

[News story: Taxpayers get all their money back from Lloyds](#)

Speaking in Washington, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond, confirmed that the government has received £20.4 billion since it began selling its stake in Lloyds in 2013, which includes both sales and dividends.

Market conditions withstanding, the government also expects to exit its remaining shareholding [of less than 2%](#) in the coming months.

The Chancellor, Philip Hammond said:

Recovering all of the money taxpayers injected into Lloyds marks a significant milestone in our plan to build an economy that works for everyone.

While it was right to step in with support during the financial crisis, the government should not be in the business of owning banks in the long term. The right place for them is in the private sector and I'm pleased to be able to say we are approaching the point at which we will sell our final shares in Lloyds Bank.

In September 2013, the government [began to sell its shares in Lloyds Banking Group](#) through an Accelerated Bookbuild (ABB) worth £3.2 billion. ABBs involve selling a large block of shares to institutional investors overnight. A [second ABB](#) worth £4.2 billion took place in March 2014.

A further £9.2 billion of Lloyds Banking Group shares were sold through [a trading plan](#) between December 2014 and June 2016. A trading plan drip feeds shares into the market on a daily basis, over an extended period of time. In October 2016, the [Chancellor launched a second trading plan](#). So far, it has raised over £3.4 billion. In addition, the government has received dividend payments totalling £0.4bn from Lloyds.

[News story: The Prime Minister reappoints a trustee of the National Portrait Gallery](#)

Dr Andrew Roberts

Andrew Roberts took a first in modern history from Caius College, Cambridge. He has written several books, including *The Holy Fox*, *Eminent Churchillians*, *Salisbury: Victorian Titan* (which won the Wolfson Prize) *Napoleon and Wellington*, *Hitler and Churchill*, *Waterloo: Napoleon's Last Gamble*, *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples Since 1900*, *Masters and Commanders: How Roosevelt, Churchill, Marshall and Alanbrooke Won the War in the West 1941-45* (which won the International Churchill Society Book Award), and *The Storm of War: A New History of the Second World War* (which won the British Army Military Book of the Year Award).

Dr Roberts sits on the boards or advisory councils of a number of think-tanks and pressure groups, including Policy Exchange, The Centre for Policy Studies, The Canadian Institute for Jewish Research, The UK National Defence Association, The London Jewish Cultural Centre, and Intelligence Squared US's Intelligence Council. He holds an honorary doctorate from Westminster College, Missouri. He is a Director of the Harry Guggenheim Foundation in New York, a founder member of President Jose Maria Aznar's Friends of Israel Initiative.

Trustees of the National Portrait Gallery are not remunerated. This reappointment has been made in accordance with the Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments. It is a requirement of the Code that political activity by those appointed is declared. Dr Andrew Roberts has declared that he has spoken for the Belgravia Conservative Association and is President of the Cambridge University Conservative Association.

[News story: UK maritime forces visit Vietnam with French naval task group](#)

Around 60 Royal Navy and Royal Marines are currently taking part in a five-month French naval deployment to the Indian Ocean and Far East, aboard French assault ship FS Mistral.

The arrival of UK maritime personnel in Ho Chi Minh City further strengthens the UK's Defence relationship with Vietnam, and while docked, UK sailors and marines, alongside French colleagues, will meet with personnel from the Vietnam People's Navy to compare national maritime operating procedures and exchange experiences.

Two Royal Navy Merlin Mk3 helicopters are also embarked with France's annual Jeanne d'Arc naval deployment, which will include port calls in Singapore, Sri Lanka, Japan, Guam and Australia.

Minister of State for the Armed Forces Mike Penning said:

“Alongside French forces, our world class Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel are flying the flag for Britain in Vietnam, one of our important partners in the region.

“This deployment continues to show the flexibility of our Armed Forces to work with our partners, particularly with France, and contribute to international maritime security.”

The UK continues to work globally alongside Vietnam, both of our countries contributing personnel to the UN peacekeeping mission South Sudan.

Additionally, the UK regularly carries out Defence Engagement with Vietnam, and last year a Royal Navy dental team deployed as part of Pacific Partnerships 16, a multinational capacity building exercise led by the US. This year a small team of Army medics will travel to Vietnam to take part in Pacific Partnerships 17.

During the Jeanne d’Arc deployment, UK maritime personnel will also take part in multilateral amphibious exercises. This reflects our commitment to exercise at the highest levels with close partners in the Asia Pacific region, including Japan and the US, and demonstrates the UK’s ability to operate seamlessly alongside French forces in particular.

[News story: Sianel Pedwar Cymru \(S4C\) Board Member Appointed](#)

Elan Closs Stephens is Emeritus Professor of Communications and Creative Industries at Aberystwyth University. During her time at Aberystwyth, she taught and supported numerous young people who have since had distinguished careers as writers, actors, directors and programme commissioners. She has specialised in cultural and broadcasting regulatory policy, chairing the Stephens Review into the Welsh Arts Council and serving as Chair of the British Council in Wales, as a Governor of the British Film Institute and, for two terms, as Chair of S4C, the Welsh Fourth Channel. For the last six years until the end of the Charter, she has been the Wales Trustee on the BBC’s governing body, the BBC Trust. She is a Non Executive Director of the Permanent Secretary of Wales’s senior Board and has chaired the Board’s Audit and Risk Committee since 2008. She also chaired the Recovery Board for the Isle of Anglesey County Council. Currently she has received the Royal Warrant to act as Electoral Commissioner for Wales from April 2017.

Elan is a first language Welsh speaker from the Nantlle Valley in N Wales and a graduate of Somerville College, Oxford. She was awarded a CBE in the Queen’s Birthday Honours in 2001 for services to broadcasting and the Welsh language.

Appointments to the Board of S4C are made by the Secretary of State. Authority Members of S4C are remunerated at a rate of £9,650 per annum.

This appointment has been made by exception under the Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments. The appointments process is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. Elan Closs Stephens was appointed to the Board of S4C as the BBC Trust Member for Wales in 2012. Her term was due to expire on 31 October 2018. The BBC Trust ceased to exist on 2 April 2017, ending her term of office on that date. The Secretary of State wishes for her to continue to sit on the Board until the date that her original appointment was due to finish.

In accordance with the [Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments](#), any significant political activity undertaken by an appointee in the last five years must be declared. This is defined as including holding office, public speaking, making a recordable donation, or candidature for election. Elan Closs Stephens has declared no such political activity.

[News story: Tax-Free Childcare launches today for children under four](#)

From today, working parents can start applying for two new government childcare schemes launching this year – Tax-Free Childcare which begins immediately and 30 hours free childcare which starts in September.

This means that working parents of children, who will be aged under 4 on 31 August 2017, can now apply through the new digital childcare service for Tax-Free Childcare and receive a government top-up of £2 for every £8 that they pay into their Tax-Free Childcare account. All parents of disabled children (under 17 years old) will also be able to apply for Tax-Free Childcare from today.

In addition, parents of 2-3 year olds, who will be eligible for a 30 hours free childcare place in September, can apply through the childcare service and start arranging a place with their childcare provider.

The [Childcare Choices website](#) provides information on the government's childcare schemes and explains how parents can pre-register or apply. It also includes a childcare calculator to show eligible families how much they could receive.

For parents across the UK, Tax-Free Childcare will cut childcare costs by up to £2,000 per year for each child under 12 years old, or £4,000 per year for disabled children under 17 years old. The programme will be rolled out through the year, with all eligible parents able to receive it by the end of 2017.

From September, working parents of three and four-year-olds living in England will also be entitled to the new 30 hours free childcare offer, worth around £5,000 per child. Parents will only need to make a single application for both schemes when their children become eligible.