

Prisons, courts and victim services will benefit from spending review funding

- £4 billion to progress delivery of 18,000 prison places
- £337 million will help reduce criminal court backlogs and support victims
- £76 million for family courts and tribunals

The money will help build on steps already in place to deal with the unprecedented challenges caused by the pandemic.

Crucially, £337 million extra funding will support the government's crime agenda – delivering swift and effective justice to convict offenders, support victims, and protect the wider public.

This includes £275 million to manage the impact of 20,000 additional police officers and reduce backlogs caused by the pandemic by increasing capacity in courts, particularly the Crown Court. The announcement is an important milestone in efforts to bring down outstanding cases, which have already seen the number of those being resolved in the Crown Court nearly treble since April.

It comes on top of existing spending on courts, including £142 million for modernising buildings and improving technology as well as £83 million committed in September to make the estate covid-secure, support remote hearings, recruit 1,600 additional staff and create new Nightingale courts – 16 of which are up and running.

An extra £4 billion will be provided over the next four years to make significant progress in delivering 18,000 additional prison places. This will create modern efficient jails, including 4 new prisons in the next 6 years, boosting the government's efforts to cut crime.

Maintenance will also be carried out – with £315 million to enhance the condition of the existing prison estate and £105 million for improvements to courts.

On top of £337 million for the criminal justice system, £76 million will further increase capacity in the Family Court and Employment Tribunal, giving families, businesses and employees confidence that their cases will continue to be dealt with effectively.

An additional £43 million will go towards measures to reduce COVID transmission in courts and prisons.

Lord Chancellor and Justice Secretary Robert Buckland QC MP said:

We are seeing positive signs thanks to our efforts to keep the justice system running, including a big increase in the number of jury trials.

This funding will help us speed up justice in our courts and continue to deliver modern prison places that keep criminals off the streets and cut reoffending.

Most homes delivered in 33 years

- New stats show 243,770 homes delivered in 2019 to 2020
- Highest number of homes delivered since 1987 and the 7th year in a row the number of new homes built has increased

[Official statistics](#) published today (26 November 2020) show more homes were delivered last year than in any year since 1987, making this the 7th year in a row the number homes delivered has increased.

The new figures show 243,770 homes were delivered in 2019 to 2020. The development of new build homes has contributed significantly to this number – accounting for 90% of the homes delivered.

Today's statistics also show that an additional 2,130 communal dwellings were added to the housing stock, including more than 1,700 student accommodation units, and that the government's 'change of use' reforms have made available almost 27,000 new homes.

Since 2010 more than 1.8 million homes have been delivered across England, supported by government investment including the £3.9 billion allocated through the Housing Infrastructure Fund, our existing £9 billion Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes programme, and the government's Help to Buy schemes which have provided confidence and certainty to the sector

The government has been working is closely with industry to support home building during the pandemic.

In June, the Housing Secretary [announced](#) the extension of planning permissions to ensure work temporarily disrupted by Covid restrictions could continue where possible.

Measures were also introduced to speed up planning appeals and to allow more flexible working hours for builders on site, helping them to continue building much-needed new homes in a safe environment.

Housing Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

Nearly a quarter of a million homes were delivered during the last year – more than at any point in the last 33 years, helping families across the country get the keys to their first home.

The pandemic has posed significant challenges for home building but this government will continue to support the industry and the £20 billion investment announced at the Spending Review will ensure we deliver the homes this country needs.

In the longer term, our overhaul of the planning system will deliver even more high-quality, sustainable homes in the communities which need them most.

The government continues to support home building and this week in the [Spending Review](#) announced nearly £20 billion of investment in housing – the single biggest investment in new homes in England's history.

This includes a National Home Building Fund, investing £7.1 billion over four years to shake up the housing market by backing smaller developers, unlocking brownfield land, and supporting innovative construction techniques such as modular housing. This will unlock up to 860,000 new homes.

And more than £12 billion in affordable housing will be invested over the next five years, the largest investment in affordable housing in a decade, which will provide up to 180,000 new homes across the country and unlock a further £38 billion in public and private investment in affordable housing.

In August the government published [Planning for The Future](#), setting out reforms to the country's outdated planning system to deliver the high-quality, sustainable homes that communities need.

Executive Chairman of the Home Builders Federation, Stewart Baseley said;

Today's numbers show the continued progress being made by the industry to deliver more homes. Home builders have delivered more homes seven years in a row, increasing the number of homes built by 42% in 5 years.

Alongside these benefits, the industry is also creating tens of thousands of new jobs each year and boosting economies across the country. Delivering new homes generates huge investment in infrastructure and amenities in communities, benefiting both new and existing residents.

Looking ahead, building more high quality, environmentally friendly homes can play a major part in supporting the economy as the country recovers from the impacts of coronavirus.

The ['Housing Supply: Net Additional Dwellings' statistics](#) show the net number of homes available in 2020/21 from 1 April and 31 March against the previous

year, including through new build homes and conversions.

The Statistical Release presents National Statistics on net additional dwellings in England up to 2019-20. The figures show the net change in dwelling stock in England between 1 April and 31 March the following year.

The 'net additional dwelling' figures are based on local authority estimates of gains and losses of dwellings during each year and are calculated using the most comprehensive list of sources available. This includes council tax base, building control, site visits and any other management information available to the authority.

The statistics track changes in the size of dwelling stock due to:

- new builds
- conversions
- changes of use
- demolitions

[Making the global green energy transition a reality](#)

Thank you, Minister Singh for that introduction.

Prime Minister Modi has often said that, "the world is one family".

There is no clearer example of this than climate change.

No one nation or sector can tackle the problem alone.

The world will succeed or fail as one.

We all have a part to play: countries, companies, investors, cities, regions and individuals.

To avoid the worst effects of climate change, we must decarbonise the global economy five times faster in the next ten years than we have done over the past twenty.

We all know that the power sector accounts for a quarter of global emissions.

Decarbonising is absolutely vital. Not only to reduce emissions.

But to boost access to power, and to support clean growth and development.

And this is why, as COP26 President, energy is one of five key areas that I am urging all countries to focus on.

And there is no doubt for us that India is a key partner.

Because, here, you are a global leader.

With pioneering international initiatives like the International Solar Alliance.

One Sun One World One Grid.

The World Solar Bank.

And the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure.

Which the UK is very pleased to support.

India is home to a renewable energy revolution.

The scale and pace of change is absolutely remarkable.

With solar capacity increasing around thirteen times in five years.

And with some of the lowest solar prices in the world.

You have already connected 700 million people to power since the year 2000.

And thanks to Prime Minister Modi's commitment to generate 450 gigawatts of renewable power within a decade. There will be much much more to come.

It is our experience in the UK, that setting such targets provide investors with confidence and clarity.

In the UK our emissions reduction targets have helped us to grow our economy by 75% over the last 30 years whilst at the same time reducing our emissions by 43%.

And this has helped us to develop the world's largest offshore wind sector.

We will accelerate that success with Prime Minister Boris Johnson's new plan for a Green Industrial Revolution, which we announced last week.

And this includes a commitment to quadruple our offshore wind capacity within a decade, supporting many thousands of jobs .

I know India has also enjoyed a surge of investment in renewables.

This is vital.

To make the global green energy transition a reality. We need investors to keep seizing the opportunities presented by the renewables revolution. In India and of course around the world.

And these opportunities are enormous.

A study by Imperial College London and the International Energy Agency found

that investments in renewables have repeatedly outperformed those in fossil fuels:

Over the past ten years, the past five years, and in 2020.

Solar and wind are already cheaper than coal power in two thirds of countries.

Momentum is building globally behind net zero. With China, Japan and South Korea all recently setting targets.

Colleagues and friends will know And on 12th December, the UK will co-host a summit, with the UN and France, and our partners Italy and Chile, to mark the fifth anniversary of the Paris Agreement.

This will be the moment for global leaders to show that we can make a step change on climate action.

By focussing our efforts internationally, we can drive down costs and increase uptake.

Every time the global deployment of solar power doubles, its price has fallen by around a third.

That is why the UK is committed to working in partnership to drive the renewables revolution.

We have established the COP26 Energy Transition Council. Bringing global leaders together.

We work with India on Mission Innovation. Accelerating clean energy innovation globally.

And we are partnering with the Government of India.

To help mobilise private capital into its green investments.

Our new UK-India Sustainable Finance Forum will increase the flow of sustainable finance.

And we are both anchor investors in the Green Growth Equity fund.

Catalysing private sector investments, through the City of London, to infrastructure projects in India.

Through international partnerships like these.

The insight of investors.

And the ambition countries like India have shown.

Together, we will continue to usher in the green global future of energy.

Protecting our planet for future generations.

HMRC and ASA launch new action to disrupt promoters of tax avoidance schemes

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) have today launched new action to cut out misleading marketing by promoters of tax avoidance schemes.

The joint enforcement notice aims to disrupt the activity of promoters and protect people from being presented with misleading adverts which may tempt them into tax avoidance.

It requires promoters to be clear about the potential consequences of tax avoidance in any online advertisements. Immediate sanctions include having their paid advertising removed from search engines and follow-up compliance action, which can include referral to Trading Standards.

It has been published as HMRC today launches its 'Tax avoidance: don't get caught out' awareness campaign warning and educating contractors about how to identify if they are being offered a tax avoidance scheme, and the pitfalls of using these schemes.

Jesse Norman MP, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, said:

The Government has made clear its determination to clamp down on the promoters of tax avoidance schemes.

Today HMRC and the ASA are taking an important further step in this direction by action against misleading advertisements by promoters.

As always, we would encourage people to pay close attention to HMRC's warnings not to enter tax avoidance schemes. If it looks too good to be true, it almost certainly is.

Jim Harra, Chief Executive and First Permanent Secretary of HMRC, said:

We're doing our part to close down these schemes and make it difficult for promoters, but we need the public to play their part too.

You really don't need to be a tax expert to spot an avoidance scheme – anything that sounds too good to be true almost certainly is, and anything which claims you can take home, say, 90% of your pay, or asks you to sign up to loans from an offshore trust just so

you can be paid, is something to steer clear of.

That's why we're starting a big push to encourage taxpayers to steer clear of tax avoidance schemes. This is part of HMRC's wider work to make it much harder for promoters to operate.

Miles Lockwood, Director of Complaints and Investigations, ASA, said:

This notice serves as a clear warning to promoters of tax avoidance scheme – get your houses in order and ensure your ads comply with the law and our advertising rules or face enforcement action.

There can be a real consumer detriment for those who unwittingly following bogus tax avoidance advice – you could find yourself facing a significant tax bill. Working with bodies such as the HMRC is helping us to better protect consumers from misleading and unfair advertising that can leave them out of pocket.

The 'Tax avoidance: don't get caught out' campaign is asking the public to:

STOP – don't sign anything that you are uncomfortable with or don't understand.

CHALLENGE – check for warning signs. If you're unsure, seek independent professional advice.

PROTECT – if you think you have been offered a tax avoidance scheme, report it to HMRC. Or if you need help getting out of one, contact us.

The campaign launch comes as HMRC publishes its Use of Marketed Tax Avoidance Schemes in the UK report, including its most recent available data covering 2018 to 2019, and a candid look into the current state of the market.

HMRC has always warned against engaging in tax avoidance. Our Spotlight series about tax avoidance schemes published on GOV.UK warns people about what to look out for. In 2019 and 2020, HMRC issued 11 Spotlight warnings, on different tax avoidance schemes being offered to people. In April 2020, Spotlight 54 warned health workers returning to the NHS that avoidance scheme promoters were targeting them.

HMRC has made significant progress in combatting tax avoidance in recent years. About 20 promoters have moved out of promoting altogether in the last six years because we are making it tougher for them to operate. Since 2014, HMRC has successfully brought in billions of pounds from settling marketed avoidance cases, accelerated payments and other compliance activity.

- [The Use of Marketed Tax Avoidance Schemes in the UK](#) report has been published on GOV.UK today.
- The [Enforcement Notice from HMRC and the ASA](#) has been published.
- The joint enforcement notice issued this week is specific to misleading

advertising of disguised remuneration and Stamp Duty Land Tax arrangements, although the principles set out in the notice may apply to other types of tax avoidance.

- HMRC's [Tax avoidance: don't get caught out](#) campaign page is now live.
- HMRC has set up a [Report Tax Fraud Online](#) form for people to report tax avoidance schemes or those promoting them.
- HMRC has detailed information on tax avoidance in its GOV.UK tax collection [pages](#).
- HMRC continues to use a variety of powers to tackle promoters to stop them benefiting from selling schemes that do not work. We are doing this by delivering on the commitments announced via the [new strategy](#) for tackling promoters of mass-marketed tax avoidance schemes, published on 19 March 2020.
- The government has already announced plans to strengthen these powers. HMRC consulted on a number of new measures over Summer 2020, and on 12 November 2020 the government announced a further package of measures to tackle promoters, which it will consult on in the Spring 2021.
- Each year, HMRC estimates the tax gap for direct and indirect taxes based on the latest available information. HMRC may revise previous years' tax gaps as more data becomes available. The latest tax gap estimates are available in the 'Measuring tax gaps' [publication](#).

[Dstl inspires students to solve space challenges](#)

Science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) ambassadors from Dstl (Defence Science and Technology Laboratory) are encouraging the next generation of space engineers with 2 new employer-led challenges for students at the university technical college (UTC) in Portsmouth.

Students from Year 12 completed the challenges during the height of lockdown, from April to July 2020. They worked individually and in small groups to research, design and present solutions to problems devised by the scientists from Dstl's Space group located on Portsdown Hill.

Challenge 1 was a space debris mission, with students designing a craft to rendezvous with, capture and safely de-orbit the rogue satellite Envisat. The growing amount of debris in space poses a risk to orbiting satellites which provide vital services such as GPS communications. Challenge 2 was a moon colony challenge, to design a moon base on Europa or Callisto – overcoming problems like ice and radiation. The students had regular feedback from the Dstl team, even though they were not able to meet in person.

In order to develop the students' skills and employability, challenges were designed to replicate work at Dstl, the science inside UK defence and security. Students took on specific roles and were required to thoroughly

research, illustrate and present their solutions – including costs and mission timelines. Challenges gave students an understanding of systems engineering and an opportunity to pursue their own, in-depth research, which they really enjoyed.

Rebecca Couchman-Crook, Space Mission Scientist who led the project with assistance from Jordan Lowrey, Max Faulkner and Simon George, said:

This challenge was a fantastic chance for us to engage with the students and show them why a career in STEM is a great opportunity and that Dstl as an awesome place to work. A few of the students produced excellent work that really impressed us. And we must have inspired them too, as one of them is very keen to join us as an apprentice after college.

UTC Portsmouth Assistant Principal, Alex Blandford, said:

As one of our Primary Employer Partners, we were delighted when Dstl was able to adapt their Space Debris Challenge to make it accessible to our students as they continued their studies during lockdown. It gave them the opportunity to work on a brief that they would not normally come across in their day to day curriculum but one that has provided invaluable feedback and insights into the world of space engineering. Their career aspirations have increased greatly because of this experience and we cannot thank Dstl enough.

Jaime Williamson, Early Careers Lead at Dstl, said:

It was amazing that Rebecca and the team were able to adapt to remote working with their students. The UTC in Portsmouth relies on employers to ensure that the students gain relevant skills to make them employable in the local economy. The students really appreciated the opportunity to get this Dstl project on their CV and the teachers really valued Dstl's support to engage the students while they were in lockdown.

Dstl's engagement with UTC Portsmouth is continuing, and Year 13 students embarked on the very popular Dstl Sentry Challenge in September, devised and delivered by STEM Ambassadors from Dstl's Platform Systems Division.