

# Levelling up boost for Yorkshire as new National Infrastructure Commission site announced in Leeds

- New office will support the Government's drive to distribute investment and opportunity across the country
- Move is part of Government's commitment to level up the UK and make more decisions outside of London

The National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) is opening a new office in Leeds, Chancellor Rishi Sunak has announced today, as the Government continues to deliver on its levelling up agenda.

The NIC, which provides impartial, expert advice to government on major long-term economic infrastructure challenges, will have a new site in the city by the end of 2023. It will also keep a presence in London. The Commission carries out in-depth studies into the UK's major infrastructure needs – covering transport, energy, water, flood protection, waste and digital infrastructure – and makes recommendations to the government.

There are currently around 50 staff working for the NIC, and the new office will ensure that those advising on future infrastructure are more representative of the public they serve.

The move will help bolster the NIC's role in addressing regional differences in infrastructure needs. It is part of the government's commitment to move 22,000 civil service positions out of London and the South East by 2030, through the Places for Growth programme.

The NIC joins the UK Infrastructure Bank which opened its headquarters in Leeds in June. The Bank is tasked with accelerating investment into ambitious infrastructure projects, cutting emissions and levelling up every part of the UK.

## **Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak said:**

We are committed to delivering high-quality infrastructure across all regions of the UK – and the National Infrastructure Commission plays an invaluable role in this.

That is why it's fantastic to announce that the National Infrastructure Commission will be opening a new office in Leeds. This will help distribute investment and opportunity right across the country as we level up opportunities, boost the economy and help create jobs.

**Sir John Armitt, Chair of the National Infrastructure Commission, said:**

It's great to be establishing a second base in Leeds. It is not only a great city to live and work in, but the move underlines the Commission's role in advising government on the role infrastructure can play in boosting local economies and improving quality of life right across the UK.

We look forward to continuing to work with local leaders as the Commission starts work on our next major assessment of the country's infrastructure needs for the future, to be published in 2023.

Last year the Government kickstarted an infrastructure revolution by publishing the National Infrastructure Strategy which laid out plans to upgrade road, rail and digital infrastructure.

Since then, the Government has committed over £130 billion to economic infrastructure, including £5.7 billion over five years to eight city regions in order to boost urban transport connectivity. We've also committed £5 billion to support the rollout of gigabit-capable broadband in hard to reach areas through Project Gigabit, completed over 90 per cent of the £850 million M4 Junction 3-12 upgrade, which will be open in spring 2022, and launched the UK Infrastructure Bank, which is expected to unlock more than £40 billion of infrastructure investment.

Alongside that, a further 15 Town Deals were confirmed in July, allocating £335 million to revitalise towns across England, as part of the government's plan to level up English regions.

**Further information**

- Around 40 per cent of staff are expected to be Leeds-based in the future.
- Last month, the NIC publicly launched its work on the second National Infrastructure Assessment (NIA 2) due to be published in the second half of 2023. In the NIA 2, the Commission will make recommendations to address the key challenges for the UK's economic infrastructure for the coming decades.
- The NIC's ground-breaking 2018 National Infrastructure Assessment (NIA) of the country's infrastructure needs, and specific studies such as those on rail, towns, freight, and resilience, have played an essential role in the government's infrastructure policy.
- The analysis the NIC has provided has supported the government's

ambition to deliver a radical improvement in the quality of the UK's infrastructure to help level up the country, put the UK on the path to net zero emissions by 2050 and deliver for all parts of the UK.