

£368 million fund to improve youth services in underserved areas opens for bids

- Scheme is part of government commitment to ensure young people given access to more activities, trips away from home and volunteering opportunities
- Announcement follows 418 youth projects benefiting from £12 million of cash fast-tracked to those in need earlier this year

Youth services in the country's most underserved areas are being encouraged to apply for a slice of a £368 million fund to improve the health, wellbeing, skills and opportunities for young people.

The Youth Investment Fund, designed to create, improve and expand local youth facilities and services, today opens for bids from 45 local authorities and more than 600 district wards in some of the most deprived areas in England. It will provide funding to build or refurbish up to 300 youth facilities over the next 3 years, providing safe spaces in which young people can socialise and participate in a wide range of activities, including those designed to help support them into employment.

The funding forms part of the Government's '[National Youth Guarantee](#)' to ensure every young person right across England will have access to regular out of school activities, adventures away from home and opportunities to volunteer backed by a £560 million investment. These opportunities will help them develop the skills they need for life and work, improving their wellbeing and employability.

The guarantee also includes offering The Duke of Edinburgh's Award to every state secondary school for the first time, as well as increased access to social action projects or the opportunity to meet new people and learn life and work skills like money management or public speaking skills through the National Citizen Service.

Minister for Civil Society and Youth Nigel Huddleston said:

We are committed to ensuring that no young person is left out of reach or left behind, and have put it at the heart of our drive to level up this country.

I encourage eligible youth services to apply for this life-changing funding.

Nick Temple, CEO, Social Investment Business said:

All young people deserve access to high-quality youth services and great youth facilities to thrive in life, but youth provision across the country is sadly unequal. That's why we're proud to be able to apply our 20+ years' knowledge and experience of grant programmes and capital projects to design, manage and deliver the Youth Investment Fund.

Working alongside our partners National Youth Agency, Key Fund and Resonance, we'll enable up to 300 youth facilities to be built or refurbished over the next three years. This is a wonderful opportunity to prioritise the needs of young people in England and create a more equal society for future generations.

Earlier this year £12 million from the fund was fast-tracked to local youth services where supply was short of meeting demand. The aim was to cover small-scale capital improvements such as providing new laptops to youth groups, small redevelopments of buildings and facilities, and improving transport, such as providing a new minibus for a youth club so they can keep young people safe and extend activities beyond their local area.

BBC Children In Need was the grant administrator for the first phase of the Youth Investment Fund and distributed funding to some 418 eligible youth projects in the most in-demand areas which included:

- [The Community Court Yard](#) in Northampton, a social enterprise delivering traditional youth work, bespoke alternative education and creative workshops based on the youth work curriculum. It was awarded a grant of more than £44,740 to fund a vehicle for detached youth work, gaming booth equipment, CCTV and the refit of the gym area. It will help build positive behaviours and communication skills for disadvantaged young people.
- IMO (Inspire, Motivate, Overcome) Charity in Blackburn and Darwen, which aims to help local young people and their families to combat disadvantage and overcome challenges they face. The grant of £32,155, has funded equipment and furnishings for a new Youth Hub which will provide programmes, activities and a safe environment for young people who struggle at school with their mental health and who are in poverty.
- Brunswick Youth and Community Centre in Bootle, which provides a wide range of activities for young people, received £10,325 of funding to update a community garden space for the youth community centre. It will help promote wellbeing and healthy eating programmes for young people facing mental health challenges and/or at risk of exposure to gang culture.

Leigh Middleton, CEO, National Youth Agency said:

High quality, universal youth provision supports all young people to have somewhere safe to go, to socialise and learn new skills, with a trusted adult who is skilled and trained to support them.

We are delighted to be partnering with Social Investment Business on the design and delivery of the Youth Investment Fund. This provides much needed investment for youth centres and dedicated spaces for young people to go in their communities, as part of the government's National Youth Guarantee.

Working with SIB, youth sector partners and young people directly, our shared aim is to ensure the funding enables high quality youth work which will have the best outcomes for young people, and for communities to thrive.

Notes to editors:

- Applications are invited from local authorities. A full list of funded projects for Phase 1 can be found [here](#).
 - Further details on the eligibility criteria for the second tranche of the Youth Investment Fund can be found [here](#). DCMS has developed a [detailed methodology](#) underpinning the selection of areas.
 - The £380 million Youth Investment Fund comprises capital and resource funding.
 - SIB will directly disperse £283 million capital funding and £58.9 million resource funding to successful projects. £5 million capital funding will be dispersed by DCMS. The remaining funds will be used to deliver the programme.
 - DCMS will release up to £5 million of this funding through four pilot projects testing user requirements, layouts and construction approaches to meet the needs of organisations working with young people. The bidding window for the pilot projects closed on 3 July and successful projects will be delivered in 2022 and 2023.
 - The National Youth Guarantee follows the completion of a [review of DCMS spending on out-of-school youth programmes](#). The review, which was announced in 2020, engaged around 6,000 young people and 175 youth sector organisations, and found that:
 - The National Youth Guarantee is targeted at all 11-18 year olds, and up to 25 years old for those with special educational needs and disabilities
 - Youth services are a vital part of the response to these challenges, delivering benefits for wellbeing and employability skills.
 - Going forward, young people would like the Government to prioritise regular clubs and activities, adventurous trips, and support to volunteer in their local communities.
 - [The full findings of the Government's review of public spending on out-of-school youth programmes](#)
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3,500 businesses risk losing ability to import goods

More than 3,500 businesses risk significant delays to importing goods if they don't move to the UK's new streamlined customs system now.

Businesses submitting import declarations must use the Customs Declaration Service from 1 October 2022, when the Customs Handling Import and Export Freight (CHIEF) system will close for import declarations.

Businesses should check that their customs agents are ready to use the Customs Declaration Service. Those without a customs agent must set themselves up to make their own declarations using software that works with the system.

Many businesses are already using the Customs Declaration Service, however around 3,500 businesses are yet to move.

It can take several weeks to be fully set-up on the Customs Declaration Service so those waiting to register risk being unable to import goods to the UK from 1 October.

Julie Etheridge, HMRC's Director of Programme and Operational Delivery for Borders and Trade, said:

There are now only 2 months left until businesses must use Customs Declaration Service for imports. Businesses need to move now or risk being unable to bring their goods into the UK.

Registering takes time so businesses should start moving to the Customs Declaration Service to ensure a smooth transition and avoid disruption to their business.

To help all businesses and agents prepare for the Customs Declaration Service, declarants are being contacted by phone and email to inform them of steps they need to take. Further information is available on GOV.UK, including a [Customs Declaration Service toolkit and checklists](#), which break down the steps traders need to take.

Traders can also register or check they have [access to the Customs Declaration Service](#) on GOV.UK and access live [customer support services](#) for additional help.

Once registered, businesses which use a Duty Deferment Account will need to set up a new Direct Debit Instruction for the Customs Declaration Service by 30 September. If this is not set up, the Duty Deferment Account will no longer be usable, and individual immediate payments will need to be made each time an import declaration is made.

CHIEF will close for export declarations on 31 March 2023, with businesses being required to use the Customs Declaration Service to send goods out of the UK.

Action taken following dry conditions in Lincs and Northants

Following a dry spring, most river flows and groundwater levels are 'below normal' or 'notably low'. Impacts of this weather are already being felt in Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire with river flows becoming lower, causing problems for wildlife and river users.

Prolonged dry weather is a natural event. It occurs as a result of low rainfall for an extended period of time. Once prolonged dry weather is declared actions are taken to minimise impacts on the environment and the risk of further deterioration.

The Environment Agency have been monitoring the situation and reviewing the range of dry weather indicators, including groundwater levels, river flows and soil conditions. It is working with partners across the area, including internal drainage boards and water companies to ensure the situation is managed effectively.

Abstraction licence holders in the affected areas may receive notice to restrict the amount of water they can take. This may include taking reduced quantities or only abstracting at particular times, depending on local circumstances.

Thomas Enright, a drought manager for Environment Agency in Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire, said:

We continue to monitor our key river, groundwater and reservoir sites using telemetry, and are liaising with water companies to understand any emerging concerns.

We are also working with farmers, businesses and other abstractors to manage water availability. We need to ensure that they get the water they need to be resilient while maintaining our protection of the environment.

We are closely monitoring the developing incident and produce regular reports on the water situation, available on www.gov.uk.

In the lead up to this announcement the Environment Agency has been monitoring weather forecasts and hydrology. Field teams have been busy

sampling to check for the impacts of dry weather on the ecology. They have also been meeting with water companies so any necessary actions can be taken.

We can all do our part to use water wisely and manage this precious resource. If you are using water in the garden, take some simple steps such as fitting a trigger to your hose or using a bucket to wash the car or water plants. For more water saving tips visit [Waterwise](#).

If people see any environmental impacts due to dry weather, such as fish in distress, please report it to the Environment Agency 24/7 on 0800 80 70 60.

Additional information

- The last time Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire moved to prolonged dry weather status was in July 2018.
- The last time Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire declared drought was in June 2011. This drought resulted from 7 to 8 months of exceptionally dry weather and lasted through to 2012. It was declared as an environmental drought.
- Our regulatory role involves issuing and regulating abstraction licences and drought permits. It also involves imposing abstraction restrictions and scrutinising water company drought plans to ensure they are robust and fit for purpose.
- Water companies plan for the expected increase in demand and reduction in effective rainfall over the warmer months and decide themselves on proposing water restrictions. We work closely with the companies to ensure they follow their drought plans.

Further investment in digital transformation of UK's legal sector

- £4 million to modernise UK legal sector through technology
- Drive to keep sector at global forefront of legal services
- Investment to boost access for individuals and businesses

A new £4 million investment will deliver a second phase of the LawtechUK programme, supporting modernisation through the development of new technology like machine learning and data analytics tools.

This will help ensure the UK retains its competitive global edge, create jobs and boost access to legal services for individuals and businesses through technology.

LawtechUK is a government-backed initiative, launched in 2019, with an initial £2 million investment to transform the UK legal sector through technology, providing resources, programmes and courses to promote new ways

of delivering and accessing legal services via digital solutions.

Justice Minister Lord Bellamy QC said:

A thriving lawtech sector will help ensure the UK continues as a world-leading legal services centre and attracts the very best talent.

This investment will support the market to develop the technology it needs to drive modernisation and deliver first-class legal services.

The LawtechUK programme has been delivered by growth platform Tech Nation in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice and the LawtechUK Panel, a board of industry experts.

The previous funding for Tech Nation has already seen results like the launch of the Lawtech Sandbox – a research and development programme for UK entrepreneurs and start-ups to test and develop products or services looking to address the legal needs of businesses and society.

One start-up to benefit from the sandbox is Legal Utopia, an app designed to help people understand their legal issues and access lawyers.

Director of LawtechUK Alexandra Lennox said:

Technology has the potential to transform business' and peoples' experience of law, meet unmet legal needs and support professionals to deliver the next generation of legal services.

We have seen great progress towards this future since LawtechUK's inception and this next phase of funding will build on those important foundations, helping cement the UK's position as a global hub for technology and law.

Lawtech Amplified Global also participated in the Sandbox.

Founder of Amplified Global Minesh Patel said:

Accelerators, incubators and sandboxes are a lifeline for start-ups bringing novel solutions into the market. It's fantastic to hear about the next series of MoJ funding, which will enable pioneering solutions to push the boundaries within the legal space.

Without the Lawtech Sandbox, an organisation of our size and stage would have found it really difficult to be working, or even engaging, with a telecoms giant and the cross section of stakeholders and regulators that we did.

The LawtechUK programme has rapidly accelerated our growth and helped us to get the product to market quicker than we could have ever imagined.

LawtechUK aims to improve understanding and awareness of legal technology and has produced a free online learning and research hub as well as a website to allow the sharing of experiences of remote alternatives to traditional court hearings.

The investment will also continue to support and promote the work of the LawtechUK's Jurisdiction Taskforce to ensure English law keeps pace with technological developments – helping the UK to maintain its place as an international hub for emerging technologies. This builds on previous work to increase market understanding of smarter contracts and digital assets by showcasing real life examples of where these technologies are being used.

Tech Nation will continue to deliver the LawtechUK programme until December 2023. Details of a competitive process to award the next stage of funding will be announced in the autumn. The new provider will deliver the programme from January 2023 to March 2025.

Notes to editors:

- The objectives of the funding will aim to build on the brilliant work delivered so far by LawtechUK in order to:
 - Increase innovation and the adoption of lawtech in the delivery of UK legal services.
 - Support the growth of the lawtech sector in the UK.
 - Enable English and Welsh law and the UK's jurisdictions to become the foundation for emerging technologies, by supporting and promoting the UK Jurisdiction Taskforce's work.
 - The LawtechUK Panel was established in 2018 by the Secretary of State for Justice and acts as the advisory board to LawtechUK. Made up of senior figures from industry, government, academia, judiciary, regulators and the legal technology community, its members take an active role in LawtechUK's work programme.
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Pubs Code Adjudicator launches its three-year strategy

News story

The Pubs Code Adjudicator has today published its strategy outlining its focus over the next three years



The Pubs Code Adjudicator (PCA) has published its strategy for delivering its priorities over the next three years, making sure the Code works to rebalance the tied pub industry. The [strategy](#) sets out what the PCA aims to achieve in the short, medium and long term and what success will look like.

In developing this strategy, 35 in-depth interviews were conducted with sector stakeholders in April and May this year. These contributions were considered along with the findings of the PCA's recent annual tied tenant survey and PCA staff workshops.

The strategy promotes stronger partnership working across the industry to better understand current issues, problem solve and raise awareness of how the Code can support tied tenants. The PCA will also continue to develop its approach as a professional regulator and work with its arbitration services partner, the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, to deliver a quality arbitration service.

Fiona Dickie, Pubs Code Adjudicator, said;

"I am pleased to introduce the PCA's first ever strategy at a time of significant challenge for the industry. I am committed to achieving positive change for tied tenants and we are already seeing progress. We can achieve even more by collaborating with others and this will underpin the PCA's work over the coming year.

"I would like to thank Glow Innovation for helping us undertake this valuable work, as well as everyone who has contributed their views. I now look forward to discussing the initiatives set out in our strategy."

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