House of Commons

Committee of Public Accounts

The Affordable Homes Programme since 2015

Twenty-Ninth Report of Session 2022–23

Report, together with formal minutes relating to the report

Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed 28 November 2022

HC 684
Published on 7 December 2022
by authority of the House of Commons

The Committee of Public Accounts

The Committee of Public Accounts is appointed by the House of Commons to examine "the accounts showing the appropriation of the sums granted by Parliament to meet the public expenditure, and of such other accounts laid before Parliament as the committee may think fit" (Standing Order No. 148).

Current membership

Dame Meg Hillier MP (*Labour (Co-op), Hackney South and Shoreditch*) (Chair)

Olivia Blake MP (*Labour, Sheffield, Hallam*)

Dan Carden MP (*Labour, Liverpool, Walton*)

James Cartlidge MP (*Conservative, South Suffolk*)

Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP (*Conservative, The Cotswolds*)

Mr Jonathan Djanogly MP (*Conservative, Huntingdon*)

Mrs Flick Drummond MP (*Conservative, Meon Valley*)

Rt Hon Mark Francois MP (*Conservative, Rayleigh and Wickford*)

Mr Louie French MP (*Conservative, Old Bexley and Sidcup*)

Peter Grant MP (*Scottish National Party, Glenrothes*)

Anne Marie Morris MP (*Conservative, Newton Abbot*)

Sarah Olney MP (*Liberal Democrat, Richmond Park*)

Angela Richardson MP (*Conservative, Guildford*)

Nick Smith MP (*Labour, Blaenau Gwent*)

James Wild MP *(Conservative, North West Norfolk*)

Powers

Powers of the Committee of Public Accounts are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No. 148. These are available on the Internet via www.parliament.uk.

Publication

Committee reports are published on the Committee's website and in print by Order of the House.

Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Jessica Bridges-Palmer (Media Officer), Ameet Chudasama (Committee Operations Manager), Sarah Heath (Clerk), Tom Lacy (Chair Liaison), Rose Leach (Committee Operations Officer), Ben Rayner (Second Clerk).

Contacts

All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerk of the Committee of Public Accounts, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA. The telephone number for general enquiries is 020 7219 5776; the Committee's email address is pubaccom@parliament.uk.

You can follow the Committee on Twitter using @CommonsPAC.

Contents

Summary 3

Introduction 4

Conclusions and recommendations 5

1 Building new homes 7

Targets for new homes 8

Where homes are built 9

Homes for social rent 10

2 Realising wider objectives 12

Wider government savings 12

Net-zero standards 13

Transparent reporting of progress 13

Formal minutes 15

Witnesses 16

Published written evidence 16

List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament 17

Summary

The Department is unlikely to meet its housebuilding targets – falling short by 32,000 homes from its original 2016 and 2021 Programme targets. The 2021 Programme is struggling to meet its public target of '180,000 new homes should economic conditions allow'. It is currently forecasting to achieve 157,000 new homes against that target and there are considerable risks ahead, including construction inflation, of which the Department does not seem to have a grasp.

The Department estimates it will spend £20.7 billion between 2015 and 2032 to provide 363,000 new grant-funded affordable homes. Through the 2015 and 2016 Programmes, the Department forecasts that 206,000 new grant-funded homes will be built. There is a clear demand for more social homes for rent, a tenure which is the only real affordable option for many people. Homes for social rent provide the highest value for money, but it is a ministerial decision that half of homes to be built under the 2021 Programme are for ownership rather than rental. And yet the Department has not calculated potential savings from reducing the number of people in temporary accommodation which is costly to the taxpayer.

As well as the total of homes the Department has sub targets for different categories of housing which it is also struggling to meet. For the 2021 Programme, the Department is set to miss its targets to deliver 10% of homes in rural areas and may struggle to deliver 10% of homes as supported homes (where support, supervision or care is provided alongside).

The Department does not focus support to local authorities with the highest housing needs. It specifies an overall target for new homes that local authorities should see built in their area but does not use the Programme to help individual councils meet these targets. Local authorities lack strong powers to shape development in their local areas as they face penalties if they do not approve enough development proposals put forward by housing providers to meet their overall targets.

The Department has also not quantified potential savings by providing homes that could reduce local authorities' spending on adult social care. On net-zero, the Department's thinking was not advanced when it set up the 2021 Programme. It did not set any standards for homes to be net-zero, which may lead to expensive retrofitting occurring in the future. The Department fails to publish transparent data on where homes are built by local authority, or information about the type or size of homes, making it difficult to hold the Department to account.

Introduction

One of the ways the Department tries to increase the supply of new homes in England is through the Affordable Homes Programme. The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities recently reiterated the government's commitment to building 300,000 new homes overall every year by the mid-2020s. The Department does not have targets for how many of these should be affordable. For the Affordable Homes Programme, the Department secures funding from HM Treasury and then gives this to Homes England (outside London) and to the Greater London Authority (GLA) in London to achieve set targets. Housing providers (usually housing associations) bid for funding to build these. Bidding occurs through strategic bidding (housing providers bid for funding to deliver on multiple sites across a region) and continuous bidding (housing providers bid on a site-by-site basis). The Department forecasts it will spend £20.7 billion (2021–22 prices) between 2015 and 2032, to deliver 363,000 grant-funded homes.

The Programme has distinct iterations based on funding periods or policy changes. Under the 2016 programme, the Department forecasts that housing providers will build 241,000 new homes, against a target of 250,000 (of these 160,500 are grant funded). However, under the 2021 programme, the Department forecasts considerable shortfalls against its targets. The Department's central forecast is that housing providers will build 157,00 new homes, against a target of up to 180,000.

Conclusions and recommendations

1. **The Department will miss its target under the 2021 programme for 180,000 new homes by March 2029.** Disappointingly, under the 2021 programme, the Department forecasts it will deliver just 157,000 new homes against its target of 'up to 180,000 new homes should economic conditions allow.' It only expects to deliver 5.0–7.5% of homes in rural communities, against a target of 10%. The Department will also struggle to meet its target for supported homes (where support, supervision or care is provided alongside). In total, for the 2016 and 2021 programmes, the Department forecasts it will deliver 32,000 fewer homes than its published targets. Significant risks, such as cost inflation and labour shortages could mean that housing providers build even fewer homes than current forecasts.

   Recommendation: ***The Department should share with Parliament a revised delivery plan for the 2021 programme.***

2. **Housing providers do not always build in areas of higher demand.** There is a mismatch between where housing providers build compared to areas of highest need. The Department tells local authorities how many homes, not just affordable homes, they should deliver each year but does not use the Programme to target local authorities with the highest need for housing. Under strategic bidding, housing providers only state the region, not the local authority, in which they intend to build. Local authorities lack power to shape development in their local areas and have few powers to insist that housing providers build the right type of homes for local people.

   Recommendation: ***The Department should consider how it can work with local authorities to take greater account in the Programme of local need for affordable homes.***

3. **We are concerned that the number of homes being built for social rent is not enough to meet demand.** There is huge demand for social rent homes which is the only real, affordable option for many people. Despite this, the Department has a target for just 33,550 homes for social rent under the 2021 programme. The Department has shown that homes built for social rent provide higher value for money than those built for ownership, but decisions around tenure are policy decisions made by ministers. The Department notes that building more homes for social rent within the existing funding envelope would lead to fewer homes overall. The Department is consulting on capping the increase in rent that housing providers can charge, which risks reducing the number of new homes built for rent in future.

   Recommendation: ***The Department should assess how much demand there is for social rent and set out how it will use the Programme to better meet this.***

4. **The Department does not quantify potential savings in some areas, such as temporary accommodation, into the Programme.** Surprisingly, the Department can identify, but not quantify, savings in areas such as temporary accommodation and adult social care that the public purse could make through the Programme. For example, from the estimated 8,500 households that could move out of temporary accommodation by 2026–27 through the 2021 programme. The Department needs

to improve its knowledge, so it can factor in these further savings when it allocates funding. The Department urgently needs to understand and quantify the savings that building more supported homes can make to local and central government spend on adult social care. It then needs to work harder with the Department of Health and Social Care to overcome the barriers to delivery, particularly in London. The Department does consider welfare savings such as savings to housing benefit and quantified these for the 2021 programme.

Recommendation: ***Before the next iteration of the Programme, the Department should quantify the wider savings it could make to areas such as adult social care and temporary accommodation.***

5. **New homes built under the Programme may need expensive retrofitting to meet net-zero standards in the future.** The Department did not set any standards around net-zero for the Programme and relies on housing providers to comply with relevant standards. This lack of foresight when setting up the 2021 programme means that housing providers may need to retrofit the homes they are currently building. The Department has not quantified this potential cost, and we are not convinced by its claim that introducing net-zero standards for the 2021 programme would necessarily have led to housing providers building fewer homes. Housing associations warn that retrofitting their existing stock will increase strain on their funding and resources, potentially limiting future delivery of housing. The Department says that the future homes standard should ensure that homes built after 2025 do not need to be retrofitted.

   Recommendation: ***The Department should clearly set out the impact of including net-zero requirements in the next iteration of the Programme.***

6. **The Department does not publish satisfactory data on the type, tenure, size, quality, or location of homes built under the Programme.** The Department does not, for example, publish data on the number of homes built, where they are built, what size they are or whether they are for ownership or rent. Furthermore, the Department does not routinely publish data on the Programme's progress. The public, parliament and stakeholders understanding of the programme and its performance is hindered by the lack of meaningful data available in the public domain. The Department agreed to the notion of annual reporting and acknowledged that updating forecasts is useful and sensible. The Department could learn from High-Speed 2 where we called in 2020 for more transparency and open reporting from the Department of Transport, since when the Department for Transport has been providing six-monthly updates to Parliament which have been useful to all parties.

   Recommendation: ***The Department should report annually to Parliament on the performance of the Programme with detail on types, tenure, size, and quality of homes built by local authority area.***

1 Building new homes

1. On the basis of a report by the Comptroller and Auditor General, we took evidence from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (the Department) and Homes England about the Affordable Homes Programme.[1]

2. One of the ways the Department tries to increase the supply of new homes in England is through the Affordable Homes Programme. The government is committed to building 300,000 new homes overall every year by the mid-2020s. The Department does not have targets for how many of these should be affordable. For the Affordable Homes Programme, the Department secures funding from HM Treasury and then gives this to Homes England (outside London) and to the Greater London Authority (GLA) in London to achieve set targets. These targets have a narrow focus on the number of homes. Housing providers (usually housing associations) bid for funding to build these. Bidding occurs through strategic bidding (housing providers bid for funding to deliver on multiple sites across a region) and continuous bidding (housing providers bid on a site-by-site basis).[2]

3. The Department forecasts it will spend £20.7 billion (2021–22 prices) on the 2015, 2016 and 2021 programmes to deliver 363,000 grant-funded homes. The Programme has distinct iterations based on funding periods or policy changes. Under the 2016 programme, the Department forecasts that housing providers will build 241,000 new homes, against a target of 250,000. (Of these 160,500 are grant funded through the 2016 programme). Under the 2021 programme, the Department forecasts considerable shortfalls against its targets. The Department's central forecast is that housing providers will build 157,00 new homes, against a target of up to 180,000 should economic conditions allow.[3] At the start of May 2022, Homes England and the GLA had collectively allocated £9.2 billion of the £11.4 billion cash budget for the 2021 programme. Housing providers will continue to bid for funding through continuous bidding.[4] Programme targets and forecasts are summarised at Figure 1. Overall, the Department forecasts a shortfall of 32,000 homes compared to the targets set for the 2016 and 2021 programmes.

Figure 1 – summary of programme targets and forecasts

Programme iteration	Published target for number of homes to be built	Forecast number of grant-funded homes to be built	Forecast number of non-grant-funded homes to be built, which contribute to a published target	Forecast number of homes to be built (where a published target is set)	Shortfall against the published target
2015	n/a	45,500	n/a	n/a	n/a
2016	250,000	160,500	80,500	241,000	9,000
2021	180,000	157,000	n/a	157,000	23,000
Total	**430,000**	**363,000**	**80,500**	**398,000**	**32,000**

1 C&AG's Report, *The Affordable Homes programme since 2015*, session 2022–23, HC 652, 8 September 2022
2 C&AG's Report, paras 2, 9
3 C&AG's Report, para 2, 4, 13, 14
4 C&AG's Report, para 2.12, Figure 9

Note: *The 2016 forecast number of 80,500 non-grant-funded homes to be built, which contribute to a published target includes: around 30,000 of the 45,500 homes grant-funded from 2015 Programme; 13,000 no grant homes delivered outside London; and homes delivered without grant or from other government programmes in London through the 2015 or 2016 programme.*

Source: C&AG's Report

Targets for new homes

4. Under the 2016 iteration of the programme, the Department forecasts that it will achieve 96%, equivalent to 241,000 homes of its target for housing providers to start building 250,000 new affordable homes by March 2023. Of these, the Department expects to achieve 160,500 grant-funded homes.[5]

5. Under the 2021 programme, the Department agreed an 'additional stretch target,' with HM Treasury and set a public target to 'deliver up to 180,000 new homes should economic conditions allow'.[6] However, the Department set lower internal targets.[7] It tasked Homes England to oversee between 122,000 and 130,000 new homes and set the Greater London Authority a target for 35,000 new homes. The Department forecasts that it will oversee 157,000 new homes, considerably less than its public target. Of these, Homes England committed to achieving 122,000 new homes, which it states was a conservative and prudent estimate.[8]

6. Homes England acknowledged that it would not meet its sub-target under the 2021 programme to deliver 10% of homes in rural areas; settlements with a population of 3,000 people or fewer. Homes England has allocated funding for its strategic partners to deliver 6,250 rural homes, around half the total number required. Homes England stated that it would try as hard as possible to deliver the sub-target but given expected market conditions it thinks delivery of between 5% and 7.5% is likely. Homes England told us there is a decent chance that it will get close to, if not achieve, a separate sub-target to deliver 10% supported homes (where support, supervision or care is provided alongside). Homes England has allocated funding for around 8,500 supported homes, so has around 3,700 still to deliver.[9] However, the Department does not expect to meet its supported homes target overall, because the GLA has only allocated finding for 325 new supported homes out of a target of 3,500.[10]

7. The Department acknowledged that its section on risk within business case for the 2021 programme may have been inadequate. We pressed the Department and Homes England over significant risks that may mean housing providers build fewer homes than forecast.[11] The Department told us that it has a fixed budget for the Programme, and must deliver within it.[12] The Department acknowledged that these significant risks could mean that housing providers build fewer homes. Significant risks include large increases

5 C&AG's Report, para 1.13
6 Q 38
7 C&AG's Report, para 2.3
8 Q 39
9 Q 40
10 C&AG's Report, para 2.13
11 Qq 63–64, 69–76
12 Q 52

in the cost of materials and labour.[13] The G15, a group of large housing associations in and around London, told us that its members, in some areas, report 15%-30% increases in material and labour costs.[14] The Department told us it expects that larger providers will manage cost pressures by using contingency funds and other sources of funding to plug the gap.[15] We questioned the Department and Homes England further about the labour force, skills shortages and delays with the planning system. Homes England confirmed that these 'non-inflationary headwinds' led to around a 20-week delay in completions last year. The Department told us that it has secured some extra funding for local planning departments, and that housing providers are using modern methods of construction a great deal, and looking to a different labour model as well as a different construction model.[16]

Where homes are built

8. The Department specifies the overall number of homes (not just affordable homes) that local authorities should build each year, through a calculation known as the 'standard method'. Local authorities must follow this unless they have exceptional circumstances, and face penalties under the Housing Delivery Test, if they do not deliver against their target.[17] The National Audit Office found there is not a strong match between areas of high housing need and where housing providers build under the Programme.[18] Shelter raised concerns there is no objective measure of demand for housing, outside of the total number of new homes delivered across England.[19]

9. We challenged the Department about whether housing providers build homes where they are needed most. The Department does not allocate funding from the Programme based on its calculation of local housing need.[20] Under strategic bidding, housing providers only state the region, not the local authority, in which they intend to build.[21] The Department told us that local authorities state what mix of housing they would like when developing their local plans, and that housing providers follow these.[22] The Department relies on housing providers to interact with local planning authorities and build homes where needed most, while ensuring value for money.[23] We pushed the Department, noting that local authorities must meet overall targets for new homes, so are pressured to approve new homes, even if they do not meet the most pressing local need. The Department acknowledged that local authorities have to consider a trade-off between meeting local housing need, expressed by the total number of homes built, and their type.[24]

10. The Department told us it tried to 'strike a balance,' between a centrally driven approach to need versus a local approach. The Department explained that outside London, Homes England identifies whether proposals for new homes are acceptable value for money, guided by local land supply and policy. Housing providers must then build homes

---

13 Qq 63, 64
14 Written evidence submitted by G15 group, dated September 2022
15 Q 63
16 Qq 69, 72
17 C&AG's Report, para 4.4
18 C&AG's Report, para 21, Figure 13
19 Written evidence submitted by Shelter, dated September 2022
20 Qq 59–62
21 C&AG's Report, para 4.3
22 Q 45
23 Q 52, 59, 60
24 Qq 45–46

within the timeframe of the Programme. The Department decides how much funding to allocate to London and the rest of England .[25] For the 2021 Programme, the GLA will receive 35% of the Programme's funding, down from a 50% split of funding for the 2016 programme. The National Audit Office found that the 2021 programme achieved a much higher benefit cost ratio in London compared to the rest of England.[26] The Department commented that there are other policy considerations, aside from benefit cost ratios, that determine the split of funding between London and the rest of England.[27]

Homes for social rent

11. We asked the Department about the number of homes designated for social rent, given social rent is the most affordable for tenants; and the type of tenure most needed. We stressed the human impact that a lack of homes for social rent has. A lack of homes forces people to live in hostels or private accommodation in which they move around every few years; leading to children having to move school or travel long distances. The Department commented that it was acutely aware of housing pressures across the country and the associated impact on people, but it said that it must maximise what can be achieved from its available resources. It said that while the 2016 and 2021 programmes were very large capital investments, they alone are not sufficient to completely eliminate the housing pressures faced.[28] As part of its 2021 business case, the Department modelled the economic benefits of the Programme compared to costs, by tenure and region.[29] The Department told us that getting into the high 2s, 3s, 4s and 5s indicates a very strong benefit-cost ratio and an excellent use of public money.[30] Compared to other housing tenures, social rent has the highest benefit cost ratio, at 3.4.[31]

12. Homes England told us that, under current plans, it forecasts achieving 14,300 homes for social rent under the 2016 programme, exceeding its target of 12,500 homes. For the 2021 programme, the Department told us it set a sub-target of 33,500 homes for social rent, which it forecasts meeting.[32] Shelter argued that the Department should refocus the Programme to deliver more homes for social rent.[33] The Department said that ultimately decisions around tenure are for Ministers to make, and it is the role of officials to ensure ministers understand the trade-offs when setting targets. The Department told us that if it did focus the Programme entirely on social rent within a fixed budget, there would be fewer homes built.[34]

13. We asked the Department about the potential impact of the proposed cap on social rents that it is currently consulting on. The rent cap could prevent housing providers from increasing rents by CPI + 1%, as envisaged.[35] Business LDN warn that the Government's proposed rent cap will leave housing providers with a significant shortfall in their finances resulting in less building of new homes.[36] The Department told us that it may introduce a

25 Q 59
26 C&AG's Report, para 2.2, Figure 5
27 Q 79
28 Qq 47, 49–50, 52
29 C&AG's Report Figure 5
30 Q 61
31 C&AG's Report, Figure 5
32 Qq 47–48
33 Written evidence submitted by Shelter, dated September 2022
34 Qq 48, 52
35 C&AG's Report, para 1.8
36 Written evidence submitted by Business LDN, dated September 20222

cap as tenants could otherwise face unaffordable increases. The Department accepts that lower forecast rent will have a knock-on impact on the Programme, potentially leading to housing providers building fewer homes for social rent. The Department told us it was considering how it could quantify the effect of the rent cap n its consultation response.[37]

37 Qq 65–68

2 Realising wider objectives

Wider government savings

14. The National Audit Office report found that the Programme could bring greater value to other parts of government, for example, in reducing the numbers of people in temporary accommodation. Local authority spend on homelessness has increased 50% in real-terms from 2015–16 to 2020–21.[38] London Councils highlighted particular high levels of homelessness and use of temporary accommodation in London.[39] We asked the Department whether it has done a cost-benefit analysis of reducing the numbers of people in temporary accommodation. The Department told us it estimates that the 2021 programme will take 8,500 households out of temporary accommodation, but could not quantify the associated financial savings.[40]

15. The Department also commented that adult social care is another important example of the links and benefits that come from investing in housing, and that it is conducting research to quantify these savings.[41] We asked the Department whether the 2021 programme was suitably aligned with wider government decisions on adult social care. The Department told us that the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) is now much more involved in the Programme. It is considering how it can work more effectively with the DHSC, for example through DHSC's Care and Support Specialised Housing Fund. The Department recognised there are challenges over aligning on-going funding for care support services, and that it needs to further its understanding over how to deliver supported homes in London.[42] The developer, McCarthy Stone, welcomed the announcement of the older people's housing taskforce in the Levelling Up White Paper and would like to see 30,000 new specialist homes a year.[43]

16. We pressed the Department as to why it does not consider these wider savings when it allocates funding through the Programme. The Department told us it is working on improving its research base to do so but contended that the great majority of the financial benefit of the Programme would still accrue from land value uplift.[44]

17. In contrast, the Department does consider welfare savings and quantified these in the 2021 programme business case. The Department's modelling showed that delivering new homes for social rent in London leads to significant savings in future housing benefit costs, compared to other regions. The Department forecast that over a 30-year and 60-year period respectively, 69% and 110% of the grant funding needed to deliver a home for social rent is repaid by forecast housing benefit savings.[45] The Department noted that these savings are very long term, with the payback period measured in decades. The Department told us that it was an option to allocate more money to London, but this must be balanced with other policy considerations.[46]

38 C&AG's Report, paras 22, 4.10
39 Written evidence submitted by London Councils, dated September 2022
40 Qq 40, 52
41 Q 53
42 Qq 82–84
43 Written evidence submitted by McCarthy Stone, dated September 2022
44 Q 81
45 C&AG's Report, paras 22, 4.9
46 Qq 78–79

Net-zero standards

18. The Department did not set out to use the Programme to advance the government's net zero objectives. The Department and Homes England did not include any specific targets around net-zero for the 2021 programme. Instead, housing providers must comply with existing and future environmental standards set out in the planning design guide and building standards.[47] The Department said it expects that housing providers will follow the national design code. Homes England said that the overwhelming majority of homes under the 2016 programme will get an energy performance certificate of B, C or better.[48]

19. The Department told us that it could have set higher standards from the outset for net-zero, but that doing so would likely reduce the number of homes delivered. We challenged the Department on this assertion, because it had not modelled the extent to which it might have been reduced. The Department replied that it 'was probably not exactly where it wanted to be,' at the end of the 2021 programme but will be better in the future.[49]

20. The National Audit Office found that neither the Department nor Homes England modelled the potential costs of needing to retrofit homes built under the 2021 programme, to meet net zero standards.[50] The Department said that the future homes standard, when it is introduced from 2025, will mean that homes after this date will not need to be retrofitted.[51] The G15 group told us that the future homes standard will add at least £5,000 to the cost of a new home and that existing social housing stock will require wholesale regeneration. The G15 group and Business London warn that retrofitting existing stock will increase strain on funding and resources, potentially limiting new supply.[52]

Transparent reporting of progress

21. The Department does not expect to deliver the intended benefits of the 2021 programme, and there are significant risks that could mean housing providers build fewer homes than forecast.[53] We asked the Department about whether it would be revising its published targets, notably the 2021 programme target of "up to 180,000 should economic conditions allow" when in practice the Department was working to a forecast of 157,000. The Department explained that these were ambitions set out at the start of the Programme. We suggested that the Department could consider annual reporting to Parliament on progress. The Department told us it is content to update the Committee when it next produces a forecast. The Department agreed to the notion of annual reporting but will need to work on its precise form.[54] In 2020 we reported on the High Speed 2 programme and made recommendations around the need for greater transparency and for regular reporting of progress to parliament. The Department for Transport accepted our recommendations and has since published very useful six-monthly update reports on progress, in the form of a written statement to Parliament.[55]

47 C&AG's Report, para 23
48 Qq 54–55
49 Qq 55–56
50 C&AG's Report, para 4.16
51 Q 57
52 Written evidence submitted by G15 group, dated September 2022 and written evidence submitted by Business LDN, dated September 2022
53 C&AG's Report, paras 14,15
54 Qq 85–89
55 Public Accounts Committee, *High Speed 2: Spring 2020 update*, 3rd Report of Session 2019–21, HC 84, 17 May 2020; *Treasury Minutes, Government responses to the Committee of Public Accounts*, CP 270, July 2020.

22. The Department said that it thought the National Audit Office recommendation to annually update forecasts was useful and that it was a sensible thing for the Department to do.[56] The NAO report had also noted that the Department accepted that it needed to make improvements around data and performance reporting, including that it needed to develop a consistent approach to forecasting housing starts, completions and spend by Homes England and the GLA, and improve its capability to stress-test and report these.[57]

23. We commented that it would be good if the Department transparently published data on the tenure, area, and size of new homes.[58] The NAO report used internal data from the Department, Homes England, and the Greater London Authority with regards homes completed and spend.[59] Rentplus UK raised concerns over the lack of information over how many shared owners buy their home outright, and the lack of official data on the incomes of those benefitting from shared ownership.[60] Homes England said it is not aware of whether it tracks what percentage of a home shared owners purchase, but probably do so indirectly. Homes England acknowledged that it was too soon to know how shared ownership may be impacted by potential changes in the mortgage market.[61]

56 Q 87
57 C&AG's Report, para 3.17
58 Q 91
59 C&AG's Report, figures 16–19
60 Written evidence submitted by Rentplus, dated September 20221
61 Qq 91–95

Formal minutes

Monday 28 November 2022

Members present:

Dame Meg Hillier

Dan Carden

Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown

Mr Jonathan Djanogly

Mrs Flick Drummond

Mr Mark Francois

Mr Louie French

Peter Grant

Anne Marie Morris

Sarah Olney

Nick Smith

The Affordable Homes Programme since 2015

Draft Report (*The Affordable Homes Programme since 2015*), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 23 read and agreed to.

Summary agreed to.

Introduction agreed to.

Conclusions and recommendations agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Twenty-ninth of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chair make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134.

Adjournment

Adjourned till Thursday 1 December at 9.30am

Witnesses

The following witnesses gave evidence. Transcripts can be viewed on the inquiry publications page of the Committee's website.

Thursday 22 September 2022

Jeremy Pocklington, Permanent Secretary, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities; **Peter Denton**, Chief Executive, Homes England; and **Emran Mian**, Director General, Regeneration, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Q1–97

Published written evidence

The following written evidence was received and can be viewed on the inquiry publications page of the Committee's website.

AHP numbers are generated by the evidence processing system and so may not be complete.

1 BusinessLDN (AHP0003)

2 G15 (AHP0004)

3 London Councils (AHP0006)

4 McCarthy Stone (AHP0001)

5 Rentplus-UK Ltd (AHP0002)

6 Shelter (AHP0005)

List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

All publications from the Committee are available on the publications page of the Committee's website.

Session 2022–23

Number	Title	Reference
1st	Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy Annual Report and Accounts 2020–21	HC 59
2nd	Lessons from implementing IR35 reforms	HC 60
3rd	The future of the Advanced Gas-cooled Reactors	HC 118
4th	Use of evaluation and modelling in government	HC 254
5th	Local economic growth	HC 252
6th	Department of Health and Social Care 2020–21 Annual Report and Accounts	HC 253
7th	Armoured Vehicles: the Ajax programme	HC 259
8th	Financial sustainability of the higher education sector in England	HC 257
9th	Child Maintenance	HC 255
10th	Restoration and Renewal of Parliament	HC 49
11th	The rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine programme in England	HC 258
12th	Management of PPE contracts	HC 260
13th	Secure training centres and secure schools	HC 30
14th	Investigation into the British Steel Pension Scheme	HC 251
15th	The Police Uplift Programme	HC 261
16th	Managing cross-border travel during the COVID-19 pandemic	HC 29
17th	Government's contracts with Randox Laboratories Ltd	HC 28
18th	Government actions to combat waste crime	HC 33
19th	Regulating after EU Exit	HC 32
20th	Whole of Government Accounts 2019–20	HC 31
21st	Transforming electronic monitoring services	HC 34
22nd	Tackling local air quality breaches	HC 37
23rd	Measuring and reporting public sector greenhouse gas emissions	HC 39
24th	Redevelopment of Defra's animal health infrastructure	HC 42
25th	Regulation of energy suppliers	HC 41
26th	The Department for Work and Pensions' Accounts 2021–22 – Fraud and error in the benefits system	HC 44
27th	Evaluating innovation projects in children's social care	HC 38

Number	Title	Reference
28th	Improving the Accounting Officer Assessment process	HC 43
1st Special Report	Sixth Annual Report of the Chair of the Committee of Public Accounts	HC 50

Session 2021–22

Number	Title	Reference
1st	Low emission cars	HC 186
2nd	BBC strategic financial management	HC 187
3rd	COVID-19: Support for children's education	HC 240
4th	COVID-19: Local government finance	HC 239
5th	COVID-19: Government Support for Charities	HC 250
6th	Public Sector Pensions	HC 289
7th	Adult Social Care Markets	HC 252
8th	COVID 19: Culture Recovery Fund	HC 340
9th	Fraud and Error	HC 253
10th	Overview of the English rail system	HC 170
11th	Local auditor reporting on local government in England	HC 171
12th	COVID 19: Cost Tracker Update	HC 173
13th	Initial lessons from the government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic	HC 175
14th	Windrush Compensation Scheme	HC 174
15th	DWP Employment support	HC 177
16th	Principles of effective regulation	HC 176
17th	High Speed 2: Progress at Summer 2021	HC 329
18th	Government's delivery through arm's-length bodies	HC 181
19th	Protecting consumers from unsafe products	HC 180
20th	Optimising the defence estate	HC 179
21st	School Funding	HC 183
22nd	Improving the performance of major defence equipment contracts	HC 185
23rd	Test and Trace update	HC 182
24th	Crossrail: A progress update	HC 184
25th	The Department for Work and Pensions' Accounts 2020–21 – Fraud and error in the benefits system	HC 633
26th	Lessons from Greensill Capital: accreditation to business support schemes	HC 169
27th	Green Homes Grant Voucher Scheme	HC 635

Number	Title	Reference
28th	Efficiency in government	HC 636
29th	The National Law Enforcement Data Programme	HC 638
30th	Challenges in implementing digital change	HC 637
31st	Environmental Land Management Scheme	HC 639
32nd	Delivering gigabitcapable broadband	HC 743
33rd	Underpayments of the State Pension	HC 654
34th	Local Government Finance System: Overview and Challenges	HC 646
35th	The pharmacy early payment and salary advance schemes in the NHS	HC 745
36th	EU Exit: UK Border post transition	HC 746
37th	HMRC Performance in 2020–21	HC 641
38th	COVID-19 cost tracker update	HC 640
39th	DWP Employment Support: Kickstart Scheme	HC 655
40th	Excess votes 2020–21: Serious Fraud Office	HC 1099
41st	Achieving Net Zero: Follow up	HC 642
42nd	Financial sustainability of schools in England	HC 650
43rd	Reducing the backlog in criminal courts	HC 643
44th	NHS backlogs and waiting times in England	HC 747
45th	Progress with trade negotiations	HC 993
46th	Government preparedness for the COVID-19 pandemic: lessons for government on risk	HC 952
47th	Academies Sector Annual Report and Accounts 2019/20	HC 994
48th	HMRC's management of tax debt	HC 953
49th	Regulation of private renting	HC 996
50th	Bounce Back Loans Scheme: Follow-up	HC 951
51st	Improving outcomes for women in the criminal justice system	HC 997
52nd	Ministry of Defence Equipment Plan 2021–31	HC 1164
1st Special Report	Fifth Annual Report of the Chair of the Committee of Public Accounts	HC 222

Session 2019–21

Number	Title	Reference
1st	Support for children with special educational needs and disabilities	HC 85
2nd	Defence Nuclear Infrastructure	HC 86
3rd	High Speed 2: Spring 2020 Update	HC 84

Number	Title	Reference
4th	EU Exit: Get ready for Brexit Campaign	HC 131
5th	University technical colleges	HC 87
6th	Excess votes 2018–19	HC 243
7th	Gambling regulation: problem gambling and protecting vulnerable people	HC 134
8th	NHS capital expenditure and financial management	HC 344
9th	Water supply and demand management	HC 378
10th	Defence capability and the Equipment Plan	HC 247
11th	Local authority investment in commercial property	HC 312
12th	Management of tax reliefs	HC 379
13th	Whole of Government Response to COVID-19	HC 404
14th	Readying the NHS and social care for the COVID-19 peak	HC 405
15th	Improving the prison estate	HC 244
16th	Progress in remediating dangerous cladding	HC 406
17th	Immigration enforcement	HC 407
18th	NHS nursing workforce	HC 408
19th	Restoration and renewal of the Palace of Westminster	HC 549
20th	Tackling the tax gap	HC 650
21st	Government support for UK exporters	HC 679
22nd	Digital transformation in the NHS	HC 680
23rd	Delivering carrier strike	HC 684
24th	Selecting towns for the Towns Fund	HC 651
25th	Asylum accommodation and support transformation programme	HC 683
26th	Department of Work and Pensions Accounts 2019–20	HC 681
27th	Covid-19: Supply of ventilators	HC 685
28th	The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority's management of the Magnox contract	HC 653
29th	Whitehall preparations for EU Exit	HC 682
30th	The production and distribution of cash	HC 654
31st	Starter Homes	HC 88
32nd	Specialist Skills in the civil service	HC 686
33rd	Covid-19: Bounce Back Loan Scheme	HC 687
34th	Covid-19: Support for jobs	HC 920
35th	Improving Broadband	HC 688
36th	HMRC performance 2019–20	HC 690
37th	Whole of Government Accounts 2018–19	HC 655

Number	Title	Reference
38th	Managing colleges' financial sustainability	HC 692
39th	Lessons from major projects and programmes	HC 694
40th	Achieving government's long-term environmental goals	HC 927
41st	COVID 19: the free school meals voucher scheme	HC 689
42nd	COVID-19: Government procurement and supply of Personal Protective Equipment	HC 928
43rd	COVID-19: Planning for a vaccine Part 1	HC 930
44th	Excess Votes 2019–20	HC 1205
45th	Managing flood risk	HC 931
46th	Achieving Net Zero	HC 935
47th	COVID-19: Test, track and trace (part 1)	HC 932
48th	Digital Services at the Border	HC 936
49th	COVID-19: housing people sleeping rough	HC 934
50th	Defence Equipment Plan 2020–2030	HC 693
51st	Managing the expiry of PFI contracts	HC 1114
52nd	Key challenges facing the Ministry of Justice	HC 1190
53rd	Covid 19: supporting the vulnerable during lockdown	HC 938
54th	Improving single living accommodation for service personnel	HC 940
55th	Environmental tax measures	HC 937
56th	Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund	HC 941