IfG DevoLab

Learning from devolution

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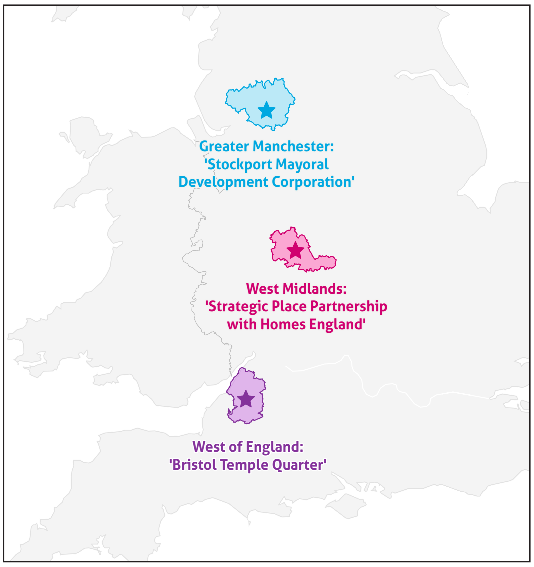
Learning from the DevoLab #4

How mayors can increase the supply of affordable homes

Megan Isaac | Harriet Shaw | Akash Paun

Summary

England has a chronic housing shortage and a widely recognised under-supply of affordable homes. Addressing this challenge – which former deputy prime minister Angela Rayner described as "the most acute housing crisis in living memory"[1] – is one of the government's top priorities.



Alongside its ambitious target to build 1.5 million new homes over this parliament, the government has expanded grant funding for affordable homes, committing itself to investing £39 billion over the next decade through the Social and Affordable Homes Programme, to "deliver the biggest increase in social and affordable housebuilding in a generation".[2]

The term 'affordable housing' is not defined in legislation but generally refers to "housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market".[3] This includes:[4]

- housing for rent at a 'social rent' level – around 50% of local market rents
- housing for rent at an 'affordable rent' level – up to 80% of market rents
- low-cost home ownership through schemes such as shared ownership, 'rent to buy' (a scheme that reduces rent to 80% of the market rate for at least five years to help residents save for a deposit) and homes sold at least 20% below local market value.

In this briefing we use the term 'affordable housing' to refer to all of these categories of homes.

The government views mayors and mayoral strategic authorities (MSAs) as key partners in delivering its affordable housing ambitions, stating that mayors will "lead the charge for thousands of new social homes".[5] MSAs can use devolved powers to acquire and regenerate land, set up mayoral development corporations to oversee regeneration projects in specific places, and invest in infrastructure to support the delivery of new housing developments.

MSAs also control devolved brownfield housing funds to remediate land for development and they work in partnership with Homes England – the government's housing and regeneration agency – to shape priorities for social and affordable housing delivery in their regions. They also have an important strategic role, joining up housing with economic, transport, skills, environment and infrastructure strategies to ensure affordable housing is built in the right places to align with regional priorities and opportunities.

Increasing the supply of affordable housing is a priority for many mayors, often featuring as key pledges in mayoral manifestos. For example, in 2024, the West Midlands mayor, Richard Parker, pledged to build 20,000 new homes in the region by 2031.[6] And Tracy Brabin, mayor of West Yorkshire, committed the region to building 5,000 new affordable homes over her mayoral term, based on a 'brownfield first' approach to new developments.[7] These commitments represent a continuation, rather than an acceleration, of existing rates of housebuilding in the West Midlands and West Yorkshire since 2021.[8,9]

To succeed in these ambitions, mayors must work hand in hand with local councils and partners, Homes England, investors, developers and central government to accelerate the supply of social and affordable housing over the coming years.

So how can devolved powers be used to increase the supply of affordable homes? What innovations have been tried at the regional level to make progress? And what lessons can MSAs learn from each other?

To answer these questions, this briefing presents three case studies of how devolved powers have been used to increase the supply of affordable homes, drawing on presentations delivered at a February 2026 event held as part of the Institute for Government's DevoLab series, held in partnership with **L&G**.

The case studies discussed are:

- **'Stockport town centre regeneration' in Greater Manchester** – a 53-hectare regeneration of Stockport town centre, including the delivery of more than 200 affordable homes[*]
- **'Bristol Temple Quarter' in the West of England** – a major brownfield regeneration programme transforming 135 hectares around Bristol Temple Meads railway station into a series of mixed-use neighbourhoods[**]

* This case study builds on a presentation that Andrew McIntosh, director of growth and infrastructure at the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, delivered at the event.

** This case study builds on a presentation that Stephen Peacock, chief executive of the West of England Combined Authority, delivered at the event.

- **Homes England's 'strategic place partnership' with the West Midlands** – a joint programme between Homes England the West Midlands Combined Authority to accelerate housebuilding by unlocking derelict brownfield sites.*

Drawing on these case studies, we set out 12 lessons that highlight the importance of:

- embedding affordable housing within long-term regional strategies
- investing early in infrastructure to unlock viability
- developing strong partnerships with councils, Homes England and delivery partners
- deploying varied delivery tools such as mayoral development corporations, blended finance and brownfield funding
- building the institutional capacity necessary to sustain long-term delivery.

This briefing forms part of the IfG DevoLab, a platform dedicated to exploring and learning from the policy and governance innovations that devolution enables.

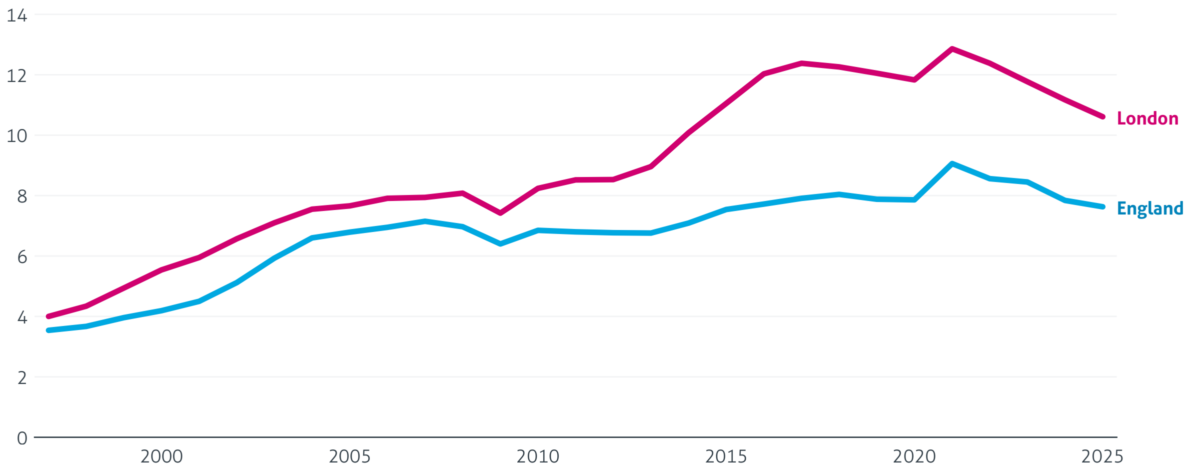
* This case study builds on a presentation that Jackie Rigby, assistant director – place, partnerships and capacity at Homes England, delivered at the event. As noted later in this briefing, Homes England now has strategic place partnerships with 10 MSAs in total, including the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and the West of England Combined Authority.

Context

Housing has becoming increasingly unaffordable in England in recent decades

Since 1997, house prices in England have risen faster than earnings. In 1997, median house prices were around 3.5 times median annual earnings.[10] By 2021, this ratio had more than doubled to nine, while the ratio of house prices to earnings in London more than tripled over the same period.[11] Housing affordability in England has improved since 2021, but it remains significantly worse than seen in previous decades.[12]

Figure 1 **Ratio of median house price to median earnings, London and England, 1997–2025**

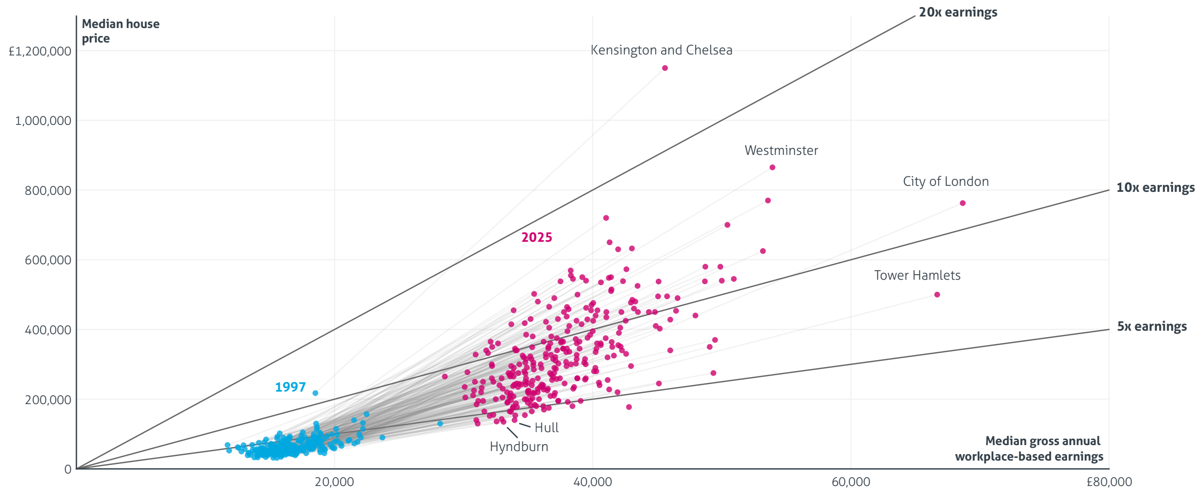


Source: Institute for Government analysis of ONS, 'House price to workplace-based earnings ratio', 2025. Notes: Median earnings are median gross annual workplace-based earnings.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) uses a ratio of house prices to income as a general indicator of affordability – under this measure, house prices are considered broadly affordable if they do not exceed five times buyers' annual earnings.[13] While median house prices would have been considered affordable by this metric in 87% of local authorities in 1997, this was true for only 7% of local authorities in 2025.[*,14] At the combined authority level, median house prices exceeded the ONS's affordability threshold for median earnings in all combined authority areas apart from Tees Valley, with housing affordability posing a particular challenge in the West of England.[15]

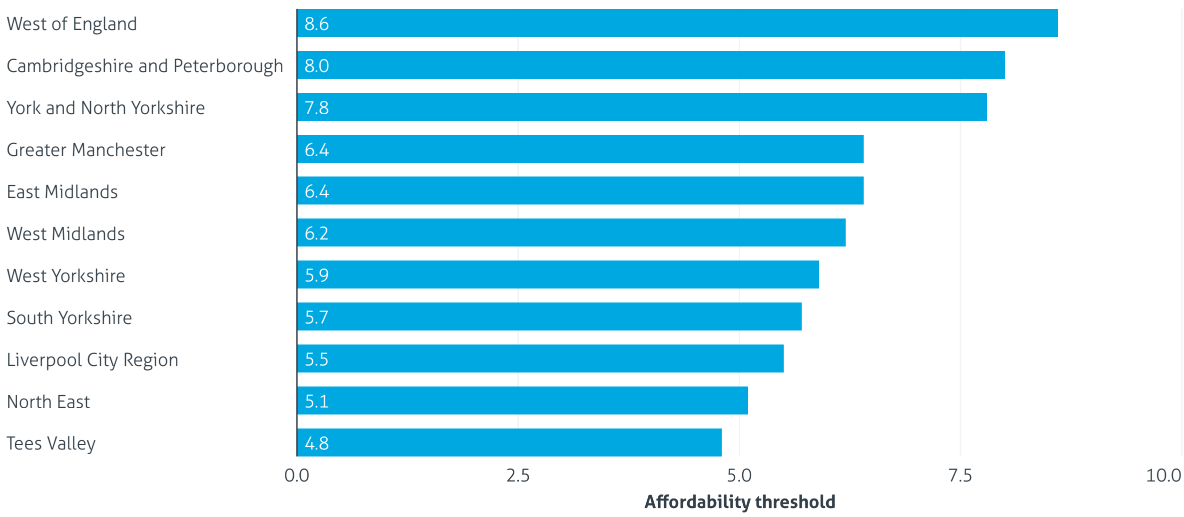
* Median house price and earnings data was incomplete for 29 local authorities in 1997 and one local authority in 2025. These local authorities have been excluded from the dataset.

Figure 2 **Median house prices relative to median annual earnings in England, by local authority, 1997 and 2025**



Source: Institute for Government analysis of ONS, 'House price to workplace-based earnings ratio', 2025. Notes:Each dot represents a local authority. There is incomplete data for 29 local authorities in 1997 and one local authority in 2025, which are excluded from this chart. Median annual earnings are measured as median annual workplace-based earnings.

Figure 3 **Ratio of median house price to median annual earnings, by combined authority, 2025**



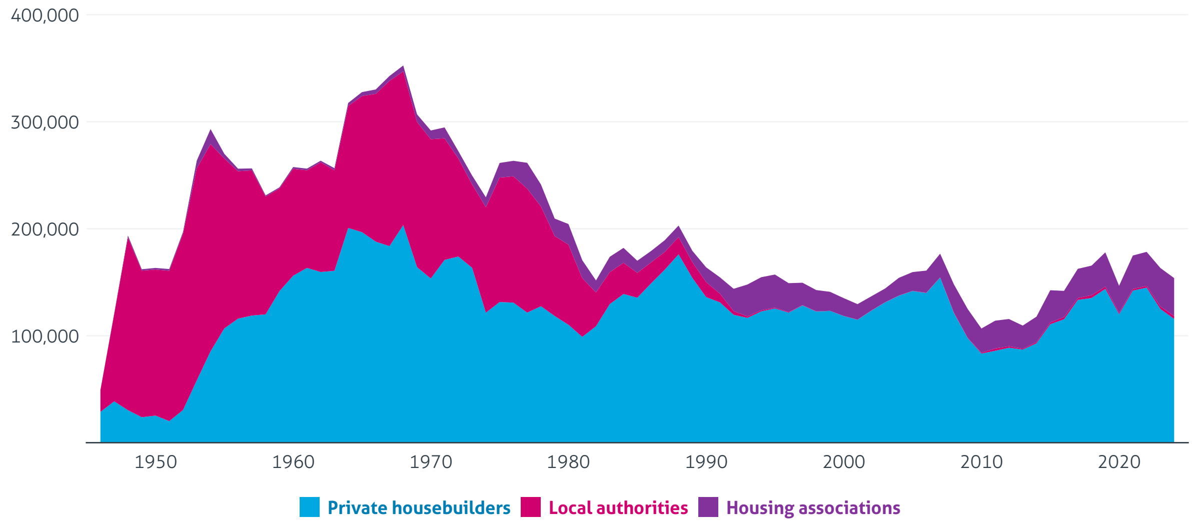
Source: Institute for Government analysis of ONS, 'House price to workplace-based earnings ratio for combined authorities', March 2026. Notes: The ONS uses an affordability threshold of five times annual earnings as a broad indicator of house price affordability. Figures rounded to one decimal place. Median annual earnings measured as median gross annual workplace-based earnings.

House prices have increased relative to earnings in all local authorities since 1997, but there has been significant divergence in house price affordability between local authorities in that time, partly driven by particularly high house price growth in London and the South East. Housing affordability is now a particular challenge in London – in 2024/25, 58% of local authorities in London had a median affordability ratio above 12.[16] This has posed an acute challenge for lower-income households, with median house prices almost 35 times household income for those in the bottom income decile in 2023/24.[17]

For several decades, England has failed to build enough homes to meet demand

Over several decades, housebuilding has failed to keep pace with population growth and increasing demand for housing, despite successive governments' attempts to build more homes.[18] Housebuilding has fallen significantly since its peak in 1968, when more than 350,000 new homes were completed, more than 40% of which were built by local authorities.[*,19] In contrast, in 2024, fewer than 150,000 new homes were completed, and local authorities built fewer than 2%.[20] Once conversions and demolitions are included, 208,600 homes were added to England's stock in 2024/25 – around 100,000 fewer annual additions than needed to achieve the government's target of building 1.5 million new homes over this parliament.[**]

Figure 4 **Housing completions in England by sector, 1946–2024**



Source:Institute for Government analysis of ONS, 'Indicators of house building, UK: permanent dwellings started and completed by country', 2024. Notes:This data series includes new build homes but does not include conversions and demolitions. It therefore provides a different measure of housing supply to MCHLG's 'net additional dwellings' series which includes conversions and demolitions.

The decrease in housing completions in England since the 1960s largely reflects a significant decrease in local authority housebuilding, which has not been made up for by private sector housebuilding.[***] This has contributed to a particular shortage of homes servicing the bottom of the market, with fewer homes available for social rent, and it has led to a growing housing benefit bill and homelessness.[21]

The causes of decades of under-building in England are numerous and complex and are therefore only discussed briefly in this document.

* Data from the ONS. The 'Indicators of housebuilding' dataset includes data on new-build houses but does not include conversions and demolitions. It therefore provides a different measure of housing supply from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's 'net additional dwellings' series, which includes conversions and demolitions.

** The government has confirmed that its target of 1.5 million homes over this parliament is in terms of net additional dwellings; see BBC Verify, 'New homes: What's the new government's housebuilding target?', 2 August 2024, retrieved 4 June 2026, www.bbc.co.uk/news/61407508

*** Rates of private housebuilding in the UK were higher before 1946; see Wilson W and Barton C, *Tackling the Under-Supply of Housing in England*, House of Commons Library, 2023, https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7671/CBP-7671.pdf. This data is not included here due to pre-1946 statistics not disaggregating data for England and Wales.

Several reviews have identified England's planning system as a key barrier to the government's ability to build more homes.[22,23] Since 1947, England has had a discretionary planning system, where local planning authorities permit development on a case-by-case basis. This gives local communities a powerful veto over development but makes the planning process long and unpredictable.[24] The negotiation of section 106 notices, which determine developers' obligations to provide social and affordable housing and other amenities in their developments, also causes delays.[25]

The planning system and the way land markets work both create incentives for private housebuilders to build at a rate that maintains market prices, often leading to slow build-out rates.[26] When combined with challenging market conditions – such as high interest rates, rising costs of construction materials, skills shortages, new building safety regulations, and downturns dampening demand – this can impose a significant constraint on new housing supply, especially of affordable housing.[27]

In addition, recent governments have left the national distribution of housing largely up to local planning decision makers. As a result, the national pattern of new housing has been poorly aligned with where it could deliver the most national benefit – in terms of both where demand is highest and therefore where it could ease affordability problems the most, and broader growth and infrastructure plans.[28] The Starmer government has introduced several measures to address this, including mandatory housing targets and more strategic planning powers for mayors and non-mayoral areas, but these are still bedding in.

Alongside these challenges, which affect the supply of homes across the market, social and affordable housebuilding has been further limited by factors including:

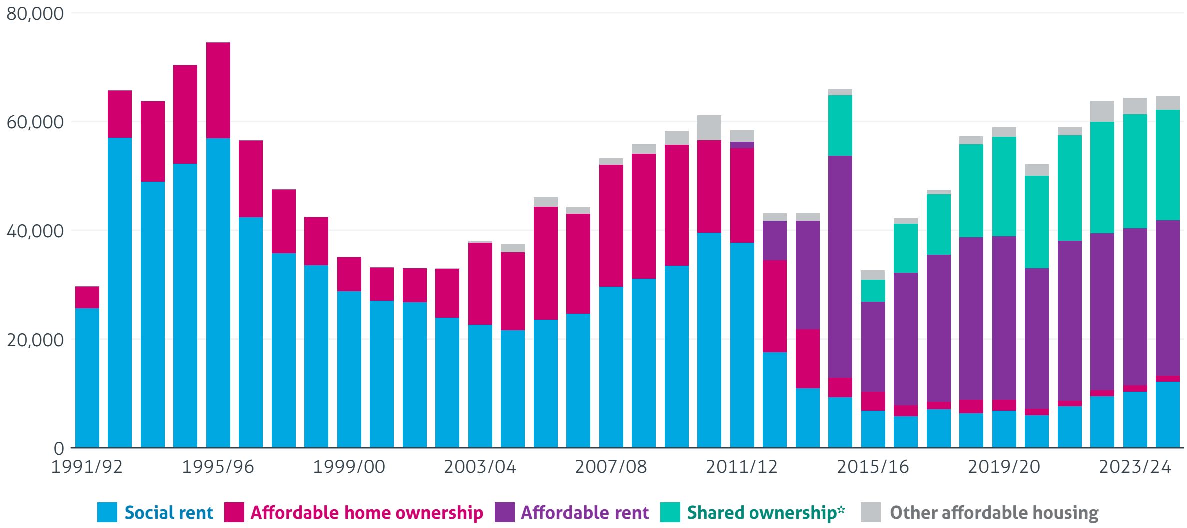
- low levels of grant funding for affordable homes compared with previous periods of high housebuilding[29]
- challenges with debt financing[30]
- negotiations of section 106 agreements leading to developers delivering fewer affordable homes than local authorities' targets, particularly when developers are exposed to adverse market conditions.[31]

In London, for example, 4,522 affordable homes were started in 2024/25, the second-lowest in the past decade and significantly below the 26,386 starts in 2022/23.[32] The Greater London Authority's starts target for the Affordable Homes Programme 2026 has now been revised downwards and the government and the mayor of London have introduced an emergency package such as fast-track planning approvals for developments that include at least 20% affordable housing and bringing forward legislation to strengthen the mayor's call-in powers.[33,34]

Increasing the supply of affordable housing is one of the government's top priorities and it views mayors as key partners in delivering this

Alongside its broader target to build 1.5 million new homes in England over the course of this parliament, the government aims to "deliver the biggest increase in social and affordable housebuilding in a generation".[35] To achieve this, it has committed itself to releasing £39bn for the Social and Affordable Homes Programme (SAHP), which aims to deliver around 300,000 new social and affordable homes between 2026 and 2036, of which at least 60% should be for social rent.[36] This would increase the number of grant-funded social homes to around 18,000 a year – around 50% higher than the 12,200 social homes completed in 2024/25 from all funding sources.[37]

Figure 5 **Net additions of affordable homes in England, by type of scheme, 1991/92–2024/25**

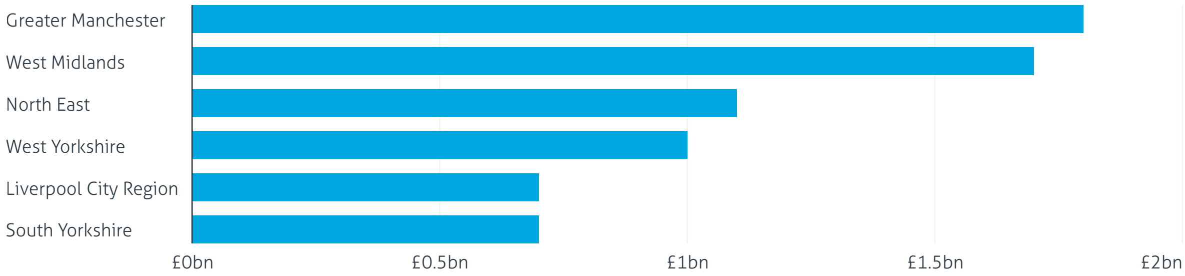


Source:Institute for Government analysis of MHCLG, 'Additional affordable homes provided by type of scheme, England', December 2025. Notes:'Affordable rent' includes the MHCLG categories 'affordable rent' and 'London affordable rent'. 'Other affordable housing' includes intermediate rent, first homes, and unknown tenure. *Prior to 2014/15, all shared ownership units were counted as affordable home ownership. From 2020/21, where units cannot be broken down between social rent and London affordable rent, they are counted as social rent.

The government is giving mayors an increased role in SAHP, stating that it is "getting behind mayors who are ready to build affordable housing across their regions".[38] This builds on the government giving Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) a strategic role in the Affordable Homes Programme (AHP)* – the £8bn predecessor to SAHP.[39] Under SAHP, established mayoral strategic authorities (MSAs) will be able to set a strategic direction for the programme in their area and will work with Homes England to deliver on the aims. For example, WMCA aims to deliver 20,000 social and affordable homes over the next decade, including 2,000 social rent homes per year by 2028.[40] The government has outlined an indicative spend of £7bn across the six established MSAs, subject to suitable bids being brought forward.[41]

* The Greater London Authority (GLA) has operated the AHP since 2012.

Figure 6 **Indicative Social and Affordable Homes Programme spending in established mayoral strategic authorities, 2026–36**



Source: Institute for Government analysis of MHCLG, 'Social and Affordable Homes Programme 2026-2036: MHCLG policy statement to accompany guidance to bidders from Homes England and the Greater London Authority', November 2025.
Notes: With the exception of Greater London, SAHP operates via bids and does not have ring-fenced budgets for particular regions or types of homes. The government has instead provided indicative spend per region to help established MSAs set the strategic direction for the programme in their area. The Greater London Authority has been allocated up to £11.7bn to deliver the London Social and Affordable Homes Programme.

The impacts of SAHP may be relatively slow given funding is back-loaded into the 2030s, but the programme nevertheless marks a substantial boost to the share of housing funding allocated to social and affordable housing – at 51% of total forecast funding for 2026–30 compared with just 16% in 2017.[42,43] The housing sector and mayors have welcomed the programme, with the mayor of Liverpool City Region, Steve Rotheram, describing it as "the largest pot of funding we've ever seen for social and affordable homes".[44]

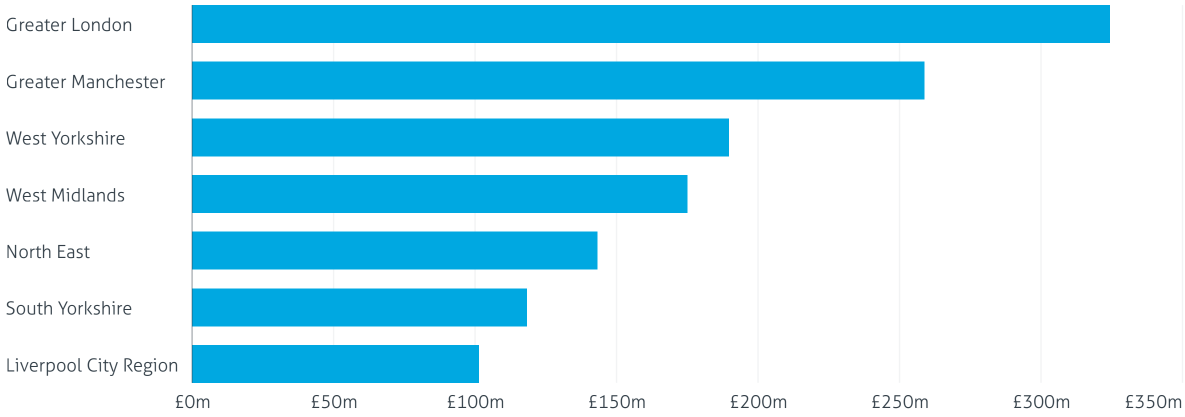
Mayors are also being given increased funding to support housebuilding across their regions. Regeneration has long been central to mayors' roles, with all MSAs having the power to:

- acquire and regenerate land
- set up a mayoral development corporation – a statutory body to deliver regeneration schemes
- control a range of funds to unlock new housing developments and improve infrastructure.

But early devolution deals included relatively limited funding. This has increased over time, however, with all MSAs now receiving funding to remediate land for development, including through the Brownfield Housing Fund and the Brownfield Infrastructure and Land Fund. For example, in 2025/26, GMCA received £85.9 million across three brownfield funds in its integrated settlement.[45]

From April 2026, MSA brownfield funding will be rolled into the National Housing Delivery Fund (NHDF) – a broader £5bn programme to support housing completions with a particular focus on the development of homes for social rent.[46] The government expects the NHDF to work with all new and established MSAs. From 2026/27, seven established MSAs – those that have shown a strong track record of delivery and are eligible for further devolved powers – will receive NHDF grant funding through their integrated settlements, which consolidate dozens of government funds into a single, flexible pot. The government has also stated that it will explore options for devolving NHDF investment funds to MSAs where they can show they have the capacity to deliver.[47]

Figure 7 **Housing funding provided to established mayoral strategic authorities in integrated settlements, 2026–30**



Source:Institute for Government analysis of MHCLG, 'Integrated Settlement funds for 2026 to 2030', November 2025.
Notes:Housing funding provided in the integrated settlement is through the National Housing Delivery Fund.

Mayors are also increasingly working in partnership with Homes England – the government's housing and regeneration agency. To support greater sub-regional collaboration to deliver housing and regeneration, Homes England has set up strategic place partnerships with 10 out of 14 existing MSAs, and the agency itself is transitioning to a more regionalised operating model to support place-based growth.[48,49]

The government is also strengthening mayors' ability to lead on strategic planning and to drive economic development across their regions. Under the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025, all MSAs must prepare a spatial development strategy – a high-level plan that sets out how each region will:

- meet its housing needs
- co-ordinate major infrastructure
- meet economic and environmental goals.[50]

The Act simplifies their adoption by requiring majority support rather than unanimity, after failed attempts to agree spatial development strategies in Greater Manchester and the West of England.[51] The Act also expands the remit of mayoral development corporations, from regeneration to include development, allowing mayors to deliver new settlements on greenfield sites.[52]

The English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026 further expands mayoral powers over housing and regeneration by conferring the power to set up mayoral development corporations on all mayors by default and expanding mayors' development powers. Specifically, the Act:

- confers housing and land powers held by Homes England and local authorities on MSAs
- allows mayors to charge a community infrastructure levy
- grants mayors the power to 'call in' planning decisions of strategic importance and issue mayoral development orders.[53]

The following case studies highlight the ways in which devolved powers have been used to improve the supply of affordable housing and integrate housing with broader mayoral functions.

Stockport town centre regeneration in Greater Manchester

This case study focuses on the regeneration of Stockport town centre in Greater Manchester. So far, the project has delivered more than 200 affordable homes, alongside improvements to transport infrastructure and civic space.

The idea

The regeneration of Stockport town centre has been a priority for Stockport Borough Council since at least 2012.[54] Since then, the council has led an ambitious £1bn investment programme to address Stockport's declining retail activity, high proportion of vacant shops, ageing infrastructure and housing pressures.[55,56] In 2019, affordable housing made up 14% of the housing stock in Stockport compared with 17% nationally, with increasing pressures on affordable housing expected due to population growth and the high proportion of residents aged 65 and over – more than double the national average.[57]

In 2017, the then mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, launched a Town Centre Challenge to boost housing and employment in town centres. After Stockport's response to this initiative, Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) approved Burnham's plans to consult on creating a mayoral development corporation (MDC) for west Stockport town centre. After the consultation and with the consent of the leader of Stockport council, Burnham designated the area as a mayoral development area and the Stockport Town Centre West Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) was formally set up by the secretary of state for housing, communities and local government in 2019.[58,59,60] The MDC aims to deliver new employment space, civic space, a transport hub and up to 4,000 new homes, including several affordable housing developments.

Affordable housing has been a consistent priority of the MDC, with "housing a growing community" at the heart of its mission[61] and an explicit focus on diversifying the tenure mix through increasing the supply of social and affordable rented homes and expanding opportunities for home ownership.[62]

The approach

Before the Stockport MDC was set up in 2019, Stockport Borough Council had started a programme of investment in the town centre, acquiring key sites for development, such as the £45m Redrock leisure hub, which was designed to boost the evening economy and support local jobs and businesses.[63,64]

In September 2019, the council and GMCA worked in partnership to establish the Stockport Town Centre West MDC – the first in Greater Manchester.[65] It was set up as a dedicated regeneration vehicle for a 53-hectare area to the west of the town centre and also aimed to address the deprivation and inequality in northern parts of the borough.

As Andrew McIntosh, director of sustainable growth and infrastructure at GMCA, emphasised at our DevoLab event in February, Greater Manchester has developed strong foundations for collaboration between the combined authority and local authorities, with more than two decades of joint working across the region.[66] The MDC was set up with a commitment to collaborative working between the mayor and Stockport council to agree how development is to proceed.[67] The MDC shares infrastructure with the council, which also holds assets and retained planning powers over the MDC area. The MDC board brings together leaders of each major party on the council, senior council officers, Homes England, GMCA and senior-level private sector board members.[68,69]

Stockport Town Centre West is a wide-ranging regeneration scheme, including making improvements to transport infrastructure and civic space alongside building new private-rented and affordable homes. Developments include the Stockport Interchange, a mixed-use development originally conceived as a transport scheme but now including 196 homes, a modern bus interchange and a two-acre rooftop park.[70,71] Led by a partnership of the MDC, Transport for Greater Manchester, Stockport Borough Council, GMCA and Homes England, Stockport Interchange received a range of funding, including £9.3m of 'patient equity'[*] investment from GMCA, £3m from the Brownfield Housing Fund and substantial private sector investment, illustrating how devolved infrastructure funding can be used to leverage private and institutional investment.[72,73]

The MDC attracted £600m of investment in its five years and has blended funding streams to deliver its objectives, with housing developments also supported by GMCA's Brownfield Housing Fund. The MDC and Stockport Borough Council have committed themselves to keeping the town centre affordable, with several affordable housing developments completed or in development, including:

- **Platform**, a £16.5m affordable housing scheme completed in 2025, which offers 73 apartments for 'rent to buy' – a scheme that reduces rent to 80% of the market rate for at least five years to help residents save for a deposit[74,75,76]

- **Hollingdrake Place**, which offers 131 energy-efficient affordable homes for social and affordable rent, with the development receiving funding from Homes England and GMCA's Brownfield Housing Fund[77]

- **Chestergate**, a £35m development, part funded by Homes England and GMCA's Brownfield Housing Fund, which is transforming the site into 148 homes for social rent and rent to buy, with the project expected to complete in 2028[78,79]

- **Stockport 8**, a major brownfield development neighbouring Stockport Interchange, which aims to transform an underused eight-acre industrial site into 1,223 new homes, including homes with affordable rent and homes for first-time buyers – the £250m project is being developed as a joint venture between the Stockport MDC and the English Cities Fund, a development company set up by Homes England, Muse and L&G.[80,81]

* Patient equity is a long-term investment that prioritises sustainable growth alongside financial returns.

The results

The regeneration of Stockport town centre is broadly regarded as a successful example of town centre regeneration. Since 2019, the regeneration of Stockport Town Centre West has delivered 1,200 homes that have completed or are under construction, of which 18% are classed as affordable, with a further 1,500 due to start on site by 2030.[82,83]

Reflecting this perceived success, in 2025, Stockport Borough Council, the then mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, and GMCA sought to expand the MDC to include 'Town Centre East', tripling the boundary to cover the entire town. After a statutory consultation and Burnham designating a mayoral development area, the relevant legislation came into force in February 2026, marking the first time an MDC has been granted a boundary expansion in the UK. The housing target for the MDC area has doubled from 4,000 to 8,000 new homes by 2040, while retaining the explicit focus on providing a diverse choice of homes for people at every stage of life.[84,85,86] The viability of affordable housing developments in the next phase should also benefit from plans to extend Metrolink to Stockport, a business case that Stockport Borough Council and Transport for Greater Manchester are currently developing.[87,88]

Watch the full presentation of GMCA's approach to increasing the supply of affordable homes.

The 'Bristol Temple Quarter' in the West of England

This case study looks at the Bristol Temple Quarter regeneration project. This is a major brownfield redevelopment project centred around Bristol Temple Meads railway station, designed to deliver a series of mixed-use neighbourhoods and expand the city's supply of affordable homes.

The idea

Building on the establishment of the Bristol Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone in 2012,[89] the Bristol Temple Quarter project is one of the UK's largest urban regeneration schemes.[90] A public sector partnership between the West of England Combined Authority (WECA), Bristol City Council and Homes England[91] leads the project, which aims to transform 135 hectares of brownfield land.[92] Another key local partner is the University of Bristol, whose new enterprise campus is located within the area covered by the scheme, and is designed to foster innovation and new research partnerships.[93]

At our DevoLab event in February, the WECA chief executive, Stephen Peacock, highlighted that Bristol Temple Quarter is surrounded by some areas of high deprivation and therefore offers "a real opportunity to put into practice the principles of inclusive growth".[94] The scale of Bristol's housing crisis means the project comes at a crucial time for the city. Over the past decade, average house prices in Bristol increased by 69%, compared with a 45% increase in England and Wales, despite earnings in Bristol being similar to the national average.[95] More than 20,000 residents remain on the council house waiting list, illustrating the city's need for new housing supply, particularly for those most vulnerable to rising costs.[96] Bristol Temple Quarter is designed to help address this challenge through its plans to deliver 10,000 new homes, 40% of which will be affordable.[97]

The approach

The regeneration of Bristol Temple Quarter has evolved over the years. As previously noted, the Bristol Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone was launched in 2012, with the aim of accelerating economic growth, attracting new investment and supporting job creation in the area.[98] Building on the work of the enterprise zone – and on regeneration happening in the Bristol Temple Quarter area more broadly – the Bristol Temple Quarter Strategic Board was set up in September 2017.[99]

In February 2021, the Bristol Temple Quarter partners signed a memorandum of understanding to formalise their commitment to work together on the regeneration programme.[100] This partnership strengthened further in March 2024 when WECA, Bristol City Council and Homes England incorporated the Bristol Temple Quarter Limited Liability Partnership (BTQ LLP) to provide a more co-ordinated approach to delivery.[101] Each partner has agreed to pool its land within the phase one areas around Bristol Temple Meads station, ensuring development can happen in the right places.[102] The BTQ LLP has recently appointed Muse Places Ltd as its development partner for the publicly owned land around the station.

Over its 25-year timeline, the project aims to deliver:[103,104]

- up to 10,000 new homes, including a significant proportion of affordable housing
- up to 22,000 new jobs
- the University of Bristol's new enterprise campus
- the regeneration of Bristol Temple Meads railway station, including the new Southern Gateway multi-modal transport hub
- multiple new mixed-use developments, including St Philip's Marsh, Mead Street and Temple Island.

In June 2022, central government awarded £94.7m to the project to fund improvements to Temple Meads station and unlock land to deliver new homes and commercial space.[105,106] The project has also received significant funding from private and institutional investors. Most notably, the University of Bristol has invested £500m into its new Temple Quarter enterprise campus[107] and L&G has invested £350m into transforming Temple Island into a new urban quarter, including 550 new homes.[108]

The results

Construction is under way on two of the programme's flagship projects: the Temple Meads station regeneration and the University of Bristol's enterprise campus.[109] The new £23m eastern entrance to Bristol Temple Meads station is due to be opened alongside the enterprise campus in September 2026.[110] Other projects are also making progress, such as the Southern Gateway transport hub, which secured planning permission in November 2025, and the publication of draft planning guidance for St Philip's Marsh, a major development opportunity to create a series of sustainable, mixed-use neighbourhoods. These early developments, particularly the transport improvements, are crucial to the success of the housing that will follow, given the importance of connecting new neighbourhoods to jobs, services and amenities.

However, the Bristol Temple Quarter regeneration programme will face challenges to deliver its full ambitions. Like many regions, the West of England faces mounting viability pressures, driven by high inflation, rising construction costs and new building safety regulations.[111] At our DevoLab event, Peacock highlighted that WECA did not, at the time, have a brownfield land fund to help it unlock difficult sites and this intensified the pressures the programme faced: "If we had a brownfield land fund, we would be using it. We don't and we need one."[112] This meant partners had to work harder to close viability gaps and secure private and institutional investment to keep schemes moving. In March 2026, WECA received its first allocation from the national Brownfield Housing Fund, worth £45m.[113]

Watch the full presentation of WECA's approach to increasing the supply of affordable homes.

Homes England's 'strategic place partnership' with the West Midlands Combined Authority

This case study examines Homes England's strategic place partnership (SPP) with the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA). An agreement made in 2024 that commits both organisations to work collaboratively to accelerate housebuilding across the region by unlocking derelict brownfield sites.

The idea

Homes England – the government's housing and regeneration agency – has formed SPPs with 10 mayoral strategic authorities (MSAs).[114] SPPs are a recognised framework for Homes England to support MSAs to deliver housing growth and regeneration in their region.[115] At our DevoLab event, Jackie Rigby, Homes England's assistant director of place, partnerships and capacity, noted that while each SPP is bespoke to its region, they all share a "commitment to collectively increase affordable housing supply".[116]

The approach

The WMCA SPP has a particular focus on brownfield land and sets out plans to "remediate difficult to deliver and stalled brownfield sites" and deliver good-quality affordable homes.[117] It builds on several years of joint working between Homes England and WMCA, on projects such as the regeneration of Digbeth[118] and the transformation of the Lockside estate in Walsall.[119]

Increasing the supply of affordable housing has become a priority for the West Midlands as it faces a depleting stock of genuinely affordable homes, with median house prices almost six times higher than median annual earnings.[120,121] WMCA argues that the region faces particular challenges because of the region's low housing density and its limited development around key transport hubs.[122]

To tackle these challenges, the West Midlands mayor, Richard Parker, has committed the region to building 2,000 new social homes a year by 2028.[123] Specific housing targets for the SPP have not been published, but the partnership has set out its strategic outcomes, which include:[124]

- maximising the quality, speed and volume of new housebuilding by maintaining a strong joint development pipeline
- supporting high-quality place-making and inclusive growth across the region
- delivering the West Midlands' affordable homes strategy and expanding affordable housing through joint programmes and investment models

- using the partnership's influence to attract additional public and private investment, skills and expertise
- working jointly to share regional and national policy and use existing frameworks to deliver regeneration aligned with local needs.

Instead of setting out a fixed list of projects, the SPP is focused on setting up a pipeline of short-, medium- and long-term priority projects that require joint intervention from WMCA and Homes England.[125] Homes England and WMCA will also work with local authorities to understand their capacity and identify the areas with the most ambitious proposals for housing growth.[126]

The results

The WMCA SPP has not set straightforward quantitative targets but instead has broader strategic outcomes that will take time to achieve and evaluate. However, there is some evidence of effective collaboration between Homes England and WMCA, on schemes such as the development of 300 affordable homes on the former Yardley sewage works in Stechford, Birmingham.[127] WMCA and Homes England worked with Birmingham City Council to facilitate the development deal, which was signed in May 2025.[128]

Delivering the ambitions of the West Midlands SPP will be challenging, particularly due to its focus on brownfield sites, which are often costly, technically complex and slow to bring forward. Nevertheless, SPPs are a potentially important mechanism for improving co-ordination between Homes England and MSAs – and can help regions to expand their capacity to deliver affordable homes.

Watch the full presentation of Homes England's approach to increasing the supply of affordable homes.

Lessons from the case studies

1. Delivery of affordable homes should be embedded within a broader long-term regional strategy that local leaders and partners coalesce around.

A clear, long-term strategic framework creates the conditions for expanding the supply of affordable homes by coalescing partners around shared goals. For example, in 2025, Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) published the latest iteration of the Greater Manchester Strategy, a high-level strategic vision that sets out the region's objectives over a 10-year period. Agreed by the 10 constituent local authorities and informed by 12 months of engagement with residents and businesses, the 2025–35 strategy sets out 10 priorities for the city region, including safe, decent and affordable housing.[129] At our DevoLab event, Andrew McIntosh, director of sustainable growth and infrastructure at GMCA, described this strategy as creating a collective "north star" or focal point for decision making across the system.

By rooting affordable and social housing ambitions in a whole-region strategy, mayoral strategic authorities (MSAs) can ensure that these principles feed into more specific strategies across the region, such as transport plans, local growth plans and spatial development strategies (SDSs). For example, in the West Yorkshire Plan 2040, West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) sets out its high-level vision for the region, including "a truly affordable and high quality housing offer, meeting the needs of people and communities".[130] This ambition is then integrated into other key strategic documents, including WYCA's housing strategy[131] and local growth plan, both of which connect housing delivery to broader inclusive growth objectives.[132]

2. Spatial development strategies will empower mayors to set a long-term framework for the delivery of affordable homes across the region.

Spatial development strategies (SDSs) promise to become one of the most powerful tools available to mayors to shape where and how affordable homes are delivered. SDSs are high-level spatial plans looking ahead at least 20 years that identify the appropriate scale of growth, development and regeneration in the region.[133] They set the framework for local plans and provide a mechanism for mayors to align housing, growth, infrastructure and environmental plans.

Before the enactment of the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025, only five mayors had the power to develop a SDS.[134] In three of these places, adoption required a unanimous vote of the respective combined authority cabinets – leading to failed attempts to adopt SDSs in Greater Manchester and the West of England.[135] To date, no MSA has adopted an SDS outside of Greater London, where the mayor is legally required to produce a regional plan, which can be passed unless opposed by two thirds of members of the London Assembly.[136] In Greater Manchester, while an SDS has not been agreed, nine of the 10 constituent councils instead adopted a joint development plan that provides a similar strategic framework for local plans and sets out policies to inform the determination of planning applications in those nine boroughs.

Through the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025, the government has now legislated to reintroduce regional spatial planning across the rest of England. The Act requires all MSAs to produce an SDS for their region, and introduces simple majority voting for adoption, with the mayor holding the casting vote in the event of a tie.[137] This provides a significant opportunity for mayors: as Stephen Peacock, chief executive of West of England Combined Authority (WECA), emphasised at our DevoLab event, SDSs represent "one of the apex opportunities we have" and will allow mayors to join up policy areas and accelerate the delivery of affordable housing.[138] SDSs will give MSAs the opportunity to set out a high-level vision for what they want their region to look like and how housing developments will fit with other infrastructure and development priorities across the region. Local plans will continue to be produced at the council level but will have to align with the SDS.

3. A credible, sequenced investment pipeline helps to align partners around shared priorities and balance short- and long-term development.

Delivering affordable housing in the right areas that is joined up with transport and employment opportunities requires significant investment and careful co-ordination of funding and partners. As Andrew McIntosh highlighted at our DevoLab event, a key challenge for MSAs in achieving this is that "we can't do everything everywhere all at the same time".[139] To mitigate this, MSAs can provide clear sequencing of housing and infrastructure projects across the region by developing an integrated investment pipeline. This gives partners, investors and developers more certainty about short-, medium- and long-term priorities – and a clear mechanism to direct resources and investment capacity.

Government guidance specifies that each region's integrated investment pipeline should be developed as part of the local growth plan – 10-year economic strategies that set out priority sectors and specific locations for growth and investment.[140] For example, WYCA's local growth plan identifies three 'corridors of opportunity' that connect major urban centres and areas of economic strength, which can provide a framework for investment priorities in the region.[141]

By outlining a clear pipeline, MSAs can also support partnership working with central government, housing associations, investors, developers, Homes England and other infrastructure providers. Through clear sequencing, the pipeline approach helps partners to align funding and delivery capacity in a co-ordinated way. This approach is particularly important for the delivery of affordable homes, which often require blended funding and collaboration between several agencies.

In the case of Greater Manchester, the integrated pipeline is presented via a visual, interactive mapping tool that captures Greater Manchester's six growth locations and key projects for investment, including transport infrastructure and land available for housing and office supply.[142]

At our DevoLab event, Andrew McIntosh emphasised the importance of the 'integrated' element of the pipeline, which ensures the projects across GMCA are "well connected and that we're not building homes in isolation to employment opportunities [and that] residents can actually get to those employment opportunities".[143] McIntosh also highlighted that the delivery of projects in the integrated pipeline will be supported by the integrated settlement, which consolidates dozens of grants provided by central government into a single settlement that MSAs can reallocate between functional areas. GMCA and WMCA have received an integrated settlement from central government since 2025/26 and five other established MSAs began receiving them in 2026/27.[144,145]

4. Early investment in infrastructure can support viability and build market confidence.

Viability is a challenge that all speakers at our DevoLab event in Manchester highlighted, with high interest rates, rising costs of construction materials and building safety regulations all increasing demands on developers. Upfront public sector investment in infrastructure – such as transport links, utilities, public realm improvements and site remediation – can be decisive for unlocking new affordable homes by reducing development costs and improving the viability of housing schemes.

For example, in Bristol city centre, the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) has forward funded a new station entrance linking to the university's new enterprise campus, which will precede the Bristol Temple Quarter development but boost credibility and investor confidence in the scheme. Stephen Peacock drew the lesson that WECA and its partners "need to lay down the tracks before the private sector can come in and do its bit".[146]

Similarly, in the West Midlands, WMCA's announcement of a new tram route for the West Midlands Metro as part of a £2.4bn transport funding package is intended to catalyse up to 1,500 new homes and unlock significant private investment, including up to £3bn from US investment firm Knighthead into the Birmingham Sports Quarter, a case study discussed in a previous publication of the IfG DevoLab series.[147,148]

5. Delivering affordable homes requires strong partnerships between MSAs and local authorities.

While mayors can provide regional leadership and strategic direction, it is local planning authorities that hold the power to approve specific developments and have duties to provide housing in the area. Strong partnership working between MSAs and local authorities is therefore essential to the successful delivery of affordable homes. The support of at least half of local leaders on MSA boards is also required for the mayor to pass his or her plans and budgets. To maintain local consensus, mayors and MSAs have to ensure that each constituent area secures investment into some key local projects, but that they do so while maintaining a focus on the overarching larger regional opportunities that offer the greatest growth potential.

MSAs and local authorities should therefore engage early in the process to reach agreement on the strategic vision for the region and specific priorities for growth and development. As noted earlier, a clear investment pipeline also plays an important role in clarifying priorities.

Partnerships between local authorities and MSAs to deliver affordable housing can also be formalised through vehicles such as mayoral development corporations (MDCs). For example, the governance of Stockport MDC includes a commitment to joint working between the mayor and Stockport Borough Council to agree how development is to proceed in the MDC's geographical remit. Similarly, in Liverpool City Region, the mayor, Steve Rotheram, is working in partnership with Liverpool City Council to set up an MDC to deliver 17,500 new homes in the North Docks over the next 15 years.[149] In the West

Midlands, in May of this year, the mayor, Richard Parker, launched the region's first MDC in collaboration with Birmingham City Council, which aims to regenerate east Birmingham and build 20,000 new homes.[150,151]

6. Mayors can use their convening power to lead system-wide collaboration to deliver affordable homes.

Delivery of affordable housing depends on system-wide collaboration – not just between MSAs and councils, but also with developers, housing associations, investors, NHS partners, Homes England, utility providers and transport authorities.

As Andrew McIntosh emphasised at our DevoLab event:

> "Partnership is fundamental … [combined authorities] don't go out and put in a spade in the ground. We are relying on a whole system across Greater Manchester to deliver our ambitions."[152]

For newer MSAs, in particular, developing and maintaining relationships across the system will take time and ongoing effort. As one former council leader previously told the Institute for Government:

> "It is hard work and persistence, regular meetings, sharing of information, being very clear on how decisions are made – particularly around money – and building up trust".[153]

In Greater Manchester, a key partnership for delivering affordable housing is a tripartite agreement between GMCA, NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care and the Greater Manchester Housing Providers (GMHP) coalition. This partnership aims to deliver integrated solutions to challenges centred on housing and health.

From an investor perspective, Ben Denton, head of strategic growth (affordable housing) at L&G, emphasised that L&G's most productive relationships with MSAs are where they regularly hold partners to account for delivery, with MSAs acting as a key convener and driver of progress across the project. Some MSAs also provide longer term support for the housing sector through their broader policy role; for example, through their control of adult skills funding, MSAs can support developers with their supply chain and skills pipeline.[154]

However, MSAs can face challenges in their partnerships with private developers, created by misaligned incentives and unequal information. Developers have strong incentives to maximise returns and may lobby for public subsidy or flexibility on affordable housing contributions, sometimes arguing that schemes are unviable without additional public intervention. It is important that MSAs build the necessary internal expertise and share enough information across partners to ensure they are not just conveners but also well-informed partners who can assess proposals, understand viability constraints and support delivery.

7. Strategic place partnerships between MSAs and Homes England provide a structured framework for mayors to work with the government on housing delivery.

Strategic place partnerships (SPPs) are becoming an increasingly important mechanism for MSAs to accelerate affordable housing delivery. As of December 2025, Homes England has formed SPPs with 10 MSAs.[155] Each partnership is built around a shared business plan, setting out the region's most ambitious proposals for housing growth, and defines how Homes England and the MSA will work together to unlock delivery. These partnerships enable both partners to:

- set out a shared vision and ambition for housing delivery in the region
- build a joint delivery pipeline
- blend pots of funding more flexibly.

At our DevoLab event, Jackie Rigby, assistant director of place, partnerships and capacity at Homes England, emphasised that SPPs have enabled Homes England to be "in the room" with MSAs and local authority partners, and act "as an objective broker" to help with site prioritisation and to keep projects progressing.[156] She highlighted the example of South Yorkshire, where there are four stockholding local authorities, each with clear housebuilding ambitions. Through the SPP, Homes England brought these partners together with South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority to co-ordinate bids and identify priority sites where Homes England grant funding could unlock progress. As a result, 100 homes across two key sites have now been brought forward – both with high proportions of affordable housing.[157]

SPPs can also help MSAs to co-ordinate their engagement with central government departments. At our DevoLab event, Stephen Peacock described the West of England Combined Authority's (WECA's) SPP as:

> "the link to our co-ordinated approach across all government departments, MHCLG [Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government], Treasury, DfT [Department for Transport]…"[158]

An insider at another combined authority offered a more cautious welcome – they suggested that SPPs should be designed in a more flexible way, taking into account the distinct needs, opportunities and delivery capacity of different MSAs.

8. The Social and Affordable Homes Programme is designed to enable mayors to set strategic priorities for affordable housing in their region.

The Social and Affordable Homes Programme (SAHP) is the government's major funding programme for new homes across England. The government has not devolved this funding – other than to London – but it has given mayors elsewhere a role in shaping what homes get built in their region and where.[159]

The government has announced indicative allocations for six established MSAs, amounting to £7bn of the £39bn SAHP, which is intended to deliver 300,000 new social and affordable homes over a decade.[160] Established MSAs will have an increased role in the allocation of SAHP, including by setting strategic priorities for:

- the types of homes delivered
- the tenure mix
- priority sites for new social and affordable housing.

Providers bidding for SAHP funding will have to show how their proposals align with these priorities, helping mayors and Homes England to accelerate the delivery of affordable homes that meet local need.

While this is a welcome step, London's experience of shaping the funding shows how difficult it can be to translate strategic priorities into delivery. The programme will be tested on its ability to attract a broad range of bids that meet the MSA's criteria, and on how flexibly it responds if providers argue that those criteria are not viable in practice. In London, this misalignment led to MHCLG and the Greater London Authority agreeing to cut London's 2021–26 target for the Affordable Homes Programme – the predecessor to SAHP – by 22%, to a range of 17,800 to 19,000 new homes.[161]

This new role for mayors is indicative of Homes England's new regionalised approach, reflected in the appointment of five regional directors who each lead on engagement with mayors and other local stakeholders.[162] At our DevoLab event, Jackie Rigby, from Homes England, noted that when the fund was designed, they wanted to make it "even more responsive to mayors and their priorities", working closely with established MSAs so that regional strategic priorities were embedded into the programme's prospectus.[163]

There is ongoing debate about further devolution of Homes England's functions, including whether to devolve social and affordable homes funding directly to MSAs, as in London, which has had control of affordable housing funds since 2012.[164] A number of mayors have made the case for this. For instance, Kim McGuiness, mayor for the North East, has pledged to "lobby hard to ensure the funds controlled by Homes England are handed to the mayor and elected representatives in the North East".[165] The new 'right to request' process, which the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026 set in motion, offers a formal mechanism for leading mayors to make the case to Whitehall for devolution of this budget. The government will be expected at least to consider and respond to these requests, even if ultimately it opts to maintain the current model.

9. Mayoral development corporations can unblock complex brownfield sites.

MSAs can use mayoral development corporations (MDCs) – statutory bodies that regional mayors set up to deliver regeneration schemes – to unblock complex sites.[166] Land assembly is one of the most persistent blockers to housing delivery. Large and complex urban sites often have fragmented land ownership, making it difficult to acquire the land needed for development. Without the powers or funding to acquire and prepare these sites, ambitious housebuilding projects will struggle to move forward. At our DevoLab event, Stephen Peacock, chief executive of the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority, highlighted this challenge starkly in Bristol, where the St Philip's Marsh site within Bristol Temple Quarter has 61 separate land interests.[167]

MDCs can help MSAs overcome this challenge by drawing on the wide statutory powers available within their defined geography. As previous Institute for Government research has shown, MDCs are "one of the most powerful interventions that mayors can make to drive urban regeneration".[168] MDCs allow MSAs to bring together:

- strong planning and land-assembly powers
- a long-term vision that operates beyond local political cycles
- the ability to co-ordinate public and private partners to unlock stalled sites.

The Stockport MDC illustrates the impact these tools can have. The MDC has unlocked 53 hectares of brownfield land and delivered 1,200 new homes over five years, including more than 200 affordable homes, with more in development.[169] Similarly, the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC), which the mayor of London set up to regenerate the Olympic Games site in Stratford, has used its powers to transform the area, delivering 12,000 new homes over 12 years, of which 22% were affordable.[170]

MDCs are growing in popularity as a model for driving regeneration and housing delivery. In 2026, one new MDC was established in the West Midlands and two were established in Greater Manchester, with others planned in Greater Manchester and Liverpool City Region. Ministers have also announced plans to set up new development corporations to support the delivery of new towns.[171]

10. Blending funding streams is a practical route to tackling viability pressures.
MSAs can respond to growing viability pressures by blending funding streams. Inflation, new building safety requirements and rising operating costs all squeeze development margins and make it harder for schemes to be viable for both public and private investors. At our DevoLab event, Ben Denton, head of strategic growth (affordable housing) at L&G, captured this challenge for regions as follows:

> **"How do we deliver more housing when it's difficult to make schemes stack up? The cost of operating homes has gone up but rents haven't… and the design and standards that we need to deliver homes to are much more challenging."**[172]

By layering different types of funding, regions can unlock projects that would otherwise stall because of viability pressures. For example, Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) has used this approach across projects as viability pressures have become an increasingly prominent issue across Greater Manchester. At our DevoLab event, Andrew McIntosh, director of place at GMCA, explained how GMCA enabled the Stockport Interchange scheme as part of the town centre regeneration:

> **"[GMCA] invested patient equity alongside grant and debt to enable that to come forwards, alongside investment from TfGM [Transport for Greater Manchester]."**[173]

This blended finance approach gives MSAs a practical and flexible tool to maintain momentum on housing delivery.

11. Targeted brownfield funding is essential for remediating land for housing development.

Targeted brownfield funding is critical for bringing forward housing on complex sites and MSAs often use it in blended funded models. Many brownfield areas require extensive remediation before they can become viable for development. For MSAs aiming to regenerate and build homes in urban areas, brownfield funding can be crucial for unlocking sites that would otherwise be economically unviable for developers. In 2024/25, dedicated brownfield funding of more than £131m was devolved to MCAs.[*,174]

In the West Midlands, brownfield investment is a central component of the region's strategic place partnership (SPP). Jackie Rigby highlighted the collaborative approach taken in the West Midlands, noting that Homes England worked closely with WMCA to understand how the region wanted to prioritise its Brownfield Housing Fund, which schemes it wanted to prioritise and how Homes England could use its grant funding to support that.

Other regions have also successfully used their Brownfield Housing Funds to remediate and develop land. Launched in January 2023, the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority (YNYCA) is using its £16.7m Brownfield Housing Fund to deliver 1,100 new homes on 17 sites across the region.[175] In November 2025, YNYCA was allocated an addition £7.3m from MHCLG, which will be assigned to a further round of projects delivering 100% affordable homes schemes across the region.

The East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) has received more than £93m in government funding to unlock brownfield sites across the region, which will be used to support the construction of more than 1,900 homes in the next four years.[176]

However, some regions currently lack brownfield land funds and the specialist land assembly teams needed to remediate land, meaning even strategically significant brownfield sites can stall for years. Stephen Peacock, chief executive of the West of England Combined Authority (WECA), highlighted this in relation to WECA, which at the time of our DevoLab event did not have access to this resource.[177] Without the ability to acquire land or obtain funding, MSAs are forced to seek complex arrangements with the private sector to bring sites forward.

12. Strengthening the capacity of strategic authorities will be crucial for the delivery of regional affordable housing goals.

MSAs are well positioned to play a central role in accelerating the supply of affordable homes, but to succeed in this task will require expansion of institutional capacity, particularly in newer and smaller MSAs, as well as technical support from bodies such as Homes England.

* In 2024/25, a total of £131.07m was provided in brownfield funding to MSAs: £72.7m to 11 MSAs through the Brownfield Housing Fund, £0.87m to the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA), the North East Combined Authority (NECA) – now named the North East Mayoral Strategic Authority (NEMSA) – and the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority (YNYCA) as brownfield capacity funding and £57.5m to GMCA as Brownfield Infrastructure and Land funding. WMCA requested to move payment of Brownfield Infrastructure and Land funding for 2024/25 to future years.

The government is taking steps in this direction. For example, strategic place partnerships (SPPs) should allow MSAs to better leverage Homes England expertise, as well as giving Homes England a better understanding of local contexts. Homes England's new regional operating model complements this. At our DevoLab event, Jackie Rigby explained that the agency has recognised that it needs to "think much more about what we're doing to deliver in a place so we can better respond to devolution, local leaders and local priorities".[178]

Homes England also plans to work with MSAs to strengthen their technical capacity. It will use a new technical capacity and co-ordination hub to deploy specialist expertise flexibly throughout the development process, to boost delivery across regions.[179] Through SPPs, Homes England aims to give MSAs access to skills that many currently lack, particularly for progressing complex sites.

The agency has also launched its National Housing Bank, which will invest up to £16bn in the housing market through debt, equity and guarantee projects over the next decade, aiming to attract more than £50bn of private capital.[180] The bank will be integrated with Homes England, but retain operational independence – together providing places with the following so that they can deliver more social and affordable homes:

- integrated support packages, including technical advice and specialist skills – thereby supporting and supplementing MSAs' in-house capacity
- low-interest loans.

About the authors

Megan Isaac
Megan is a research assistant working in the Institute for Government's devolution team. Before joining the Institute, Megan worked for an education start-up, and a charity campaigning for economic, social and cultural rights where she worked with local authorities on the socio-economic duty.

Harriet Shaw
Harriet is a researcher working in the Institute for Government's devolution team. Before joining the Institute in July 2025, she worked as a research consultant at SQW where she contributed to projects across economic development, health and employment, primarily for clients in local government and strategic authorities.

Akash Paun
Akash is programme director for devolution at the Institute for Government, overseeing research on the union, devolution to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and devolution to England's cities, counties and regions. Akash joined the Institute in 2008 and has also worked at the UCL Constitution Unit, the British Academy and as an adviser to the Independent Commission on the Constitutional Future of Wales.

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enquiries@instituteforgovernment.org.uk

+44 (0) 20 7747 0400

@instituteforgovernment.org.uk

Institute for Government, 2 Carlton Gardens
London SW1Y 5AA, United Kingdom

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