

[Press release: Homes and Communities Agency appoints housebuilding expert to spearhead Accelerated Construction](#)

Stephen is highly expert in delivering major housing developments on public land, having spent the last 11 years as the Growth and Partnerships Director at Barratt Partnerships, the housebuilder's national public sector team.

The HCA is leading the drive to increase the scale and pace of construction to get more homes built now, at the same time as working with new entrants to develop smarter approaches to housebuilding that will expand the market over the long term.

Stephen will lead the agency's Accelerated Construction unit, reporting to Chief Executive Nick Walkley. The £2bn programme involves the HCA taking direct action to build homes on surplus public sector land to increase the pace of housebuilding and diversifying the market by supporting smaller builders and modern methods of construction.

Nick Walkley, HCA Chief Executive, said:

This is a very important appointment for the agency and we've very pleased to have found someone who has the same ambition and passion to transform housebuilding in this country so more people can have a home of their own. Stephen is a private sector housebuilding leader with a comprehensive understanding of developing on public land. He will bring strong leadership skills, extensive industry knowledge and a track record for doing things differently.

Sir Edward Lister, HCA Chairman, said:

This appointment is further evidence of our renewed ambition to increase the scale and pace of construction and pioneer new approaches to diversify the housing market. We will ensure more homes are built for people across all housing tenures through a whole series of measures and interventions, including direct delivery on public land and encouraging modern methods of construction.

Stephen Kinsella said:

I am excited by this opportunity to create a new delivery model for housing supply and increase innovation in the sector. The major housebuilders have a huge role to play in increasing supply but it

is clear to me that Accelerated Construction and other HCA-backed initiatives are essential to diversify the market and ensure we can meet the pent-up demand for housing in this country.

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The Homes and Communities Agency is the government's national housing delivery body. For more information visit the [website](#).

Accelerated Construction is designed to help tackle the undersupply of new homes. Building on the Direct Commissioning pilot, Government will take direct action and use its own surplus land as a lever to drive increased delivery of homes. Rather than sell land directly to the market, the HCA will enter into partnerships with developers with robust contractual conditions, which will:

- Accelerate housing supply on surplus public sector land, by ensuring rapid starts on sites that would otherwise be disposed straight to market, with no guarantees to when building of homes would start.
- Build new manufacturing supply chains, by seeking enhanced use of modern methods of construction (MMC). This will provide a strong pipeline of orders to give MMC firms the confidence to invest and help drive industry to be more efficient and productive.
- Support low and medium volume housebuilders to grow and new entrants to enter the market. By using our own land as equity rather than requiring an upfront receipt and taking on some sales risk we are able to lower developer risk, bringing new entrants into the market and helping low and medium volume builders to overcome issues with access to finance and stretch their existing equity to build more homes.

Through £1.7 billion of investment, we will deliver up to 15,000 housing starts in this Parliament. The first site going through the programme is Lower Graylingwell, in Chichester, The vacant site borders the University of Chichester's Campus, an NHS health centre, and existing housing. Through Accelerated Construction, it will deliver 160 new homes at double the local market rate through a SME builder.

[News story: Minister Ellwood offers](#)

condolences after UN deaths in DRC

I am deeply saddened and shocked by the news of the discovery of the bodies of two UN Group of Experts members in DRC. I would like to express my profound condolences to their families, colleagues, and friends. The UN Group of Experts are held in high esteem and their research into conflict and insecurity in DRC is vital in our attempts to hold to account those committing serious human rights abuses and violations.

The UK calls for a full investigation into their deaths. We will continue to underline to the Government of the DRC its responsibility for the Group of Experts' security and the need for its full cooperation with them.

Speech: Minister Ellwood's speech at UK-Angola Trade and Investment Forum

Speaking at the UK-Angola Trade and Investment Forum, Tobias Ellwood, Minister for Africa, said:

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, good morning.

It is a pleasure to be here today. As I looked down the delegate list and saw a company called the Tea Club, I knew that Angola was a country that could do business with the UK.

There is a huge overlap between what Angola needs and what we have in this country that we want to share.

Change and Opportunity

Change is on the horizon for both our countries.

This summer Angola is expected to experience its first change in leadership in almost 40 years.

And tomorrow, the Prime Minister Theresa May will formally begin the process of withdrawing from the European Union.

Change brings with it opportunities.

Angola has the opportunity to set an example to the region by ensuring a peaceful and democratic political transition.

Our departure from the European Union offers us the opportunity to become a truly Global Britain – strengthening our partnerships across the world, including with Angola.

Strengthening Links with Angola

We made a first step towards that goal last year, when our two governments signed a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen our political, economic and commercial relationship.

We have plans in the pipeline for a number of further agreements in specific areas, like finance.

Our commitment to growing our links with Angola is illustrated by the fact we have a dedicated Trade Envoy – Baroness Northover.

Baroness, can I thank you for the work you're doing.

You have paid four visits to Angola in the last 12 months alone, developing important relationships with Angola's economic ministries and identifying excellent opportunities for UK companies.

Personal Impressions of Angola

For my part, I certainly saw some of those opportunities for myself when I visited Angola last month.

There was encouraging evidence that the economy is beginning to strengthen and that the right investment conditions are beginning to be put in place.

The government explained their plans to diversify the economy and improve the business environment.

I heard how Angola was ready to embrace international partners – both Governments and businesses.

And I was told there was a particular need for foreign expertise in the energy, agriculture and infrastructure sectors, all sectors where the UK is well-placed to offer support.

We also have world leading expertise in financial services which can help a government spread the burden of new investment.

The situation in Angola

For those unfamiliar with Angola, let me give you a few

impressions.

It is sub-Saharan Africa's third largest economy, worth £85 billion. It is still heavily dependent on oil exports, and it suffered heavily because of the fall in oil prices.

But it has great potential: it is politically stable, it has a favourable climate; huge non-mineral resources; vast areas of under-utilised arable land; and a young population of over 24 million people.

And possibly most importantly, it has a government which has an economic vision that welcomes foreign investment.

It wants to exploit both its traditional energy reserves and its huge potential in renewables, including hydro.

By 2025 the electricity grid will double to provide for nearly two thirds of the population.

The Angolan government is giving thought to how it builds its manufacturing base, and is taking steps to improve the business environment.

UK Government trade support

For all these reasons, the UK Government is boosting our support for British companies seeking to invest in Angola.

We have increased UK Export Finance limits for trade with Angola by 50%, from £500 million to £750 million.

This additional quarter of a billion pounds will help UK companies win new export contracts, and will give Angolan buyers access to UK finance.

Conclusion

Ministers, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen.

Today is your chance to learn more about the opportunities on offer in Angola's dynamic market and how the Angolan Government intends to improve the climate for business there.

It is a chance for Angolan interests to team up with UK expertise.

Our Ambassador and his team – and our Trade Envoy -are on hand to give detailed advice about doing business in Angola.

I very much look forward to working with you to strengthen the

partnership between our two countries.

This is an exciting time for both Britain and Angola.

Further information

[Statement to Parliament: Dartford-Thurrock Crossing charging scheme](#)

[unable to retrieve full-text content]Publication of the Dartford-Thurrock Crossing charging scheme account for 2015 to 2016.

[News story: GLD lawyers advise on new £1](#)

The distinctive new coin that is legal tender from 28 March is the most secure of its kind in the world and aims to tackle the rise of counterfeit coins in circulation. Although its shape owes much to the old threepenny bit (which also had 12 sides and was retired in 1971) the new coin has a hologram-like image that changes from a '£' symbol to the number '1' when it is seen from different angles, micro-lettering and milled edges.

GLD's Treasury Legal Advisers have provided advice over the past few years to support the development of the new coin, including on practical matters relating to its roll out. They have been working closely with The Royal Mint, Treasury colleagues and other parts of government to deliver the project.

David Chaplin, senior lawyer in the Treasury Legal Advisers team, said:

This is just one of the unique and interesting roles of being a government lawyer. It is a privilege to be involved in such a historic process.

The Royal Mint has been hammering out coins of the realm since AD886 first in London and more lately in south Wales. Although the process is now fully mechanised it is still steeped in ancient traditions, such as the Trial of the Pyx, a centuries-old method of testing coins for authenticity.

Adam Lawrence, chief executive of Royal Mint, said:

It's a historic day for UK coinage, and one that The Royal Mint has been working towards, together with businesses and industry, for a number of years. From today, the public will start to encounter for themselves the most innovative and secure coin ever produced by The Royal Mint.

It's been designed to be fit for the future, using security features that aim to safeguard our currency, and currencies around the world, for years to come. Staying ahead of sophisticated counterfeiters remains a constant challenge and this coin helps in that battle.

Read more about the launch of the new £1 coin on www.gov.uk/Treasury