

[The Government needs to provide answers on how it will keep the UK as an attractive university destination for EU students – Blomfield](#)

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Labour's Shadow Minister for Exiting the European Union, commenting on the 6 percent fall in applications from non-UK European Union students, said:

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"The Government's failure to provide certainty to non-UK European citizens living, working and studying here is harming our world-class universities.

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Press release: Multi-million pound boost for community-led services

Communities Minister Andrew Percy today (6 April 2017) announced a multi-million pound cash boost to community-led efforts giving local people greater control over local services.

More than 54 projects will receive a share of over £3 million communities funding to help deliver additional services.

A third of the projects receiving funding will focus on offering personalised schemes to improve people’s health and general wellbeing. Other schemes will tackle social isolation, help people find a job, and support those facing homelessness.

Communities Minister Andrew Percy said:

Making a real difference to people’s lives doesn’t always happen by Whitehall diktat. It also comes from the dedication and inventiveness of local people who know their area best and the issues most important to them.

That’s why we’re supporting these innovative projects which provide

tailored services that make a real difference to people's lives.

The Communities Fund

The [Communities Fund](#) was launched in December 2016 and totals £3.25 million. It's targeted at providing dedicated and personalised support to some of the most vulnerable people in society and those people who are struggling to manage.

Similar programmes have shown that significant benefits can be achieved from small amounts of funding that help local community projects to try different approaches to local priorities. For example, a community-led project in Ilfracombe, Devon, has addressed the high levels of youth unemployment in the town by creating 50 apprenticeships. This has saved around £1 million in benefits and is now funded by local partners. It has since expanded to 100 annual apprenticeships, with more than 50 young people helped into full time employment.

Communities Fund projects include:

Colchester Borough Council and Essex Public Health

A project in Colchester involving local schools, high street retailers and doctors' surgeries. It aims to get more people out walking and socialising as a way to improve health and wellbeing.

Local residents will play a game on the street by tapping specially designed boxes on lampposts with a fob to earn points. An earlier pilot scheme with over 10,000 residents saw a huge jump in levels of fitness, with those meeting Department of Health guidelines on daily exercise reaching 48% from the previous 27%.

Plymouth City council

Plymouth City Council, with Devon and Cornwall Housing, NHS England and Royal British Legion, will deliver employment skills to local homeless people and other hard to reach groups. They will be given the opportunity to learn how to mend bicycles from expert mechanics.

The regular training will also give them the opportunity to earn qualifications. The workshop will also be open to the public, so customers will be able to take advantage of the skills of the newly trained bike mechanics and in turn allow them to develop customer service skills.

Further information

The Communities Fund was launched in December 2016. See [more information](#) on this website. View a [list of the Communities Fund recipients](#) (PDF, 84.4KB, 4 pages) .

The [Localism Act 2011](#) gives communities more say locally, from regulars

running their local pub and protecting other treasured assets, to ambitious plans for new development, new jobs and better targeted local services.

Want to get involved in your community? See the [My Community website](#) for details on how to go about it.

[Press release: Newtownards shooting](#)

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, said:

Shooting someone in the elbows, knees and ankles is barbaric. The criminals who did this do not represent anyone. No one in Northern Ireland wants this; people want to live in a peaceful society. I urge anyone with information about this shooting to contact the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

[Press release: Evaluations suggest ways to further improve merger review](#)

A pair of reports published today make recommendations for ways in which the CMA can provide even better results for consumers and the wider economy by making improvements in the way it investigates mergers.

Sheldon Mills, CMA Senior Director, Mergers, said:

Businesses require our merger investigations to be prompt, thorough and fair and I am pleased that these evaluations into both our assessment of entry/expansion in merger cases and our remedies process recognise that we already produce good work.

We are always open to adapting our processes in light of new information and we are now planning to implement some changes following these reports.

In the [first report](#), the CMA commissioned KPMG to review 8 cases, investigated by the CMA or its predecessor bodies the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) and the Competition Commission (CC), where mergers were cleared on the

basis of entry or expansion of rival firms in the relevant market.

KPMG recommended that in future cases the CMA should take greater account of the potential cost of new entry into a market, the ability for firms to expand and the impact of local market conditions, including regulatory changes.

The second report, [Understanding past merger remedies](#), builds on previous research, so that it now includes the evaluation of 15 merger remedies. The evaluation, which includes interviews with the companies involved as well as customers and competitors, looks at the effectiveness of the different types of mergers remedies used as well as the CMA's remedies processes. The CMA is currently assessing the report to identify further improvements it can make in future phase 2 investigations.

These evaluation reports are the most recent from the CMA, continuing a valuable programme of reviewing past cases to understand what lessons can be learned and identify what improvements can be made. The learnings from these reports will help ensure that the CMA's future merger decisions and approaches to remedy design deliver better outcomes for consumers, businesses and the UK economy.

Notes for editors

1. The CMA is the UK's primary competition and consumer authority. It is an independent non-ministerial government department with responsibility for carrying out investigations into mergers, markets and the regulated industries and enforcing competition and consumer law. From 1 April 2014 it took over the functions of the CC and the competition and certain consumer functions of the OFT, as amended by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013. For more information see the [CMA's homepage](#) on GOV.UK.
2. For CMA updates, follow us on Twitter [@CMAgovuk](#), [Flickr](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#).
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