



Homes &
Communities
Agency

Large sites and Housing Zones Capacity Fund

Guidance for local authorities



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Introduction

The government is firmly committed to its ambition to deliver one million homes by December 2020. To assist in delivering this, up to £18m resource funding is available in 2016 to 2017 to develop/build capacity in local authorities and to extend the capacity within the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), through external resources to support the delivery of large and complex sites. This funding is aimed at existing government initiatives/programmes in priority order:

1. Housing Zones and Large Sites*, where capacity funding will unlock housing before 2021;
2. Housing Zones and Large Sites, where capacity funding will unlock housing before 2026;
3. Sites, or collections of sites below 1,500 units, where capacity funding will unlock housing before 2021; or
4. Sites or collections of sites, below 1,500 units where capacity funding will unlock housing before 2026.

*A Large Site is defined as delivering more than 1,500 units. Housing Zones must be designated to be eligible, and **outside of London**. Some large sites are part of Housing Zones.

Government recognises the significant contribution large sites and housing zones make to the provision of future housing and new communities. Large sites/Housing Zones are a focus for government support but are complex, often requiring significant local-coordination to progress from planning to delivery. Starter Homes schemes that are being delivered within Large Sites and Housing Zones should be considered a priority 1 or 2 project where they meet the appropriate delivery timescales.

The delivery of improvements to public and social infrastructure will usually be required and local capacity to design, manage and implement these improvements can be a barrier. This funding can be used to tackle these barriers, including:

- funding to create additional capacity in local authorities to manage applications for large developments
- access to expert planning and technical support and advice to help schemes progress from conception through to planning consent
- supporting the development of housing zone bids submitted to DCLG for approval;
- through Planning Performance Agreements, resources will be made available to local planning authorities to assist them with reviewing and determining large scale public sector sites that are capable of delivering new homes
- brokerage support is also available from central government to help resolve barriers that are preventing schemes from moving forward

Separate funding is available to support the development and delivery of proposals for Garden Villages. Bids which do not received funding under the Garden Villages programme can be considered for funding under this fund.

What resources are available?

Support can be provided in the form of grant funding to local authorities, and HCA managed consultancy support as set out below with an expectation that every endeavour will be made to utilise the funding in 2016/17 as far as is possible. It is envisaged that a level of matching support/contribution (either in terms of funding or staff resources) will be provided by local authorities in receipt of this funding.

Grant Funding

Funding can be provided to local authorities to procure consultancy support, including via the HCA panels, to assist with key pieces of work such as: site investigations; market testing/studies; master planning; and work to support achieving planning certainty, viability appraisals, etc.

The funding can also be used to establish and/or support a bespoke Local Authority led local delivery team which has a clear and singular purpose to accelerate delivery of key projects that result in new homes. The HCA will work with Local Partnerships and/or other appropriate consultancies and the local area to help identify the type and scale of team that would be most effective.

HCA managed consultancy support

The HCA's specialist team Advisory Team for Large Applications (ATLAS) can offer local authorities advice on a broad range of issues relating to the delivery of large housing projects and aim to provide a service which will build capacity and improve relationships. It assists local stakeholders to deliver on their ambitions. The services can range from general project management advice, advice on the planning process, dealing with technical planning and related topics and addressing project issues. Where necessary, ATLAS will procure specialist advice utilising consultancy support.

The funding cannot be used for:

- any capital works, legal fees or estate management/holding costs

How is the fund accessed?

The funding will be made available through a short bidding process. **Local authorities should be made aware of the short time period for submitting bids of four weeks with completed bids to be submitted to the e-mail address below by Friday 9 December 2016**, as this fund is aimed at live, known sites, where information is readily available. Funding will be paid as s31 grant under the Local Government Act 2003.

HCA managed consultancy support will be procured and paid for directly by HCA.

Who do I contact for more information?

Please contact your local HCA office. All offices can be reached on the main enquiries number 0300 1234 500 or by email mail@homesandcommunities.co.uk.

Our enquiries line is open weekdays from 9am to 5pm. Further details can be found on our [website](#).

All completed bids should be submitted by Friday 9 December 2016 to: capacityfund@hca.gsi.gov.uk.

Bid assessment

Bids will be assessed against the following initiatives/programmes:

1. Housing Zones and Large Sites, where capacity funding will unlock housing before 2021;
2. Housing Zones and Large Sites, where capacity funding will unlock housing before 2026;
3. Sites, or collections of sites below 1,500 units, where capacity funding will unlock housing before 2021; or
4. Sites or collections of sites, below 1,500 units where capacity funding will unlock housing before 2026.

In addition, bids will be considered against the following criteria:

Deliverability:

- number of units being delivered against the above criteria
- development programme and underlying assumptions
- description of key risks (including wider site constraints)/how they will be mitigated through this funding?

Viability:

- evidence that funding is in place, or has been identified, for the site(s)

VFM:

- level of match funding/resource from local authority/other sources?
- estimated cost per unit?

Strategic:

- strength of council support
- evidence of strong local housing market
- areas of high objectively assessed need and low delivery numbers.

Enabling and development support submission

Please read the supporting guidance note before completing this application which will explain support options and key considerations.

The HCA may contact you following your submission to further understand the scope and support requested in your application. Applications should be sent to capacityfund@hca.gsi.gov.uk

1. Applicant Details	
Name of Organisation	
Contact First Name	
Contact Surname	
Contact Position	
Contact Email Address	
Contact Telephone Number	

2. Required Support	
Please select which support options are being requested	
ATLAS	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grant Funding (Consultancy)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grant Funding (Delivery Team)	<input type="checkbox"/>
1. Housing Zones and Large Sites*, where capacity funding will unlock housing before 2021;	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Housing Zones and Large Sites, where capacity funding will unlock housing before 2026;	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Sites, or collections of sites below 1,500 units, where capacity funding will unlock housing before 2021; or	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Sites or collections of sites, below 1,500 units where capacity funding will unlock housing before 2026.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please detail what the support will be used for, including:

- amount of funding requested and what it will be used for and by when (please provide a breakdown against strategic overarching Housing Zone and/or site specific work, including details of any delivery team posts)
- reason why the capacity funding cannot be met locally
- evidence of local support and demand
- evidence that capital funding is in place, or identified for the site(s)
- development programme and underlying assumptions
- key risks that the funding will mitigate

ATLAS Support Requirements	
Project Management	No
Infrastructure Planning & Delivery	No
Transport & Movement	No
Masterplanning & Design	No
Environmental Sustainability	No
Social Infrastructure	No
Viability, Deliverability & S106 negotiations	No
Engaging with the Local Community & members	No
Engaging with External bodies e.g. statutory agencies	No
Any other support Requirements	No
Please specify:	
Please detail any similar funding previously awarded, describe how this was used, and how it supported the delivery of homes.	

Please detail any match funding being provided:

3. Site Details

Name of Site	
Number of units	
Local authority name	
Brownfield/greenfield	
Site planning status	
Developer/promoter	

	16/17 - 20/21	21/22 - 25/26	Future Years	Total
Housing Completions without capacity funding				
Housing Completions with capacity funding				

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4. Brokerage
Please provide details of any brokerage assistance required from government, setting out the issues where assistance is required and the outcomes you hope to achieve.