

**HEART OF THE SOUTH WEST HOUSING TASK FORCE**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Housing was identified as one of the key priorities in the HotSW Productivity Strategy to support and stimulate growth within the HotSW area.
- 1.2 Councils already have a duty to produce long term spatial plans which include assessments of future housing need and the allocation of sites.
- 1.3 Through the Joint Committee there is an opportunity to take a holistic approach to housing growth and to develop a more strategic dialogue with Government departments, particularly MHCLG and DfT and with Homes England.
- 1.4 This approach will add value to the delivery of existing Local Plans and emerging Joint Local Plans by identifying common challenges and opportunities that we can tackle together, including those that require cross boundary working and will give us greater critical mass to secure support from Homes England.
- 1.5 The HotSW Housing Task Force was recently set up under the Joint Committee to coordinate and drive this approach. This report seeks agreement on the scope, objectives and role of the group and the overall proposed approach.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 Housing is fundamentally important to the economy in terms of both supporting and driving growth. Along with other vital infrastructure, it is identified as a priority for the Heart of the South West in our Productivity Strategy.
- 2.2 In common with other parts of the country, the HotSW region has increasing numbers of areas where housing delivery is becoming more challenging as long-term underinvestment in infrastructure constrains the ability of the market to deliver growth without external input/support. The need for strategic and tactical intervention by authorities to maintain and accelerate delivery is increasing, yet this comes at a time of severe resource constraint for local government.
- 2.3 Joint working across local authority boundaries is already well-established across the HotSW area, with joint local plans adopted in some areas, under development in others, and through cross-border working via a range of Member and Officer groups such as the Greater Exeter Growth & Development Board, or the Somerset Strategic Housing Officers Group. However, with housing being vital to local (council) areas and the wider economy it was agreed by the HotSW Committee that more should be done to try and drive action, progress and delivery by harnessing our productivity ambitions and seeking to address our shared challenges.

- 2.4 Early work undertaken on behalf of the Heart of the South West partnership around housing and planning was led by Karime Hassan, Chief Executive of Exeter City Council. This work informed the partnership's Prospectus for Productivity (Devolution ambition) submitted to Government in February 2016.
- 2.5 Following that submission, further discussions with Ministers, senior civil servants and Homes England were held with a view to progressing the agenda.
- 2.6 Over the summer of 2018, Keith Thomas from perConsulting Ltd was commissioned on behalf of the Joint Committee to conduct an audit of housing targets, planning processes, and delivery rates across the HotSW area. The work involved collating information from published data and verifying this through a questionnaire and a series of face to face meetings with housing and planning officers in each council. The survey also picked up information regarding the capacity and skills within local planning teams, and other issues, for example around planning policy and local housing markets.
- 2.7 The report was presented at the HotSW Housing Summit at the end of September 2018. This event was attended by a wide range of partners and stakeholders from across the public, private and third sector, and Government. It provided a valuable opportunity to hear first-hand from Homes England, and to discuss the opportunities for faster growth and delivery, as well as exploring challenges and sharing best practice.
- 2.8 A significant number of elected members attended the Housing Summit, and all were buoyed by the words of Homes England who asked us to set out 'what we need', in order that they might work with us to achieve our shared ambitions around housing delivery.
- 2.9 At the subsequent Joint Committee meeting on 5 October, Councillor Harvey Siggs, Leader of Mendip District Council, supported by Stephen Walford, Chief Executive of Mid Devon District Council agreed to take the work forward through the establishment of a Housing Task Force.
- 2.10 The Housing Task Force met for the first time on 29 November with an initial membership consisting of:
  - Cllr Harvey Siggs, Leader of Mendip District Council
  - Cllr Tudor Evans, Leader of Plymouth City Council
  - Cllr John Tucker, Leader of South Hams District Council (*unable to attend the first meeting*)
  - Ian Collinson, Homes England
  - Stephen Walford, Mid Devon District Council
  - Stuart Brown (*not at the first meeting*) and Tracy Aarons, Mendip District Council
  - Nick Bryant, Taunton Deane District Council
  - Russell Baldwinson, Livewest
  - Alison Ward, Plymouth City Council

- 2.11 This meeting was designed to kick-start the work. Actions arising from the meeting were:
- I. for a report to be brought back to the Joint Committee to agree:
    - a. the overarching objectives of the Housing Task Force;
    - b. the suggested structures and membership to support the work for this initial phase;
    - c. an action plan.
  - II. to complete initial soundings from all HotSW Housing Market Areas on their priority 'Asks' of Government to deliver planned housing numbers, and to accelerate delivery rates.
- 2.12 Ian Collinson from Homes England attended the Joint Committee meeting on 30 November to provide an overview of their recently published Homes England 5 Year Strategic Plan.
- 2.13 The key points were that Homes England will work as part of the Heart of the South West Housing Task Force to create and support bespoke housing delivery approaches which recognise the diversity and distinctiveness of the area. The outcome will be a set of ambitious place-based projects and programmes, linked to a set of tools and interventions appropriate for use in smaller rural and coastal settlements.

### **3. Housing Task Force - proposed approach**

- 3.1 The Housing Task Force has been established and has met once so far. Suggested objectives for the Housing Task Force are:
- To coordinate the overall approach to housing delivery on behalf of the Joint Committee - adding value, not duplicating or detracting from locally-agreed plans with the aim of creating more resilient and diverse housing markets
  - To be a point of contact and channel to Government for the HotSW geography (recognising that areas will also be engaged in local conversations with Homes England, MHCLG and other Government Departments) – to link specifically with the relevant Housing Growth Department at MHCLG, and Richard Chapman - the Director who heads this department.
  - To develop a strategic approach with Homes England that reflects and incorporates the different needs and delivery models required across the area helping to create and deliver more ambitious plans to get more homes built in an accelerated timeframe
  - To identify opportunities for unlocking land and investment which can improve housing affordability, design quality and place making, productivity and market resilience
  - To consider the need for more detailed modelling of infrastructure requirements to unlock growth and the financial return arising from growth – to understand the both the absolute 'gap' and the timing/phasing gaps that reflect the need for upfront investment in infrastructure

- To move rapidly to refine the ‘asks and offers’ arising from the Housing Summit and recent engagement with local authorities, and then to seek to build an aggregated position alongside specific tactical interventions that reflect the need of the HotSW area. Furthermore to align these with the expertise, capacity and resources available from Government and Homes England (notably as expressed through the 5yr strategic plan) to support and influence accelerated housing delivery in the HotSW area and drive positive market change
  - To champion HotSW’s housing ‘Asks’ and seek to influence Government, maximising the benefits of the HotSW scale to achieve a closer relationship with relevant Government agencies and central departments
  - To identify any gaps in evidence or insight and to commission studies if appropriate on behalf of, and in conjunction with the Joint Committee
  - To ensure strong links with local housing and planning delivery teams and other groups (ideally at a Housing Market Area geography). *e.g. Somerset Strategic Housing Group; Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan Steering Group; Greater Exeter Growth & Development Board etc.*
  - To act as a learning forum to highlight and where possible develop good practice and promote sharing across the HotSW area
  - To collate and present updates to the Joint Committee on a regular basis, and update the Productivity Strategy Delivery Plan
  - To link with the LEP on housing issues to combine local authority expertise with lobbying on strategic economic impact
- 3.2 It may be necessary to establish a technical working group that coordinates information across the HotSW group of councils. If needed, this group should be formed on a ‘task and finish’ basis and include lead officers from the clusters of councils working together or individual councils to ensure full coverage, and would be used to test, shape and refine the approach from an operational perspective.
- 3.3 It is proposed that the Housing Task Force should meet on a quarterly basis throughout 2019 in order to establish the relationship and approach with Homes England and partners. The technical group could operate primarily as a virtual group via e-mail with occasional face to face meetings as required, in support of the Task Force.
- 3.4 The Housing Task Force will bring back updates and any proposals that require endorsement to formal Joint Committee meetings so that progress can be tracked. Proposed timetable:
- **25 January – report to Joint Committee to agree the approach**
  - *mid-February (tbc) – meeting of Housing Task Force*
  - End Feb – First meeting/conference call with technical group

- **29 March – update to Joint Committee** (potential attendance from a senior Homes England representative to provide feedback on HotSW progress)
- *Early April (tbc) – meeting of the Housing Task Force*
- **24 May – update to Joint Committee**

#### 4. Summary of HotSW ‘Asks’

4.1 At the conclusion of the Housing Summit in September 2018, a potential set of ‘Asks and Offers’ were considered, some of which were drawn from the audit work undertaken and some that were suggested during the day itself. These are shown below:

##### **Asks:**

- Viability appraisals – Homes England (HE) to assist with skills and resources to provide a stronger and consistent approach to viability appraisals across the region to help LPAs defend local viability challenges and secure more affordable housing delivery in the region
- Infrastructure Capacity Planning – to provide further support and funding to assist in developing a more comprehensive and up to date understanding of regional needs, especially in terms of transport and other infrastructure capacity with improved modelling and delivery advice
- Forward Funding Support – to underpin Housing Action Plans with further access to specific barriers to unlock local housing delivery
- Quality, not just quantity, is vital. Work with HE to introduce a version of Building for Life 2 to help LAs and developers assess the quality of development.
- Better and clearer legislation in terms of reviewing CIL and s106 funding obligations.
- Greater support for and recognition of the contribution of the delivery of housing in complex inner city and brownfield sites, by developing an approach that addresses viability challenges. This would also apply to the regeneration of estates.

##### **Offers:**

- To agree to the development of Housing Action Plans for strategic sites across the region
- To ensure that design quality is an integral part of housing delivery going forward
- To create a Housing Sector Task Force made up of strategic leaders from across the housing sector. The Task force would be responsible for developing a proposition for Government and would report directly to the HotSW Joint Committee
- To prepare long term joint local plans at a sub-regional level
- To champion a positive development management culture helping to pool specialist resources across multi-agencies and authorities across the region
- To offer a transformational pilot to Homes England, as a test bed of housing delivery in a rural, urban, coastal setting, adding in the following:
  - Up front infrastructure funding
  - Quality place-shaping and design – further development of our USP (quality, tenure type, design that supports our objectives of prosperity for all, linked to the environment)
- That the HotSW area should establish an Academy for Development and Construction
- To provide developers with greater confidence to take risks.
- To consider whether LAs can invest to further develop Modular Construction methods

- 4.2 The recent engagement with housing market areas has seen suggestions from areas regarding their priority 'Asks' of Government to deliver planned housing numbers and to accelerate delivery rates. The responses covered a broad range (see table at appendix A) however there were some common themes and they were generally consistent with those from the Summit.
- 4.3 The Somerset Districts represent broadly distinct housing market areas (see appendix B), however it is recognised that further aggregation will be required in order to present a coherent HotSW area package with specific tactical interventions linked to housing delivery (not necessarily administrative boundary).
- 4.4 **Funding**  
Critical infrastructure to unlock housing was considered to be a major challenge. Development is often hampered by inadequate transport and other infrastructure. The need to secure separate funding and sequence infrastructure projects to fit with developers' phasing of sites can lead to stagnation of larger sites or render sites commercially unviable. Furthermore, the responsibility for major transport upgrades, for example around motorway junctions sits with other Government agencies but can severely constrain the development potential of some key sites.
- 4.5 Whilst there has been some recognition of the issues relating to infrastructure that supports housing development in recent Homes England funding approaches, and in the National Infrastructure Commission's recently published National Infrastructure Assessment, there needs to be a more fundamental move to guarantee that critical infrastructure is completed for sites in a timely way and in step with overall housing delivery. This could be achieved by setting up a separate revolving infrastructure fund, pump-primed by Government investment and managed locally as has happened in other areas where they have negotiated housing deals with Government. I.e. the financing of infrastructure as well as the funding of it. Individual councils have borrowed to bring forward infrastructure, but scale will be a barrier to larger infrastructure financing requirements associated with larger sites.
- 4.6 There were also calls for Government to ensure that previous funding commitments were honoured. It was notable that successful HIF investment (in which the HotSW area fared well) had still not been passed to councils, despite the Chancellor's announcement on 01/02/18, leading many councils to be progressing schemes at their own risk/cost until the funds are transferred. It was also highlighted that there should be local flexibility to switch projects, in discussion with Homes England, if unforeseen problems arose with sites in order to retain investment in unlocking housing in the area and maximise the opportunity to build.

4.7 In discussion with practitioners, there is a concern that many actions proposed to address much of the housing delivery challenge are simply perpetuating the market 'system' as it exists today, and do little to address the wider problem of value being lost in the journey from existing use to developable land.

**4.8 Skills and Capacity**

Many councils cited issues with the skills and capacity within Council planning and housing teams, and other agencies. This ranged from specialist skills to broader problems with retention and recruitment and general pressures arising from budget cuts and reduced teams. Reduced capacity also means it can be challenging to prepare funding bids or carry out viability work.

4.9 Concerns about skills shortages also extended to the construction industry where gaps are emerging. Some of these are exacerbated by shifts in the labour market as a result of localised competition between large projects, and national effects such as the risks around Brexit.

**4.10 Policy and Funding Regimes**

Changes to national planning policy have introduced some additional challenges, as has the stated approach for the expected distribution of Homes England funding based on affordability ratios – which will see 'at least 80%' of national funding go to areas of highest house-price-to-income ratio (predominantly London and the South East). There were a range of 'Asks' relating to these, including concerns around the new National Planning Policy Framework and the alignment to Local Plans and the requirements for 5 year land supply.

4.11 There were also specific concerns around the requirements for affordable housing where it can be difficult to adhere to local plan aspirations as the outcomes for each site is generally subject to negotiation and compromise.

4.12 There was an overwhelming view that the Homes England HIF money that has already been announced should be forthcoming NOW to enable projects to deliver to the timetable stipulated by government and for greater clarity on the prioritisation of future funding, particularly where areas deemed to have low affordability ratios are pro-growth.

**5. Recommendations:**

- That Members agree the role and membership of the HotSW Housing Task Force and the principle of the senior technical officer group as needed
- That Members agree to collaborate on developing a HotSW-wide approach to 'asks' and ambition for action, acknowledging that this builds on and does not replace the relationships and activity at sub-regional level where this exists
- That Members agree the approach as set out in 3.1 above, and ask the Housing Task Force to bring a report back to the joint committee at its meeting of 29<sup>th</sup> March 2019 with recommendations on a proposed package

and an aligned work programme to further evidence any technical position to support the committee's ambition

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HotSW Housing Task Force January 2019



Housing Market Area	Asks to deliver on planned numbers	Asks to accelerate delivery	Other comments
<b>Sedgemoor</b>	<p><b>1) Access to ‘design and feasibility’ funds</b> to progress infrastructure priorities.</p> <p><b>2) Clarification over communal bed spaces</b> in delivery numbers, in particular the inclusion of temporary bed spaces delivered in the National Infrastructure Project Hinkley Point campus. They form part of the Hinkley housing zone and sit on a consented permanent housing site. This would in effect neutralise the impact not create a significant negative on delivery of planned numbers.</p> <p><b>3) Introduction of a performance regime</b> for statutory agencies to expedite applications and find solutions, not barriers.</p>	<p>1) Expedite Housing Infrastructure Fund / Marginal Viability Fund applications based on consented schemes – and through streamlined processes</p> <p>2) Seed corn finance to develop a new era of garden villages.</p> <p>3) Consideration of part of EZ sites to be considered for housing growth.</p> <p>4) Bristol / M5 corridor NIC study to scope major infrastructure priorities for investment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review NSIP / DCO regime to consider how to better to enable new housing delivery to align with meeting local and as well as project needs.</li> <li>Government capacity and methodology on HIF to be reviewed to ensure capacity is aligned to priorities, that appraisal methodology positively reflects consented sites, and a strategic perspective is taken to deal with actual issues on the ground.</li> </ul>
<b>Mendip</b>	<b>1) Appraisal of infrastructure investment</b>		The key issues to speed up delivery are: -

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	<p>Current policy and process for appraising infrastructure (such as road/rail) investment is slanted towards housing delivery outcomes. For LPA's where the opportunities for planning larger sites (say over 2000 dwellings) are limited, Government should be recognising the need for a more flexible approach to appraising infrastructure investment – looking at the wider value in improving road and rail networks at a district level.</p> <p><b>2) Housing supply targets</b> In general, time taken from a plan allocation to starting development is taking longer, particularly progressing outline consents. We are seeing quite long gaps (of years) in the time taken for land with permission to be acquired by a house builder where consent has been obtained speculatively and then for a developer to progress schemes to reserved matters. The council is not often party to the reasons for these delays but it re-enforces the view that there are insufficient incentives (or penalties) associated with retention of development land.</p> <p><b>3) Five Year Supply</b> Government need to look again at the practical impact of the five year supply and housing delivery test for rural areas given the complete absence of meaningful measures on developers and promoters to move schemes to implementation. Greater recognition needs to be given to the fact that ambitious planning for growth takes time to deliver in a sustainable way. A more bespoke/ flexible</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking a more <b>Strategic approach to local infrastructure</b> Very limited attention or priority has been paid to <b>cumulative impacts on local infrastructure</b> (health/roads etc) of many small scale sites compared with larger settlement planning.</li> <li>• Speeding up planning is going to be difficult without tackling the <b>absence of resources to advise LPAs</b> and coherently plan for local infrastructure - particularly highways, education and health.</li> <li>• <b>Lack of capacity in responsible agencies</b> not only means it takes longer to determine applications but has also undermined confidence or acceptance that higher growth is sustainable without impacting on existing communities.</li> <li>• <b>Supporting Affordable Housing.</b> Without exception, discussions over viability and affordable housing are lengthening the time needed in getting major schemes to outline permission. Broader and more support for affordable housing (through grants and support to HA's) is needed both meet genuine local need and speed up the process.</li> <li>• <b>Local development industry Capacity</b></li> </ul>

Housing Market Area	Asks to deliver on planned numbers	Asks to accelerate delivery	Other comments
	<p>approach is needed on supply targets to match local circumstances and ambition.</p>		<p>In Mendip, the years with significant housing completions is very dependent on the coincidence of national house builders with housing schemes underway at the same time in different towns. They rarely seek to bring land forward in competition within a market town. There is a forward supply in smaller-scale schemes in the 20-80 dwelling range, but a very limited number of mid-range house builders actively developing. This acts as a brake on delivery as land promoters hold on to sites in the hope of obtaining further permissions to ‘interest’ national builders. Smaller builders also do not appear to have the capacity to bring on more than one site at a time in the district.</p>
<p><b>Taunton Deane and West Somerset</b></p>	<p>1) <b>Housing Infrastructure Forward Funding</b> requests to be forthcoming without delay. This funding is critical to enable early delivery of key infrastructure to unlock housing sites and accelerate delivery. Sufficient CIL funds are not available to</p>	<p>1) <b>Fairer Government housing related funding allocations for areas outside South East.</b> The current prioritisation of 80% of housing related Government funding programmes focusing on areas of ‘highest affordability pressure’ will limit local authorities’ ability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Flexibility with the Housing Infrastructure Forward Fund</b> so that the local authorities are able to change the agreed infrastructure schemes if development sites are not coming forward in the timescales anticipated. This will give local authorities a stronger negotiating position when working with housing developers on delivering their key sites.</li> </ul>

Housing Market Area	Asks to deliver on planned numbers	Asks to accelerate delivery	Other comments
	<p>forward fund key infrastructure and there remains a significant infrastructure funding shortfall in many local authority areas (circa £80-£100m) even if projected CIL income was available.</p> <p>2) <b>Housing Infrastructure Marginal Viability</b> funding to be forthcoming without delay. Successful schemes were announced back in February 2018 and many areas are still awaiting confirmation of the timescale for release of funding. This is holding up s106 negotiations and ultimately site progress.</p> <p>3) <b>Affordable housing grant</b> – many of the large sites are negotiating lower affordable housing contributions to address viability gaps and enable key upfront infrastructure</p>	<p>to accelerate delivery (outside of these areas). Housing affordability is a national problem. Significant housing pressures coupled with lower land values in areas outside the South East region mean that Government investment is critical if the national housing shortage is going to be addressed.</p> <p>2) <b>More resources for Local Government.</b> Between 2010 and 2020 councils will have lost 60p out of every £1 the Government had provided for services. <a href="https://www.local.gov.uk/about/news/local-services-face-further-ps13-billion-government-funding-cut-201920">https://www.local.gov.uk/about/news/local-services-face-further-ps13-billion-government-funding-cut-201920</a> The funding cuts have ultimately impacted on local government’s ability to address the housing</p>	

<b>Housing Market Area</b>	<b>Asks to deliver on planned numbers</b>	<b>Asks to accelerate delivery</b>	<b>Other comments</b>
	<p>schemes to be provided. A mix of housing products is key to accelerating delivery and addressing housing need.</p>	<p>shortage effectively and will limit the ability to accelerate delivery. The housing challenge also impacts on adult and children’s social care, homelessness and housing related health issues in particular increasing mental health challenges.</p> <p>3) <b>Construction skills shortage</b> – it is well documented that there is a significant skills shortage in the construction industry in order to accelerate delivery and construct key infrastructure projects required to support housing sites. In a post-Brexit world with lower migration levels this is likely to be exacerbated. This is a key challenge to enabling the acceleration of housing delivery rates.</p>	
<b>South Somerset</b>	1) A streamlined <b>rolling programme of infrastructure</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With regards to infrastructure provision,</li> </ul>

Housing Market Area	Asks to deliver on planned numbers	Asks to accelerate delivery	Other comments
	<p><b>funding</b> from government; this could be pump priming, loans or grants.</p> <p>2) An approach to accelerating delivery that focuses on the development industry rather than on penalising Local Authorities.</p>		<p>our main focus is to enable the delivery of the link roads associated with the Chard and Crewkerne Key sites; the Yeovil Sustainable Urban extension roundabouts and Town centre junction improvements.</p>
<p><b>Torbay</b></p>	<p>1) <b>Incentivising and encouraging the compulsory purchase of strategic and brownfield land.</b> Land assembly is often the barrier to timely growth. This issue is compounded in our Town Centres where investment will have both positive social and economic outcomes. These issues are further exacerbated in Coastal communities as per our previous evidence to the LEP.</p> <p>2) <b>Additional funding to be targeted at brownfield and town centre sites</b> Stalled sites and barriers to large scale regeneration proposals are often on Brownfield sites and in our Town Centres. Funding to unlock and acquire these sites as part of a strategic land assembly programme will have significant benefits for the place.</p> <p>3) <b>Improved resourcing of Planning departments</b> Providing an up to date, responsive and flexible planning policy framework allied with efficient, timely consistent advice is key to driving regeneration and growth, as is the ability to adopt a more proactive approach to housing delivery. Giving the confidence to the development industry by the adoption of an up to date Local Plan and support to developments will achieve improved outcomes for our places</p> <p>4) <b>Review and reform of viability mechanism for reducing S106 contributions.</b> Affordable housing delivery is at an all-time low. The mechanism allowing developers to reduce their S106 obligations is flawed. A fundamental review of this process is required to have a significant step change in delivery and to achieve mixed and balanced communities.</p> <p>5) <b>Funding for land acquisitions that will deliver affordable housing</b></p>		

<b>Housing Market Area</b>	<b>Asks to deliver on planned numbers</b>	<b>Asks to accelerate delivery</b>	<b>Other comments</b>
	<p>A barrier to affordable housing delivery outside of planning gain is the lack of ability to pay open market value for land. Creating a land acquisition programme for affordable housing will allow for a more strategic delivery programme to ensure we get the right type of homes and tenures in the right locations.</p> <p>6) <b>Access to significant infrastructure funding, improving the rail network.</b> The lack of available funding to drive regeneration and place shaping infrastructure improvements is very evident. Having a simplified and regular opportunity to access funding for those major infrastructure projects will provide multiple benefits. Investment in the rail network and unlocking major growth areas are not possible without his additional funding.</p> <p>7) <b>Funding and the promotion of careers in the built environment</b> The skills shortage across the whole built environment sector is creating a barrier to effective and efficient delivery of growth and regeneration. More work needs to be done with further education to fund and promote this area as a career of choice</p>		
<b>North Devon</b>	<p>1) <b>Simplified and ongoing access to Infrastructure funding</b> – provide ongoing programmes of infrastructure funding which are accessible and responsive to emerging demands from sites and opportunities as they arise and are applicable to all authorities, recognising that smaller interventions may be significant in some areas. This funding should be more of a rolling programme rather than one-off bidding rounds and include scope and potential for loans and grants, with decisions and distribution of funding carried out in a timely fashion. The process of application and allocation should be streamlined, recognising the limited capacity in some local authorities to carry out such work.</p> <p>2) <b>Expansion of opportunities for external public sector intervention</b> – through site acquisition, de-risking and/or access to funding to bring sites forward where the market will otherwise not choose to do so; including sites of a small to medium scale (i.e. less than 250 dwellings).</p> <p>3) <b>Resourcing of local planning authorities</b> – increased levels of finance to ensure relevant staffing, systems and skills development can be put in place; coupled with expanded investment in education development of relevant sectors to ensure a pipeline of future professionals; access to wider portfolio of</p>		

<b>Housing Market Area</b>	<b>Asks to deliver on planned numbers</b>	<b>Asks to accelerate delivery</b>	<b>Other comments</b>
	<p>specialist external expertise and advice – such as that previously available through the HCA Atlas team.</p> <p>4) <b>Incentivising or facilitating the development industry</b> to build more rapidly, or diversifying expanding the house building sector to increase competition and capacity.</p> <p>5) <b>Responding to supply chain and skills gap issues within the development industry</b> to ensure construction rates can be maintained or accelerated; particularly in light of potential effects from external factors such as Brexit.</p> <p>6) <b>Stability of regulatory and policy framework</b> to facilitate the timely delivery of development plans and to ensure confidence for investment decisions and continuity and certainty for decision making on planning applications.</p>		
<b>Greater Exeter</b>	<p>Top 3 asks both in terms of planned numbers and accelerating delivery.</p> <p>1) <b>Capacity funding</b></p> <p>2) <b>Land acquisition</b></p> <p>3) <b>Infrastructure funding</b></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The impact that forward funding of infrastructure has on accelerating delivery.</li> <li>• Interest in Government-backed delivery vehicles and planning freedoms where there are joint planning arrangements, notably in relation to housing land supply, also around the NIC’s recommendations to devolve infrastructure budgets to cities.</li> </ul>
<b>Plymouth and South West Devon JLP</b>	<p>1) Develop and maintain <b>longer term grant funding for housing associations</b> to enable them to take a more proactive approach to building a pipeline of land and opportunities to control future delivery</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenge non-delivery of stalled sites by landowners and developers by supporting Local Planning Authority delivery strategies on sites with planning permission in relation to the new NPPF</li> </ul>



<b>Housing Market Area</b>	<b>Asks to deliver on planned numbers</b>	<b>Asks to accelerate delivery</b>	<b>Other comments</b>
	<p>2) Promote housing providers to <b>deliver a range of housing products</b> to diversify the housing market and increase ‘absorption’ rates</p> <p>3) Need more <b>streamlined and simplified Government funding</b> programmes and decision making to accelerate funding into new homes.</p> <p>4) Establish a <b>clear, robust and transparent national viability system</b> that helps to manage down the escalation of land values and ensure the delivery of affordable housing and infrastructure that our communities desperately need.</p> <p><b>Specific Asks of Homes England:</b></p> <p>1) <b>Greater clarity from Homes England on the “Priority Places”</b> proposed strategic approach and funding.</p> <p>2) <b>Faster commitments in principle to land acquisitions</b> (as set out in the Homes England Strategic Plan 2018-2023).</p> <p>3) Recognition that proper <b>estate regeneration requires bespoke funding solutions</b> and dedicated funding streams.</p> <p>4) <b>Strategic alignment of Homes England funding streams to local plan allocations.</b></p>		<p>Housing Delivery Test.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Align Local Industrial Strategy infrastructure investments to the delivery of allocated housing sites in Local Plans.</li> <li>• Support research into housing market areas and housing delivery</li> </ul>
<b>National Parks</b>	<p>The implementation of packages of measures to address rural affordability, with a specific ask being the approval of the bid by the Rural Housing Network (including Exmoor &amp; Dartmoor NPs) to DEFRA and MHCLG last summer which was submitted in response to the Government’s 25 year Plan for the Environment seeking appropriate locations to pilot the concept of a revolving landbank for rural areas.</p>		

**Appendix B – Housing Market Areas**

**Somerset Housing Market Areas**



**Devon Housing Market Areas**

