

**Westminster Social Policy Forum conference:  
Next steps for new towns in England**

Timing: Morning, Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2025

\*\*\*Taking Place Online\*\*\*



**WESTMINSTER  
SOCIAL POLICY  
FORUM**

*Draft agenda subject to change*

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**  
Senior Parliamentarian
- 9.05 **Assessing the Government's vision for new towns in England and their role in meeting housebuilding targets**  
**Professor Cecilia Wong**, Professor, Spatial Planning, University of Manchester; and Director, Spatial Policy and Analysis Lab, Manchester Urban Institute
- 9.15 **Key considerations for stakeholders in the planning and development of new towns**  
*looking ahead to the New Towns taskforce final report and key considerations | what is needed for development and rollout | challenges for infrastructure delivery, such as utilities and transport provision | the capacity of local authorities to deliver large scale projects | addressing environmental concerns and potential impact on existing communities | considerations for delivering affordable housing and the impact of new towns on meeting government housebuilding targets | meeting housing demand and developer standards | identifying potential sites for development | placemaking and ensuring new towns meet community needs | approaches for both urban extensions and standalone settlements | design quality and density | considerations for supporting public services provision | lessons from previous approaches*  
**Robert Lloyd-Sweet**, Head, Devolution and Local Government Policy, Historic England  
**Gary Soloman**, Partner and Head, Planning and Compulsory Purchase, Burges Salmon  
**Paul Thomas**, Director, Planning and Placemaking, Milton Keynes City Council  
**Venus Galarza-Mullins**, Policy Manager, Shelter  
**Frazer Osment**, Chair, LDA Design
- 9.40 Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.05 **Priorities for securing the release of land for new towns**  
Senior representative, land
- 10.15 **Key environmental considerations and addressing concerns**  
**Clare Warburton**, Deputy Director, Sustainable Development, Natural England
- 10.25 **Infrastructure needs and addressing strategic implementation challenges**  
Senior representative, utilities
- 10.35 Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.55 **Chair's closing remarks**  
Senior Parliamentarian
- 11.00 Break
- 11.10 **Chair's opening remarks**  
**Chris Vince MP**
- 11.15 **Creating partnerships, encouraging investment to accelerate delivery and the impact of wider planning policy**  
Senior representative, policy
- 11.25 **Key considerations for developers and enhancing project engagement**  
**Caroline Foster**, Development Director, Urban & Civic
- 11.35 Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.55 **Practicalities for the delivery of new towns**  
*assessing delivery mechanisms | skills provision and addressing shortages | long-term infrastructure planning and transport connectivity | provision for social and affordable housing | design quality | managing public spaces in new towns | strategies for engagement with key stakeholders and developing effective collaboration | balancing commercial and community priorities*  
**Maurice Lange**, Analyst, Centre for Cities  
**Councillor Dr Tumi Hawkins**, Lead Cabinet Member, Planning Policy and Development Management, South Cambridgeshire District Council  
**Tim Balcon**, Chief Executive, Construction Industry Training Board  
Senior speaker confirmed from **Nichols Group**  
Senior representative, transport  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.45 **Policy priorities and key considerations for stakeholders in the rollout of new towns**  
**Ellie de la Bedoyere**, Deputy Director, New Towns, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 13.10 **Chair's and Westminster Social Policy Forum closing remarks**  
**Chris Vince MP**  
**Harry Nelson**, Westminster Social Policy Forum

*This conference is supported by LDA Design*

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