

Speech: New Towns: launch of the All-Party Parliamentary Group

Good evening and thank you, Lucy. It's a pleasure to be here.

Now, we all know the jokes about roundabouts, concrete wastelands and ring roads.

The references to eternity looking like Milton Keynes.

The people who make these jokes have no idea what they're talking about.

If they want to know what eternity feels like, try being a politician waiting for the call from No.10 on reshuffle day!

But, seriously, as the launch of this APPG shows, New Towns have got a lot to offer.

That we need to do more to ensure they're fit for the future.

And that we have an ambitious vision for the New Towns of the 21st century.

One man who certainly wasn't lacking in vision was Ebenezer Howard, the pioneer whose garden cities inspired the New Towns.

But it's fair to say that not everyone bought into his dreams of marrying the best of city and rural living.

Even the progressive Fabian News said rather sniffily:

"His plans would have been in time if they had been submitted to the Romans when they conquered Britain..."

But Ebenezer Howard's achievements; as an urban planner whose influence can still be felt, here and abroad, speak for themselves.

They're all the more remarkable considering that his day job was as a Hansard short-hand copy-taker right here in Parliament.

So maybe I need to look a little closer to home for solutions to the housing crisis!

And it's especially pleasing to have the Town and Country Planning Association...

...the organisation Howard founded...

...supporting this APPG and represented here today.

Your input, and the history behind it, underlines that the challenges Howard sought to address are just as relevant today.

Not enough good quality affordable housing.

Overcrowding.

The belief that everyone deserves to live in a strong, vibrant community.

Of course, the bleak industrial backdrop that spawned Howard's garden cities has long gone.

But the desire for people to live somewhere they can find work, build families, get about easily, and enjoy green space has not.

It's the most basic of desires – the desire for a place to call home.

And it's this issue of place...

...how to build not just more homes, but strong communities...

...that goes to the heart of the challenge we face as a country.

A challenge we're determined to meet – as underlined by the recent change in my department's name...

...to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

And the launch of a new national housing agency, Homes England.

A challenge that the important work of this APPG has an opportunity to inform.

Because there's little doubt that there are valuable lessons to be learned from New Towns.

Many, like those represented by my honourable friends here today,..

... are home to successful companies

...offer affordable homes

...and job opportunities that attract inward commuters.

But the downsides of the rapid development and, in particular, centralised planning, that underpinned New Towns are all too evident.

Dated, often identikit housing, infrastructure and town centres that, too often, look like everywhere and nowhere.

That don't just make these towns the butt of lazy jokes...

...but make it harder for them to be seen as truly aspirational and attract the investment they need to grow and thrive.

Like you, I want this to change.

And I can see that many new towns are stepping up to the challenge.

Some, like Bracknell, are making intelligent use of their existing assets...

...and making a virtue of the need for massive regeneration to offer investors and developers scale of opportunity.

Others, such as Crawley, are introducing a richer mix of shopping opportunities and development...

...by breaking down the original blocky zoning and the inner ring roads.

And we're seeing high quality and better design informing the development of Lightmoor Village in Telford.

A development that, fittingly, is being driven by a partnership between Homes England and Bournville...

...one of the first and still most successful New Towns.

And I see partnerships; between central and local government, between local government and the private sector, as very much the way forward.

For regenerating existing New Towns and driving the delivery of new ones.

Again, Lucy's constituency, is showing just what's possible through initiatives such as the Telford Land Deal.

A partnership between:

- the government
- Homes England
- the local council
- and Marches LEP

...that will deliver 2,800 new homes and 8,500 new jobs.

The key thing with this Deal, is that it's led, not centrally, miles away from the communities concerned...

...even if that approach had worked previously, it wouldn't be right for the times we live in.

Instead, it's led locally by those who know Telford best – the people who live and work there.

This shows that government and New Towns can work innovatively to power further growth.

And that we're open to other New Towns coming to us with ideas.

We're already supporting 24 locally led garden cities, towns and villages...

...ranging in size from 1,500 new homes to over 20,000, from Cornwall to Cumbria.

Some are being built on land where there are few or no houses at the moment.

Others will provide transformational growth to existing settlements.

All reflect their particular local circumstances and share a focus on quality and good design...

...echoing the commitments in our [Housing White Paper](#).

The recent Budget...

...the biggest and boldest for housing for decades...

...built on these commitments to back five new locally led Garden Towns in places where demand is high.

A million new homes in the Oxford-Milton Keynes-Cambridge corridor by 2050...

...a hugely ambitious project which I was delighted to appoint my honourable friend, Iain Stewart, to champion.

And also the first of our ambitious Housing Deals...

...with Oxfordshire, to deliver 100,000 homes by 2031, backed by £215 million of funding for infrastructure.

We all know that the right infrastructure is absolutely vital for New Towns.

So the Budget's doubling of investment in the Housing Infrastructure Fund to £5 billion can only be good news.

As are our legislative changes to reboot New Town Development Corporations – the vehicle for the post-war New Towns.

So you can count on our support.

But I won't pretend that we have all the answers.

Which is why I am keen to learn from the important work you'll be undertaking; to better understand the challenges and opportunities for New Towns.

To consider how can we do more to support the people and places you serve.

And deliver the next wave of garden towns and villages.

So congratulations again on today's launch and all the best for your work ahead.

As a government, we've made some great strides, having delivered more than a million homes since 2010.

And helped over 255,000 households buy their own home through Help to Buy.

But there's clearly a long way to go to deliver the 300,000 homes a year on average we will need by the mid 2020s.

New towns have an important role to play in helping us fix our broken housing market.

But I know we'll really have succeeded when the joke isn't on New Towns, but those who knock them.

Thank you.

[Speech: Matt Hancock's speech at the Alliance for Intellectual Property reception](#)

As new Secretary of State, I wanted to set out my views on intellectual property early and clearly.

Imagine there was no James Bond

Imagine there was no Harry Potter

Imagine there was no Imagine.. by John Lennon

Who can say what cultural brilliance would have been robbed from our nation if artists couldn't reap the rewards of their creation?

As your report acknowledges, we have one of the best intellectual property regimes in the world.

We were one of the first countries in the world to realise the need for laws to protect the work of creators. The Statute of Anne from 1710 is widely seen as the first copyright act, and influenced similar legislation across the world.

Of course a lot has changed since then.

Rather than copyright simply concerning what comes off the printing press, there are now international video and streaming platforms which host colossal amounts of content. Four hundred hours of video is uploaded to YouTube every minute.

Of course the internet means distribution is easier than ever. Both legal and illegal.

And the viral nature of social media means ownership can be harder than ever

to enforce.

To paraphrase Mark Twain, a stolen joke is no laughing matter.

You understand this. IP rules may be technical but their importance can't be overstated.

Intellectual property is vital to encouraging creativity and as a Government we are committed to protecting it.

We remain fully committed to addressing the transfer of value from the creative industries and closing the value gap that fails to reward our creators.

We are making some real progress in this area. Research shows there has been a drop in infringement levels from 17% to 15% since 2013, partly due to the increased availability of legal content.

But there is much more to do. The research also shows that pirates are increasingly turning to illegal streaming devices and websites. You have told me this.

This must be stopped and there is a lot of work taking place to do this.

Our Digital Charter is the framework which will develop the policies and frameworks to make the UK the safest and fairest place to be online. We have a good track record on this.

The Government has helped to broker a ground-breaking code of practice through the Search Roundtable.

This helped search engines and the creative industries to work together so consumers aren't being led to copyright infringing websites.

Thank you to the Alliance and its members for the vital part you all played in this. These partnerships between tech firms and the creative industries are crucial and we want to see even more of them.

The Government has also confirmed that it will continue to fund the Intellectual Property Crime Unit, helping it to build on its impressive record fighting online counterfeiting and piracy.

While we remain members of the EU, we will support work in Brussels to tackle the value gap.

And as we leave the EU we will import EU rules into UK law and then maintain and strengthen the protection of intellectual property.

We want to go further than just maintaining the status quo.

Brexit will provide the opportunity to strike trade deals independently with new markets.

And I want to make it perfectly clear tonight; intellectual property will be

at the heart of these discussions.

The Government wants Free Trade Agreements to support innovation, market entry and consumer choice.

And as we look to expand the potential of new markets, we want to ensure rewards for creators, along with support and investment for the creative industries.

Breaches of IP are not a new concern for artists; Jimi Hendrix once said "I've been imitated so well that I've heard people copy my mistakes." This is true for me too...

But the scope and the nature of it is changing and we need to be well equipped to combat it.

Britain has historically been world-leading in helping artists get the value they deserve from their books, plays, films or music.

The Alliance for IP has played a big part in this. Thank you for all the work you've been doing on behalf of artists across the UK – and for producing this valuable report.

It is my profound belief that throughout history, civilised society has been based on the respect of property.

That is the basis of any market economy. And the market economy in turn is the greatest force for prosperity ever invented by man.

And as technology marches on, the property that really matters is increasingly the ideas, the designs, the art and the concepts. In short, the IP.

It is therefore no exaggeration to say that respect for IP underpins this nation's prosperity. And you are its most effective voices and guardians. Britain understood this first. And we will lead the world once more.

Our commitment to IP is unwavering. We will remain an open, confident, forward looking nation that will be a haven for the brightest creative talent. For that is where this country's future lies.

Thank you and have a wonderful evening.

[News story: Carillion: what's happening now](#)

We know that this is a troubling time for Carillion's workers and businesses

that were in Carillion's supply chain.

The government's priority is to make sure all public services Carillion provided continue to run smoothly. We have put our plans into action to ensure all public sector services continue unaffected. No major disruptions have been reported and we will continue to monitor the situation. We will continue to pay workers on public sector contracts.

Financial support for businesses

HMRC will provide practical advice and guidance to those affected through its Business Payment Support Service (BPSS). The BPSS connects businesses with HMRC staff who can offer practical help and advice on a wide range of tax problems, providing a fast and sympathetic route to agreeing the best way forward and addressing immediate concerns with practical solutions.

Working with banks to help small businesses

Business Secretary Greg Clark, Economic Secretary to the Treasury John Glen, and Small Business Minister Andrew Griffiths, met banks on 17 January 2018 to seek assurances that they will support small businesses affected by Carillion's liquidation.

Lenders are contacting customers and, where appropriate, are putting in place emergency measures, including overdraft extensions, payment holidays and fee waivers to ensure those facing short term issues can be helped to stay on track.

This ensured small businesses exposed to the liquidation of Carillion are given the support they need.

Minimising disruption to apprentices' training programmes

We are committed to funding every apprentice that has already started their apprenticeship programme through to its completion. We have taken steps to protect learners by transferring the training of Carillion apprentices to the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB), and we are grateful to CITB for helping us ensure learners can continue to gain the skills they need.

We will continue to work closely with the CITB to support apprentices to remain in existing placements or to find new employment with other local organisations so they can complete their training.

Pensions

For those already receiving their pension, you will continue to be paid.

We know that some people will be concerned about their pensions, so if you need free and impartial advice we would recommend that you call The Pensions

Advisory Service on 0300 123 1047.

We've also set up a special additional helpline with the Pensions Advisory Service for members of Carillion's pension schemes: 0800 7561012.

Keeping public services running

Our primary responsibility has always been keep our essential public services running safely. Government is providing the necessary funding required by the Official Receiver to maintain public services. Staff that are engaged on public sector contracts continue to come to work and will continue to be paid.

Worried about your job?

JobCentre Plus, through its Rapid Response Service, stands ready to support any employee affected by this announcement.

Support could include:

- helping people facing redundancy to write CVs and find jobs
- providing general information about benefits
- helping people to find the right training and learn new skills
- helping with costs like travel to work expenses.

Speech: "All Libyans, regardless of their age, gender, or where they are from, must feel represented and understood by their political leaders."

Thank you Mr President.

And may I thank both Ghassan and Rina for your briefings here today. And a very warm welcome and thank you also to our briefer from civil society, Ms. Sharief, who set out some very powerful messages and set out very eloquently the importance of an inclusive peace process, including particularly women and youth, and actually it would be very helpful, perhaps as follow up to this conversation to hear anymore from UNSMIL on how they are integrating the gender perspective in their work.

Let me begin, Mr President, by welcoming the Special Representative Salamé's update on the political process and reiterating the United Kingdom's full

support for his work. In our statement of the 14 December, we in this Council urged all parties to support the political process in a spirit of compromise for the sake of the Libyan people.

This must include support for Special Representative Salamé's efforts to secure consent to amend the Libyan Political Agreement and commitment to the sequencing of the UN Action Plan.

As Ms. Sharief highlighted, civil society has an essential role to play in ensuring the voices of the people are also heard during discussions on the future of their country.

All Libyans, regardless of their age, gender, or where they are from, must feel represented and understood by their political leaders. This will encourage Libyans to give their political leadership their support and build trust in the political process.

The greatest immediate need is the establishment of a more inclusive political platform. That is essential to create an executive better able to improve the security, human rights and economic conditions in Libya.

A more inclusive political settlement will also help build a context more conducive to preparation for elections. We welcome the Special Representative's emphasis on ensuring the right conditions are in place ahead of elections, including the necessary political, legislative and security preparations to ensure their success.

Mr President,

The security situation in Libya remains of deep concern, as we saw from clashes at Mitiga airport on Monday. As we've said before, there can be no military solution in Libya. All parties must exercise restraint and express their support for national reconciliation. This must include reconciliation of the security forces.

Unified security forces under the command of the civilian government, which are representative of and work for all Libyans, will also enable the threat posed by extremist groups to be tackled in a sustainable way. It will help bring an end to the impunity of armed groups which are inextricably linked to the gravity concerning human rights situation.

Ungoverned spaces in Libya are creating the conditions for abuses and violations of international humanitarian law which take place against civilians, internally-displaced persons and migrants.

We fully support the work of the AU-EU- UN Taskforce in tackling slavery in Libya. We call on all parties that are suspected of committing, ordering, or failing to prevent such human rights abuses and violations to be fully investigated, and if found guilty, to be held to account for their actions. We also stand ready to consider the sanctioning of individuals involved in people trafficking in modern slavery.

We are also concerned by reported restrictions to civil and political

freedoms and intimidation of civil society organisations, public servants, religious groups and national minorities, including recent attacks of Sufi Shrines and Amazigh representatives. These groups must be allowed to participate in Libyan society and the political process.

And finally Mr President, on the economic situation. This Council needs to continue to protect the Libyan people from economic hardship, including by supporting the restoration of the economy and the delivery of services across the country. We must act robustly against attempts to illicitly sell oil and establish parallel institutions.

We need to continue to ensure that sanctions measures keep up with the situation on the ground. This includes the work we have done to address fuel oil smuggling. But we should also be ready to rectify inadvertent consequences, such as addressing the depreciation of frozen Libyan Investment Authority funds – which remain frozen at the Libyan government's request until their eventual return for the benefit of the Libyan people.

Mr President,

A stable, unified, inclusive government is the best way to improve the security conditions, the economic fortunes and human rights situation for millions of Libyans. It will also improve global peace and security and our ability to address the challenges of migration. We must continue to stand together in support of Special Representative Salamé's efforts to achieve this. And we, like him, urge Libya's political leaders to put their country first.

Thank you.

Speech: Anne Milton: speech at Sixth Form Colleges Association conference

Thank you Bill for that very kind introduction, and for giving me the opportunity to speak here today. The work that you and your colleagues do to transform the lives of young people is so important for them and for the country. You change lives.

As I have said before, I am determined to see the sixth form sector get the recognition it deserves. Indeed it is well earned – the work you do transforms lives.

It probably should go without saying that I value the key role that Sixth Form Colleges and 16-19 academies have to play in post-16 education and I want to work with you to achieve so you can deliver outstanding outcomes for everyone. But I am saying it anyway! I think it is important to restate.

Our shared vision of a sixth form sector that includes great colleges and academies with excellent teachers, embedded in communities, can only be reached if we work together. I will always be your advocate in Government. That's what Ministers are there for. I know you have brilliant support from your local MPs whatever political party they belong to. If you have that don't underestimate it.

It is not just about great places to study, it's also how you, as educators of sixth formers, respond to the social and economic challenges that we face as a country today: helping to tackle disadvantage, increasing social mobility and training our future leaders.

We have significant challenges and there is a focus on the introduction of T-levels and apprenticeships. But, that shouldn't and doesn't eclipse how crucial the curriculum you deliver to a significant number of our children is. We want all post-16 education to be prestigious and you are the key leaders in providing consistency and continuity up to and beyond the introduction of T-levels, encouraging pupils into the direction that is right for them and allowing them to be achieve their potential.

You know, and I know, how powerful the education and the college environment you provide is for social mobility. Social mobility is dependent on education. A few succeed without it – we all know of exceptions – but for the vast majority of us, social mobility doesn't happen without education. You are there for young people who wish to pursue further education, particularly in academic subjects, and who are ready to study somewhere that is not school.

That is also at the heart of the Department's work: extending opportunity, giving a real choice to young people and unlocking ambition for everyone.

Our recently published Social Mobility Action Plan – Unlocking Talent, Fulfilling Potential – talked about a high quality post-16 education choice for all young people.

We have more people going to university than ever before, including more disadvantaged young people, but we need to expand access further to the best universities. We need rewarding careers and jobs that develop the potential of everyone.

In December, I was very pleased to launch the Government's careers strategy. It sets out a long-term plan to build a world-class careers system that will help young people and adults choose the career that's right for them. This was a long time waiting for an announcement. For me the front cover says it all. Skills is the largest word. The strategy aims for every school and college to have an excellent dedicated Careers Leader and you can play your part working alongside schools, FE colleges, universities and other local organisations.

For me, meeting the challenge of both making sure people are, and feel, they can change the direction of their lives – becoming socially mobile – is at the core of why I do this job. I will be your champion within government,

ensuring your contribution and that drive for social mobility is understood.

You have a key role in helping young people from disadvantaged backgrounds do well at university. And, by working together on this shared purpose, we are more likely to succeed. I try very hard never to use the word partnership, as it goes in the category of political clichés. But working together in a meaningful, constructive, dynamic and effective way matters. It can make a difference.

At the Association of Colleges Conference, I spoke about changing the way we work together. I want to continue that discussion with you, both directly and through the Sixth Form College Association about your particular challenges and discuss any upcoming opportunities and how we can work together differently.

There are three key areas that matter.

The first of those is support: from Government, for the sector. Money matters, I know, but there are also other issues that can make a difference.

Wherever we can, we want to harness capacity to improve from within the sector through collaboration, rather than relying on competition to achieve improvement.

That's what we are doing through the new Strategic College Improvement Fund and with the new National Leaders for Further Education programme.

I am pleased that out of the six applications approved for the pilot phase of the Improvement Fund, two are from sixth form colleges. We have recently recruited the first of our new cohort of National Leaders and I am pleased that this includes Peter McGee from the outstanding St John Rigby Sixth Form College. He will work to help improvement in colleges. And for those of you that are academies, we have recently extended the Strategic Schools Improvement Fund so that it also covers all post-16 institutions. I said we want to harness capacity from within the sector through collaboration, but where that capacity doesn't exist we will invest with these funds in programmes such as the Strategic College Improvement Fund and the National Leaders of Further Education.

I know there is widespread concern about the level of funding for 16-19 year olds and in particular for those young people who will continue to follow academic programmes rather than taking new T-levels.

When we made the commitment in the 2015 Spending Review to protect the base rate of £4,000 per student per year until at least 2020, that did set spending plans for the next few years and we are still operating within that Spending Review plan. You would like more, I know. With more you can do more.

However, we have announced additional money as an incentive to grow participation in level 3 maths, with an extra £600 per year for those above the baseline. Again, there is potential here for sixth form colleges to benefit. Yes, we will always return to the question of funding in the longer term and will want to continue to talk to the sector about how to secure the

high quality education all our young people need, but to do this in an sustainable and affordable way. Sixth form colleges undoubtedly have a key role in this.

It would be another cliché for me to say “we also want and need to play an active role in ensuring everyone in society reaches their fullest potential.”

But I think you will agree that none of us can develop the best response to many of the biggest challenges we face if any of us work in isolation. Only by working together, will we realise our shared ambition of world class sixth form provision for everybody. Richard Atkins’ work as FE Commissioner is an example of this.

You will know that I have recently extended his role to include sixth form colleges. As well as supporting sixth form colleges to overcome quality or finance issues, he will now step in to support colleges earlier to prevent quality or finance becoming issues in the first place. Richard has an outstanding record, raising standards and improving outcomes for learners, and his unique viewpoint has been of benefit to many colleges. As principal at Exeter College, Richard ensured the college delivered high quality A Level provision giving him insight into the challenges and benefits that come with that. For those of you that lead 16-19 academies, Regional Schools Commissioners play a similar role.

The area review programme has also helped colleges to think differently. For example, Priestley College in Warrington, Cheshire was a trailblazer, converting to academy status as part of the newly formed The Challenge Academy Trust. Formalising some of the partnerships that emerged as part of the borough wide work during the area review, the Trust brings together existing academies and maintained schools.

If we are to produce world-class provision, every educator in a region must work together for the good of their learners and local communities. Priestley College, at the centre of their learning community, is a shining example of this.

The third area I want to touch on is the role you have to play within the local communities you serve, going further in looking outwards to your local communities.

We should all strive to do more, to reach out to new ideas, to new relationships. We should not remain parochial, but always be looking for new ways to do things, such as innovative ways to make use of your collective resources for learners in your communities or being flexible and reaching out to other organisations and providers. Stale does not work. I am constantly looking for better ways of doing things. No wholesale change. But have we missed an opportunity? Could we extend the reach of good colleges? What about the children who find academic work a challenge? This is why I wanted to be an Education Minister – your Minister. Being open to new ways of thinking, being flexible around how we provide learning opportunities and having a learner centred focus will only improve what we are doing and what we are providing.

As members of an increasingly diverse organisation, you being here today, continuing long-standing collaboration and beginning new ones with each other, will ensure that high quality post-16 education choice for all young people becomes a reality.

As Ministers we are fortunate to have very helpful officials who draft us our speeches. And like many draft speeches, I read the conclusion ended with the words that "this is a hugely exciting and challenging time". What does that mean? It is possibly political speak for the fact that the challenge is money.

But I guess it is exciting too. Exciting because with the government focus on social mobility clear, we have a choice to change people's lives.

Without you – we cannot do this. Your hard work, your commitment and your belief in what you are doing will make that government focus on social mobility become a reality.