

Warrington Youth Zone development begins

News story

Building work has started on a new state-of-the-art youth zone in Warrington.



The new Warrington Youth Zone

As one of the founder patrons of Warrington Youth Zone, Sellafield Ltd is delighted to see building work starting on a state-of-the-art facility in the centre of Warrington that's due to open in 2022.

The facility will provide young people across the town with a safe and inspiring place to spend leisure time away from the pressures of home and school.

Jamie Reed, Head of Corporate Affairs, Sellafield Ltd said:

The youth zone will be an amazing facility, providing young people with a place to enjoy a range of activities while also being given much needed support.

We are delighted to see construction work getting underway, and look forward to seeing the outcomes it will achieve in years to come.

Groundbreaking ceremony, marking the start of construction work

The youth zone will ensure that every young person in Warrington, regardless of their circumstance or background, can access first-rate facilities alongside expert mentoring and employability programmes; levelling the playing field and tackling specific issues that might otherwise hold back our young people.

Jamie added:

With help from local partners like ourselves, the building will transform the lives of young people in the area with the aim of making them happier, healthier and better equipped with the skills they need to forge their own positive futures.

Warrington Youth Zone CEO, Dave McNicholl said:

I'm extremely grateful to our partners, including Sellafield Ltd for what they are helping create – it will transform and enhance the lives of thousands of young people in Warrington.

Our incredible universal offer will provide so many opportunities alongside a network of support, that young people need now more than ever.

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'Fight For Fairness' speech to set out government's new approach to equality

- Liz Truss to set out government's move to root out inequality that impacts people across the UK
- New evidence-based approach to tackle geographical inequality and break down barriers to social mobility – moving away from current way of thinking
- Equality Hub to relocate to the North and take on sponsorship of the Social Mobility Commission to give this agenda real teeth and coherence

Minister for Women and Equalities, Liz Truss, will today (Thursday 17th December) set out the Government's new approach to tackling inequality in the UK.

In a speech, 'The New Fight for Fairness', at the Centre for Policy Studies, the Minister will make the case for change, saying:

"The British story has been driven from its earliest days by the desire for liberty, agency and fairness. In the simplest sense it is the notion that in Britain you will have the opportunity to succeed at whatever you wish to do professionally, that you can be whoever you want to be, dress however you want to dress, love whoever you wish to love and achieve your dreams."

She will also set out the current problem with the debate around equality in this country:

“Too often, the equality debate has been dominated by a small number of unrepresentative voices, and by those who believe people are defined by their protected characteristic and not by their individual character.”

The speech marks a new approach to the Government’s equality policy, with a commitment to individual dignity and opportunity at its heart. The Minister will also launch the Equality Data Programme in the speech, the large-scale project will gather data in order to better understand the barriers that people from every background are facing across the UK.

This is a significant change from the previous work of the Equality Hub, which often focused on people with a single protected characteristic and compared outcomes narrowly within those groups. The Minister will set out why this approach hasn’t worked, and has often created further divides. She will say:

“Underlying this [approach] is the soft bigotry of low expectations, where people from certain backgrounds are never expected or considered able enough to reach high standards.

“This diminishes individual humanity and dignity.

“Because when you choose on the basis of protected characteristics, you end up excluding people.”

By considering a wide range of issues, such as geography and social background, the Data Programme will deliver on a manifesto commitment to improve evidence on equality and to support levelling up ambitions. The information gathered will be used to inform policy decisions across government, and will allow the Equality Hub to deliver on the public’s priorities.

Liz Truss is expected to say:

“Just as our forebears fought for change, we must fight for change again – challenging whatever is unfair and unjust today.

“It is not right that sometimes having a particular surname or accent can make it harder for people to get a job.

“It is appalling that pregnant women suffer discrimination at work. Or that women may be encouraged to dress in a certain way to get ahead. Or that some employers overlook the capabilities of people with disabilities.

“Now is the time to root the equality debate in the real concerns people face, delivering quality housing, cutting commute times, improving public transport, ending discrimination in our offices, factories and shop floors, and improving our schools so every child has the same chances in life.

“It is our duty to deliver, because if right-thinking people do not lead the

fight for fairness, then it will be led by those whose ideas do not work.”

In another move, the Social Mobility Commission will move to be sponsored by the Equality Hub following recommendations from the Commission itself and the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities. This will place the social mobility agenda at the heart of government and further advancing the influence it has on the development of evidence-based action.

To further demonstrate the Government’s commitment to levelling up the whole country and listening to the voices of everyone in the UK, the Equality Hub will also relocate to the North of England. Existing data clearly shows a gap between London and the South East and the rest of the UK in things such as life expectancy, pay and GDP.

The Minister is expected to say:

“...The equality agenda must be prosecuted with fierce determination and clarity of purpose up and down the country not just in London board rooms and Whitehall offices.

“Whether that be making the case for free schools in deprived areas or using data to help regional businesses attract investment we will use the power of evidence to drive reform and tailor that reform to local needs.

“We will drive this action from the North of England, where we are moving the Equality Hub. And we will also take on the power of the Social Mobility Commission and give this agenda real teeth.”

The speech will also give a strong government-wide commitment to continue the Equality Hub’s work related to race and ethnic disparities, women’s economic empowerment, LGBT rights and the National Strategy for Disabled People.

And next year, the UK will also use its role as President of the G7 to ramp up work on championing freedom, human rights and the equality of opportunity. During her speech the Minister will make it clear that there is a strong economic case to continue the fight for equality of opportunity, especially as up to £250bn could be added to the economy if women opened businesses at the same rate as men.

Robert Colvile, Director of the Centre for Policy Studies said:

“If the pandemic has shown us anything, it’s that there are still vast inequalities across the country which need to be addressed. It is welcome news that the work of Equality Hub won’t be limited to individual protected characteristics, but rather take into account the needs of every part of society, levelling up the regions and empowering our youth, restoring dignity and offering the same opportunities to all, irrespective of their postcode, gender or heritage.”

Steven Cooper and Sandra Wallace, co-chairs of the Social Mobility Commission said:

“We are delighted that the Prime Minister has backed our proposal for a

greater focus on social mobility at the heart of Whitehall. We look forward to helping drive the levelling up agenda in the regions whilst continuing our important research work and delivery programmes with key partners such as major employers. We value our independence and will continue to be a big voice advocating for progress and change.”

Ministerial direction: £30 million Waking Watch Relief Fund for unsafe high rise buildings

Permanent Secretary Jeremy Pocklington has written to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government the Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP who in return issued a ministerial direction.

The letters relate to funding fire alarms for private and social sector buildings over 18 metres with unsafe cladding and with Waking Watch.

Contingencies fund advance: 17 December 2020



I hereby give notice of the Department for Transport having drawn advances from the contingencies fund totalling £5,808,000,000 to enable expenditure on COVID-19 support packages to be spent ahead of the passage of the Supply and Appropriation Act. The schemes include:

Parliamentary approval for additional resources of £4,574,000,000 and additional capital of £1,234,000,000 will be sought in a supplementary estimate for the Department for Transport.

Pending that approval, urgent expenditure estimated at £5,808,000,000 will be met by repayable cash advances from the [Contingencies Fund](#).

The cash advance will be repaid upon receiving Royal Assent of the [Supply and Appropriation \(Anticipation and Adjustments\) Bill](#).

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[Tay Cities Deal signed](#)

The Tay Cities Deal reached a major milestone today [17th December 2020] when UK Government Minister Iain Stewart joined partners for an online ceremony to ratify the implementation and financial arrangements for £700 million

investment in the region.

The deal is an agreement between the UK and Scottish governments along with Angus, Dundee City, Fife and Perth & Kinross councils as well as partners in the business and higher and further education sectors.

The UK and Scottish governments are each investing £150 million, which will help to leverage a further £400 million of investment from public and private partners. This will be transformative for the region, driving investment, boosting the economy and creating more than 6,000 jobs.

UK Government Minister Iain Stewart said:

Today's landmark signing will deliver transformative investment to the entire Tay region, including £150 million from the UK Government.

The deal will create thousands of jobs through innovative projects such as cutting-edge forensic science at the University of Dundee and a drone port at Montrose in Angus.

Investments in Perth City Hall transformation and Innerpefferay Library, Scotland's oldest lending library, will also enhance the region's culture and tourism offering.

This is the seventh Full Deal we have signed in Scotland and we now have deals in implementation or development for all of Scotland, representing investment from the UK Government of over £1.5 billion.

At the Spending Review in November the Chancellor, Rishi Sunak, announced that the UK Government's funding for the deal would be delivered over 10 years instead of 15, which will help projects to be delivered sooner.

The Tay Cities Deal projects aim to place the region at the forefront of innovation, technology and connectivity.

The UK Government is investing £150 million in 16 projects, all of which are subject to final approval of robust business cases:

- £15 million for 'Just Tech' the world's first institute for forensic science innovation, at the University of Dundee
- £ 5.7 million for cyberQuarter, a cyber-security centre of excellence at Abertay University
- £ 8.1 million for the Aviation Academy for Scotland
- £20 million for the International Barley Hub at the James Hutton Institute
- £25 million for the Advanced Plant Growth Centre at the James Hutton Institute
- £5.2 million for the creation of an advanced plastics recycling facility capable of treating all waste plastic types

- £5 million for Perth Innovation Highway that will support business development at the planned Perth Eco Innovation Park
- £10 million for the transformation of Perth City Hall into a new museum and potential home for the Stone of Destiny
- £24.5 million for the Eden Campus, a Centre of Excellence in Low Carbon and Renewable Energy innovation at the University of St Andrews. Plus a further £300,000 for the Stretch Dome Simulator that can be used to test research and innovation in areas like climate change
- £2 million for rural high speed broadband in Angus and in Perth & Kinross. This will be enhanced by a further £5.9 million from the UK Government Local Full Fibre Network programme.
- £5.6 million to promote North Angus and Montrose as a clean growth zone
- £5.9 million for low carbon projects in Angus
- £15 million for the development of agritech in Angus
- £100,000 for developing Innerpeffray library, Scotland's oldest lending library
- £1 million for the Crief International Highland Centre
- £1.6 million for AERO SPACE Kinross

For further details please read the [full deal document](#).