

22 July 2011

All NHS Chief Executives
All NHS Directors of Finance
All NHS Directors of Estates & Facilities

Room 4N24
Quarry House
Quarry Hill
Leeds
LS2 7UE

Dear Colleague

ACCELERATING THE RELEASE OF PUBLIC SECTOR LAND FOR DEVELOPMENT

On the 8th June 2011, Grant Shapps, Minister of State for Housing and Local Government, announced Government plans to release enough public land to build up to 100,000 new homes by 2015. Full details of the announcement are at:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/1917726>

As one of the largest owners of public sector land, the National Health Service is quite rightly expected to contribute to this objective. I should emphasise that this specifically relates to land which is no longer required, nor likely in future to be needed for health service purposes. Subject to this, I am therefore asking the NHS to provide as much assistance as possible to both the Department of Health and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) in delivering this initiative.

Between the 22nd July and 12th August, the NHS Information Centre will be collecting data on surplus land from NHS organisations. In advance of this collection being completed, the HCA may also be contacting NHS organisations that have previously identified surplus land for housing to obtain updated information.

I hope this initiative will assist in achieving the optimum return on surplus land, where NHS organisations choose to sell. Support is available to NHS trusts in disposing land from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). The HCA is developing a set of tools for public sector partners to use including standard contract clauses, bid assessment templates etc. Subject to resourcing, the HCA teams may be able to provide advice and support on individual disposals.

Selling surplus land represents a win-win situation for everyone involved; the NHS is able to reduce its costs and focus on better services for patients whilst the available surplus land can go towards the Government's initiative to release public sector land to build up to 100,000 new homes.

I hope you will support this initiative.

Please contact Neil Mortimer (neil.mortimer@hca.gsx.gov.uk, 01925 644721) at the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) regarding the assistance they can provide

The data collection is being undertaken at www.efm.ic.nhs.uk website. A user ID and password are required to access it. NHS Estates & Facilities staff who have taken part in previous similar data collections are being notified of the collection separately. If you have any queries, on the data collection please contact Robert Grogan (robert.grogan@ic.nhs.uk, 0113 2547010).

If you have any queries, on this initiative please contact either Mike Bellas (mike.bellas@dh.gsi.gov.uk, 0113 2545757) or David Gubb (david.gubb@dh.gsi.gov.uk, 0207 6337046).

Yours faithfully

David Flory
Deputy NHS Chief Executive