

# News story: £23 million government funding boost to cycling and walking nationwide

- Department for Transport pledges multimillion pound investment to improve cycling and walking around the country
- funding includes support for outreach projects which aim to get thousands more children walking to school
- this funding is the latest in a series of measures to cut emissions across transport modes

Communities are set to benefit from a £23 million investment to rejuvenate cycling and walking across the UK. In the Department for Transport's latest step to drive down emissions and improve safety, Cycling Minister Jesse Norman has announced £21 million to improve significant on and off-road stretches of the 16,000-mile National Cycle Network.

A further £2 million will encourage more people to cycle and walk, particularly children and young people, so that greener travel choices are the norm, helping clean up our air.

Communities across England will benefit from upgrades to existing cycle routes and improved cycleway connectivity, to help create a safe, accessible and traffic-free network on the doorstep of millions of people. Jesse Norman, Transport Minister, said:

Cycling and walking are a key part of our plans to make transport cleaner, greener and more productive.

This funding will help ensure that everyone can enjoy wonderful routes which connect communities across the UK, and benefit from the huge health and environmental benefits of cycling.

The investment, the allocation of which will be managed by cycling and walking charity Sustrans, will fund dozens of activation projects for upgrading the network – which were identified in the recent [Paths for Everyone report](#) – including:

- refurbishing and upgrading Cinder Track North in Whitby to improve access to a substantial new housing development
- converting a poor on-road section of the NCN between Dewsbury and Huddersfield to a combination of traffic free and full segregation
- connecting current paths through the centre of Lincoln
- re-routing busy on-road sections with poor junction facilities to an alternative traffic-free route in Longbridge, Birmingham
- creating a new quiet-way route to replace a busy on-road section between

Luton and Dunstable

- improving a road crossing and re-routing to traffic-free alternatives around Ashton Court in Bristol
- improving and extending paths connecting Thatcham and Newbury

It is estimated that the health benefits associated with walking and cycling on the network prevented 630 early deaths in 2017 alone, and averted nearly 8,000 serious long-term health conditions.

Alongside this major investment to encourage people to take to 2 wheels up and down the country, the Department for Transport has also announced £2 million for broader cycling and walking initiatives.

These include the [Living Streets Walk to School outreach programme](#), which encourages young people to make walking a key part of their journeys from an early age. The scheme saw walking to school rates increase by 30% last year within schools supported by the scheme, a big step towards the government target of 55% of primary school children walking to school by 2025.

[Cycling UK's Big Bike Revival](#) will also receive investment to continue its work inspiring the 42% of people who own bikes but do not cycle, to start riding.

Xavier Brice, Chief Executive of Sustrans said:

As the custodians of the National Cycle Network we are very excited by this investment in transforming crucial links for communities across England, making it easier for everyone to walk and cycle.

The network already makes it possible for 4.4 million people to travel actively every year, to work, school or for leisure. This investment is a vital boost to achieving a network of safe paths for everyone, used and enjoyed by people of all ages and abilities.

We look forward to working with local authorities and partner organisations around the country to improve people's health, access to green spaces, and help our villages, towns and cities move sustainably

These measures are the latest in a series of actions taken by the department to reduce emissions across all modes of transport:

- the UK's bus fleet has also joined the drive to go green through the government's £48 million [Ultra-Low Emission Bus Scheme](#), which will fund 263 new zero emission buses and infrastructure to drive forward government plans to clean up the air in towns and cities
- the government has provided £1.75 million funding for innovative schemes that can cut the carbon footprint of the UK's railways – including solar panels that directly power trains, and a system that uses hydrogen and oxygen to produce steam to power engines. It's part of the government's drive to a cleaner, greener economy which is a key part of its modern

## Industrial Strategy

- DfT will launch a call for evidence later this year to gather information on how to help consumers better understand the emissions resulting from their journeys and ensure they have options for offsetting those emissions should they wish to – one of the ideas for this would be to require companies selling travel tickets to offer good quality carbon offsets at the point of sale
- DfT has recently announced £60,000 funding to support the [Modeshift STARS National School Travel Awards](#) for the next 3 years – the scheme recognises students who have improved air quality by walking and cycling to school, and the continued investment will allow Modeshift to continue to develop the project up to 2022

Paul Tuohy, Chief Executive of Cycling UK, said:

We are delighted the Big Bike Revival will be going ahead again in 2019, helping tens of thousands more people to discover the joys of cycling.

Last year we put on more than 1,000 events across England, kick starting a life time of cycling for more than 40,000 people we reached.

This money will ensure even more people are helped to overcome the barriers that stop them getting on their bikes, while improving health, happiness and air quality.

Joe Irvin, Chief Executive of Living Streets, said:

Nationally the number of children walking to school has fallen significantly over recent years. However, in schools where successful initiatives like WOW are in place, we are seeing more families choose active and sustainable ways to travel.

Walking to school helps children stay active and build healthy habits for life, which is incredibly important at a time when a third of children leave primary school overweight or obese.

We are becoming increasingly aware of the impact of air pollution on our children's health – stunting their lung development and increasing the risk of asthma attacks. One in four cars during peak hours are on the school run and the toxic fumes they produce stay around the school gates long after the cars have left. We need to be making it possible for families to swap to healthier forms of travel and this funding will go a long way to doing that in these local authority areas.

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## [Press release: Charity Commission inquiry into Khatme Nubuwwat Centre finds poor governance at the charity](#)

An inquiry [report](#) published by the Charity Commission today has found that the trustees of the [Khatme Nubuwwat Centre](#) (KNC) (formerly known as the Aalami Majlise Tahaffuze Khatme Nubuwwat) are responsible for a series of failings amounting to misconduct and/or mismanagement.

The inquiry was prompted by the Commission's engagement with the charity's trustees after a news article published in April 2016 alleged the charity was displaying literature calling for the killing of members of the Ahmadi community.

As a result of this, the Commission found serious regulatory concerns in relation to the trustees' administration and management of the charity. This included the trustees demonstrating behaviour which was unacceptable and fell below the standard expected of them.

The inquiry found that the charity had no framework or controls in place in relation to the distribution of literature or hosting of speakers at its premises. The charity had also been associated with an organisation in Pakistan, which extended to bearing the same name and using the charity's contact details on their materials. The inquiry was concerned by this association due to the Pakistani organisation's alleged connections to terrorist and extremist groups as well as offensive material on its website relating to the Ahmadi community.

In response to these concerns, and others, the Commission exercised its powers and issued an order to the charity's trustees under section 84 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act'). The order directed the trustees to complete a series of actions intended to improve the administration and governance of the charity.

As a result of the Commission's engagement, the trustees made improvements to the charity which include replacing a number of its trustees, implementing new policies, establishing a new governing document and taking measures to remove links to the Pakistani organisation of the same name.

In February 2019, the Commission used its regulatory powers to issue the charity's trustees with an official warning under section 75A of the Act. The warning, which was issued due to the trustees' failure to ensure its accounts and annual documents were filed on time, sets out that the trustees must take all reasonable steps to ensure future returns are submitted on time.

**Michelle Russell, Director of Investigations, Monitoring and Enforcement said:**

Our inquiry concluded that the trustees did not properly discharge their duties under charity law and were responsible for a series of failings amounting to misconduct and/or mismanagement. These failings led the charity to be associated with material that was wholly unacceptable and offensive and disparaging to the Ahmadi community.

As a result of our inquiry, the charity's trustees have now taken steps to improve its governance. We expect the trustees to continue to protect the charity's identity, and comply with charity law, so that the charity can have a positive impact on people's lives.

The full report is available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

Ends.

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## **[Press release: UK Government to match £2m of public donations to cyclone appeal](#)**

The UK will double the first £2 million of donations from the British public to the Disasters Emergency Committee's (DEC) Cyclone Idai Appeal, bringing the UK's total response so far to £20 million.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt has today (20 March 2019) announced that the UK will match pound-for-pound the first £2 million raised by the generous British public for DEC's appeal, to support those affected by flooding in Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said:

This new support, from the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), will double the impact of the public's donations and ensure that charities working on the ground can reach the vulnerable men, women and children who have been left homeless and in urgent need of food, water and shelter.

The UK sent humanitarian experts prior to the cyclone making landfall, and this latest package of support comes after the UK increased its direct support by £12 million, bringing the total UK aid support to £20 million to

save lives in areas devastated by rising flood waters.

This is on top of substantial existing support that the UK is already providing through its core funding to partners on the ground, including UNICEF, the World Food Programme and the International Red Cross.

## **Notes to editors**

Donations to the Cyclone Idai appeal will be matched through the UK Aid Match scheme.

Through UK Aid Match, DFID gives the British public the opportunity to decide how the UK aid budget is spent and support people in desperate need by matching their donations pound-for-pound up to £2 million.

This has increased the impact of a number of DEC appeals to help those in need around the world, including most recently to support people affected by the earthquake in Indonesia.

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## **[Press release: New funding will ensure all charities can access safeguarding training to build safe and strong civil society](#)**

The Minister said it is vital that all charity employees and volunteers are able to spot warning signs of unacceptable behaviour, bullying and harassment and know how to handle and report concerns.

She has announced that Government and The National Lottery Community Fund are investing £1.2 million to develop new training to improve charities' knowledge of safeguarding requirements. The National Council for Voluntary Organisations will bring together a partnership of organisations to develop the high-quality training.

Minister for Civil Society Mims Davies said:

This funding will support employees, volunteers and members of the public to have confidence in handling and reporting concerns. And that means charity leaders must take a zero tolerance approach to misconduct and make sure proper protections are in place.

Safeguarding is one of my key priorities. This training will make a huge difference ensuring charities, big or small, know their

responsibilities, how to report concerns and have easily accessible advice to hand.

The training is part of a package of measures that comes 6 months after the launch of the Civil Society Strategy.

The Strategy – the first of its kind – set out a vision for how government, the public, social and private sectors can work together to support thriving communities and build a fairer society.

The Minister has also announced:

Five organisations across England will receive a share of £250,000 of government funding to help tackle barriers to volunteering in later life. The Age-Friendly and Inclusive Volunteering Fund, launched in partnership with the Centre for Ageing Better, will develop new ways to encourage older people to take part in voluntary and community activity. The government recognises the importance of tackling barriers to volunteering.

### **The winning areas are:**

Age UK Oxfordshire will use £53,340 to provide group support for bereaved people to help them feel confident about moving into volunteering, to improve wellbeing and combat loneliness.

Kent Coast Volunteering (£52,698) will target vulnerable and isolated older people in Thanet, East Kent to help them overcome physical and emotional barriers to volunteering.

Hastings Voluntary Action (£54,189) will reach out to BAME groups, refugees and asylum seekers to encourage them to volunteer.

Age UK North Craven (£56,611) will target older people in rural areas of Craven District of North Yorkshire to get involved in a community good-neighbour initiative.

Sustain (£55,332) will lead a London-wide project that will build on existing successful community food growing projects and target areas that have high levels of diversity and deprivation.

A further £144,000 is being invested to increase the number of places available to young people from disadvantaged areas in uniformed youth groups. Scouts will receive £130,000 to work with the National Autistic Society to develop resources about autism and support adult volunteers and parents. The funding will also extend a current scheme providing resources for adult volunteers in areas of deprivation.

The Jewish Lads and Girls Brigade will receive £14,056 to create a new curriculum based around character building and resilience.

Mims Davies added:

The funding for these projects will make a real difference in our communities, breaking down barriers to volunteering for those who might otherwise miss out and giving more young people the chance to learn important skills and build friendships through youth groups.

Six months after the launch of our Civil Society Strategy we remain absolutely committed to supporting the sector, improving lives and creating a fairer society.

## Notes for Editors

Find out more about the [Civil Society Strategy](#).

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## [Speech: PM statement on Brexit: 20 March 2019](#)

Nearly three years have passed since the public voted to leave the European Union.

It was the biggest democratic exercise in our country's history.

I came to office on a promise to deliver on that verdict.

In March 2017, I triggered the Article 50 process for the UK to exit the EU – and Parliament supported it overwhelmingly.

Two years on, MPs have been unable to agree on a way to implement the UK's withdrawal.

As a result, we will now not leave on time with a deal on 29 March.

This delay is a matter of great personal regret for me.

And of this I am absolutely sure: you the public have had enough.

You are tired of the infighting.

You are tired of the political games and the arcane procedural rows.

Tired of MPs talking about nothing else but Brexit when you have real concerns about our children's schools, our National Health Service, and knife crime.

You want this stage of the Brexit process to be over and done with.

I agree. I am on your side.



It is now time for MPs to decide.

So today I have written to Donald Tusk, the President of the European Council, to request a short extension of Article 50 up to the 30 June to give MPs the time to make a final choice.

Do they want to leave the EU with a deal which delivers on the result of the referendum – that takes back control of our money, borders and laws while protecting jobs and our national security?

Do they want to leave without a deal?

Or do they not want to leave at all, causing potentially irreparable damage to public trust – not just in this generation of politicians, but to our entire democratic process?

It is high time we made a decision.

So far, Parliament has done everything possible to avoid making a choice.

Motion after motion and amendment after amendment have been tabled without Parliament ever deciding what it wants.

All MPs have been willing to say is what they do not want.

I passionately hope MPs will find a way to back the deal I have negotiated with the EU.

A deal that delivers on the result of the referendum and is the very best deal negotiable.

I will continue to work night and day to secure the support of my colleagues, the DUP and others for this deal.

But I am not prepared to delay Brexit any further than 30 June.

Some argue that I am making the wrong choice, and I should ask for a longer extension to the end of the year or beyond, to give more time for politicians to argue over the way forward.

That would mean asking you to vote in European Elections, nearly three years after our country decided to leave.

What kind of message would that send?

And just how bitter and divisive would that election campaign be at a time when the country desperately needs bringing back together?

Some have suggested holding a second referendum.

I don't believe that is what you want – and it is not what I want.

We asked you the question already and you gave us your answer.

Now you want us to get on with it.

And that is what I am determined to do.