

Press release: UK pledges continued support to Commonwealth's young people

Lord (Tariq) Ahmad, Minister of State for the Commonwealth and His Royal Highness The Duke of Sussex, the Commonwealth Youth Ambassador, met with 30 young people from across the Commonwealth in London today.

At the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in April 2018, the UK announced more than £500 million in funding to help deliver the summit's commitments during its period as Chair-in-Office. This included a range of projects with a specific youth focus, recognising that 60% of the population of the Commonwealth is under 30.

Lord (Tariq) Ahmad, Minister of State for the Commonwealth, said:

We will only succeed in delivering the vision for the Commonwealth agreed in April 2018 if we listen to the views of young people; they must be at the heart of our collective effort.

On education, we are delivering projects worth over £200 million in nine Commonwealth countries to enable 12 years of quality education for girls and boys. We are helping to create 150 new Queen Elizabeth's Commonwealth scholarships for talented students by 2025.

On trade and political inclusion, we are making concrete steps too. We recently supported the 2nd Annual Youth Business Forum in Uganda, bringing together over 300 youth entrepreneurs to influence the national youth legislative agenda, and in March we are planning an Africa regional conference on youth inclusion.

And on our environment's future, our co-leadership of the Commonwealth Clean Oceans Alliance with Vanuatu, and our Commonwealth Marine Economies programme, are helping to protect our oceans and the communities that rely on them.

I'm delighted that His Royal Highness was able to be here as Commonwealth Youth Ambassador, and to speak about his inspiring work to champion the youth of the Commonwealth.

At the event, the Minister and Duke of Sussex heard from Dr Elvis Eze, co-founder of the Commonwealth Youth Health Network and Youth Ambassador for Malaria No More. He also met with Tijani Christian, Chair of the Commonwealth Youth Council. Dr Elvis and Mr Christian shared their experience of

advocating for the views and perspectives of young people across a range of issues.

Further information

[Speech: Building London Summit 2019](#)

Introduction

Thanks, John [Dickie], it's great to be here.

As a London MP, I know just how vital the capital's businesses and the talented, dedicated people who lead them, work in them and support them are to our country's prosperity.

And I want to thank you for helping make London the global beacon for creativity, diversity and enterprise that it is.

To be a Londoner, born or adopted, is a badge of pride and testament to this great city's ability to embrace opportunities and challenges like no other.

As such, I know that our capital – and, by extension, our country – is well-placed to seize the opportunities that lie ahead.

But of course, I recognise that also means delivering economic certainty and stability, that means delivering a Brexit deal in the best interests of our economy, and the best interests of our country.

Last night's vote in the House of Commons showed that Parliament does not want to leave the EU without a withdrawal agreement and future framework.

The government will now redouble it's efforts to secure arrangements which will do just that, and secure a deal that Parliament can support and deliver on the vote of the British people in the referendum and get on with delivering our vision of building a country that works for everyone.

That very much means building the homes our country needs and that is central to that ambition, and indeed what today's event is all about.

There are few places in our country where this need is more acute – where the gap between demand and supply, between what people can afford and what's on offer, is more stark.

This isn't just a top priority for Londoners.

As the Prime Minister has said, it's a top priority for our country.

We've made some important progress.

Last year, we delivered the highest number of new homes in a decade – 222,000 – up 2% on the previous year.

And just a fortnight ago, we learned that the number of new homes being built had hit the highest level for a decade – up 12% on the previous year.

This is positive news.

And I want to pay tribute to everyone here today for your contribution to this.

In all, since 2010, this government has delivered over one million new homes and we're determined to get that up to 300,000 homes a year by the middle of the next decade.

London will be key to achieving that goal.

Which is why it was disappointing to see that net additions in London were down by almost 20% last year, with 21 boroughs showing a dip in their annual supply.

[Political content removed]

So, there's no question that we need to raise our game urgently – to seize every opportunity to boost supply across the capital and key transport corridors and deliver for the Londoners who just want a place to call home.

The government is playing its part.

We're putting billions into housing and infrastructure – at least £44 billion of financial support over 5 years.

We're reforming planning to provide greater certainty and clarity for developers and communities and have empowered Homes England, our new national housing agency, to take a more strategic and assertive approach to increasing supply around and outside London.

We've also removed the government cap on how much councils can borrow to build more – a real breakthrough – and are investing £2 billion of long-term funding to help housing associations deliver.

And I'm delighted to announce today that we'll be making [£497 million available to housing associations to help build 11,000 new affordable homes](#), including properties for social rent.

These strategic partnerships – agreed by Homes England – will give associations from Essex to Ecclestone the freedom to spend this money where it will have the biggest impact.

Taking us a step closer to meeting our ambition of delivering 300,000 homes a year.

But this isn't just about getting the numbers up.

It's also about putting fairness at the heart of the housing market – by restoring the dream of home ownership and championing renters through our new £7.2 billion Help to Buy scheme to 2023 and initiatives like Build to Rent.

And by taking action to end rough sleeping for good and implementing a new regulatory framework for building safety following the tragedy at Grenfell Tower – ensuring we deliver for all parts of our society.

London stands to benefit hugely from these measures – particularly the removal of the borrowing cap which could unlock around 10,000 homes – and which many in the sector have been calling for for some time.

It's been great to see how warmly this has been welcomed by councils in London and elsewhere – and how ambitious they are about making the most of this opportunity to deliver the next generation of council housing.

It's notable, too, that the capital has received around half of the national funding pot for the Affordable Homes Programme in recent years and we're providing £486 million to the Greater London Authority to help deliver 3 of our new funds: Accelerated Construction, Land Assembly and Small Sites.

Funds that, together, will help generate over 8,000 new homes by unlocking land, delivering homes more quickly and diversifying the house building market.

On top of this, there's the Budget announcement that the first successful Housing Infrastructure Fund Forward Funding Bid would be in London.

This amounts to £291 million of grant funding for vital infrastructure on the Docklands Light Railway, which will ease pressure on existing services in the area and unlock up to 18,000 homes across East London.

We're also investing in skills through, for example, a £24 million Construction Skills Fund that will see 7 housing sites in London benefit from on-site construction training hubs.

And, crucially, we're backing innovation in housebuilding such as Modern Methods of Construction.

I want to see the sector really embracing this more innovative approach over the coming months to build faster, improve productivity and drive up choice and quality for people in and outside the capital.

Which is why I'm delighted to be announcing today that Homes England will be putting £9 million towards building new modular homes on top of some of London's buildings.

An exciting venture that will see homes constructed offsite and then transported to 5 sites across the city – and that demonstrates our commitment to working with diverse developers to promote innovation and deliver for London.

So, across board, this government is making every effort, from every angle,

to get London – and Britain – building.

And we now need to see the GLA also stepping up.

Because despite all the talk of putting housing first, its record in recent years has been disappointing.

And it's ordinary Londoners who are paying the price.

I share your worries about the consequences.

About the young people who can't afford to take up a job here because of sky-high rents.

About the family who have to move out to get a place with a garden where their children can play.

About the workers who keep London going priced out of even living within commuting distance.

It's with them in mind that the government has raised concerns about the Mayor's draft London Plan, which we will be pursuing through the Examination in Public which is currently underway.

But, first and foremost, we want to see the GLA urgently picking up the pace and delivering against their programme targets on the Affordable Homes Programme as well as the new land funds I mentioned earlier – and working with authorities in London and the South East, as well as private developers, to drive up overall housing delivery.

London's boroughs can and must also lead the charge – both individually and by working together across boundaries – to match the record of those such as Croydon, Westminster and Wandsworth, which are going the extra mile to build more homes.

Because there has been no better time – with all the support this government is providing – for local authorities to develop new partnerships and to be bolder and more ambitious in their thinking about how to drive up supply and meet their residents' needs.

We can see this starting to happen through projects such as Capital Letters, an unprecedented collaboration between London's boroughs and government, backed by £38 million of funding, to provide extra homes for vulnerable families who are at risk of becoming homeless.

And on this same, critical issue, there's PLACE, the first collaboration of its kind by London's boroughs to use temporary modular accommodation to tackle homelessness.

Exciting, inspiring examples of just what's possible when councils join forces and can count on government support when needed.

We need others in the sector – developers, housing associations, forums like

this – to also get involved and explore what more we can do.

I'm ready and willing to play my part in this – to work with individual boroughs, if needed, to push up supply.

If you have thoughts and ideas about how we go further, faster, about what might be holding us back from delivering, tell me. I will listen.

And, working together, I'm confident that we can and will fix this – and raise the bar for all our communities.

And, yes, that includes London.

Conclusion

Our capital punches well above its weight in so many respects, but we know that it includes people and places that are struggling to forge their own destinies, to reach their potential.

Who can see success, but feel cut off from it.

We have a chance to change that – to create a housing market that works for everyone.

And, in doing so, create a country that works for everyone.

That means not just building more homes, but building stronger communities.

The terrible events at Grenfell and last year's terror attacks underline why this matters so much.

So, we must keep this issue in our sights – especially if we're to ensure all parts of our country and all parts of our capital can take advantage of the opportunities that lie ahead.

On this and on delivering the homes we need, there are few places better equipped to take the lead than London, with its endless diversity, boundless ambition and openness to the best the world has to offer.

That's why this government is doing everything we can to deliver for the capital and its people.

And it's now time for others with a stake in their future to make the most of the support and tools on offer and make the difference we all want to see..

...this great city continuing to succeed, with all Londoners sharing in this success and being able to truly make it their home.

Thank you.

News story: Apprenticeship non-levy from April 2019 to March 2020



As per our announcement in [November 2018](#), we are extending apprenticeship non-levy contracts to provide stability while decisions about the future of the non-levy system are made.

We are issuing contract extensions at the end of February.

We have confirmed with non-levy providers:

- They will be able to use their 12-month allocation to fund new starts and carry-in
- No delivery above allocation will be funded
- We do not anticipate announcing funding for growth, unless significant budget becomes available
- Allocations will be based on the November (R04) data submission, using providers' current delivery patterns and mix, with a forecast of their delivery from December until March. We will review the allocations in May 2019 using R09 data.
- Allocations must be used, as usual process, within the terms and conditions of funding agreements and operated within the Apprenticeship funding rules 2018 to 2019 and the Individualised Learner Record specification.

We will confirm arrangements from April 2020 onwards by July 2019. Updated performance management rules will be published during March 2019.

Any providers wanting to discuss their non-levy contract can raise a query with our [service desk](#).

Published 30 January 2019

[News story: Latest appointments to the Adaptation Sub-Committee of the Committee on Climate Change](#)

Defra and the Devolved Administrations have appointed Professor Richard Dawson to the Adaptation Sub-Committee. Existing members Rosalyn Schofield and Ece Ozdemiroglu have been reappointed to their roles for a further three-year term.

The [Adaptation Sub-Committee](#) (ASC) is comprised of experts in the fields of climate change impacts, science, environmental economics, conservation, public health and business, and provides independent, expert advice on preparing for and adapting to climate change to UK and devolved governments and parliaments.

Whilst these appointments are not regulated by the [Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments](#), they have been made in line with the guidance set out in the [Ministerial Governance Code for Public Appointments](#). They will run from 31 January 2019 to 1 February 2022.

Professor Dawson will take on the role held by Professor Jim Hall who recently stood down after 10 years of service. Commenting on his appointment, Professor Dawson said:

Jim Hall taught me as a PhD student and has been a long term mentor. I am truly honoured to be appointed as his replacement on the Adaptation Committee. Over the last decade the Committee has set a very high standard for the rigour and quality of its work, establishing the UK as a world leader in climate change adaptation.

However, there is still important work to be done to monitor and manage the risks of climate change to the UK's cities, rural communities, infrastructure and businesses.

Professor Richard Dawson

Richard Dawson is Professor of Earth Systems Engineering and Head of Water in the [School of Engineering](#) at [Newcastle University](#). He holds a MEng degree in Civil Engineering and a PhD in flood risk management. Over the last two decades his research has focused on the analysis and management of climatic risks to civil engineering systems, including the development of systems modelling of risks to cities, catchments and infrastructure networks. Professor Dawson was lead author for the chapter on Infrastructure in the [2017 UK Climate Change Risk Assessment \(CCRA\) evidence report](#).

Professor Dawson is currently a member of the [National Infrastructure](#)

[Commission](#)'s Technical Expert Panel, [Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research](#), and [UK Collaboratorium for Research on Infrastructure and Cities](#) (UKRCIC). He holds editorial roles for the scientific journals Climatic Change, Flood Risk Management and Infrastructure Asset Management, and was a member of the Scientific Steering Committee of the IPCC's 2018 Cities and Climate Change Conference.

Details of ASC members being reappointed:

Ece Ozdemiroglu

Ece Ozdemiroglu is an environmental economist and the founding director of [eftec \(Economics For the Environment Consultancy\)](#). She specialises in interpreting economic value evidence for natural capital, ecosystem services, cultural heritage, charitable sector and value of information. Her other roles include Economics lead of the Valuing Nature Programme, Convener of the British Standards Institute's Committee on Assessing and Valuing Natural Capital, Member of the Natural Capital Initiative steering group, and Associate Editor of the Journal for Environmental Economics and Policy.

Rosalyn Schofield LLB

Rosalyn Schofield is a solicitor and a Director of Company Secretariat at [Associated British Foods plc](#), where she has global responsibility for the environmental sustainability and impact of the business. Rosalyn also holds positions as Chair of the Audit Committee, and Trustee of Regent's University London where she chairs the Audit and Risk Committee. She has previously worked as a Legal Director at JD Wetherspoon plc, and as a commercial property lawyer in private practice.

All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. Adaptation Sub-Committee members receive £550 per day based on a time commitment of up to three days per month.

The Adaptation Sub-Committee of the [Committee on Climate Change](#) (ASC) is an advisory Non-Departmental Public Body created under the Climate Change Act (2008). The ASC is jointly sponsored by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), the Northern Ireland Executive, the Scottish Government and the Welsh Government. Further information about the CCC is available [here](#). The Board for the ASC comprises a Chairperson and five members.

[Speech: International Development Secretary opens AIDSfree Cities Global](#)

Forum

Good morning everyone, the first thing I want to say is a huge thank you for you all for coming together and for our shared commitment to create an AIDS free for all.

I am just going to go slightly off-script, don't panic Officials but are [Dean Street](#) in the room today? I just wanted to give a shout out to Dean Street, because on my travels I have met so many people that have benefited from your amazing service. What you do is truly phenomenal and I think sometimes when we look at, what my budget is doing and DHSC's budget is doing; we think about tests, we think about drugs and we think about all those numbers and things we can measure, what we sometimes don't think about is health care professional time.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt speaking at the AIDSfree Cities Global Forum, London

The thing that everyone always says about Dean Street is that quite often very vulnerable people with very complex lives are given time with health care professionals that makes a difference to them and gave them something that their GP couldn't do for them, that other people couldn't do for them and that I think is absolutely fantastic. At a moment when the Health Secretary and I and other members of the Cabinet are scratching our heads and thinking about [Global Britain](#) this is what Global Britain means to me, it's our technical expertise, it's our fantastic NHS as well as our budgets and all that we want to lever in and it's everything that Britain has to offer the rest of the world; but Dean Street you're wonderful.

I am delighted that the Department of Health and Social Care, is joining with DFID along with the the [Elton John AIDS Foundation](#) and the Evening Standard as well as the [Fast Track Cities Initiative](#) and [Johnson&Johnson](#) to achieve this fantastic partnership. And through the partnership we've highlighted that – while the world has made great strides in addressing HIV and AIDS – we must step up our efforts if we are to meet the [Global Goal 3.3](#) to end AIDS by 2030.

That battle is far from over especially in poorer countries where stigma, lack of awareness and scarcity of life-saving medicines may persist. AIDS remember, is still the biggest killer of women of reproductive age around the world.

The UK continues to be at the forefront of the global AIDS response. In 2017, UK aid helped the [Global Fund](#) provide 17.5 million people with treatment and protect nearly 700,000 babies from infection. And our 20-year agreement with [Unitaid](#) and support to the [Clinton Health Access Initiative](#) has given the world great advancements in HIV testing and treatment, at affordable costs.

Our task is not easy, while we continue to advance some treatment, we must also address some of the most challenging drivers of HIV infection. Through

UK aid supported research we now know that we will not reduce HIV infections if we don't also address gender inequality and violence against women and girls. That's why DFID continues to put women and girls at the heart of everything that we do.

In some parts of the world we are also seeing growing stigma and discrimination and a backlash against rights, all of which fuel HIV infections among some of the world's most vulnerable people. In July last year, we proudly extended our support to the [Robert Carr Civil Society Networks Fund](#) by £6m to support populations affected by HIV.

And we are also delivering change at home. In the [LGBT Action Plan](#), with my other hat on, we have committed to ensuring that health and social care services better meet the needs of lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and trans people. From appointing a [National Adviser on LGBT health]⁹⁹<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-government-action-plan-pledge-to-improve-the-lives-of-lgbt-people-2>), to make the changes to gender identity services, and to ensure that LGBT people receive better and more appropriate care.

In London and the UK, we have demonstrated what is possible if the right services and support are in place. We are so proud of London's success and we are thrilled to be able to share our experiences and inspire other cities to accelerate towards their own [90-90-90 targets](#).

Through the [AIDSfree appeal](#) we are proudly supporting the Elton John AIDS Foundation to expand testing and treatment in Maputo in Mozambique and Nairobi in Kenya, for vulnerable young people. Through [UK Aid Match](#), we are doubling public donations made through the Evening Standard appeal up to £2m, for projects in these two cities.

UK Aid Match means that every time the British public donate to the AIDSfree appeal, we will match this pound for pound and double their generosity. In this case, it will directly change – and in many cases, save – the lives of people living with HIV in those two cities. The appeal is still going so please help us publicise it.

And also through our significant funding to Unitaid, UK aid is supporting further work by the Elton John AIDS Foundation and its partners in Kenya to expand HIV testing and treatment for young men. This is the first project within the [MenStar Coalition](#) an initiative launched in Amsterdam last year to tackle HIV and AIDS which I was very pleased to endorse.

Today is about celebrating success and driving action – I applaud you for your leadership, your commitment and this partnership. We look forward to a productive day ahead, and to seeing the strides that we are going to take to achieve Global Goal 3.3: to end AIDS by 2030. Starting right here today at the [Global Forum](#).

The scale of our ambition is clear, we all passionately believe that we can create an AIDS free future for the world, and I know that we're going to.