

Press release: Business rates boost for broadband

The [Telecommunications Infrastructure Act 2018](#) paves the way for full-fibre broadband and future 5G communications. By enabling 100% business rates relief for operators who install new fibre on their networks, the Act incentivises operators to invest in the broadband network.

Now secondary legislation has been laid, firing the starting gun on the scheme which will see communications providers exempt from business rates on new fibre for 5 years, backdated to 1 April 2017.

Local Government Minister, Rishi Sunak, said:

From the country's most rural locations, to our big cities, we want everyone to benefit from fast, affordable and reliable broadband.

With this new legislation now in place, people can expect the rapid installation of new fibre, paving the way for better connectivity across the country.

From making it easier to work from home to allowing digital businesses to flourish, our measures are creating the right conditions for more high-skilled, high-paid jobs of the future.

By driving improvements in the speed, service quality, security and reliability of broadband services, the Act will help transform the way modern businesses work together, reach their consumers and target their export markets.

As well benefiting businesses, full fibre broadband will also increase internet speeds for households and enable users to access more services online with multiple devices. For example, simultaneously streaming high definition TV and films, playing online games, and working from home quicker and more reliably than ever before.

These measures will provide important support for a more productive economy and help build a Britain fit for the future.

Minister for Digital, Margot James, said:

We are building a Britain that is fit for the future, and creating the right conditions to stimulate industry investment in infrastructure. People need good connectivity wherever they work, live, and travel and initiatives like our business rates relief scheme are key to us delivering this.

At the 2016 Autumn Statement, the government announced £1 billion of new funding to boost the UK's digital infrastructure. This includes investment of £400 million in a new Digital Infrastructure Investment Fund to support emerging fibre broadband providers.

Today's announcement builds on the recent, pioneering new [Digital Strategy](#), which has skills, infrastructure and innovation at its heart to support Britain's world-leading digital economy.

As we make the most of the opportunities presented by exiting the European Union, it will help to make the UK the best place to start and run a digital business – creating more of the high-skilled, high-paid jobs of the future.

News story: Ciara Eastell appointed to Arts Council England

Ciara Eastell OBE is Chief Executive of Libraries Unlimited, a nationally renowned charity and social enterprise trialling new and innovative models for delivering modern library services. A Chartered Librarian for over 20 years, Ciara led the establishment of Libraries Unlimited and has continued to drive the organisation forward over the past two years, gaining National Portfolio Organisation status from Arts Council England, expanding the organisation's geographical reach, developing new digital-making services through its growing network of FabLabs and securing more than £1 million in additional funding to improve and enhance library services.

Her extensive experience in public libraries has seen roles in a number of library services across England over the past 20 years, including Nottinghamshire, Gateshead, Cambridgeshire, Somerset and Devon, where she was Head of Libraries, Culture and Heritage for Devon County Council and lead the library service for almost eight years.

Ciara was President of the Society of Chief Librarians (SCL) from 2014 – 2016; was an inaugural member of the national Libraries Taskforce and is a member of the British Library's Advisory Council. Ciara was amongst the first cohort of Fellows to take part in the Clore Leadership Programme in 2005. She was awarded an OBE in the New Year's Honours in 2017 for services to libraries.

The role is not remunerated. This appointment has been made in accordance with the [Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments](#). The appointments process is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. Under the Code, any significant political activity undertaken by an appointee in the last five years must be declared. This is defined as including holding office, public speaking, making a recordable donation, or candidature for election. Ciara has declared no such political activity.

News story: Geffrye Museum **Reappointments**

Cynthia Polemis

Cynthia Polemis has had a longstanding career in broadcasting as a presenter for the BBC World Service coupled with development and fundraising work in the independent theatre sector. Over the past ten years she has also been involved with the setting up of five of London's leading independent cafe/wine bars [Fernandez and Wells] as well as completing a Masters degree in History of Art at Birkbeck College, London University, in which she focussed on French 18th century portrayals of home and food. She is an official art guide at Tate Modern and Tate Britain and also undertakes independent bespoke art tours in galleries and museums throughout London. She is on the board of the independent touring theatre company, Paines Plough which promotes new writing and acting talent.

Alexandra Robson

Alexandra Morris Robson is founder and CEO of Augustine Jewels. She was previously a Partner at Accenture where she specialised in Sales and Marketing Strategy. She was Global Head of CRM for Consumer Goods Clients and has a BA from Cambridge University and an MA from Stanford University.

Edwina Sassoon

Edwina Sassoon has had a career in the visual arts, working with museums and galleries. In 1990 she established her own consultancy advising both sides of the arts and business partnership. She is currently Director and Member of the Garden Project Board at The Hepworth Wakefield and Trustee of the Royal Society of Sculptors. In 2010 Edwina was awarded the Victoria & Albert Museum "Knowledge and Inspiration" Medal.

The roles are not remunerated. These reappointments have been made in accordance with the [Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments](#). The appointments process is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. Under the Code, any significant political activity undertaken by an appointee in the last five years must be declared. This is defined as including holding office, public speaking, making a recordable donation, or candidature for election. Cynthia and Edwina have declared no such political activity. Alexandra has highlighted that she is a member of the Conservative Party and has made donations and canvassed in the last 5 years.

News story: Trustees reappointed to the Royal Armouries

Andrew Burnett

Andrew retired after 11 years as Deputy Director of the British Museum in 2013, having previously been Head of its Coins and Medals Department from 1992-2002. He has a particular interest in the coinage and history of the Roman Republic and Empire. He is a Fellow of the British Academy, and an Honorary Professor at University College London, as well as a past President of the Roman Society and the current President of the Royal Numismatic Society. He is Chair of the Trustees of the Royal Mint Museum. That is an unremunerated role, but not a ministerial appointment.

Anne Curry

Professor of Medieval History at the University of Southampton. She was President of the Historical Association (2008-11) and has also been a Vice President of the Royal Historical Society (2006-9). Chair of the Agincourt 600 Trustees and heavily involved in the commemorations of 2015, Anne is also Deputy Chair of the Battlefields Trust and a liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Fletchers. She has published extensively on medieval armies and battles, and co-runs a medieval soldier database, as well as an online project on English-held Aquitaine www.gasconrolls.org.

Chris Mayer

From 2004-08 Chris was NW Regional Director for HM Courts Service, and then Chief Executive for HMCS until 2010. In 2011/12 she also worked for the Slynn Foundation as an adviser to the Serbian Government and Senior Judiciary, and in 2012/13 she worked for G4s as a consultant. Since 2012 she has additionally been involved in leadership development with Fiona MacNeill Associates. She is the Non Executive Director of Pennine Acute Hospital Trust and in 2017 was appointed Non- Executive Director of Salford Royal Foundation Trust.

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Consultation outcome: National policy statement for water resources: infrastructure types and sizes

Updated: Summary of responses and government response added.

We want your views on our proposals for the types and sizes of infrastructure which should be considered as 'nationally significant' infrastructure projects. These will be defined in the Planning Act 2008.

This consultation supports the development of the National Policy Statement for Water Resources.