

[News story: £1 billion housing delivery fund launched by Brokenshire in partnership with Barclays](#)

Housing Secretary James Brokenshire MP has today announced a new partnership with Barclays Bank to provide £1 billion of loan finance to help support small and medium sized developers, speeding up the delivery of thousands of new homes planned across England.

Support, ranging between £5 million to £100 million, will be made available to those developers who are able to demonstrate the necessary experience and commitment to building excellent new homes, whilst boasting a track record of delivering challenging projects on time and to target.

Overseen by the Government's delivery agency Homes England, the funding will put greater emphasis on opening up the housing market, which sees almost two-thirds of new homes built by just ten companies at present.

The Housing Delivery Fund will support the delivery of new homes, including social housing, retirement living and apartments for rent, whilst also encouraging greater innovation on how housing is delivered such as brownfield land and urban regeneration projects.

Housing Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, said:

My priority as Housing Secretary is to get Britain building the homes our country needs. This new fund – partnering Homes England with Barclays – is a further important step by giving smaller builders access to the finance they need to get housing developments off the ground.

This is a fantastic opportunity to not only get more homes built but also promote new and innovative approaches to construction and design that exist across the housing market.

John McFarlane, Barclays' Chairman, said:

There is a vital need to build more good quality homes across the country. This £1bn fund is about helping to do exactly that by showing firms in the business of house building that the right finance is available for projects that help meet this urgent need.

We are very pleased to be working with government to get the country building more homes, more quickly.

Chairman of Homes England, Sir Ed Lister, said:

Homes England has been established to play a more active role in the housing market and do things differently to increase the pace, scale and quality of delivering new homes.

The Housing Delivery Fund demonstrates Barclays' commitment to the residential sector and will provide a new funding stream for SME developers to help progress sites and deliver more affordable homes across England.

Today's agreement with Barclays forms part of the Government's wider commitment to increase the pace of housing delivery in England. Ministers have been clear on their ambition to achieve 300,000 new homes a year by the mid-2020s, which follows 217,000 homes built last year, the biggest increase in housing supply in England for almost a decade.

[News story: Investment drive could help Met Police and London Fire Brigade go green](#)

As the world's first zero emissions vehicle summit closes in Birmingham closes in Birmingham, International Trade Secretary Liam Fox celebrated a series of major investments in clean tech and the automotive industry.

Over £500m worth of investment was secured around the summit creating more than 1,000 jobs across the UK. This includes Aston Martin creating jobs in south Wales, the UK's largest independent vehicle battery manufacturing plant opening in Coventry and a new R&D centre for electric vehicles opening in Birmingham.

The summit also saw major investment from American automotive firms. Lear Corporation invested £54m in its UK operation – creating 220 jobs and safeguarding another 600 – and Cummins committed to investing £210m in R&D over the next three years.

Dr Fox was also on hand to see the LEVC (London Electric Vehicle Company) announce it is starting trials of its new electric van in London. Backed by Chinese firm Geely, the makers of the iconic electric taxi could see their electric vehicles introduced into the fleets of the Met Police and London Fire Brigade – helping them achieve their target for all new vans to be zero emission capable from 2025.

International Trade Secretary Liam Fox said:

At the summit, the Prime Minister and I sat down with 14 automotive investors to ask them why they invest in R&D in the UK and what more the government can do to support. Around that table it was clear that there is already confidence in the UK's investment proposition and that's why we remain the number one destination for investment in Europe.

International firms are building their futures in the UK – investing in research and development, creating jobs and ensuring the UK maintains its edge in the industries of the future.

Take LEVC for example whose growth and technological advance is made possible by foreign investment. This, in turn, allows them to export their iconic electric taxi around the world and now sees them applying this technology to vans which could reduce the carbon footprint of iconic UK fleets like the Met and London Fire Brigade.

This is British innovation in action and with the launch of our new Export Strategy, my international economic department will help even more innovative UK firms to reach markets around the world.

The automotive roundtable was the third in the Government's series of investment roundtables, led by DIT, which promote UK industry opportunities to a global audience, and drive foreign direct investment into the UK as we prepare to leave the European Union.

[News story: UK and Texas medical centre agree partnership to drive life sciences innovation](#)

The UK's life sciences industry received a major boost today (Wednesday 12 September) as the Department for International Trade (DIT) agreed a landmark 'BioBridge' collaboration with the world's largest medical complex.

The Texas Medical Center (TMC), home to more than 60 world leading innovators, including the US' leading cancer hospital, will now offer UK companies a unique package which will help boost exports and drive forward scientific innovation.

British life sciences businesses will now be able to locate themselves at the

TMC in Houston, where they will have access to a network of advisors, investors and medical experts from both the Center and DIT.

The partnership will allow for a significant research collaboration on a wide range of medical issues, including the development and advancement of Genomics and Cancer treatments.

Additionally, shared priorities will focus on entry into new markets through accelerators – providing legal, business, regulatory, and mentorship to startup companies from both countries.

Speaking at an event to celebrate the launch in London today, Minister of State for the Department for International Trade, Baroness Fairhead, said:

The UK is a world leader in healthcare innovation, and this partnership is clear evidence of the opportunities that exist for our companies in exciting markets such as the US.

Our recently launched Export Strategy will help even more British life sciences companies to reach new markets – bringing together some of the brightest minds in science to advance the availability of innovative healthcare across the globe.

President & CEO of TMC, William McKeon, said:

This truly unique collaboration is a testament to the Texas Medical Center's and the United Kingdom's joint commitment to further fostering the cross-pollination of ideas, people, and innovation in the life sciences.

We believe this new relationship will serve to create a tactical alliance between TMC and a nation that has been at the forefront of substantial medical innovation for centuries.

The collaboration is also a step forward in harnessing the UK's world-renowned research and development capabilities. Healthcare trusts in Oxford, Cambridge and Manchester are in talks with TMC institutions that are actively looking to formulate partnerships.

Three UK companies have already made use of the BioBridge:

- Paxman Scalp Cooling A company which specialises in cooling therapies to help breast cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy, have set up a subsidiary in Houston gaining traction due the entrepreneurial attitude of CEO, Richard Paxman.
- SurePulse Medical and FirstKind Limited Both companies are in the initial stages of engagement with TMC ahead of major presentations to

hundreds of investors, industry leaders and hospitals at 'Demonstration Days' in Texas.

Chief Executive of UK Research and Innovation, Sir Mark Walport, said:

This unique opportunity will prove to be a valuable asset to UK and US healthcare professionals who are working tirelessly on the advancement of medical treatments for people all over the world.

With the recognition of the UK as a leader in research and development, I hope to see further collaboration between the Texas Medical Center and the UK in the near future.

To celebrate the announcement of the partnership in London, representatives from the TMC and UK partners will meet to discuss further opportunities for collaboration, including foreign direct investment.

Further information

The US spent \$3.3tn on healthcare in 2016, which was 18% of GDP. National health expenditure is projected to grow to \$5.7tn in 2026, which would be nearly 20% of GDP. This presents a significant opportunity for UK companies who currently export more than £6bn of pharma and £750m medtech to the US each year.

The government recently launched its Export Strategy which sets out how we will support businesses of all sizes to make the most of the opportunities presented by markets around the world.

A collaboration with business, developed after extensive engagement with a range of UK firms – the Strategy sets a new ambition from government to increase exports as a proportion of UK GDP to 35%.

The BioBridge agreement is the culmination of over 18 months of preparatory work by the entire government team at the British Consulate General in Houston, including the DIT team and the Science and Innovation Network.

[Press release: Savers to earn 50p for every £1 saved thanks to Help to Save](#)

Hardworking people on low incomes are set to benefit from a new government savings account that offers a 50% bonus.

Help to Save will reward savers with an extra 50p for every £1 saved, meaning

over 4 years a maximum saving of £2,400 would result in an overall bonus of £1,200.

The launch of the new account follows an 8-month trial, with over 45,000 customers who deposited over £3 million.

Help to Save is easy to use, flexible and secure, will help those on low incomes build up a 'rainy day' fund, and encourages savings behaviours and habits.

How much is saved and when is up to the account holder, and they don't need to pay in every month to get a bonus.

John Glen, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, said:

Savings shouldn't be a luxury, they are an essential part of planning for the future. But for some, putting away even a tenner each month can be a tough habit to get into.

Whether you're saving up to take the family on a much-needed holiday, or to take the next step in life, Help to Save is designed to make saving possible for every hardworking person in this country.

Help to Save is available to working people on tax credits and Universal Credit.

Paul Richard Hughes, from Torquay, said:

I wasn't saving before, so it has helped me save and it was easy to use.

It has enabled me to build up a savings pot and the bonus is very good value. It is much better than other savings accounts as the interest on other savings accounts is low in comparison.

Account holders can save between £1 and £50 every calendar month and accounts last for 4 years from the date the account is opened.

After 2 years, savers get a 50% tax-free bonus on savings. If saving continues, there is another 50% tax-free bonus after 4 years.

On maximum savings of £2,400 over 4 years, the overall bonus would be £1,200.

[Savers can apply online](#) or use the HMRC app.

[Help to Save explained](#)

Further information

- the scheme, administered by HM Revenue and Customs, will be open to UK residents who are entitled to Working Tax Credit and receiving Working Tax Credit or Child Tax Credit payments. It is also available to those claiming Universal Credit who have a household or individual income of at least £542.88 for their last monthly assessment period (though note that payments from Universal Credit are not considered to be part of household income).
- people living overseas who meet either of these eligibility conditions can apply for an account if they are: a Crown servant (or their spouse or civil partner); a member of the British armed forces (or their spouse or civil partner).
- Help to Save is an example of digital transformation designed to make it quicker and easier for citizens to interact with government online and on-demand. The #SmarterGov campaign has been launched to drive innovation, savings, and public service improvement across the public sector.

10 things about Help to Save

1. You get a 50% bonus on your savings, so you can earn 50p for every £1 you save.
 2. Help to Save is available for working people who receive tax credits or Universal Credit – [check if you're eligible](#).
 3. Opening online account takes, on average, less than 5 minutes.
 4. Paying in is easy: you can set up a standing order to make regular payments into your Help to Save account on a weekly, fortnightly, or monthly basis to fit the way that you manage your money. You can also make one-off payments by debit card when you are in your online account. Note that any payments, including standing orders, need to arrive in your account before the last working day of the month to ensure they are credited to that month – don't get caught out by weekends and public holidays.
 5. You can withdraw money at any time from your account if you need to – although this could affect the size of your bonus.
 6. You can continue to receive tax credits or Universal Credit while saving with Help to Save.
 7. If your situation changes and you stop receiving Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit, you can still save and receive any bonus you are entitled to.
 8. Help to Save is backed by the government, which means the money you save is secure.
 9. Help to Save accounts will be available to open from 12 September 2018 and up to September 2023.
 10. If you don't have access to the internet, you can still get an account. Call 0300 322 7093 and our helpline advisers will help you set one up.
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Press release: Traffic officers go back to school for road safety education

Traffic officers have been patrolling the busy holiday route as part of a trial this year, and now they're extending their patrols to visit three primary schools.

The crews are running two highways awareness days, visiting Blackwater Community Primary School and Chacewater Community Primary School near Truro on Wednesday, 19 September, and Goonhavern Primary School, near Perranporth, on Thursday, 20 September.

The children will get a chance to chat to the traffic officers about their jobs and will get to see first hand their patrol vehicle and the equipment used every day as they patrol England's major A roads and motorways. Highways England's trial initiative has seen traffic officers patrol the A30 in Cornwall for the first time during the bank holiday weekends and summer holiday season.

The aim of the initiative is to provide further assistance to motorists on the South West network, and extend the traffic officer service further south into Cornwall to continue an already close working partnership with Devon and Cornwall Police and Cornwall Council.

The traffic officers have been patrolling the A30 between Carland Cross and Liftondown and, based at Bodmin police station and Cornwall Council's Castle Canyke depot during the peak holiday months, they have been much closer at hand to provide assistance along both the A30 and A38.

During the summer holiday period up to its conclusion on Monday (10 September), Highways England crews attended a total of 134 incidents, including live lane breakdowns, road traffic collisions and debris clearance. And on the last Sunday in July, the traffic officers' 'powers of recovery' averted major disruption on the westbound A30 as they were able to assist police by towing a broken down horsebox and vehicle to safety at Okehampton Services.

Rob Penney, South West Service Delivery Manager for Highways England, said:

"The patrols have been really well received by both holiday makers and local residents.

"Following this initial trial period, the school visits are a great opportunity to meet local children and raise road safety awareness among this young audience."

The highways awareness days will launch a longer-term STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths) initiative run by Highways England's

A30 Chiverton to Carland Cross project team.

The schools' outreach programme, which will run from October, is designed to engage children from four to 18 in fun, hands-on activities which will teach them more about the interesting work taking place as part of the dualling scheme.

Josh Hodder, project manager of the A30 Chiverton to Carland Cross scheme, said:

"The traffic officers have had a great reception and we look forward to working with local schools to teach them more about the STEAM project and our work on the scheme."

For any schools interested in receiving a STEAM visit, or learning more about Highways England's work in the area, email A30ChivertontoCarlandCross@highwaysengland.co.uk

View more information on [the roles and responsibilities of a Highways England traffic officer](#).

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.