Community-led improvement and levelling-up of 'left behind' neighbourhoods

Consultation at St George's House, Windsor Castle,
9-10th September 2021

Purpose of the St George's House consultation
This St George's House consultation brings together for the first time in person a number of the participants at the 2020-21 APPG evidence sessions, together with the APPG's key supporters and stakeholders, to explore in more detail what is effective in neighbourhood regeneration. As we recover and rebuild from COVID, with money tight, and competition over its allocation increasingly fierce, it has never been more important for local area-based initiatives to be evidence-led, with local communities and their partners in the public, social and private sectors understanding what interventions work and deliver sustainable results over the long term.

This consultation will enable those who have contributed so much to the APPG the time and opportunity to review its work over the course of its first year, consider its findings and key recommendations, and what its agenda should be as we approach the Comprehensive Spending Review given the government's sharp focus on levelling up.

Background: levelling-up the 'left behind'

[Foundational research by Local Trust and OCSI](#) identifies the 225 areas in England which are perhaps the most 'left behind' in England. Their 2.4m residents experience the worst outcomes across a range of indicators and many of the issues they face are complex and multi-dimensional.

Understanding the issues facing 'left behind' communities, and helping identify solutions which reconnect and rebuild local areas and improve outcomes for their residents has been the focus of the APPG for 'left behind' neighbourhoods. Over the course of seven evidence sessions held from July 2020 to June 2021, it has explored issues ranging from poor connectivity, to health inequalities and education, skills and employment.

We know that there is a lot of good work being done to strengthen and support local communities at a local level – this has been a focus of many of the APPG's evidence sessions. But, to date, there has been little in the way of a shared national policy agenda to address the need for levelling up at a hyper-local or neighbourhood level, and respond to disparities in outcomes, particularly in relation to the social infrastructure that is so important to community life and the vibrancy of places.

To establish such an agenda there will be a need to consider the growing evidence base for action – the successes and failures of local interventions, lessons from past regeneration and renewal initiatives and the perspectives of communities themselves. This event seeks to bring these elements together, reflecting on and consolidating the work of the APPG so far in order to set the scene for its work programme into 2022. Our aspiration is to support the development of a new policy approach to community-led neighbourhood improvement strengthening the case for investment in 'left behind' neighbourhoods to secure long-term transformational change.