

## [Press release: Homes England acquisition boosts housing in Coventry](#)

Homes England has acquired land in Coventry to deliver hundreds of homes.

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The national housing agency is currently working with City Council's planning team on proposals for the former pumping station site, on London Road, which will connect communities and transform the location into a much needed residential scheme.

Land for the new homes was allocated by the council to unlock the brownfield site and meet Coventry's current housing need. This is following increased demand for houses by the expansion of Coventry-based manufacturing businesses.

The Whitley pumping station is known for its Victorian historic legacy, which Homes England is keen to retain and bring back into use by working alongside the council. Proposals for the site will be shared with the public over the course of the coming year.

Homes England's involvement in the site will help to speed up delivery of this project and ensure that the land is used to its maximum potential. The provision of a good quality residential development and enhanced green infrastructure will also benefit local communities.

Stephen Kinsella, Executive Director for Land, at Homes England added: "Our role is to ensure more people in England have access to better homes in the right places. To make this happen we intervene in the housing market to build more homes where they are needed. We accelerate delivery and help to shape a more resilient and diverse industry.

"With a strong demand for new homes in Coventry, we are keen to work collaboratively with partners to ensure that we are meeting the needs of the local community and this is an excellent example of how we are unlocking sites to meet those needs."

Planning permission for the new homes, including affordable housing will be submitted in 2019, with start on site to commence within the following 12 months.

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For more information contact Nosheen Haque, Communications Officer at Homes England. Tel: 0161 200 6131/ 07967 782 260 or email [Nosheen.haque@homesengland.gov.uk](mailto:Nosheen.haque@homesengland.gov.uk)

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## [News story: UK medical support to largest UN peacekeeping mission in South Sudan continues after hospital handover to Vietnam](#)

As one of the 5 permanent members of the Security Council, the UK has demonstrated its commitment to international security within the United Nations (UN) since its inception in 1945. Financially, the UK is the sixth-largest contributor to both the regular and peacekeeping budget. In 2015, the Strategic Defence and Security Review saw the Prime Ministers intent to double the number of military personnel that the UK contributes to UN PKO met; South Sudan being the mission of choice.

The UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) commenced in 2011 when they declared independence, and is now the largest peacekeeping mission, with over 14,000 contingent troops from 65 countries . Providing medical care over a country 3 times the size of the UK is challenging, with large areas of swamps, armed clashes and a substantial wet season.

UNMISS currently has 40 Level 1 Clinics (29 Troop Contributing Countries (TCC) provided; 11 UN provided), 8 Forward Medical Teams and 8 casualty evacuation/medical evacuation (CASEVAC/MEDEVAC) helicopters for urgent aeromedical evacuation. UNMISS has 5 Level 2 hospitals across South Sudan, with Level 3 hospitals for further specialist care in Entebbe with a dedicated fixed wing aeromedical aircraft available; the Level 4 hospital for the mission is in Nairobi.

In 2017, Operation Tenton commenced with the deployment of a UK engineering task force across two sites; Bentiu and Malakal along with the supporting medical footprint for UNMISS. On arrival, the UK erected a tented Level 2 hospital in Bentiu from a bare patch of scrubland prior to the UK engineers being tasked to build a hardstanding Level 2 hospital in close vicinity which is due to be completed in Dec 2018.

Hardstanding. Image Crown copyright

The UK medical deployment for the Level 2 hospital was unprecedented in its roulement; Army deployed and set-up the tented capability, Royal Navy

developed the capability before handing over to the RAF to manage and mentor the Vietnamese through the successful transition. This is the first time that a UN hospital has had unbroken clinical cover; the UN have formally recognised this transition as best practice, with other Troop Contributing Countries being encouraged to follow suit .

The relationship between the UK and Vietnam has grown over 2 years as the UK provided an 'Advise, Assist and Mentor' package as the Vietnamese prepared for their first ever peacekeeping mission. America and Australia have also provided supporting roles, celebrating the international effort, Vietnamese medics, trained by the UK, using American equipment, flown in by the Australians. This deployment epitomises what can be achieved through defence engagement with new and old partners alike, to fulfil a UK goal to get more nations involved in UN peacekeeping. The Vietnamese officially took command of the Level 2 Hospital in Bentiu on 27 October 2018.

United Kingdom and Vietnamese personnel on parade. Image: Crown copyright

In wider support to UNMISS, 8 UK Staff Officers (SO) are deployed under the Op VOGUL banner. One of the SO positions is the Deputy Force Medical Officer (DFMO) based at the Level 2+ Hospital in Juba. The DFMO post will endure until 2020, which will see the position held by a doctor from all 3 UK Services for a tour length of 9 months each.

The current DFMO, Wg Cdr Adam Manson, has described the role as monitoring and co-ordinating all the Level 1 and 2 facilities, improving the health of the force through education, clinical advice, facility inspections and hygiene inspections to allow the force to implement the mandate for UNMISS.

Force Medical also co-ordinate CASEVAC/MEDEVACs to ensure patients are moved in a timely fashion with the right level of escort to the right medical facility. Having a UK doctor as the DFMO has already reaped huge benefits from within the UN, not only to ensure the required standard of care for UK personnel deployed, but also through the soft power of medical to relationship build with other TCCs to open avenues for defence engagement to support both the Global Britain and prosperity agendas.

Rwanda medals parade. Image: Crown copyright

The DFMO highlights that the UN provides a unique working environment with every day being different with the challenges of language, culture and communication. He highlights that it is culturally fascinating working day to day with a Chinese Lieutenant Colonel, Major Staff Officers from Rwanda and Sri Lanka and a Marine Warrant Officer from Bangladesh. Living in a UN camp with a mixture of civilian and military personnel brings a real sense of unity and friendship, whether it is undertaking exercise, over lunch or even when catching lifts for the 30-minute drive across Juba between the two main UN camps.

The roles within the UN Mission are varied and often the result of the ground-realities; a third of the 12 million population of South Sudan are displaced, either internally or as refugees in external countries, with

children often suffering the most. A memorable day for UK personnel in Juba was the cleaning of a local orphanage which is home to 50 orphans ranging in age from several months old up.

Over 60 UNMISS personnel got together and between them rooms were emptied, cleaned and tidied, food stores were emptied and rats removed, the teaching room was organised and dormitories and eating areas were cleaned and disinfected. Swings were repaired and grass areas cut to allow for vegetable patches and new play areas.

Over 60 UNMISS Personnel assisted with the cleaning of a local orphanage in Juba. Image Crown copyright

The UK support to UNMISS continues until 2020 with the engineers on Op TRENTON and Staff Officers on Op VOGUL. The small numbers of UK personnel have not only greatly assisted the mission to implement the mandate but each individual has found it personally rewarding and seen actual results to improve the lives and relieve the suffering of the South Sudanese population. With new peace efforts ongoing it is hoped these may result in a longstanding solution and allow the country to prosper in the future.

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## **[Press release: Planning application submitted for further £112.1m of Leeds flood defences](#)**

Plans for the second phase of the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme have been put forward.

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## **[Press release: Planning application submitted for further £112.1m of Leeds flood defences](#)**

Plans for the next phase of the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme to reduce flood risk along the River Aire have now been submitted.

Leeds City Council has worked alongside the Environment Agency to put forward a planning application for phase two of the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme, which will invest £112.1million in flood prevention measures for areas

upstream of Leeds city centre.

A range of measures have been put forward to reduce the risk of flooding along a 14-kilometre stretch along the River Aire catchment, including the A65 Kirkstall Corridor which was badly hit by the impact of Storm Eva at Christmas 2015 and ending at Apperley Bridge, Bradford.

These plans include both parts of the two-step process that has been developed to give a one-in-200-year level of enhanced protection against flooding for Leeds, helping to better protect 1,485 homes and 370 businesses. If approved, work to deliver the first step, a one-in-100 year level of protection, is expected to start next summer. The plans feature measures such as new defence walls, embankments and a large flood storage area. As part of the application it focuses on four key areas of Leeds Industrial Museum at Armley Mills, Kirkstall Abbey and Kirkstall Meadows, Apperley Bridge and Calverley.

The scheme also incorporates a flagship Natural Flood Management programme. Leeds City Council and the Environment Agency will work with partners and landowners across the catchment to deliver a range of measures, such as the creation of new woodland and other natural features. These will help reduce the flow of rainwater into the river and help reduce the impacts of climate change. Additional planning approvals will be sought from the relevant authorities as the catchment wide programme develops.

Leader of Leeds City Council Councillor Judith Blake said:

This planning application is an important step in our commitment to providing Leeds with the level of flood defences it needs.

If it is approved it would mean we can get on with starting the work we can carry out now, which is vital to provide our residents and businesses with reassurance and confidence as we come up on three years since the devastation caused by the impact of Storm Eva.

We will continue to pursue all options to secure the remaining funding to deliver the scheme to one-in-200-year level in full.

Flood risk manager at the Environment Agency, Adrian Gill said:

The joint project team have worked hard to get to this point. We are keen, through this consultation process, to understand what the public think about the proposed scheme.

If approved, it will enable our team to begin works at pace, extending the level of protection in the city centre out to the Kirkstall area, whilst we continue to work towards our ambition of a 1-in-200-year level of protection from the River Aire for the whole city.

At Leeds Industrial Museum at Armley Mills, which suffered significant flood damage in 2015, the defence works include new protective walls, a new pipe bridge to improve water flow and two new control structures on the goit. At Kirkstall Meadows the proposal is to transform 2.4 hectares into a wetland habitat to hold flood water and also feature kingfisher banks, otter holts and wetland scrapes for fish.

A series of sketches to show how the works could look have also been released as part of the application. Other features of the scheme, which include new bridges and footpath improvements, will be handled in a separate planning application.

Also to follow will be the second element of the process if further funding is secured. This will complete the River Aire scheme in full by the creation of a flood storage area near Calverley, which will use the moveable weir technology used in phase one of the scheme in the city centre to allow water to be stored and then be released slowly back into the river in a controlled way.

[Details of the planning application can be viewed here](#)