

Press release: UK sends humanitarian experts ahead of Mozambique cyclone

The UK is sending humanitarian experts to assess the impact of an expected cyclone in Mozambique which could leave hundreds of thousands of people without food and shelter.

Specialist humanitarian advisers, from the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), are expected to deploy from London this evening (14 March). The experts will assess what UK aid is needed to support people affected by the cyclone and plan and co-ordinate relief efforts.

The Met Office predicts that flash flooding, large waves and extremely high-speed winds pose a danger to life and could also significantly damage buildings and other infrastructure. The cyclone is expected to make landfall this evening (14 March), and thousands of Mozambicans have already been evacuated for their own safety.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said:

We are sending UK aid experts to Mozambique to be our eyes and ears on the ground and to make sure we're ready to rapidly increase our response if needed.

UK aid is already helping people and families affected by the heavy rains, as we had pre-positioned items including tents, buckets for clean water and basic cooking items. We are ready to offer further help to anyone in need.

My thoughts remain with those people who have already been affected by the recent extreme weather, and anyone who has lost loved ones.

UK aid prepositioned vital relief items in Mozambique to support any response to a humanitarian emergency – some of which have now already been given to people in need – including:

- 9,000 hygiene kits, which include basic hygiene items such as soap, toothbrushes and buckets to carry clean water;
- 7,000 tool kits, which include shovels, saws and other items to help repair homes and clear debris;
- 6,000 family kits and 1,000 latrine kits, which include solar lamps, water purifiers and toilet paper;
- 5,000 shelter kits, 10,000 tarpaulins and 600 plastic rolls to provide emergency shelter to those that have been made homeless; and
- 1,573 family tents and 15 community tents.

In addition to the humanitarian aid items, the UK is supporting the World Food Programme (WFP) to help 130,000 people feed themselves for two weeks.

WFP will distribute emergency food and food vouchers for people to use at local markets.

The cyclone is also expected to hit Malawi, which has been suffering from severe flooding over the last five days, leaving at least 56 people dead, and may also affect Zimbabwe. The START Fund, which is managed by a group of NGOs and to which DFID is the biggest donor, has allocated £400,000, to enable Trocaire and HelpAge International to meet immediate needs such as clean water and shelter in Malawi.

Tomorrow in Mozambique, a UK government team is leading a meeting of donors and other countries, alongside the Government of Mozambique, to help co-ordinate the response.

Notes to editors

- DFID has provided £764,000 to the World Food Programme to provide food and food vouchers. This is an allocation from DFID Mozambique's annual budget for 2018/19.
- DFID provided approximately £1.5 million from the 2018 Mozambique bilateral budget to preposition relief items in warehouses of the Mozambique National Institute for Disaster Management.
- DFID is the largest donor to the Start Fund. In 2018, we committed an additional £37.5m over three years

ENDS

[Press release: Total investment for Borderlands reaches up to £447 million](#)

Communities across the Borderlands area of the North of England and South of Scotland will benefit from up to £447 million investment.

The announcement of fresh funding in the Spring Statement brings the historic Borderlands Growth Deal to deliver investment, create jobs and encourage economic growth in the Northern Powerhouse and across the Borderlands region a step closer.

The funding will provide the opportunity to explore key priority projects such as regenerating Carlisle Station and developing the Lilidorei attraction at Alnwick Gardens, one of the North East's most popular tourist destinations.

Discussions will now continue with the local partners – including the local authorities of Carlisle City, Cumbria County, Dumfries and Galloway, Northumberland County and Scottish Borders – to further develop their

proposals and work towards reaching a Heads of Terms agreement for the Borderlands Growth Deal later this year.

Secretary of State for Scotland, Rt Hon David Mundell MP, said:

Our exciting and innovative Borderlands deal recognises that the cross-border region is a single economic unit.

Investment north of the border has an economic benefit south of the border and vice versa.

It is the right approach and I'm absolutely confident the Borderlands deal will deliver a massive boost to the region, supporting business, creating jobs and improving quality of life for everyone who lives there.

Minister for the Northern Powerhouse, Jake Berry MP, said:

Today's announcement demonstrates the government's ambition to develop the next phase of growth across the Northern Powerhouse and Borderlands so no one is left behind.

This investment will go a long way to supporting jobs and boosting economic growth and tourism within the regions and improving people's lives with increased job opportunities and improved transport infrastructure.

People in the Northern Powerhouse and Borderlands regions are not forgotten and are an absolute priority for the government and we are determined to ensure these communities continue to thrive

The UK government's Borderlands Champion, John Stevenson MP, said:

As Borderlands Champion I'm absolutely delighted with the announcement of substantial new money going into the Borderlands region.

It gives us a great opportunity to seek other investment to boost the local economy and strengthen ties within the region.

Today's announcement builds on significant UK government investment to encourage housing growth and support coastal communities.

Further significant investment in the region from the Coastal Communities Fund and Coastal Revival Fund is due to be announced later this month.

A total of up to £447 million will be invested in the Borderlands region. The UK government will invest up to £260 million in the Borderlands Growth Deal.

In combination with the recent £102 million investment in Carlisle from the Housing Infrastructure Fund, this means that up to £362 million of UK government funding will be invested into the Borderlands region. The Scottish government will contribute a further £85 million to the Borderlands Growth Deal.

Funding for both the regeneration of Carlisle Station and the Alnwick Gardens projects, as with all of the local Borderlands Growth Deal proposals, are subject to full business case approval.

[News story: £260 million announced for the Borderlands growth deal](#)

Scotland is set to benefit from new funding for a Borderlands growth deal the Chancellor announced in the Spring Statement.

Five local authorities from north and south of the border have worked in partnership with the UK Government on the ambitious Borderlands Deal that will deliver wide-ranging benefits throughout the region.

The funding levels for specific projects will be confirmed later this year and is expected to focus on energy projects, improving transport links, rural productivity and tourism across the region – boosting jobs, creating opportunity and encouraging further inward investment.

Up to £260 million for a Borderlands Growth Deal covers the border regions of England and Scotland. This includes £65 million new funding from the UK Government for the Scottish areas of the deal, the Scottish Borders, Dumfries and Galloway. This is in addition to the £102 million recently announced from the Housing Infrastructure Fund for Carlisle, giving a total of £362 million of UK Government funding to the Borderlands area.

Scottish Secretary, David Mundell said:

The announcement of £362 million UK Government funding for the Borderlands is absolutely fantastic news for the region.

This exciting deal will boost economic growth by helping existing business, encouraging new ventures and bringing a wealth of improvements to people who live and work in the area and to visitors.

It is an ambitious approach to cross-border working between Governments, local authorities and partners and I'm confident that together we can create jobs and opportunity and bring investment.

This new funding from the UK Government brings our investment in growth deals in Scotland to more than £1.35 billion, and shows our huge commitment to growing Scotland's economy.

Press release: Brokenshire hails package to build homes and opportunities in communities

- £100 million to tackle knife crime in the worst affected communities across England and Wales
- £717 million to upgrade roads, drainage and other infrastructure to support up to 37,000 new homes
- Up to £260 million investment to support economic growth in the cross-border region
- New planning measures to help government hit 300,000 homes-a-year target

Communities Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP has hailed millions of pounds in extra funding and new planning measures to build thousands of homes, rejuvenate high streets, create jobs and deliver economic growth.

The measures, unveiled by the Chancellor, are part of our wider strategy to deliver 300,000 a year by the mid-2020s.

The package will unlock large housing sites with targeted £717 million infrastructure funding, reform parts of the planning system and ensure new-builds are more energy efficient, and help the country meet climate change targets.

The government is also investing up to £260 million as part of the Borderlands Growth Deal to support local economic growth across the Northern Powerhouse and the UK.

Communities Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said:

We're pulling all the levers available to build homes and opportunities in our communities.

These new measures and funding mark our continued commitment to ensuring the housing market works for everyone and economic growth is shared across the country.

The Chancellor's announcement follows a sustained increase in the number of homes delivered. Last year England delivered over 222,000 new homes, the highest in all but one of the last 31 years.

Measures set out in the Spring Statement include:

Housing Infrastructure Funds

Meeting the needs of existing communities in preparation for delivering new homes is a key part of our strategy to deliver 300,000 new homes a year by the mid-2020s.

We have awarded the next wave of the £5.5 billion [Housing Infrastructure Fund](#), totalling £717 million to these successful locally-led schemes in key areas across England:

- Old Oak North – £250 million to build nearly 13,000 new homes can be built close to the new HS2 railway station at Old Oak Common, which will become the UK's best-connected station.
- Cheshire East – £21.7 million to help deliver a new 1,675 home garden village through the upgrading and improvement of existing roads, provision of a new village high street and a new footbridge.
- 'Northern Fringe East', Cambridge, – £227 million to deliver up to 8,625 new homes through the relocation of drainage and sewerage facilities, opening up brownfield land for development.
- 'Access to Didcot Garden Town', Oxfordshire, to unlock up to 13,411 new homes with £218 million to upgrade road links, including new bridges over the River Thames and Great Western Railway to alleviate traffic.

A further £320 million will be made separately available to Barnet council to deliver at least 7,500 homes at Brent Cross Cricklewood. The money will be spent on a new train station on the Thameslink route, which is essential for the homes to be built.

Housing Guarantees

The government will stand behind £3 billion of loans to housing associations, supporting them to build tens of thousands of affordable properties across the country, it has been confirmed.

This will come from the £8 billion of housing guarantees the Chancellor

announced in his 2017 Autumn Budget.

The scheme will open for bids from housing associations in due course.

Previous programmes have helped 66 housing associations to build around 35,000 new homes since 2013.

A further £1 billion of the overall £8 billion will be made available to small and medium enterprise housebuilders in the private sector, as announced by the Chancellor in last year's Budget. This scheme, which will be called the ENABLE Build Guarantee Scheme, will open to applications from banks in April.

Oxford-Cambridge Arc

We are also committed to delivering the ambition of up to a million new homes by 2050 across the Oxford-Cambridge Arc to maximise its sustainable economic growth.

To make that vision a reality, £445 million is being provided to the Didcot and Cambridge infrastructure projects.

We have also secured a joint declaration from councils and local enterprise partnerships across the Arc, with leaders signing up to ensuring that we are working together to deliver these desperately needed new homes and fulfil the Arc's economic potential.

We will also appoint a new independent chair to a Cross-Arc Advisory Group.

Letwin Review

New planning guidance will be published for councils, to help them get the right homes finished on large sites more quickly.

Sir Oliver Letwin's review, published at Autumn Budget, concluded that greater diversity of homes on sites with more than 1,500 homes would increase buildout rates.

In response, the government will publish guidance for councils on building diverse range of homes on large sites.

A new 'Accelerated Planning Green Paper' will also be published to accelerate the planning process for new homes – from when ideas are still on the architect's drawing board and well before shovels hit the ground.

Details of the new Green Paper will be published in due course.

Permitted development rights and high streets

New planning rules will be brought in so the owners of high street premises can change the way the buildings are used more easily.

Our high streets are changing, and the government will bring in new rules to

enable change of use from most retail uses to offices without planning permission.

For example, shops could be turned into offices and takeaways could be turned into homes under the suite of changes being brought forward.

As a result of the new permitted development rights, high street uses can change more quickly without going through a formal planning application process. By increasing the number of homes in and near town centres, adding footfall, which will help support shops and restaurants as trends in spending change.

In addition, we will take forward a new right to allow buildings to extend upwards to create new homes, which respect the existing design of communities and the impact on neighbours.

We will also make permanent the time-limited permitted development right to allow for larger rear extensions to homes.

The new permitted development rights will be created as soon as parliamentary time allows.

Low carbon homes

Emissions from heating existing homes is the single largest contributing factor to the UK's carbon footprint.

We recognise that combating climate change requires the construction of new build homes to feature more sustainable and efficient ways of heating, alongside other energy saving measures.

In the [Spring Statement 2019](#), we have committed to adopting the Future Homes Standard by 2025 so new homes built are built with the latest green technology – driving down energy bills and reduce the impact on our precious environment.

The Future Homes Standard will build on the Prime Minister's Clean Growth Grand Challenge mission to at least halve the energy use of new build property by 2030, and halve the cost of renovating existing buildings to a similar standard as new buildings, while increasing quality and safety.

Details of the new standard will be consulted on during 2019.

Borderlands growth deal and Toton

The Borderlands Growth Deal is a unique cross-border collaboration between the local authorities of Carlisle City, Cumbria County, Dumfries and Galloway, Northumberland County and Scottish Borders to drive local growth.

At [Spring Statement](#), we announced UK government investment totalling up to £260m to support economic growth and productivity across the Borderlands.

The funding will present opportunities to explore key local projects such as

the regeneration of Carlisle Station and also support the development of Alnwick Gardens, one of the North East's most popular tourist destinations. Both of these projects have the potential to increase tourism, create job opportunities and encourage investment both across the Northern Powerhouse, the Borderlands and beyond.

Today's announcement builds on significant government investment to encourage housing growth and support coastal communities, including £102 million for the Carlisle Southern Link Road to unlock the St Cuthbert's Garden Village.

Further significant investment in region from the [Coastal Communities Fund](#) and [Costal Revival Fund](#) is due to be announced next week.

As part of the next phase the government will now work with local partners and the Scottish Government towards agreeing a Heads of Terms agreement with the Borderlands.

We also announced today that Sir John Peace will oversee the development of proposals for a new delivery vehicle at Toton, which will include considering the case for a Development Corporation.

Funding of schemes under the Borderlands Growth Deal, including Alnwick Gardens and Carlisle Station, are subject to a business case being submitted to the Ministry of Housing.

[News story: GC contributes to European standard to combat food fraud](#)

Food fraud is a worldwide problem, with many countries committing considerable resource to combat the issue. The globalisation of the food supply chain has led to the acknowledgement that having agreed definitions for terms commonly associated with food authenticity and food fraud would be of great benefit.

The Norwegian Institute of Food, Fisheries and Aquaculture Research (Nofima), has led a European initiative aimed at making communications regarding food fraud more precise and clear. Food fraud experts from several European countries including the Government Chemist and the Food Authenticity Network in UK, a European standard has been created that defines many of the English terms and concepts used in connection with food fraud. The words are placed in a hierarchical system that makes it easier to understand how they relate to each other.

This standardisation process was coordinated as part of the [EU-funded Authent-Net](#) and [FoodIntegrity](#) projects. It was published in January 2019 by [Standard Norway](#), and it is also being distributed by several other National

Standardisation Bodies in Europe; currently Estonia, Netherlands, and the [UK](#).

This standard represents an important first step in the global standardisation of these terms which will help facilitate trade, combat food fraud and better secure our food supply chains.

The Government Chemist team has great expertise in the area of food fraud, having had a role in providing advice in previous cases, such as the horsemeat crisis in 2013 and many others.

For more information on the role of the Government Chemist contact us: