

News story: UK government funds City of Derry air link

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Government announces £3.8 million for a Londonderry to London air route to begin at the end of March.

The UK government has today announced £3.8 million for a Londonderry to London air route, following the decision by current operator Ryanair to stop serving the air link at the end of March.

BMI Regional has been chosen as the preferred operator for the route between City of Derry Airport and London Stansted, following a competitive tender process by Derry City & Strabane District Council.

Flights will begin on Sunday 26 March and the government will fund the route over the 2017/18 and 2018/19 financial years.

The new service will include two return flights each day, except for Saturdays which will have one flight each way.

Aviation Minister Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon said:

The UK government has worked closely with Derry City and Strabane District Council to protect this important route to City of Derry Airport. £3.8 million UK Government funding will allow 13 return flights to connect Londonderry to London every week. The new service will allow business passengers to get to central London and complete a full day's work before returning home.

This is the first ever government backing for a public service obligation (PSO) in Northern Ireland. The government maintains regional airport links through the [Regional Air Connectivity Fund](#), which can be used to protect important regional air connections to London which may otherwise be lost.