

£500 million boost to create thousands of new prison places

- Local businesses of all sizes to support delivery of £500m construction project, estimated to create over 2,000 jobs
- Significant step in Government's £4 billion programme to build 20,000 new places – boosting public safety and making the streets safer

Thousands of new prison places will be built at prisons across England under a £500 million construction deal, announced today (20 June 2022) by Prisons Minister Victoria Atkins.

Kier and Wates have been awarded contracts to lead an alliance of hundreds of small businesses in constructing new houseblocks at 6 prisons – capable of accommodating more than 2,600 offenders.

They will also build state-of-the-art workshops at the six locations – HMPs Bullingdon, Channings Wood, Elmley, Highpoint, Hindley and Wayland – which will add further momentum to the Government's drive to cut reoffending and crime by getting more ex-offenders into jobs. This push has already seen the proportion of ex-prisoners employed 6 months after release increase by two-thirds (66 per cent) between April 2021 and March 2022.

Designed with security and rehabilitation in mind, the innovative design of the new houseblocks will include x-shaped buildings with wider landings to increase visibility of multiple wings – helping officers to maintain order. The designs will also mean easier access to supporting facilities such as additional healthcare and kitchens, promoting rehabilitation and helping prisoners to turn their lives around.

It is estimated that the construction of the houseblocks and refurbishment works will generate over 2,000 jobs through the construction phase and over 750 jobs within the new prison facilities.

This includes jobs through Kier's ['Making Ground' initiative](#), which offers prisoners on temporary licence jobs in the construction industry. To date, over 100 serving prisoners and prison leavers have taken part in the programme.

These new builds are in addition to the two planned houseblocks announced earlier this year at HMPs Stocken and Guys Marsh, while construction of a brand-new workshop is already underway at HMP High Down in Surrey.

Prisons Minister Victoria Atkins MP, said:

The government is delivering on its vision for a modern prison estate that places security and rehabilitation at the heart of its design.

This will boost public safety by giving offenders every opportunity to turn away from a life of crime and towards a future of gainful employment.

These houseblocks are also great news for the local firms who will play a central role in constructing them, along with the communities who benefit from the jobs that will be created at the prisons.

Liam Cummins, Group managing director, Kier Construction, said:

Being appointed to the Accelerated Houseblock Development Programme (AHDP) is a fantastic opportunity for Kier to continue the strong relationship we have built with MOJ over a number of years as a strategic supplier to government. We are excited to be combining our national, custodial expertise with our strong regional delivery capability to unlock value for the MOJ, both at strategic programme and local delivery levels.

As a project integrator, we look forward to continuing to drive forward the high standards we have set in using modern methods of construction, including innovation, technology and pushing the boundaries of Design for Manufacture and Assembly (DfMA). We will also continue our commitment to supporting prisoner rehabilitation through the extensive use of Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) through our Making Ground programme.

Paul Chandler, Executive Managing Director, Wates Construction Group, said:

We have been working closely with the MoJ for almost two decades to support the expansion and modernisation of its estate and look forward to bringing this experience to the Accelerated Houseblock Development programme.

Drawing on the expertise of our in-house engineering and offsite manufacturing specialists, we will be working closely with our Alliance partners to deliver greener, more operationally efficient buildings that support the MoJ's net zero ambitions by 2040. Not only this, but our focus will be on creating environments that boost staff and prisoner wellbeing, and that encourage better rehabilitation outcomes for the people that these buildings serve in the long-term.

These projects are part of the government's £4 billion investment to create 20,000 modern places – the biggest prison-building programme this country has seen in over a century.

The new jails will ensure the right conditions are in place to truly

rehabilitate prisoners – giving them the education, skills and support they need to live crime-free lives on release. This will help to cut crime, reduce reoffending and protect the public.

New houseblocks are only part of the agenda to increase capacity across the prison estate, with plans to build four brand-new prisons while refurbishing existing sites to bring out of date prison places back online.

Notes to editors

- Kier and Wates have been awarded the alliance contract to deliver the Accelerated Houseblocks Development Programme (AHDP).
- The alliance was procured via the CCS Framework.
- The six sites covered by the alliance contracts are HMPs Bullingdon, Channings Wood, Elmley, Highpoint, Hindley and Wayland.
- There are also plans to build new houseblocks at HMP Stocken and Guys Marsh.
- The Ministry of Justice has previously committed £4 billion to increase prison capacity by 20,000 additional places by the Mid-2020s.
- The Ministry of Justice has so far completed four refurbishment sites at HMPs Aylesbury, Feltham, Haverigg and Swinfen Hall as well as small-scale investment projects at HMYOI Deerbolt, HMP Hollesley Bay and HMP Warren Hill.
- [The latest statistics](#) show the proportion of ex-prisoners employed six months after release increase by two-thirds (66 per cent) between April 2021 and March 2022.
- It is estimated that the construction of the houseblocks and refurbishment works will generate over 2,000 jobs through the construction phase and over 750 jobs within the new prison facilities.