

Build back better: £600 million to upgrade and refurbish NHS hospitals

- Part of £1.5 billion capital funding announced by the Prime Minister in the summer to help the NHS build back better
- Almost 1,800 projects across 178 trusts will tackle urgent maintenance issues by March 2021

NHS hospital staff, patients and visitors across all regions in England will benefit from refurbished wards, brand-new electrics and upgraded ventilation systems by next spring, the Health Secretary has announced, as the government invests £600 million to tackle critical maintenance work.

The funding has been released to 178 NHS trusts to cover almost 1,800 maintenance projects. The projects are now underway, and will be completed by March 2021.

Investment will be targeted towards a range of projects including:

- building new or refurbished buildings to deliver key services;
- upgrades to electrical infrastructure
- improvements to ventilation systems
- works to improve fire safety
- replacing hospital lifts

The investment is part of £1.5 billion capital funding which was announced in the summer to build an NHS fit for the future, which also includes plans to modernise mental health facilities, expand A&E capacity and improve infection control ahead of winter.

Secretary of State for Health and Social Care Matt Hancock said:

“Alongside delivering on our manifesto commitment to build 40 new hospitals and 20 major hospital upgrades across the country, this investment will help our NHS build back better.

“These crucial maintenance projects will deliver immediate benefits and provide NHS staff with the facilities they need to provide world-class care to their patients this winter, helping ensure the NHS is always there for you when you need it.”

The projects include:

- £15.9 million for a new critical care centre at Northampton General Hospital
- £3.3 million to Croydon Health Services NHS Trust for a new paediatric integrated unit
- £6.5 million for the construction of a new MRI building at St George’s Hospital in London to house a new scanner
- £2.7 million to refurbish Firth Theatres at the Northern General

Hospital, which includes critical care, cardiovascular surgery and other surgical wards

Trusts were provided an initial allocation based on need and were asked to put forward suitable projects that would deliver maximum impact and the best value for money, and could be completed by March 2021. The successful projects are evenly distributed across England, with more than half of projects in the Midlands, North East and Yorkshire; and North West regions.

Today's announcement is on top of an additional £450 million investment from government to improve hospital A&Es this winter by expanding waiting areas and increasing the number of treatment cubicles, helping to boost A&E capacity by providing additional space, reducing overcrowding and improving infection control measures.

The government is committed to supporting the NHS to build back better, having confirmed a series of major investments in NHS infrastructure since August last year, including £850 million to upgrade 20 hospitals and £3.7 billion to help deliver 40 new hospitals by 2030.

Following last month's Spending Review, £1.2 billion has been ring-fenced for NHS new hospitals and upgrades in 2021/22, plus £4.2 billion for NHS operational capital funding.

The Treasury has also committed an additional £235 million for further hospital maintenance works for the next financial year beginning in April 2021. There will be a further boost for technology and digital projects including AI labs and remote GP appointments, diagnostic equipment and a science hub.

800,000 trees set to be planted as Green Recovery Challenge Fund projects announced

- Funding will create over 300 hectares of woodlands, restore hedgerows, and plant trees in cities as we build back greener from the pandemic
- Nearly £40 million allocated to projects across England in this first round, with second round of funding to open in early 2021

Projects that protect landscapes, connect people with nature and help create and retain thousands of green jobs across England have been awarded a share of almost £40 million, the government announced today.

The 68 projects will see over 800,000 trees planted and help restore damaged habitats such as moorlands, wetlands and forests. The projects will also

support conservation work and help to improve education about the environment.

This first round of funding from the Green Recovery Challenge Fund will award nearly £40 million. The second funding round will open for applications early next year. The Green Recovery Challenge Fund is a key part of [the Prime Minister's 10 Point Plan](#) to kick-start nature recovery, create green jobs and tackle climate change while helping the country build back better and greener from the pandemic.

The fund will be delivered by the National Lottery Heritage Fund in partnership with Natural England and the Environment Agency.

The winning projects include:

- The Woodland Trust, which is being awarded £3,860,200 to restore ancient woodlands and trees in 63 landscapes across England. The funding will also go towards helping increase skills and capacity within the wider forestry and conservation sectors and reinvigorate UK timber markets.
- A partnership led by the Youth Hostel Association (YHA) in England and Wales, who will receive £2,543,600 to connect young people to nature and build a new workforce for the green recovery, targeting young people from deprived areas through virtual, field or class based learning, day and residential trips, citizen science programme and volunteering with experienced environmental tutors across 200 diverse natural heritage sites, such as conservation areas, AONBs, national parks and more.
- The Centre for Sustainable Healthcare, which has been awarded £580,400 to improve access to green spaces at NHS sites across England, including by planting 10,000 trees at 50+ NHS sites, and providing outdoor ecotherapy sessions and even refurbishing a garden for a chemotherapy suite, which will allow patients to have treatment outside.
- The Conservation Education & Research Trust will receive £249,900 to help plant 12 'tiny forests' (the size of a tennis court) in urban areas across England.
- The Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust's Owl Box Initiative is being awarded a grant of £123,700 to work with 100 farms and supply communities with Barn Owl boxes, monitoring their success and involving farming families in this process.

Environment Minister Rebecca Pow said:

These projects will drive forward work across England to restore and transform our landscapes, boost nature and create green jobs, and will be a vital part of helping us to build back greener from coronavirus.

I look forward to working with environmental organisations as these projects develop and help address the twin challenges of biodiversity loss and climate change, while creating and retaining jobs as part of the green recovery.

Emma Howard Boyd, Chair of the Environment Agency, said:

Reaching net zero and achieving the government's 25 Year Environment Plan goals for nature can only be done by employing the right skills. The Green Recovery Challenge Fund will deliver on the ground benefits for local communities, and wildlife, by supporting jobs in the environmental sector.

This has been a tough year for everyone, but these projects give us reason for optimism and will help develop the skills needed to tackle the climate emergency, protect biodiversity and build back greener.

Natural England Chair Tony Juniper said:

Having opportunities to experience wildlife-rich natural environments has never been more essential for the nation's health and wellbeing as it has been this year. Today we celebrate the tangible benefits for people and wildlife this fund will soon deliver, as we emerge from the coronavirus crisis.

It is inspiring to see how the fund will help aspiring ecologists take their first roles toward building careers in Nature recovery and the sustainable economy it is essential we now build. It is another step toward securing the wonderful landscapes and habitats upon which we all depend.

Ros Kerslake, Chief Executive, National Lottery Heritage Fund, said:

Supporting our natural environment is one of the most valuable things we can do right now. All these projects are of huge benefit to our beautiful countryside and wildlife, but will also support jobs, health and wellbeing, which are vitally important as we begin to emerge from the COVID-19 crisis.

Exchequer Secretary, Kemi Badenoch, said:

This investment will support growth right across England, creating and supporting thousands of new jobs and helping people develop valuable new skills.

The Green Recovery Challenge Fund is a vital part of our efforts to support decarbonisation and restore biodiversity, as part of our transition to a green economy.

21 projects will receive the larger grants (over £250k – £5m) and 47 projects

awarded funding for the smaller grants (£50 – £250k).

The fund will also drive progress on the government's wider [25 Year Environment Plan commitments](#), including plans to increase tree-planting across the UK to 30,000 hectares per year by 2025. This is alongside the forthcoming [Environment Bill](#) which puts the environment at the centre of policy making to ensure that we have a cleaner, greener and more resilient country for the next generation.

[Sunbeam report and safety flyer published](#)

Fatal accident in an enclosed space on board the fishing vessel Sunbeam in Fraserburgh, Scotland.

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News story

Fatal accident in an enclosed space on board the fishing vessel Sunbeam in Fraserburgh, Scotland.



Our accident investigation report into the fatal accident on board the pelagic trawler Sunbeam on 14 August 2018, is now published.

The report contains details of what happened, the subsequent actions taken and recommendations made: [read more](#).

A [safety flyer](#) to the fishing industry summarising the accident and detailing the safety lessons learned, has also been produced, along with our [safety bulletin](#), published in 2018, which provides an urgent safety warning to those working in enclosed spaces.

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The continuing challenges facing Central Africa

Statement by Ambassador Barbara Woodward, UK Permanent Representative to the UN, at the Security Council briefing on the UN Regional Office for Central Africa