

# HOUSING ADVISERS PROGRAMME 2019/20



**The Housing Advisers Programme is designed to support councils seeking to innovate in meeting the housing needs of their communities.**

To find out more visit  
[www.local.gov.uk/housingadvisersprogramme](http://www.local.gov.uk/housingadvisersprogramme)  
or contact us on  
[housingadvisers@local.gov.uk](mailto:housingadvisers@local.gov.uk)



# HOUSING CONTEXT

There is a significant nationwide housing crisis; forcing difficult choices on families, distorting places, hampering growth, and putting untold pressure on council services and budgets.

Ultimately there is a crisis because housing is often unavailable, unaffordable, and not appropriate for those that need it. While there are a number of explanations for this, the reality is that housing markets are complex and interconnected systems, both within and with other parts of our economy and society, and they vary significantly around the country.

As housebuilders, housing enablers, and landlords; as planners, place-shapers, and agents of growth, transport and infrastructure; as responsible guardians to the vulnerable and the homeless; and as democratically accountable to our communities – local government is at the heart of the solution.

There is impressive innovation emerging across local government's housing activities and a renewed emphasis from central government on the need to build homes, which includes an acknowledgement of the role councils can play in achieving this.

The Local Government Association (LGA) wants to help promote, facilitate and enhance the role and capacity of councils to meet local housing need. This is the ambition of the Housing Advisers Programme.



# THE PROGRAMME SO FAR



**The Housing Advisers Programme** is designed to support councils by helping them meet their local housing need. It aims to be simple, flexible, and locally-led.

In the previous two years of the Housing Advisers Programme we have funded over 100 councils to help build homes, reduce homelessness, plan for ageing populations, understand the student housing market, increase supply of modular housing, and more. We have funded a diverse range of projects from a variety of councils to help assist and advise local authorities on real-time housing issues.

We are now working hard to embed and share this learning, creating networks of participating councils, developing case studies, and arranging events.

For further details on the programme so far, plans for sharing this experience and our wider support offer to councils, such as our recent advice to councils on how to understand local housing markets, please visit **[www.local.gov.uk/housingadvisersprogramme](http://www.local.gov.uk/housingadvisersprogramme)**

# THE OFFER TO COUNCILS FOR 2019/20



**The programme will continue to fund the provision of bespoke expert support to councils – or groups of councils – wanting to transform the delivery of homes and places, the quality and security of existing homes, and/or to prevent and reduce homelessness.**

## **For 2019/20, we want to support a smaller number of larger, strategic housing projects.**

The programme will aim to:

- make a significant difference to the housing crisis
- build capacity in councils, so there is a lasting impact long after the funding ends
- ensure that projects can become sustainable in the longer term
- create learning about what works, so that the wider sector can benefit from the programme.

The programme will award up to £50,000 to each project for the purpose of securing expert advice in transforming how a service or partnership meets the housing need of communities.

It would be for the local authority to 'own' the project, around which the advice would provide additional expert support in helping deliver transformation.

Successful councils will be awarded a grant through which to procure advice for the project, details of which will be discussed and agreed with the LGA.

The LGA will have a continuing role as part of the project governance.

The programme will coordinate and oversee projects, and integrate findings and learning into the LGA's wider improvement offer.

We will support councils to lead and contribute to activities that enable the sharing of experiences across the sector through a learning programme which includes:

- pre-application support
- learning webinars
- learning events
- an online learning hub.

# AREAS OF SUPPORT

**Councils are invited to submit an expression of interest to the programme for adviser support with projects that would transform how they meet a local housing need.**

The programme will fund ambitious projects seeking to improve outcomes. This might involve looking at:

- strategy
- service design
- delivery operations
- workforce
- partnership.

The projects might focus on opportunities to:

- meet housing and wider support needs of low income families
- refresh homelessness services and partnerships to focus on prevention
- sustainably provide temporary accommodation

- meet needs of groups at risk of homelessness to prevent it happening
- support improvements in the private rented sector
- improve the quality of existing housing
- reform the end to end planning process and the relationship with developers
- achieve fair returns to communities from planning gain
- proactively enable the development of the types of homes
- directly build homes of the right mix of products, tenures and techniques
- empower council housing tenants.

Our ask is that the projects are innovative and meet the following principles:

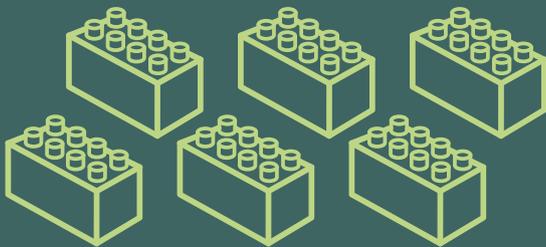
- they are focused on local need and involve local people and partners
- they use and create evidence about what works well to address local need
- they will have a sustainable impact beyond the period of the funding.



# | HOW TO APPLY

**The Housing Advisers Programme is now open for expressions of interest. Please email [housingadvisers@local.gov.uk](mailto:housingadvisers@local.gov.uk) to request a form.**

The programme is open to all English councils, either individually or as a partnership. If you are forming a partnership of councils (and other organisations), a single council must lead the project. The deadline for submission of your expression of interest is **5.00 pm on 19 September 2019.**



The LGA will use a panel of experts to assess bids and as part of this process will engage with councils as necessary.

Prospective applicants must:

- have already agreed corporate buy-in/support from the relevant lead officer(s) and/or portfolio holder(s)
- contribute to the project to ensure success
- be open to the prospect of external input and challenge from their adviser
- have the officer capacity to enable the project to succeed
- share their learning with the LGA and others, supported by our learning programme.

Each expression of interest must address each question directly and not exceed a maximum word length of 500 words for each question.

# EXPRESSION OF INTEREST QUESTIONS



## Project title

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1. What is the project for which you are seeking support and why is it important for your area?
2. How much funding are you seeking from the Housing Advisers Programme to secure expert advice for the project?
3. In what areas do you need support and how can the Housing Advisers Programme provide added value?
4. What are the anticipated timescales, milestones and key outputs for the project?
5. What will success look like? How will you measure the outcomes?
6. How will the project have a sustained impact beyond the period of funding?
7. How will the learning from your approach be transferrable to other councils?

The expression of interest must be signed off by the local authority's leader and chief executive, or appropriate lead member and senior officer (including the S151 officer where there are financial implications).

## If your project is not selected

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We want to ensure that the learning from this programme reaches as many councils as possible, and all councils which submit an expression of interest will be invited to participate in the learning programme, which will be led and delivered by successful councils and the LGA.

In cases where commonalities are identified across a number of councils, we may suggest a joint solution or approach where appropriate. We will discuss this with you if this is the case.

We may also offer councils alternative support through another LGA programme, where appropriate.



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