

Press release: Government investment to unlock more homes across England

- a further 44 areas shortlisted for funding for major infrastructure projects worth £4.1 billion and with the potential to deliver over 400,000 homes
- almost £300 million funding in total for housing projects in Greater Manchester, the West of England and Oxfordshire

Almost £300 million government investment in Greater Manchester, the West of England and Oxfordshire is set to help deliver thousands of much-needed new homes for local communities, Housing Secretary Sajid Javid announced today (21 March 2018).

Greater Manchester is set to receive £68 million funding to support the Mayor's ambitious target of delivering 227,200 homes by 2035 and boost economic growth across the Northern Powerhouse.

Government support for the West of England will help to nearly double the number of new homes being delivered historically, increasing from around 4,000 homes to 7,500 homes a year. This will deliver much-needed homes and support the local economy.

Ministers have also approved a housing deal with Oxfordshire worth £215 million that will help deliver a further 100,000 new homes for local people. This follows a similar deal agreed with the West Midlands last week to support the Mayor's ambitious plan to deliver 215,000 homes across the region.

This latest announcement comes as the government has also announced that [Housing Infrastructure Fund bids](#), from a further 44 areas for projects to help unlock more homes across country, have been shortlisted to the next stage of the competitive process.

A potential £4.1 billion funding will be available for vital infrastructure like roads, bridges, new schools and medical centres, which are needed for new communities.

Housing Secretary Sajid Javid said:

This government is determined to build the homes this country needs. That's why we're working with ambitious areas across England and backing them with investment and support.

This new housing investment in Greater Manchester, the West of England and Oxfordshire will help build much-needed homes, giving more people the opportunity to get on the property ladder.

We're also investing in local infrastructure like schools, roads and hospitals, so that we can help unlock even more new homes in the areas where they're needed most and build a Britain fit for the future.

Greater Manchester housing package

This funding will support a focus on developing brownfield land for housing and getting more homes built on small sites.

The [government package](#) includes:

- £50 million for a Land Fund to help councils in the region to prepare brownfield land for housing development
- taking 4 Housing Infrastructure Fund projects through to the next stage of assessment for funding
- up to £8 million for capacity funding to boost support for housing delivery across the region
- £10.25 million funding to help regenerate the Collyhurst Estate in north Manchester
- new flexibilities on the existing £300 million Housing Investment Fund to allow more homes to be delivered through loans to developers

Mayor of Greater Manchester Combined Authority Andy Burnham said:

I welcome this Housing Deal from government and the £50 million Greater Manchester's Leaders have secured that will allow us to build on more of Greater Manchester's brownfield sites.

It brings us closer to our ambitions and is a clear statement of intent as we move towards publishing the rewritten Greater Manchester Spatial Framework.

As we look to build the homes Greater Manchester needs, we must do everything we can to make sure as much brownfield land as possible is made available for development. This is the best way to ensure we minimise the impact on our green spaces.

But this isn't just about numbers of homes and land for development. I've been clear that I want to see more truly affordable homes built and more homes available for social rent across Greater Manchester.

I also want the rewritten Greater Manchester Spatial Framework to specify a date by which all new homes built across Greater Manchester should be net zero carbon. This is all part of my ambition.

West of England housing package

The West of England – covering Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset – is a high housing demand area. Across the region, the average house prices are more than 8 times average incomes, with Bath more than 10 times the average income.

The government's [interim package](#) supports the Mayor's with ambitious plans to deliver more homes and tackle affordability challenges. It includes:

- £3 million of funding for specialist support to help the region deliver large housing development
- taking 2 Housing Infrastructure Fund projects through to the next stage of assessment for funding
- exploring the potential for a deal with housing associations in the region to deliver more affordable homes

West of England Mayor, Tim Bowles said:

We have worked closely with government to secure this announcement, which will see millions of pounds invested in delivering new homes in the West of England. We know that we need more homes, to buy and rent – homes where they are needed at prices people can afford.

This deal will support us to work with our constituent councils, and North Somerset council, to build homes and communities that are well-connected.

Oxfordshire housing deal

The first completed government [housing deal](#) has been confirmed with Oxfordshire's 6 local authorities – Cherwell, Oxford City, South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse, West Oxfordshire, Oxfordshire County Council – and the Local Enterprise Partnership, OxLEP.

The deal, which is worth £215 million, will:

- deliver 100,000 homes by 2031 – which is significantly above the Local Housing Need figure in the draft National Planning Policy Framework – playing a key role in the emerging Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford corridor where the government recognises the need to build up to 1 million new homes in the area by 2050 to maximise its economic potential
- provide £150 million of the funding to build much needed bridges, roundabouts and roads
- deliver more than 1300 affordable homes by dedicating over a quarter of the new funding, £60 million, to support these new homes

Oxfordshire is also home to 3 garden towns and villages – at Bicester, Didcot and Oxfordshire Cotswold – where government has invested almost £4 million to deliver an additional 30,000 homes.

Cllr Bob Price, Chair of the Oxfordshire Growth Board said:

I'm pleased that so many councillors of all parties and from all parts of the county have backed the deal. It represents a comprehensive and integrated approach to addressing Oxfordshire's severe housing shortage and infrastructure challenges.

It demonstrates the government's commitment to working with Oxfordshire and recognises the critical role the county will play in driving forward the UK economy post-Brexit, attracting global investment.

The government has said the deal represents a 'downpayment' on a pipeline of infrastructure investment for Oxfordshire – and we in the county will work with them to ensure that happens.

Housing Infrastructure Fund

With the government committed to building 300,000 homes a year by the mid-2020s, the £5 billion [Housing Infrastructure Fund](#) is part of a comprehensive programme to fix the broken housing market.

Last month, ministers confirmed 133 council-led infrastructure projects that received a total of £866 million funding to support local work that will make housing developments viable and get much-needed homes built quicker.

The latest bids from 44 areas across England are for high-impact infrastructure like key roads, rail links and schools with the potential to deliver over 400,000 homes.

They will now move to the co-development stage, where government officials will work with these areas to further develop their bid and assess the projects. However, not all projects will receive funding after this stage or funding amounts could change to the amount originally bid for.

Without this financial support these projects would struggle to go ahead or take years for work to begin, delaying the homes these communities need.

Together with the government's Industrial Strategy, this funding will provide high-quality infrastructure to support economic growth.

Successful bids will be announced from autumn 2018 onwards and local authorities would then begin building the necessary infrastructure to help speed up new homes being built.

Further details

See [further details on the housing packages](#).

The [Housing Infrastructure Fund](#) is a government capital grant programme to

help unlock new homes in areas with the greatest housing demand. Funding is awarded to local authorities on a highly competitive basis.

The £5 billion fund is divided into 2 streams:

- a Marginal Viability Fund – available to all single and lower tier local authorities in England – to provide a piece of infrastructure funding to get additional sites allocated or existing sites unblocked quickly. Bids have a soft cap of £10 million
- a Forward Fund – available to the uppermost tier of local authorities in England – for a small number of strategic and high-impact infrastructure projects. Bids have a soft cap of £250 million

The government will be progressing Forward Funding projects to go through to co-development in the coming weeks, with final funding announced from autumn 2018 onwards. Find more information on the [areas being taken forward to co-development](#).

Office address and general enquiries

2 Marsham Street

London
SW1P 4DF

Contact form

<http://forms.communiti...>

General enquiries: please use this number if you are a member of the public
030 3444 0000

Media enquiries

Email

newsdesk@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Please use this number if you're a journalist wishing to speak to Press Office
0303 444 1209

Social media – MHCLG

Twitter – <https://twitter.com/mhclg>

Flickr – <http://www.flickr.com/photos/mhclg>

LinkedIn – <http://www.linkedin.com/company/mhclg>

[News story: Prudential Regulation Authority launches public consultation on eligibility of guarantees](#)

The [Prudential Regulation Authority](#) (PRA) has launched a public consultation on the eligibility of guarantees as unfunded credit protection.

The proposed changes seek to clarify what contracts are eligible to be treated as guarantees for credit risk mitigation under the Capital Requirements Regulation (CRR). Some of the suggestions proposals made in the consultation document could impact the capital treatment of UKEF guaranteed loans.

UKEF is in touch with the PRA and is working closely with them to answer their questions on export credit guarantees and the international obligations that influence the terms of our guarantee.

[Find out more and download the consultation paper.](#)

The consultation closes on Wednesday 16 May.

UKEF contact

Victoria D'Sylva, Policy Development Manager
victoria.dsylva@ukexportfinance.gov.uk

[Speech: Brexit offers big opportunities to showcase our creativity and innovation](#)

Some people may say that Britain will struggle to trade with the rest of the world after we leave the European Union. Such a gloomy outlook fails to recognise the continued strength of the UK economy, with record inward investment, an 11% increase in exports and employment at a historic high.

In reality, the UK has cutting-edge capabilities. We lead the world in art and culture, food and drink, finance and education.

Last year we had 58,000 tech start-ups in the UK, a new tech business every

hour. Digital technology has helped reduce many of the old barriers to trade and made the world more connected. You don't have to leave Basingstoke to sell your digital app to someone in Beijing. UK businesses have a huge amount to gain from this trend.

The IMF predicts 90% of global growth will be generated beyond the borders of Europe in the coming years.

Much of this will come from Asian economies, where new markets are growing to match their new wealth. Trade between the UK and China is already at record levels, worth more than £59 billion, while UK exports to China increased by over 25% last year.

China's middle class is expected to number 600 million by 2020 – greater than the current population of the EU. This offers big opportunities for UK businesses in a market that wants UK goods and services, and this government is putting the UK in a position to benefit.

This week I will take a delegation of nearly 300 UK businesses to the [GREAT Festival of Innovation in Hong Kong](#), which has been organised by the Department for International Trade. Entrepreneurs and businesses of all sizes will come together to showcase the best of British creativity and innovation.

The festival will explore how the world will work, live, play and learn in the future, and it's a golden opportunity for British companies to create new business relationships not only with Hong Kong, China and the wider Asian region, but across the world.

There are already brilliant partnerships between UK and Asian companies of every kind, from large corporates to new start-ups.

From cutting-edge UK robotics making construction safer in Hong Kong, to Chinese automotive technology cleaning the air we breathe in UK cities.

Today I'm launching 3 campaigns to showcase the best of British fashion, beauty, food and consumer goods on some of Asia's top commerce platforms and mobile shopping apps.

More than 160 UK brands will benefit – from Waitrose and Neal's Yard Remedies, to Boohoo, Cath Kidston, Victoria Beckham and Burberry. This type of e-commerce will be the new frontier of global trade. It favours smaller companies, and ensures more women can be involved in international trade.

That's why, as the digital economy continues to develop, the UK will use our new independent trade policy to make sure global rules benefit British businesses.

We are an innovation nation ready for the hi-tech opportunities around the world that Brexit will open up.

Demand for UK goods and services is growing, and the new relationships we forge at the GREAT festival will maintain this momentum, so we can deliver a brighter, more prosperous future for every part of the UK.

Britain is not struggling, it is blossoming.

Speech: Strengthening financial oversight of Montenegrin Parliament

Poštovani gospodine Sekuliću, gospodine Jovićeviću, dragi Emile, poštovani poslanici i poslanice,

Drago mi je da sam danas ovdje sa vama da obilježimo kraj faze projekta na kojem smo radili sa crnogorskom Skupštinom i Vestminsterskom Fondacijom.

As the representative body of Montenegrin citizens, and the seat of legislative power in the country, ensuring sound legislative scrutiny is central to Parliament's role and essential in delivering accountability. Robust parliamentary oversight of the public finances not only facilitates good use of public funds but enhances the provision of public services and supports the alignment of policy with citizens' needs.

Parliamentary Budget Offices, such as the one the UK has helped the Montenegrin Parliament to establish, are designed to enhance the financial and economic analytical expertise available within a parliament as well as providing independent costing of policies and legislation. They are supposed to be the objective and competent aide to the MPs in performing one of their most crucial roles – holding government accountable for the money it has spent.



Copyright: Parliament of Montenegro

I'm delighted that the British Government, working through the Westminster Foundation for Democracy, has supported the establishment of a Parliamentary Budget Office within the Parliament of Montenegro. The UK's intention is that this facility will enhance the culture of effective financial oversight and scrutiny, thus assisting the country in the process of European integration.

We are grateful to the Parliament of Montenegro for their consistent support for this project, which was not an easy task, and involved a series of complicated institutional and procedural solutions.

The work of the Montenegrin Parliamentary Budget Office has been tested through the times of the post-election period in 2016, formation of the new Government, adoption of Montenegro's first 4-year Fiscal Strategy and the government's plan for fiscal consolidation.

Although few in numbers, the researchers have managed to both build up their capacities and answer the inquiries of MPs, as well as work proactively on the topics they considered neglected or important enough for the attention of MPs.

While the position of the UK remains that we call for all elected MPs to take up their seats in Parliament and in order to better serve those who voted for them, I am pleased that MPs of all parties have drawn on material produced by the Parliamentary Budget Office.

We are particularly glad that within this project, the MPs and parliamentary staff of the Montenegrin Parliament had the opportunity to witness the work

done by the Scottish Parliament Information Centre and the functioning of its Financial Scrutiny Unit.

The UK looks forward to the Parliament of Montenegro continuing to develop the Parliamentary Budget Office. There is still work to do to make the Parliamentary Budget Office an integral part of the parliamentary structure, and I welcome the reassurance from the Parliamentary leadership that this will happen soon.

The UK hopes that the products produced by the Parliamentary Budget Office will be used not only by the MPs in the Committee for Economy, Finance and Budget, but by all the committees across the Parliament. Public money flows through all policies of the state, and its oversight is equally important in the welfare sector as well as healthcare or education.

Furthermore, we hope that the products of Parliamentary Budget Office will be read and used by a wider audience outside of the Parliament, as a credible and objective source of data for both the civil society organisations and media.

The UK stands ready to support the future work to strengthen the accountability of Montenegrin institutions, and to continue work which draws on the UK's rich parliamentary experience.

Zahvaljujem se na vašem doprinosu i radujem nastavku razgovora na ovu temu.

Hvala.

[Press release: February 2018](#) [Transaction Data](#)

In February:

- HM Land Registry completed more than 1,632,960 applications to change or query the Land Register
- the South East topped the table of regional applications with 376,385

The transaction data shows HM Land Registry completed 1,632,969 applications in February compared with 1,782,088 in January and 1,516,596 last February, of which:

- 376,546 were applications for register updates compared with 462,352 in January

- 796,961 were applications for an official copy of a register compared with 825,613 in January
- 186,329 were search and hold queries (official searches) compared with 211,393 in January
- 23910 were postal applications from non-account holders, compared with 26,002 in January

Applications by region and country

Region/country	December applications	January applications	February applications
South East	287,649	403,526	376,385
Greater London	250,636	339,286	313,340
North West	139,168	222,150	185,253
South West	124,681	173,058	158,433
West Midlands	107,079	150,292	143,338
Yorkshire and the Humber	98,017	139,207	122,513
East Midlands	90,239	122,812	115,725
Wales	58,854	80,315	74,301
North	56,648	77,912	71,772
East Anglia	53,549	73,345	71,764
Isles of Scilly	79	110	75
England and Wales (not assigned)	42	75	70
Total	1,266,641	1,782,088	1,632,969

Top 5 local authority areas

Top 5 local authority areas	December applications	Top 5 local authority areas	January applications	Top 5 local authority areas	February applications
Birmingham	19,714	Birmingham	27,561	Birmingham	26,256
City of Westminster	17,977	City of Westminster	25,488	City of Westminster	21,991
Leeds	14,262	Leeds	20,256	Leeds	18,730
Manchester	13,384	Manchester	19,350	Manchester	16,972
Cornwall	13,332	Cornwall	18,367	Cornwall	16,606

Top 5 customers

Top 5 customers	December applications	Top 5 customers	January applications	Top 5 customers	February applications
Enact	36,313	Enact	50,327	Enact	50,488

Top 5 customers	December applications	Top 5 customers	January applications	Top 5 customers	February applications
Optima Legal Services	19,826	Nationwide Building Society	31,589	Optima Legal Services	27,904
O'Neill Patient	19,764	Optima Legal Services	27,284	O'Neill Patient	23,851
HBOS PLC	16,649	O'Neill Patient	26,073	Devonshires	20,684
TM Group (UK) Ltd	16,444	My Home Move Limited	19,103	TM Group (UK) Ltd	19,558

[Access the full dataset on data.gov.uk.](#)

Notes to editors

1. Transaction Data is published on the 15th working day of each month. The March Transaction Data will be published at 11am on Monday 23 April 2018 at [HM Land Registry Monthly Property Transaction Data](#).
2. We are challenging ourselves to reassess our language to make our terms understandable to both our commercial and citizen customers. This is in line with our commitment set out in the [Business Strategy 2017-2022](#) under the 'simplicity' element of our ambition.
3. The monthly Transaction Data shows how many applications for register create (new titles), leases, transfer of part, register updates (updating existing titles), official copies of the register and search and hold queries (official searches) were completed. It reflects the volume of applications lodged by customers using an HM Land Registry account number on their application form.
4. Completed applications in England and Wales shown by region and by local authority include postal applications as well as those sent electronically.
5. Transaction Data excludes pending applications, bankruptcy applications, bulk applications, and discharge applications (to remove a charge, for example, a mortgage, from the register).
6. Transactions for value are applications lodged involving a transfer of ownership for value. For an explanation of other terms used, see [abbreviations used in the transaction data](#).

7. Most search and hold queries carried out by a solicitor or conveyancer are to protect the purchase and/or mortgage. For example, a search will give the buyer priority for an application to HM Land Registry to register the purchase of the property. This can give an indication of market activity.
8. Reasonable skill and care are used in the provision of the data. We strive to ensure that the data is as accurate as possible but cannot guarantee that it is free from error. We cannot guarantee our data is fit for your intended purpose or use.
9. Transaction Data is available free of charge for use and re-use under the [Open Government Licence](#) (OGL). The licence allows public bodies to make their data available for re-use.
10. If you use or publish the Transaction Data, you must add the following attribution statement:
Contains HM Land Registry data © Crown copyright and database right 2017. This data is licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.
11. HM Land Registry's mission is to guarantee and protect property rights in England and Wales.
12. HM Land Registry is a government department created in 1862. It operates as an executive agency and a trading fund and its running costs are covered by the fees paid by the users of its services. Its ambition is to become the world's leading land registry for speed, simplicity and an open approach to data.
13. HM Land Registry safeguards land and property ownership worth in excess of £4 trillion, including around £1 trillion of mortgages. The Land Register contains more than 25 million titles showing evidence of ownership for some 85% of the land mass of England and Wales.
14. For further information about HM Land Registry visit www.gov.uk/land-registry
15. Follow us on: Twitter [@HMLandRegistry](#), our [blog](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#).

Contact

Senior Press Officer

Marion Shelley

Trafalgar House
1 Bedford Park
Croydon
CR0 2AQ

Email

marion.shelley@landregistry.gov.uk

Telephone

0300 0067543

Mobile

07790 690297

Press Officer

Paula Dorman
Head Office

Trafalgar House

1 Bedford Park
Croydon
CR0 2AQ

Email

paula.dorman@landregistry.gov.uk

Telephone

0300 0063349

Press Office

Email

HMLRPressOffice@landregistry.gov.uk