 5AU	52
South Lakeland	Kendal Almshouse Charity	Kendal Almshouse Charity. Romleigh Development.	34028	LA9 5QR	3
East Cambridgeshire	Kennett Community Land Trust	Kennett Garden Village	53525	CB8 7QF	60
Leeds	Leeds Community Homes	Mistress Lane	125000	LS12 2HL	34
Manchester	LGBT Foundation Ltd	Manchester LGBT Extra Care Housing	54926	M16 8AJ	103
Bristol City	Lockleaze Neighbourhood Trust	Home Made	40000	BS7 9YD	5
Bristol City	Lockleaze Neighbourhood Trust: Turner Gardens	Lockleaze Neighbourhood Trust: Turner Gardens	45000	BS7 9YD	19
Wiltshire	Nadder Community Land Trust Ltd.	The Old Sports Centre	18275	SP3 6HJ	6
Oxford City	Oxfordshire Community Land Trust	Dean Court Affordable Homes for Rent	67375	OX2 9DD	8
East Hampshire	Petersfield Community Land Trust	Reservoir Lane	102045	GU32 2HY	12
Sefton	SAFE Community Homes CIC	Destination Bootle	82700	L20 4AP	187

Somerset West and Taunton	Somerset Co-housing Community Land Trust Limited (Somerset Co-operative CLT)	Wiveliscombe	182276	TA4 2NY	29
Devon	South Dartmoor Community Energy	South Dartmoor Community Energy/Teign	64845	PL21 0DN	30
South Tyneside	South Tyneside Churches KEY Project	South Tyneside Churches KEY Project	5000	NE33 5RU	10
Bristol City	Southmead Development Trust	Southmead Regeneration – Glencoyne Square	268205	BS10 6EU	95
Cornwall	St Ives CLT	St Ives CLT: Project 1 Old Vicarage Flats	30000	TR26 2DS	6
East Cambridgeshire	Swaffham Bulbeck Community Land Trust	Pony and Cemetery Fields Development	101736	CB25 0LU	18
South Oxfordshire	Thame Community Land Trust	Thame Homes for Thame Families	137299	OX9 2DR	31
Herefordshire	The Buchanan Trust	North Farm	28942	HR8 1JY	2
Maidstone	The Honeywood and Douglas Charity (211272)	Honywood and Douglas Charity 23 High street Lenham	50224	ME17 2QD	3
East Suffolk	Ufford Charities	Refurbishment and Extensions to the Ufford Almshouses	7975	IP13 6DS	2
Rutland	Uppingham Homes CLT	The Badley Orchard Housing Development	22348	LE15 9EB	6
Bristol City	We Can Make Knowle West CIC	We Can Make good homes	75000	BS4 1NL	17
Chichester	Westbourne Community Trust	Mill Road Affordable Housing Project	62900	P010 8TH	12
Cornwall	Wheal Luna	Wheal Luna	29925	TR5 0NH	4
Calderdale	Women Centre Ltd	Women Centre Housing Initiative	22191	HX1 1JN	23

City of York	Yospace CLT Limited	Lowfield Green: Project 33595 1	Y024 3FH 19
City of York	Yospace CLT Limited	Morrell House – Fully Mutual Housing Co-op (FMHC) 74154	Y030 6EZ 17