

Press release: Government champions innovation in bid to build well-designed homes

- Ministers to call for closer links between government and industry to deliver well-designed homes.
- Industry summit to promote quality design to help deliver new homes and fix the broken housing market.

Ministers will today (25 April 2018) call on industry to embrace the latest innovations to make sure we are building the good quality homes that our country needs.

As part of the government's focus on fixing the broken housing market and its ambition of delivering 300,000 new homes in England by the mid-2020s, it's essential that the quality and design of new housing is addressed. This can help secure support from communities for new homes, and make sure we have good quality homes that people can feel proud living in and next-door to.

Recent research shows that more than 7 out of 10 people would support new residential development if buildings are well-designed and in keeping with their local area.

Action to boost innovative approaches for well-designed new homes include:

£1 billion investment through the Home Building Fund to develop new, modern approaches to design and construction

To date, 8 projects across 11 local authorities, backed by government funding, will use modern methods of construction such as modular homes to build good quality homes, using the latest techniques, whilst helping to speed up housing delivery.

Learning from other countries like Australia, Norway and Sweden where good design is embedded in decision making

For example, based on an Australian model, the government will urge councils to set their own design quality standards, giving communities the ability to better reflect their own unique character in local planning policy.

Embracing new technologies

For example using Virtual Reality (VR) technology to win the confidence of communities before a single brick is laid. By visualising proposed new housing from the neighbour or homebuyer's perspective, communities will be able to see how development can visually contribute to the area from an early stage, even before planning permission has been granted.

Housing Secretary Sajid Javid will say:

Our homes are the making of all of us, which is why today's event on raising the bar on the quality of new homes is so important.

This government is determined to make sure that high quality design is the norm rather than the exception.

Housing Minister Dominic Raab will say:

We are putting high-quality design on the map as never before when it comes to building better homes and stronger communities.

Today's conference marks an important milestone in that journey.

Industry leaders, including local authority planners, developers and design professionals, attending the Design Quality Conference will share their expertise to ensure how homes look becomes just as important as the number delivered.

Ministers will focus on how developers can use better quality design in order to win over both communities and new generations of first-time buyers, who expect the highest quality homes before parting with their hard-earned deposits.

When things go wrong, the government has also proposed strengthening ways for homebuyers to complain when their home hasn't been built satisfactorily – with these new measures recently being subject to a [consultation](#).

The event will build on previous government action to ensure new homes are built using quality materials and design methods, as set out in the recently published [draft National Planning Policy Framework](#).

The document, which is currently out to consultation, outlines requirements for design guides and codes to feature prominently in new Local Plans, significant consideration to be given to existing local character as well as setting out the density of developments that meet the needs and expectations of the community.

The conference will also include speakers from the Royal Institute of British Architects, Stephen Lawrence Trust, The Princes Foundation, Historic England and Homes England as well as other experts with experience in delivering excellent build quality for new and existing communities.

A series of exhibitions and seminar workshops will be held during the day, focusing on a range of issues such as:

- How to use quality methods and materials to create supportive communities.
- New approaches that lead to quality design in practice.

- Using new technologies that support greater community engagement in design, approaches to measuring quality and presentation.
- Training, skills development and latest innovation to ensure the use of good design principals spread across the industry.
- The expectations of consultee organisations such as Historic England, Homes England and the National Infrastructure Commission in designing homes that fit in with their wider setting.

National Planning Policy Framework

In the [revised National Planning Policy Framework](#) it is made clear that the government is committed to ensuring the planning system can deliver high quality buildings and places.

The document sets out that permission should be refused for a development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions. Conversely, where the design of a development accords with clear expectations in local policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a valid reason to object to development.

Housing white paper

The [housing white paper](#) published in February 2017 also set out the government's ambition to give communities a stronger voice in the design of new housing, and to drive up the quality and character of new development, building on the success of neighbourhood planning.

Home Building Fund

The £3 billion [Home Building Fund](#) provides support for builders using modern methods of construction, custom builders, and new entrants to the market. An additional £1.5 million announced in the Autumn Budget will help small and medium-sized builders who cannot access the finance they need.

Eight projects employing modern methods of construction have been awarded almost £1 billion through the Home Building Fund to date.

[News story: New taskforce to take action against violent crime](#)

Home Secretary, Amber Rudd, today announced a coalition of government ministers, cross-party MPs, police leaders, local government and the voluntary sector will make up the Serious Violence Taskforce – which will ensure sustained, swift and decisive action against violent crime.

Together with the government, the taskforce will help design and deliver the key commitments of the [Serious Violence Strategy](#), working with affected communities to ensure immediate and real action is taken.

The taskforce's aim is to stop the recent increases in serious violence and see levels of violent crime reduce. It will hold the government and others to account, evaluate the strategy's impact and commission further work as commitments are delivered.

Chaired by the Home Secretary, the taskforce – which will meet for the first time on 26 April, when the frequency of future meetings will also be decided – will have the vital job of ensuring the strategy is effectively delivered.

Home Secretary Amber Rudd said:

I am determined that the Serious Violence Strategy will have an immediate impact on tackling the scourge of serious violence.

I am absolutely clear that the taskforce must work with the government to deliver the strategy's commitments. Together, we will seek to prevent serious violence from happening in the first place and ensure the measures that I set out when I launched the strategy are delivered.

Everyone joining the taskforce is committed to ending the serious violence blighting our communities and I look forward to working together in the weeks and months ahead.

The taskforce's members include Home Office ministers Nick Hurd and Victoria Atkins; London MPs Chuka Umunna and David Lammy; Mayor of London Sadiq Khan; Met Commissioner Cressida Dick; National Crime Agency Director-General Lynne Owens; and Chingford and Woodford Green MP Iain Duncan Smith, who founded the Centre for Social Justice and has a long-standing interest in issues around serious violence.

Its membership reflects the Home Secretary's words when launching the strategy last week when she spoke of the importance of the taskforce's cross-party dimension.

Establishing the taskforce was one of 60 measures announced in the Serious Violence Strategy. Commissioned by the Home Secretary and backed with £40 million of Home Office funding, the strategy marks a major shift in the government's response to serious violence.

It strikes a balance between prevention and robust law enforcement with a new £11 million Early Intervention Youth Fund for community projects to help young people live lives free from violence.

The strategy identifies the changing drugs market – in particular the devastating impact of crack cocaine – as a key driver of the violence harming our communities, and announces a range of powerful actions to tackle the

issue of 'county lines' and its implications for drugs, violence and exploitation of vulnerable people. That includes £3.6 million to establish a new National County Lines Co-ordination Centre.

The membership of the taskforce will be:

- Home Secretary, Amber Rudd
- Minister for Crime, Safeguarding and Vulnerability, Victoria Atkins
- Minister for Policing and the Fire Service, Nick Hurd
- Minister for Children and Families, Nadhim Zahawi
- Minister for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries, Margot James
- Member of Parliament for Tottenham, Rt Hon David Lammy MP
- Member of Parliament for Streatham, Chuka Umunna MP
- Member of Parliament for Chingford and Woodford Green, Rt Hon Iain Duncan Smith MP
- Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, Cressida Dick
- National Police Chiefs Council Deputy Assistant Commissioner, Duncan Ball
- Director-General of the National Crime Agency, Lynne Owens
- Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan
- Chair of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, David Lloyd
- Chief Executive of the Big Lottery Fund, Dawn Austwick
- Children's Commissioner, Anne Longfield
- Chief Executive of Public Health Wales, Dr Tracey Cooper
- Chief Executive of Public Health England, Duncan Selbie
- Local Government Association, Councillor, Simon Blackburn
- CEO of the Ben Kinsella Trust, Patrick Green
- CEO of Redthread, John Poyton
- Head of Gangs SOS project for St Giles Trust, Junior Smart
- CEO of Onside Youth Zones, Kathryn Morley
- Chief Operating Officer of Catch 22, Naomi Hulston
- Knife crime campaigner and Member of Parliament for Enfield North (2010-2015), Nick de Bois

[Press release: Minister for Europe attends Gallipoli Commemorations in Turkey](#)

The Minister paid respects to allied forces who lost their lives over a century ago in the World War One Gallipoli campaign.

Sir Alan attended an International Service of Commemoration where he was invited to deliver a [speech of reconciliation](#) and lay a wreath.

He will join other dignitaries from around the world representing New Zealand, Australia and France.

The Minister for Europe Sir Alan Duncan said:

I am honoured to attend the Gallipoli commemorations and pay respects to allied forces who fought in the World War One campaign.

It is also a remarkable testament to the power of reconciliation that a century after Turkey and the UK were on opposite sides, we now stand shoulder to shoulder as NATO allies and trusted friends.

Further information

News story: Robin Walker Speech at Community Outreach event

As a Minister at the Department for Exiting the EU, I have spoken at a number of these events with our EU communities here in the UK and I am delighted to be here tonight to hear from you directly.

The purpose of our meeting today is to bring you, the French community here in the UK, together with officials from the Department for Exiting the EU and the Home Office to reassure you on your rights and discuss the issues that matter most to you.

I know that many of you, your friends and your families, will want to know what our EU exit means for your future in the UK. As we have made clear throughout this process, and as the PM emphasised in her speech in Florence: EU citizens who have made their lives in the UK are highly valued, we want you to stay; and we thank you for your contribution to our country.

The United Kingdom and France are very close partners and friends – as has been shown in recent weeks – and I hope that tonight's event can help to demonstrate our desire – as we prepare to leave the EU – to maintain the strong bonds that we have created over generations, indeed centuries.

Everyone in this room, and members of the French community across the whole of the UK, make a contribution to British society and culture. You help save lives, you teach children, you enrich our business, tech and finance industries, and you help to make Britain the inclusive and diverse society it is. So I want to stress that you are an important part of our community. We want to make sure that everyone here continues to feel welcome – and that you're able to carry on living your lives as before, in the country you have

chosen to make your home.

I hope that today's event will demonstrate that commitment.

From the start of our negotiations we have prioritised citizens' rights. I am delighted that in March we were able to announce real progress on the legal drafting of the Withdrawal Agreement. This includes successfully translating all the commitments made in the December political agreement between us and the EU commission on citizens' rights into the Withdrawal Agreement legal text. This agreement will enshrine your rights in international law, securing your rights, and those of the other 3 million EU citizens in the UK, and 1 million UK nationals in the EU.

This agreement gives certainty not only about residency, but also healthcare, pensions and other benefits. We understand that the arrangements on which citizens rely need to go beyond broad political declarations and deal with the realities of people and their lives. The point of meetings such as today is to hear from you and learn about these realities.

It will enable families who have built their lives together in the UK and EU to stay together. And will ensure close family members can join after the implementation period, on the basis of current EU rules, as long as the relationship existed at the end of the implementation period – 31 December 2020.

Let me stress – the guarantee we are giving on your rights is real. We have committed to incorporating the Withdrawal Agreement fully into UK law. This will mean that the UK courts can refer directly to it and your rights are protected fully in law both here and internationally.

Details of the agreement are set out in a Joint Report published on 8 December and the Withdrawal Agreement legal text, published on 19 March.

Our agreement with the EU will protect your right to residency through granting settled status.

You will hear fuller details of this proposed scheme later in the evening but let me summarise:

Settled status will be granted to those who have been in the UK for five years or more at the end of the implementation period. For those of you – or your friends – who don't yet have five years residency on that day, the 31st December 2020, we will make sure that you will be able to stay to make up these years, so you can apply for settled status when you have.

We have committed to giving you until June 2021 to submit an application for settled status – and we have made a commitment in the Withdrawal Agreement that this application system will be smooth, streamlined and low cost. I know that the French community in the UK is long established, and for those who have already acquired permanent residence documents I would like to stress that there will be a simple process to exchange this for a settled status document completely free of charge. This will also be available to people who have documents demonstrating Indefinite Leave

to Remain, such as those who came before the UK joined the EU.

In addition, those who acquire settled status will be able to leave the country for up to 5 years, without losing their right to return. In this respect we have gone further than existing EU law which only allows for an absence of 2 years in the permanent residence process.

The Home Office is currently developing this application system, which will be designed with your needs and priorities in mind. This system will be launched for voluntary applications by the end of this year, giving those of you already living in the UK, 2 and a half years to apply.

Events such as this give the officials working on the system the opportunity to hear directly from EU citizens to ensure it is carefully designed to meet your needs. I am grateful to the officials from my department and the Home Office who are here to listen to you and to take your questions.

Even while we're leaving the EU, we want to continue to deepen the strong relationship we already have with France, after decades, indeed centuries, of cooperation.

The UK's relationship with France is one of the longest, most complex and, arguably, most important in the world. In 48 years' time, it will be one thousand years – a millennium – since William the Conqueror landed near Hastings, and the Duke of Normandy became the King of England. The famous Bayeux Tapestry chronicles William's triumph and we are delighted that, at the 35th Franco-British Summit hosted at Sandhurst earlier this year, President Macron agreed the loan of the Bayeux Tapestry to the UK – an important signal of the depth of our relationship and a marker for how far we have come since William landed on UK shores.

Of course, the UK and France have a partnership like no other. We work closely together across a full spectrum of issues from defence, to science, to culture and we reinforced this co-operation at this year's Franco British Summit. We agreed to: strengthen our security co-operation, including on military engagements, counter terrorism and cyber security; collaborate further to deliver cutting edge technologies in areas such as medicine and space; develop our partnership on education, and work together to protect our cultural heritage. And there's more.

We also have a strong economic relationship – France's total trade with the UK is worth nearly 100 billion euros. And over 5,000 of our companies invest in each other's countries. As immediate neighbours it is in the interests of both the UK and France to forge a strong economic partnership between the UK and the EU on goods and services.

But of course, the relations between our two countries are not only, or primarily, about the relations between the Governments. It's the human stories and links that underpin our shared history and future. These are ties of family, friendship, work and beyond. There are hundreds of thousands of British and French citizens living in each other's countries. And there are no fewer than 12 million British visits to France each year – more than any

other country in the world. Likewise, more French people visit the UK than those of any other nationality. It is no coincidence that the French language is the first language, after English, that is taught in schools here.

French schools have been operating across the UK for years – there are over a dozen such schools in London alone. And at our recent summit the UK and France agreed to deepen cooperation across all education sectors, to increase opportunities for young people, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds. We also have very close ties in the higher education sector, which were set out to me when I visited the University of London Institute in Paris recently. It is clear to see that the lives of hundreds of thousands of French and British people are intertwined every day, and it is these people who will make the Franco-British relationship such a rich one for years to come.

All of you here today are a big part of that and, as the Prime Minister said at the Franco British Summit reception at the V&A Museum: “I am proud that more than three million EU citizens [including hundreds of thousands of our French friends] have chosen to make your homes and livelihoods here in our country. We greatly value the depth of the contributions you make – enriching every part of our economy, our society, our culture and our national life. We know our country would be poorer if you left and I want you to stay”.

I echo these remarks and I know that President Macron feels the same about the British Community in France.

So I hope that you leave today more informed by the steps we’re taking to secure your future. I also hope that you leave today able to share the information you learn with your friends and relatives in the French community and have the chance to share your views with us.

Reassuring and informing our citizens is best done when it is a shared endeavour. That’s why we hope to host more events such as this with EU citizens across the country.

We value enormously the French community in the UK, and I hope today’s event will help to ensure we provide reassurance to as many people as possible that, despite the challenges of Brexit, there is a bright future for French people in Britain.

Both our Foreign Secretary and the President of France have spoken about London as the sixth biggest French city in the world. We want our French neighbours to continue to enjoy the UK, to contribute to our communities and to continue to be part of the fabric of our nation. The UK and France will remain partners, neighbours and friendly rivals for generations to come.

News story: Scam emails claiming to be from Companies House

We're aware that some customers have received suspicious emails about company complaints. These emails are not from us.

The email is sent from: "noreply@cpgov.uk" with the following message:

If you receive any emails from this sender, forward them to phishing@companieshouse.gov.uk as soon as possible. Do not open any attachments.

If you receive a suspicious email, you should report it to us immediately. Do not disclose any personal information or open any attachments. Companies House will never ask for your authorisation code.

You can read our guidance for more information on [reporting fraud to Companies House](#).