

Annex A

Application by Anglian Water Limited for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant Relocation project (Ref WW010003)
 The Examining Authority’s written questions and requests for information (ExQ1)

The Examining Authority asked Homes England for a response to questions 2.30 and 8.31 and our answers are below:

ExQ1	Question to	Question	Response
2.30	Applicant, CCC, SCDC, Homes England	<p>Housing delivery – certainty of housing delivery on existing WWTP site</p> <p>What evidence is there to demonstrate that the existing WWTP site is likely to be suitable for development – for example, if the land is shown to have been contaminated over the years by the existing WWTP, has there been a feasibility assessment and financial estimate for site remediation and an assessment made as to whether this would be prohibitively expensive for a developer?</p>	<p>Homes England is confident that the existing WWTP site is suitable for housing development and delivery of homes is secured through the HIF Grant Determination Agreement.</p> <p>In terms of possible contamination, the HIF bid was subject to a comprehensive assessment process by Homes England including external due diligence. Whilst the due diligence recognised that there may be an element of contamination on the existing site no significant risks were identified that would materially impact the suitability of the site for housing development. The wider Benefit Cost Ratio assessment of the HIF bid included allowances for remediation to be met by the private sector. The HIF bid was assessed to demonstrate value for money and to be of high deliverability.</p>
8.31	Applicant, Homes England	<p>Planning Statement para 1.7.6 [AS-166] states that the HIF places obligations on the Applicant to relocate and commission the proposed WWTP and decommission the existing WWTP by March 2028, with works (as shown on Figure 1.1) set to commence in the second quarter of 2024 (albeit the application for the s35 Direction suggested commencement in early 2024 to meet the March deadline (page 137 of the Planning Statement)).</p> <p>a) How can the ExA be certain that this timescale is achievable (including having regard to SoS decision dates, approval of permits, discharging of pre-commencement requirements etc.);</p> <p>b) Are there any potential unforeseen issues which might arise which may have implications for this timescale; and</p> <p>c) Should the timescales not be met, what implications would this have for the HIF?</p>	<p>Homes England has the following answers for each part of the question.</p> <p>a) The timescales included in the question remain the Applicant’s target timeframe, but the Delivery Stage Milestones are indicative and will as necessary be adjusted before the Delivery Stage commences. The extensive preparatory work carried out as part of the preparation of the Application, and the ongoing work during the Examination, have maximised the Applicant’s ability to achieve the timescales set out in the Planning Statement. Once the Milestones have been finalised, there is a further ability to adjust these, if there is a defined “Milestone Extension Event”, or otherwise with the agreement of Homes England (acting reasonably) pursuant to the provisions under clause 8.2 and 8.3 of the GDA.</p> <p>b) The preparatory work mentioned above has minimised the potential for unforeseen issues that might arise, but as we have noted, there is flexibility in the GDA to enable these to be addressed, with extensions to the Milestones where “Milestone Extension Events” occur, and the ability to agree other extensions where reasonable.</p> <p>c) As we note above, the GDA includes flexibility to ensure the Milestones remain appropriate and reflect the realistic expectations of the parties- the Delivery Stage Milestones were expressed to be indicative only as it was recognised that further investigations would be required, including the progression of the DCO – before these could be fixed.</p>

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Speech

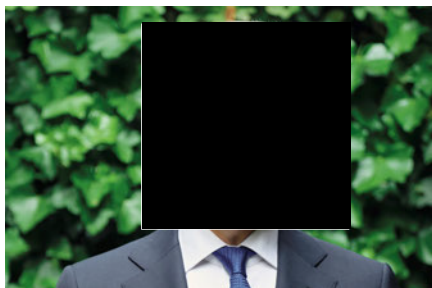
Long-term plan for housing: Secretary of State's speech

Speech by the Rt Hon Michael Gove
MP, Secretary of State for Levelling Up,
Housing and Communities.

From: [Department for Levelling Up, Housing
and Communities](#)
(</government/organisations/department-for-levelling-up-housing-and-communities>) and [The Rt Hon
Michael Gove MP](#) (</government/people/michael-gove>)

Published 24 July 2023

Delivered on: **24 July 2023** (Transcript of the
speech, exactly as it was delivered)



[political content removed from speech]

Introduction

We shape buildings, Winston Churchill argued, and then they shape us.

The quality of the homes that we live in, the physical nature of our neighbourhoods, the design of our communities, determines so much. Our health, our happiness, our prosperity, our productivity – all depend on where we live

That is why housing policy – the building of new homes, the stewardship of existing properties, the planning of our towns, the fundamental landscape of our lives – requires long-term thinking. And a long-term plan.

In the months that I have been in this role we have been developing, and implementing, just such a plan

Today I want to outline the ambitions that plan embodies. And the critical next steps that we need to take, over the years to come, to build a better Britain.

A Britain with many more homes – an assured path to home ownership – and homes in the right places

Our long-term plan has 10 principles.

The regeneration and renaissance of the hearts of 20 of our most important towns and cities.

Supercharging Europe's science capital.

Building beautiful – and making architecture great again.

Building great public services into the heart of every community

Communities taking back control of their future.

Greener homes, greener landscapes and green belt protection.

A new deal for tenants and landlords

Ensuring that every home is safe, decent and warm.

Liberating leaseholders

And extending ownership to a new generation.

Our long-term plan for housing comes at a critical moment for the housing market.

We have a record of delivery.

We have built more homes over our time in office than Labour did under Tony Blair and Gordon Brown.

In this Parliament we have delivered the highest number of new homes in a year for 3 decades, and we've ensured the highest number of first time buyers in 2 decades. And we will meet our manifesto target of delivering 1 million new homes in this Parliament

Not only that but our £11.5 billion Affordable Homes Programme is delivering well over a hundred thousand affordable homes and we are scaling up to deliver tens of thousands of new homes specifically for social rent.

But we know that there are immediate challenges to future growth. Across the developed world, there are economic pressures.

And there is therefore a need for radical action to unlock the supply of new homes.

In every western country inflation is a barrier to building.

Inflation has pushed up the price of materials, it has required interest rates to rise, it has squeezed access to credit and, with tight labour markets across the West, construction has everywhere become more difficult. But construction is more necessary than ever.

So tackling inflation is critical to the implementation of our plan.

The steps the Prime Minister and the Chancellor have taken to control public spending and borrowing, and our broader fiscal and monetary strategy, are working. Inflation is coming down.

But we need to maintain that discipline.

And underpinning our long-term plan for economic recovery is a long term plan for housing

Regeneration of 20 places

And the first, and most important, component of that plan is our programme of urban regeneration and a new inner city renaissance.

Renaissance – because we want to ensure our cities have all the ingredients for success that we identified in our Levelling-Up White Paper last year as the Medici model

Beautiful homes, flourishing public spaces, cultural jewels, safe and orderly streets, space for trees and nature, centres of educational excellence, dynamic new businesses and excellent public services.

In our White Paper we committed to the regeneration of 20 places across England as the core of our long-term plan for housing. And today I want to say more about how we are implementing our ambitions.

We are unequivocally, unapologetically and intensively concentrating our biggest efforts in the hearts of our cities. Because that is the right thing to do economically, environmentally and culturally.

As my colleague Neil O'Brien argued in his landmark study for the think tank Onward on housing – Green, Pleasant and Affordable – cities are where the demand for housing is greatest. It is better for the environment, the economy, for productivity and well being if we use all of the levers that we have to promote urban regeneration – rather than swallowing up virgin land.

That is why we will enable brownfield development rather than green belt erosion, sustainable growth rather than suburban sprawl.

So the economic and environmental imperatives all point towards a move away from a land-hungry destruction of natural habitats in favour of a much more efficient regeneration of our cities.

And in the UK we have been markedly inefficient in this regard Inefficient in how we use land

In recent years the rates of housebuilding in rural areas have been greater than in urban areas. And in our cities, especially those outside London, the population densities are much lower than in comparable competitor Western nations.

We occupy more land with fewer people.

That approach has not only been inefficient in planning terms it's cost us in productivity

Failing to densify our inner cities means lower growth – with a 10% increase in our cities' population potentially unlocking a £20 billion increase in UK GDP.

Failing to densify means longer commutes, a longer wait for a plumber or ambulance, and more vehicle journeys leading to congestion and pollution. At present, only 40% of people living in our great cities can get into the city centre in 30 minutes by public transport, compared to over two thirds of the population in comparable European cities

And we would not only be more productive, we would have an enhanced quality of life. People living and working in close proximity to one another is a key feature of the most creative, productive and attractive cities in the world and in particular a feature of the most attractive parts of those cities

The heart of Gaudi's Barcelona, the Haussmann-designed centre of Paris, the Nash terraces of Regent's Park, the apartment blocks of Pimlico, Marylebone and Knightsbridge, Edinburgh's New Town, the Upper West side of Manhattan or the centres of Boston or Austin, Texas – all are districts

where what economists call the agglomeration effect – the mixing of talent and opportunity which sparks innovation and growth – is marked.

Densification of our inner cities would not just enhance economic efficiency and free up leisure time – it would also help with climate change. Denser cities on the American eastern seaboard emit 50% less carbon than the suburban and exurban areas near them

That's why we have been developing and implementing policies explicitly designed to support urban regeneration

We have given the metro mayors more powers, and resource, to build homes in our cities. We've allocated an extra £250 million to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and to the West Midlands

And we have shifted government funding to support housing delivery already – the money needed to assemble and then to remediate the land on which the private sector can then build – and this week a further £1 billion will be launched to make brownfield land fit for development in our cities and towns, including landmark investments in Greater Manchester and the West Midlands.

In addition the new Infrastructure Levy which we are legislating for in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill will further incentivise that brownfield development.

Developers aiming to build on greenfield sites will have to pay more to provide for the new affordable housing and the infrastructure necessary in areas where there just aren't the roads, GP surgeries, the schools and shops already in place

By contrast, in urban areas where the infrastructure already exists – and indeed in London, where school rolls are falling in the heart of the city – densification and growth can ensure existing public services thrive and remain sustainable

And to make it cheaper for development to deliver more affordable housing, more schools and

hospitals when it's right for the community our Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill will eliminate the "hope value" that landowners and property speculators try to extract from any sale

And we are already supporting gentle densification of existing areas of housing through our proposals for 'street votes' – where local communities can collectively decide to extend their homes to capture more value and to create more space for new householders or bigger families.

We are also consulting on new and expanded Permitted Development Rights to maximise the potential of existing buildings for new homes.

And as I look forward to publishing the updated National Planning Policy Framework a little bit later this year, we are looking at how we can support more development on small sites

To support more upward construction with existing beautiful street design.

And we want to see agreed development and plans go ahead on locally agreed sites.

We are then also tackling – at source – some of the reasons that have held back investment in the flats and the apartment blocks that help urban regeneration and densification.

In the aftermath of the Grenfell fire, the market for many properties in our cities froze because of the fire safety issues which had gone unaddressed for years. That meant that householders were in the terrible position where they could not sell their homes until they had a commitment that remediation would be undertaken.

We took decisive steps to unfreeze the market, to protect leaseholders, to get developers to pay for that remediation and to prompt lenders to start offering mortgages on those properties once more.

And today we are taking further steps by opening our new Cladding Safety Scheme – and also providing much desired clarity to builders that 18m

will be the threshold that we will introduce for new buildings requiring second staircases.

And of course there will be transitional arrangements in place to make sure that there is no disruption to housing supply.

All of these building safety measures have got a vital sector of our urban housing market moving again – and that lays the ground for the further expansion we now need

Because we know that there have, recently, been successful examples of the sort of urban regeneration that I've been envisaging. The wonderful King's Cross redevelopment in London where we are today, the transformation of central Manchester, the riverside development in Newcastle.

But as I've explained, we must now go much further.

While some local leaders have set the pace in building homes in urban areas – with Andy Street in the West Midlands exceeding the numbers assessed as necessary for his authority – delivery elsewhere is behind where we need to be

London has a particularly poor record. The London Plan identified capacity for around 52,000 new homes annually – but in recent years London has been building as few as 30,000 homes a year.

The mayor's failure on housing, like his failure on crime and his failure on transport, undermines the vitality and attractiveness of our capital.

And that holds back the whole country. I support the mayoral model. But I also will not hesitate to act in the national interest when politicians fail.

The number of homes we need in London is only likely to rise beyond the 52,000 there is already provision for in the plan – but these homes are not being delivered. And the failure to turbocharge the redevelopment of inner city London is putting further pressure on the suburbs. If just 5% of the capital's built-up area had the density of Maida

Vale, it could host an additional 1.2 million people without the need to expand outwards.

That is why we now need in London to emulate the ambitious approach that Margaret Thatcher and Michael Heseltine took to London Docklands.

We are planning to intervene, using all the arms of government, to assemble land, provide infrastructure, set design principles, masterplan over many square miles and bring in the most ambitious players in the private sector, to transform landscapes which are ripe for renewal.

Our ambition in London is a Docklands 2.0 – an eastward extension along the Thames of the original Heseltine vision. Taking in the regeneration of Charlton Riverside and Thamesmead in the south, and the area around Beckton and Silvertown to the north, tens of thousands of new homes can be created. Beautiful, well-connected homes and new landscaped parkland are integral to our vision – all sympathetic to London's best traditions.

We will look at how we can ensure better transport connections from east to west, to crowd in local and private investment, and we will build on the best evidence on how and where to invest ourselves in the future.

Making sure we unlock all the potential of London's urban centre – while also preserving the precious low rise and richly green character of its suburbs such as Barnet and Bromley – is critical to the nation's future success.

And because it is a mission of national importance, I want to work with the Mayor to ensure we have a London Plan – a housing and development blueprint for the capital – worthy of the task.

We can do it together. The Dockland 2.0 sites we have identified – and of course the new homes and investment we will also bring to Old Oak Common – are in line with the GLA's own ambitions. But we owe it to Londoners, and to the nation's economic well-being, to get this right. To regenerate inner and East London, while protecting the character of family life in the suburbs and our green spaces.

Which is why I reserve the right to step in to reshape the London Plan if necessary and consider every tool in our armoury – including development corporations

And London will of course also see the benefits of this government's decision to allow the Affordable Homes Programme to be directed towards regeneration for the first time – with up to £1 billion available in London alone – as part of a transformative reform that will change how we level up communities across the country.

Because while London is the world's most attractive capital for new investment, and a national asset beyond price, the country will only succeed if our other cities also secure the investment needed to raise their productivity faster. That is why, in our programme of 20 city centre renewals, the Midlands, and particularly the North of England, are our future focus.

In Leeds we will – over the next decade – bring comprehensive regeneration to the city centre, working with the local authority to build new homes in areas such as the South Bank, the Innovation Arc and Mabgate.

We will work with the Department for Transport to unlock wider development on the land which is currently being safeguarded for transport projects – and we will also progress work on a mass transit system, providing better links within the city, and between Leeds, Bradford, and indeed Kirklees, through our £96 billion Integrated Rail Plan

And we will continue to support the rapid regeneration of Manchester with £150 million to unlock brownfield land, and a trailblazing £400 million devolved housing investment. We also have a new partnership with Great British Railways that will turbocharge travel on the newly integrated Bee Network, rolling out in full by 2030. We want to provide the modern homes and the rapid transport system that Manchester needs.

It's not just in Leeds and Manchester. In Sheffield and Wolverhampton we are already active, with £160 million of investment unlocking homes and

wider regeneration including the City Learning Quarter in Wolverhampton, where I will be later today and Castlegate in Sheffield.

In the months ahead we will be working with other great cities to ensure we have the development vehicles and the ambition necessary for further regeneration.

And in each case we want to use the planning and tax levers provided by our new Investment Zones to help drive activity, and we will work with the metro mayors to align the new housing we envisage with the wider economic development that they are helping to drive.

And we will also ensure that new homes are built in line with the best urbanist principles of gentle densification. That means new urban quarters of terraced houses and thoughtful apartment blocks the Haussmannian-style transformation of urban space.

And this programme will make vividly real the vision in our Levelling Up White Paper – ensuring that cities outside London which are rich in talent but do not enjoy the same level of productivity as cities in other jurisdictions get the rich mix of financial, human, cultural and social capital which will drive growth.

And it's not just Manchester and Leeds, Sheffield and Wolverhampton, and existing great cities where we see opportunities opening in the North. Barrow in Cumbria is the home of engineering excellence, the site of significant new investment over the next four decades, and of course it will be building the submarines of the future through the historic AUKUS deal

We want Barrow to be a new powerhouse for the North – extending beyond its current boundaries with thousands of new homes and space for new businesses to benefit from the scientific and technical expertise already clustered there. The Cabinet Secretary will be in Barrow later this week, with an elite civil service team, to meet with local leaders and the superb local MP Simon Fell, to

scope out the room for significant further expansion and investment.

Because making the most of our science strengths is vital to Britain's future. And of course the establishment of the new Department of Science, Innovation and Technology under Michelle Donelan, the new AI task force under Ian Hogarth, and the amazing life science breakthroughs that enabled the Vaccine Taskforce's work during Covid – all of these are examples of how we lead the world in science, and all are essential to our future prosperity and well being.

Supercharging Europe's science capital

And we know that we have wonderful sites of scientific innovation across the country – in the West Midlands, in Liverpool, and in the North East – but of course nowhere is more central to our scientific leadership than Cambridge.

Cambridge has been one of the intellectual centres of the world for eight centuries – the home of Newton, Widdowson, Rutherford, Crick, Watson, Franklin, Venki Ramakrishnan and Richard Henderson – the birthplace of generations of innovation. But Cambridge's future potential has been circumscribed by a lack of new space for lab capacity and research activity. And also by the constraints on new housing which have priced new graduates out of the market and have also made attracting and retaining talent harder.

While Cambridge's growth has been held back, its rivals abroad have benefited. In 2021, Boston had 6 million square feet of lab space under development; in an average year, Cambridge and Oxford together managed just 300,000 square

In Cambridge today, you have to wait almost a year for the next available lab space: that is no way to incubate the dynamic technological innovators that we sorely need.

So this government will now start to write the next, expansive, chapter in Cambridge's story of scientific

endeavour

We are going to develop a vision for Cambridge, a vision that will involve growing beautiful integrated neighbourhoods and healthy communities while supercharging innovation and protecting green spaces.

I am delighted today to be able to appoint Peter Freeman – the Chair of Homes England and one of the country's foremost delivery experts when it comes to new development – to lead this effort; under a Cambridge Delivery Group, backed by £5 million, to start this scoping work

In concert with national and local partners, Peter will be charged with crafting the detailed vision for Cambridge's future.

What it means for housing and for businesses – including those technology and life sciences firms

What it means for transport, critically what it means for water supply and for public services.

And just as importantly what a new vision can offer for healthy living, for green spaces and for cultural institutions.

I have asked Peter to advise me on what the right long-term delivery vehicle needs to look like as well, because I do not underestimate the scale of the task, and just as the Olympics succeeded thanks to the right leadership and structure, so too will delivery of this vision require the expertise, focus and momentum of a dedicated, freestanding organisation.

One that can develop the masterplan, enforce high quality design standards, acquire land, approve planning and work with developers.

It will be for Peter and his new team to take forward the vision for Cambridge, but I want to take a moment to paint a picture of the kind of evolution that we want to see in the city by 2040 – so that the scale of our intent is clear.

First, imagine a major new quarter for the city, built in a way that is in-keeping with the beauty of the historic centre.

One shaped by the principles of high quality design, urban beauty and human-scale streetscapes – emulating the scale and quality of neighbourhoods such as Clifton in Bristol or Marylebone in London, and with a high proportion of affordable homes and other properties set aside for key workers and young academics.

Then connect that new quarter to the rest of the city with a sustainable transport network that sees current congestion becoming a thing of the past, drawing on Cambridge's existing strengths in promoting cycling and walking – allowing for faster and easier travel in and around the city, including to science and business parks

Then think about expanding existing commercial infrastructure so that the constraints that businesses currently face, including on lab capacity, are removed – supporting more jobs and more growth.

Next turn your mind's eye to how the environment might look in which those living and working in Cambridge will spend their evenings and weekends – adding to Parker's Piece, Jesus Green and the Botanic Garden a substantial new green space that rivals not just the Royal Parks of the capital but the best urban parks in the world.

And in the wider region, we could support some of our most remarkable nature reserves, such as Wicken Fen, with what could become a new National Park. Finally, we can envisage new centres for culture – perhaps a natural history museum, or a genuinely world-class concert hall – proudly taking their place alongside some of Cambridge's existing institutions such as the Fitzwilliam and the Scott Polar.

That is the kind of Cambridge that I want to see come 2040. And under Peter's leadership, the hard work to deliver against that ambition starts today.

Building beautiful and making architecture great again

But to achieve success in this vision of Cambridge – like everywhere else – we need homes that are accepted and wanted by their local communities. And core to that acceptance must be a new philosophy of community-led housing that is beautifully designed to match local character, has local input, and respects the local environment

That's why we have established a powerful new body to drive building beautifully. The Office for Place which will find its home in Stoke on Trent. This new body, led by the brilliant urbanist Nick Boys-Smith, will ensure that new places are created in accordance with the very best design principles. That we are place making and not just house building

For the first time, communities will be enabled to demand from developers what they find beautiful, and banish what they find ugly

And we will support the thoughtful stewardship and repurposing of existing buildings.

As my department has demonstrated, it is both right environmentally and aesthetically to protect and preserve existing beautiful buildings and make it easier for their use to change and evolve.

Communities taking back control of their future

And we know that communities will welcome development when it is beautiful. I saw for myself in Poundbury the support that exists for the right sort of major development if it is properly master planned and well-designed.

And that is why I am so glad that the spirit of Poundbury is animating new garden towns and villages across the country – like the outstanding Welborne development in Hampshire, championed by my colleague Suella Braverman.

Six thousand new homes delivered to a design blueprint shaped by the landscape architect Kim Wilkie and the aesthetic genius Ben Pentreath. It provides a model for the future. More garden towns and villages built on similar lines, master-planned to be communities that anyone would aspire to live in – that is critical to our future.

And we will go further to empower communities to build beautiful in the places that they already love supporting people to build homes themselves by scaling up the role of community land trusts and also making more resource available to support custom and self-built homes.

We will also support communities to ensure that the beautiful new homes they want are delivered rapidly. Through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, we are simplifying and speeding up the process of updating local plans.

But of course in order to do that, that means investing in quality planning. So today we are more than doubling our funding to bust planning backlogs with over £24 million of additional investment.

And also we are creating a new “supersquad” of expert planners, backed by £13 million of new funding, to unblock major housing and infrastructure developments. This team will first land in Cambridge to turbocharge development that contributes to our vision for the city, but it will also look at sites across our 8 Investment Zones in England, to help provide high quality homes which complement the high quality jobs that are being created.

Ensuring every home is safe, decent, and warm

As you can see, we believe in speed and scale. Speed and scale matter. But our pursuit of quantity must not involve, as I have always stressed, any compromise on quality.

Too often in the past we have met housing targets but in the wrong way – ignoring the need for beautiful and well-constructed homes.

Many of the homes that were built at speed, and on a significant scale in the fifties and sixties were brutalist blocks or soulless estates. Many are now unsafe, poorly insulated and prone to damp and mould, and are also alienating environments rather than loved neighbourhoods.

We must learn the lessons from past failures as we build for the future. We must ensure that new builds are of the highest quality and also that renovation work proceeds apace in our existing housing stock, so that everyone can have a safe, decent and warm home that meets their family's needs

So for new build homes we will roll out new design codes, and later this year we will consult on a universal Future Homes Standard – to deliver comfortable homes built to be zero-carbon: warm in the winter and cool in the summer

And we will continue of course to improve life for those in existing homes. We have reduced the number of non decent homes by 2.5 million since 2010. But we must go further.

We will now more rigorously hold social landlords to account for providing quality homes for their tenants and renovating the stock they have. Because the tragic death of Awaab Ishak demonstrated that we need to act and we in central government we need to regulate more robustly.

Just last week our Social Housing Regulation Bill became law – and that requires social landlords to respond to serious hazards like damp and mould within new strict time limits. And of course we will penalise those social landlords who fail to make homes decent – with new unlimited fines for failing landlords, and the removal of house building subsidies where social landlords are not keeping their existing stock in good repair.

And of course we will update the Decent Homes Standard and apply it to private rented homes for the first time – tackling the fifth of homes which still do not meet basic standards of inhabitability.

A new deal for landlords and tenants

Through all of these interventions we recognise that a house is not just an asset to be traded but a home to be loved. Countries around the world have always recognised that thoughtful, focused, regulation is vital to ensure that everyone involved in the housing market benefits.

That is why of course we have introduced legislation in the private rented sector to deliver a fairer deal for both landlords and tenants

For tenants, we will implement our manifesto commitment to end 'no fault' evictions – protecting those currently afraid to ask their landlord for basic repairs, for fear of losing their home.

And we will also help landlords deal with tenants who abuse their position – expanding landlords' ability to evict anti-social tenants, or those who wilfully refuse to pay rent. And a new Ombudsman will provide quicker, cheaper redress, alongside reformed court processes which ensure landlords can get their properties back quickly when they need them back.

Liberating leaseholders

Action again to get our housing market to work

But making the housing market work better will also require fundamental reforms to leasehold law. We want to ensure that those who have paid for their home by acquiring a leasehold can finally truly own their own home by becoming free of an outdated feudal regime which has been holding them back.

So we will continue action on exploitative ground rents, expand leaseholder' ability to enfranchise and to take back control from distant freeholders we will reduce punitive legal service charges, reduce insurance costs – and improve transparency.

All in new legislation to be in the King's Speech.

Extending ownership to a new generation

And of course this new legislation, these changes to leasehold law will mean that true home ownership is extended to millions more. But it is also critical to our long term housing plan to get many more people on a sustainable path to home ownership.

Most recently of course we have backed existing buyers facing hardship. The Chancellor has worked with lenders to help owners facing temporary difficulties to stay in their homes, and he has extended mortgage interest support to help those who are most vulnerable and who need a helping hand.

But through backing British first-time buyers across the country through the tax and planning system we are also planning to extend the ladder of opportunity to many more – by prioritising first time buyers for homes over those with multiple properties, over those seeking to convert family homes into holiday lets, and over speculative buyers who have been seeking to invest only to inflate property prices.

We have helped already over three quarters of a million people to buy their first home since 2010 – through programmes including Help to Buy, Right to Buy and shared ownership and we will go further later this year.

Conclusion

All of the steps we are taking – on ownership, on leasehold reform, on decency, on beauty, on simplifying planning procedures, expanding planning capacity, and on regenerating and reviving our inner cities – are the components of a long term plan for safe, decent, warm and beautiful homes for all.

In the weeks and months ahead we will be saying more, and delivering more.

The comprehensive, and coherent, nature of our plan demonstrates a seriousness of intent in improving the supply of new homes – rather than an approach that returns to the failures of the past

to encourage urban sprawl, to ignore environmental imperatives, to omit the need for new infrastructure, to avoid the rigorous work of thoughtful master-planning, to neglect the need for urban regeneration, to duck the leadership required to think big, and to forget the importance of beauty and community.

These are policies that would encourage resistance to development, not incentivise it. They would weaken communities not strengthen them, and they would see the biggest economic prizes elude our grasp.

That is why we are committed to a better way.

Acting at every level – with a vision of national renewal – hundreds of thousands of new homes built from Barrow in Furness to Barking Riverside, Wolverhampton to West Yorkshire. Beautiful new neighbourhoods and thoughtfully-landscaped new quarters in our historic cities – proving to the world that the energy and ambition of our Victorian ancestors has now been superseded by a matchless modern spirit of endeavour.

This is a plan to build a better Britain – and it is a plan we are determined to deliver.

Thank you.

Published 24 July 2023

Explore the topic

[Housing and communities \(/housing-local-and-community/housing-and-communities\)](#)

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