

Welsh Secretary welcomes £243 million UK Government support for Welsh farmers



- This cash injection will maintain the level of funding for Direct Payments at the same rate as last year.
- This will provide certainty for farmers, giving them confidence for next year.

Welsh Secretary Simon Hart has today (Monday 30 December) welcomed the Chancellor's announcement that the Welsh Government will receive £243 million of UK Government funding to support farmers once the UK leaves the EU next year.

Sajid Javid confirmed the cash will be used to support farmers once the UK leaves the Common Agricultural Policy Direct Payments scheme, allowing farmers across Wales to plan for the future, sow their crops and care for their livestock with confidence.

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sajid Javid, said:

When we leave the EU and are freed from the Common Agricultural Policy, we will be able to support our vital rural communities – who are a cornerstone of life in the UK – with a fairer and less bureaucratic system.

Farmers can enter the New Year with confidence that they have our backing and will be able to thrive after Brexit.

Welsh Secretary, Simon Hart, said:

This funding demonstrates the UK Government's commitment to providing certainty and support for Wales' farmers. It also highlights the vast opportunities available to us as we leave the European Union.

Taking back control of this funding will allow us to better represent the people we serve, ensuring that our farming communities have exactly what they need to flourish after we leave the European Union.

ENDS.

Published 30 December 2019

[Royal recognition for DVLA's LEAP training programme](#)

Getting your training right allows you to attract better staff, and retain talent. Our Learn, Engage, Adapt, Perform (LEAP) training programme was developed in-house for new and existing leaders. It's a 12 month programme where delegates can explore and understand their role as a leader and build excellent leadership skills. Nearly 500 staff have received the training so far, in just under three years.

So I'm delighted that the programme has been recognised and celebrated with a [Princess Royal Training Award](#).



A huge honour

I helped commission, design and develop LEAP and I was nominated by my training colleagues to accept the award from HRH Princess Anne on behalf of the team. I was honoured, but to say I was nervous was an understatement!

I was joined at the awards ceremony by my colleagues Mari Rees and Richard Perry, and Mark Shackell, a leader from our Contact Centre who has come through the programme.

Mari said:

The awards ceremony was a wonderful way to recognise the hard work of colleagues who created the LEAP programme. Hearing all the stories of the other award winners made me feel proud that the DVLA was in such good company.

Every member of the team has played an important part in gaining this award, I was pleased to represent them on this special occasion.

The ceremony

Entering [St James's Palace](#) was a surreal experience. Taking in the beautiful surroundings and being part of the excitement and nervousness of all the other award winners was like nothing I have experienced before.

After being invited into the waiting hall we mingled with the other award winners ahead of the presentation ceremony.

As the award recipient, I had to leave my colleagues to be seated in a separate area. I waited patiently until I was called to step forward. It was a pleasure to be greeted by Princess Anne who asked me how many staff worked for the agency and congratulated us on our achievements.

After the ceremony, the award recipients were taken to small tables and Princess Anne took the time out to visit each of the tables, where we all got to give a quick overview of our achievements. I thought that was a very nice touch from someone whose time is always at a premium.

The whole day was fantastic and something I will always remember. I feel privileged to have been part of it.



In good company

This award sees DVLA join a select group of businesses and organisations who have achieved the award, including household names such as IBM, The Royal Bank of Scotland and the Royal Navy.

On average only about 40 of these sought-after awards are given each year. We are only the second Civil Service organisation ([the other was HMRC](#)) to have achieved this standard of excellence in the four years since the awards launched.

Future plans

Great training and [opportunities to develop and progress](#) are at the core of our values. With this award under our belt, LEAP goes from strength to strength – the next round of delegates are three months into the latest programme and enjoying every minute.

To find out more

You can [read about what it's like to work at DVLA](#) and [take a look at our latest vacancies on Civil Service jobs](#).

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UK satellites to help lead the fight against climate change

- new government-backed virtual satellite data centre will analyse the impact climate change is having on the UK, help shape policies on reducing carbon emissions, and contribute to reaching net zero targets
- 50 new PhD researchers and £5 million investment to enable use of satellite images to better predict future weather trends and protect communities from flooding and pollution
- Earth Observation experts from the Universities of Edinburgh and Leeds will work with 18 businesses on pioneering work to monitor the impact of climate change

Ministers today (30 December) announced backing for ground-breaking research analysing satellite images that will better predict the future impact of climate change in towns and cities and inform future government action.

A new £5 million satellite data centre involving the Universities of Edinburgh and Leeds will use cutting-edge satellite technology to help combat climate change, including helping lower the risk of people being affected by flooding. The data centre will bring together 50 of the UK's brightest and best PhD researchers to help solve climate change.

Measurements from satellites on rising sea levels, greenhouse gases and shrinking glaciers and forests will help provide policy makers, government and industry with the data and knowledge they need to better understand the impact of climate change and make future predictions.

This knowledge and data could lead to the adaptation of preventative measures for vulnerable areas such as installing flood defences to protect coastal towns, identifying areas increasingly at risk of flooding and monitoring pollution levels in towns and cities.

Business Secretary Andrea Leadsom said:

The UK is leading the world in tackling climate change and we have set the bar high, as the first country to legislate to eliminate our contribution to climate change by 2050, and the fastest in the G20 to cut emissions.

This new satellite data centre will give us instant images showing us the true impact of climate change and in doing so, help us develop innovative new ways of tackling it.

Dr Anna Hogg, co-director of the centre in the [School of Earth and Environment](#) at the University of Leeds, said:

Earth observation satellites collect hundreds of terabytes of data per day, delivering important information about how fast glaciers flow, the size of forest fires in the Amazon, and the quality of the air that we breathe.

We have a fantastic opportunity to grow the community of researchers with the skills and knowledge to measure the how our environment is changing.

Dr Edward Mitchard, centre leader at the University of Edinburgh, said:

We are looking for outstanding candidates from environmental science, maths, physics, engineering and computer science disciplines to undertake a PhD in this exciting and innovative centre.

The students will belong to a happy, inclusive and stimulating research environment, with supervision from world-leading earth observation scientists.

The 50 new PhD researchers will work closely with experts from UK universities at Leeds and Edinburgh as well as leading Earth Observation scientists and industry-leaders.

The [Centre for Satellite Data in Environmental Science \(SENSE\)](#), is a virtual academic collaboration and is being established with funding from the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) and the UK Space Agency (UKSA). It will work with 18 businesses and partners, including Airbus and Unilever, who will co-fund, co-design and co-supervise 42 of the PhD research projects.

Professor Duncan Wingham, Executive Chair of NERC, said:

The researchers will support cutting-edge scientific discovery, new data-based products and new Earth observation technologies that will provide benefits to society.

Working with the UK Space Agency gives students unique opportunities to engage with the wider community.

Beth Greenaway, Head of Earth Observation and Climate at the UK Space Agency, said:

We are at the forefront of innovative new technology for measuring our planet from space.

We have many of the world's leading scientists and academics who can use this data for new discoveries, and we have a commercial sector able to build the space missions and create services for the

public and private sector.

The rapid growth of the Earth Observation sector means we need to attract thousands of people with the right skills over the next 10 years.

The new centre will be funded by £2.3 million funding over 3 years from NERC's core grant with money from UK Space Agency for specific student activity support. This is matched by £3.4 million additional funding from business/industry as well as the universities own funds.

The independent [‘UK space industry: size and health report’](#), published in January 2019, showed that, compared to the 2016 survey Earth Observation services, such as data for monitoring land use and agriculture, is a significant growth area, supporting £92 billion of GDP and growing at a rate of 25% per year.

At the 2019 European Space Agency Ministerial Council in November the UK Space Agency committed over £200 million of investment in Earth Observation, including a UK-led [TRUTHS mission](#) to help tackle climate change and the [ESA Copernicus Space Component](#), which runs to 2028.

(Image credit: Contains modified Copernicus Sentinel data (2016 to 2018), processed by [ESA](#), [CC BY-SA 3.0 IGO](#)).

Farmers' £3 billion support confirmed in time for 2020

- this cash injection will maintain the level of funding for Direct Payments at the same rate as last year
- this will provide certainty for farmers, giving them confidence for next year

The Chancellor has today (Monday 30 December) given a welcome boost to UK farmers and rural communities by announcing nearly £3 billion of funding for 2020.

Sajid Javid confirmed the cash will be used to support farmers once the UK leaves the EU next year, allowing them to plan for the future, sow their crops and care for their livestock with confidence.

The UK will leave the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) Direct Payments scheme, which supports farmers across Europe with subsidies in 2020. This will be replaced by a new system based on public money for public goods.

The cash injection will allow the funding for Direct Payments for 2020 to

continue at the same level as 2019 and supplement the remaining EU funding that farmers will receive for development projects until 2023 at the latest. We will guarantee the current annual budget to farmers in every year of the Parliament.

It is in addition to the £206.6 million of funding awarded since Spending Round to support the farming sector in Scotland and Wales.

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sajid Javid, said:

When we leave the EU and are freed from the Common Agricultural Policy, we will be able to support our vital rural communities – who are a cornerstone of life in the UK – with a fairer and less bureaucratic system.

Farmers can enter the New Year with confidence that they have our backing and will be able to thrive after Brexit.

Environment Secretary, Theresa Villiers, said:

Outside the EU we will have a simpler, fairer funding system – one that rewards farmers for enhancing our environment and safeguarding our high animal welfare standards.

We are committed to making sure our rural communities feel the benefits of Brexit and will ensure our farmers get a better deal.

The CAP is an EU policy that provides financial support to farmers in Member States. The Direct Payments scheme forms the majority of spending under the CAP and provides subsidies to farmers based on the area of land under management.

The funding announced today will be available from late 2020, as in previous years.

The UK Government will therefore provide £2.852 billion of support, topping up the remaining EU funding, and matching the total funding for Direct Payment available for 2019.

This will provide certainty for the rural economy.

The funding is spread across two financial years. The allocations for each nation of the UK for 2020/21 are:

- £1,751 million for the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- £449 million for the Scottish Government
- £231 million for the Welsh Government
- £279 million for the Northern Ireland administration

And for 2021/22:

- £92 million for the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- £24 million for the Scottish Government
- £12 million for the Welsh Government
- £15 million for the Northern Ireland administration

Notes to editors

- The CAP consists of two pillars:
- The vast majority of CAP Pillar 1 is the Direct Payments scheme. This scheme makes a payment to farmers each year based on the amount of land they manage. Farmers apply from March each year and are paid from October in Northern Ireland and from December elsewhere.
- CAP Pillar 2 schemes deliver rural development and multi-year environmental projects.
- Under the Withdrawal Agreement, the UK will continue to participate in all EU programmes financed under the EU's 2014-2020 multi-annual budget. The UK will leave the EU's CAP Direct Payments scheme in 2020, earlier than all other EU programmes, as 2020 Direct Payments are funded from the 2021 EU budget.
- The payment for 2020 will be provided across two financial years, with the majority of the payments in 2020/21 and the remaining in 2021/21 to provide flexibility for Defra and the devolved administrations.
- Remaining EU funding under CAP Pillar 2 (for rural development and environmental projects) will continue until the current EU funding is used up or 2023, whichever is earliest. The UK Government will fund Direct Payments for 2020 domestically. The UK will leave the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) Direct Payments scheme, which supports farmers across Europe with subsidies in 2020. This will be replaced by a new system based on public money for public goods. The cash injection will allow the funding for Direct Payments for 2020 to continue at the same level as 2019 and supplement the remaining EU funding that farmers will receive for development projects until 2023 at the latest. We are committed to matching the current budget available to farmers in every year of this Parliament

Further funding and expert support for high streets

- The first 101 places to benefit from up to £25 million each from the Future High Streets Fund were announced over summer. In the latest step of our £3.6 billion investment in towns and high streets, 20 pilot areas across England will lead the way in rejuvenating town centres with

expert and tailored support from the High Streets Task Force before this offer is rolled out across the country next year.

- Today we announce 14 of these 20 pilot areas.
- Over 2020, hundreds of millions of the £1 billion Future High Streets Fund will be invested across the country in projects emerging in the initial towns that have already been announced

Industry experts will join forces with local leaders initially in up to 20 areas across England to breathe new life into town centres – with the first 14 of these areas announced by Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick today (Monday 30 December). This programme of support is being piloted and the full offer from the High Streets Task Force will be rolled out across the country in 2020.

In July the £3.6 billion Towns Fund was announced, including the £1 billion High Streets Fund to help high streets adapt and evolve while remain vibrant places for their community.

The first 101 places to benefit from up to £25 million each were announced over summer, today training and support for a further 14 places is being announced, with six more to follow in the pilot phase.

The places announced today will benefit from bespoke support and guidance from the new High Streets Task Force, announced by the government in response to recommendations of an expert panel on the high street chaired by Sir John Timpson.

The High Streets Task Force will give face-to-face support, access to cutting-edge research, new online training, and local footfall data to give businesses that vital edge and transform local town centres.

The government is also providing additional funding to further support the 101 high streets announced over summer in planning for how to best use the £25 million funding available to them.

Communities Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick said:

This government is investing £3.6 billion in our great towns, including £1 billion to help our high streets to adapt and evolve while remaining vibrant and safe places at the heart of our communities.

Having announced the first 101 high streets that can benefit from £25 million each back in the summer, I am announcing support from our new High Streets Task Force for a further 20 places and naming 14 of these today. The Task Force will provide the tools they need

to get the best advice possible and a dashboard of key local data.

Central to the mission of this new government is levelling up towns and regions, ensuring prosperity and opportunity are available to everyone. Over the course of 2020, we will invest hundreds of millions into projects to transform our town centres and support bespoke plans to meet the needs of individual local communities.

Minister for the Northern Powerhouse Rt Hon Jake Berry said:

Every place has its own unique strengths and challenges but all our town centres and high streets have one thing in common – they are the lifeblood of communities.

The tailored support from our new High Streets Task Force and up to £25 million each from the Towns Fund for 100 places gives communities the money and support they need to unleash the potential of their towns.

This people's government is backing people across the Northern Powerhouse and every part of the UK to succeed no matter where they live.

Today the government is also seeking views on whether an online register of commercial properties would make it easier to bring empty shops back into use.

Government wants to understand people's experiences of leasing commercial property – with a view to making ownership of high street properties more transparent, making it easier for businesses and community groups to find space and supporting investment in local areas.

Today's announcements build on ongoing government action to support high streets, including cutting small retailers' business rates bills by 50% from April, following more than £13 billion of business rates support since 2016.

The High Streets Task Force was announced by the government in response to recommendations of an expert panel on the high street chaired by Sir John Timpson.

The High Streets Task Force will give high streets and town centres advice, training and information to adapt and thrive, piloting a range of products and services with 20 places before rolling out across the country next year. The first 14 of the 20 areas are announced today.

The Task Force, run by the Institute for Place Management on behalf of government, is holding an open recruitment for a Board Chair to provide expert leadership to this programme.

The Task Force brings together a range of expert groups on reinventing and restructuring places, including the Royal Town Planning Institute and The Design Council.

Today the government is also announcing an extra £1 million dedicated to providing further support to the 101 high streets announced over summer in planning for the

£25 million of funding that is available to them, ensuring the vibrance of these high streets for years to come.

The first fourteen places that will take part in the pilot are:

1. Salford – Swinton Town centre
2. Croydon – Thornton Heath
3. Staffordshire Moorlands – Cheadle
4. Rushmoor – Aldershot Town Centre
5. Birmingham – Stirchley
6. Hyndburn – Accrington Town Centre
7. South Lakeland – Kendal
8. Preston – Friargate
9. Coventry – Coventry City Centre
10. Hartlepool – Hartlepool Town Centre
11. Cheshire West and Chester – Ellesmere Port Town Centre
12. Sandwell – West Bromwich Town Centre
13. Knowsley – Huyton Town Centre
14. Manchester – Withington District Centre