

St Helens

Regeneration & Investment Briefing



Funding, places and delivery.

A briefing for the organisations bringing forward homes and regeneration across St Helens, Earlestown, Newton-le-Willows and the wider borough.

Inside this briefing

A practical guide to funding routes, local programmes and the organisations turning sites and neighbourhood priorities into delivery.

For organisations delivering housing and regeneration in St Helens.

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Earlestown Town Hall

DATES AND DECISIONS TO WATCH

As at 19 September 2026	Published position
Local Plan timetable	Cabinet approved the new-system timetable 3 June 2026: notice of intention proposed for June 2026, scoping consultation Aug/Sept 2026, Gateway 1 self-assessment from October 2026, proposed content/evidence consultation June–July 2027, Gateway 2 November 2027, consultation on the proposed local plan April–June 2028. [4]
Town Centre East & Fingerpost Pride in Place	Neighbourhood Board recruited through 2026; first meeting 13 August 2026, chaired by Mike Denning. Up to £20m over 10 years. Pride in Place Plan due to MHCLG by 30 November 2026. [6,33]
Newton-le-Willows Pride in Place	Cabinet backed £361,000 of Year 1 (April 2026–March 2027) spend across three projects; Regeneration Plan and 4-Year Investment Plan submitted to MHCLG November 2025. [5,7]
Pride in Place Impact Fund	£1.5m across 2025/26 and 2026/27 (50:50), 100% capital; national guidance requires commitment by 31 March 2027. [8,20]

Figures in this briefing cover different programmes, geographies and periods. They should not be added into a single borough investment total.

Up to £46 billion over ten years

Homes England and its subsidiary, the National Housing Bank, have up to £46 billion to deploy across England to 2036. These are the principal streams. [1]

The joint Investment Prospectus, published on 31 March 2026 ahead of the Bank's opening on 1 April, brings grant, land and finance into one framework. The Bank aims to attract more than £50 billion of additional private capital over the decade.

Stream	Amount	What it funds / who it reaches
Social and Affordable Homes Programme 2026–2036	At least £27bn outside London £39bn nationally, including London	Capital grant for social and affordable rent, shared ownership, supported housing and estate regeneration. Registered Providers, councils, housebuilders and community-led organisations, through continuous market engagement or strategic partnerships.
Housing and Infrastructure Capital Grant	About £3.1bn Homes England's share of the £5bn national pot*	Land assembly, remediation and strategic infrastructure; dedicated viability-gap support planned for later in 2026/27. Councils, developers and landowners with sites the market cannot unlock alone.
National Housing Delivery Fund Debt, equity and guarantees	Up to £16bn	Loans, equity and guarantees, including funding that may be devolved to mayoral authorities. Housebuilders, Registered Providers, funds and lending partners.

*The prospectus describes the agency's share as £3.1bn, subject to final confirmation. These are programme envelopes, not a ring-fenced allocation to St Helens.

PROGRAMME MILESTONES

Date	Milestone
31 March / 1 April 2026	Investment Prospectus published / National Housing Bank opens
25 August 2026	First wave: £9.58bn to 33 strategic partners outside London [2]
Later in 2026/27	Dedicated viability-gap grant planned [1]
To 2036	Ten-year programme period

Land, grant and finance can be combined around the needs of a scheme.

Grant, land and finance

Which support fits a scheme depends less on its size than on what is holding it up: a funding gap, a difficult site, or the tenure of the homes to be delivered. [1]

Family	Product	Purpose	Typical user
Grant	Social and Affordable Homes Programme	Affordable tenures, supported housing and estate regeneration	RPs, councils, developer partners
Grant	Housing and Infrastructure Capital Grant	Viability gaps, infrastructure, land assembly and remediation	Councils, landowners, master developers
Land	Homes England land	Acquisition, enabling and disposal through sale, lease, development agreement or joint venture	Developers of all sizes
Finance	SME Accelerator Loan	Site finance for smaller builders establishing a track record	SME housebuilders
Finance	Revolving credit facility	Multi-site support alongside commercial lenders	Growing builders
Finance	Senior and mezzanine debt	Project funding for build to rent, later living and brownfield schemes	Developers and funds
Finance	Corporate lending	Balance-sheet finance for growth, including modern methods of construction	Housebuilders
Finance	Infrastructure loans	Long-term finance, up to 15 years, for upfront infrastructure	Developers and councils
Finance	Low-interest RP loans	Unlocking capital investment in social and affordable homes	Registered Providers
Finance	Equity	Minority investment in vehicles typically delivering more than 3,000 homes	Funds and partnerships
Finance	Guarantees	Bonds and loans to reduce institutional financing costs	Funds and RPs

Two grant routes in the Liverpool City Region. Land, remediation and infrastructure grant normally comes first through the Combined Authority: the Brownfield Land Fund, the Housing Investment Fund and the integrated settlement that LCRCA has held since 1 April 2026. Social and Affordable Homes Programme grant remains administered by Homes England, shaped by LCRCA's published strategic priorities. The National Housing Bank makes its own finance decisions while working alongside the agency.

How the regional routes fit together

For a St Helens scheme, the first conversation depends on the funding gap; a regional figure is not a borough award.

FIRST-WAVE SAHP ESTIMATE FOR THE LIVERPOOL CITY REGION

£380m

c.3,100 homes

Estimated strategic-partnership spend and homes across the region in MHCLG's regional funding breakdown of 24 August 2026; the companion Homes England release names the 33 partners and gives no totals. Neither gives a St Helens allocation. [2]

Scheme requirement	Route to establish	What to resolve
Social and affordable homes	Homes England, via CME or a strategic partner — Torus covers St Helens.	Check the 60% Social Rent floor; St Helens Town and Earlestown are priority places. [21]
Land, infrastructure or abnormal costs	The Combined Authority's Brownfield Land Fund; the council's own land team for council-owned sites, including the Langtree JV at Parkside.	Evidence the scheme is unviable without support. [3]
Additional affordable-housing support	The Combined Authority's Investment Fund, where a site sits in the LCR Housing Pipeline.	Not a named St Helens allocation; check pipeline status. [3]
Debt, equity or guarantees	National Housing Bank via Homes England.	Borrower structure, commercial funding, security and repayment route. [1]

Brownfield Land Fund: current position. LCRCA's £60m programme from July 2020 targets at least 4,000 and up to 5,000 homes; applications go to the Combined Authority's housing team with no standing deadline, and the test is that the scheme is unviable without grant. A further £13.8m for 555 homes was added in November 2025. The Housing Investment Fund, endorsed January 2026, supports stalled and early-stage sites in the LCR Housing Pipeline. [3]

Priority places, not awards. St Helens Town and Earlestown are named SAHP priority places; status is not itself a grant. [21]

REGIONAL AMBITIONS TO DESIGN FOR

LCRCA's SAHP strategic priorities seek around 16,000 social and affordable homes over 2026–2036 with at least 60% at Social Rent, across 13 priority places. The LCR Housing Pipeline published in January 2026 carries 64,044 homes on 310 sites. The Liverpool North Docks Mayoral Development Corporation, decided by the Combined Authority on 25 September 2026, could bring forward up to 17,000 homes. These are regional ambitions across delivery routes. [21]

Who decides what

Funding, planning and delivery sit with different organisations. Identify the decision you need before choosing the first conversation.

01

Homes England / National Housing Bank

SAHP funding and finance decisions. [1]

02

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority

Brownfield Land Fund, Housing Investment Fund, SAHP strategic priorities. [3,21]

03

St Helens Borough Council

Local Plan, planning, council land; accountable body for Pride in Place; JV partner at Parkside. [4,10]

04

English Cities Fund (ECF)

JV of Homes England, Legal & General and Muse Places; master developer for the town centre and Earlestown. [11,14]

05

Neighbourhood boards

Newton-le-Willows (Chris Hickey) and Town Centre East & Fingerpost (Mike Denning) shape local plans. [5,7,19]

06

Scheme owner

The RP, council or developer delivering the individual scheme.

PUBLIC ROUTES FOR THE NEXT CONVERSATION

Enquiry	Public route
Local Plan / strategic planning	Kathrynbrindley@sthelens.gov.uk [4]
Housing options / advice	housingadviceoptions@sthelens.gov.uk · 01744 675150 [12]
General council enquiries	01744 676789 · sthelens.gov.uk/contactus [12]
Town centre masterplan	sthelentowncentre.co.uk [13]
Combined Authority Brownfield Land Fund	brownfield@liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk [3]

A useful first enquiry names the site, landowner, proposed use, delivery lead, funding gap and next decision. Attach a concise programme and explain what the requested intervention changes.

A route for smaller providers

A first-wave strategic allocation is one route into delivery. Continuous Market Engagement also gives eligible organisations a direct route to Homes England.

Continuous Market Engagement

Open for individual schemes and portfolios, while funding remains available. Designed to accommodate smaller partners, new entrants and complex projects. [19]

Strategic partnerships

Programme-level allocations support delivery at scale. The initial bidding round closed on 15 April 2026; future rounds will be announced. [18]

Route	Practical fit and requirements
CME general	A direct scheme bid. Establish eligible tenure, costs, delivery readiness and grant need with Homes England. [18,19]
CME portfolio	Discuss the pipeline before bidding. Initial portfolios normally deliver 300–500 homes; named sites should start by 31 March 2028 and complete by 31 March 2032. [19]
Delivery partnership	An eligible RP or council can work with a strategic partner under the programme's delivery-partner rules. Owning the funded homes is a different role from supplying construction services. [18,20]

BEFORE A GRANT APPLICATION

Organisations need Homes England Investment Partner qualification to receive grant. New partners can apply for that status alongside the funding application. Programme qualification and regulatory registration are separate steps. [19]

The bid should show how it meets local housing need and regional priorities. The Liverpool City Region seeks at least 60% Social Rent through SAHP, with 13 named priority places. [21] St Helens' Local Plan (Policy LPC02) requires at least 30% affordable homes on greenfield sites in Affordable Housing Zones 2 and 3, or at least 10% on brownfield sites in Zone 3, with at least 10% of any affordable total as affordable home ownership; a brownfield site in Zone 1 or 2 carries no LPC02 requirement. [22]

HOW TO PREPARE THE DISCUSSION

Bring a site schedule, proposed tenure mix, cost plan, planning position, delivery programme and confirmation of the intended landlord. Explain what is ready now and which dependencies still need resolving.

Places and programmes

St Helens town centre, Earlestown and Parkside sit at different stages, delivered through different partnerships. Establish the live phase and the organisation commissioning it before approaching a scheme.



St Helens town centre · Phase 1A is on site within the wider c.£100m ECF masterplan.

St Helens town centre / ECF

64 homes, on site

St Helens Borough Council and the English Cities Fund (ECF) are delivering a c.£100m masterplan. Phase 1A has reserved matters consent (P/2023/0685/RES, approved September 2025), a £23.2m GDV, 64 homes, a 120-bed Hampton by Hilton, a 22,400 sq ft market hall, 75,000 sq ft of offices and 11,400 sq ft of retail. VINCI Building is main contractor; a £69.7m funding sign-off in December 2025 moved the scheme into full construction in early 2026. [11,35,36,37]

No completion date is yet published for Phase 1A; highway works run to 22 January 2027.

Earlestown town centre

£20m Levelling Up Fund

The Earlestown programme sits within the same ECF/council partnership, backed by £20m from the Levelling Up Fund plus £8m council match funding. Earlestown Town Hall's refurbishment is due to complete summer 2026; Market Square's new canopy and public realm works began construction in January 2026; Queen Street highway works are phased from 1 June 2026. [9,15]

Confirm which element of the Earlestown package a scheme sits within before approaching the council or ECF.

Parkside, Newton-le-Willows

£80m phase one, on site

A joint venture between St Helens Borough Council and Langtree on the former Parkside Colliery site, within the Liverpool City Region Freeport. Phase one is £80m, 793,200 sq ft across three units, with the £55m Parkside Link Road already open. Phase two (1.6m sq ft) had planning committee resolution to grant in February 2026. [10,16]

An employment scheme, not housing — included for its scale and effect on labour and infrastructure demand.

Cowley Hill / Glass Futures

£54m Centre of Excellence

Glass Futures has opened a £54m research and technology centre on the former United Glass site, funded by £15m from UKRI and £9m from the Combined Authority, with 165,000 sq ft of facility and 80 jobs. [17,18]

Partners: Glass Futures, the Combined Authority, UKRI and St Helens Borough Council.

Three allocations, kept apart

St Helens Borough holds three separate Pride in Place allocations, which should not be summed: £20m for Newton-le-Willows, up to £20m for Town Centre East & Fingerpost, and £1.5m from the Impact Fund. [8,31,32,33,34]



Fingerpost

Neighbourhood	Published position / next conversation
Newton-le-Willows (phase one)	£20m over 10 years, secured spring 2024. Board chaired by Chris Hickey. Regeneration Plan and 4-Year Investment Plan submitted to MHCLG November 2025. Cabinet backed £361,000 of Year 1 (April 2026–March 2027) spend: St Johns Playground, Earlestown (£203,000); Earlestown Town Hall AV & lighting (£134,000); Arts on Prescription, Newton Library (£24,000); plus a Building Improvement Programme for Earlestown town centre reported at £1.2m. [5,7]
Town Centre East & Fingerpost (phase two)	Up to £20m over 10 years, split 63% capital / 37% revenue; the Pride in Place Plan is due to MHCLG by 30 November 2026. On approval, £1.36m is released in FY 2027/28. Neighbourhood Board recruited through 2026; first meeting held 13 August 2026, chaired by Mike Denning. [6,33]

BRING A PROJECT THAT CAN BE DELIVERED

Need, ownership and consent

Explain who benefits and how the proposal responds to residents. Identify land control, a delivery lead, consents and dependencies.

Capital and continuing costs

Set out works, development costs and contingency, then identify the asset owner, operating budget and maintenance responsibility.

The Pride in Place Impact Fund adds £1.5m borough-wide (£750,000 in each of 2025/26 and 2026/27); no St Helens-specific target wards are published. National guidance requires commitment by 31 March 2027. Public contact routes: page 6. [8,20]

Different pots, different decisions

Earlestown's Levelling Up Fund award, the two Pride in Place Programme Fund allocations, the Impact Fund, Glass Futures and Parkside operate at different scales and on different timetables; none should be summed into a single borough total.

£20m

Levelling Up Fund award backing the Earlestown programme, plus £8m council match funding [9,15]

Component	What the figure includes
£20m	Levelling Up Fund, backing Earlestown Town Hall's refurbishment and the Market Square / public realm programme. [9,15]
£8m	St Helens Borough Council match funding for the same Earlestown programme. [9,15]

This is separate from the town centre masterplan's own funding package: £69.2m from the council plus government and ECF support, including two Town Deal grants totalling £10.49m and £812,000 from the One Public Estate Brownfield Land Release Fund. [35,39]

PRIDE IN PLACE PROGRAMME FUND

Neighbourhood	Published position
Newton-le-Willows	£20m over 10 years; Year 1 (2026/27) spend of £361,000 approved by Cabinet. [5,7]
Town Centre East & Fingerpost	Up to £20m over 10 years; Neighbourhood Board recruited 2026; plan and investment priorities not yet published. [6]

Parkside phase one (£80m, on site) and the Glass Futures Global Centre of Excellence (£54m total: £15m UKRI, £9m Combined Authority) sit outside the Pride in Place and Levelling Up programmes. [10,16,17]

ST HELENS PRIDE IN PLACE IMPACT FUND

£1.5m	£750,000 in 2025/26 (determination signed 29 September 2025) and £750,000 in 2026/27 (signed 8 April 2026), where the authority is listed as 'St. Helens'. [31,32] Allocation is borough-wide. No St Helens-specific target wards are published.
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National guidance requires commitment by 31 March 2027; uncommitted sums must be returned. [20] This is not extra funding for the two neighbourhood programmes.

Homes, partners and local need

St Helens' Local Plan up to 2037 (adopted July 2022) requires a minimum of 10,206 net additional dwellings, at least 486 a year; the plan anticipates about 2,457 (24%) as affordable, against an assessed need of 117 a year. The council's housing strategy sets no numerical target of its own. [22,23]



Sankey Canal · The towpath through St Helens, where the borough's canal-side schemes sit.

Partner / example	Documented local delivery
Torus / Watkin Jones, Moss Nook	Partnership to deliver 295 homes. [24]
Torus, Elephant Lane, Thatto Heath	83 homes via shared ownership; Torus investment over £18m. [25]
Torus, Lancots Lane, Sutton	168 homes — described as Torus's largest St Helens site. [26]
Torus	£17.2m investment building 77 new homes at a further St Helens site. [27]

These are examples of local activity, not a complete provider list, procurement shortlist or evidence of a new SAHP award.

FOR DEVELOPMENT AND ASSET TEAMS

Agree tenure, accessible homes and support needs before fixing the unit mix. Bring the operator into the appraisal: nominations, management, service charges and whole-life maintenance. Keep new-supply budgets separate from existing-stock investment.

From scheme assembly to appointment

The national programme supports delivery through councils, Registered Providers and developers. The local supply chain enters through their projects, procurement routes and contractor packages.

Stage	Lead organisations	Specialist input
01 · Site and viability	Council land team, ECF, Langtree, developer, RP, funders	Land and planning advice, valuation, surveys and abnormal-cost assessment
02 · Enabling	Council, ECF, developer, Homes England / Combined Authority where relevant	Ground investigation, remediation, ecology, civils and utilities
03 · Funding and agreement	RP, developer, public funder, lender	Legal, cost advice, programme and development finance
04 · Design and consent	Client team, architect, planning authority	Architecture, engineering, arboriculture and technical coordination
05 · Construction	Main contractor and client delivery team	Groundworks, structure, roofing, M&E, scaffolding and site services
06 · Handover and operation	RP asset team, council or other operator	Commissioning, landscaping, compliance and maintenance

FINDING THE ACTUAL ROUTE TO WORK

St Helens Borough Council advertises tender opportunities through The Chest (the-chest.org.uk), the shared eProcurement portal hosted on the Proactis ProContract platform and used by five of the six Liverpool City Region councils and STAR Procurement member authorities; Liverpool City Council directs suppliers to ProContract rather than the Chest portal. St Helens buys through STAR Procurement, the shared service; the published contact is procurement@star-procurement.gov.uk. [29]

Above-threshold notices also appear on Find a Tender (find-tender.service.gov.uk). The council's 'Become a supplier' page sets out its route in for new suppliers, and STAR Procurement's category management and social value commitments apply to St Helens contracts, including use of the Better Business Scorecard by local firms to evidence social value. [28,29]

Parkside's delivery team includes Langtree (developer, JV with the council), Spawforths (planning), Curtins (highways), Fletcher Rae (architects), TPM Landscape and Cundall (engineering / drainage), led by 4Ward. [16]

A funding announcement does not itself create an open invitation to tender. Confirm whether work is being commissioned directly, through a framework or by a main contractor.

Build the workforce into the plan

Construction skills, training capacity and local employment should be considered while the scheme and its contracts are being assembled.

CONSTRUCTION SKILLS THROUGH THE NORTH-WEST CTEC

The North-West Construction Technical Excellence College (CTEC) — one of ten selected nationally — is hosted by Wigan & Leigh College with delivery partners Blackpool & The Fylde College and the East Lancashire Learning Group, covering the whole Liverpool City Region footprint, including St Helens, through its regional hub structure. [30]

St Helens Chamber runs local business-support and social-value guidance for firms bidding into council and public-sector contracts, including help interpreting social value scoring in tender applications. A St Helens-specific construction skills hub beyond the CTEC and Combined-Authority-wide provision is not verified. [29]

01 · Forecast

Trades, numbers and start dates

02 · Agree

Training, supervision and delivery partners

03 · Evidence

Starts, qualifications and sustained work

A PRACTICAL WORKFORCE BRIEF FOR A LIVE SCHEME

Agree early	What to record
Demand and timing	Map likely labour needs to the programme: enabling works, structure, services, finishes and handover.
Employer and supervision	Name the employing organisation, site supervisor and training partner. Allow time for recruitment and induction.
Learning and progression	Identify the relevant qualification, practical experience and route into continuing work.
Evidence of delivery	Agree how starts, completions, qualifications and employment outcomes will be recorded by the contract owner.

Suggested briefing checklist for clients and contractors. Agree the actual commitments through the scheme's procurement and contract process.

CONNECT TRAINING WITH COMMUNITY BENEFIT

Use the college's employer routes alongside the workforce plan, with named responsibilities and outcomes that can be evidenced through STAR's social value framework. [29,30]

CTEC enquiries: CTECenquiries@wigan-leigh.ac.uk

Procurement: procurement@star-procurement.gov.uk

Evidence and source notes

Research checked on 19 September 2026. Numbered references link to primary sources; public enquiry routes are on page 6.

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