



Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP

*Secretary of State for Levelling up, Housing and
Communities*

Minister for Intergovernmental Relations

2 Marsham Street

London SW1P 4DF

Clive Betts MP
Chair, Levelling Up, Housing and
Communities Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

1 September 2023

Dear Clive,

Thank you for your letter of 17 July, about my Department's investment in housing and the Reforms to National Planning Policy Consultation.

Housing Investment

You requested clarification on my Department's funding for housing. My Department remains committed to delivering the Government's target for housing supply and affordable housing, including 300,000 new homes a year. Although we recognise that the global backdrop is tough and this will affect the housing market, 232,000 net additional homes were delivered in 2021/22 – this represents over 77% of our target. We have delivered more than 2.2 million homes in England since 2010 and are on course to achieve our target of one million homes this Parliament – with over 687,000 homes delivered since 2019.

It is standard practice for Departments to adjust their delivery and expenditure profiles in response to external changes. In 2022-23 there were challenges in the housing market driven by global supply chain pressures, related construction product inflation, and changes in the availability of finance for developers. As has been the case under successive administrations, we addressed this changing backdrop and these issues through agreeing new profiles with HM Treasury, securing the delivery of our housing supply and support over the medium term by adjusting delivery in that year. We are continuing to adapt the £11.5 billion Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) and bolster the delivery of affordable housing, and funding not needed in 2022-23 was reprofiled into the remaining years of the programme. The AHP will provide thousands of affordable homes for both rent and to buy across the country, including London, and this money will be spent in future years.

We are also making progress in ensuring high-rise buildings with the most dangerous form of cladding are safe. Over £1.9 billion has already been allocated from the Building Safety Fund for high-rise residential buildings with other forms of unsafe cladding.

We continue to encourage councils and developers to use brownfield land wherever possible. That is why we are allocating £800 million to unlock new housing in the right places while simultaneously protecting our precious green landscapes around the country. This funding will help unlock 56,000 new homes to transform our towns and neighbourhoods, removing barriers to growth with beautiful homes, and greater access to employment and education.

Reforms to National Planning Policy Consultation

You asked for an update on the December 2022 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) consultation. I expect to publish the Government's response to the Reforms to National Planning Policy Consultation this Autumn. The existing NPPF will remain in place until the new version is finalised and published. The Government's priority for getting up to date plans in place has not changed and we have been clear that local planning authorities should continue to make progress on their plans in accordance with the current NPPF.

Almshouses and the NPPF

You requested an update on the definition of 'affordable housing for rent' in the NPPF. I recognise that community-led developers and Almshouse charities have raised concerns regarding the fact that the current definition of 'affordable housing for rent' in the NPPF is (in most cases) restricted to homes with a landlord that is a registered provider of social housing. In light of those concerns, our consultation sought views on whether the definition of 'affordable housing for rent' should be amended to make it easier for these organisations to develop new affordable homes. We are considering the responses to the consultation and are looking at this issue carefully.

Thank you again for your letter.

With every good wish,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael Gove". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of "Michael" being a large, stylized 'M'.

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