

News story: £30 million to improve road safety for communities along HS2 route

- government today (November 24 2017) confirms allocation of £30 million to improve road and cycle safety in towns and villages along the HS2 route between London and the West Midlands
- funding will help provide improved road safety for generations

A cash boost of £30 million will be handed out to towns and villages along the route of the new High Speed Two railway to help improve road and cycle safety.

Funding for 13 areas along the Phase One route of the new rail line between London and the West Midlands has been revealed by HS2 Minister Paul Maynard today as part of [National Road Safety Week](#).

The cash can be used for traffic calming measures, safer pedestrian crossings or safer junctions for cyclists, pedestrians and drivers.

Today's announcement highlights the government's determination to ensure HS2 is more than building a new railway. It will be a catalyst for economic growth, driving regeneration as well as improving the transport landscape around the track.

Paul Maynard, HS2 Minister, said:

This significant investment will mean a legacy of road and cycle safety improvements for people who live and work along the HS2 route between London and the West Midlands.

HS2 will become the backbone of our national rail network – supporting growth and regeneration and helping us build a Britain fit for the future. As part of Europe's biggest infrastructure project, we are minimising the effects of building the new railway as much as possible.

This money will see areas up and down the route benefit from high quality road and cycle safety projects to ensure that England's roads remain among the safest in the world.

Mark Thurston, HS2 Chief Executive, said:

Safety, environmental protection and being sensitive to the impact of our work on local communities are at the heart of HS2's approach to construction. That's why we welcome today's announcement and we look forward to working with local highways authorities along the route. We all have a responsibility to ensure that the new funding leaves a positive local legacy of improved road safety for communities once HS2 is complete.

Once local authorities have agreed plans for projects, they will agree the release of funds with HS2 Ltd. Authorities must ensure that improvements made leave a lasting legacy of road safety.

[Royal Assent was granted for Phase One of HS2](#) on February 23 2017 and preparatory works have been underway since then, including archaeological surveys and the creation of new wildlife habitats.

On November 9 2017 HS2 Ltd [announced a £5 million Woodland Fund](#) to help local landowners create new native, broadleaf woodlands and restore existing ancient woodland sites along the HS2 Phase One route.

[Press release: Men and women asked not to miss out on bowel screening](#)

PHE is calling on all men and women, aged over 60, to get screened for bowel cancer after the latest figures show over 40% are not getting tested – with embarrassment over providing a stool sample one of the reasons, among men in particular, that is putting thousands unnecessarily at risk of dying.

PHE wants wives, partners and daughters to encourage the older men in the family – as well as the women – to overcome any embarrassment and ensure they send in a sample to be tested.

A new PHE report today (24 November 2017), [Screening Programmes in England 2016 to 2017](#), shows that despite a 3% increase on the previous year, the take-up for bowel cancer screening (59%) is still significantly lower compared to other cancer screening programmes – breast screening (76%) and cervical screening (72%).

Bowel cancer screening is offered to all men and women aged 60 to 74, who are sent a home test kit to provide stool samples.

There were over 3,000 bowel cancers diagnosed as a result of screening in 2016 to 2017. In over 90% of these cases, cancers were found at an early stage, where treatment is more likely to be successful.

Bowel cancer is the fourth most common cancer in England, but the second leading cause of cancer deaths, with around 13,000 people dying from it every year.

If detected early, bowel cancer is very treatable which is why screening is vital and it has been shown to reduce the risk of dying from bowel cancer by 16%. Thousands more lives could be saved if more people, particularly men, returned their stool samples to be tested.

Improvements are being made to make screening easier and next year there will be a new home test, the faecal immunochemical test (FIT), which requires just 1 sample rather than the current 3, and will detect bowel cancer more accurately.

In addition to the home test, a one-off test called bowel scope screening is offered to men and women at the age of 55.

Professor Anne Mackie, PHE's director of screening, said:

It's of great concern that 4 out of every 10 over 60 year olds are not taking up the offer of getting tested for bowel cancer. Men in particular are less likely to send in a sample, so we're asking their partners, children and grandchildren to encourage them to do so.

Bowel cancer causes 13,000 deaths every year, which is why screening is so important. Embarrassment over giving a stool sample may be causing thousands of preventable deaths. But with a new home test kit next year making it much easier to get screened, we are hoping to see numbers increase.

Judith Brodie, Interim Chief Executive at Beating Bowel Cancer, said:

People may feel uncomfortable completing their home screening tests, but they can be crucial in the early diagnosis of bowel cancer – which is very treatable if caught early. We strongly encourage the use of these bowel screening tests – they can be life-saving.

PHE is committed to improving bowel cancer screening attendance and has a programme of work which includes:

- providing local services with clearer information to encourage better screening take-up
- encouraging GPs to endorse screening invitation letters

The Bowel Cancer Screening Programme, recommended by the UK National Screening Committee, began in 2006 and the expert Committee has reviewed the evidence every 3 years. The Committee recommends the programme as it shows

clear benefits and saves lives. Screening remains a choice, based on a person's individual circumstances.

1. The risk of bowel cancer increases with age, with over 80% of bowel cancers arising in people who are 60 or over.
 2. Bowel scope screening, also known as flexible sigmoidoscopy, is a one-off test offered to men and women at the age of 55. It is normally used as a routine outpatient appointment procedure to examine the inner lining of the lower large intestine – the part where most cancers are found. It can also be used to evaluate gastrointestinal symptoms, such as abdominal pain, rectal bleeding, or changes in bowel habit.
 3. The NHS Bowel Cancer Screening Programme offers screening every 2 years to all men and women aged 60 to 74. People in the invitation age range are automatically sent an invitation, then their screening kit, so they can do the test at home. Those over the invitation age range can ask for a screening kit every 2 years by calling a Freephone number – 0800 707 60 60.
 4. PHE is currently working with NHS England on the introduction of a new home test kit, the Faecal Immunochemical Test (FIT), which can quantify the amount of blood found in a stool sample. It has a number of potential advantages over the current test, faecal occult blood (FOB), as it is more accurate and more acceptable to use.
 5. Anyone with any symptoms, such as a persistent change in bowel habit or bleeding from the back passage, or who has concerns about their bowel health, should speak to their GP, who can arrange for a referral with a specialist, if necessary.
 6. For more information about the bowel cancer screening programme, [visit NHS Choices](#)
 7. [Public Health England](#) exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities. We do this through world-leading science, knowledge and intelligence, advocacy, partnerships and providing specialist public health services. We are an executive agency of the Department of Health, and are a distinct organisation with operational autonomy to advise and support government, local authorities and the NHS in a professionally independent manner.
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Press release: PM attending Eastern Partnership summit: 23 November 2017

Prime Minister Theresa May will attend the Eastern Partnership summit in Brussels.

On a trip to Brussels tomorrow the Prime Minister will set out her commitment for the UK to continue to play a critical role in European security after the UK leaves the EU.

Taking a leading role at the Eastern Partnership summit, the PM will reflect on the significant economic and social advances in the region and will join the renewed commitments to work together to tackle corruption and foster economic growth.

As the UK prepares for its exit from the EU, Theresa May will also welcome the unified approach to tackle threats and attempts of destabilisation from other foreign powers like Russia.

The Prime Minister will conclude by reaffirming the UK's support to the region – we are providing £50 million this financial year to support reform and security in the region through projects like tax reform in Moldova and de-mining in Ukraine; we are also spending £100m over five years in the Eastern Neighbourhood to counter disinformation.

The Prime Minister is expected to say:

From agriculture in Ukraine to the tech sector in Belarus – there is a huge amount of potential in the Eastern neighbourhood that we should nurture and develop.

But we must also be open-eyed to the actions of hostile states like Russia which threaten this potential and attempt to tear our collective strength apart.

This summit highlights the crucial importance of the European countries working together to protect our shared values and ideals. The UK may be leaving the EU but we are not leaving Europe, and we are unconditionally committed to maintaining Europe's security.

Speech: Secretary of State's Speech at Belfast Partners event

I'm really delighted to be here this evening at the latest Belfast Partners event here in the magnificent Mansion House right in the heart of the City of London.

It follows on from the highly successful launch event you held at Canary Wharf earlier this year ... and of course the hugely successful visit to Dublin and Belfast by the previous Lord Mayor of London just last month.

Lord Mayor, it is a pleasure to be here this evening ... and I'd also like to extend the very warmest welcome to Lord Mayor of Belfast, Nuala McAllister.

All of this is testament to the ever growing and strengthening links between the City of London and Belfast ... and I'd also like to pay tribute to Suzanne Wylie and Patrick Magee for all the tremendous work that they are doing in taking that forward.

But I know that this is only the start ... and that Belfast Partners have ambitious plans to forge new business networks between Belfast and other cities globally. I'm also aware that this reception concludes a Business Mission to London by a delegation of Belfast tech entrepreneurs.

And only last week the Government announced that Belfast has been chosen to be one of ten new regional hubs across the UK for emerging tech firms.

That announcement is clear evidence of our commitment to Northern Ireland and confirms its position at the leading edge of technology and digital development.

It also underlines the Government's support across the UK for digital startups and the expansion of existing businesses in the technology sector.

Tonight's event is also taking place of course in the immediate aftermath of the Chancellor's Autumn Budget delivered in the House of Commons yesterday.

I strongly believe that it was a Budget that will make great strides in building an economy that's fit for the future ... and that works for everyone across our United Kingdom, including of course in Northern Ireland.

It injects £660 million into Northern Ireland ... meaning that over the current spending review period the block grant will see a real terms increase.

It helps hard-working people by freezing fuel duty for the eighth successive year ... raising personal allowance and income tax thresholds ... and increasing the National Living Wage to deliver a £600 annual pay rise to full-time workers.

And of course in line with our manifesto commitments at the last election,

the Chancellor set out the way forward for a comprehensive and ambitious series of City Deals across Northern Ireland ... with negotiations to begin for a deal for the Belfast region.

Sajid Javid and I have already had some early discussions with partners in the Belfast City Regions and this will now be stepped up.

Again I'd like to pay tribute to the massive amount of work Suzanne and her team are putting into this.

We've seen in England, Scotland and Wales how City Deals can boost investment and employment. So it's right that Northern Ireland should start getting City Deals to boost economic growth ... not just in the Belfast region but to Londonderry and across Northern Ireland.

And we want to work with other Councils to see how we can develop plans to achieve that. In recent years the Northern Ireland economy has been performing well.

Growth was 1.6 per cent in the past year. There are 42,000 more people in employment than in 2010 and 4,600 more businesses.

Between 2010 and 2017 the earnings of an average full-time employee grew faster in Northern Ireland than in any other region.

And in the most recent year, Northern Ireland has seen the fastest annual productivity growth of all the UK nations and regions.

But I want us to do much, much better ... and unlock further the huge potential that Northern Ireland has to offer.

I believe that yesterday's Budget will help us to achieve that.

As will the restoration of a fully functioning Northern Ireland and Executive and Assembly.

A few times yesterday in interviews about the Budget I was asked "who is going to spend this extra money?"

And my very clear answer is that I want a Northern Ireland Executive in place to spend this money according to local priorities and on behalf of the whole community in Northern Ireland.

I also want to be able to devolve Corporation Tax powers to Northern Ireland.

The Government firmly believes that it could have a major impact in helping to transform the local economy ... and we reiterated our commitment to it yesterday. But we can only devolve it if there is an Executive in place with stable and sustainable finances.

So Northern Ireland is clearly missing out on huge economic opportunities by there not being an Executive in place.

At the same time key decisions that could transform public services and improve people's lives are not taken. So there's an absolute imperative to get devolution back up and running.

And the Government will continue to do all that it can to work with the parties to help resolve differences between and reach a successful outcome.

But in conclusion, this evening let's celebrate once more the strength of the links between Belfast and the City and I wish you all a very successful evening.

News story: Defence Minister returns to Chelmsford to announce £18m contract to support Royal Navy radar systems

The contract will ensure the continued availability of the battle-winning Long Range Radar (LRR) equipment on the UK's six Type 45 Destroyers, including maintenance and repairs. The work will sustain 11 highly-skilled jobs with BAE Systems in Chelmsford, as well as four in Portsmouth.

The announcement was particularly personal to the Defence Minister, who had her first ever work experience placement at Marconi in Chelmsford at the age of fifteen, with the expertise in radar technology from that site still evident today.

Defence Minister Harriett Baldwin, said:

It's been great seeing the cutting-edge innovation of British industry today, especially as my first experience of British business was so close to this site. This multi-million pound contract will boost the future of both this high-tech hub and our Navy's battle-winning radars.

Visiting BAE Systems' Great Baddow site, Defence Minister Harriett Baldwin announced a new £18 million contract. Crown Copyright.

Formerly the Marconi Research Centre and Advanced Technology Centre, the BAE site continues to be a cradle of innovation where some of the best brains in the world of electromagnetics and antennas develop new digital communications technologies. It is credited as the "Birthplace of Radio" after Italian inventor Guglielmo Marconi started his business in Chelmsford.

Whilst at the site in Great Baddow, which homes BAE Systems' research and technology hub AI Labs, the Defence Minister met scientists and engineers and discussed space opportunities as well as Long Range Radar technology.

The Long Range Radar provides the Royal Navy with a detailed air surveillance picture of the battlespace, capable of automatically detecting and tracking hundreds of separate targets simultaneously at ranges of greater than 200 miles.

It is a key element of the Type 45 air defence capability and is also employed on the new Queen Elizabeth Class Aircraft Carriers.

Richard Smart, Director Weapons for Defence Equipment and Support, the MOD's procurement organisation, said:

The UK's Type 45 Destroyers are part of the backbone of the Royal Navy and this contract supports their primary air defence role, offering the best protection available to the ships and crew.

This support agreement is the product of the strong skills base we have in UK Defence. It will keep Royal Navy personnel safe at sea as they defend our interests all over the world.

The new contract, which will run for the next five years, will cover support for the entire Type 45 fleet as well as one shore-based facility in Portsmouth.

Les Gregory, Product and Training Services Director for BAE Systems said:

We are delighted to have been awarded this follow-on contract to support the Long Range Radars across the Royal Navy's Type 45 Destroyer fleet, which will also enable us to explore further growth opportunities.