



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Miatta Fahnbulleh MP

Minister for Devolution, Faith and Communities
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Our reference: MC2025/29113

Councillor Keith Cunliffe
National Chair
Industrial Communities Alliance

11 November 2025

Dear Councillor Cunliffe,

Thank you for your letter of 16 October regarding the definition of the 169 'Phase 2' neighbourhoods.

For the purposes of selecting places in a robust way, "neighbourhoods" were approximated as 2021 Middle layer Super Output Areas (MSOAs). The funded MSOAs are selected from the 6,856 MSOAs in England using a combined IMD and CNI score.

However, we recognise this is simply a statistical geography and not necessarily how local areas really feel to communities. As such, there will be flexibility offered to areas to alter that default boundary. Further details of this will be provided within the updated programme prospectus shortly.

Furthermore, there may be circumstances where a Neighbourhood Board chooses interventions that extend beyond the geographic boundary for the programme, so long as it benefits and reflects the preferences of the resident population. As an example, the community may prioritise improving the high street in the local town centre even if this sits outside the named neighbourhood, or they might want to improve an asset or green space just outside the boundaries provided. Either of these would be permissible.

Local authorities will be involved in both the Neighbourhood Boards and in the set up work to establish board membership and the neighbourhood boundaries. So their views will be recognised and I hope ensure that the programme geographies best reflect the real communities on the ground.

Our updated guidance will set out shortly how these processes will work in a way that I hope assuages the concerns of your members.

Thank you for your ongoing engagement with the programme and for writing on this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

MIATTA FAHNBULLEH MP
Minister for Devolution, Faith and Communities