

Local Government Update 1 October 2025

Announcements in September 2025

Pride in Place Fund and Strategy

On 25 September 2025, Government announced the [Pride in Place](#) Strategy and Fund. The [Pride in Place Strategy](#) is the Government's plan to create safer, healthier neighbourhoods where communities can thrive. The aim is to provide long-term funding to the most doubly disadvantaged areas. Doubly disadvantaged neighbourhoods are defined as areas with high levels of socio-economic disadvantage and weakened social capital [a finding of the [Independent Commission on Neighbourhoods](#)]. A total of £5bn in funding will be provided to up to 250 areas in England, Wales and Scotland, with £20m per area.

The **areas selected for the Programme** can be seen [here](#).

The Pride in Place Strategy and Fund build on the Plan for Neighbourhoods announced in March 2025, with £20m of funding over 10 years to doubly disadvantaged areas of around 10,000 population. The Pride in Place Strategy will bring together the Plan for Neighbourhoods programme, and the Trailblazers programme. It will include new powers:

- **Community Right to Buy:** the power to buy local assets.
- **Compulsory Purchase powers:** allowing communities in England to acquire assets like boarded up shops and derelict abandoned businesses.
- **Power to block unwanted shops:** empowering councils in England to say no to new betting shops, vapes stores etc.
- **Giving residents the power:** spending will only be approved if community groups, local organisations and social clubs have been included in decisions on how the money should be spent – via Neighbourhood Boards which will be set up for each area receiving funding.

This Local Regeneration Fund

MHCLG have announced the creation of the [Local Regeneration Fund](#), consolidating three separate funds into one, with the aim of simplifying accounting and administration for local authorities. The Fund will bring together the Levelling Up Fund, Town Deals, and Simplification Pathfinders Pilot Fund into a single funding pot which will give increased flexibility to adapt schemes to local needs.

Whilst government fully expect local authorities to complete current projects, they will be able to make changes to existing projects without seeking prior approval from MHCLG, including being able to cancel projects and add new projects in response to local priorities. Local authorities will be expected to use the increased flexibilities to unlock and accelerate work, ensuring delivery continues rather than pushing spend into future years. All funding for this combined fund will need to be spent by 31 March 2028.

Simplifying the Funding Landscape

Government has announced how it will [simplify funding for local authorities](#) and reduce administrative burdens. The plan is intended to support local authorities to maximise their return on spending, generating the best outcomes for communities. It has three main phases.

1. Immediate simplification of existing funds and communication. This will cover all funds from MHCLG that support local economic growth. There will be a 'Simplification Pathfinder Pilot' to test the streamlined delivery of capital funding in a small group of local authorities.
2. A 'Funding Simplification Doctrine' requiring departments to strive for a simpler and more streamlined way of delivering funding to local authorities, including considering allocative distribution approaches. However, this excludes funds allocated via the Local Government Finance Settlement and funding for statutory services such as schools, children and adult social care, public health, police, fire and rescue.
3. Reforms to be implemented at the next Spending Review, including multi-year, single departmental-style funding settlements for the trailblazer Mayoral Combined Authorities and better join up across interconnected policy areas and investment programmes.

Common Ground Fund

MHCLG have published a [prospectus](#) for a new competitive award to support voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations building community cohesion in England.

MHCLG have said that:

- The Government's new 'Common Ground Award' will shine a spotlight on organisations across England that are making a real difference in bringing communities together.
- Through the Award, MHCLG will provide direct investment into voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations, that are building stronger connections across different groups ('bridging social capital'). This investment will support the cost of constructing or renovating facilities, or the purchasing of equipment to help deliver activities.
- The Common Ground Award will be open to applications from 13 October 2025 to 21 November 2025.
- You can find the Prospectus for the Common Ground Award [here](#) and can direct any queries to CGA@Communities.gov.uk.

We are following up with MHCLG to understand why this fund has been launched in this way, what it is actually trying to achieve through distribution of comparatively small sums of capital only funding, and the unrealistically short application time.