

Press release: UK and Kenya Host Research Symposium on Affordable Housing

By 2030, nearly half of Kenyans will be living in cities. With half of Kenya's population aged under 18, many young people are moving to urban areas in search of jobs, opportunities and more choices. Kenya's growing urban population need sustainable, resilient, affordable housing; getting this right is key to Kenya's development.

In recognition of this, the UK and Kenya co-hosted a two-day symposium on affordable housing and sustainable infrastructure on 21 and 22 May at Strathmore University, supported by the Global Challenges Research Fund and the UK Collaborative on Development Research.

The symposium brought together more than 200 policymakers, leading researchers, business and civil society delegates to explore the potential for new innovative collaboration on affordable housing and sustainable infrastructure.

Hosted at the request of the UK-Kenya High-Level Oversight Board on Science, Technology and Innovation, the symposium showcased how strong partnerships between UK and Kenyan stakeholders are delivering innovations in housing and urban development – from changing how people apply for mortgages, to using technology to turn plastic waste into pavements.

Among those in attendance were the British High Commissioner to Kenya Nic Hailey, Chief Administrative Secretary Ministry of Transport Hon Chris Obure, Housing Secretary State Department of Housing and Urban Development Patrick Bucha and Katherine Muoki Director of Infrastructure, Science, Technology and Innovation, State Department of Planning.

Speaking at the event, British High Commissioner Nic Hailey reiterated the UK Government's commitment to progress on affordable housing and sustainable infrastructure.

He said:

The UK is proud to support the Big 4 agenda in Kenya, and to work with the Kenyan Government to address the challenge of delivering affordable housing for all. To deliver on this policy priority, we need to leverage research, technology and innovation, and this joint symposium is doing just that.

Minister for Africa, Harriett Baldwin said:

Affordable Housing and Sustainable Infrastructure are challenges everywhere, so it is good news that the UK and Kenya are working together to turn world-leading research and innovation into practical solutions to benefit us all.

Mr. Peter Okwanyo, Secretary Administration, State Department for University Education and Research, Ministry of Education said:

Research, Science, Technology and Innovation presents a unique platform for the generation of new knowledge to overcome barriers to affordable housing, healthy cities, resilience and affordable urban infrastructure. Affordable housing is recognized as an enabler to the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the UK-Kenya Partnership is a powerful tool for application in the enhancement of their attainment.

Dr Jaideep Gupte, GCRF Challenge leader for cities and sustainable infrastructure said:

Ensuring urban residents have access to affordable and adequate housing is one of the big issues in Kenya. Building new houses is only part of the solution which also involves providing access to health and education services, safe public spaces and to the jobs and opportunities that are replete in cities. Recent GCRF investments support Kenya-UK collaborations doing cutting edge and policy relevant research on issues ranging accessing healthcare to embedding disaster risk management into urban development.

The symposium was organized by the Governments of the UK and Kenya with support from the UK Collaborative on Development Research (UKCDR), UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) through the Global Challenges Research Fund and Strathmore University. The symposium showcased innovative housing technologies and research from around the world.

A joint statement from the UK and Kenyan Government [UK-Kenya Housing Symposium Joint Statement](#) (ODT, 500KB) following the symposium announced a commitment to continue working together on affordable housing and sustainable infrastructure research, policy and practice in Kenya.

The Joint UK-Kenya Oversight Board in Research, Science and Innovation was established in 2018 to provide strategic guidance on UK-Kenya partnerships on science and innovation and is co-chaired by the British High Commissioner in Kenya and the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Education, Kenya.

The UK's contribution to affordable housing research in Kenya is worth an estimated £13.0m (initiated between FY 2013/2014 –2017/18 and active during 2017/18) with 15 research projects relating to housing in Kenya focused on:

- Public land use
 - Upgrading slums and informal settlements
 - Zoning and urban planning
 - Social housing
 - Supportive ecosystems and infrastructure
 - Competitive construction costs
 - Green building codes for sustainability
 - Social housing
 - Access to affordable financing for housing

Through the five-year £60 million [Sustainable Urban Economic Development \(SUED\) programme](#) the UK is also supporting 10 municipalities across Kenya develop sustainable urban economic plans and attract investment for critical infrastructure and value chain projects.

The [Global Challenges Research Fund \(GCRF\)](#) supports cutting-edge research and innovation that addresses the global issues faced by developing countries. It is a £1.5 billion fund which forms part of the UK Government's Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitment and is overseen by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), and delivered through nine delivery partners including UK Research and Innovation (comprising the research councils, Research England and Innovate UK), the UK Academies, the UK Space Agency and other funding bodies.

The [UK Collaborative for Development Research \(UKCDR\)](#) is a collaborative of government and research funders working in international development. UKCDR exists to amplify the value and impact of research for global development by promoting coherence, collaboration and joint action. The core contributing members include BEIS, Department for International Development (DfID), Department for Health & Social Care (DHSC), UKRI, and Wellcome Trust.

[Press release: £40m Great Yarmouth flood defence upgrade set to start](#)

Tidal defences in Great Yarmouth are set to receive a £40.3 million refurbishment, upgrading the level of protection from tidal flooding to more than 4,500 homes and businesses in the area. Nearly 4km of flood walls will be improved and updated as part of the project which will better protect the local community from the threat of east coast flooding.

Great Yarmouth has a history of flooding. During the 1953 east coast tidal surge, the tidal river defences in the town were breached in several places resulting in loss of life. More recently, in December 2013, approximately 9,000 people were urged to evacuate their homes as a result of the highest ever recorded tide in Great Yarmouth.

The work will see 46 flood defence walls refurbished at locations across the town using an innovative technique that will extend their lifespan by up to 30 years. It follows on from the initial five-year phase of work which included the use of a specialised dam, known as a limpet dam, to inspect and repair the steel sheet piles that form the flood walls in a dry environment that would otherwise be underwater.

Funding is now in place for the next phase of the multi-partner project, which is being led by the Environment Agency and due to start later this year.

The £40.3 million investment, plus £6.2 million for ongoing maintenance, has come from a range of sources including £32.4 million provided by central government. Partnership contributions have come from New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, £8.2 million through the Growth Deal programme, and £2.8 million from the Anglian Eastern Regional Flood & Coastal Committee. Norfolk County Council and Great Yarmouth Borough Council have also contributed towards the project and local quayside businesses are supporting through contributions and the provision of compound space.

Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey said:

I'm very pleased to see the funding is now in place for this significant improvement to Great Yarmouth's flood defences. An extra £5.4 million of funding was added to our standard Defra grant in view of additional regeneration objectives to allow this project to proceed with important partnership funding contributions.

Over £32million from direct government investment alongside the partnership funding will ensure 4,500 homes and businesses in the area are better protected from any future tidal flooding.

Sir James Bevan, Chief Executive of the Environment Agency said:

We have worked very closely with our partners to enable this important project to go ahead. The upgraded defences will ensure that the flood defences in Great Yarmouth provide the best standard of protection to the local community for many decades to come.

We are currently consulting on our Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy and this project is a perfect example of some of the ways in which, by working together, we can make communities more resilient for the future.

The first five-year phase of works to replace more than 500 metres of tidal defences was completed in early 2017.

The next phase of works is being delivered by the Environment Agency's contractor JBA-Bentley.

Preliminary work for this new phase of improvements began in February.

A public drop-in event is being held on 13 June, 2019 at the Kingsgate Community Church, Kings Centre, 30 Queen Anne's Road, Great Yarmouth, NR31 0LE.

The session, which runs from 2pm and 7pm, will offer people the chance to find out more about the project and the partners involved.

Cllr Carl Smith, leader of Great Yarmouth Borough Council, said:

The River Yare Tidal Defences are a huge benefit to everyone who lives in, works in and visits our borough, reducing flood risk to our homes, workplaces, and the highways and other vital infrastructure that we use every day, better protecting communities and helping the borough to realise its full economic potential.

Together with the Environment Agency and local businesses, the borough council has played an instrumental role over the years in securing this crucial and most welcome investment from multiple sources, helping with lobbying and developing the robust business case. I'm pleased that work will soon be getting underway on the second phase.

Chair of the Anglia Eastern RFCC, Paul Hayden OBE, said:

Members visited Great Yarmouth both to see the great work that has already been completed on flood defences in the town, and to show their support for partners working together to deliver these vital further improvements.

Our £2.8m contribution to these works comes from a Local Levy collected across Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Southend and Thurrock, and this investment is a demonstration of our commitment to protecting homes, jobs and businesses, and in encouraging further economic investment in the town.

Doug Field, chair of New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, said:

This project is a great example of how partnership working can deliver projects which have a real impact on our people, places and economy.

Great Yarmouth is a vital part of our all-energy coast. It sits at the centre of the world's largest market for offshore wind and is of huge strategic importance to our region.

By protecting homes and businesses and creating a safe environment for more to be created, these sea defences will allow the town to

reach its potential as a key contributor to our economy.

Cllr Andrew Proctor, Leader of Norfolk County Council said:

This refurbishment work will help to safeguard the future prosperity of Great Yarmouth. This is an important funding partnership which we are happy to support.

The Environment Agency has been leading a conversation with people and organisations who are affected by or work to manage flooding and coastal change. We are now consulting on a [draft strategy](#), which sets out a vision for a nation ready for, and resilient to, flooding and coastal change up to 2100.

Press release: Man has prison time increased after drunken assault

The prison sentence for a man who repeatedly kicked and punched a woman in a drunken rage has been increased, after the Attorney General's Office referred it to the Court of Appeal as being unduly lenient.

David Hurst, 57, was heavily intoxicated, falling over and knocking into people on Saturday 20 October 2018. He pushed the victim to the floor, kicked her and stamped on her head and body in an attack which lasted several minutes.

Hurst pleaded guilty to attempting to cause grievous bodily harm with intent and was sentenced to 21 months' imprisonment at Manchester Crown Court in March. That sentence has been increased to 4 and a half years following a hearing at the Court of Appeal today.

The case was referred under the Unduly Lenient Sentence scheme, which allows victims of crime and members of the public to ask for certain sentences to be reviewed. A case must be referred within 28 days of the date of sentencing and this deadline cannot be extended.

Speaking after the hearing the Solicitor General, Lucy Frazer QC MP, said:

"Hurst's attack was a sustained assault that carried the very real risk of serious injury to the victim. He intended to inflict more serious harm than actually resulted and the Court's decision to increase his sentence reflects that."

Speech: PM statement on new Brexit deal: 22 May 2019

With permission, Mr Speaker, I would like to make a statement on the Government's work to deliver Brexit by putting forward a new deal that members of this House can stand behind.

We need to see Brexit through, to honour the result of the referendum, and to deliver the change the British people so clearly demanded.

I sincerely believe that most members of this House feel the same.

That, for all our division and disagreement, we believe in democracy.

That we want to make good on the promise we made to the British people when we asked them to decide on the future of our EU membership.

As to how we make that happen, recent votes have shown that there is no majority in this House for leaving with no deal.

And this House has voted against revoking Article 50.

It is clear that the only way forward is leaving with a deal – but it is equally clear that this will not happen without compromise on all sides of the debate.

That starts with the Government, which is why we have just held six weeks of detailed talks with the Opposition – talks that the Leader of the Opposition chose to end before a formal agreement was reached, but which nonetheless revealed areas of common ground.

And having listened to the Opposition, to other party leaders, to the devolved administrations, to business leaders, trade unionists and others, we are now making a 10-point offer to Members across the House.

Ten changes that address the concerns raised by Hon and Rt Hon Members.

Ten binding commitments that will be enshrined in legislation so they cannot simply be ignored.

And 10 steps that will bring us closer to the bright future that awaits our country once we end the political impasse and get Brexit done.

First, we will protect British jobs by seeking as close to frictionless trade in goods with the EU as possible while outside the single market and ending free movement.

The government will be placed under a legal duty to negotiate our future

relationship on this basis.

Second, we will provide much-needed certainty for our vital manufacturing and agricultural sectors by keeping up to date with EU rules for goods and agricultural products that are relevant to checks at the border.

Such a commitment – which will also be enshrined in legislation – will help protect thousands of skilled jobs that depend on just-in-time supply chains.

Third, we will empower Parliament to break the deadlock over future customs arrangements.

Both the Government and Opposition agree that we must have as close as possible to frictionless trade at the UK-EU border – protecting the jobs and livelihoods that are sustained by our existing trade with the EU.

But while we agree on the ends, we disagree on the means.

The Government has already put forward a proposal which delivers the benefits of a customs union but with the ability for the UK to determine its own trade and development policy.

The Opposition are both sceptical of our ability to negotiate that and don't believe an independent trade policy is in the national interest. They would prefer a comprehensive customs union – with a UK say in EU trade policy but with the EU negotiating on our behalf.

As part of the cross-party discussions the government offered a compromise option of a temporary customs union on goods only, including a UK say in relevant EU trade policy, so that the next government can decide its preferred direction.

But we were not able to reach agreement – so instead we will commit in law to let Parliament decide this issue, and to reflect the outcome of this process in legislation.

Fourth, to address concerns that a future government could roll back hard-won protections for employees, we will publish a new Workers' Rights Bill.

As I have told the House many times, successive British administrations of all colours have granted British workers' rights and protections well above the standards demanded by Brussels.

But I know that people want guarantees, and I am happy to provide them.

If passed by Parliament, this Bill will guarantee that the rights enjoyed by British workers can be no less favourable than those of their counterparts in the EU – both now and in the future.

And we will discuss further amendments with trade unions and business.

Fifth, the new Brexit deal will also guarantee there will be no change in the level of environmental protection when we leave the EU. And we will establish

a new and wholly independent Office of Environmental Protection, able to uphold standards and enforce compliance.

Sixth, the Withdrawal Agreement Bill will place a legal duty on government to seek changes to the political declaration that will be needed to reflect this new deal – I am confident we will be successful in doing so.

Seventh, the Government will include in the Withdrawal Agreement Bill at introduction a requirement to vote on whether to hold a second referendum.

I have made my own view clear on this many times – I am against a second referendum.

We should be implementing the result of the first referendum, not asking the British people to vote in a second one.

What it would say about our democracy if the biggest vote in our history were to be re-run because this House didn't like the outcome?

What would it do to that democracy, what forces it would unleash?

But I recognise the genuine and sincere strength of feeling across the House on this important issue.

So to those MPs who want a second referendum to confirm the deal, I say: you need a deal and therefore a Withdrawal Agreement Bill to make it happen.

Let it have its Second Reading and then make your case to Parliament.

If this House votes for a referendum, it would require the Government to make provisions for such a referendum – including legislation if it wanted to ratify the Withdrawal Agreement.

Eighth, Parliament will be guaranteed a much greater role in the second part of the Brexit process: the negotiations over our future relationship with the EU.

In line with the proposal put forward by the Hon Members for Wigan and Stoke-on-Trent Central, the new Brexit deal will set out in law that the House of Commons will approve the UK's objectives for the negotiations.

And MPs will also be asked to approve the treaty governing that relationship before the Government signs it.

Ninth, the new Brexit deal will legally oblige the government to seek to conclude the Alternative Arrangements process by December 2020, avoiding any need for the Northern Ireland backstop coming into force.

This commitment is made in the spirit of the amendment tabled by my Hon Friend the Member for Altrincham and Sale West, passed by this House on 29 January.

And while it is not possible to use Alternative Arrangements to replace the

backstop in the Withdrawal Agreement, we will ensure they are a viable alternative.

And finally, 10th, we will ensure that, should the backstop come into force, Great Britain will stay aligned with Northern Ireland.

We will prohibit the proposal that a future Government could split Northern Ireland off from the UK's customs territory

And we will deliver on our commitments to Northern Ireland in the December 2017 Joint Report in full.

We will implement paragraph 50 of the Joint Report in law.

The Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive will have to give their consent on a cross-community basis for new regulations which are added to the backstop.

And we will work with our Confidence and Supply Partners on how these commitments should be entrenched in law, so that Northern Ireland cannot be separated from the United Kingdom.

Following the end of EU election purdah, the Withdrawal Agreement Bill will be published on Friday so the House has the maximum possible time to study its detail.

If Parliament passes the Bill before the summer recess, the UK will leave the EU by the end of July.

We will be out of the EU political structures, out of ever closer union.

We will stop British laws being enforced by a European court.

We will end free movement.

We will stop making vast annual payments to the EU budget.

By any definition, that alone is delivering Brexit.

And by leaving with a deal we can do so much more besides.

We can protect jobs, guarantee workers' rights, maintain the close security partnerships that do so much to keep us all safe.

We will ensure that there is no hard border between Northern Ireland and Ireland.

And we can bring an end to the months – years – of increasingly bitter argument and division that have both polarised and paralysed our politics.

We can move on, move forwards, and get on with the jobs we were sent here to do, what we got into politics to do.

That is what we can achieve if we support this new deal.

Reject it, and all we have before us is division and deadlock.

We risk leaving with no deal, something this House is clearly against.

We risk stopping Brexit altogether, something the British people would simply not tolerate.

We risk creating further division at a time when we need to be acting together in the national interest.

And we guarantee a future in which our politics become still more polarised and voters increasingly despair as they see us failing to do what they asked of us.

None of us want to see that happen.

The opportunity of Brexit is too large and the consequences of failure too grave to risk further delay.

So in the weeks ahead there will be opportunities for MPs on all sides to have their say, to table amendments, to shape the Brexit they and their constituents want to see.

Mr Speaker, in time another Prime Minister will be standing at this despatch box.

But while I am here, I have a duty to be clear with the House about the facts.

If we are going to deliver Brexit in this Parliament we are going to have to pass a Withdrawal Agreement Bill.

And we will not do so without holding votes on the issues that have divided us the most – that includes votes on customs arrangements and on a second referendum.

We can pretend otherwise and carry on arguing and getting nowhere.

But in the end our job in this House is to take decisions, not to duck them.

So I will put those decisions to this House.

Because that is my duty.

And because it is the only way that we can deliver Brexit.

So let us demonstrate what this House can achieve.

Let's come together, honour the referendum, deliver what we promised the British people, and build a successful future for our whole country.

And I commend this statement to the House.

[News story: Apple pledges clearer information on iPhone performance](#)

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) raised consumer law concerns with the tech firm last year after finding people were not being warned clearly that their phone's performance could slow down following a 2017 software update designed to manage demands on the battery.

The CMA became concerned that people might have tried to repair their phone or replace it because they weren't aware the software update had caused the handset to slow down.

In addition, people were not able to easily find information about the health of their phone's battery, which can degrade over time.

Since the CMA raised its concerns, Apple had already started to be more up front with iPhone users, but today's announcement locks the firm into formal commitments always to notify people when issuing a planned software update if it is expected to materially change the impact of performance management on their phones.

Apple will also provide easily accessible information about battery health and unexpected shutdowns, along with guidance on how iPhone users can maximise the health of their phone's battery. This could help people improve the performance of their own handset after a planned software update by, for example, changing settings, adopting the low power mode or replacing the battery – rather than resorting to having their phone repaired or replaced. The firm has agreed to do this both for current and future iPhones.

By signing up to undertakings with the CMA, Apple has agreed that it will be bound by them. If it goes on to breach any of the commitments made, the CMA may take action through the courts.

For more information, visit the [Apple iPhones consumer protection case page](#).