

## Accelerating the supply of new homes

# Homes England

## The Challenge

- Improve the supply of suitable land for housing developments

## The Benefits

- Rapid insight into development opportunities
- Cost and time savings for developers
- More efficient customer services
- Confident bids for development sites
- An effective way to showcase success



Homes England is supporting the delivery of much needed homes in England with a trailblazing web app built using Esri's new ArcGIS Experience Builder. Called **Land Hub**, the solution provides instant access to detailed information about the development plots that Homes England wants to sell, enabling housing developers to make faster, well informed investment decisions and accelerate the supply of new homes.

### The Challenge

Homes England has a vital role to play in helping the UK Government to achieve the ambitious target of 300,000 new homes per year, by the mid-2020s. As part of its mission to accelerate housing supply and create a more resilient, diverse housing market, the organisation facilitates the sale of publicly owned land, supporting the delivery of new homes and generating returns for the public purse. It used to produce a list, twice a year, of development plots that were for sale, but this basic document didn't provide the level of information that developers needed to make informed decisions about what could be multi-million pound investments.

### The Solution

Using Esri's ArcGIS platform, Homes England developed an online, interactive solution called **Land Hub** that makes information about potential development sites very easy for developers to find and explore. Initially, Land Hub was published in an ArcGIS StoryMap template. Then, twelve months later, Homes England redeveloped the solution using ArcGIS Experience Builder, becoming one of the first organisations in the world to take advantage of this versatile new app creation tool.

"We really liked the StoryMap approach as it gave us the ability to customise our site information and incorporate our own corporate style," explains Fiona Clowes, Head of Geospatial Environment at Homes England. "However, when we found out about the new ArcGIS Experience Builder we were really excited about its potential and keen to put it to use. It offers all the components of a StoryMap that we like, but also gives us the ability to include more querying and searching capabilities."

Available for anyone to use, on desktops and mobile devices, the latest version of Land Hub allows people to see all development sites on an interactive map and search for sites by local authority area or status (such as being marketed or in the pipeline). Once they click on a specific parcel of land, users can then view relevant information, such as the locations of flood alert areas and local authority green belts, local transport hubs and drone footage, all of which helps them to make an informed decision about whether or not to bid for the land.

Developers can also download data from Land Hub directly into their own GIS systems, so that they can analyse it in conjunction with their own data. Whereas Homes England's original property list was only updated biannually, data in the Land Hub is currently updated quarterly, and Homes England plans to introduce monthly updates in the near future.

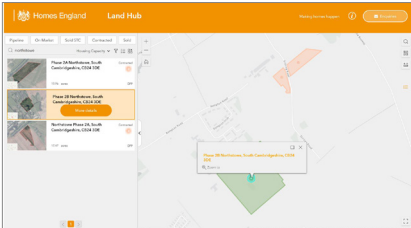
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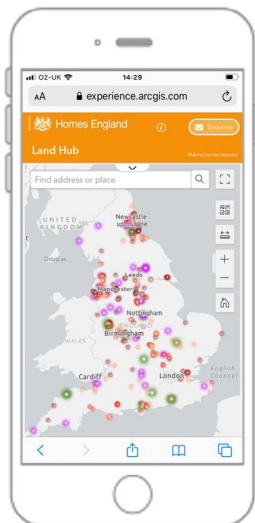
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“Land Hub accelerates the supply of new homes by making information about development sites more accessible and transparent, and enabling house builders to make faster, well informed plans for new housing developments.”

Fiona Clowes, Head of Geospatial Environment, Homes England



Developed using ArcGIS Experience Builder, Land Hub provides easy access to information about sites available for building new homes



The Land Hub on a mobile device

### The Benefits

#### Rapid insight into development opportunities

The ArcGIS-based Land Hub solution gives developers faster and deeper insight into development opportunities across England, helping them to build more homes, more quickly. As Clowes says, “Land Hub accelerates the supply of new homes by making information about development sites more accessible and transparent, and enabling house builders to make faster, well informed plans for new housing developments.”

#### Cost and time savings for developers

The quality of the data that is available via Land Hub often removes the need for site visits and additional surveys, enabling developers to save time and money. For example, whereas an aerial image of a site might just show a large tree canopy, the drone imagery available via Land Hub allows users to peer beneath the branches and see the whole site, from multiple angles, without obstructions. Jimmy Overill, Development Manager at Homes England, says: “Over the last twelve months, average usage of Land Hub has increased by 365% from 107 to 392 views a week, which demonstrates the value it adds for developers.”

#### More efficient customer services

Using Land Hub, Homes England can now channel enquiries from developers to the right members of staff, depending on the plot of land they are interested in, and respond to them more quickly. In the past, the organisation used to receive over 100 emails each week, often asking the same questions, and it could take 2-4 weeks to respond. Now the organisation receives just 35-40 enquiries a week, because the answers to questions are already on Land Hub, and it can research and respond to more complex enquiries in just 4-5 days.

#### Confident bids for development sites

By making information about sites available much earlier, Land Hub enables housing developers to bid for sites with greater confidence. The platform allows Homes England to advertise sites that it is bringing to market up to nine months in advance of inviting tenders, which gives housing developers early sight of plots they may want to secure. Developers consequently have more time to thoroughly investigate sites and get all the information they require, such as Homes England’s requirements to use Modern Methods of Construction or to build the site out at pace.

#### An effective way to showcase success

In addition to advertising available land, Homes England also uses Land Hub to showcase the diverse range of sites that it has been able to make available, over time, which is suitable for developers of different sizes and different types of housing. “It is not just a marketing tool; it’s also a story board for how we’re working to diversify the market,” Overill says.

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