



GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS



Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

The Rt Hon Lucy Frazer KC MP (South East Cambridgeshire) was appointed Minister of State for DLUHC on 26 October and was confirmed as Planning Minister on 7 November.

Autumn Statement

The Autumn Statement was delivered by Chancellor of the Exchequer Jeremy Hunt on 17 November. It is in full [here](#). Amongst other things the statement included:

- Refocusing the investment zone programme; the programme will now instead be used to grow a small number of the highest potential knowledge-intensive clusters. Existing expressions of interest will not be taken forward;
- Plans to update National Policy Statements for transport, energy and water resources during 2023;
- A recommitment for Core Northern Powerhouse Rail, East-West Rail and HS2;
- A commitment to Project Gigabit, to reach at least 85 per cent gigabit-capable broadband coverage by 2025 and nationwide coverage by 2030;
- Delivering Sizewell C Nuclear Power Station subject to final agreement;
- Putting the UK Infrastructure Bank on a statutory footing;
- The agreement of a further mayoral devolution deal with Suffolk County Council, whilst advanced discussions are being held with authorities in Cornwall, Norfolk and the North East of England;
- Reaffirming the commitment in the Levelling Up White Paper for new devolution deals with deals with Greater Manchester and the West Midlands Combined Authorities by early 2023; and - Levelling Up Fund bids will be announced before the end of the year.

MICHAEL GOVE DROPS MANDATORY HOUSEBUILDING TARGETS AFTER PRESSURE FROM TORY MPs

The Levelling-Up Secretary has ditched the controversial plan because there is “no truly objective way” of calculating how many new homes are needed in an area.

Targets drawn up centrally will now be advisory with local councils able to say if they fear the numbers would “significantly change the character” of their area.

Mr Gove wrote to backbenchers to say centrally determined targets would now be a “starting point”.

It follows anger from Conservative MPs who feared their constituencies would be harmed by large housing developments.

Mr Gove has said “We have an urgent need in this country to build more homes so that everyone - whether they aspire to home ownership or not - can have a high-quality, affordable place to live. But our planning system is not working as it should.

“If we are to deliver the new homes this country needs, new development must have the support of local communities. That requires people to know it will be beautiful, accompanied by the right infrastructure, approved democratically, that it will enhance the environment and create proper neighbourhoods.

“These principles have always been key to our reforms and we are now going further by strengthening our commitment to build the right homes in the right places and put local people at

the heart of decision-making.” Source: [Express](#)

LEGISLATION AND MATTERS ARISING

Emerging Legislation

Government Bills

- **Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill:** The Bill makes provisions for a wide range of matters, including aspects of planning, local democracy and devolution, and levelling up measures. Amongst other things the Bill makes provision for:
 - National development management policies to sit alongside local development plan policies;
 - A replacement for the Community Infrastructure Levy;
 - Environmental Outcome Reports to replace Environmental Impact Assessments;
 - Changes to compulsory purchase and enforcement powers;
 - Powers in relation to planning data;
 - A requirement for local authorities to have design codes for their area.
- **The Bill contains five clauses relating to the historic environment:**
 - A duty to have special regard to the preservation or enhancement of heritage assets and their settings will apply to a wider range of designated heritage assets (Clause 92);
 - Enforcement powers introducing Temporary Stop Notices for listed building works, aligning them with general planning enforcement powers (Clause 93);
 - New powers to enable Urgent Works Notices to be served on occupied buildings, and any costs to be entered as a land charge (Clause 94);
 - Removal of compensation for local authorities when they serve a Building Preservation Notice on a historic building under threat of damage whilst it is considered for listing. (Clause 95);
 - A statutory underpinning for Historic Environment Records, enabling them to be a strong evidence base for the new planning system. (Clause 185).
- **The Bill was accompanied by an Explanatory Note and a Policy Paper** giving further information on its contents and future consultations on aspects of the Bill. The Bill is now at Report stage, the first sitting of this stage was on 23 November, a second sitting was due to be held on 28 November but has been delayed.
- **Further amendments were published in November, including those put forward by the DLUHC Secretary of State.** These include:
 - Powers for community land auctions, meaning local authorities can capture the value of land allocated for development, put forward by Secretary of State for DLUHC (proposed new Part 4A);
 - Proposals for ‘street votes,’ put forward by Secretary of State for Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (proposed Clause 61);
 - A requirement for developers to report annually on build out rates for housing permissions, put forward by Secretary of State for DLUHC (proposed Clause 90B); and
 - The potential for consolidation of existing legislation without the need for parliamentary approval, put forward by Secretary of State for DLUHC, (proposed to be inserted after Clause 114)
- **Two Research Briefings have also been published**, the first provided a general briefing on the Bill and was published as part of the House of Commons Library on 1 June. A further Research Briefing on the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill 2022-23: Progress of the Bill was also published on 9 November.
- **UK Infrastructure Bank Bill 2022-23:** The Bill has been introduced in the House of Lords to give statute to the UK Infrastructure Bank. Its purposes are to contribute to addressing climate change and to support regional and local economic growth through investment in infrastructure. The Bill has reached Committee stage which sat on 22 and 23 November and has now passed to Report Stage a date for which is awaited. A Research Briefing was published by the House of Lords Library on 19 May.
- **Energy Bill:** The Bill has been introduced through the House of Lords. The aim of the Bill is to increase resilience and reliability of energy systems across the UK, support the delivery of the UK’s climate change commitments and reform the UK’s energy system while minimising costs to consumers and protecting them from unfair pricing. The Bill has three key pillars:
 - Leveraging investment in clean technologies.
 - Reforming the UK’s energy system and protecting consumers.
 - Maintaining the safety, security and resilience of the energy systems across the UK.The Bill had its First Reading in the House of Lords on 6 July, its Second reading on 19 July and is now at Committee Stage. Committee sat on 5 and 7 September. A Library Briefing for the Energy Bill was published by the House of Lords Library on 14 July.

PRIVATE MEMBER'S BILLS

- **Carbon Emissions (Buildings) Bill:** This Private Member Bill has been introduced with proposals to require the whole-life carbon emissions of buildings to be reported; to set limits on embodied carbon emissions in the construction of buildings; and for connected purposes.
- The Bill had its first reading in the House of Commons on 2 February in the previous session of Parliament and had its first reading in this current session on 20 June. The Bill is undergoing its second reading and sat on 25 November and will also sit on 9 December.
- **Green Belt (Protection) Bill:** This Private Member Bill seeks to establish a national register of Green Belt land in England, to restrict the ability of local authorities to dedesignate Green Belt land and to make provision about future development of dedesignated Green Belt land. The Bill had been introduced in the previous session of Parliament but had not progressed beyond the first reading and was reintroduced in the current 2022-2023 session in the House of Commons on 20 June 2022. The Bill is now undergoing its second reading and will sit on 2 December.
- **Climate and Ecology Bill:** The Bill was introduced through the House of Lords. The Bill would impose a duty on the government to achieve defined climate and nature targets. This would also include introducing a strategy for reducing the UK's overall contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions to net zero. The Bill would also impose a similar requirement on targets designed to halt and reverse the UK's overall contribution to the degradation and loss of nature. The Bill underwent Committee Stage sitting on 18 November. The Bill will now undergo reporting stage for which a date is awaited. A Library Briefing for the Climate and Ecology Bill was published by the House of Lords Library on 11 July.

COMMITTEES

Land Use in England Committee

- The Committee is holding an Inquiry to consider Land Use in England. Formal (private meetings) were held on 7, 14 and 28 November. The Inquiry is looking into a range of issues including:
 - Current and potential demands on land use in England;
 - The impact of these demands on the environment and climate change;
 - The current systems for deciding land use and the effectiveness of these systems;
 - How the decision-making process surrounding land use can be improved.

Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee

The Committee is holding an inquiry into Funding for Levelling Up. The Committee's inquiry will examine questions around the allocation of levelling-up resources and the aim, size and focus of the many different funds available. The inquiry will also explore how far the Government's approach to funding for levelling up, and proposed initiatives such as Investment Zones, contributes to its objective of levelling up the country. Two formal meetings (oral evidence sessions) were held on 14 and 28 November.

Written Ministerial Statements

- On 17 November the Secretary of State for DLUHC made a Written Ministerial Statement on the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. The Statement announced that amendments to the Bill had been tabled. As part of the Statement it was announced that planning reforms will be based on five key principles known as BIDEN, these are Beauty, Infrastructure, Democracy, Environment and Neighbourhoods.

Message from Chief Planner

- A Planning Newsletter was published on 4 November by the DLUHC Chief Planner. The letter covered the following topics:
 - Improving planning performance: Updated criteria for designation
 - Law Commission review of compulsory purchase law
 - Natural England survey on SSSI Impact Risk Zones
 - PINS AI Innovation Survey for local planning authorities
 - DfE design code for schools and colleges - register for upcoming stakeholder engagement sessions
- **A further Planning Newsletter was published on 28 November by the DLUHC Chief Planner.** The letter covered the following topics:
 - Nutrient Neutrality Update

- Housing Design Awards (open for entry on 1 December)
- DLUHC Planning Software Improvement Fund
- Natural England testing of a Biodiversity Net Gain Habitat Management and Monitoring template
- PAS guidance on Biodiversity Net Gain and Nature Recovery
- Slurry Infrastructure grant and habitats regulations assessment (information for local planning authorities)
- Planning practice guidance on flood risk and coastal change training, to be held by the Town and Country Planning Association on 13 December
- Short films on Natural Flood Management for planners.

OF INTEREST

Compulsory Purchase

• DLUHC has asked the Law Commission to review the current law on compulsory purchase, examining the consolidation and modernisation of the law that would be required. This follows a stated commitment from the UK Government for the compulsory purchase process to be made faster and fairer.

Brownfield Land Release Fund 2

• On 19 November DLUHC allocated up to £35 million from a total of £180 million from the Brownfield Land Release Fund 2 to 59 projects across England. The remaining funds will be allocated over the next two years to help create homes and jobs.



PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CIRCULATE THIS NEWSLETTER TO ALL YOUR RESIDENTS



**PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU HAVE ANY
COMMENTS
EMAIL US AT norasecretary@gmail.com**