

# What's New? Policy Summary

## Thousands of new homes to be built and derelict land transformed

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) have announced thousands of new homes will be built on underused and derelict land to regenerate local areas and help people onto the property ladder. Almost £58 million from the £75 million Brownfield Land Release Fund (BLRF) has been allocated to 53 councils. In the East the following councils will receive:

Council	Location	Amount
Broxbourne Borough Council	Hope Nursery	£160k
Essex County Council	Hargraves House and Lexden Springs	£146k and £371k
Fenland District Council	Fenland Nene Waterfront	£200k
Great Yarmouth Borough Council	Beach Coach Station	£207k
Peterborough City Council	Middleholme	£550k
Stevenage Borough Council	Brent Court	£750k



**Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Michael Gove, MP** said, "We are levelling up and **backing home ownership in every corner of the country**, delivering new high-quality, affordable homes and creating thriving places where people want to live, work and visit. Making the most of previously developed land is a government priority and it will help protect our cherished countryside and green spaces." Full details can be found [here](#).

## Findings from Wave 3 of the Household Resilience Study, April - May 2021

The **Household Resilience Study** is a follow up survey to the 2019-20 English Housing Survey. It examines how household and housing circumstances have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. **The third and final wave of the survey was run in April-May 2021.** The report is split into four chapters: Employment and Income, Housing Affordability including arrears, Household Circumstances and satisfaction with local area and finally, Changes in Wellbeing, including loneliness. **Main findings:**

- There were more households in mortgage arrears in April-May 2021 than there were before the pandemic.
- Private rental arrears remain higher than they were pre-pandemic.
- **While more likely to be in arrears than private renters, over the course of the pandemic, the proportion of social renters in arrears has not changed.**

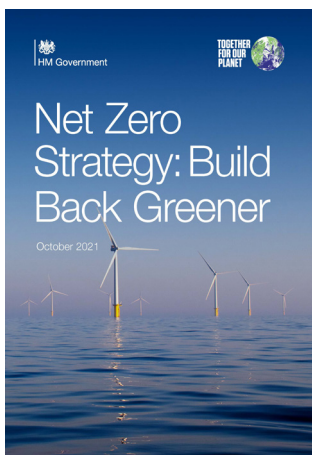
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- One in ten households were behind with at least one household bill in April – May 2021; more than one in five had recently used their savings to pay their rent or mortgage.
- Over half of households said their income did not change between November – December 2020 and April-May 2021; fewer households reported that their income had decreased and more reported that their income had increased.
- **The proportion of renters who expect to buy their own home has declined further.**
- Overcrowding remains higher than it was pre-pandemic, particularly in the private rented sector.
- People's satisfaction with their local area declined slightly over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- For home owners, well-being levels are starting to improve but not to pre pandemic levels.

For further statistics behind these headline findings please click [here](#).

## The Government have published their Net Zero Strategy



It sets out policies to meet the 4th and 5th Carbon Budgets, the UK's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and a decarbonised economy by 2050.

Formulated under 4 key principles:

- 1. Prioritise consumer choice.**
- 2. Ensure biggest polluters pay the most for the transition through carbon pricing.**
- 3. Ensure the most vulnerable are protected through Government support: energy bill discounts, energy efficiency upgrades etc.**
- 4. Work with businesses to deliver deep cost reductions in low carbon technology.**

A summary of commitments are up to £90bn private investment unlocked by 2030, supporting 440,000 well-paid jobs in green industries in 2030. The aim is this will provide certainty to businesses to support the UK in low carbon technologies and develop green industries in industrial heartlands.

The strategy focusses on 7 key areas: Power, Fuel Supply and Hydrogen, Industry, Heat and Buildings, Transport, Natural Resources (waste and gases), and Greenhouse Gas Removals. They Government propose to support the transition with cross-cutting action as follows:

- Deliver £1.5bn funding to support net zero innovation projects.
- Use the UK Infrastructure Bank (UKIB) to crowd in private finance, support £40bn in investment and expand low carbon technology and sectors.
- Introduce a new Sustainability Disclosures Regime including mandatory climate related financial disclosures and a UK green taxonomy.
- Reform the skills system to equip training providers, employers and learners for their role in net zero and support the development of UK supply chains.
- Publish an annual progress updated for achieving climate goals.
- Urge other countries to set targets.

**November 2021**

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## Decarbonisation Fund

Registered providers of social housing (including private and local authority providers) can apply for some of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) to support the installation of energy performance measures in social homes in England. Up to £160 million is available. The SHDF will upgrade a significant amount of social housing stock to an Energy

Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of C. Wave 1 projects will follow a worst first, fabric first, lowest regrets approach to improving the energy performance of social housing by 31 January 2023.

**The fund will help to deliver warm, energy-efficient homes, reduce carbon emissions, tackle fuel poverty, support green jobs, develop the retrofit sector and improve the comfort, health and well-being of social housing tenants.**

The SHDF Wave 1 Competition has now closed. Successful applicants will be announced in early 2022.

## Heat and Buildings Strategy

The Government have published their Heat and Buildings Strategy. The key aims and commitments are around the following themes:

### Heat Pumps

1. Phase out the installation of new natural gas boilers from 2035
2. Ensure that heat pumps are no more expensive to buy and run than gas boilers by 2030
3. Improve the appeal of heat pumps
4. Grow the supply chain for heat pumps to 2028
5. Ensure all new buildings in England are ready for net zero from 2025
6. Phase out the installation of fossil fuel heating systems in properties not connected to the gas grid
7. Grow UK-manufactured technology and capabilities



### Hydrogen

1. Develop hydrogen for heating buildings by assessing the feasibility, safety, consumer experience and other costs and benefits, by the middle of the decade
2. Establish large-scale trials of hydrogen for heating
3. Enable blending of hydrogen in the gas grid
4. Consult on hydrogen-ready boilers
5. Develop the evidence base necessary to take strategic decisions on the role of hydrogen

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for heating buildings in 2026

## Greener Buildings

1. Improve the performance of existing homes
2. Support social housing, low income and fuel poor households
3. Improve the performance of public sector buildings
4. Set long-term direction and clear signals
5. Reduce energy consumption of commercial and industrial buildings by 2030
6. Launch a new policy framework for energy-related products
7. Ensure flexible demand and supply (including through smart technologies and energy storage) is taken into account across the full range of energy performance, fuel poverty and heat policies.
8. Develop a workforce pipeline with the skills to meet the requirements of net zero transition.

## Other carbon savings

1. Accelerate growth of the low-carbon heat network market through a series of complementary measures
2. Increase the proportion of biomethane in the gas grid in Great Britain

## Levelling Up Fund: first round of successful bidders announced

The £4.8 billion Levelling Up Fund contributes to the levelling up agenda by investing in infrastructure that improves everyday life across the UK, including regenerating town centre and high streets, upgrading local transport, and investing in cultural and heritage assets. In the East the following areas have been successful in securing funding:

Local Authority Name	Bid Name	Bid Value
Central Bedfordshire	Clophill (Transport Infrastructure Improvement Project)	£6.7m
Central Bedfordshire	Houghton Regis (Community Wellbeing Hub)	£19.9m
Luton	The Stage (Transforming Luton Town Centre)	£20m
Peterborough	Living Lab	£20m
Southend-on-Sea	Infrastructure Upgrades to Coastal Attractions	£19.9m



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## Government's Budget and Spending Review

Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak delivered his Autumn Budget and Spending Review.

### Key takeaways:

- **£1.8bn** to assist housing supply via land regeneration
- A multi-year housing settlement, totalling **£24bn**; including **£11.5bn** for the Affordable Homes Programme which will fund up to **180,000** new affordable homes, with **65%** of funding for delivery outside London.

- Government consultation on developer tax has been published and an addition **£65m** investment into improving the regime through a new digital system
- Cutting the Universal Credit taper rate by **8%**. The taper rate is one where Universal Credit is reduced once a claimant starts to earn over a certain amount. The drop from 63% to 55% means the level of Universal Credit a claimant can receive will be cut by **55p rather than 63p** in every £1 over the work allowance.
- The government has said that its forecast is "**defaulting Local Housing Allowance rates for 2022/23 to the level of elevated cash rates agreed for 2020/21**".
- **£640m** a year for rough sleeping and homelessness but no mention of Housing First
- The chancellor also revealed that more than 100 projects across the UK would be recipients of the first **£1.7bn tranche of a £4.8bn** Levelling Up Fund.
- **£3.9bn** to decarbonise buildings, including **£1.8bn** to support low-income households to make the transition to net zero.
- **£450 million** to grow the heat pump market in England and Wales as part of the ambition to work with industry to reduce the costs of heat pumps by **25-50% by 2025**.
- **£338m** to encourage private investment.
- Business rates exemptions and relief in England for eligible green technologies to support the decarbonisation of non-domestic buildings.
- **£950m** for the Home Upgrade Grant and **£800m** for the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.
- **£1.4bn** to help decarbonise the public sector estate in England.

You can read Inside Housing's full summary [here](#).

## Local areas to trial new digital initiatives to make planning process more accessible

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) have announced new **innovative digital tools** to help local people have their say in the planning process will be trialled in **13 areas across England**. Over £1 million of government funding has been allocated to 13 planning authorities under the PropTech Engagement Fund to test new digital initiatives to make the planning process more open and accessible and boost public engagement. In the East the following areas will receive funding:

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Local Authority	Amount
Dacorum Borough Council	£100k
Greater Cambridge	£98k
Watford Borough Council	£100k

## £65 million support package for vulnerable renters

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities have announced a support package of **£65million** for vulnerable renters struggling due to the impact of the pandemic. The funding will be given to councils in England to support low-income earners in rent arrears – helping to prevent homelessness and support families get back on their feet. Renters across the country have been protected throughout the pandemic by the Government, which has included a ban on evictions and a £400 billion support package for the economy.