

News story: £200 million Derby rail upgrade works to deliver more reliable services and tackle bottlenecks, says Rail Minister

- works nearing completion on new platform, track layout and signal upgrade
- passengers already benefitting from partial re-opening of lines in early September
- work is part of the wider £1.5 billion Midland Mainline upgrade

Passengers will benefit from more punctual services, shorter waiting times and faster intercity journeys thanks to £200 million of government investment in upgrades at Derby station, Rail Minister Jo Johnson announced today (13 September 2018).

On a visit to the station to see the massive infrastructure project being carried out by Network Rail, he met with representatives from Network Rail who began work earlier this year and are due to complete in early October.

The upgrade will include a new platform, new track layout and upgraded signalling. Passengers are already benefitting from a partial re-opening of lines at the start of September.

Mr Johnson said:

We are investing in the biggest rail modernisation programme since Victorian times to deliver the improvements that passengers want.

I've come to Derby today to see the progress for myself and to thank passengers for their patience during the works.

When this vital upgrade is complete, it will give passengers visiting and travelling through Derby the faster, more reliable services they deserve.

The upgrades in and close to the station replace signalling equipment that was 50 years old and improve a track layout that had been in place for more than a century.

The project is a key part of the £1.5 billion the government is investing in upgrading the Midland Mainline. This will mean faster services and more seats from 2020, as well as more seats on brand new trains from 2022.

News story: UK Government Agriculture Bill – Scotland myth-buster

The UK Government's Agriculture Bill was introduced on 12 September 2018. Agriculture is devolved to the Scottish Government and will remain devolved. This Bill does not change that. Claims of 'power grab' are completely false and misleading.

The UK Government is not seeking consent from the Scottish Parliament on this Bill as we are not legislating in areas of devolved competence in Scotland.

No powers that could constrain devolved policy choices in Scotland are being introduced.

For example, there is nothing in the Agriculture Bill which will stop existing Scottish Government policies – including the Voluntary Coupled Support and Less Favoured Area Support Scheme. They will still be possible under both retained EU law and the Agriculture Bill.

Contrary to claims, Scottish farmers will continue to receive the same level of funding as they currently do until the end of this Parliament in 2022

As we leave the EU, it is our intention that each administration can independently design policies that support their farming sectors and enhance their environment.

While these policies are still under development, the Agriculture Bill demonstrates a continued commitment by the UK Government to World Trade Organization (WTO) obligations on domestic support.

The Scottish Government has claimed powers enabling us to comply with our WTO obligations should be exercised jointly; however, the Scottish Parliament does not have the legal competence to act in this area.

While this is a reserved matter, the UK Government will work closely with the devolved administrations on this given their interest. Just as we did ahead of the Agriculture Bill's introduction.

We have offered to extend powers in the Agriculture Bill to the devolved administrations which would enable them to create their own farming support systems to replace the CAP.

Wales and Northern Ireland have accepted the offer.

The Scottish Government has chosen not to take any powers in this Bill. Agriculture is devolved and that is their choice. But our offer remains on the table.

We remain in discussions with the Welsh and Scottish Governments regarding red meat levy funds and legislative options.

We will continue to work with all parts of the UK to put in place a wider common framework relating to agriculture once we leave the EU.

Scottish Secretary David Mundell said:

The UK Government has already agreed to commit the same cash total in funds for farm support for Scotland until the end of this Parliament.

This Bill ensures that new systems of farming support can be put in place after 2020 in England and Wales.

Farmers in Scotland need the same reassurance – and time is running out for the Scottish Government to act.

It is simply not acceptable for Scottish farmers to be kept in the dark about the future of agricultural policy in Scotland.

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Press release: More funding to boost services in village pubs and bring communities together

- Government awards £70,000 to support Pub is The Hub to deliver additional village services
- Call on pub companies to match government support and help village locals across the country

More than 30 rural communities are set to benefit from new or expanded village services from libraries, shops to post offices all delivered by their local pub, Community Pubs Minister Jake Berry announced today (13 September 2018).

The government has confirmed a further £70,000 of funding for 'Pub is The Hub' to support their work in encouraging rural pubs to widen their 'offer' beyond food and drink that not only helps pubs to thrive but also helps to bring communities together.

Community Pubs Minister Jake Berry MP said:

Our great British pubs are not only places for local people to get together over a pint, being at the heart of their communities they are perfectly placed to deliver valuable services, especially in rural areas.

From postal facilities to community playgrounds, Pub is The Hub provides fantastic support to licensees wishing to diversify, ensuring their pubs are both thriving and firmly rooted in their local communities.

Government funding since 2012 for Pub is The Hub now totals £390,000, including provision for its Community Services Fund to inspire and help local pub licensees understand what locals want for their pubs and deliver these.

This new funding is expected to deliver 36 projects which will help revamp local pubs with services ranging from village shops, libraries, and allotments, post offices to community cafes and cinemas. This will create an estimated 30 full time and 59 part-time/voluntary jobs; benefiting 31,400 local users.

Jake Berry also welcomed £30,000 of additional funding to 'Pub is The Hub' from Heineken UK and called on the major players in the pubs and drinks industry, to offer their support to help village locals up and down the country.

John Longden, Chief Executive of Pub is The Hub said:

The government's support for the Community Services Fund has been essential to ensure that we can get much needed investment and support to just some of the thriving pubs and their community-minded licensees that want to go the extra mile to support their communities.

We are always grateful for the faith the government has shown in our initiative but even more so for the amazing small enterprises who take the plunge into diversification to support their neighbourhoods.

Case studies of pubs that have benefited from Pub is The Hub

Swan Inn, Carleton in Craven, North Yorkshire

The licensee at the Swan was keen to create a community space within the pub where villagers and visitors of all ages can enjoy hot drinks and snacks, find local information, access the internet and a printer and meet regularly. Through its Community Services Fund, Pub is The Hub was able to provide advice and funds towards equipment to help provide IT training, adult learning sessions including local history and ancestry as well as a café to host a weekly over 60's coffee morning.

Saracen's Head, Shirley, Derbyshire

This long established and highly successful pub/restaurant in the village of Shirley created an essential new service for the village and the surrounding area with a newly incorporated Deli filled with specialist foods including local fruit and vegetables and dairy items, together with home baked goods such as bread, cakes and pastries.

Further information

Pub is the Hub was set up in 2001 with the support of HRH the Prince of Wales, to help improve community services and activities in primarily rural areas.

The organisation is staffed mostly by volunteers and has worked with pub licensees, local authorities, local communities and industry partners to help hundreds of pubs across the country provide a wide range of services and facilities for their local communities.

The government has supported Pub is The Hub with £390,000 of funding since 2013.

For more information on Pub is The Hub and how to access support for your

local visit www.pubisthehub.org.uk.

[Press release: Sir Alan Duncan statement on adoption of United National Security Council Resolution on Colombia](#)



The Rt Hon Sir Alan Duncan MP, Minister of State for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office said:

Colombia has come a long way in the last year towards consolidating the peace process. This is clearly evident in the transition of the FARC to political party and the passing of the safest elections in decades. The approval of UN Security Council resolution 2435 demonstrates that Colombia has global support for its work to a safer, more stable and prosperous future for all citizens.

The UN Political Mission in Colombia has played a vital role in maintaining cooperation by all parties, encouraging them to work together to first end the violence and to go on building the peace. I welcome the UN Security Council's response to this request, made on behalf of both the Colombian Government and the FARC, to extend the UN Political Missions presence.

The UK is privileged to have worked closely with Colombia and with partners in the UN Security Council to ensure continued international support to Colombia's peace process, which continues to inspire others globally.

Further information

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