



Almost **90,000** homes built in district areas in 2022-23 and **400,000** homes over the past 5 years.

Districts approved **86%** of all planning applications received in the last year.

Over **70,000** social and affordable rent homes delivered in districts in the five years to 2022-23.

Districts are delivering **41%** more social rent homes than in 2018-19.

Over ten years, only **55%** of the 24,000 council homes in district areas sold under Right to Buy were replaced.

Total district council spending on temporary accommodation increased by more than **200%** in five years to reach £220m in 2022-23.

51% increase in children living in temporary accommodation in district areas in the two years to December 2023.

Housing & Planning

How districts can help you

By forging a strong partnership between district councils and central government, we can:

Accelerate delivery of at least 1.5 million new homes in five years by leveraging our planning and economic development powers, local knowledge and community connections to unlock development at an unprecedented scale.

Boost supply of social and affordable housing through stronger local planning policies, smart use of government grants and proactively identifying development opportunities.

Prevent homelessness through critical support, tenancy sustainment initiatives, and innovative temporary accommodation and affordable housing models.

Integrate housing initiatives with wraparound support services, leveraging our close community ties to create sustainable tenancies, proactively tackle homelessness and promote resident wellbeing.

Strategically target funding and shape localised delivery models to provide the types of homes most needed in each community, combining local expertise with a holistic understanding of the distinct housing challenges and opportunities facing individual areas.

How central government can help us deliver

1. Empower councils to unleash a new generation of council housing

- Grant district councils full autonomy to retain and reinvest 100% of Right to Buy sale receipts in replacement social and affordable homes, and remove all restrictions on the use of receipts to achieve this goal.
- Empower district councils with the authority to set Right to Buy discount rates locally, reflecting market conditions and community needs.
- Introduce a 'Right to Pause' policy, allowing councils facing extreme housing pressures to temporarily suspend Right to Buy.
- Protect newly built social homes from being sold under Right to Buy.
- Commit to long-term, preferential borrowing rates for councils to drive investment in social homes.
- Provide certainty through a minimum 10-year social housing rent deal to enable long-term investment in building new social homes and upgrading existing homes.
- Fully finance council housing decarbonisation and quality improvements through a dedicated, non-competitive fund to deliver energy-efficient and cost-effective homes.

2. Reimagine funding for affordable housing

- Provide long-term, flexible grant funding, with higher per-home grant levels to address the market challenges undermining project viability.

- Allow a bigger proportion of Affordable Homes Programme funding to be used to acquire existing homes.
- Allow Affordable Homes Programme funding to be combined with other funding sources, including Right to Buy receipts, to maximise housing delivery.
- Streamline funding by combining multiple housing programmes into a single, flexible, multi-year pot.
- Unlock powers for councils to purchase stalled sites for affordable housing where developers face viability issues.
- Launch an ambitious £300 million national Empty Homes Programme, with direct financial support and powers for councils to unlock one million empty homes.

3. Empower councils through bold planning reforms to rapidly unlock new housing

- Urgently strengthen council powers to acquire stalled sites and to force developers to get building homes quickly on sites with planning permission, such as through streamlined compulsory purchase powers and robust council tax levies on developers.
- Grant district councils enhanced powers to approve affordable housing developments, designate land for affordable housing, and set higher local affordability requirements that reflect community needs.

- Reform permitted development rights to ensure all developments contribute to affordable housing and meet quality standards.
- Identify and release public land for affordable housing, enabling councils to acquire it at low cost for public benefit.
- Launch a new review of land value to ensure a much greater share is captured for local authorities to invest in much needed affordable housing and infrastructure.
- Invest £500m annually to boost the local planning profession and develop a new generation of planners.

4. Work with councils to help end homelessness

- Remove the housing benefit subsidy cap to fully fund the cost of council temporary accommodation services and ensure vulnerable families are properly housed.
- Commit to uprate the Local Housing Allowance annually to ensure it tracks local market rents, providing stability and affordability.
- Partner with districts to develop innovative temporary accommodation models, like modular homes, that are cost-effective and responsive to local needs.
- Create a new capital fund to assist councils to rapidly build or acquire new temporary accommodation and housing for homelessness.
- Boost the Homelessness Prevention Grant to adequately resource critical support and keep people in their homes.

5. Transform the private rented sector

- Introduce comprehensive tenant rights to ensure a secure, accessible, and affordable private rented sector, including the swift elimination of Section 21 'no fault evictions' to protect tenants from unjust evictions.
- Extend the eviction notice period from two months to four months to give renters enough time to find a new home and avoid homelessness.
- Extend the Decent Homes Standard to the private rented sector, with district councils leading on compliance to ensure quality homes for all.
- Expand the enforcement powers of district councils to guarantee a well-regulated and fair private rented sector.
- Implement a comprehensive national register for short-term lets and conduct a wider review to identify additional tools for local authorities to effectively manage the growth of short-term lets, such as powers to charge licensing fees.