

[Press release: New measures to back British shale gas exploration](#)

A new package of measures to deliver on the government's manifesto pledge to continue supporting the development of British shale gas was announced today (Thursday 17 May) as part of the modern Industrial Strategy, by Energy and Clean Growth Minister Claire Perry and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government James Brokenshire.

[Read the Written Ministerial Statement.](#)

The package includes:

- Streamlining and improving the regulation process for shale applications to ensure decisions are made in a timely way and developers and local authorities are supported through the process. This will include setting up a Shale Environmental Regulator and new Planning Brokerage Service which would focus exclusively on the planning process and will have no role in the consideration or determination of planning applications. The service will not comment on the merits of a case and will also have no role in the appeals process.
- Launching a new £1.6 million shale support fund over the next 2 years to build capacity and capability in local authorities dealing with shale applications
- Holding a consultation on the principle of whether the early stages of shale exploration should be treated as permitted development, and in particular on the circumstances in which this might be appropriate
- Consulting on the criteria required to trigger the inclusion of shale production projects into the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects regime

Energy and Clean Growth Minister Claire Perry said:

British shale gas has the potential to help lower bills and increase the security of the UK's energy supply while creating high quality jobs in a cutting-edge sector. This package of measures delivers on our manifesto promise to support shale and it will ensure exploration happens in the most environmentally responsible way while making it easier for companies and local communities to work together.

[Press release: Hiring a car for your wedding?](#)

Rolls-Royces, Bentleys and Daimlers were among the most popular luxury choices of car when getting married, with a black cab, fire engine and even a golf buggy standing out among the quirkier ways people chose to arrive on their big day.

While around 70% said they had the exact choice of transport they wanted, a horse and carriage was revealed as the most popular dream choice – perhaps inspired by the royal couple – for those who would have preferred to have had something different. Others said they would have liked to have made a more dramatic arrival, preferring to arrive by vintage bus, helicopter or even motorboat.

Deciding on how to get there – and who will be doing the driving – is a vital part of any wedding checklist. But around 37% did not realise that the quickest and easiest way to view or share driving licence information when hiring a car is by using DVLA's [View and Share](#) driving licence service.

With so much to get ticked off ahead of the occasion, this service could help take away a lot of the hassle for whoever is doing the driving – whether they're hiring a 1976 Rolls Royce Silver Shadow, a Ford Capri or the latest Audi R8.

Dudley Ashford, Head of Drivers Services at DVLA explains:

You can use DVLA's online service to view your driving record, and to find out the types of vehicles you can drive. You can also check for any penalty points or disqualifications. It's also the simplest way for the person driving on the big day to share their driving record with a car hire company.

The service can be found [here](#).

Quoted statistics are based on responses to a DVLA survey.

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Press release: Government to cut Fixed Odds Betting Terminals maximum stake from £100 to £2

The maximum stakes on Fixed Odds Betting Terminals (FOBTs) are to be reduced from £100 to £2 to reduce the risk of gambling-related harm, Minister for Sport and Civil Society Tracey Crouch announced today.

The move comes off the back of a [consultation](#) with the public and the industry to ensure that we have the right balance between a sector that can grow and contribute to the economy and one that is socially responsible and doing all it should to protect consumers and communities.

The government wants to reduce the potential for large losses on FOBT ([category B2](#)) machines and the risk of harm to both the player and wider communities. Following analysis of consultation responses and advice from the Gambling Commission, the government believes that a cut to £2 will best achieve this.

The [Gambling Commission](#) has also been tasked to take forward discussions with the industry to improve player protection measures on B1 and B3 category machines, looking at spend and time limits.

DCMS Secretary of State Matt Hancock said:

When faced with the choice of halfway measures or doing everything we can to protect vulnerable people, we have chosen to take a stand. These machines are a social blight and prey on some of the most vulnerable in society, and we are determined to put a stop to it and build a fairer society for all.

Minister for Sport and Civil Society Tracey Crouch said:

Problem gambling can devastate individuals' lives, families and communities. It is right that we take decisive action now to ensure a responsible gambling industry that protects the most vulnerable in our society. By reducing FOBT stakes to £2 we can help stop extreme losses by those who can least afford it.

While we want a healthy gambling industry that contributes to the economy, we also need one that does all it can to protect players. We are increasing protections around online gambling, doing more on research, education and treatment of problem gambling and ensuring tighter rules around gambling advertising. We will work with the industry on the impact of these changes and are confident that this innovative sector will step up and help achieve this balance.

In addition to the reduction to FOBT stakes the government has today confirmed:

- The Gambling Commission will toughen up protections around online gambling including stronger age verification rules and proposals to require operators to set limits on consumers' spending until affordability checks have been conducted.
- A major multi-million pound advertising campaign promoting responsible gambling, supported by industry and GambleAware, will be launched later this year.
- The Industry Group for Responsible Gambling (IGRG) has amended its code to ensure that a responsible gambling message will appear for the duration of all TV adverts.
- Public Health England will carry out a review of the evidence relating to the public health harms of gambling.
- As part of the next licence competition the age limit for playing National Lottery games will be reviewed, to take into accounts developments in the market and the risk of harm to young people.

In order to cover any negative impact on the public finances, and to protect funding for vital public services, this change will be linked to an increase in Remote Gaming Duty, paid by online gaming operators, at the relevant Budget.

Changes to the stake will be through secondary legislation. The move will need parliamentary approval and we will also engage with the gambling industry to ensure it is given sufficient time to implement and complete the technological changes.

Notes to Editors

For further information please contact: DCMS Press Office on: 020 7211 6276 / 6971

- Gambling is devolved in Northern Ireland, but substantially reserved in Scotland and Wales. However, as of 23 May 2016, the Scottish Parliament and Scottish Ministers have the executive and legislative competence to vary the number of high-staking gaming machines authorised by a new betting premises licence in Scotland. Under the Wales Act 2017, identical powers were transferred to the Welsh Ministers and the National Assembly for Wales.
- We are committed to working constructively with devolved administrations as we move towards implementation of the £2 stake limit on B2 gaming machines.
- B1 machines are in casinos with a maximum stake of £5 with a maximum pay-out of £10,000 (or progressive jackpot of £20,000)
- B3 machines are located in casino, betting, arcade and bingo venues with a maximum stake of £2 and a maximum pay-out of £500.
- Remote Gaming Duty is paid by all companies who earn revenue through offering online gaming to British residents. It is currently set at 15% of operator's profits.

[Press release: Dr Liam Fox launches global investment drive, bringing more than £30 billion to the UK](#)

- part of the modern [Industrial Strategy](#), setting out how the government is building a Britain fit for the future – helping businesses create better, higher-paying jobs in every part of the UK
- online one stop shop invest.great.gov.uk launched to help global investors find UK projects
- High Potential Opportunities scheme to be extended across more than 20 new sectors and areas of the UK after pilot schemes in Doncaster, Telford and Greater Manchester
- as the Board of Trade meets in Stirling, Dr Fox recognises the exceptional international trading performance of 6 Scottish companies with Board of Trade Awards (BOFTAs)

International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox will today (Thursday 17 May) launch a new drive to attract foreign investment into the UK at a meeting of the Board of Trade in Stirling.

The Department for International Trade (DIT) is promoting 68 UK investment projects worth more than £30 billion to overseas investors. Dr Fox will also extend the highly successful High Potential Opportunities scheme, piloted in Doncaster's rail industry, Telford's agri-tech sector, and Greater Manchester's innovative graphene-based lightweight materials sector to new industries and parts of the UK.

Dr Liam Fox, International Trade Secretary and President of the Board of Trade, said:

This is a bold and ambitious programme, building on the UK's position as the leading destination for foreign investment in Europe through the government's modern Industrial Strategy, helping to build a Britain fit for the future.

The High Potential Opportunities scheme will deliver growth where it is most needed, ensuring that the benefits of global investment are felt in every part of the country.

And with more than £30 billion worth of new opportunities, my international economic department's overseas network is working hard to attract top investors to the UK.

DIT works directly with companies in 177 cities in 108 countries around the world. Last year, DIT helped attract 2,265 investment projects which created or safeguarded 108,000 jobs in the UK.

The 68 projects worth more than £30 billion, with more to be added over the coming months, will also be promoted through a [revamped online one stop shop for potential investors: invest.great.gov.uk](https://invest.great.gov.uk).

The extended High Potential Opportunities scheme is now taking applications from business organisations, Local Enterprise Partnerships and councils from across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. In the first phase, more than 20 new sectors and areas of the UK will benefit from a boost in investment – creating new jobs and securing the UK's prosperity.

Carolyn Fairbairn, CBI Director-General, said:

The UK has a strong standing when it comes to attracting investment to these shores. That investment leads to real, tangible benefits for people and communities – more jobs, prosperity and choice.

The International Trade Department's drive to attract billions of pounds worth of investment to projects in each corner of the country is warmly welcomed by firms.

The new online catalogue of British projects for global investors to find and research will also be a vital tool to attracting even more capital to the UK, enabling the benefits of free trade and investment to flow into our communities.

Through the modern Industrial Strategy, the government is setting out a long-term plan to boost the productivity and earning power of people throughout the UK. It sets out how the government is building a Britain fit for the future – helping businesses create better, higher-paying jobs in every part of the UK with investment in skills, industries and infrastructure.

Whilst in Scotland, Dr Fox will also announce the winners of the BOFTAs – Board of Trade Awards. Six companies are being recognised for their excellence in international trade, demonstrating innovation, creativity and entrepreneurialism.

The BOFTA winners are:

- world-leading bus and coach manufacturers Alexander Dennis from Falkirk
- Speyside Distillery from the Cairngorm Mountains
- oil and gas company EnerQuip from Aberdeen
- plastics suppliers McGavigan from Glasgow
- Bowalds Energy from Aberdeen
- Glasgow-based power generation company Aggreko

Further information

The Department for International Trade (DIT) secures UK and global prosperity by promoting and financing international trade and investment, and championing free trade. We are an international economic department, responsible for:

- bringing together policy, promotion and financial expertise to break down barriers to trade and investment, and help businesses succeed
- delivering a new trade policy framework for the UK as we leave the EU
- promoting British trade and investment across the world
- building the global appetite for British goods and services

Details of the 68 projects being promoted by DIT, by location and value:

East Midlands

- Loughborough University Science & Enterprise Park, Loughborough, £625

million

- Island Site, Nottingham, £500 million
- Ashton Green, Leicester, £480 million
- Drakelow Park, Derbyshire, £360 million
- Waterside, Nottingham, £340 million
- Grantham Southern Quadrant, Lincolnshire, £200 million
- Tudor Cross, Bolsover, £175 million
- Heart of the City, Derby, £165 million
- Space Park Leicester, Leicester, £100 million
- Boots Enterprise Zone, Nottingham, £100 million

East of England

- Wisbech Garden Town, Cambridgeshire, £2,500 million
- CAMRO, Ely, £800 million
- Nelson Quay, King's Lynn, £120 million

Northern Ireland

- Sirocco Quays, Belfast, £465 million
- Titanic Quarter, Belfast, £365 million
- Weavers Cross, Belfast, £250 million
- McAleer & Rushe, Belfast, £175 million
- One Bankmore Square, Belfast, £100 million
- 21–29 Corporation St, Belfast, £92 million
- Norwich Union House, Belfast, £54 million
- Baptist Church, Belfast, £30 million

Northern Powerhouse

- Wirral Waters, Wirral, Merseyside, £4,000 million
- Trafford Waters, Manchester, £1,000 million
- Kirkstall Forge, Leeds, £400 million
- Protos, Cheshire, £300 million
- MediaCityUK, Manchester, £300 million
- Property Alliance Group Portfolio, Manchester, £300 million
- Pall Mall Exchange, Liverpool, £150 million
- Stockport Exchange, Stockport, £140 million
- Future Carrington, Manchester, £100 million
- Liverpool Waters, Liverpool, £100 million

West Midlands

- UK Central Hub and HS2 Interchange, Solihull, £2,000 million
- Birmingham International Station, Birmingham, £1,400 million
- Birmingham Curzon, Birmingham, £1,000 million
- Friargate Coventry, Coventry, £700 million
- i54 Western Extension, Wolverhampton, £600 million
- Paradise, Birmingham, £550 million
- Stafford Gateway North, Stafford, £381 million

- Stoke-on-Trent City Centre, Stoke-on-Trent, £310 million
- Worcester Growth Corridor, Worcester, £300 million
- MIRA Technology Park Southern Manufacturing Sector, Nuneaton, £150 million
- Interchange Commercial District, Wolverhampton, £150 million
- Skylon Park, Hereford, £105 million
- Telford Investment Cluster, Telford, £105 million
- Redditch Gateway, Redditch, £100 million

Scotland

- Dundee Waterfront, Dundee, £500 million
- Buchanan Wharf, Glasgow, £350 million
- Magenta, Glasgow, £280 million
- AMIDS, Renfrewshire, £244 million
- Edinburgh International Business Gateway, Edinburgh, £185 million
- Queen's Square, Aberdeen, £150 million
- Bothwell Street, Glasgow, £140 million
- George Street Complex, Glasgow, £100 million
- Perth West, Perth, £100 million

South East

- Otterpool Park, Folkestone, £2,000 million
- Fawley Waterside, Hampshire, £1,000 million
- Hickstead Science & Technology Park, Sussex, £350 million
- Bexhill Enterprise Park, Sussex, £150 million
- Bargate Quarter, Southampton, £150 million

South West

- UK Cyber Park, Cheltenham, £600 million
- West Carclaze, Cornwall, £400 million
- Gateway Development, Plymouth, £100 million

Yorkshire & Humber

- Sirius Minerals Polyhalite Project, North Yorkshire and Teeside, £2,900 million
- York Central, York, £750 million
- Axiom Regional Shopping Centre, Wakefield, £400 million
- Aero Centre Yorkshire, Doncaster, £100 million
- Unity Doncaster, Doncaster, £100 million

Wales

- Penrhos Coastal Holiday Resort, Anglesey, North Wales, £105 million

In all, the 68 projects are worth £33,791,000,000

The government's Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Strategy

The government's Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Strategy consists of operational changes which will:

- improve the effectiveness of our work and help teams to focus on the projects which contribute most to the UK economy
- clearly define DIT's priorities for promoting investment opportunities

DIT has been working closely with colleagues across government to ensure the closest possible alignment of activity to support the Industrial Strategy's initiatives around supporting the business environment, growing clusters and sectors, and the promotion of FDI through DIT's FDI strategy.

This will deliver a more targeted approach to promotion and investor support, and better address market failures to maximise wealth creation across the UK.

From next financial year, we will change our measure of performance from the volume of projects landed to a comprehensive measure of economic impact.

Alongside this, we will work with local partners to build a portfolio of 'High Potential Opportunities' across the UK to promote investment opportunities showcasing UK sector strengths, skills bases, cost bases and infrastructure programmes that are not readily referenced by current market information and have a high potential to deliver economic benefits.

This will enable us to be more responsive to the needs of foreign investors and better match investor requirements with opportunities across the UK that have the capacity to drive high value growth and jobs.

Details of the existing High Potential Opportunities (HPO) pilot schemes

HPO commercialising new technologies for high productivity food production (Telford)

- High productivity food production is set to disrupt agriculture markets due to growing demand for food and scarce land resource. Innovation breakthroughs in satellite imaging, remote sensing and precision farming are ready for commercialisation.
- Telford is home to Harper Adams University, a world-leader in agri-tech research and home of the National Centre for Precision Farming – developing automation, drones, autonomous systems, with strong links to and appetite to work with business. The area has an advanced engineering cluster with crossover technologies, eg remote sensors, and availability of development-ready land with pro-active planning and landing support from council.

HPO rail rolling stock supply chain (Doncaster)

- An ageing fleet with passenger and freight numbers that are increasing, the size of UK rolling stock growing faster than at any time in decades, combined with government commitments on rail projects, the arrival of HS2, and a significant level of imports ripe for substitution, creates a pipeline of UK demand offering a multitude of supply chain opportunities in procurement.
- Rail has been a major part of Doncaster's economy for over 150 years: strong infrastructure includes iPortrail, at the heart of the UK's intermodal transport network. The region offers a rail cluster of 50 companies and 8,000 rail employees, and a pool of talent to provide the employees of today. This is future proofed by the National College for High Speed Rail, developing a pipeline of work ready talent for tomorrow.

HPO lightweight and specialist materials for the transport sector (Greater Manchester: Rochdale, Bury, Oldham)

There is a global opportunity in lightweight materials for transport applications:

- light alloys
- technical textiles
- coatings
- graphene and 2D materials
- materials for demanding environments

Greater Manchester offers a gateway to opportunities in lightweight structures throughout the North West, the rest of the UK, and across Europe. The unique ecosystem offers the ability to move from research and testing, to commencing small scale production, and includes scaling up in the UK (rather than abroad) with the benefits of retaining your people, networks and importantly links to world class research.

For more information:

- Contact the DIT Media Team on 020 7215 2000 or email baylee.turner@trade.gov.uk
- Follow us [@tradegovuk](https://twitter.com/tradegovuk) and at [gov.uk/dit](https://www.gov.uk/dit)

[Press release: PM pledges ongoing UK support for building stability and](#)

prosperity in the Western Balkans

Prime Minister Theresa May will underline the UK's unconditional commitment to maintaining Europe's security and upholding European values on her visit to Macedonia today (17 May 2018) – the first visit to the Western Balkans by a serving UK Prime Minister for almost 20 years.

The PM will begin the day in Sofia at the EU's Western Balkans Summit, where she will restate the UK's desire to work with European allies to promote greater stability, security and prosperity across the region.

Travelling on to Macedonia, Theresa May will be the first British Prime Minister to set foot in the Western Balkans since Tony Blair visited in 1999. Here she will meet with Prime Minister Zaev to discuss the programme of reforms his government is undertaking to strengthen democracy, uphold the rule of law, and reach out to its neighbours, as well as progress on negotiations with Greece on the Name Issue.

On International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, the Prime Minister will also meet with LGBT activists to discuss their experiences and the shifting culture in Macedonia.

The Prime Minister will end her trip by speaking at a reception in Parliament, which will be attended by politicians, officials, military personnel and future leaders from across Macedonian society.

Prime Minister, Theresa May said:

This year, as we mark the 25th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Macedonia and the UK, the ties between our countries are stronger than ever.

Next year the UK is leaving the European Union, but we are not leaving Europe – and we will continue to work with our allies to protect our collective security and champion the European values that so many in Macedonia and the wider Western Balkans share.

I'm looking forward to hearing from Prime Minister Zaev and others about the progress the country is making towards a more progressive, prosperous and democratic Macedonia.

At the EU's Western Balkans summit in Sofia, the 28 leaders in the EU and the 6 leaders in the Western Balkans will discuss the next steps in helping the Western Balkans continue on its path to stability, free from conflict and malign influence, and able to tackle its own problems.

The UK will host a Western Balkans Summit on 10 July in London, focussing on strengthening regional security cooperation; increasing economic stability; and fostering greater political cooperation. This will be the fifth annual

Summit as part of the Berlin Process that Chancellor Merkel launched in 2014.