

# Prime Minister hails levelling up in action as government unveils raft of new policies

Press release

Plans for better high streets, stronger schools and more jobs outside of London will be unveiled by the government.



- Government sets out new initiatives to level up the country backed by up to £860 million
- Better high streets, stronger schools and more public sector jobs to move outside of London
- PM hails 'levelling up in action' and vows to drive forward his agenda to transform lives and livelihoods by spreading opportunity equally across the UK

Plans for better high streets, stronger schools and more jobs outside of London will be unveiled by the government today as part of its plan to level up opportunities for people and communities across the UK.

As we recover from the pandemic, the Prime Minister has committed to delivering an ambitious set of policies that will reduce long-standing inequalities, which have been further exacerbated by Covid-19.

His levelling up agenda will focus on improving living standards, investing in our essential public services and increasing access to opportunities so people can thrive no matter where they live.

Government departments will today set out a range of new policies which focus on better access to high-quality education, improved infrastructure in our town centres, and more public sector jobs outside of London – all of which are at the heart of levelling up.

They include:

- 57 local areas have been confirmed as recipients of our £830 million investment to transform high streets across the country into vibrant places to live, work and shop. As a result of the funding, Grimsby will create a new cinema and market food hall to boost visitor numbers, Taunton will build a new outdoor performance venue and Sutton-in-Ashfield will repurpose vacant retail space into offices and hospitality venues.
- More support for four local authorities – Plymouth, Ashfield & Mansfield, South Sefton & North Liverpool, and North Durham & City – to improve the quality of their teaching, backed by £10 million. These areas have lower than average numbers of pupils in good or outstanding schools. They will also be encouraged to join multi-academy trusts so pupils can benefit from being part of a strong group of schools that provide the best possible education.
- An £18 million expansion of the Opportunity Areas programme for the fifth year running, which helps vulnerable young people from the most disadvantaged areas in the country. Funding will go to areas including Blackpool, Derby, Oldham and West Somerset and could be used to help children improve in key subjects such as maths and English, support pupils who are at risk of falling out of education or give older students the confidence and skills to make the leap from school into work.
- More than 3,000 civil service jobs across the Home Office and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy will be relocated to hubs in Stoke-on-Trent, Edinburgh and Belfast by 2025, creating more opportunities to work in the public sector outside of London. This is part of the government's commitment to move 22,000 civil service roles outside of London and the South East by 2030, ensuring more policy makers reflect the communities they serve.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

As the country gets back on its feet, the government has renewed its commitment to levelling up and tackling the issues that really matter to people.

Making sure our children get the best possible education, transforming our town centres and correcting the regional imbalance of public sector roles – this is levelling up in action.

Not only will we beat the pandemic and recover from its impact, I am determined to seize the opportunity it presents to create a fairer society, improve lives and build back better once and for all.

The new policies deliver directly on the government's commitment to transform lives and livelihoods and drive growth across the country by spreading opportunity equally, which is at the forefront of the Prime Minister's vision for the UK.

He has also committed to publishing a Levelling Up White Paper later this year, which will set out further policy interventions to improve lives as we recover from the pandemic.

A new No. 10/Cabinet Office Unit has recently been set up to drive forward work on the White Paper, with the Prime Minister appointing Neil O'Brien as his Levelling Up Adviser.

Published 19 May 2021