



Homes England

25 November 2021

Invitation for local authorities to bid for Garden Communities Funding 2021-22

I'm pleased to announce the bidding round for 2021-22 funding for the garden communities programme. We know this funding can be a significant element in supporting the additional and proactive work needed to accelerate the journey of these large and complex projects to delivery stage if used effectively, and it has been great to see a number of the garden community projects achieve key planning and delivery milestones over the past year.

The capacity/resource funding envelope for 2021-22 is circa £5.8m and funding awards will be made via a S31 grant. In addition, an additional capital funding package of up to £6m has also been identified by DLUHC for use towards local infrastructure projects associated with garden community projects. This additional funding is intended for capital costs of infrastructure delivery or the costs of advancing a business case towards such works where there is a direct link to accelerating delivery of the garden community. Local authorities are invited to bid for a share of this funding to drive forward their garden community projects and the purpose of this letter is to set out the process and criteria for assessing bids.

Where there are a number of garden community projects located in a single county, we encourage you to explore opportunities to work jointly to make most effective and efficient use of the limited funding available and to make a joint bid for funding. We also encourage local authorities to engage with county councils and private sector partners in considering the activities that would benefit from the funding available to drive projects forward.

The aim of the Garden Communities programme continues to be the acceleration of delivery of attractive and sustainable new communities that are exemplars of good design and innovation. The focus of the bidding process & assessment this year will be on supporting those projects that:

- are making substantial and demonstrable progress towards delivery of their garden community – particularly where a start on site will occur within the next four years (or continued sustained delivery rates where development has already started);
- demonstrate how they are implementing high quality place making and innovation in delivery;
- demonstrate effective utilisation of previous funding granted in meeting key project milestones previously identified in moving projects towards delivery and have a credible project plan in place for the coming year.

If you wish to bid for a share of the funding available, please complete the attached form. We want to keep the bidding process proportionate, so please be succinct in your answers and ensure you address the questions posed. In addition to completing the form, we ask that you also submit the following:

- i. A project plan for the garden community that sets out the key priorities, activities and workstreams planned for 2021-22 highlighting those workstreams you intend to use garden community funding to undertake.
- ii. The latest version (2021) of the housing delivery trajectory for the garden community.

The completed form and attachments should be sent to Zahur Gitay at zahur.gitay@homesengland.gov.uk by **17 December 2021**.

The assessment process will be administered by the Homes England.

The criteria that will be used to assess the resource funding element of bids are:

1. The total number of homes that the scheme that will deliver.
2. Schemes that (i) where development has not yet started, it is clearly demonstrated there will be a start on site within the next 4 years; (ii) schemes where development has already started, the rate of delivery of homes and other elements will continue at an accelerated rate.
3. Schemes that have made effective use of previous capacity funding awards to progress the garden community project towards delivery and have no significant underspend from previous year's funding rounds. We ask you to highlight whether the 2020/21 funding and any unspent funding from previous years has been expended, committed or proposed (E/C/P) for identified workstreams / activities.
4. Effective project planning for delivery activities proposed in 2021-22 that sets the context for your capacity funding request – highlighting the added value that capacity funding will provide.
5. Complementarity with the use of other public funding going into the schemes (e.g, HIF, HIG) to reinforce acceleration of housing delivery.
6. Continued focus on implementing sustainable place-making, innovation & community engagement

The criteria that will be used to assess the capital funding element (towards local infrastructure works) of bids are:

1. Schemes where there is a direct connection between additional funding awarded towards local infrastructure and/or related business case work and accelerated delivery of the garden community.
2. Confirmation that the infrastructure projects or business case work bid for will be committed this financial year and delivered/completed in 2022/23 financial year.

If you have any queries about this or wish to discuss the bidding process, please contact myself or Simon Turner (simon.turner@homesengland.gov.uk)

Regards

Fionnuala Lennon

Head of High Growth & New Settlements

Homes England