

LEVELLING UP WHITE PAPER (February 2022) – Key Headlines

The Government has published the Levelling Up White Paper which sets out the plan for reversing the UK's geographic inequalities and improving the country by:

- Unleashing the full potential of the private sector, boosting pay, productivity, innovation and economic growth.
- Improving public services, including giving everyone access to higher quality schools and training, improving people's health, particularly in disadvantaged communities, and increasing the supply and standard of housing.
- Regenerating town centres and high streets, tackling crime and anti-social behaviour to make streets safer, and ensuring everyone has access to culture.

The paper includes 12 national missions – all quantifiable and to be achieved by 2030 – which will be given status in law in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill (see **Appendix 1** for details).

The White Paper includes:

- **A new devolution framework** which sets out a clear menu of options for places in England that wish to unlock the benefits of devolution. By 2030, every part of England that wishes to have a 'London-style' devolution deal will have one.
- **The local growth funding landscape** – a commitment to simplify this.
- **The £2.6 billion UK Shared Prosperity Fund** will be decentralised to local leaders as far as possible.
- **55 Education Investment Areas (EIAs)** will be designated where school outcomes are currently weakest and will benefit from intensive investment and support. East Sussex has been identified automatically for this due to our Opportunity Area status.
- **The intention to mobilise £16 billion** of the Local Government Pension Scheme for investments in local projects.
- **A transformation of the government's approach to data and evaluation**, with a new independent body created to improve transparency of local government performance.
- **Spend more on Research and Development**, with an emphasis on shifting more of that expenditure away from the South East.
- **Provide more business finance to SMEs** through the British Business Bank (and other related constructs).
- **Put more social value** at the heart of Government procurement activity.
- **Make transport provision** in major urban centres closer to London standards.
- **Digital Connectivity** – a pledge for the nation to have gigabit-capable broadband and 4G, with 5G for "the majority" of people.
- **National Living Wage** is to continue to increase.

- **Support Local Nature Recovery Strategies**, with a second report on “rural proofing” in England due this spring.
- **Creation of a Community Wealth Fund** will be considered for community-led regeneration initiatives.
- **Increase cultural spending** with an emphasis on increased Arts Council expenditure outside of London.

A Levelling Up Advisory Council will be established which will have a statutory duty to provide an annual report on delivering “Levelling Up”.

Appendix 1: The 12 Levelling Up Missions:

1. JOBS

Improve pay, employment and productivity in every area of the UK – but also narrow the gap between the best and worst performing areas.

2. RESEARCH

Refocus research and development funding, with spending outside the South East rising by 40 per cent – and a target of attracting £2 of private money for every pound spent by the taxpayer.

3. TRANSPORT

Improve local bus and rail services in every part of the country to bring standards 'significantly closer' to those in London, including the introduction of Oyster-style ticketing used in the capital.

4. TECHNOLOGY

Gigabit broadband and 4G for all, with 5G for 'the majority' of people.

5. EDUCATION

Improving maths and literacy rates in the worst primary schools by a third to ensure 90 per cent of all children reach expected standards by the age of 11.

6. SKILLS

Boost adult skills by ensuring that around an extra 200,000 people a year complete high-quality training.

7. HEALTH

Raise 'healthy life expectancy' by five years by 2035 and narrow the yawning gap between the most and least healthy parts of the country.

8. HAPPINESS

Improve 'well-being' in every area of the UK and help the worst performing areas catch up.

9. LOCAL PRIDE

Boost people's 'pride in place', by improving town centres and local culture.

10. HOUSING

Give renters a 'secure path to ownership', increasing the number of first-time buyers. Halve the number of shoddy homes currently rented out.

11. CRIME

Cut murder, violent crime and antisocial behaviour across the country, with a particular focus on improving life in the most crime-ridden neighbourhoods.

12. MAYORS

Local devolution with elected county mayors for all areas that want London-style control over issues like transport.