

Emergency action to kickstart London housebuilding

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The Housing Secretary and Mayor of London have confirmed emergency measures today to accelerate housebuilding in the capital.

- Thousands more affordable homes to be built faster across London under new emergency package
- Expanded powers for the Mayor to have direct control over housing schemes at risk of being blocked
- Progress already being made in the capital with the government's New Homes Accelerator successfully negotiating the future of a regeneration site in East London

London housebuilding is on the road to recovery after the government and Mayor of London today (Wednesday 25 March) confirmed emergency measures to unblock dozens of stalled sites and build thousands more affordable homes for Londoners priced out of the housing market.

The package - confirmed by Housing Secretary Steve Reed and the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan - delivers a London solution for a national crisis, with targeted planning changes designed to cut through bureaucracy and viability constraints holding back new homes across every borough.

Despite the government's strong track record working closely with the Mayor, particularly on council housing, the capital is building far fewer homes than it needs. High interest rates, rising construction costs, complex planning rules and the legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic have created a series of hurdles. This has resulted in only 4,522 social and affordable housing starts on site in London in 2024/25, which is considerably lower than the 26,386 starts reported in 2022/23.

Today's package confirms targeted, time-limited support for housebuilders to improve the viability of housing schemes and get quicker approvals across every borough. This includes:

- A new fast-track planning route for sites delivering at least 20 per cent affordable housing, meaning faster delivery and more affordable homes get built overall.
- Temporary relief from the Community Infrastructure Levy - charges paid by developers - for eligible schemes that meet affordable housing targets, with additional relief for those going further.
- Removal of targeted Greater London Authority (GLA) guidance that can constrain density which has been holding back the delivery of more homes on land already earmarked for development - meaning more homes can get built on sites that are ready to go.

Targeted refinements have been made after consultation to maximise the number of schemes that can benefit from the emergency measures.

Housebuilders will still be expected to make real progress - and will face an Early-Stage Review if they miss agreed targets and milestones, which could require them to deliver more affordable housing on site.

The government has also brought forward the necessary legislation today to expand the Mayor's

powers to call in and review planning applications for 50 homes or more where a borough is minded to refuse. This will come into force in May. This builds on the progress already made in the English Devolution Bill which includes a faster representation process will cut up to six months off some planning decisions.

Housing Secretary Steve Reed said:

“The scale of the housing crisis in London demands action – so that’s what we’re doing.

“This decisive action will turn plans on paper into thousands of new homes in our capital, with a clear message to developers to get on and build.

“We’re kickstarting London housebuilding so more Londoners can rent or own a home that is genuinely affordable.”

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan said:

“Building more social and affordable homes is a top priority and I’m taking the tough decisions to get these much-needed homes built, including working closely with government to finalise this temporary emergency package which will unlock stalled sites across London.

“We’ve listened closely to the views of housebuilders, housing associations, councils and Londoners and the bold new measures respond to many of their concerns, ensuring we prioritise getting as many affordable homes built as possible and address the unique challenges London is facing.

“I make no apology for wanting to see more action to deliver new homes and will continue to work with government to accelerate housebuilding, tackling the building safety regulator backlog and supporting new schemes as we build a fairer and better capital for all.”

These changes support the government’s mission to build 1.5 million homes this Parliament and gives London its own tools to move at pace and start to get back on track to meeting its annual target of 88,000 new homes.

The Mayor can also become the decision-maker for developments of over 1,000sqm on Green Belt or Metropolitan Open Land – bolstering plans to build on lower-quality, poorly connected grey belt land near public transport hubs. However, this will not make it easier for development to be approved on high quality Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land.

Progress is already being made to release more homes in the capital. The government’s New Homes Accelerator – working with the GLA and the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham – has unlocked a major 4,000-home regeneration site in East London, Beam Park, which is releasing 1,500 homes held up for a decade behind a single planning condition. The government has now confirmed a new Beam Park rail station could be accommodated within the existing rail network; giving the scheme a clearer path forward, with the GLA, London Borough of Havering, Transport for London and partners now working to assemble the funding needed to deliver it.

The Accelerator has since expanded into London, launching a dedicated city branch managed by the GLA – NHA LDN – alongside a new planning support service for boroughs, ATLAS LDN.

Alongside these measures, government and the Building Safety Regulator, under new leadership, are driving stronger operational performance, with the clearance of almost all legacy Gateway 2 cases and over 10,500 new homes approved in the past 12 weeks, including 3,800 new homes approved across London.

Today's measures are backed by the most significant housebuilding investment in a generation. The government's £39 billion Social and Affordable Homes Programme has allocated up to £11.7 billion for London – considerably more than under the previous programme.

As part of the emergency package announcement, the GLA secured an allocation of £324 million to establish a City Hall Developer Investment Fund (CHDIF) that will prioritise interventions on stalled sites that can deliver housing completions as soon as possible.

Acting Chief Executive Officer of the Building Safety Regulator, Charlie Pugsley said:

“As we enter an important new chapter as a standalone regulator, our focus is on strengthening safety, building trust and collaborating with industry supportively to help deliver the secure, high-quality homes all Londoners need.

“Operational improvements are already accelerating decisions on new builds and clearing complex legacy cases. This progress is clear in the thousands of high-rise safe new homes we've approved in the capital over the last 12 weeks. Alongside this, new measures will also prioritise essential remediation works, ensuring hundreds of existing buildings across the country are safe to live in.

“We are committed to maintaining this momentum and delivering a proportionate regime but remain clear that speed will never come at the cost of the essential safety standards that all current and future high-rise residents deserve.”

Further information

In October 2025, the government and the Mayor of London announced an emergency package of time-limited measures to accelerate housebuilding in London. A public consultation was formally launched in November 2025. The government's response to the consultation can be read in full [here](#) and the GLA's response to the consultation can be read in full [here](#).

The government and GLA have worked in partnership – responding to feedback from housebuilders and boroughs alike via recent consultations – to further amend the proposals and maximise the number of schemes that can take advantage of the measures. A summary of these measures, following consultation feedback, is [here](#).

The new time limited planning route to expedite new affordable homes has been adjusted. The route will now be open to validated applications submitted by 31 March 2028, by which time the new London Plan is expected to have been adopted. The late stage gain-share mechanism has also been replaced by an Early Stage Review, with no further reviews required beyond this.

Emergency relief from the Community Infrastructure Levy will now apply to eligible schemes commencing before 31 March 2030, with further simplified requirements and processes to access the relief and get schemes moving.

Alongside this the government will lay secondary legislation in Parliament to expand the Mayor's planning powers, this will come into force in May after local elections.

Powers in the English Devolution Bill will give the Mayor greater planning powers, including allowing certain called-in planning application to be dealt with by written representations instead of a hearing, which will save up to 6 months off the process.

As part of the £39 billion Social and Affordable Homes Programme, the Greater London Authority opened its bidding window last month for providers to come forward with ambitious bids for grant

funding. Further details are available [here](#).

Last month the Mayor confirmed a new City Hall Developer Investment Fund, following an initial £322 million allocated by the government in October 2025. £1.5 billion of low-interest loans is being allocated to support the delivery of social and affordable housing in London.

Earlier this year the government launched phase 2 of the New Homes Accelerator which includes expanding operations in London through NHA LDN and a new planning support service for boroughs, ATLAS LDN.

Beam Park is a major regeneration scheme that was announced as a New Homes Accelerator site in February 2025. Over the past year the government has worked closely with the Greater London Authority, the Department for Transport, Transport for London (TfL), the rail operator c2c, Network Rail and London boroughs to unlock development, while funding challenges are resolved in parallel. More than 1,100 homes have been completed so far and over 1,200 are currently under construction with a further 260 now programmed to deliver during this parliamentary term.

Through the Accelerator, the Department for Transport, the GLA and local partners have progressed timetable and performance work confirming that the proposed Beam Park station could be accommodated within the existing rail network. The flagship programme's work with the GLA and LB Barking and Dagenham as the local planning authority and the borough's regeneration company Be First, has also enabled the release of 1,500 homes blocked for the past 10 years behind a planning condition.

The GLA is leading and coordinating efforts to identify and assemble the funding package, working closely with LB Havering, TfL and wider partners.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/emergency-action-to-kickstart-london-housebuilding>