

Press release: Planned roadworks in and around the M25: weekly summary for Monday 27 February to Sunday 5 March 2017

The following summary of planned new and ongoing road improvements over the coming week is correct as of 24 February 2017 but could be subject to change due to weather conditions or unforeseen circumstances. All our improvement work is carried out with the aim of causing as little disruption as possible.

M1 junction 6a (M25), Hertfordshire: resurfacing

Work to improve journeys by carrying out resurfacing continues this week. The dedicated link road from the M1 southbound to the M25 in both directions will be closed in both directions, between 10pm and 5.30am, from Monday 27 February for 4 nights. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via the M1 southbound to junction 6 and the A405 to M25 junction 21a.

M3 junction 2 (M25), Surrey: smart motorway improvement

Work to reduce congestion and improves journey times continues this week. The dedicated link road from the M3 northbound to the M25 in both directions will be closed for the entire weekend, from 9pm on Friday 3 March until 5.30am on Monday 6 March. A clearly signed pre-diversion will be in place for the M25 clockwise from M3 junction 4, via the A331, A31 and A3 to M25 junction 10. A clearly signed diversion will be in place for the M25 anti-clockwise via M3 junction 1 and return to M3 junction 2 and the M25 anti-clockwise. A clearly signed diversion for Heathrow Airport traffic will be in place via M3 junction 3, A322, A329M and the M4 to junction 4.

M3 junctions 2 (M25) to 4a Farnborough, Hampshire: smart motorway improvement

Work to reduce congestion and improve journey times continues this week with narrow lanes a 50mph speed limit in place on both carriageways between junctions 2 and 4a, with a free recovery service operating 24 hours a day.

The southbound carriageway between junctions 2 and 4a will be closed overnight, between 8pm and 5.30am, from Monday 27 February for 4 nights. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via M25 junction 13, A30 and the A327 to M3 junction 4a.

The northbound carriageway between junctions 4a and 2 will be closed overnight, between 8pm and 5.30am, from Monday 27 February for 4 nights. A

clearly signed diversion will be in place via the A327, A30, M25 junction 13 and M25 junction 12.

The northbound carriageway between junctions 3 and 2 will be closed overnight, between 8pm and 7am, on Friday 3 March. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via the A322, A30, M25 junction 13 and M25 junction 12.

M4 junctions 3 (A312) to 1 Chiswick, West London: electrical installation

Work to improve safety by carrying out electrical installation will start this week. The eastbound carriageway, including Heston Services and junction 2, will be closed overnight, between 10pm and 5.30am, from Monday 27 February for 5 nights. Work on Friday will start at 11pm. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via the A4.

M4 junction 5 Langley, Berkshire: drainage survey

Work to maintain safety by carrying out drainage surveys will start this week. The westbound exit slip road will be closed overnight, between 10pm and 5am, on Tuesday 28 February. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via junction 6 and return.

M25 junction 10 (A3), Surrey: resurfacing

Work to improve journeys by carrying out resurfacing will start this week. The anti-clockwise carriageway between the slip roads will be closed overnight, between 10pm and 5.30am, from Monday 27 February for 4 nights. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via the exit and entry slip road.

M25 junction 12 (M3), Surrey: smart motorway improvement

Work to improve journeys by carrying out smart motorway improvement continues this week. The dedicated link roads from the M25 in both directions to the M3 southbound will be closed overnight, between 8pm and 5.30am, from Monday 27 February for 4 nights. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via M25 junction 13, A30 and the A327 to M3 junction 4a.

M25 Heathrow Airport Terminal 5, Greater London: survey

Work to maintain safety by carrying out surveys will start this week. The dedicated link road from the M25 clockwise to Heathrow Airport Terminal 5 will be closed overnight, between 10pm and 5am, on Saturday 4 March. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via M25 junction 15, M4 westbound to junction 5 and return.

M25 junction 15 (M4), Greater London: drainage survey

Work to maintain safety by carrying out drainage surveys will start this week. The dedicated link roads from the M25 in both directions to the M4 westbound will be closed overnight, between 10pm and 5am, on Monday 27 February. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via the M4 eastbound to junction 4 and return.

The dedicated link roads from the M25 in both directions to the M4 eastbound will be closed overnight, between 10pm and 5am, on Thursday 2 March. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via the M4 westbound to junction 5 and return.

M25 junction 17 Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire: electrical repair

Work to maintain safety by carrying out electrical repairs will start this week. The anti-clockwise exit and entry slip roads will be closed overnight, between 11pm and 6am, on Friday 3 March. A clearly signed diversion will be in place for the exit slip road via M25 junction 16, M40 eastbound to junction 1 and return. A clearly signed diversion will be in place for the entry slip road via junction 18 and return.

M25 junction 18 Chorleywood, Hertfordshire: electrical repair

Work to maintain safety by carrying out electrical repairs will start this week. The anti-clockwise exit and entry slip road will be closed overnight, between 10pm and 5am, from Wednesday 1 March for 2 nights. A clearly signed diversion will be in place for the exit slip road via junction 17 and return. A clearly signed diversion will be in place for the entry slip road via junction 20 and return.

M25 junction 19 (A41), Hertfordshire: electrical repair

Work to maintain safety by carrying out electrical repairs continues this week. The anti-clockwise entry slip road will be closed overnight, between 10pm and 5am, on Tuesday 28 February. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via the A41 northbound to M25 junction 20.

M25 junctions 21 (M1) to 21a St Albans, Hertfordshire: electrical repair

Work to maintain safety by carrying out electrical repairs will start this week. The clockwise carriageway will be closed overnight, between 10pm and

5am, on Thursday 2 March. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via the M1 northbound to junction 8 and A405 eastbound to M25 junction 21a.

M25 junction 21(M1), Hertfordshire: electrical repair

Work to maintain safety by carrying out electrical repairs will start this week. The dedicated link road from the M25 clockwise to the M1 northbound will be closed overnight, between 10pm and 5am, on Tuesday 28 February. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via M25 junction 21a, A405 southbound to M1 junction 6.

M25 junctions 25 Enfield, Greater London: tunnel/sign maintenance

Work to maintain safety by carrying out sign maintenance will start this week. The anti-clockwise entry slip road will be closed overnight, between 10pm and 5am, on Monday 27 February. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via junction 26 and return.

Work to test and maintain the Holmesdale Tunnel safety system continues this week. The clockwise entry slip road will be closed overnight, between 10pm and 5am, on Saturday 4 March. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via junction 24 and return.

M25 junctions 31 Lakeside to 30 Thurrock, Essex: electrical maintenance

Work to maintain safety by carrying out electrical maintenance will start this week. The anti-clockwise carriageway between junctions 31 and 30 will be closed overnight, between 10pm and 5.30am, on Monday 27 February, and from Thursday 2 March for 2 nights. Work on Friday will start at 11pm. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via the dedicated link road between junctions 31 and 30.

M25 junctions 30 Lakeside to 31 Thurrock, Essex: electrical maintenance

Work to maintain safety by carrying out electrical maintenance will start this week. The clockwise carriageway between junctions 30 and 31 will be closed overnight, between 10pm and 5.30am, on Tuesday 28 February, and between 11pm and 5.30am on Friday 3 March. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via the dedicated link road between junctions 30 and 31.

M25 junction 30 Thurrock, Essex: electrical

maintenance

Work to maintain safety by carrying out electrical maintenance will start this week. The anti-clockwise entry slip road will be closed overnight, between 10pm and 5.30am, on Wednesday 1 March. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via the A13 eastbound to the A128, A127 and M25 junction 29.

M25 junction 31 Lakeside, Essex: lighting replacement

Work to maintain safety by carrying out lighting replacement continues this week. The clockwise entry slip road will be closed overnight, between 10pm and 5.30am, on Saturday 4 March. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via junction 30 and return.

A1(M) junction 2 Welham Green, Hertfordshire: vegetation clearance

Work to maintain safety by carrying out vegetation clearance will start this week. The southbound entry slip road will be closed overnight, between 11pm and 6am, on Friday 3 March. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via the A1001 to A1(M) junction 4 and return.

A3 Ockham, Surrey: litter clearance

Work to improve journeys by carrying out litter clearance continues this week. The southbound exit slip road will be closed overnight, between 11pm and 6am, on Friday 3 March. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via the A3100, A3 and the B2215.

A3 (M25), Surrey: litter clearance

Work to improve journeys by carrying out litter clearance continues this week. The northbound exit and entry slip roads will be closed overnight, between 10pm and 5am, on Thursday 2 March. A clearly signed diversion will be in place for the exit slip road via the Painshill junction and return. A clearly signed diversion will be in place for the entry slip road via the Ockham junction and return.

A13 (A1012), Essex: resurfacing

Work to improve journeys by carrying out resurfacing will start this week. The eastbound entry slip road will be closed overnight, between 10pm and 5am, on Thursday 2 March. A clearly signed diversion will be in place via M25 junction 30 and return.

The westbound exit and entry slip roads will be closed overnight, between 11pm and 6am, on Friday 3 March. A clearly signed diversion will be in place for the exit slip road via M25 junction 30 and return. A clearly signed

diversion will be in place for the entry slip road via the A128 and return.

A282 (M25) Dartford – Thurrock Crossing: maintenance

Work to improve journeys at the Dartford Crossing continues this week. The following closures will be in place with fully signed diversions in place during the northbound east tunnel closures for oversized vehicles.

During the closure of the QEII Bridge, southbound traffic will be diverted via the east tunnel which will operate in reverse flow mode.

- Monday 27 February (9pm to 5.30am) northbound east tunnel
- Tuesday 28 February (9pm to 5.30am) northbound east tunnel
- Wednesday 1 March (9pm to 5.30am) northbound east tunnel
- Thursday 2 March (9pm to 5.30am) northbound east tunnel
- Friday 3 March (9pm to 5.30am) northbound east tunnel
- Saturday 4 March (9pm to 5.30am) northbound east tunnel
- Saturday 4 March (10pm to 5.30am) southbound QEII Bridge
- Sunday 5 March (9pm to 5.30am) northbound east tunnel

The QEII Bridge will have three (of four) lanes closed overnight, between 10pm and 5.30am, on Sunday 5 March.

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.

[News story: Holocaust memorial designs exhibition in Parliament](#)

An exhibition of the [shortlisted teams' designs for the National Holocaust Memorial and education centre](#) is on display and open to the public in Westminster Hall in Parliament from Monday 26 February.

The new National Holocaust Memorial and accompanying education centre will stand in Victoria Tower Gardens in the shadow of Parliament. This striking new structure will honour victims and survivors of Nazi persecution and will act as a national voice against hatred in our world today.

The [international design competition](#) sought to harness the very best architectural talent to create an emotionally powerful and sensitively designed memorial. Ninety-two teams expressed an interest in the project, with a [shortlist of 10](#) invited to submit the concept designs on display as part of this exhibition.

Consultation with the public, survivors, those working in the field of Holocaust remembrance and education, and technical experts will play a crucial role in informing the final decision of the jury. Visitors are invited to give their views as part of the exhibition.

The exhibition is open from Monday 26 February until Saturday 11 March, from 9am each morning. Entrance is via Parliament's Cromwell Green entrance. Read more about [finding the Houses of Parliament](#).

Closing times will vary depending on parliamentary business each day and will close at 5:30pm on non-sitting days (Friday 3 and Saturday 4 March). Parliament has advised visitors to avoid busy periods, notably between 3pm and 7pm on Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons. Visitors will go through an airport-style search. For further information on entry arrangements, call Parliament's Visitor Services on 020 7219 0516.

[Press release: Drop in poor children's progress at secondary school](#)

Children from poor backgrounds experience a worrying drop off in progress at secondary school, [new research](#) by the Social Mobility Commission reveals today (Monday 27 February).

It finds that the gap between poor pupils' attainment at the end of primary school and the end of secondary school has widened. Since 2012, low-income families have been making less progress year on year, compared to their more affluent peers.

Even when bright pupils from low-income families outperform their more advantaged peers at primary school, they are likely to be overtaken at the next stage of their education.

The report warns that the secondary school drop off means that poor children are failing to finish school with the qualifications that will create opportunities for them to succeed in life.

The research, which was conducted by LKMco and Education Datalab using data from the National Pupil Database, finds that most of the gap (88%) in progress stems from differences in achievement between children at the same school, rather than variations between schools (12%).

The report suggests that this is partly due to the treatment of children on free school meals. These children are more likely to be placed in lower sets, have access to less qualified teachers and have lower expectations set for them by the school.

Home life can also have a big impact on progress with children from low-income families less likely to benefit from effective homework routines, access to books and computers, or cultural and sporting experiences.

Outcomes for children from low-income backgrounds are also affected by the fact that they are more at risk of behavioural issues and exclusion from school.

The research finds that poor pupils located in cities make more progress relative to their more affluent peers than those in rural areas and that the gap is greatest in large schools with average levels of pupil disadvantage.

It also finds that ethnic minority pupils make better progress at secondary schools than poor white children – partly because some evidence suggests that low-income ethnic minority parents seem to provide support that is more effective for their children at home.

The largest gaps in progress are between poor white children and their more affluent peers. Most low-income ethnic minority groups make progress that is in line with the national average for all pupils.

Head teachers interviewed as part of the research said that lower funding was already putting pupils progress at risk and that the prospects for improvement were bleak despite the new funding formula proposed by the government.

With health and social care funding streams also under pressure, schools are facing reductions in external support for children with mental health disorders or Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) who make the least progress in secondary schools.

The Rt Hon Alan Milburn, chair of the Social Mobility Commission, said:

One of the shocking features of our education system is that the gap between poor pupils and their better-off peers increases during their time in school rather than reducing.

This new research suggests that the progress poor pupils make in primary school is all but wiped out during secondary. The consequence is that successive generations of poor children are being let down by a school system that is supposed to be there to help them move up and get on.

This is not just an issue for the government. If social mobility is to improve, schools need to do more to bridge the education attainment divide between poorer children and their better-off classmates. Closing the gap needs to be top of mind for every

teacher in every school.

The government can help by setting an explicit target for narrowing the attainment gap at GCSE and by doing more to get the best teachers into the toughest secondary schools.

Lead author Bart Shaw, from education think tank LKMco said:

Whilst we should be concerned about the high attaining pupils from low-income families who get overtaken at secondary school, it is at least as important to focus on low and middle-attaining pupils from poorer backgrounds.

These children will continue to achieve poorly at GCSE and have diminished life chances unless more is done to accelerate their progress at secondary school.

Our research has found that teacher expectations and actions taken by schools can have a profound impact on outcomes. Parents also have an important role to play by creating an effective home learning environment and taking an active interest in their children's education.

- children on free school meals achieve almost half a GCSE grade less progress in 'Attainment 8' core subjects than better-off pupils
- 88% of this gap is due to differences between pupils at the same school, meaning that only 12% is due to variations between schools
- school culture: pupils from low-income families are most likely to make progress in secondary schools that focus on them, both in terms of setting and sharing high expectations for pupils
- successful schools use data to track pupils' progress and intervene swiftly and flexibly when pupils fall behind
- high-quality teachers who believe that poor children are capable of making progress are key to ensuring progress
- the teaching of pupils with SEND needs should be prioritised and specialist provision should be easily and promptly accessed where needed.
- pupils from low-income families are less likely to make progress when they are grouped by ability from an early age

Key recommendations:

For government:

- ensure funding cuts do not exacerbate the problem of poor pupils failing to make good progress at secondary school

- make additional funding available for schools to buy-in high-quality specialist provision for SEND pupils
- tackle teacher recruitment issues in areas where pupils from low-income families make low progress
- halt plans to increase selection to prevent further segregation of pupils from low-income backgrounds
- set up an exclusion fund for specialist provision to reduce the changes of 'at risk' children being excluded
- review the quality of specialist provision for looked-after children and make more funding available to offer high-quality support for these children

For secondary schools:

- head teachers must ensure that resources are targeted at KS3 and year 7 pupils making the transition from primary school to the same level or beyond the resources targeted at KS4
- head teachers should develop a school culture of universally high expectations and promote practices that support those expectations
- schools should make regular use of data to analyse progress in order to intervene as early as possible when pupils' progress, especially those from low economic backgrounds, stagnates or drops off.
- heads of departments and senior leaders should exercise great caution in using setting and streaming practices that can negatively impact on pupils from low-income backgrounds
- all staff in schools, particularly school leaders, should prioritise support for pupils with SEND, for example, by providing continuing training which improves teachers' skills and confidence in providing 'quality first' teaching in every classroom
- all school staff should improve their understanding of teaching approaches that support low prior attainers and pupils from low-income backgrounds
- senior leaders should reduce exclusion rates, particularly of pupils from low-income families.
- secondary schools should provide early and regular careers guidance that makes clear the links between progress at school and the freedom to choose from a wide range of careers

Notes for editors

1. The Social Mobility Commission is an advisory, non-departmental public body established under the Life Chances Act 2010 as modified by the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016. It has a duty to assess progress in improving social mobility in the United Kingdom and to promote social mobility in England. It currently consists of 4 commissioners and is supported by a small secretariat.
2. The commission board currently comprises:
 - Alan Milburn (chair)
 - Baroness Gillian Shephard (deputy chair)
 - Paul Gregg, Professor of Economic and Social Policy, University of

Bath

- David Johnston, Chief Executive of the Social Mobility Foundation

3. The functions of the commission include:

- monitoring progress on improving social mobility
- providing published advice to ministers on matters relating to social mobility
- undertaking social mobility advocacy

4. For further information, please contact Kirsty Walker at the Social Mobility Commission by:

Press release: Campaign launched to increase low paid workers' knowledge of national minimum and national living wage rights

- Government advertising campaign goes live across the country today to raise lowest paid workers' knowledge of their rights ahead of the National Minimum and National Living Wage rates rise on 1 April
- New poll shows lack of understanding when it comes to being paid, including for travel time and security searches at the start or end of shifts
- Business Minister Margot James: "We are determined to make sure everybody in work receives a fair wage"

The Government has today launched a nationwide campaign to increase low paid workers' understanding of their rights around pay.

The national advertising campaign – which will be carried on public transport, in shopping centres and other public places – is being rolled out ahead of the Government's National Minimum and National Living Wage rates rising on 1 April.

It comes as a new poll for the Government shows many people in low paid work are confused about when they should be paid and what deductions from their pay packets can legally be made.

The poll of more than 1,400 workers earning less than £15,000 found:

- 69% didn't know they should be paid for travel time between appointments
- 57% didn't know having money deducted from their wages to cover the costs of their uniform is unlawful if it takes their earnings under the National Minimum or National Living Wage
- 48% didn't know that tips can't be used to top up pay to the legal minimum

Some of the most common excuses given to HMRC by employers for underpaying workers include using tips to top up pay to the minimum wage, making staff pay for their uniforms out of their salary which takes them below the legal minimum, not paying for shutting up shop or for time waiting for security checks, or the time spent travelling from one appointment to another.

In light of this, the campaign highlights some of the most common examples when a worker may be underpaid the legal minimum in a bid to encourage workers to check their pay.

Business Minister Margot James said:

"We are determined to make sure everybody in work receives a fair wage and while most employers get it right, there are still a small number who fail to play by the rules. This campaign will raise awareness among the lowest paid people in society about what they must legally receive.

"Anyone who thinks they may be paid less than the legal minimum should contact Acas as soon as possible."

Jennie Granger, Director General for Customer Compliance at HMRC, said:

"Paying the National Minimum Wage is the law – it's not a choice. Employers must pay their workers what they're entitled to and follow the rules.

"We will act to ensure ripped-off workers receive their proper pay and hardworking businesses are not losing out to dodgy dealers who cheat their staff."

Ahead of 1 April, when the national minimum and living wage rates go up, workers are encouraged to check their pay, speak to their boss about the rate rise and report underpayment to Acas, the independent workplace advisory service.

Stewart Gee, Head of Guidance at Acas, said:

"We welcome this new Government awareness campaign as it is important for employers to stay within the law and for workers to be fully aware of the pay that they are legally entitled to.

"[Acas](#) has free and impartial advice for both employers and employees on the correct national minimum and living wage rates and advice for workers on what they can do if they feel that they are not being paid correctly."

[Information](#) on the Government's National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage and to report underpayment.

Notes to editors:

1. From 1 April 2017: The Government's National Living Wage rate for those aged 25 and over will increase by 30p to £7.50 per hour.

2. For the Government's National Minimum Wage:
 - the rate for 21 to 24 year olds will increase by 10p to £7.05 per hour
 - the rate for 18 to 20 year olds will increase by 5 to £5.60 per hour
 - the rate for 16 to 17 year old will increase by 5p to £4.05 per hour
 - the apprentice rate will increase by 10p to £3.50 per hour
 3. The new rates were been recommended by the [independent Low Pay Commission](#) after careful consideration of evidence from both workers and employers.
 4. HMRC enforces the Government's National Minimum and Living Wage law and over the next year will spend a record £25.3 million on making sure the country's lowest paid people get the pay they are entitled to.
 5. On 15 February, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy [named and shamed](#) a record 359 employers for underpaying workers nearly £1 million.
 6. Polling methodology statement: Populus interviewed a random sample of 1,435 UK adults who are currently working aged 16+ earning less than £15,000 a year from its online panel between 14 and 20 February 2017. Surveys were conducted across the country and the results have been weighted to the profile of all adults. [Populus](#) is a founder member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules.
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Press release: £17 million boost for the UK's booming artificial intelligence sector

New measures to support Britain's world-leading AI sector are set to be announced as part of a bold Digital Strategy to boost growth and deliver a thriving, outward-looking digital economy that works for everyone.

Accenture has estimated AI could add in the region of £654 billion (\$814 billion) to the UK economy by 2035. So the Strategy, due to published by Culture Secretary Karen Bradley MP on Wednesday (March 1), builds on the plan set out in the Government's Industrial Strategy to capitalise on Britain's existing strengths and back new technologies where the UK can take a lead.

Britain already has a competitive advantage in Artificial Intelligence, with

some of the world's most innovative AI companies based here and a rich ecosystem of investors, employers, developers and clients. It is a fast-growing area for research and commercial investment, including by major global digital companies, and was identified as one of the technologies that could be supported through the Government's new Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund and the Challenger Business Programme.

AI is already making a huge positive difference in people's lives – every day. This ranges from the obvious uses, such as smartphone voice and touch recognition technology and virtual digital assistants like Siri, to less well-known benefits such as online customer services which make it easier to get help when things go wrong and fraud detection tools used by banks to protect against theft. It also the bedrock of video games and music and movie recommendation services.

The Digital Strategy's proposals are expected to include:

- A major AI review led by Wendy Hall and Jérôme Pesenti to identify the critical elements for the exciting technology to thrive and grow in the UK. It will consider how Government and industry could work together to back this technology, which could inform a sector deal. The UK is already a world-leader in the science underpinning this technology and the sector has the potential to grow further, from early research to commercialisation.
- Government is also expected to confirm a funding boost of £17.3m from the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) to support the development of new Robotics and Artificial Intelligence (RAI) technologies in universities across the UK.

The moves are part of the strategy's ambition for Britain to build on areas of strength and develop a global lead in technologies, including cyber security, connected and smart devices, autonomous vehicles as well as AI. These technologies will drive future economic growth and productivity across the economy.

Culture Secretary Karen Bradley said:

Britain has a proud history of digital innovation – from the earliest days of computing to Sir Tim Berners-Lee's development of the World Wide Web.

We are already pioneers in today's artificial intelligence revolution and the Digital Strategy will build on our strengths to make sure UK-based scientists, researchers and entrepreneurs continue to be at the forefront.

Technologies like AI have the potential to transform how we live, work, travel and learn, and I am pleased that Professor Dame Wendy Hall and Jérôme Pesenti will be leading this review. It's great that Government and industry will be working together to drive growth in the sector, to realise all the economic and social

benefits for the UK.

Backing our thriving digital economy to expand and grow by putting the best foundations in place to develop new technology is a vital part of this Government's plan to build a modern, dynamic and global trading nation.

Business Secretary Greg Clark said:

Investment in robotics and artificial intelligence will help make our economy more competitive, build on our world-leading reputation in these cutting-edge sectors and help us create new products, develop more innovative services and establish better ways of doing business.

Innovation is at the heart of our Industrial Strategy and the launch of the Government's Digital Strategy underlines our commitment to this vital sector. By supporting British businesses and investing in dynamic fields such as robotics and AI, we will help put the UK at the forefront of global innovation.

Dame Wendy Hall, Regius Professor of Computer Science at the University of Southampton, said:

Our scientists, researchers and entrepreneurs are at the forefront of the development of artificial intelligence and I'm looking forward to exploring how industry and government can work together to support the technology in the UK.

Media enquiries and interview requests – please contact the DCMS News and Communications team on 020 7211 2210.

Notes to editors

- Professor Dame Wendy Hall FRS FREng is Regius Professor of Computer Science at the University of Southampton. Wendy is an entrepreneur, and one of the world's leading computer scientists. She was a founding director of the Web Science Research Initiative, now the Web Science Trust, and is the Executive Director of the Web Science Institute at Southampton. She was president of the British Computer Society from 2003-04 and was the first person from outside North America to be elected President of the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) from 2008-10. Since 2014, she has served as a commissioner for the Global Commission on Internet Governance and is a non-executive director of Dstl and the Digital Catapult.
- Jérôme Pesenti is the CEO of BenevolentTech, the technology division of BenevolentAI, a British technology company using artificial intelligence to accelerate scientific discovery. He is a world-leading pioneer in the

commercialisation of AI. He co-founded Vivisimo, a tech firm specialising in text mining and enterprise search engines, which was acquired by IBM. At IBM he became chief scientist of big data, and created and led the development of the Watson Platform – the first comprehensive cloud platform for artificial intelligence.

- The funding boost from the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) will support pioneering research including a project by the University of Manchester to develop robots capable of operating autonomously and effectively within hazardous environments such as nuclear facilities, while researchers at Imperial College London will use funds to make major advances in the field of surgical micro-robotics.
- AI refers to computers and software that support behaviour comparable in some ways to human capabilities. It can interpret complex data to enable better decision making, and can work with large amounts of information to improve its own performance.
- Source:
<https://www.accenture.com/gb-en/insight-artificial-intelligence-future-growth>