



Centre for the New Midlands



## Overview of Government's Levelling Up White Paper

Objectives taken from Government press release, ahead of 12:30pm statement to the Commons, 2nd February 2022 (divided into broad areas of policy)

### LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

- Number of poor quality rented homes halved
- The most run down town centres and communities across the country rejuvenated
- The government will support twenty of our towns and city centres, starting off with Wolverhampton and Sheffield, undertaking ambitious, King's Cross-style regeneration projects, transforming derelict urban sites into beautiful communities. This work will be spearheaded by Homes England, which will be repurposed to, in addition to its existing functions, regenerate towns and cities
- The '80/20 rule' which leads to 80% of government funding for housing supply being directed at 'maximum affordability areas' – in practice, London and the South East – will be scrapped, with much of the £1.8 billion brownfield funding instead being diverted to transforming brownfield sites in the North and Midlands. The Metro Mayors will be allocated £120 million of this funding
- The government will announce a plan that for the first time ever, all homes in the Private Rented Sector will have to meet a minimum standard – the Decent Homes Standard. Section 21 'no fault' evictions will further be abolished, ending the unfair situation where renters can be kicked out of their homes for no reason. We will consult on introducing a landlords register, and will set out plans for a crackdown on rogue landlords – making sure fines and bans stop repeat offenders leaving renters in terrible conditions.
- Home ownership will be boosted due to a new £1.5 billion Levelling Up Home Building Fund being launched, which will provide loans to SMEs and support the UK government's wider regeneration agenda in areas that are a priority for levelling up.
- The government will further commit to building more genuinely affordable social housing. A new Social Housing Regulation Bill will deliver upon the commitments the government made following the Grenfell tragedy in 2017.
- The White Paper will announce 68 more local authorities to be supported by the High Streets Task Force to transform their town centres
- The government will give local authorities the power to require landlords of empty shops to fill them if they have been left vacant for too long
- The £2.6 billion UK Shared Prosperity Fund will be decentralised to local leaders as far as possible, with investments set to regenerate communities, boost people's skills, and support local businesses

## **CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**

- Significantly increasing cultural spending outside the capital, and commit that 100% of the Arts Council England funding uplift agreed at the latest Spending Review will be spent outside London.
- A new National Youth Guarantee will be launched so that by 2025 every young person in England will have access to regular out of school activities, adventures away from home, and opportunities to volunteer
- A review of the Community Ownership Fund will occur so that more fans can take control of their vital local assets such as football club grounds. A £230 million investment in grassroots football will be delivered, with funding this year to deliver 850 pitches in England alone with further funding to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

## **EDUCATION AND SKILLS**

- Illiteracy and innumeracy in primary school leavers effectively eliminated – focussing the government’s education efforts on the most disadvantaged parts of the country.
- Hundreds of thousands more people completing high quality skills training every year
- 55 Education Investment Areas (EIAs) will be designated in local authorities in England where school outcomes are currently weakest. These areas, 95% of which are outside London and the South East, will benefit from intensive investment and support. This will ensure the worst off schools of the North, Midlands, South West and East of England receive the most support over this decade.
- Local Skills Improvement Plans will be rolled out with funding across England, giving local employer bodies and stakeholders a statutory role in planning skills training in their area, to better meet local labour market needs.

## **RESEARCH AND ENTERPRISE**

- Research & Development (R&D) mission will see domestic public R&D investment outside the Greater South East increase by at least 40% by 2030, with these funds leveraging a huge increase in private investment in these areas too
- Three new Innovation Accelerators, major place-based centres of innovation, centred on Greater Manchester, the West Midlands, and Glasgow-City Region. These clusters of innovation will see local businesses and researchers in these areas backed by £100 million of new government funding to turbo-charge local growth, learning from the MIT-Greater Boston and Stanford-Silicon Valley models.

## **DIGITAL**

- Large majority of the country gain access to 5G broadband

## **DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE**

- Every part of England getting a ‘London-style’ devolution deal if they wish to.
- Negotiations for ‘trailblazer’ devolution deals with the West Midlands and Greater Manchester to extend their powers – with these deals acting as blueprints for other Mayoral Combined Authorities to follow.
- Announcing for the first time a new devolution framework which sets out a clear menu of options for places in England that wish to unlock the benefits of devolution, whether that is moving towards a London-style transport system to connect people to opportunity, improving local skills provision, or being able to act more flexibly and innovatively to respond to local need

## **ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

- Rest of the country’s local public transport systems becoming much closer to London standards
- Fund ambitious plans for bus improvements in areas where this can make the most impact, including the mayoral city-regions, Stoke-on-Trent, Derbyshire and Warrington.

## **HEALTH**

- Gross disparities in healthy life expectancy narrowed
- Government will set out its strategy to tackle the core drivers of health inequalities through a new White Paper on Health Disparities published this year.
- Recommendations will be taken forward from Henry Dimbleby’s review towards a National Food Strategy. DfE will work with the Food Standards Agency to pilot measures to ensure greater compliance with the school food standards. The government will pilot the Community Eat Well programme, enabling GPs to prescribe exercise and healthy food.

## **LAW AND ORDER**

- £50 million from the Safer Streets Fund will be invested every year to give Police and Crime Commissioners, local authorities, and also certain civil society organisations in England and Wales the resources they need to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour
- To ensure those who transgress repair the damage they cause, £93 million will be invested in scaling up the amount of unpaid work that offenders to around 8 million hours per year – 1.75 million hours higher than any time since records began in 2015. Police officers will also gain the power to deal with noise nuisance.
- Building on investment from the 10-year Drugs Strategy, the government will work intensively with the local authorities of 10-20 areas most affected by prolific neighbourhood crime
- Significant decrease in serious crime in the most blighted areas

## **HOW PERFORMANCE WILL BE MONITORED**

- Statutory duty to publish an annual report updating the public on the progress of these missions, with a new Levelling Up Advisory Council including members such as Sir Paul Collier, renowned economist at Oxford's Blavatnik's School of Government, providing further support and constructive analysis.
- With a new independent body created to improve transparency of local government performance