

Press release: Reforms to boost UK's digital infrastructure

Reforms made today to outdated legislation will reduce the costs of housing phone masts and other communications infrastructure on private land. This opens the way for faster and more reliable broadband and mobile services, particularly in rural areas.

Changes to the UK's Electronic Communications Code will:

- bring down the rents telecoms operators pay to landowners to install equipment to be more in line with utilities
- providers, such as gas and water;
- make it easier for operators to upgrade and share their equipment with other operators to help increase coverage;
- make it easier for telecoms operators and landowners to resolve legal disputes.

Matt Hancock, Minister of State for Digital, said:

It's not good enough that many people are struggling with poor mobile and broadband connections which is why we are improving coverage across the UK.

We want everyone to benefit from the growth of digital services. Removing these outdated restrictions will help promote investment in new technologies such as 5G, and give mobile operators more freedom to improve their networks in hard-to-reach places.

By the end of the year all mobile operators are required to deliver coverage to 90 per cent of the UK and 95 per cent of all homes and businesses will be able to get superfast broadband, but more needs to be done.

These reforms will help to drive investment and stimulate the continued growth, rollout and maintenance of communication technology infrastructure, an increasingly significant area of the UK's economy.

Hamish MacLeod, Director of Mobile UK said:

The Electronic Communications Code is an important piece of the puzzle alongside further planning reform that will help mobile operators to overcome the challenges they face with expanding their networks, while also developing innovative services for customers.

Good mobile connectivity is no longer an optional extra. It is essential infrastructure as core to modern economic activity as broadband, electricity and other essential services.

Mark Talbot FRICS, Chair of the Royal Institute of Chartered (RICS) Surveyors Telecoms Forum Board, said:

RICS recognises the critical role that a modern, efficient and equitable digital infrastructure has on the future development of the UK economy. RICS has worked closely with our colleagues in DCMS to ensure that the new Code enables investment in our national digital infrastructure whilst balancing the needs of the public and private property owners.

With high speed internet seen by many as the fourth utility service the public and businesses expect access to digital services when they want and as they want, and RICS believes that the reformed Code is a great step forward towards this ultimate goal.

The old Electronic Communications Code was originally enacted in 1984, and became out-of-date as technology evolved, making it difficult for landowners and network operators to reach agreements and resolve disputes when rolling out modern digital infrastructure.

The Government reformed the Code through the Digital Economy Act, which received Royal Assent in April. The supporting regulations laid in Parliament today will bring the new Code into force, which is expected to take effect in December 2017.

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Notes for Editors:

- The Government has today laid draft regulations in Parliament needed to commence reform of the Electronic Communications Code. The changes will help ensure network providers achieve the coverage and connectivity targets set by government to reach the hardest-to-reach places in the UK.
 - The Electronic Communications Code (the Code) is the legislative framework that enables electronic communications network providers to construct electronic communications networks. The Code was reviewed by the Law Commission in 2012 which recommended reform, and the Government has carried out extensive consultation with all stakeholders before bringing forward the amendments to the legislation.
 - For further information on reform of the Electronic Communications Code:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-publishes-proposals-for-a-new-electronic-communications-code>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/digital-economy-bill-2016>
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News story: Hundreds of pupils on track towards fluency in Mandarin

Almost 400 pupils from 14 schools across England have been praised by Nick Gibb for their progress in learning Mandarin, as part of a pilot programme to help them get ahead in the global jobs market.

The Mandarin Excellence Programme, delivered by the UCL Institute of Education in partnership with the British Council, aims to have at least 5,000 pupils in England on track towards fluency in Mandarin Chinese by 2020.

The first cohort of children have completed the first year of the programme and over 380 pupils achieved more than 80% in specially-created tests in reading, writing, listening and speaking, demonstrating their quick progress and commitment.

This year, an additional 23 schools throughout England have entered into the Mandarin Excellence Programme, meaning hundreds more pupils will soon have the opportunity to learn this advanced skill.

School Standards Minister Nick Gibb said:

Mandarin Chinese is an important language to learn in our globally competitive economy. I am pleased that this programme is continuing to grow, allowing more pupils to be taught Mandarin at an advanced level. I would like to congratulate the first cohort of students on their success. They have achieved some excellent results thanks to their hard work and dedication. This will give them a significant advantage when competing in the global jobs market, and is particularly important as we prepare to leave the European Union.

Pupils on the programme spend an average of eight hours per week studying the language.

In addition to improving students' fluency in the language, the UCL Institute of Education, in collaboration with other providers, aims to have trained at least 100 new qualified Chinese teachers by the end of the programme.

Katharine Carruthers, Director of the UCL Institute Of Education (IOE) Confucius Institute, who deliver the training, said:

The progress that learners have made after their first year participating in the Mandarin Excellence Programme is exceptional. The test results from the end of year one of the programme demonstrate the success and the impact that it is having. This year we are delighted to welcome additional schools joining the programme which will ensure that more than 1,000 new learners

across the country are given the opportunity to learn Chinese to such an advanced level.

Mark Herbert, Head of Schools Programmes at the British Council said:

Mandarin Chinese is one of the languages that matters most to the UK's prosperity – and its importance is only likely to increase as the UK repositions itself on the world stage.

If the UK is to remain globally competitive, we need far more young people leaving school with a good grasp of Mandarin in order to successfully work abroad or for businesses here in the UK. More than that, learning Mandarin is a fascinating process which creates a connection to the amazing Chinese culture and over a billion Chinese speakers globally.

State schools in England can apply to join the Mandarin Excellence Programme from 2018 with funding available to support successful delivery. As part of the programme, some pupils will have the chance to go to China from summer 2018.

More information about the programme and how to get involved can be found [here](#).

[News story: Appointment of Dame Anne Owers as the new IMBs National Chair](#)

Dame Anne Owers has been appointed as National Chair of the Independent Monitoring Boards (IMBs) from 1 November 2017.

Dame Anne is currently the Chair of the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC), shortly to become the Independent Office for Police Conduct, at which point she will be stepping down. Dame Anne was Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons between 2001 and 2010 and chaired a review of prisons in Northern Ireland in 2010 to 2011.

She was also a non-executive director of the Criminal Cases Review Commission. She currently chairs Clinks (the infrastructure body for the voluntary sector working with offenders) and the Koestler Trust. She was a member of the advisory group to the recent Lammy review of race and criminal justice.

Secretary of State David Lidington said:

I welcome the appointment of Dame Anne Owers as the first National Chair of the Independent Monitoring Boards. She will play a vital role in ensuring we are accountable to the public for our prisons and ensure that they are safe and secure and are able to transform lives.

It is important to improve the transparency about how our prisons are running and provide assurance that they maintain proper standards of care and decency.

Independent Monitoring Boards (IMBs) provide statutory, independent oversight, monitoring the treatment and care of prisoners and detainees. They operate in prisons, young offender institutions, immigration removal centres, some short-term holding facilities and on flights for those being removed from the UK.

This appointment has been made in line with the Commissioner's Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies.

[News story: New route into classroom for aspiring teachers](#)

A new postgraduate teaching apprenticeship to offer talented graduates an alternative route into the profession has been announced today (19 October) by Education Secretary Justine Greening.

Developed in partnership with the sector, the new apprenticeship will provide hands-on experience for new recruits and a chance to learn from excellent, experienced teachers during training, as well as the incentive of potential employment as a qualified teacher at the end of the apprenticeship course.

The apprenticeship, which launches in September 2018, will mirror the entry criteria and high-quality course content currently required of all other teacher trainees and will give schools across the country the opportunity to use the apprenticeship to recruit and train new teachers in-house.

Education Secretary, Justine Greening, said:

Getting the best people to train as teachers and into our classrooms is a crucial part of giving every child the high quality education deserve. This new route will provide another pathway for talented graduates into a profession that will give them the chance to change lives for the better on a daily basis.

The new teaching apprenticeship will run in parallel with School Direct Salaried (SDS) training in 2018 that already allows graduates to train while on the job. All apprentices will be paid as unqualified teachers.

Schools who are not eligible for the apprenticeship levy, or who require additional funds, will receive government funding to cover up to 90 per cent of training costs.

CEO of South Farnham School Educational Trust, Sir Andrew Carter, said:

The postgraduate apprenticeship route into teaching will be greatly welcomed by the profession. The opportunity for more graduates to be trained within the school setting has the potential to increase the number of applicants. Working alongside great teachers and learning at first hand is the best way to create great teachers.

Chairing the Employers Group, who put the programme together, was a great privilege. The expertise, enthusiasm and wisdom of the group focussed all that is best in the educational world. Everyone was, and is, totally focussed on the goal which is to create a strong, plentiful and sustainable flow of recruits into this great and noble profession.

Executive Director of the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET), James Noble Rogers, and Executive Director, National Association of School Based Teacher Trainers (NASBTT), Emma Hollis, said:

We are pleased that the new apprenticeship will be delivered in partnership between schools and accredited Initial Teacher Training providers and will be subject to the same regulatory framework as other ITT courses. That represents a good outcome from the perspective of the employer-led group which UCET and NASBTT were happy to be represented on.

In the future we would like to see the apprenticeship developed to reflect any changes to Qualified Teacher Status and the rationalisation of some of the rules applying to apprenticeships generally which we don't think necessarily translate well for ITT.

To ensure apprentices are ready to enter the classroom full-time at the end of their apprenticeship, schools have helped set assessment criteria to give them greater oversight of the training of prospective members of staff.

Applications for Initial Teacher Training open through UCAS on October 26, allowing applicants to convert their place to an apprenticeship at a later date.

The development of this apprenticeship is part of the government's commitment to ensure there are 3 million high quality apprenticeship starts by 2020.

As part of the plan to get excellent teachers into the schools that need them most, the government is also piloting a new programme to reimburse student loan repayments for teachers in the early years of their careers. Around 800 modern foreign language and 1,700 science teachers a year will be eligible for this pilot scheme.

Speech: General Sir Nick Carter

It is a tremendous honour to share this very special day with you and all your families.in this your 70th year as the independent army of a sovereign country. It is a proud day and it is has been a fine parade. You have displayed outstanding precision and panache...you were immaculate.

I know that the pride etched on the faces of all of you stood on the parade square today is mirrored in the other faces in this audience. Not least your instructors, who recognised in you that spark of potential...that fighting spirit...those qualities that make a soldier and shape a leader...and who enabled you to get where you are today.

And your families and friends whose love and support have fortified you – and who will continue to be a source of strength.

And your international friends are proud of you too. For in a world with global problems no country is able to address all the challenges alone. Strong alliances and partnerships are more important than ever in preventing conflict, building stability and strengthening the rules-based international order.

And friends we are...

...our two Armies have a long and resilient relationship built on mutual respect and understanding. We have much shared history. Pakistan's soldiers proved themselves brave and valiant time and again when we fought side by side in the two World Wars – one only has to look at the tally of gallantry medals and battle honours awarded to be reminded.

While our soldiers and officers may have different backgrounds and different faiths, they are united by the same values and standards of courage, discipline, respect, integrity, loyalty and selfless commitment – we may use different words for them, but the effect is the same.

And they share the same hopes – for a secure and prosperous world in which we, our children and future generations can continue to live according to our belief in tolerance, freedom, justice and the rule of law.

You start your career in this honourable profession – the profession of arms – in demanding times. The character of conflict is changing and the operating environment is increasingly uncertain, complex and dispersed. Leadership has never been more challenging and the responsibility of being a leader has rarely been so profound.

But our Values and Standards as soldiers set us apart from other occupations and, often, from our enemies. They are the basis on which we commit ourselves unreservedly to the Service of our respective nations.

For those graduating, today represents a significant moment – it is about celebrating what you have accomplished so far. But it is also about the anticipation of what you can accomplish in a lifetime of selfless service.

You are about to accept a great responsibility to lead soldiers – an honour that demands unfailing competence, commitment, and character each and every day.

As officers, you have been selected, individually, to lead your fellow countrymen in battle in defence of the values you hold dear. And your country can do you no higher honour. Whatever happens to you, whatever rank you achieve, whatever honours are showered on you, you will never have a greater compliment paid you than that.

And, in return for that honour and that trust, you, when you go out from here, will live up to the traditions of leadership. However far your careers take you, always remember, where you started.

In the years ahead, your soldiers will look to you, for guidance and inspiration. They will want to know that you care for them, and for their families. They will model their behaviour on your integrity. They will get their courage from your steadfastness. Leadership is about getting people to do things – and getting them to do things willingly. And in the Army, it will be in situations of great personal danger. When your nation will be relying on you. Military capability and tactical brilliance will always be essential but they will not alone suffice. What qualities then must a leader have if he is to secure this willing acceptance of what he wants?

First – Courage. All soldiers must be prepared to use lethal force to fight. They may need to show restraint, even when doing so involves personal danger. This requires physical courage, and soldiers will depend on each other for it.

And there is another kind of courage you need as an officer. You must have moral courage. Moral courage is a much rarer thing than physical courage. Moral courage means you do what you think is right without bothering very much what happens to you when you are doing it – insisting on maintaining the highest standards of decency and behaviour – even when it may be unpopular, or risk ridicule or danger. Courage – both physical and moral – creates the strength upon which fighting spirit and success in the fight depend.

Second – Integrity. Integrity has a unique significance to soldiering and is an essential ingredient of good leadership. You have got to be honest, not only with yourself but with the men you lead and the people with whom you work. Honesty and integrity are things that you cannot compromise with – you cannot alter; it is the critical foundation for earning the loyalty and trust of those you lead and those you serve. It is about doing as you would be done by. And the standard you walk past without taking action is the standard that you accept – and how you will be judged.

Third – Judgment. The next quality that I wish to mention is judgement. You have got to have judgement. You have got to be able to assess a situation, and assess it quickly as judged against your values, and under difficult circumstances. And judgement is only learned by practice and experience.

You may face action day after day, week after week, virtually alone, with only your consciences as monitors. You will rely on your integrity and your judgment – especially on today's dispersed battelfields where it is the quality of junior leadership which will count.

Fourth – knowledge and understanding. If you are to have the courage to take the initiative, to produce the will-power that is needed, you must have knowledge. And that is often the challenge of leadership – to keep the balance between strength of will and flexibility of mind. Keep your mind bright and flexible. If you command a small unit, a platoon or section you ought not be satisfied until you can do every task which you order each man in your small unit to do, as well as he can, if not better.... ..and, by the way, the command of a platoon is, I think, the best command you will ever have. I have commanded everything from a section of half-a-dozen men to the entire British Army, and I still look back to the time when I commanded a platoon as the best command I ever had...

You have also got to have a different type of knowledge that is at least as important, if not more important – a knowledge of your men. It is not enough that you are the best soldier in your unit, that you are the strongest, the toughest, the most resilient, and the most intelligent. You must be their leader, their mentor even if you are half their age. That cultivation of human understanding between you and your men is the one art that you must yet master – but it is the understanding you have of your men on which great soldiering depends.

Know your job and know your men.

There are many other qualities that make a good leader. But these are the four I would wish to share with you that have served me well – courage, integrity, judgment and knowledge and understanding.

There is no man on this parade square who has not got these qualities. If you had not got them you would not be here. So by standing here today you have earned the right to be officers. And leaders of the next generation.

It is up to you now to invest in those qualities, nurture them and keep them close. Remember that good leadership is not imposed like authority. It is actually welcomed and wanted by the led. It is up to you to give your units – whether it is a tank crew, platoon, or becomes a company – leadership, every hour of the day, every day of the week.

Then you will be doing your duty and you will be worthy of the honour that your country does you by choosing you as a leader in this fine Army.

I will leave you with a last thought. There are many things I have learned throughout my service, but it was in the early years that the simplest proved to be the most important to me. And that is that soldiering is nothing without comradeship. It surrounds a man with an atmosphere of warmth and

strength at the very moment when he is feeling cold and weak. It encourages his finest instincts, and the demands of friendship serve to strengthen him in battle.

So if I could have my wish as I stand here today, feeling honoured as I do in the tribute paid me, I would say this: If I could only meet you all somewhere in the future, with the world more stable due to friendships like ours, and our Armies standing side by side in comradeship.

So as you go, you go with all our hopes and prayers but also with our confidence that each one of you is ready to write the next chapter in your life – and the next chapter in your nation's history.