

# Press release: Phase Two of the Community Housing fund is now open

The £163 million fund is available for community-led groups to drive forward their ambitions for delivering new affordable housing schemes across England up to 31st March 2020.

Phase One of the fund launched in July, supports applications for capacity building, pre-development revenue funding and capital funding for local infrastructure projects.

Phase Two bidding is now open to eligible organisations to bid for capital grants to fund the costs of acquiring land and building community-led housing schemes.

The fund aims to give local people a leading and lasting role in delivering local affordable housing.

Jackie Jacob, General Manager for Housing Programmes, at Homes England said: "Community-led housing is about giving local people the lead to solve local housing problems and provide affordable homes in their communities.

"At Homes England, we're committed to increasing the supply of affordable housing where it's most needed. It's great to make funding available for community groups across England to transform how the homes are delivered locally."

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

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

Further details are available in the Prospectus and the Addendum to the Prospectus for Phase Two published on [Gov.uk](http://Gov.uk)

For further media information please contact:

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Or Patsy Cusworth, 020 7393 2201, [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.

Organisations which intend to be the landlord of low-cost rental properties funded by Homes England capital grant programmes must be – or intend to become – registered as a provider of social housing (a ‘registered provider’) with the Social Housing Regulator (‘the Regulator’) before completion of any developments funded through those programmes and any payment of funding. It is not, however, a requirement to be a registered provider before applying for Homes England grant.

The requirement to be a registered provider does not apply to organisations that will not act as the landlord of low-cost rental property. Where an organisation is delivering homes for low-cost homeownership – including shared ownership – for example, there is no requirement for that organisation to be a registered provider.

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](#)

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.

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## **[News story: Spacecraft bound for the Sun due to leave Stevenage factory for testing](#)**

The UK is at the heart of this European Space Agency (ESA) mission to uncover the secrets of our planet's star. Solar Orbiter will provide close-up views of the Sun's polar regions, tracking features such as solar storms and the solar wind which causes Earth's atmosphere to light up as the Aurora or Northern Lights. The north and south poles of the Sun 'flipped' in 2013 and Solar Orbiter will also explore this phenomenon.

ESA selected Airbus Defence and Space in the UK as the prime contractor on the mission in 2012, to lead a team of companies and universities from all

over Europe that supply various parts of the spacecraft.

The UK is a world-leader in solar physics research and its scientists are in high demand on solar missions. UK scientists were instrumental in proposing the Solar Orbiter mission to ESA and the UK Space Agency funded teams from University College London, Imperial College London and the RALSpace to design and build three out of the ten state-of-the-art scientific instruments on board the spacecraft, and to contribute to a fourth.

Business Secretary Greg Clark said:

Our space sector is going from strength to strength with full backing from the Government's modern Industrial Strategy and the UK Space Agency. We have world-class scientists and a strong track record of exporting to countries all over the world. From sending spacecraft to the Sun to supporting new technologies here on Earth, our commitment to the European Space Agency will continue to deliver ground-breaking discoveries, highly-skilled jobs and substantial economic returns to Britain.

Solar Orbiter will follow in the footsteps of NASA's Solar Parker Probe which launched in August. The two missions will offer complementary perspectives of the Sun – Parker Solar Probe will travel through the Sun's atmosphere, while Solar Orbiter will observe the surface. In fact, their close operation should allow Solar Orbiter to capture images of the NASA spacecraft.

UK Space Agency Head of Science Chris Lee said:

This is an exciting time for solar science. UK research and engineering teams are at the heart of this mission which will help us understand more about our star – the Sun – and its effects on us all here on Earth.

Chris Lee, Head of Science, UK Space Agency. Credit: Airbus/Max Alexander.

Engineers at Airbus have designed and built the spacecraft to withstand the scorching heat from the Sun that will hit one side, while the other is frozen as the orbit keeps it in shadow. The design is based on the BepiColombo mission which is due to launch next month and travel to the closest planet to the Sun, Mercury – another ESA mission with significant involvement from UK engineers and scientists.

The UK's space sector is going from strength to strength, employing around 40,000 people and carrying our world-class science while growing the economy. In 2016 the UK committed €1.4 billion across a range of ESA space programmes, leading European space research in telecommunications and Earth Observation.

This is all supported by the Government's Industrial Strategy, with major initiatives such as the National Satellite Test Facility at Harwell and the

development of a commercial spaceport in Sutherland, Scotland, which could be the first in mainland Europe. The UK continues to be a leading member of ESA, which is independent of the EU.

UK companies have significant capabilities and expertise in satellite manufacturing. Yesterday (Sunday 16 September) a UK satellite called NovaSAR-1 which was built in Surrey by SSTL launched from India. SSTL already has 40% of the world's small satellite export market, and this new satellite will offer low cost remote sensing capabilities and services to their global customers, with a recent deal agreed with Australia's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) to provide Australia a 10% share of the satellite's capabilities.

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## **Press release: Birmingham prison action plan published as work continues at pace after 'step-in'**

- 200 prisoners already moved out following unprecedented 'step-in'
- 32 extra experienced prison officers and additional senior staff already in post
- Cell refurbishment is ongoing and experienced estate managers continue to support urgent improvement to living conditions
- Dedicated Prison Service safety team training staff to better manage vulnerable offenders
- The 'step-in' at Birmingham will result in no additional cost to the taxpayer

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) has [published detailed plans to improve standards](#) at HMP Birmingham which follow the unprecedented decision to take over running of the prison from G4S on 20 August, for at least the next six months.

The Prison Service placed a new experienced Governor, Paul Newton, in charge immediately and has also brought in 32 skilled prison officers and five new custodial managers (who oversee teams of officers) to provide support to colleagues and offenders and improve safety.

The 300-person reduction in HMP Birmingham's population which the MoJ committed to after 'step-in' is two-thirds complete and is expected to be

finished by the end of September, with four local courts now diverting some of those convicted or on remand to other prisons. This reduction will allow the prison to empty and improve three wings in the Victorian section of the prison which are most in need of refurbishment.

Safety teams brought in by the Prison Service are working with all staff at HMP Birmingham to reduce self-harm and violence. They have developed a tailored safety plan which will be implemented by the end of September, and training is already underway with all staff to immediately improve the way vulnerable offenders are managed.

Two senior and experienced facilities management staff are working with the prison to drive urgent improvement in living conditions. They will support ongoing work to refurbish wings and cells, replace damaged furniture and improve cleanliness throughout the establishment.

The action plan published today is the formal response to HMIP's Urgent Notification – a system set up by this Government to allow the inspectorate to immediately flag serious concerns during an inspection.

Justice Secretary David Gauke said:

We acted decisively at HMP Birmingham by taking it over from G4S, just as we are addressing issues in the wider estate by investing heavily in more staff and measures to improve safety and security.

The Prison Service had been working with G4S for many months to drive up standards at Birmingham, but it became clear that they would not be able to make the necessary improvements alone.

That's why we took over the running of the prison, appointed a strong governor to turn it around, brought in extra staff and began improvements to the building itself.

This plan sets out in more detail exactly what we are doing to establish an effective regime, restore safety and decent living conditions, and allow staff to focus on rehabilitating offenders.

Other actions included in this initial plan include:

- The work that Governor Paul Newton has done with G4S to consider short-term workforce issues, effective management of workforce plans and training requirements. Together they have developed and introduced recruitment, training and mentoring strategies for all staff, including senior managers.
- The national drugs taskforce undertaking an assessment of what further action is required to tackle drug supply and reduce demand, and improve the treatment and recovery of those with misuse problems.
- A review of the Samaritans' Listener scheme to ensure vulnerable prisoners have swift access to support.
- New processes to ensure maintenance of cell call bells systems is

undertaken on a regular basis and to improve cell bell response times.

- Improvements to training and work-related activities and to support prisoners on release.
- Two new physical education instructors brought in to improve the wellbeing of prisoners, with another due imminently.
- Read the [full action plan](#).
- The final inspection report for HMP Birmingham will be published by HM Chief Inspector later this year.