

Note on GLA interventions to support housing delivery

This note sets out GLA programmes and policies designed to support housing delivery beyond the Policies in the London Plan.

Most of these are contained within the London Housing Strategy, a statutory strategy governed by section 333A of the Greater London Authority Act 1999. The latest version was adopted in August 2018 following extensive consultation and consideration by the London Assembly and the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State did not use his power of direction to amend the strategy.

The list is not exhaustive and more detail can be provided if the Panel require it.

The Strategy also includes a range of 'asks' of other organisations, particularly central Government. These have not been included here but are summarised in chapter eight of the strategy.

The interventions are listed under the following categories:

- 1) Interventions in the land market
- 2) Infrastructure and viability
- 3) Diversification of the homebuilding industry
- 4) Affordable housing delivery
- 5) Construction skills
- 6) Precision-manufactured housing
- 7) Skills and capacity in local government.

1. Interventions in the land market

- The **Mayor's Land Fund**, initially set at £250m but recently increased by a further £486m to £736m, has been established to buy and prepare land for new and affordable housing ([LHS, box 2, p56](#)). The Fund will enable the Mayor to influence the pace, quality and level of affordable housing on acquired sites.
- The GLA, TfL and boroughs have **compulsory purchase powers** and the Mayor has stated his intention to make more use of these to support delivery on strategic sites ([LHS, p60](#)), including through establishing a land assembly centre of expertise to create economies of scale across acquiring authorities.
- In 2012, the GLA inherited more than 600ha of land from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), the London Development Agency (LDA) and the Thames Gateway Development Corporation (TGDC). The **GLA public land portfolio** now includes some of London's most significant development opportunities, including Barking Riverside, the Royal Docks and Greenwich Peninsula. The Mayor is utilising this land to support his housing delivery objectives¹, including capacity for around 40,000 new homes
- The **GLA's functional bodies** control significant landholdings which are not yet in development or procurement, and they have committed to ensure that this land is utilised to support additional housing delivery ([LHS, p57](#)):
 - TfL is reviewing all its landholdings with a view to supporting additional housing delivery. This includes operational sites, where engineering solutions that allow co-location with

¹ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/gla_property_asset_strategy_0.pdf

housing could be found. TfL has committed to starting on sites with potential to deliver 10,000 homes;

- the Metropolitan Police, through the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), is reviewing its own landholdings, and anticipates bringing forward sites by 2022, with the potential to deliver up to 2,500 homes; and
- the London Fire Brigade (LFB), through the London Fire Commissioner (LFC), has identified several small sites that might be appropriate for redevelopment as housing.
- The Mayor is using the establishment of the **Health and Care London Estates Board (LEB)** to enhance the potential role of surplus NHS land to support housing delivery². This includes hosting the London Estates Delivery Unit at the GLA ([LHS, para 3.42](#))

2. Infrastructure and viability

- The Mayor's **Housing Zones** programme aims to accelerate housing development in areas across London with high potential for growth but which face delivery constraints, including infrastructure, remediation, land assembly or financial viability. A total of £600 million in funding has been made available by the Mayor and Government for the construction of 75,000 new homes across 30 zones³.
- The GLA is coordinating London's bids for **Housing Infrastructure Funding**, with one major bid already confirmed ('Docklands Light Railway – Accelerated Growth Programme') and several others in the pipeline.
- The Mayor is establishing an **Infrastructure and Development Coordination Team** to support coordination of infrastructure and development planning and delivery in London, focusing on larger strategic schemes⁴

3. Diversification of the housebuilding industry

- The Mayor's **Building Council Homes for Londoners** programme⁵ aims to support a resurgence in council housebuilding, up from around 200 per year at present to thousands each year, with an initial target of 10,000 council housing starts by March 2022. To support the programme, the Mayor has allocated £1.1bn of grant funding to 27 London boroughs.
- The GLA has established **Strategic Partnerships with major housing associations** that offer affordable housing grant on more flexible terms, with support for land assembly, in an effort to promote more direct development by housing associations. In return, strategic partners must contractually commit to delivering 60% of their programme as affordable housing ([LHS, p82](#))
- The GLA is also providing support and advice to **small and medium-sized housing associations** who wish to develop more homes, and has funded the establishment of two consortia of SME housing associations: North River Alliance and the Connected Partnership ([LHS, p82](#))

2

<https://www.london.gov.uk/moderngovmb/documents/s60332/05a%20London%20Estates%20Board%20clean.pdf>

³ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing-and-land/increasing-housing-supply/housing-zones>

⁴ <https://www.london.gov.uk/decisions/md2386-infrastructure-and-development-coordination-team>

⁵ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing-and-land/increasing-housing-supply/building-council-homes-londoners>

- The **Small Sites, Small Builders** initiative (LHS, box 6, p78) is the Mayor’s way of promoting development on small publicly owned sites. It is targeted at a broad range of small organisations who deliver housing, including housing associations, private sector builders and contractors, community-led housing organisations, and self-builders. It is based on a simplified competitive disposal process, combining some of the convenience of land auctions with some of the delivery and quality control of a development agreement – but without the complication of procurement⁶
- Until recently, **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments** were due shortly after commencement of a scheme unless the scheme was large enough to benefit from an instalments policy. In order to lower the finance costs associated with smaller scale residential development, the Mayor has amended the Mayoral CIL instalments policy so that more schemes – particularly medium-sized and smaller ones – can benefit. Councils are strongly encouraged to apply the same principle to their own instalments policies (LHS, p79)
- The Mayor is providing a range of support for the **community-led housing sector**, including providing funding for a London Community-Led Housing Hub⁷ (LHS, box 15, p159) and making available £38m funding to support community-led housing schemes through the London Community Housing Fund⁸.

4. Affordable housing delivery

- The GLA is responsible for the administration of the **affordable homes programme** in London (LHS, box 10, p116 – further details in appendix 1). The current programme consists of £4.82bn of grant funding to support 116,000 affordable housing starts between April 2015 and March 2022. The majority of this funding goes to housing associations. Details of the Mayor’s mainstream affordable homes programme is set out in the prospectus for the programme⁹ and a subsequent addendum¹⁰.
- As part of the affordable homes programme, the Mayor has created an **Innovation Fund** to support novel or innovative proposals to increase levels of affordable housing in London. These include new typologies, tenures and building methodologies that have the potential to be scaled up significantly with the help of GLA funding¹¹.
- Most of the GLA’s affordable housing grant funding goes to Registered Providers (housing associations and councils) for schemes that they lead themselves. To supplement this, the GLA has created the **developer-led funding route** (LHS, p113, para 4.37) to allow private-sector led schemes to access affordable housing grant. It makes available grant at a fixed rate per affordable home, to increase the level of affordable housing above the level viable without grant.

⁶ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing-and-land/land-and-development/making-small-sites-available-small-builders>

⁷ <https://www.communityledhousing.london/>

⁸ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/london_chf_prospectus_0.pdf

⁹ <https://www.london.gov.uk/file/11941201>

¹⁰ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/addendum_to_ahp_2016-21_funding_guidance_18_june.pdf

¹¹ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing-and-land/homes-londoners/apply-innovation-fund>

- The Mayor provides funding for a range of **supported and specialist housing**¹², including supported housing, homelessness hostels, move-on accommodation, refuges, and Gypsy and Traveller sites¹³.
- As part of his efforts to increase housing delivery on GLA Group owned **public land**, the Mayor has set a target for functional bodies to achieve an average of 50 per cent affordable housing for new schemes coming forward (LHS, p119-120).

5. Construction skills

- **The Mayor's Construction Academy (MCA)** (LHS, box 7, p89) is delivering an approach to skills and training which will help make sure there are enough people with the construction skills that London needs, including a focus on increasing the involvement of groups and communities currently underrepresented in the construction workforce¹⁴.
- The Mayor has committed to lead a **construction skills campaign** (LHS, p86, para 3.108). It will focus on the benefits of a career in construction and the contribution that Londoners can make to the capital by building homes for current and future residents. To help increase the construction workforce above its current size, this campaign will be targeted at groups currently under-represented in the construction workforce, in particular young people, women, and those from a BAME background.
- The Mayor has also committed to work with councils, developers, construction employers, and training providers to develop a system which enables Londoners to access high quality **training, apprenticeship and employment opportunities** across the capital through better coordination and brokerage. The Mayor will work with councils to ensure that this new approach is reflected in section 106 agreements with developers

6. Precision manufactured housing

- As well as funding schemes using precision-manufactured homes via the Innovation Fund, the GLA is also creating a **design tool** (LHS, box 8, p90) to identify how different precision-manufactured housing systems could be used on specific sites. The Mayor intends this work to help enable more consistency across the industry and to support the aggregation of demand for precision-manufactured housing components – enabling it to grow beyond its current small scale, while continuing to benefit from innovation and customisation.

7. Expertise and capacity in local government

- The Mayor has made available £10m revenue funding for council housing and planning departments through the **Homebuilding Capacity Fund**¹⁵. The four priorities of the fund are: delivering a new generation of council homes; increasing housing supply by supporting the development of small sites; proactive planning in areas with significant growth potential; and

¹² <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing-and-land/increasing-housing-supply/funding-supported-and-specialist-housing>

¹³ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing-and-land/increasing-housing-supply/gypsy-and-traveller-accommodation>

¹⁴ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/skills-and-employment/skills-londoners/mayors-construction-academy-mca-programme>

¹⁵ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing-and-land/homes-londoners/homebuilding-capacity-fund>

ensuring optimal density of new residential developments. The funding can be used to recruit staff, undertake studies or appoint consultants.

- As part of the Building Council Homes for Londoners programme, the Mayor worked with Future of London to fund a **Council-Led Housing Forum**¹⁶. The Forum will provide technical advice to practitioners involved in council-led delivery of homes. Boroughs that are pioneering delivery in-house or through housing companies, housing associations and independent experts will share skills, experience and lessons learned, including pitfalls to avoid.

¹⁶ <https://www.futureoflondon.org.uk/networks/council-led-housing-forum/>