

APPLY FOR FREE EXPERT HELP
TO IMPLEMENT YOUR LOCAL
HOUSING PRIORITIES

HOUSING ADVISERS PROGRAMME



HOUSING CONTEXT

Most partners now acknowledge that the housing market is broken, and needs fixing. The housing crisis is forcing difficult choices on families, distorting places, hampering growth, and putting untold pressure on a range of local authority services and budgets.

Ultimately there is a crisis because housing is unavailable, unaffordable, and is not appropriate for everyone that needs it. While there are a number of explanations for this, the reality is that housing markets are complex and interconnected systems, both within and with other parts of our economy and society, varying significantly around the country.

As housebuilders, housing enablers, and landlords; as planners, place-shapers, and agents of growth, transport and infrastructure; as responsible guardians to the vulnerable and the homeless; and as democratically accountable to communities – local government is at the heart of the solution.

There is impressive innovation emerging across local government's housing activities, and the Local Government Association (LGA) wants to increasingly help promote, facilitate and enhance the role and capacity of local authorities to meet local housing need. This is the ambition of the Housing Advisers Programme.

The Housing Advisers Programme is designed to support councils seeking to innovate in meeting the housing needs of their communities.



OUR OFFER TO COUNCILS

The Housing Advisers Programme is designed to support local authorities deliver a project that helps meet the housing need of their local area. It aims to be simple, flexible, and locally-led.

The programme funds the provision of an independent adviser to offer bespoke expert support to local authorities undertaking a specific project that works towards delivering homes, reducing homelessness, or generating savings or revenues.

It would be for the local authority to 'own' the project, around which the adviser would provide additional expert support.

In supporting a local authority to deliver a project, the adviser might provide assistance scoping out the project; identifying skills need; technical expertise; relationship development; advising on delivery etc.

The programme will fund adviser support for up to £14,000 to each council. This has been calculated on the basis of 20 days of support at a day rate of £700. However flexibility is key, and councils could reduce the number of days to seek a higher day rate should they wish, or themselves provide additional funding should they wish to continue the project beyond the funding cap.

The allocation of days to the local authority may be spread over the course of the project as appropriate, this would be agreed at the beginning but with some flexibility to alter.

The programme will identify potential advisers based on the requirements of individual projects. Local authorities would also be able identify individuals or organisations that might be well suited to providing the support funded by the programme.

The LGA will conduct the procurement of the adviser on behalf of the local authority, and anticipates there being a contractual relationship for the duration of the funding period.

Crucially, participating local authorities and will be asked to write up their experiences in undertaking the project and its impact for the benefit of sharing the learning across the sector, and participate in learning events and other activities as appropriate.

The programme will coordinate and oversee the delivery of projects and their outcomes, and integrate findings and learning into the LGA's wider improvement offer.

AREAS OF SUPPORT

Local authorities are invited to submit an application to the programme for adviser support with projects that would help meeting a local housing need.

Groups of local authorities are also very welcome to submit joint applications.

Possible areas of support are given opposite but they are not mutually exclusive. The programme welcomes bids outside these options, the inclusion of these options in this prospectus does not indicate a preference.

The programme aims to deliver a balanced spread of projects that might enable a local authority leadership to deliver new homes, reduce homelessness, generate revenue, or find efficiencies.



HOUSING

Delivering housing on an identified site

Identifying and understanding the housing market

Acquiring property

Establishing a delivery vehicle

Developing joint ventures – with housing associations or developers

Developing joint venture with other local authorities

Identifying sources of funding

Accessing institutional investment

Land assembly and remediation

Delivering housing through the Housing Revenue Account

Supporting SME developers



PLANNING

Delivering reasonable build-out rates for sites with planning permission

Using compulsory purchase order powers to unblock sites

Understand the market and enabling building through partnership

Establishing local development corporations to deliver new communities

Planning for residential urban extensions

Succeeding in viability negotiations

Use of development appraisals

Acquiring land

Capturing land value uplifts

Attracting investment through master planning

Planning for a need, eg for an ageing population, affordable housing

Strategic planning across areas

HOMELESSNESS

Redesigning local authority services focusing on prevention

Procuring support services effectively

Responding to new Homelessness Reduction Act duties

Preventing youth homelessness

Developing partnerships with other public services to end homelessness

Working well with homeless households

Sustainably sourcing temporary accommodation

Reducing use of bed and breakfast and 'nightly rated' accommodation

Adapting to Universal Credit



HOW TO APPLY

Prospective applicants should:

- have already agreed corporate buy-in/support from the relevant lead officer(s) and/or portfolio holder(s)
- be open to the prospect of external input and challenge from their adviser
- share their learning with the LGA and others as appropriate.

Applicants should set out, on less than five sides of A4, minimum font size 11, why they should receive the support of a housing adviser, including:

- What is the project for which you are seeking adviser support?
- What are the outcomes that you aiming to deliver through the project?
- In what areas do you need support, and how can an adviser help you/provide added value?
- What are the anticipated timescales for the project, and how could the delivery of successful outcomes be captured?

- At what points would the adviser's help be sought, for instance in a single block, or at different points over the course of a project?
- How will the learning from your approach be transferrable to other local authorities?

The programme would also welcome additional information on whether you would like to:

- offer match-funding to secure additional days of support from the adviser
- identify an adviser that might tender to provide support.

The application must be signed off by the local authority's leader and chief executive, or appropriate lead member and senior officer (including the S151 officer where there are financial implications).

We will work with the successful local authorities to agree on the appropriate individual adviser and on a process and timetable for that support to take place.

The programme is now open for bids from English local authorities. Bids will be assessed by the LGA in line with the application guidelines.

Depending on demand from this first bidding round, the programme may run further calls for bids.

**The deadline for
applications is
Tuesday 12 September 2017**

**To find out more
please contact us on
housingadvisers@local.gov.uk**

020 7664 3000



OTHER SOURCES OF SUPPORT

The programme aims to provide genuine added-value to local authorities, and will sequence its activity with other offers of support from the LGA and our partners.

Local authorities might also consider other support available, including from:

- LGA Peer challenge
- One Public Estate
- Planning Advisory Service.





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