

Welcome to the Planning Bulletin prepared by **Tetlow King Planning**. This Bulletin provides an update of recent publications across the housebuilding and planning sectors from a wide range of public, private and quasi-governmental organisations.

Autumn Budget

The Budget has made a number of announcements that will boost the planning and housing sectors.

Under the Levelling Up section of the speech, Rishi Sunak announced:

‘I’m allocating the first round of bids from the Levelling Up Fund. £1.7bn to invest in the infrastructure of everyday life in over 100 local areas. With £170m in Scotland, £120m in Wales, and £50m in Northern Ireland...this will benefit the whole United Kingdom.

We’re backing projects in: Aberdeen. Bury. Burnley. Lewes. Clwyd South. And not one, not two, but three successful projects for the great city of Stoke-on-Trent. But that’s not all. We’re also going to fund projects in Ashton under Lyne, South Leicester, Sunderland, Doncaster, and West Leeds.’

Announcements in relation to Net Zero, Migration and Skills were also made by the Chancellor.

On top of the Autumn Budget, earlier this month, the government announced the allocation of £58 million to fund the delivery of 5,600 new homes on brownfield land. The

Brownfield Land Release Fund (BLRF) has been allocated to 53 Councils. It is hoped that the funding could help support up to 17,000 jobs across the housing and construction sector and the wider economy.

Exeter City Council is the biggest beneficiary receiving nearly £6 million towards five redevelopment projects. Other councils in the south west that have also been successful awarded funding include: Cornwall, Torbay, Plymouth and North Somerset. London and the south east were also successful with the London Boroughs of Kensington and Chelsea, Haringey, Richmond upon Thames and Waltham Forest receiving large funding awards as well as Reading, Bracknell Forest and Brighton and Hove. Surprisingly fewer awards were made to Councils within the northern regions where you would have expected a greater abundance of brownfield development projects.

The full speech is available on the GOV.UK website [HERE](#)



New digital initiatives trials to make planning more accessible

Fulfilling on the White Paper's commitment for greater use of digital technology to improve public accessibility of the planning system, the department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has launched pilot scheme funding for innovative digital tools.

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.

The planning authorities that will receive a share of the funding are: Dacorum Borough Council, Chesterfield Borough Council, Cotswold District Council, Southampton City Council, Greater Cambridge, Stockport Council, London Borough of Hounslow, London Borough of Wandsworth, Dorset Council, London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, Watford Borough Council, Bolsover District Council and North Lincolnshire Council.

The selected projects include:

- The London Borough of Hounslow will create an online 3D map, helping residents to visualise and comment on proposals.
- Watford Borough Council will develop a QR code system for residents allowing them to view an interactive map and access planning information.

- Greater Cambridge Shared Planning will use digital technology to capture views outside of the formal consultation process, including social media comments, media articles and blog posts.

The pilot schemes, which will run until March 2022, will inform the government's work to modernise the planning system and the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities is working with planning authorities to establish best practice and identify where further digital guidance and innovations are needed.

In addition to the pilot, it has been suggested that chancellor may announce £65 million of funding towards the digital transformation of the planning system in the Autumn budget.

The planning system has long been criticised for its lack of public engagement and its inability to access hard to reach groups such as younger generations. It is hoped that the wide use of digital technology will encourage wider community participation in the decision-making process.

Further information is available on the GOV.UK website [HERE](#)

Adjustments to housing delivery test

Concerns have been raised about the implications of adjustments to this year's housing delivery test results that could mean that about a third of English local planning authorities avoid a more serious penalty compared to last year.

The delivery test works by comparing the net homes delivered over the previous three financial years to the homes required over the same period, with penalties for those councils delivering less than 95 per cent of their requirement.

In a written ministerial statement, Pincher announced that four months will be subtracted from councils' housing requirement figures for 2020/21 due to the "disruption" caused to homebuilding by the Covid-19 pandemic. This third of the year covers the most heavily disrupted period of 2020, which lasted from April to the end of July, when many construction sites were forced to shut. Together with the one month already subtracted from the housing requirement for 2019/20 to reflect March 2020's slowdown in activity, a total of five months will be taken off the three-year period used to assess council's performances under the HDT, equating to about 14 per cent.

Figures prepared by a Planning Consultancy show that, following the five-month subtraction in total, 90 councils would be penalised, or 29 per cent of all English local planning authorities. This compares to 126 without the adjustment, or

40 per cent of all authorities. It is apparent that this year's adjustment will mean a significant number of authorities will avoid the penalty.

Most, especially those in planning consultancy argue that Pincher's move will undoubtedly ease pressure on LPAs to meet the HDT. However, Shelly Rouse, principal consultant with the Local Government Association's Planning Advisory Service, argued that the less stringent test is unlikely to significantly alter the profile of those authorities that were subject to the presumption. In 2020, out of date plans were the biggest common factor amongst those LPAs that were subject to the harshest penalty, she said, which was a "very similar" pattern to the previous year.

Housing delivery remains a contentious issue, whilst it almost unanimously agreed that not enough houses are being built, the solution to this and explaining why England has such a housing shortfall is disagreed upon.

Full article in Planning Resource [HERE](#)

Social housing investment could save councils £600 million a year

The Chartered Institute of Housing and the Centre for Homelessness Impact claims that Local authorities could save nearly £600 million a year if money spent on housing support was invested instead in building homes for social rent.

Their analysis reveals that building 10,000 homes for social rent would cost around £40m a year. However, building these homes could save £44m annually in housing support if the properties housed tenants currently living in the private rented sector or temporary accommodation.

The Chartered Institute of Housing and the Centre for Homelessness Impact argue that the Treasury could save £1.9 billion annually by moving recipients of housing benefit from the private rent sector to social housing. Such a move would also make low-income households less vulnerable to homelessness, the organisations argue.

Around 1.7 million tenants in the private rented sector receive housing subsidies through the benefits system which costs £7.9bn a year. As such, moving each claimant out of private rented accommodation and into social rented housing would save around £1,100 a year in benefit payments, while moving each family from temporary accommodation would save about £7,760 per family per year.

As such, it is apparent that there are some clear economic benefits to this suggestion, however it would mean central Government rethinking its current housing system and making some radical changes.

Full article available in the Planner [HERE](#)



More than 100,000 fewer new homes to be built due to pandemic disruption, says report

The Building Post-Pandemic Prosperity report said the backlog of completions across all tenures affected by the COVID-19 crisis would not be cleared until at least 2025, with more than 100,000 fewer new homes being built by 2023 due to the pandemic.

Nearly 32,000 home completions were lost during the first year of the pandemic, according to the report commissioned by the Local Government Association, the Association of Retained Council Housing and the National Federation of ALMOs (NFA). “Construction was hit hard by COVID and, although it has shown signs of strong recovery, homebuilding remains significantly behind pre-COVID forecasts,” the report states.

Since 2017, the government has pledged to deliver 300,000 new homes annually by the mid 2020s, and that still remains the target. However, it is looking like an increasingly unachievable target with large backlogs which need to be accounted for.

The report included figures that show one in 10 households are made to wait more than five years for a home and said waiting-list times were the result of a “chronic shortage of affordable homes”. Council housing waiting lists could almost double by 2022, to 2.1 million households, as the reduction of pandemic-related support schemes cause a spike in homelessness, the report said.

See the full report [HERE](#)

Housing association shared ownership sales rise almost 10% in 2020

This year's analysis of housing association shared ownership sales found that sales increased 19 per cent in outer London but decreased in inner London.

A total of 12,396 first tranche (the initial stake bought by leaseholders in a shared ownership home) shared ownership units were sold over the period in England – an increase of 1,090 sales.

The Help to Buy scheme offers people the opportunity to afford larger homes than what would be possible via Shared Ownership and there is also more freedom with this programme; in central London where affordability is a huge issue the prospect of using the Help to Buy scheme may be more appealing. Shared Ownership properties have also been largely affected by cladding complications and the requirement for obtaining an EWS1 form (an independent assurance that the building's external walls meet the government's latest safety standards) for mortgage approval, this is not so much of an issue outside Inner London.

The special report also looked at the number of low-cost ownership homes that have not yet been fully staircased. This stood at 207,501 properties for 2019-20. Of these, 75 per cent were outside the capital, 14 per cent were in outer London and the remainder were in inner London. It is clear that affordable housing is a growing sector outside the Capital.

Full article available in Social Housing [HERE](#)



Climate guidance for planning launched

The RTPI and the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) have launched new guidance on how the planning system can help communities to face the climate crisis.

In advance of COP26, the new guidance, known as The Climate Crisis – A Guide for Local Authorities on Planning for Climate Change, aims to place the government's net-zero ambitions and building community resilience to severe weather at the heart of the planning system.

The guide sets out the importance of the planning system in designing places that cut carbon through the promotion of energy efficiency, sustainable transport and renewable energy. Six basic steps to planning for the climate crisis are identified in the guide, including one to ensure that there is comprehensive relevant evidence on climate mitigation, and use that evidence to set local carbon reduction targets for the local development plan.

Dr Wei Yang, president of the RTPI, states in relation to the new guidance and the role of planners in combatting climate change:

'We are concerned that the effects of climate change will disproportionately affect the most vulnerable individuals in the country, and we believe the planning system, utilised properly,

can prevent this. Also, many of the actions necessary to tackle the climate crisis are also key in creating healthy, ecologically rich, prosperous, and beautiful places for us and for our future generations.'

It is hoped this guidance will help to build a more sustainable future with a range of policies and initiatives to address current and emerging issues, some of the recommendations include:

- Require all major new development to set a robust net-zero energy strategy as a core part of the overall corporate strategy and infrastructure delivery plan.
- Set planning policy that prioritises a move away from car dependency.
- Consider and prioritise the use of nature-based solutions and natural capital approaches in the design of a new design of development.

View the new guidance [HERE](#)

In the News



Low Incomes

Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) analysis reveals 956,000 households in England are on low incomes and spend more than 30% on rent or struggle to cover their rent after housing benefit.

[CLICK HERE](#)



Environment Bill

MPs have voted against a House of Lords' amendment to the environment bill that would have seen a minimum 50-metre buffer around ancient woodland near new development.

[CLICK HERE](#)



Rural Affordable Housing

New research suggests that 57% of young people who live in rural areas anticipate leaving over the next five years, with 72% concerned about affordable housing.

[CLICK HERE](#)



Build to Rent

According to British Property Federation almost 90 per cent of build-to-rent units have been built in cities where the government has increased housing need levels and the tenure could play critical role in helping councils meet their higher home requirements.

[CLICK HERE](#)



Net Zero Strategy

The government's Net Zero Strategy has revealed that the government will seek to "embed transport decarbonisation principles in spatial planning" and reiterates that the NPPF will be reviewed to "make sure it contributes to climate change mitigation and adaptation as fully as possible".

[CLICK HERE](#)

Note: You may need to register to the website provider to view some links.

About Us

Tetlow King Planning is a leading town planning and development consultancy operating nationwide, with specialists in housing, affordable housing, care, custom and self-build housing. We have been established for over 35 years and operate from our offices in Bristol and West Malling, Kent. Testimonials and news stories on development proposals are available to view on our website www.tetlow-king.co.uk. Follow us on our social media accounts at:



TKP Successes

Tetlow King Planning is delighted to have assisted in various appeal successes in October 2021.

The West Malling office has successfully obtained planning permission on appeal for 3 self-build dwellings in Medway following the refusal of the application by planning committee. Medway Council has a development plan dating from 2003 and a housing land supply position of approximately 3 years, yet the application was refused on the basis of being harmful to the character of the area (Riverside Marshes Area of Local Landscape Importance) and in an unsustainable location.

In undertaking the planning balance, it was accepted that there was localised landscape harm and that the site was unsustainable, however the lack of 5-year housing plus the additional weight afforded by delivery of self-build housing against a clear demand weighed heavily in favour of the appeal.

Full commentary is available on the TKP website.

Job Opportunities

Tetlow King Planning is looking to expand its team due to a substantial increase in new commissions. We are seeking Town Planners with experience from either the public or private sector, ideally with five years' experience and MRTPI chartered status. To discuss these opportunities please call **John Sneddon** or **James Stacey** on **0117 9561916**.



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