

Marking the Centenary of Northern Ireland

The Secretary of State, Rt Hon Brandon Lewis MP, has welcomed the Prime Minister's announcement of plans to establish a Centenary Forum, and a Centenary Historical Advisory Panel as part of the Government's plans to mark 100 years since the creation of Northern Ireland, and the formation of the United Kingdom as we know it today.

The centenary is an opportunity to celebrate the people, places and products of Northern Ireland, which has such rich sporting, cultural, entrepreneurial and academic talent. It is an occasion to promote Northern Ireland as an attractive place to visit, invest and do business – a place where our young people choose to stay and use their talent to build.

As part of the New Decade, New Approach deal, the UK Government committed to working alongside the NI Executive to mark the centenary of Northern Ireland in 2021 – today's announcement is an important step towards realising this commitment, and delivering national recognition and international awareness of this important anniversary.

Speaking earlier today, the Secretary of State, the Rt Hon Brandon Lewis MP, said,

I am delighted that the Prime Minister is in Northern Ireland today, and has announced the first stage of our plans to mark this centenary. This is a fantastic opportunity for people right across the UK to celebrate Northern Ireland and its integral place within our Union. We will use the centenary next year to promote it on the world stage, celebrating its people, culture, traditions and enterprise and its vital contribution to the United Kingdom.

The establishment of a Centenary Forum and Centenary Historical Advisory Panel will offer us the opportunity to work with a broad spectrum of people, including those from across the political parties, business, tourism and the voluntary and community sectors, to deliver an ambitious and exciting programme of events to mark this significant national anniversary for the UK.

Following formal acceptance of invitations to join the Centenary Forum and Historical Advisory Panel, it is expected that these groups will have their first meetings later this month. Further details on the centenary programme plans will be available in the autumn.