



## BRIEFING PAPER

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# Meeting London's housing need

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Inside:

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2. Government measures to support London's housing supply
3. Barriers & solutions



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## Summary

Rarely a day goes by without reference in the London media to housing in the Capital. The long-term failure to develop sufficient housing in London to keep up with its growing population, and to deal with the rising backlog of need, is demonstrated by rising house prices and rents as well as rising levels of homelessness and overcrowding. The proportion of households privately renting is growing while owner occupation (still the tenure of choice) is falling. It is widely recognised that the lack of affordable housing in London could put the Capital's economic competitiveness in jeopardy as an increasing number of London's workers say they are prepared to leave.

Estimates of the need for additional housebuilding in London fall within a range of 50,000-80,000 per year. Housing completions are well below this level; 2012-13 saw 21,900 net conventional completions. The Mayor's Housing Strategy (2014) contains an ambition to build 42,000 new homes per year for 20 years. Clearly this is well below assessed need, but the target has been defended on the grounds that a higher level would exceed assessed capacity, while the target for affordable housing (45,000 over three years) is said to be deliverable in the light of available public subsidy.

There has been a good deal of research over the years into why London has such a severe housing shortage with a view to identifying barriers and developing solutions. This research has highlighted problems with; for example, the planning system (complex, inconsistent and subject to too much change); land availability; complex land ownership and high land values; building at too low densities; and difficulties in accessing finance.

The Mayor and the Greater London Authority have developed initiatives aimed at promoting development such as Housing Zones and the London Land Commission but commentators believe there is a need to do more and are concerned that some recently announced policies (reduction of the benefit cap, extending the Right to Buy and freezing Local Housing Allowance rates) could exacerbate London's affordability challenges.

It is accepted that there is no single 'silver bullet' solution for resolving London's housing shortage. There have been calls; for example, to review the policy of not building on London's Green Belt; increase density levels; remove blockages from the planning process and set and enforce 'hard' housebuilding targets for local authorities. The debate continues; the Institute for Public Policy Research launched the [London Housing Commission](#) in June 2015 to decipher evidence and produce a clear programme of action for London's housing market, while the London School of Economics launched an ongoing project in September 2014 which is exploring key barriers to increasing London's housing supply.

# 1. A London housing crisis?

## 1.1 The evidence

The evidence base for the Mayor's Housing Strategy can be found in [Housing in London 2014](#) (April 2014). In brief, this report tells us that:

- London's population is expected to grow by about a million between 2011 and 2021, passing its previous peak of 8.6 million sometime in the next few years and reaching around 10 million by 2031.<sup>1</sup>
- Rapid and sustained population growth in the Capital at a time when housing supply fell (due to the financial crisis and recession) "is a major contributor to rising prices and rents."
- Average household size fell for decades but increased in 2011 – this increase was unexpected and has been attributed to the failure of housing supply to keep up with demand thus suppressing household formation.
- The proportion of households privately renting is growing while owner occupation is falling. Younger households are now more likely to rent than own. Only half of private tenants are satisfied with living in this tenure (although a much higher proportion are happy with their accommodation).
- Social housing is unevenly distributed in London. Since 2001 the proportion of households living in this tenure has fallen.
- Falling rates of household formation, linked to rapid population growth and an under-supply of housing, have particularly affected young adults in London, who are now less likely to head a household than they were in 1991 or 2001.
- London's population has grown by 14% since 2002 and its number of jobs by 15%, but the housing stock has grown by only 9%.
- New house building in London is recovering from the effects of the recession, with 21,900 net conventional completions in 2012/13, but remains well below its peak in 2008/09.
- London's average house price was £450,000 in December 2013, 73% higher than the national average and up 12% in the last year. Average house prices in London are at a record high relative to the average UK price.
- The affordability of owner occupation is at its worst ever level in London, while in the UK as a whole houses are still a little more affordable than they were before the recession. The typical first time buyer in London is now borrowing nearly four times their income and has to put down a deposit of 25%.
- Average private rents rose quicker in London than in the rest of the country both before and after the housing market downturn and London has by far the highest average private sector rents in the country.<sup>2</sup> The [English Housing Survey 2013-14](#) reports that average weekly private rents in London were £136 higher than

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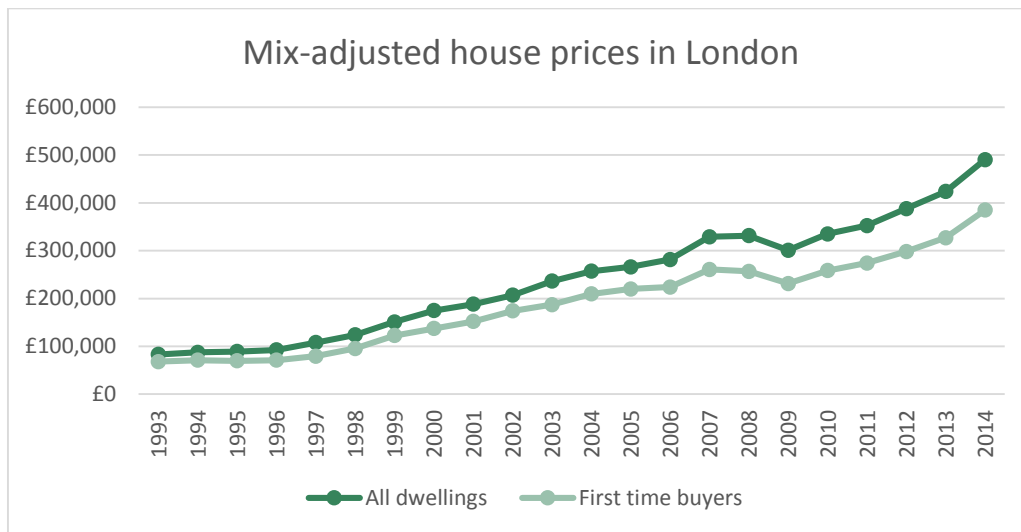
<sup>1</sup> This growth is unconstrained by housing supply – the expectation is that if supply does not increase population growth is likely to be lower.

<sup>2</sup> [Housing in London 2014](#), GLA, April 2014

outside of London at £281 and £145 per week respectively in 2013-14.<sup>3</sup>

## House prices

As noted in [Housing in London 2014](#) excess demand resulted in an upward pressure on house prices. House prices in London have increased every year but one over the past 20 years. Since 1993, when the Office of National Statistics' (ONS) regional data on mix-adjusted house prices begins, prices have increased nearly six-fold, compared to just over four-fold in England as a whole.



Source: ONS House Price Index, June 2015

Although there was a decrease in prices in 2009 as a result of the financial crisis, house prices in London recovered quicker, and to a greater degree than in other regions. ONS figures showed that in June 2015, London house prices were 29.9% higher than their pre-crisis peak. Five other regions had seen prices increase above their pre-crisis peaks by this time. Outside of London, the highest increase was 14.9% in the South East.

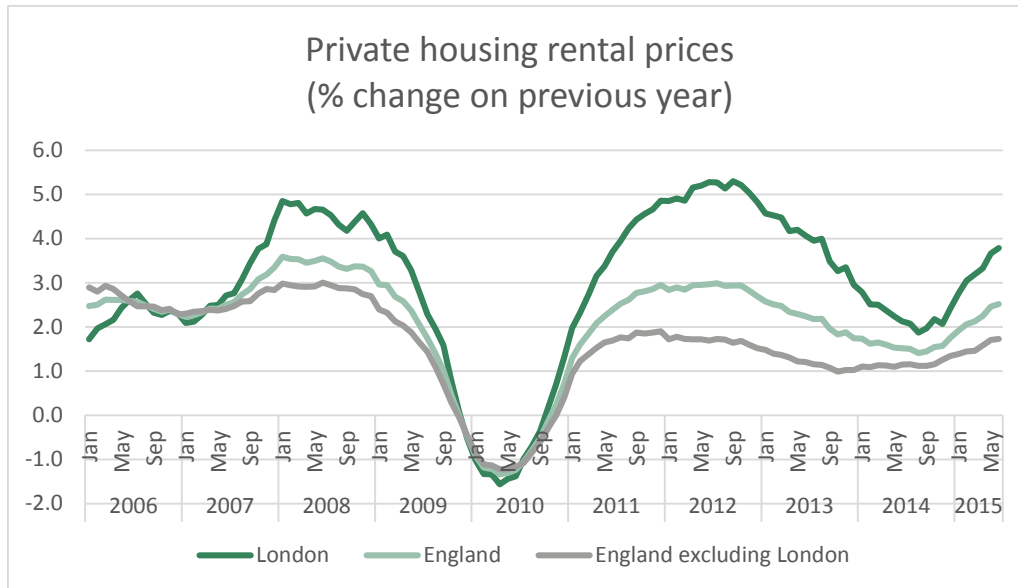
## Private sector rents

Although not rising as sharply as house prices, private rents have also seen steady increases over recent years. Rents increased 35% from June 2005 to June 2015 (compared to a 91% increase in house prices from 2004 to 2014).<sup>4</sup>

As the graph below shows, although London rents have followed the same broad trends as those in the rest of the country, during upturns rents increased at a faster rate (particularly since the financial crisis), whilst during downturns they decreased at a broadly similar rate:

<sup>3</sup> [English Housing Survey 2013-14](#), para 2.32

<sup>4</sup> Figure from the ONS experimental data set, index of private housing rental prices



Source: ONS index of private housing rental prices, July 2015

## Homelessness

The long-term failure to develop sufficient housing in London to keep up with its growing population and to deal with the rising backlog of need is also demonstrated by rising levels of homelessness and overcrowding. The most recent quarterly statistics on homeless acceptances by local authorities in England (June 2015) show that over the financial year 2014/15 London accounted for 32% of all homeless acceptances (17,530).<sup>5</sup> The main reason cited for the loss of their last settled home by homeless applicants in London between January and March 2015 was the ending of an assured shorthold tenancy at 1,720 (39% of London acceptances). This is an increase of 17% from 1,460 (36% of London acceptances) in the same quarter of 2014.<sup>6</sup> At the end of March 2015 London also accounted for 75% of all homeless households placed in temporary accommodation by English local authorities (48,240).<sup>7</sup>

The statutory homeless statistics provide only a partial picture of homelessness in England as they do not include rough sleepers or households who apply but do not qualify for assistance. Annual counts of rough sleepers are carried out. The results of the 2014 count were published in February 2015:

- The autumn 2014 total of rough sleeping counts and estimates in England was 2,744.
- This is up 330 (14%) from the autumn 2013 total of 2,414.
- London had 742 rough sleepers, which accounted for 27% of the national figure.

<sup>5</sup> DCLG, [Statutory homelessness in England: January to March 2015](#), June 2015

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

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- The number of rough sleepers in London has increased by 37%, compared to an increase of 7% in the rest of England.<sup>8</sup>

When an individual is contacted by outreach teams or other services working with rough sleepers in London, their details are entered onto the Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN) database. According to these records, 7,581 people slept rough at some point in London during 2014/15, an increase of 16 per cent on the previous year's total of 6,508 and more than double the number six years ago. The most recent quarterly CHAIN data confirms a continued upward trend in the number of rough sleepers in London. In the period April - June 2015, outreach teams recorded 1,447 people in London sleeping rough for the first time. This is 14% higher than in the equivalent period a year earlier.<sup>9</sup>

### Overcrowding

Analysis of the 2011 Census showed that London had the highest percentage of overcrowded households,<sup>10</sup> 11.3% compared with 4.5% in the West Midlands (the area with the next highest percentage). Within London, Newham had the highest proportion of overcrowded households (25.2%).<sup>11</sup> Overcrowding is more prevalent in the social and private rented sectors.<sup>12</sup>

## 1.2 How many homes are needed?

Estimates of the need for additional housebuilding in London fall within a range of 50,000-80,000 per year.

In [Spotlight: London Demand](#) (2013) Savills identified a need for an additional 50,000 new homes a year in London to meet growing demand.<sup>13</sup> London Councils set the requirement for new homes at 80,000 a year if the aim is to tackle the backlog of unmet need:

A new analysis by London Councils of figures from the Department for Communities and Local Government and the Greater London Authority shows that between 2011 and 2021, 526,000 new homes will need to be built in London just to keep

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<sup>8</sup> [Rough Sleeping England – Autumn 2014](#), February 2015

<sup>9</sup> Source: [GL Chain Reports 2015/16\(1\)](#)

<sup>10</sup> This is based on the bedroom standard. A standard number of bedrooms is allocated to each household in accordance with its age/sex/marital status composition and the relationship of the members to one another. A separate bedroom is allocated to each married or cohabiting couple, any other person aged 21 or over, each pair of adolescents aged 10-20 of the same sex, and each pair of children under 10. Any unpaired person aged 10-20 is paired, if possible, with a child under 10 of the same sex, or, if that is not possible, he or she is given a separate bedroom, as is any unpaired child under 10. This standard is then compared with the actual number of bedrooms available for the sole use of the household and differences are tabulated. Bedrooms converted to other uses are not counted as available unless they have been denoted as bedrooms by the informants; bedrooms not actually in use are counted unless uninhabitable.

<sup>11</sup> ONS, [Census suggests 1.1m households in England and Wales were overcrowded](#), 17 April 2014

<sup>12</sup> [English Housing Survey 2013-14](#), para 2.60

<sup>13</sup> Susan Emmett, Savills, [Spotlight: London Demand](#), 2013

pace with London's booming population. A further 283,000 homes will need to be built to meet the unmet backlog of housing. On current projections only 250,000 homes will be built, and London will be faced with a 559,000 deficit of homes by 2021. Even on a conservative definition of housing need (excluding for example overcrowding criteria) the deficit remains 329,000 homes.<sup>14</sup>

[Housing in London 2014](#) identified a need for around 49,000 new homes each year for 20 years. The report refers to 69,000 'concealed' families in London representing 3.3% of all families in the city.<sup>15</sup>

The 2013 London Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) estimated a need for 48,840 new homes between 2015 and 2035 of which "48% should be market homes, 32% social rent or Affordable Rent, and 20% intermediate."<sup>16</sup>

Research carried out by the London School of Economics (LSE) on behalf of Family Mosaic Housing Association, [The Future Housing Needs of London](#) (2015) concludes that if Londoners are to have the same housing conditions in 2021 as in 2011, 59,000 homes must be built annually.<sup>17</sup>

Continued failure to tackle London's housing shortfall is recognised as a serious threat to the city's future success:

But with the city's remarkable success come challenges, one of the biggest of which is the massive shortfall of homes that most Londoners can afford. Addressing this is essential to ensure London's continued growth and the retention of its status as a pre-eminent global city.<sup>18</sup>

YouGov conducted four surveys over in August 2014 on behalf of Turner & Townsend and London First on the subject of housing. The results were published in [Moving Out – how London's housing shortage is threatening the Capital's competitiveness](#). The surveys revealed that:

...if rental costs and house prices continue to increase at their present rate in London almost half of employees would consider leaving the capital to seek work elsewhere.<sup>19</sup>

Amongst this group the preparedness of 18-39 year olds to leave London is seen as a particular concern.<sup>20</sup>

### 1.3 How many homes are planned?

The Mayor's [London Housing Strategy](#) (June 2014) set out an ambition to work with partners "to double house-building and build 42,000 new homes a year, every year, for the next 20 years." Clearly this falls somewhat short of the assessed need for new housebuilding in the Capital. The Housing Committee of the London Assembly's response to

<sup>14</sup> [The London Housing Challenge](#), London Councils, September 2013

<sup>15</sup> [Housing in London 2014](#), GLA, April 2014, p85

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p86

<sup>17</sup> LSE, [The Future Housing Needs of London](#), 2015

<sup>18</sup> [The London Housing Strategy](#), June 2014

<sup>19</sup> [Moving Out – how London's housing shortage is threatening the Capital's competitiveness](#), Turner & Townsend & London First, 2014

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.



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the draft strategy described the Mayor's top-line housebuilding target as 'worrying' on the grounds that it falls short of assessed need.<sup>21</sup>

The 42,000 will comprise:

- 25,000 market homes;
- 17,000 affordable homes to rent or buy;
- 5,000 of the market homes will be for purpose-built long-term private rent, particularly on schemes with more than one phase.<sup>22</sup>

Over the 2015-18 investment period for the Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) the Mayor intends to deliver 45,000 affordable homes.<sup>23</sup> This will comprise:

- 40 per cent for low cost home ownership
- 60 per cent for affordable rent comprising 'capped' rent and 'discounted' rent products with the latter intended to be prioritised for low income working households.<sup>24</sup>

The Housing Committee was critical of the targets set for affordable housing:

The Committee also notes the target of at least 15,000 affordable homes to be built per annum. However, it considers this worryingly insufficient in view of London's current housing crisis, noting that despite a rapidly rising population this is less than ten per cent more than the number targeted in the current investment round (2011-15). It falls well short of the 26,000 affordable homes indicated as the annual requirement in the SHMA, leading to a shortage of more than 100,000 affordable homes over the course of the decade.<sup>25</sup>

The Committee went on to call for a better balance between affordable and market provision:

And perhaps more significantly, the SHMA indicates that the most pressing immediate need is for more affordable, not market, homes with some 41,000 affordable homes needed annually if taken over the ten-year timeframe used in the past and for which the Mayor's target is set.

The Strategy argues that assessed need for new homes 'significantly exceeds' capacity, noting that delivering 42,000 per year will be 'a huge challenge in itself.' There is also reference to the need for new affordable homes funded with part public subsidy to be 'deliverable in the light of plausible future subsidy levels.'<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> [London Assembly Housing Committee's response to the draft London Housing Strategy](#), February 2014, para 2.2

<sup>22</sup> [The London Housing Strategy](#), June 2014

<sup>23</sup> Responsibility for allocating funding under the AHP in London lies with the Greater London Authority. In the rest of England funding under the AHP is allocated by the Homes and Communities Agency.

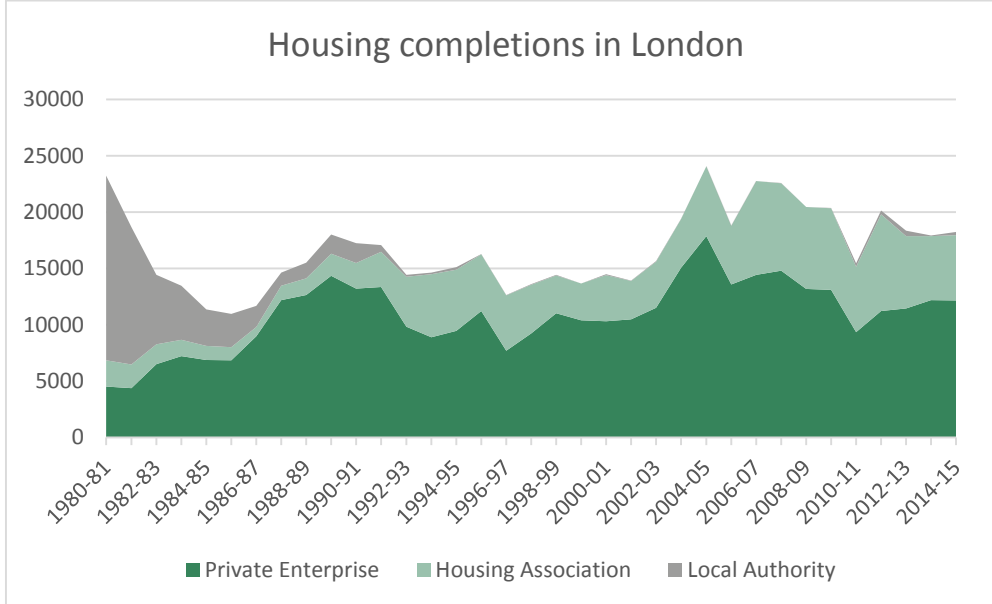
<sup>24</sup> [The London Housing Strategy](#), June 2014

<sup>25</sup> [London Assembly Housing Committee's response to the draft London Housing Strategy](#), February 2014, para 2.23

<sup>26</sup> [The London Housing Strategy](#), June 2014, p25

## 1.4 How many new homes are being built?

Housebuilding data from the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) show a reduction in the contribution by local authorities to housebuilding in London in recent decades:



Source: DCLG live table on house building 253

In 1980-81, local authorities were responsible for 70% of housing completions in London. In 2014-15 the equivalent figure was 2%.

For the years shown in the above graph, housing completions reached a peak of 24,060 in 2004-05, in comparison to the lowest figures of 10,960 in 1984-85.

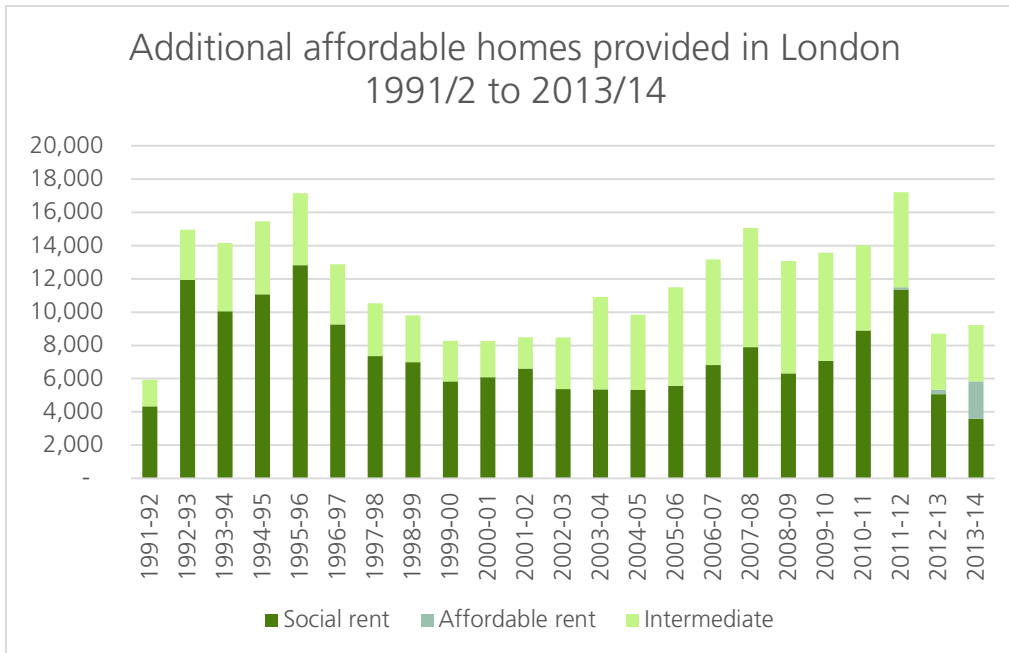
Comparing these figures to the required annual housing estimates of 50,000-80,000 in section 1.2, even the 2004-05 peak is less than half of the more conservative estimates.

The shortfall in the number of new homes being provided in London must also be considered in the context of affordability. Additional homes could be provided for rent or purchase, but these might not all be affordable by all those wanting to live in London. There is no statutory definition of what constitutes "affordable" housing, but the DCLG gathers data in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (published 27 March 2012) as:

Housing units (or traveller pitches and bed spaces when describing a shared dwelling such as a hostel) provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.<sup>27</sup>

DCLG data show the number of additional affordable homes in London, particularly for social rent, to have been relatively low in the two years to 2013/14:

<sup>27</sup> DCLG, [Affordable Housing Supply in England 2013-14](#), 16 October 2014



Source: [DCLG Live Tables Affordable Housing Supply 1006, 1006a, 1007, 1008](#)

In 2013/14, an additional 9,200 affordable homes were provided in London. 8,100 (88%) of these were new build, the rest were provided by acquisition of existing stock, for example. These 8,100 affordable new builds represent 45% of all dwellings completed in London in 2013/14. (DCLG Live Tables 1011.)

## 2. Government measures to support London's housing supply

In March 2015 the Minister for Housing, Brandon Lewis, provided a comprehensive response to a Parliamentary Question tabled by Austin Mitchell concerning steps to create more affordable housing in London. His response is reproduced below; some of the schemes mentioned are specific to London (e.g. the London Housing Bank and Housing Zones) while others, such as Build to Rent and self-build, apply more widely.<sup>28</sup> Although the response refers to action taken by the Coalition Government, these measures have continued under the Conservative Government:

### **Decentralisation**

The Coalition Government decentralised housing, regeneration and economic development to the Mayor of London from April 2012. This enables him to shape programmes and direct funding to meet London's needs.

As part of the transfer of housing and regeneration functions we provided a capital grant of around £2.6 billion to the Greater London Authority up to 2014-15 to fund the housing and regeneration programmes inherited from the Homes and Communities Agency, the London Development Agency and for the development of the Olympic Park.

### **Budget measures**

Our commitment to support London was set out in the recent Budget, where the Government set out the following proposals for London:

- £1 million to allow the London Land Commission to create a comprehensive database of public sector and brownfield land.
- £7 million to the Greater London Authority to support the development of the Croydon Growth Zone. This could unlock over 4,000 homes and 10,000 jobs.
- £97 million of funding and a ring-fenced local 50% share of business rate growth to support the London Borough of Barnet and the Greater London Authority's plans for the regeneration of Brent Cross. This will unlock approximately 7,500 homes of which at least 15% will be affordable.
- Consult on giving greater powers over planning on sightlines and wharves to the Mayor of London, allowing the Mayor to accelerate provision of new homes by reducing planning delays.

### **Affordable housing investment**

Government funding for new affordable housing in London is as follows: 2010-11: £1.1 billion (outturn), 2011-12: £712 million (outturn), 2012-13: £400 million (budget), 2013-14: £392 million

<sup>28</sup> For general information on Government schemes to stimulate housing supply see Library Briefing Paper [06416](#).

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(budget); 2014-15: £516 million (budget). However, this understates the total expenditure on new affordable housing in this Parliament. Across England, our affordable housing programme in 2011-15 is delivering £19.5 billion of public and private investment in affordable housing; about a quarter of which is being provided in London.

This investment continues to contribute to the provision of new affordable homes for Londoners, of which 51,300 had already been delivered in London between April 2010 and the end of September 2014.

A further £1.07 billion has been allocated from the 2015-18 Affordable Homes Programme, to deliver another 32,000 new affordable homes in London. In addition a further £180 million has been allocated from the Affordable Homes Guarantee Programme to deliver 8,700 homes. The Greater London Authority has so far announced initial grant allocations of £404 million to deliver 18,000 new homes and are now inviting further bids on a continuous market engagement basis. Again, the grant funding understates the total anticipated expenditure on affordable housing. We will deliver a total of 275,000 new affordable homes across England in 2015-20, with £38 billion of public and private investment. London's allocation for 2018-20 has not been finalised.

### **Building more rented accommodation**

The London Housing Bank is a new housing fund intended as a springboard to home ownership for aspirational working households on lower incomes. Through London Housing Bank, we are providing the Greater London Authority with £200 million of low-cost loan funding to deliver 3,000 – 4,000 new homes by March 2018.

The Greater London Authority has already announced the first allocations of funding from the London Housing Bank, which will help deliver intermediate rental homes. These schemes include: Peabody Homes in Thamesmead; Isis part of the wider Hale Wharf regeneration site; and Quintain part of the continued regeneration of Wembley Park.

Under our £1 billion Build to Rent fund we have contracted 4 schemes in London worth over £63 million and delivering 671 homes for private rent.

### **Improving social housing**

We have awarded Decent Homes Backlog Funding of £821 million to 14 London Boroughs. This funding has so far made 42,110 homes decent. Gap funding granted to stock transfer landlords of £24 million has helped ensure that less than 0.9% of their stock failed the Decent Homes Standard at the end of March 2014.

A further £145 million has been awarded to 9 London Boroughs to tackle their remaining Decent Homes Backlog. This will help to ensure that no more than 10% of stock in each local authority is non-decent by April 2016.

We have also taken steps to protect leaseholders from excessive works charges imposed by local authorities.

### **Reducing empty housing**

We have provided the Greater London Authority with £29 million to bring 1,600 empty homes back into use as affordable housing.

Our full package of reforms to tackle empty housing is outlined in the written answer of 17 March 2015, Question 227326.

London Boroughs have been allocated a total of £720 million of New Homes Bonus funding for 2011-2016, recognising over 140,000 additions to stock, and over 15,000 long-term empty properties returned to use. Almost 50,000 of these also received the premium for affordable homes.

### **Supporting self-build and custom build**

In July 2012 we launched the Custom Build Homes Loan Fund and we delegated £5 million to the Greater London Authority to administer schemes in London. Bids exceeding this were submitted to the Greater London Authority and £4.8 million was allocated. We have exempted self-builders from Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 tariffs.

### **Promoting home ownership schemes**

Since the start of the Help to Buy scheme in March 2012, over 5,300 families across London have brought a home using the support of a Government loan or guarantee, of which over 4,200 sales were to first-time buyers. This includes 2,430 under the Equity Loan sales scheme (of which 2,304 were to first-time buyers), 2,175 under the Mortgage Guarantee sales (of which 1,955 to first-time buyers) and 721 Newbuy sales (data is not available for the number of first-time buyers).

We have reinvigorated the Right to Buy, with a proportion of the sales receipts being used to build new housing. This increases housing supply, moves people up the housing ladder and gets people off waiting lists.

### **Supporting locally-led regeneration schemes**

We, with the Mayor, are investing each investing £200 million to create 20 new Housing Zones which will deliver 50,000 homes in London. The Mayor announced the first eleven Housing Zones in London in February 2015.

We are working with the Greater London Authority and Transport for London to unlock 11,000 homes at Barking Riverside.

We have invested around £125 million through Get Britain Building for twenty two schemes which has resulted in starts for 3,000 homes. The schemes include:

Brentford Locks West – Get Britain Building funding enabled the first phase of this mixed use scheme by Isis Waterside Development to be delivered, bringing forward the first three blocks which deliver a total of 150 homes.

Grahame Park, Brent – Get Britain Building funding unlocked a phase of this major regeneration scheme that had stalled. The first block of homes was completed in March 2014 with the final homes due to complete in March 2015.

Lewisham Gateway - Get Britain Building funding will deliver 193 units and indirectly support the delivery of an additional 701 homes.

We have shortlisted four housing estates in London for a share of a £150 million Government loan fund for Estate Regeneration. These schemes are in Grahame Park, in Barnet; Blackwall Reach and New Union Wharf, in Tower Hamlets and Aylesbury Estate, in Southwark. They would provide more than 8,000 new homes, of which more than 3,000 would be additional homes

The Government announced in 2012 a UK Guarantee which would allow the Mayor of London to borrow £1 billion at a new preferential rate from the Public Works Loan Board to support the Northern Line Extension. We have also recently made regulations allowing the retention of 100% of business rates growth in the area from which to fund the borrowing. The extension is critical to the realisation of the £8 billion Battersea Power Station redevelopment, as well as the wider regeneration of the Vauxhall and Nine Elms area.

Surplus Public Sector Land capable of delivering almost 28,000 homes has been sold in London. This was critical towards helping us achieve our wider ambition to dispose of land for 100,000 homes across England by the end of March 2015.

We have supported a number of other regeneration projects in London. These include:

- £141 million capital grant to the Greater London Authority for Olympicopolis – this project aims to develop a new education and cultural quarter on the Olympic Park.
- £10 million capital funding for the London Enterprise Fund to support the regeneration of Croydon and Tottenham (2011-12).
- Royal Albert Docks Enterprise Zone - we awarded a grant of £12 million from the 'Building Foundations for Growth' fund which is designed to accelerate progress on the zones to maximise long-term job creation. This supports the Mayor's priority for growth in East London and building on past 30 years of regeneration in the wider area. Regeneration of the Royals will support the convergence of East London with the wider city area.

### **Tackling homelessness and rough sleeping**

We have supported the Mayor in tackling homelessness in London through:

- £34 million grant to tackle rough sleeping across London;
- Developing a pioneering £5 million Social Impact Bond to improve the outcomes for a large group of persistent rough sleepers in London;
- Providing £3.8 million from the Homelessness Transition Fund for the No Second Night Out scheme to help new rough sleepers off the street quickly in London; and
- Allocating £2.8 million of Single Homelessness funding in 2011/12 to take forward a package of measures to prevent and tackle single homelessness, including rough sleeping.

In addition we have provided £167 million Homelessness Prevention Grant to local authorities in London to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping.

There is more to do, but I hope this illustrates the decision action taken by this Government to build more affordable homes and help people move on and up the housing ladder.<sup>29</sup>

There are several Library Briefing Papers on Government measures to improve the planning process:

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<sup>29</sup> [PQ 219222, 26 March 2015](#)

[Planning Reform Proposals](#) (06418)

[Planning Obligations \(Section 106 Agreements\)](#) (07200)

[Planning for Housing](#) (03741)

The Mayor is responsible for the following housing investment programmes in London:

- [Affordable Homes Programme](#)
- [National Affordable Housing Programme](#)
- [Homes for working Londoners](#)
- [Build to Rent Fund](#)
- [Specialised Care and Supported Housing Fund](#)
- [Traveller Pitch Funding](#)
- [Empty Homes](#)
- [Build Your Own Home - the London Way](#)
- [Building the pipeline fund](#)
- [The Mayor's Housing Covenant 2015-18](#)
- [Homelessness Change and Platform for Life](#)
- [Estate Regeneration Fund](#)
- [Housing Zones](#)
- [London Housing Bank](#)

## 2.1 Post-election announcements: London impact

Some aspects of the current Government's housing policy have attracted criticism on the grounds that they may make it more difficult to increase the supply of affordable housing, and may result in existing rented housing becoming less affordable to households in receipt of full or partial Housing Benefit. Some of the challenges posed are felt to be particularly acute in London.

### Extending the Right to Buy

The Conservative Party's 2015 Manifesto contained a commitment to "extend the Right to Buy to tenants in Housing Associations to enable more people to buy a home of their own." Subsequently, the 2015 Queen's Speech announced that a *Housing Bill* would be introduced to "dramatically extend the Right to Buy to the tenants of Housing Associations – putting home ownership within the reach of 1.3 million more families." The Government has said that the properties sold will be replaced on a one-for one basis.

Local authorities are concerned that the measure will be paid for, in part, by the sale of their most valuable (vacant) stock. Commentators



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have questioned whether the rate of sales of vacant council stock will track the take-up rate of the extended RTB.

The Conservative Party published a table showing the values over which council homes would be sold which was subsequently published in *Inside Housing* magazine.<sup>30</sup>

	1 bedroom	2 bedroom	3 bedroom	4 bedrooms	5 or more bedrooms
North East	80,000	125,000	155,000	250,000	310,000
North West	90,000	130,000	160,000	270,000	430,000
Yorkshire and the Humber	85,000	130,000	165,000	265,000	375,000
East Midlands	105,000	145,000	175,000	320,000	430,000
West Midlands	100,000	145,000	180,000	305,000	415,000
East	155,000	220,000	265,000	440,000	635,000
London	340,000	400,000	490,000	790,000	1,205,000
South East	165,000	250,000	320,000	495,000	755,000
South West	135,000	200,000	260,000	375,000	535,000

Some London councils made the point that these caps would result in the sale of almost all their social housing as vacancies arise. The findings of interim research by Liverpool Economics on behalf of Camden, Enfield, Haringey and Islington councils has been widely reported in the press. Using the indicative values set out in the table above, the research, reportedly found:

Of the 73,727 properties owned by the four boroughs, the report estimated 3,467 would be sold under the policy in the first five years. It predicted Islington and Camden would be most affected with 1,843 of Islington's 25,736 properties, and 1,509 of Camden's 22,267 properties being sold in the first five years. Haringey only stood to lose 115 while it was predicted none of Enfield's properties would meet the threshold of what constitutes an expensive property.

[...]

The report said as a result it was "highly likely that a substantial part of the cost of building a replacement home would have to be financed through additional borrowing". It estimated that even if the new policy to replace homes worked, there would be a time lag of at least two years from the sale of a home to it being replaced. It argued some or all of the replacement homes might have to be built in different boroughs which brought "a number of complications" as councils would either have to start buying land in other areas for letting to their own tenants, or funds would have to be transferred to other authorities or housing associations.<sup>31</sup>

The Housing Committee of the Greater London Authority considered the extended Right to Buy at its meeting on 16 July. Richard Blakeway,

<sup>30</sup> [Councils forced to sell expensive homes under Tory right to buy plans](#), *Inside Housing*, 14 April 2015

<sup>31</sup> [Right to buy would be destructive for London](#), *Local Government Chronicle*, 28 May 2015

the Deputy Mayor for housing, reported that a 'broad assessment' by City Hall suggested that between 3,000 and 4,500 London council homes would be sold off each year.<sup>32</sup> A report prepared for the Committee identified substantial implications for the London boroughs.<sup>33</sup>

A further issue is whether homes sold in London would be replaced within the same locality. Boris Johnson was widely reported as having told the London Assembly that the policy would have to deliver more homes in London:

To make this policy work it has to deliver more homes. It would be the height of insanity to use the proceeds of council homes sales in London to help build more homes outside, because it's in London where we have a housing crisis.<sup>34</sup>

Library Briefing Paper 07224 [Extending the Right to Buy \(England\)](#) contains more information on the Right to Buy proposals.

## Reducing social housing rents by 1% for four years

As part of the Summer Budget 2015 the Chancellor announced that rents in social housing would be reduced by 1% a year for four years resulting in a 12% reduction in average rents by 2020-21. Measures have been included in the *Welfare Reform and Work Bill*. The Government expects the rent reductions to be funded through efficiency savings.

The requirement to reduce social housing rents was unexpected, particularly as a ten-year rent policy (to operate from 2015-16) had been announced in May 2014 with a stated intention of enabling social landlords to plan for future investment:

At Budget 2013, the Government signalled its intention to set out, in the Spending Round, a rent policy to apply for ten years from 2015-16. This commitment was in recognition of the benefit of long-term certainty to landlords, in helping them to plan for future investment – and so provide more new affordable homes, improve existing affordable homes, and provide good services to their tenants.<sup>35</sup>

The announcement has been greeted with some dismay by social landlords who are now modelling the impact on their business plans. The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) is predicting a reduction in housing investment as a result of the measure:

...the 1 per cent a year reductions in social sector rents for four years from April 2016 announced in this Budget will directly reduce social landlords' rental income. We expect that this will reduce their ability and willingness to invest in housing, so we have lowered our forecast for residential investment, proportionate to the expected reduction in rental income. The effect is to reduce the level of private residential investment by around 0.7 per cent by the end of the forecast period, which is

<sup>32</sup> "GLA: London will see 4,500 homes sold off, *Inside Housing*, 16 July 2015

<sup>33</sup> See [GLA Housing Committee – Agenda and Reports for 16 July 2015](#), item 5

<sup>34</sup> "[Boris Johnson: Right to Buy in London is insanity if we don't build more council homes](#)," *Evening Standard*, 27 May 2015

<sup>35</sup> [Guidance on rents for social housing](#), DCLG, May 2014, para 1.10

broadly consistent with a reduction in housebuilding of 4,000 in 2020-21. Over the forecast period, our assumptions suggest around 14,000 fewer affordable homes will be built. We do not expect private sector house-builders to offset this effect to any material degree.<sup>36</sup>

The National Housing Federation has forecast a loss of income for housing associations equivalent to building 27,000 affordable homes over the period,<sup>37</sup> while the Local Government Association's modelling concluded that the measure will **cost councils £2.6 billion by 2019/20 – the equivalent of building 19,000 affordable homes.**<sup>38</sup>

London's Deputy Mayor for housing, Richard Blakeway, reportedly told the GLA's Housing Committee that its 2015-18 programme could come under pressure as housing associations review their commitment to build 18,000 units following the announcement on rent reductions. The possibility of associations seeking to change the balance of their schemes towards low cost home ownership and away from social/affordable rented housing has been raised.<sup>39</sup> The affordability of low cost home ownership initiatives, such as shared ownership, in central London has been questioned. Mr Blakeway, speaking at a conference in January 2015, reportedly told the audience that shared ownership does not work 'where property values are in excess of £600 a foot.' This is the case in London underground zone 1 and most of zone 2.<sup>40</sup>

### Reducing the benefit cap

A commitment to reduce the household benefit cap from £26,000 to £23,000 was included in the Conservative Party's 2015 Manifesto after being initially announced as part of a package of measures aimed at funding three million apprenticeships during the Party's 2014 Conference. The [Summer Budget 2015](#) confirmed the Government's intention to reduce the cap for families to £23,000 in London (£15,410 for single people) and £20,000 (£13,400 for single people) outside the Capital. Measures to implement the lowering of the threshold have been included in the *Welfare Reform and Work Bill 2015-16*.

The [UK Housing Review 2015 Briefing Paper](#) (June 2015) considered the impact of a cap of £23,000 and concluded that £110 per week for couples with three children "would be insufficient to meet an average housing association three-bedroom social rent anywhere in either the Midlands or the south of England, and even in many areas in the north of England."<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> OBR, [Economic and Fiscal Outlook](#), Cm 9088, July 2015, para 3.84

<sup>37</sup> [Summer Budget 2015 Briefing](#), National Housing Federation (NHF), 10 July 2015

<sup>38</sup> [LGA Press Release](#), 21 July 2015

<sup>39</sup> "[London affordable homes programme will be reviewed after rent cut](#)," *Inside Housing*, 16 July 2015

<sup>40</sup> "[Blakeway: shared ownership doesn't work in central London](#)," *Inside Housing*, 5 February 2015

<sup>41</sup> Steve Wilcox, John Perry & Peter Williams, [UK Housing Review 2015 Briefing Paper](#), June 2015, p15

The National Housing Federation (NHF), the representative body of housing associations, has commented on the impact of a lower benefit cap:

The Federation's modelling suggests that the lower benefit cap could impact 205,000 households including 68,000 households living in housing association properties. The lower cap will impact affordability in all areas of the country and a lower benefit cap outside London takes no account of regional variations in rents outside London.

Our modelling shows that a couple with three children would not be able to afford the average housing association rent on a 3-bed property in any region. Under the £23,000 cap in London, they would face a shortfall between housing benefit and rent of £27.79 per week. The weekly shortfall under a £20,000 cap ranges from £37.40 in Yorkshire and Humberside to £67.35 in the South East, based on the current rent agreement.<sup>42</sup>

### Freezing Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates

As part of Summer Budget 2015 the Government announced that LHA rates (which determine the maximum amount of Housing Benefit payable to most private sector claimants) would be frozen for four years from 2016-17. There will be some provision for increasing rates in the most expensive areas.

This is a continuation of policies started by the Coalition Government to bear down on Housing Benefit expenditure. Despite growth in the private rented sector in London, between 2011-13 London Centre was the only area to see a decline in Housing Benefit claimants in this sector. Research carried out into the impact of LHA reforms on behalf of the Department of Work and Pensions, found that "the caseload in London Centre has declined in every year since the reforms."<sup>43</sup>

Commentators have argued that the four year freeze of LHA rates will make London increasingly unaffordable for people on a low income (Housing Benefit is an in-work and out of work benefit). Kate Webb for Shelter has written:

**LHA rates have already fallen behind actual rents in nearly 70% of England**, meaning families are chasing an ever smaller number of properties at the bottom of the market covered by housing benefit, or are having to make up the difference by cutting back on essential spending elsewhere.

The new four year freeze will inevitably exacerbate this. [Our model](#) suggests that after two years – the freeze originally mooted – nearly all of the country will be unaffordable. **The bottom third of the market will be affordable in just 20 local authorities.**

Extending the freeze means that the cuts will become deeper as rents continue to rise. We consider an area to have become very unaffordable to benefit claimants when LHA rates fall below the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile. **By 2019 60 local authorities will be very unaffordable, marking huge parts of the country out of**

<sup>42</sup> [Summer Budget 2015 Briefing](#), National Housing Federation (NHF), 10 July 2015

<sup>43</sup> [Impact of recent reforms to Local Housing Allowances – differences by place](#), DWP, July 2014

**bounds to people who need support.** This includes most of London, large parts of the Home Counties, towns like Reading and high pressure areas like Manchester.<sup>44</sup>

### 3. Barriers & solutions

It is accepted that there is no single 'silver bullet' solution for resolving London's housing shortage; there is also some consensus around the barriers to delivery. This section summarises *some* of the barriers and possible solutions which have been advanced as a result of research into the issue.

In 2012 the Mayor commissioned independent consultants (Molior London) to identify the barriers to housing delivery in the Capital. The study focused on larger schemes and those with a significant private sale element. The key issues identified were:

**Control of the 'realistic' pipeline** – at that time (2012) planning permission existed for 210,000 new homes but 180,000 were in 148 schemes each over 250 homes. The consultants noted that such schemes are rarely built at a rate of more than 250 homes every three years, so many of the permitted units in excess of 250 in each scheme were 'not realistically deliverable.' Between 50,000 and 70,000 units were deemed to be realistically deliverable over three years if all schemes commenced, but not all schemes *would* commence. 45% of the permitted homes were in the control of non-building firms such as historic land owners, Government, investment funds and developers who do not build – acting as a constraint on London's housing supply. Changing ownership is described as 'not simple' with reference to price and possible design issues associated with the planning consents (requiring amendment which may incur Community Infrastructure Levy costs).

**Non-balance sheet funding** – availability of debt to fund development was found to be a bigger constraint than the cost of debt although development funding was identified as costly. The consultants concluded "with a few exceptions, only firms with large balance sheets are able to build new homes in London in any significant quantity."

**Private sector capacity** – the firms interviewed in 2012 did not think there was much that could be done to help them build more. They felt they were operating at capacity, The study found that relatively few firms are responsible for London's housing delivery – barriers to entry are high "both in terms of planning/building complexity and the difficulties in acquiring land." April 2015 saw reports of shortages of skilled labour and bricks in the construction industry.<sup>45</sup>

**Planning system** – developers expressed frustration around the speed of local authority decision making and inconsistent decisions. Problems

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<sup>44</sup> [Kate Webb, Shelter policy blog](#), 9 July 2015

<sup>45</sup> Federation of Master Builders, "[Bricks and brickie shortages threaten housing targets](#)," 27 April 2015

and delays had also arisen with Transport for London, the Environment Agency and the District Valuer Service. The industry's key request was a halt to changes in planning rules and requirements. The consultants came up with five areas to focus on if the GLA was minded to set up a task force:

- Press for more rapid consistency between national policy and local plans.
- Solve scheme specific issues in addition to affordable housing issues.
- Lend assistance to under resourced planning departments.
- Offer a one-stop-shop liaison between developers and public bodies such as TfL.
- And generally work to remove the small blockages and illogical elements in the planning system.<sup>46</sup>

A follow-up report was commissioned by the GLA in May 2014 – a commentary was requested on the ability of the market to deliver the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Further Alterations to the London Plan. The key findings are reproduced below. Broadly, the consultants concluded that **'big schemes in London are commencing units in line with the numbers required to meet housing need'**.

- Big schemes are delivering a large number of starts. When measured in terms of housing starts not housing completions, recent marketing conditions have been so favourable that GLA housing need targets are being met in terms of the contribution expected from private-sale starts on sites of 20+ homes
- As few individual schemes commence more than 100 private sale units per year, the *number of consented sites* is as important, if not more so, than the number of consented units
- If large sites continue to get planning consent at recent rates, and if the sales environment continues to be favourable, it is quite likely that London will continue to meet or exceed the private sector starts element of a 49,000 homes-a-year total requirement. Molior's one concern is that the number of individual sites with planning permission might start to fall – 49% of the permitted sites in the 2012 report are now being built. Luckily, during the last two years sufficient new sites have emerged to maintain the number of consented sites – on a like for like basis, in 2012 there were 531 permitted sites, now there are 575
- A smaller percentage of planning permissions are held by non-developers (as opposed to developers) in 2014 than in 2012, and the majority of those held by developers in 2012 have since progressed to full construction commencement.<sup>47</sup>

Section 1.2 of this paper referred to Savills' assessment of a need to build 50,000 new homes per year in London. In their Spring 2015

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<sup>46</sup> [Barriers to housing delivery](#), Mayor of London, December 2012

<sup>47</sup> [Barriers to housing delivery – update](#), Mayor of London, July 2014

Outlook Report, [Solving London's Housing Crisis](#), Savills identified a number of triggers which could be used to increase the Capital's housing supply (see below). Using these triggers could, according to Savills, deliver just under an additional 6,000 homes per year for 10 years:

**Infrastructure improvements** - Savills argues that new transport links should be used to open up new areas and boost housing development. There should be coordination between new station openings and residential development.

**Support a wider tenure mix** – Savills' research identifies the biggest gap between supply and demand in the lower price brackets. Mixed tenure is seen as a way of addressing this; for example, large scale development for private rent backed by institutional investment with professional management.<sup>48</sup>

**Higher densities to increase capacity** – “higher densities can be achieved by reintroducing traditional streetscapes with mansion blocks and terraced housing as well as tower blocks.”

**Housing Zones** – Savills is predicting a doubling of housing provision within the 9 zones within its study area. They expect ‘the remaining 11 Housing Zones are likely to bring significant numbers if momentum is kept up.’

**Release more public land** – the creation of the [London Land Commission](#) is seen as a positive step in identifying more brownfield land for housing development.

**Look beyond the M25** – a dialogue with neighbouring authorities to London should ensure that they play their part in delivering suitable housing sites.

**The Green Belt** - Savills refers to the need for an ‘open debate’ on the potential for sustainable development in the Green Belt.<sup>49</sup>

The use of the Green Belt in London is a reoccurring theme in studies considering how to increase housing supply. In London First's report, [The Green Belt – A place for Londoners?](#) (February 2015) the authors argue that London's Green Belt is of variable quality and that local planning authorities should be encouraged to review this land and consider building on areas “of poor environmental quality, of little or no public benefit and with good connectivity” to provide “high-quality, well-designed residential development that incorporates truly accessible public green space.”<sup>50</sup> The report notes that

- public access land and land that has an environmental designations accounts for only 22% of London's Green Belt; and

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<sup>48</sup> For more information see Library Briefing Paper 07094 [Building the new private rented sector: issues and prospects \(England\)](#)

<sup>49</sup> Savills, Spring 2015 Outlook Report, [Solving London's Housing Crisis](#), March 2015

<sup>50</sup> SERC at the London School of Economics, Quod Planning Consultancy & business group London First, [The Green Belt – A place for Londoners?](#), February 2015

- around 60% of London’s Green Belt is within 2km of an existing rail or tube station.<sup>51</sup>

More information on national policy in relation building on the Green Belt can be found in Library Briefing Paper 0934, [Green Belt](#).

The London School of Economics launched a project in September 2014: *Housing in London: Addressing the Supply Crisis*, which is exploring key barriers to increasing housing supply. A 2015 briefing paper summarises the various barriers relating to institutional challenges, procedural challenges and fundamentals which the project has identified over 9 months since its inception:<sup>52</sup>

<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Main Barriers</b>	<b>Proposed solutions</b>
Institutional	<p><b>Staff and resource shortages in</b> planning departments. Lack of institutional memory within Local Authorities. Limited partnership-working between boroughs.</p>	<p>Increase cross-borough networking, particularly around strategies for alternative housing. Redefine the role of the GLA—providing templates to support partnerships and resources for over-stretched departments.</p>
Procedural	<p>Uncertainty in the planning system. Dysfunctional viability procedures. Difficulties in land assembly and complex land ownership.</p>	<p>Clarify and modify CPO powers and procedures. Introduce more transparent and consistent targets for affordable housing and infrastructure—move towards tariffs and away from negotiation.</p>
Fundamentals	<p>High land values. Density is too low. Land supply constraints. Finance.</p>	<p>Introduce more Housing Zones. Develop the London Land Commission. Establish more revolving infrastructure funds. Expand Builders Finance Fund.</p>

LSE has also developed a [dedicated website](#) for the project.

London First’s 2014 report, Home Truths, included the following recommendations to increase housing supply – some of which replicate Savills’ conclusions:

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> LSE Briefing Paper HEIF 5, [Housing in London – addressing the supply crisis](#), 2015



### **Targets, incentives and planning reforms**

- The Mayor should set boroughs hard house building targets and take over the determination of housing applications where boroughs fail to meet these targets.
- The boroughs should be given a new, long-term, predictable and real financial incentive that will enable them to benefit directly from the construction of new homes and will motivate them to support new house building.
- The Mayor should reform the policies governing the provision of affordable housing by private developers to make them less complex and to deliver more homes. We suggest three changes:
  - encourage boroughs to be more flexible about allowing affordable homes to be built off-site - near to the development - when this results in more affordable homes being provided;
  - require boroughs to surrender to the GLA any developers' payments made in lieu of affordable housing provision if they remain unspent or uncommitted to affordable housing after two years - in effect, use it or lose it; and
  - move to establishing a London-wide scheme, for affordable homes built per development. This should be based on the actual numbers achieved over recent years and must take into account the other charges placed on development, such as Section 106 agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy.

### **Getting land into development**

- To help secure quicker delivery, planning authorities should reduce the use of pre-commencement conditions and, where conditions are necessary, enter into early discussion about them.
- The Mayor could assemble data to assess the scale and cause of unimplemented planning permissions in London, and publish a list of sites where all the permissions are in place but there are no good reasons why development isn't taking place.
- Boroughs could use their compulsory purchase powers to bring land back to the market, where:
  - a reasonable period of time from the permission being granted – say five years – has elapsed; and
  - after consultation with the landowner and/or developer, they are satisfied there are no credible plans to develop in the medium term; and
  - where it is in the public interest that it be brought forward.
- The Mayor should explore ways in which the GLA can support – whether through finance or expertise – the boroughs using these powers.
- Government should empower the Mayor to identify publicly owned sites in London that are surplus to the

public sector's operational needs – a 21st century "Domesday Book" for housing delivery; and the Mayor should act as the disposing agent for these sites.

- The Mayor should immediately require boroughs to review their designation of strategic industrial land to demonstrate that the designation is realistic. If it is not, other uses should be permitted, with a presumption in favour of residential led mixed use development.

#### **Increasing densities and new suburbs**

- The Mayor should adopt a proactive approach to designating areas for higher density development across London, through the London Plan.
- The construction of new transport infrastructure such as Crossrail and the proposed north-east to south-west London rail link, Crossrail 2, should be used as an opportunity by London government, in consultation with local communities, to build new suburbs
- The Mayor should conduct two strategic reviews: one to analyse where new stops on existing rail and underground lines could be delivered to support new housing and a second to consider the opportunities for re-designating green belt land within London for residential development.
- To help support growth outside of London's boundary, the Mayor should work with surrounding authorities, through sharing data and evidence, with a view to seeing how they can also benefit from supporting London's growth.

#### **New ways to build new homes**

- Abolishing restrictions on the ability of local authorities to borrow against the value of their housing stock, when this would be within prudential limits. This reform would give most London boroughs, whose current debt is lower than the value of their assets, a greater ability to support housing growth.
- The Mayor should support an increase in build to let developments by ensuring that boroughs:
  - plan for the private rented sector in their local plans;
  - proactively look for build to let development opportunities in their area; and
  - recognise the distinct economic model of the build to let tenure in policies and decision-taking by, for example, supporting the use of legally binding commitments (covenants) that a new development will remain privately rented for a specified period in return for flexibility in the level of affordable housing required, subject to viability testing.<sup>53</sup>

The recommendations outlined above (from Home Truths) cover a range of influences over private and public sector housing delivery. It is certainly the case that local authorities would like to see the removal of borrowing restrictions in order to enable them to support an increased housing supply. This issue is discussed in detail in Library Briefing Paper

<sup>53</sup> London First, [Home Truths: 12 steps to solving London's housing crisis](#), 2014

06776, [Local housing authorities - the self-financing regime: progress and issues](#). In [Freeing Housing Associations – Better financing, better homes](#), Christopher Walker (for the Policy Exchange think tank, 2014) made a case for a new grant free funding model under which housing associations would be able to deliver at least 60,000 homes a year (in England) at affordable and market rents.<sup>54</sup> In contrast, Capital Economics (on behalf of the National Federation of ALMOs and SHOUT) argues that increased grant funding could support the development of 100,000 homes a year (in England) at rents affordable to low income households:

From our analysis, we have a stark and clear finding: the government would achieve better value for taxpayers' money, as well as improve the living standards of many low-income households, if it were to part fund the delivery of 100,000 new social rent homes each year rather than continue with its existing policy.<sup>55</sup>

June 2015 saw the Institute for Public Policy Research launch the [London Housing Commission](#) with the aim of addressing the following questions:

- How can we double the delivery of homes in London every year, and maintain high levels of housing delivery in the long term?
- How can we reconnect the costs of home ownership and renting to incomes in London?
- How can we provide a high quality private rented sector?

A call for evidence was opened in July and will remain open until 12 October 2015.

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<sup>54</sup> Policy Exchange, [Freeing Housing Associations – Better financing, better homes](#), 2014

<sup>55</sup> National Federation of ALMOs & SHOUT, [Building new social rent homes](#), June 2015



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