



Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

To: All local authority chief executives of a town in the Long-Term Plan for Towns programme
cc. MPs representing constituencies in the Long-Term Plan for Towns programme

Adam Hawksbee

Interim Chair, Towns Unit

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

2 Marsham Street

London

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6 February 2024

Dear Chief Executive,

I am pleased to share with you today the draft of the tailored data pack for your town, produced by the Department for Levelling Up's Spatial Data Unit and the Office for National Statistics (ONS). We hope that this will be helpful in supporting the delivery of your Town Board, as part of the Long-Term Plan for Towns. The pack includes a raft of local data across the three themes for investment: safety and security; transport and connectivity; and heritage and high streets. This data has never been presented together at this town-centric level before and we are grateful for the support of colleagues in ONS that has enabled us to do so.

The data in these packs is modelled on the ONS Build Up Area boundaries for your town, the default geography of the town as set out in the guidance published in December. You'll find a map is included for ease of reference.

There is scope to make representations to the department to alter those boundaries, where an amendment remains within the spirit of the programme and includes, as part of the revised area, the town that was originally selected. For example, your town's local station may lie just outside of the boundaries provided or essential green spaces may have been excluded, due to the emphasis on 'built up' areas. Alterations to the boundary should not bring in additional, separate population centres (i.e. different towns) and must remain contiguous.

If your Town Board would like to invest in projects outside of the boundaries that are set out in the pack, you will need to confirm this by 1 April at the latest, as part of a wider return to the department on the establishment of your Towns Board. The department will share an agreed template and further guidance for this submission, which will need to set out the amendments that you would like to make (including a map) and the rationale for the changes. You would need to provide confirmation that changes to the geography were agreed by the Towns Board and provide evidence for why these changes are needed to deliver local priorities. Ministers will then consider the case for change, in particular, how this aligns with the spirit of the programme, and confirm whether the changes are accepted.

The data sources in this pack are the latest available as of 30 November 2023. In collaboration with the ONS, metrics have been derived at town level, where this data was not previously available. To ensure maximum public availability of this new data, we intend to

publish the final data packs on gov.uk. We would therefore be grateful if you could contact your Area Team representatives by 14 February if you think there are any factual errors or omissions in these drafts.

We would be grateful if you would be able to share these data packs with the prospective Town Board chair and their membership. We would also encourage Town Boards to share this data publicly with local stakeholders and members of the public, as part of their community engagement, once they have been published online.

I have copied your local MP into this letter, alongside the Department's relevant Area Team.

I will be hosting a webinar on 14 February between 14:30 - 15:15 to provide you with the opportunity to feedback on your initial discussions and the guidance we published last year, and hopefully provide the opportunity to answer any questions that you may have.

I look forward to speaking with you then.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Hawksbee', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

ADAM HAWKSBEЕ
Interim Chair, Towns Unit