

# News story: Government announces new housing measures

The government has today announced:

- a New Homes Ombudsman to support homebuyers facing problems with their newly built home
- plans to help provide the homes the country needs through planning reform
- plans to create a lasting legacy from the 2022 Commonwealth Games
- measures to improve the safety of high-rise buildings

Measures to champion the rights of homebuyers and help ensure that when they buy a new home they get the quality of build they rightly expect. The New Homes Ombudsman will protect the interests of homebuyers and hold developers to account when things go wrong.

The government is committed to delivering 300,000 homes a year by the mid 2020s and has today (1 October 2018) announced further plans to speed up the planning system as well as make better use of land and vacant buildings to provide the homes that communities need.

This includes more flexibility to extend upwards on existing blocks of flats, shops and offices making better use of space by increasing housing density.

Championing ambitious councils keen to make new garden communities a central part of their plans for housing and economic growth and have local support there will be clearer rules to give more certainty for communities when land is needed to make this a reality.

Local authorities will also receive additional freedom to make the most of existing brownfield land and dispose of surplus land that could instead accommodate new homes.

To support a successful Commonwealth Games in 2022 and create a legacy long after the games are over, £165 million has been announced to unlock up to 5,100 homes in Birmingham and provide the infrastructure to support these new homes.

As part of its comprehensive programme to improve building safety following the Grenfell Tower tragedy, the government has also confirmed that it will ban the use of combustible materials on external walls of high-rise residential buildings. The ban will also apply to hospitals, care homes and student accommodation over 18 metres.

## **Support for homebuyers facing problems with their newbuild**

The government has announced that there will be a New Homes Ombudsman – a watchdog that will champion homebuyers, protect their interests and hold

developers to account.

We intend to legislate to require all new developers to belong to a new homes ombudsman.

House buyers should be confident that when they purchase a new home, they get the quality of build and finish they expected.

We will work with consumers and industry to develop our proposals and publish more details in due course.

In the meantime government expects industry to continue to improve the current redress arrangements and improve the consistency of quality for new build homes.

## **Planning reform**

The government set out a package of reforms to deliver 300,000 homes a year by the mid 2020s through planning reform and targeted investment.

As part of this the government has announced plans to consult on further measures to speed up the planning system as well as make better use of land and vacant buildings to deliver the homes that communities need.

This includes:

- introducing a new permitted development right to allow property owners to extend certain buildings upwards, while maintaining the character of residential and conservation areas and safeguarding people's privacy.
- clearer guidance to give more certainty for communities when land is needed to make a New Town a reality.
- giving local authorities more flexibility to dispose of surplus land that could instead accommodate new homes.

The government will consult on these new measures in due course.

## **Funding for 2022 Commonwealth Games**

Funding to help deliver the 2022 Commonwealth Games Village, provide necessary transport improvements and create a legacy after the games has ended has also been announced.

The government will provide a £165 million funding boost to unlock up to 5,100 homes in Birmingham and support wider regeneration of the Perry Barr area through major infrastructure projects:

- creating a Commonwealth Games Village – providing a home-away-from-home

for athletes and officials which will be converted to housing in Perry Barr following the games

- providing road and public transport improvements including upgrading the railway station, to support both new and existing communities

With construction due to begin in 2019, the government will work with the West Midlands Combined Authority and Birmingham City council to support these ambitious plans.

Birmingham 2022 is set to showcase Birmingham, the West Midlands and the entire country to the rest of the world as a destination for international trade, education, world class sport and tourism.

## **Building safety**

Following the Grenfell Tower tragedy the government established a comprehensive building safety programme that included an [independent review on fire safety and building regulations](#). In the summer the government published its response to this review and said it would ban the use of combustible materials on external walls of high-rise buildings subject to consultation.

Following this consultation the government has today (1 October 2018) confirmed that it will take forward this ban on all high-rise buildings that contains flats, as well as hospitals, residential care premises and student accommodation above 18 metres.

This ban will be delivered through changes to building regulations guidance and will limit materials available to products achieving a European classification of Class A1 or A2.

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# **Press release: £5m Youth Performance Partnerships to boost performing arts**

Five Youth Performance Partnerships will be created in England to give young people greater access to the performing arts, Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Jeremy Wright has announced.

The scheme will bring arts organisations and schools together to teach practical performance skills both on and off stage, including drama, dance, art, creative writing, lighting, sound and set design.

Primary and secondary schools will also be linked up with playwrights to give children the opportunity to perform new works by up and coming writers.

The Youth Performance Partnerships will be delivered by Arts Council England over three academic years and will reach 10,000 young people.

The Arts Council will select one partnership in the North, the Midlands, South West, South East and London, and prioritise places where not enough young people have the chance to take part in performance.

The Partnerships build on the success of Music Education Hubs which helps over 600,000 children a year access activities like playing an instrument, singing in a choir or joining a band.

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## News story: Action to reduce food waste announced

The Government will set up a pilot scheme to reduce food waste, Environment Secretary Michael Gove has announced today.

The scheme will be supported by £15 million of additional funding which has been allocated to tackle food waste.

Currently around 43,000 tonnes of surplus food is redistributed from retailers and food manufacturers every year. It is estimated a further 100,000 tonnes of food – equating to 250 million meals a year – is edible and readily available but goes uneaten. Instead, this food is currently sent away for generating energy from waste, anaerobic digestion, or animal feed.

The pilot scheme will be developed over the coming months in collaboration with businesses and charities. The scheme will launch in 2019/20.

Environment Secretary Michael Gove said:

Nobody wants to see good food go to waste. It harms our environment, it's bad for business – and it's morally indefensible.

Every year, around 100,000 tonnes of readily available and perfectly edible food is never eaten. This has got to change.

In the coming months we will work closely with business, charities and volunteers to deliver a new scheme to tackle this problem.

The scheme will specifically address surplus food from retail and manufacturing. This is just one part of the problem – food waste in the UK totals 10.2 million tonnes per year, of which 1.8 million tonnes comes from food manufacture, 1 million from the hospitality sector, and 260,000 from retail, with the remainder from households. Further action to cut food waste from all sources is being considered as part of Defra's Resources and Waste Strategy, which will be published later this year.

Defra is commissioning work to improve the evidence base around food waste, including understanding why more surplus food is not being redistributed. This work will inform the design of the scheme, ensuring it drives down food waste in the most effective possible way.

Dr David Moon, Head of Business Collaboration at WRAP said:

Today's announcement is a great boost for the many support networks around the country working hard to ensure good food feeds people, and is not wasted.

Between 2015 and 2017 surplus food redistributed from retailers, manufacturers and hospitality and food services businesses increased by 50%, with nearly £130 million worth of food saved from waste.

And there is the potential to increase this significantly, and to expand the range and type of foods with more fresh produce. Not only will this benefit people, it will also help reduce the huge environmental impact of food waste.

The new scheme follows the £500,000 Food [Waste Reduction Fund](#) announced in December last year to support the substantial reduction of food waste throughout England.

In July this year it was announced that funds have been awarded to [eight charities](#) across the country. The Food Waste Reduction Fund grants will help provide the essential resources needed to expand their important work, and will further inform development of the new scheme.

## **Further information:**

- In 2017, [205,000 tonnes](#) of surplus food in the retail and food manufacturing sectors was wasted. Some of the surplus is difficult to minimise, costly in that it would need to be reworked or repackaged, and some surplus would not be edible. It is estimated by WRAP that 100,000 tonnes of this is both accessible and edible with the remaining being more difficult to redistribute.
- The pilot will run in 2019/20, drawing on £15 million additional funding the Treasury have allocated to Defra to tackle food waste. Any future funding would be subject to the Spending Review.

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## **[News story: Charity Fraud Awareness Week \(22 – 26 October 2018\)](#)**

This is the third annual [Charity Fraud Awareness Week](#) aiming to help you increase resilience against fraud.

More than 40 charities, regulators, professional bodies and other stakeholders are joining forces to help combat fraud targeted against charities.

The main aims of the week are to:

- raise awareness of the key risks affecting the sector
- promote and share good counter-fraud practices
- promote honesty and openness about fraud

## Fraud awareness week themes

Each day of national charity fraud week the campaign will focus in on particular topics.

Monday 22 October Cyber-fraud (current and emerging threats)  
Tuesday 23 October Grant fraud (due diligence and partnership working)  
Wednesday 24 October Donation fraud/legacy fraud  
Thursday 25 October Insider fraud  
Friday 26 October Moving money safely

## How to get involved

We are encouraging the charity sector to get involved in Fraud Awareness Week, you can:

- download a [UK supporters pack](#) from the Fraud Advisory Panel website
- download an [international edition of the supporters pack](#) from the Fraud Advisory Panel website
- develop your own counter fraud activities aimed at staff and volunteers, members and beneficiaries, donors and supporters, for example staff awareness training
- [join the conversation on Twitter](#) by promoting your own counter fraud messages or retweet ours using the hashtag #CharityFraudOut

Our guidance will also help you to [protect your charity from fraud](#).

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## [News story: London-Newquay flights secured for further 4 years](#)

Today (1 October 2018) the government and Cornwall Council have announced that direct flights between Newquay Airport and London Gatwick have been secured for a further 4 years, backed by funding from both organisations.

The service will see daily flights between the 2 airports, with 3 return flights on weekdays and 2 per day at weekends. Operated by FlyBe, the service will commence from October 2018.

This follows success of the previous route offered by Flybe, which saw demand almost double over 3 years. Gatwick flights now account for 40% of all

passengers using Newquay Airport.

And the funding has further increased confidence in the airport, with other airlines operating new routes from Dusseldorf, Frankfurt and Stuttgart.

Public Service Obligation routes are used to subsidise vital air connections and economic and social development in peripheral regions, where a clear business case is put forward.

## **Aviation and maritime media enquiries**

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