

NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT DELIVERY COMMITTEE		Item 7	Page 1
Councils Affected	All	19 th April 2016	
Report Title	STARTER HOMES: UNLOCKING THE LAND FUND		

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Joint Delivery Committee of the opportunity presented by the Government's Starter Homes Prospectus and to agree that an Expression of Interest should be made on behalf of North Northamptonshire.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Government is committed delivering 200,000 'starter homes' by 2020. These will be exclusively available for first-time buyers under the age of 40 and sold at a discount of at least 20 per cent off the market price.
- 2.2 To deliver this commitment, the Government is proposing to amend national planning policy to support the delivery of starter homes on unviable and underused land, and to include starter homes within the definition of affordable housing. It is also legislating, through the Housing and Planning Bill, to introduce a statutory duty on local planning authorities to promote the supply of starter homes. The Government is currently consulting on [Starter Homes Regulations](#) to flesh out the detail.
- 2.3 Alongside these changes to policy and legislation, the November 2015 Spending Review made available £2.3 billion of funding to support up to 60,000 starter homes. In January 2016, the Government announced that £1.2 billion of this would be used for a new Starter Home Land Fund to prepare brownfield sites for at least 30,000 starter homes by 2020.
- 2.4 The Government has now published a [Starter Homes prospectus](#) (see [Appendix A](#)) inviting Expressions of Interest from local authorities outside of London to form partnerships with the Homes and Communities Agency to use the Fund to acquire, assemble and de-risk land for quality starter home developments which can be built out by developers by 2020. Expressions of interest are sought by 13th May 2016, a tight deadline which would tend to favour areas with developed plans and plenty of brownfield capacity.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 In responding to the proposed changes to national planning policy, the Joint Planning Committee supported the Government's intention to broaden the range of housing types, but raised a number of practical concerns over the

funding of starter homes and the likelihood that they will squeeze out other forms of affordable housing that are essential to meeting objectively assessed needs in North Northamptonshire. Its response therefore stressed that “... *starter homes need to come forward alongside, and not instead of, other forms of affordable housing...*”

- 3.2 The starter homes prospectus provides an important opportunity to address this concern by promoting the delivery of starter homes on brownfield sites, many of which will not already have planning permission for housing. The Garden Communities Stakeholder Group on 30th March supported the principle of a North Northamptonshire Expression of Interest to ensure that it meets the scale of starter home ambition sought by DCLG (300-600 starter homes to be completed or under construction in each partnership by 2020/21). It was proposed that this should be coordinated through the Joint Planning Unit, which is currently working with the LPAs to prepare draft Registers of Brownfield Land Suitable for Housing (as part of a DCLG funded pilot project). This will include reviewing brownfield land opportunities within the Sustainable Urban Extensions.
- 3.3 Discussions with the partner councils and HCA are ongoing and the Joint Delivery Committee will be updated on progress.

4. RECOMMENDATION

That the Joint Committee agrees to the preparation of a North Northamptonshire Expression of Interest in response to the Government's Starter Homes Prospectus (attached)

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