

Rural Economies and delivering in uncertain times



Introduction

- Nigel Wilcock
- Executive Director of the Institute of Economic Development
- Director of Advisory business Mickledore
- 30 years in a mix of public and private sector economic development roles

Introduction

- Rural Economies and delivering in uncertain times
- Shambles
- Paralysis
- Alternative directions

The heady days of February



- Levelling Up White Paper
- Published 2nd February 2022
- Available for download <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-the-united-kingdom>

Principles

1. Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in **places** where they are lagging
2. Spread opportunities and improve public services, especially in those **places** where they are weakest
3. Restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those **places** where they have been lost
4. Empower local leaders and communities, especially in those **places** lacking local agency

For a White Paper it's a page turner....

- Chapter 1 – a detailed critique of the UK regional economy and the systemic reasons for inequalities
- Chapter 2 – an examination of the appropriate policy regime as a response
- Chapter 3 – the specific policies to be brought forward

From a rural perspective it missed an opportunity – but we may still be able to focus on the positive aspects of Chapter 2.

Recent initiatives

- Levelling Up Fund
- Shared Prosperity Fund
- Rural Shared Prosperity Fund
- ~~Investment Zones~~

LUF R2

Policy paper

Levelling Up Fund Round 2: prospectus

The prospectus provides guidance on how local areas can submit bids for the Levelling Up Fund.

From: [Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities](#), [HM Treasury](#), and [Department for Transport](#)

Published 23 March 2022

Last updated 15 July 2022 — [See all updates](#)

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Documents



[Levelling Up Fund Round 2: prospectus](#)

HTML

Details

The Levelling Up Fund is designed to invest in infrastructure that improves everyday life across the UK. The £4.8 billion fund will support town centre and high street regeneration, local transport projects, and cultural and heritage assets.

Across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (NI), unitary authorities (including metropolitan borough councils), London borough councils and district councils in two tier areas in England are eligible to submit bids for the second round of the Levelling Up Fund which was announced in the 2022 Spring Statement.

In addition to local authorities, the UK government will accept bids from a range of local applicants in NI, including but not limited to businesses, universities, voluntary and community sector organisations, district councils, the Northern Ireland Executive, and other public sector bodies.

English | [Cymraeg](#)

Related content

[UK Shared Prosperity Fund: prospectus](#)

[Levelling Up Fund Round 2: frequently asked questions](#)

[Levelling Up Fund: first round successful bidders](#)

[Levelling Up Fund Round 2: application form and guidance](#)

[UK Community Renewal Fund: successful and unsuccessful bids](#)

Collection

[New levelling up and community investments](#)

- Launched 23rd March
- Portal due to close 30th June
- Actually opened in July with extended deadline
- Projects due to be announced early autumn
- Essential to spend in FY22/23
- No announcement and suggestion of fund haircut
- LAs undertook all preparatory work and now sat waiting

Shared Prosperity Fund

Guidance

UK Shared Prosperity Fund: prospectus

Updated 1 August 2022

Contents

Ministerial foreword

Part 1

1. Introduction
2. What to use funding for
3. Funding places will receive
4. How the Fund will be delivered
5. Who should be involved in the Fund
6. How to write an investment plan

Part 2

7. The Fund's parameters
8. How we will pay places and projects
9. How we will measure performance
10. Next steps and important dates

 Print this page

This Prospectus provides information to local authorities and other partners across the United Kingdom on:

Part 1

- The aims of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund
- What to use the funding for
- The funding places will receive
- How to deliver the Fund
- The investment plan process

Part 2

- The Fund's parameters
- How we will pay each place or project
- How we will work with each place to measure impact

It builds on pre-launch guidance published in February 2022.

For further information, you can [contact us](#) on any of the content of this guidance or via the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities area team for your place.

Important dates

- Fund launch: 13 April 2022
- Investment plan platform launch: 22 April 2022. A [pre-registration form](#) will need to be completed before accessing the investment plan platform
- Investment plan submissions window: 30 June 2022 to 1 August 2022
- First payments expected to lead local authorities: from October 2022
- Funding period: April 2022 to March 2025

Further information including a more detailed timeline is included in [section 10](#).

- Long awaited replacement to ESIF funding
- 2+ years in development
- Launched fully June 22 with bids required by 1st August
- First payments to LAs announced for Oct 22
- Initial response to bids not yet received
- LAs undertook all preparatory work and now sat waiting

Rural England Prosperity Fund

Guidance

Rural England Prosperity Fund: prospectus

Published 3 September 2022

Applies to England

Contents

1. Introduction
2. What to use the funding for
3. Funding places will receive
4. How to deliver the Fund
5. Rural Fund process
6. The Fund's parameters
7. How we will pay each place or project
8. How we will measure performance
9. Next steps

 [Print this page](#)

Guidance for local authorities for funding under the Rural England Prosperity Fund. The Rural England Prosperity Fund is referred to as the 'Rural Fund' in this prospectus.

Important dates

Dates are indicative and may be subject to change.

- 3 September 2022 - Rural Fund launch
- 12 September 2022 - Rural Fund addendum platform launch
- September 2022 - engagement sessions with local authorities and local partners to support the Rural Fund process
- 3 October 2022 to 30 November 2022 - Rural Fund addendum submissions window
- November 2022 to January 2023 - Rural Fund assessment period for government
- January 2023 - anticipated date for approval of Rural Fund proposals
- April 2023 - first payments expected to lead local authorities
- April 2023 to March 2025 - funding period

- Somewhat unexpected launch of REPF
- Prospectus only published after plans for SPF submitted
- 3 month period to prepare plans

- LAs now almost completed the submission work

Investment Zones



[Home](#) > [Business and industry](#) > [UK economy](#) > [UK economic growth](#)

Press release

Areas urged to 'go for growth' as Investment Zone applications open

Local areas can apply to host a new Investment Zone from today to boost growth, deliver homes and spread opportunity.

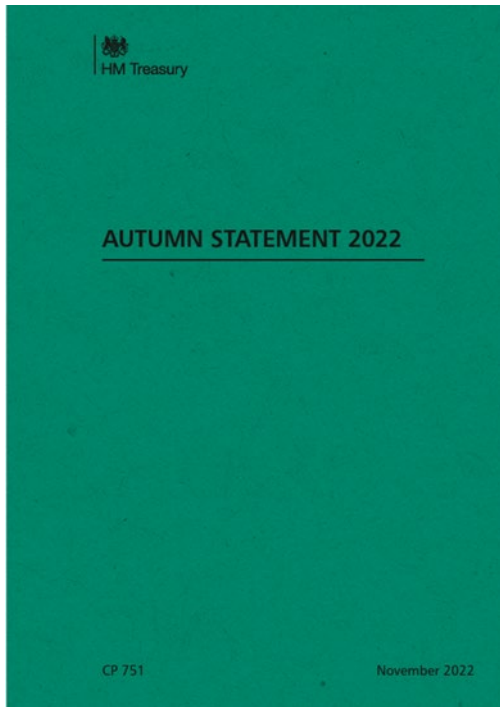
From: [Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities](#)

Published 2 October 2022



- Completely unexpected launch of Investment Zones
- LAs given 2 weeks to respond to a published template
- 90 Local Authorities complied with the 'urge' for applications
- LAs completed the submission work and the project was scrapped

Investment Zones

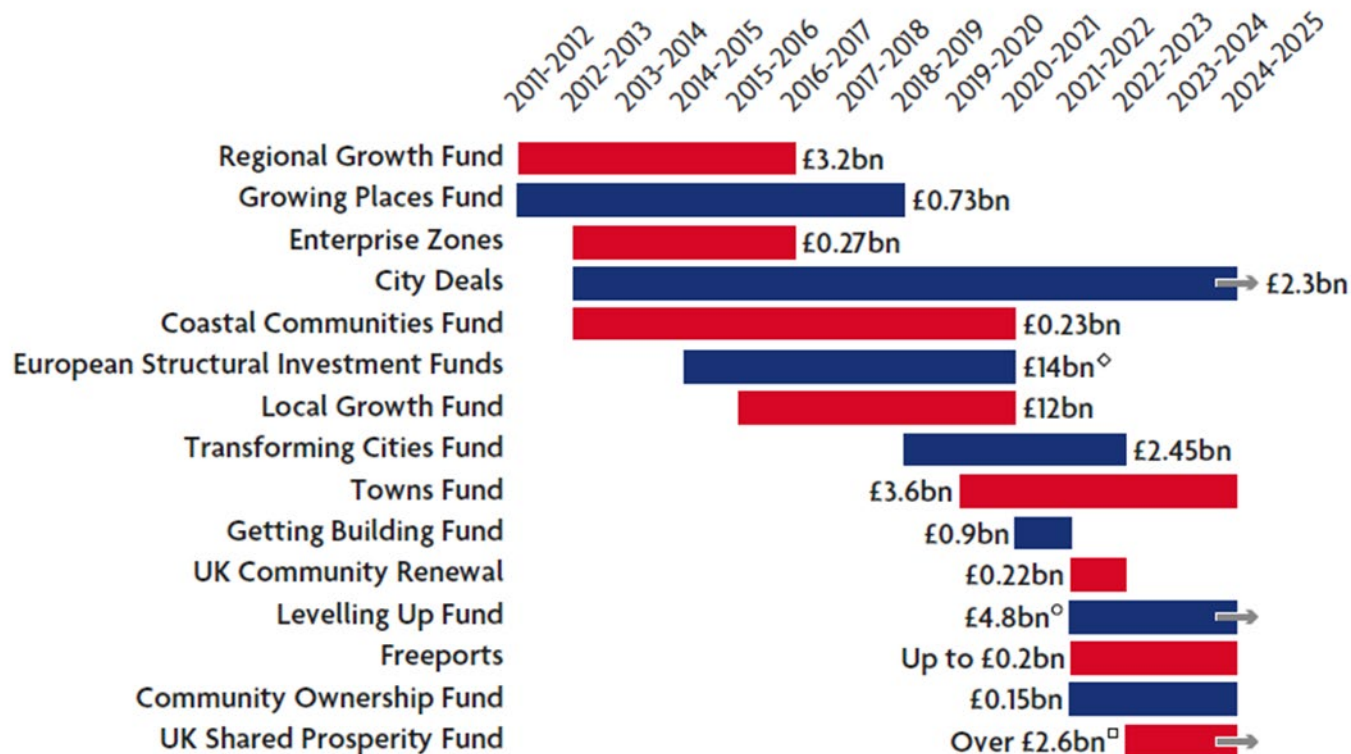


17th November (46 days later)

‘The government will refocus the Investment Zones programme. The government will use this programme to catalyse a limited number of the highest potential knowledge-intensive growth clusters, including through leveraging local research strengths. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities will work closely with mayors, devolved administrations, local authorities, businesses and other local partners to consider how best to identify and support these clusters, driving growth while maintaining high environmental standards, with the first clusters to be announced in the coming months. The existing expressions of interest will therefore not be taken forward. The government is grateful to local authorities for their work to develop proposals’.

Re-shaping central government decision making

- Funding – City Deals, Levelling Up Fund, UK Shared Prosperity Fund



2022

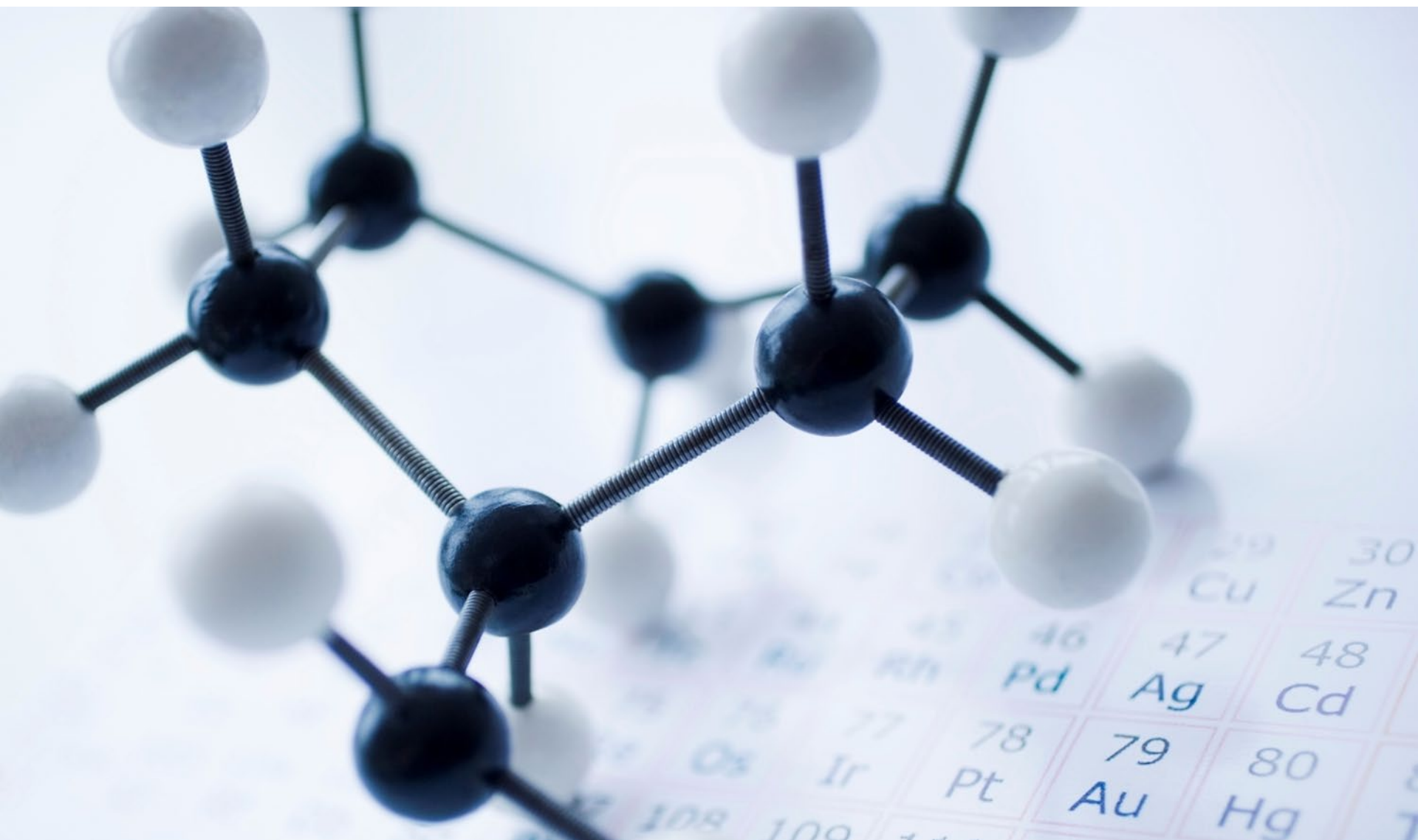
- **The lost year of economic development**
- **Wasted cost, wasted resource, wasted time**



In Uncertain Times



Informed decisions on structure



Structure

- Levelling up did set out a route map
- Budgetary pressured are forcing some implementation
- Genuine coming together takes preparation and time
- Emergence of new Unitary Authorities, Combined Authorities and County Deals
- What did the White Paper actually say...

Empowering Local Decision Making

- Devolution for all if meet principles of:
 - Effective Leadership
 - Sensible Geography
 - Flexibility
 - Appropriate Accountability
 - Follow the devolution framework
- **Level 3** - A single institution or County Council with a directly elected mayor (DEM), across a FEA or whole county area
- **Level 2** – A single institution or County Council without a DEM, across a FEA or whole county area
- **Level 1** – Local authorities working together across a FEA or whole county area e.g. through a joint committee

Function	Detail	L1	L2	L3
Strategic role in delivering services	Host for Government functions best delivered at a strategic level involving more than one local authority e.g. Local Nature Recovery Strategies	✓	✓	✓
	Opportunity to pool services at a strategic level	✓	✓	✓
	Opportunity to adopt innovative local proposals to deliver action on climate change and the UK's Net Zero targets	✓	✓	✓
Supporting local businesses	LEP functions including hosting strategic business voice		✓	✓
Local control of sustainable transport	Control of appropriate local transport functions e.g. local transport plans*		✓	✓
	Defined key route network*			✓
	Priority for new rail partnerships with Great British Railways – influencing local rail offer, e.g. services and stations			✓
	Ability to introduce bus franchising		✓	✓
	Consolidation of existing core local transport funding for local road maintenance and smaller upgrades into a multi-year integrated settlement			✓
Investment spending	UKSPF planning and delivery at a strategic level		✓	✓
	Long-term investment fund, with an agreed annual allocation			✓
Giving adults the skills for the labour market	Devolution of Adult Education functions and the core Adult Education Budget		✓	✓
	Providing input into Local Skills Improvement Plans		✓	✓
	Role in designing and delivering future contracted employment programmes			✓
Local control of infrastructure decisions	Ability to establish Mayoral Development Corporations (with consent of host local planning authority)			✓
	Devolution of locally-led brownfield funding			✓
	Strategic partnerships with Homes England across the Affordable Housing Programme and brownfield funding			✓
	Homes England compulsory purchase powers (held concurrently)		✓	✓
Keeping the public safe and healthy	Mayoral control of Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) functions where boundaries align^			✓
	Clear defined role in local resilience*		✓	✓
	Where desired offer MCAs a duty for improving the public's health (concurrently with local authorities)			✓
Financing local initiatives for residents and business	Ability to introduce mayoral precepting on council tax*			✓
	Ability to introduce supplement on business rates (increases subject to ballot)			✓

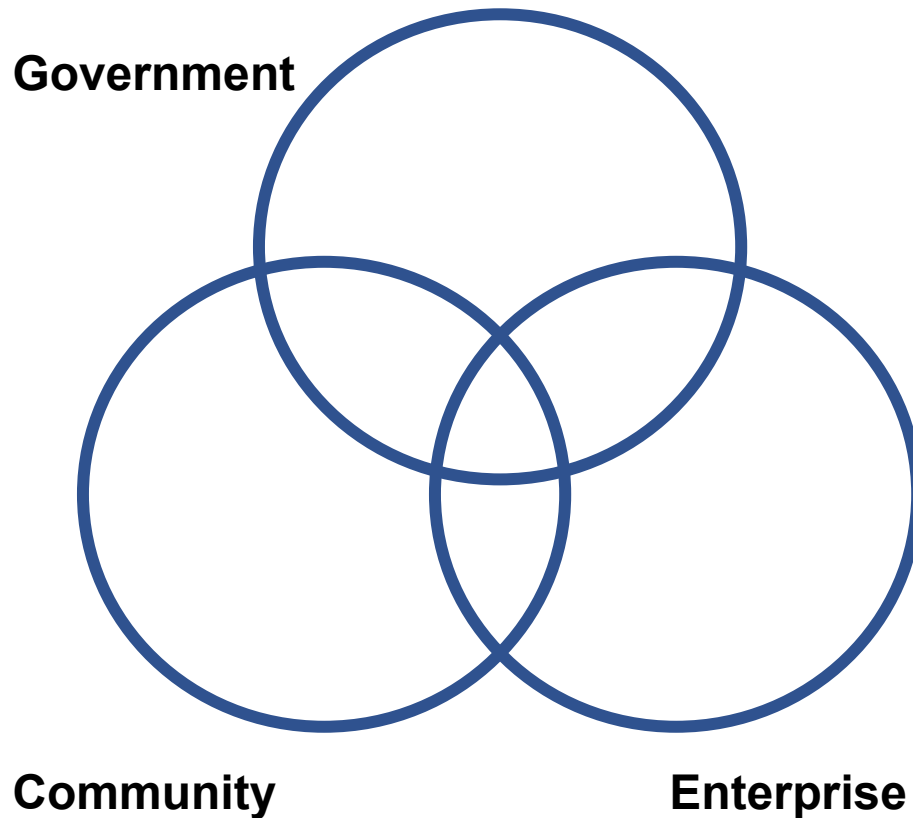
Structure

- Personal view that the suggestion is helpful – and probably sensible
- It did however leave LEPs in an uncertain position – and the formation of cross border partnerships and voluntary role of business is under-valued
- Of course the structure may not survive contact with local areas (more paralysis)

Growing importance of new models?

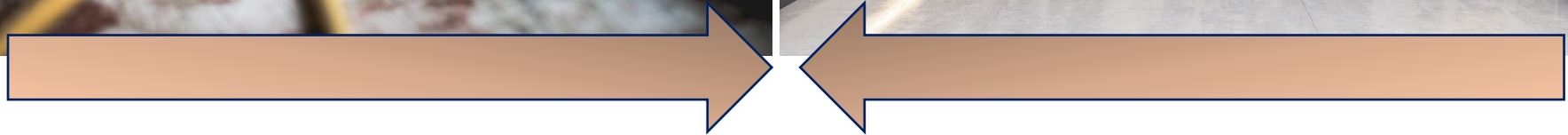


Pillars of effective change



- Works best when all three work together
- Not all schemes require all 3 strands
- For the immediate term focusing on schemes not involving Government maybe helpful
- Ageing population and Govt debt issues may extend this issue

New approach?



To what extent is
'homespun' meeting
mainstream

Is this counter culture or
a sensible new
approach

Grand Challenges

The four grand challenges of the Industrial strategy remain valid even if the strategy has rather declined:

- Digital
- Ageing and health
- Clean growth
- Future mobility

Grand Solutions

Accepting that Government would ideally be part of the solution, there is a need to better explore solutions from:

- Institutional investment
- Social Investment
- Retaining wealth for an area
- Community ownership models

The Institutional Response

- Increasing engagement from institutional investment and the power of local pension investments



Triple Point

Investments
with **purpose**
for **profit**
by **people**
from Triple Point

Our Investment Strategies

Social Housing



Digital Infrastructure



Energy



Private Credit



Venture



Social Investment

How Big Issue Invest is supporting projects and providing work

We take a closer look at the projects Big issue Invest have made happen

LIAM GERAUGHTY | 14 May 2021



A large banner for BG Society Capital. On the left is the logo for BG Society Capital and a circular emblem with 'TEN YEARS' inside. On the right is a navigation menu with links: TEN YEARS, HOW WE WORK, PORTFOLIO, ABOUT US, LATEST, CONTACT, and a search icon. The background of the banner is a close-up of a young child with curly hair wearing a blue knitted hat. The text 'Uniting capital, expertise and ideas for better lives' is overlaid in white. At the bottom right, there is a small text box: 'A community nursery in Hull, Child Dynamix, received investment from'.

Uniting capital,
expertise and ideas
for better lives

A community nursery in Hull, Child
Dynamix, received investment from

Social Investment



Uniting capital,
expertise and ideas
for better lives

- Our approach
 - Impact venture
 - Social lending
 - Social outcomes
 - Social property
- Making investments
- Creating new ideas
- Impact
- For investors
- Social enterprises and charities
- Partnerships and Policy
- Market data

A community nursery in Hull, Child Dynamix, received investment from [Social and Sustainable Capital](#)

Social Investment in Enterprise

Goldfinger Factory

While the name screams Bond villain, **Goldfinger Factory** are very much the good guys when it comes to community and climate.

Launched in 2013 by sustainability entrepreneurs Marie Cudennec Carlisle and Oliver Waddington-Ball, the social enterprise is actually named after Ernö Goldfinger. The renowned architect designed Trellick Tower, the West London building where they create golden opportunities for young people who are out of work and education, and older disadvantaged adults from the community.

Goldfinger Factory does this through an academy that teaches people how to make sustainable furniture and homewares, whittling their woodwork skills into further employment opportunities. So far, their work has given youngsters 13,809 hours of paid meaningful work with all trainees receiving the London Living Wage.

Social Investment in Enterprise

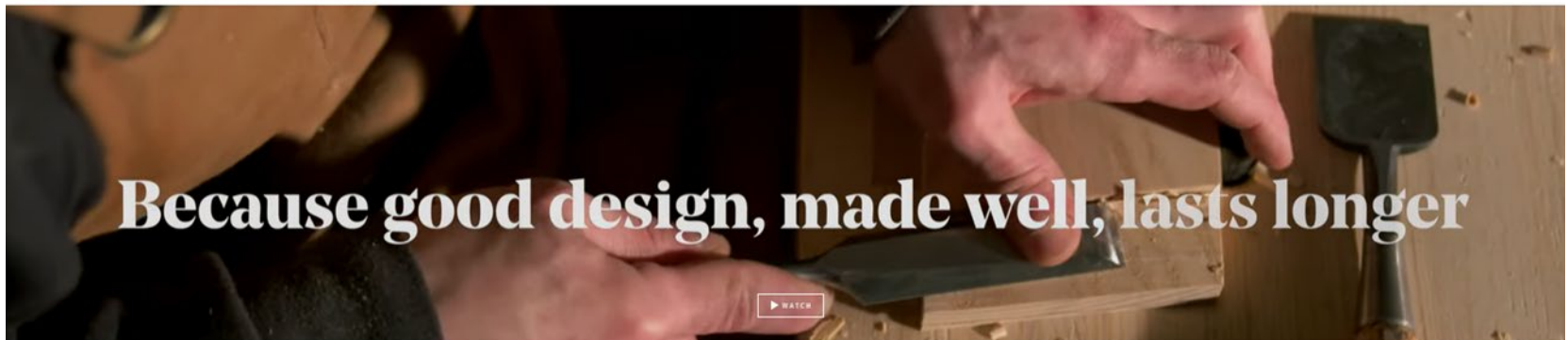


SHOP BESPOKE  GOLDFINGER ABOUT US OUR IMPACT



We are Goldfinger.
We design and craft beautiful furniture for homes and businesses. Everything we make and do has a positive impact on our community and the planet.

- [Our collections →](#)
- [Bespoke commissions →](#)
- [Our impact →](#)



Shop our best sellers

[VIEW ALL](#)



Community Wealth Building

- A more comprehensive view of where local income is spent.
Started with the Preston Model:

Initiative has been tried in Preston, a city in the North West of England that has historically been relatively disadvantaged. Rather than involving new government funding, this new approach involved all the large public and third sector organisations in Preston, known as anchor institutions (e.g. the local authority, university, NHS, police, the social housing provider etc). These organisations looked at how they spent their budgets, to see if they could buy more services from local suppliers. Where they could not find local suppliers they helped establish new charities and cooperatives. They also improved the conditions of their employees, increasing their wages and encouraged their suppliers to do the same.

- Starts to consider how all local income can be better retained
- BUT also highlights the need to create new income generating activity within the area

Community Ownership Models

Blog Post · 10 June 2021

How community energy schemes can help the UK reach net zero



Community Ownership models



Baywind Energy Co-operative

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Home

Welcome to Baywind

Baywind Energy Co-operative is proud to be the first UK co-operative to own wind turbines.

After successfully raising £2 million through share offers in 1997, Baywind has over 1,200 members.

For almost 20 years we owned six wind turbines in Cumbria. Five of our wind turbines based at Harlock Hill in Cumbria were decommissioned in January 2016, to make way for 2 new high powered turbines belonging to our successor High Winds Community Energy Co-operative.

In January 2020 Baywind sold its remaining turbine at Haverigg to Thrive Renewables.

Baywind has now installed roof top solar on 8 buildings in the Furness area. [More information can be found here](#)

During the life of the Baywind project we have actively sought opportunities for renewable energy schemes and would welcome discussions with developers and land owners seeking to involve local communities. Read more about us and our development company [Energy4All](#).

Latest News

Baywind Energy Community Trust (BWECT) – direct benefits to the community

Baywind Community Trust meets three times a year to grant funding for energy, ... [more...](#)

The Power of Co-operation – in the Community Owned Renewable Energy Sector

Three renewable energy co-operatives unite to deliver community owned wind ... [more...](#)

The South Lakes Energy Extravaganza

The South Lakes Energy Extravaganza is organised by Cumbria Action for ... [more](#)

- Community buys 'shares' in enterprise
- Not for profit activity
- Surpluses shared

Community Ownership models

- The project to create the network builds greater community engagement and future opportunities

B4RN
Broadband for the Rural North Ltd

Home Get B4RN Awards Service Community Resources Info About

The World's Fastest Rural Broadband

2021
WINNER
ISPA
AWARDS
**BEST
RURAL ISP**
www.ispa.org.uk ispa-awards

CONNECTED
BROADBAND PROVIDER
OF THE YEAR 2022
B4RN

Gigabit full fibre broadband costing households just £33/month

Can I Get B4RN?

B4RN is a professionally designed fibre optic broadband network. We're registered as a community benefit society and run by a dedicated local team with the support of landowners and volunteers. We offer 1,000Mbps FTTP broadband to every property in our coverage area, costing households just £33 per month.

Conclusion

- Local provision is changing in terms of decision making structures, funding and potential delivery models
- Private networks are challenging a centrist approach in many different areas of provision – energy, transport, social health, digital
- The absence of longer term government direction is a bad thing
- Careful work now can prove decentralised models for the future.
- This isn't the whole solution but it is part of a better solution

Questions and Contact Details

Questions?

Case Studies?

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