

[News story: Government publishes £1.2 billion plan to increase cycling and walking](#)

The government has published its [£1.2 billion long-term plan to make cycling and walking the natural choice for shorter journeys](#).

The government wants cycling and walking to become the norm by 2040 and will target funding at innovative ways to encourage people onto a bike or to use their own 2 feet for shorter journeys.

Plans include specific objectives to double cycling, reduce cycling accidents and increase the proportion of 5 to 10 year-olds walking to school to 55% by 2025.

The £1.2 billion is allocated as follows:

- £50 million to provide cycling proficiency training for further 1.3 million children
- £101 million to improve cycling infrastructure and expand cycle routes between the city centres, local communities, and key employment and retail sites
- £85 million to make improvements to 200 sections of roads for cyclists
- £80 million for safety and awareness training for cyclists, extra secure cycle storage, bike repair, maintenance courses and road safety measures
- £389.5 million for councils to invest in walking and cycling schemes
- £476.4 million from local growth funding to support walking and cycling

In addition, the government is investing an extra:

- £5 million on improving cycle facilities at railway stations
- £1 million on Living Streets' outreach programmes to encourage children to walk to school
- £1 million on [Cycling UK's 'Big Bike Revival' scheme](#) which provides free bike maintenance and cycling classes

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

We are making cycling and walking more accessible to everyone because of the substantial health and environmental benefits – it will also be a boost for businesses because a fitter and healthier workforce is more productive.

We have already tripled spending on cycling since 2010 and we are now publishing a long-term investment plan because we are absolutely committed to increasing levels of cycling and walking.

Transport Minister Andrew Jones said:

As the days are becoming longer and warmer we want to encourage people to make cycling and walking the natural choice for shorter journeys – improving people’s health, reducing travel costs, cutting congestion and cleaning up the environment in the process.

Today we have set out our long-term approach to encourage more people to cycle or walk and overcome the barriers which stop them from doing so.

Joe Irvin, Chief Executive Living Streets said:

Publication of government’s first ever statutory ‘Cycling and walking investment strategy’ is a historic moment. Making it easier for people to walk their everyday journeys will improve our health, economy and social welfare. We now need to turn good intentions into practical progress and help government step up to the new ambitions.

Paul Tuohy, Chief Executive of Cycling UK:

Cycling is a fantastic transport choice, helping you to stay active and healthy as part of your daily routine, and saving you money on travel costs. Cycling UK’s Big Bike Revival will help tens of thousands of people back into cycling by getting your bikes checked over, fixed up and back into use. We are grateful to the Department for Transport for supporting this initiative for this, our third year of national activities to help get more of the UK cycling more often.

Xavier Brice, Chief Executive Sustrans, said:

The first ever ‘Cycling and walking investment strategy’ is a significant step forward by the government. There is an overwhelming body of evidence that demonstrates that investment in cycling and walking has many health, social and economic benefits and must be prioritised. The challenge now is to deliver the change needed locally and nationally.

Under the [Infrastructure Act 2015](#) , the government is required to set a ‘Cycling and walking investment strategy’ for England. This is the first of a series of shorter term, 5 year strategies to support the long-term ambition to make walking and cycling the natural choice for shorter journeys by 2040.

[News story: Defence Secretary announces £539 million investment in new missile systems](#)

The deal ensures our Armed Forces have the best equipment available to protect the new Queen Elizabeth Class Carriers and the extended fleet from current and future threats.

The half a billion-pound contracts will sustain over 130 jobs with MBDA in the UK, with missile modification and service support being carried out in Stevenage, Henlow, Bristol and Bolton.

Secretary of State, Sir Michael Fallon, said:

This substantial investment in missile systems is vital in protecting our ships and planes from the most complex global threats as our Armed Forces keep the UK safe.

Backed by our rising Defence budget, these contracts will sustain high skilled jobs across the UK and demonstrate that strong defence and a strong economy go hand in hand.

As part of a £41 million contract, the Meteor air-to-air missiles will arm the UK's F-35B Lightning II squadrons. It will provide the Royal Air Force and Royal Navy with a world beating missile that can engage with targets moving at huge speed and at a very long range. The weapon will enter service on Typhoon with the RAF in 2018 and the F-35B from 2024, and will be used on a range of missions including protecting the Queen Elizabeth Class Carriers.

Meteor missile fired from a fighter jet. Image courtesy of MBDA Systems.

Meanwhile, a £175 million in-service support contract for the anti-air Sea Viper weapon system will ensure that the Royal Navy's Type 45 Destroyers can continue to provide unparalleled protection from air attack to the extended fleet. Under the contract, the missiles will be maintained, repaired and overhauled as and when required to ensure continued capability. The Sea Viper missile defends ships against multiple threats, including missiles and fighter aircraft.

The final contract is a £323 million deal to purchase the next batch of cutting-edge air defence missiles for the British Army and Royal Navy, offering increased capability at a lower cost. Designed and manufactured by MBDA UK at sites in Bolton, Stevenage and Henlow, the next-generation CAMM missile will provide the Armed Forces with missiles for use on sea and on

land. CAMM has the capability to defend against anti-ship cruise missiles, aircraft and other highly sophisticated threats. Signalling our continued investment in Type 26 programme, CAMM will provide the anti-air defence capability on the new Type 26 Frigates for the Royal Navy and will also form part of the Sea Ceptor weapon system on the Type 23 Frigate and will also enhance the British Army's Ground Based Air Defence capability by replacing the in-service Rapier system.

Tony Douglas, Chief Executive Officer of Defence Equipment and Support, the MOD's procurement organisation, said:

Work on these cutting-edge missiles, which will help to protect the UK at home and abroad and secure jobs across the country, demonstrates the importance of Defence investment. That is why, working closely with our industry partners, we continue to drive innovation and value into everything we do; securing next generation equipment for our Armed Forces at the best possible value for the taxpayer.

Dave Armstrong, Managing Director of MBDA UK, added:

MBDA is delighted by the continued trust placed in us by the Ministry of Defence and the British military. The contracts announced today for Meteor, CAMM and Sea Viper will help protect all three UK Armed Services, providing them with new cutting-edge capabilities and ensuring their current systems remain relevant for the future. They will also help to secure hundreds of high-skilled people at MBDA UK and in the UK supply chain, maintaining the UK's manufacturing base and providing us with a platform for exports.

[Press release: Northern Ireland \(Ministerial Appointments and Regional Rates\) Bill](#)

Bill published to set a Regional Rate for Northern Ireland and allow a new Executive to be formed.

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, has introduced legislation which would set a Regional Rate for Northern Ireland in 2017-18 as well as providing an extension to the period in which a new

Executive could be formed.

Published this morning, the Bill will provide for the setting of a Northern Ireland Regional Rate, enabling household bills to be issued in their usual cycle of ten monthly payments. The rate for 2017-2018 will be increased in line with inflation. It would also remove the present legal barrier to the formation of an Executive, enabling any deal reached between the parties in the coming weeks to be implemented.

Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said:

Since the Northern Ireland Assembly election on 2 March our focus has been on re-establishing inclusive, devolved government.

The forthcoming UK General Election does not change that. This Bill will therefore enable an Executive to be formed in the coming days should an agreement be reached. However, if an agreement is not possible before the General Election, it is right that we provide flexibility for an incoming Government to act in the best interests of Northern Ireland and the space for the parties to conclude a deal.

This Bill gives the parties the legal authority to convene the assembly, appoint ministers and get on with the resumption of devolved government at any point up to 29 June. This is what the people of Northern Ireland voted for on 2 March, and should remain the focus in the weeks ahead.

[News story: Institute for Apprenticeships announces new appointments](#)

The Institute for Apprenticeships has appointed chairs for 15 route panels, and a panel of apprentices to advise the board.

The route panels are made up of industry experts and are responsible for setting the standards of knowledge, skills and behaviours needed by employers for every occupation in England. The chairs will lead their groups in reviewing and recommending apprenticeship standards and assessment plans and

advising on funding levels on behalf of the institute.

The panel of apprentices is made up of current or recent apprentices from a wide range of occupations and experiences from up and down the country. The panel will decide what issues to focus on and ensure the apprentice voice is heard within the decision making structure of the institute.

Chair of the Institute for Apprenticeships Antony Jenkins said:

“I’m delighted to be able to formally announce these appointments. For our panel chairs we’ve got individuals of superb calibre – a dynamic mix of experts in their field from a broad range of occupations. Their expertise will ensure the panels are run smoothly and that quality will be maintained across the system.

“Our panel of apprentices is something I am particularly proud of – a deeply impressive group of individuals who will ensure the needs of apprentices are truly reflected in the development of the apprenticeship programme.”

The panel chairs are:

- agriculture, environment and animal care – Richard Self, Project Manager, Edge Careers and Agricultural Manager, Co-operatives UK
- business and administrative – Andrew Ground, CEO and co-founder of Tutorfair
- catering and hospitality – Alison Gilbert, Human Resources and Board Director, CH&Co
- childcare and education – Sir Nick Weller, Executive Principal, Dixons City Academy, Bradford
- construction – Tanja Smith, Technical Director, Gradon Architecture
- creative and design – Iain Smith OBE, Film Producer, Applecross Productions
- digital – Mark Sherwin, Managing Director, Global Digital Customer Services Lead, Accenture
- engineering and manufacturing – Dr Graham Honeyman CBE, Chief Executive at Sheffield Forgemasters
- hair and beauty – Suki Kalirai, Director, GKC Infocus Ltd and Qi Spa (Spa WMC Ltd)
- health and science – Kirk Lower, National Lead for Apprenticeships, Talent for Care, Widening Participation and Volunteering, Health Education England
- legal, finance and accounting – Mike Thompson, Director, Early Careers, Barclays
- protective services – Sir Jonathan Murphy, former Chief Constable Merseyside Police, Professor of Advanced Policing Studies, Liverpool John Moores University
- sales, marketing and procurement – Godfrey Moger, Station Director for Free Radio, Bauer Media
- social care – Sir Roger Singleton, Chair of the Independent Safeguarding Authority and previously Chief Executive of Barnados
- transport and logistics – Michelle Nolan-McSweeney, Head of Training Strategy, Network Rail

The 11 members of the panel of apprentices are:

- Heeran Basi – SevernTrent
- Holly Broadhurst – JCB
- Lucille Gallaway – Barclays
- Adam Gymer – Pfizer UK
- Kara Halford – Dawn's Flower Box
- Becky King – National Physical Laboratory
- Kam Penglin – CT Skills
- Sanna Shabir – Atkins Global
- Adam Sharp – Sellafield
- Daniel Skinner – BAE Systems
- Poppy Wolfarth – Asset Training

[Press release: High fines for illegal fishing](#)

On 13 April 2017, at Barkingside Magistrates court, Billy Cox was fined £300 for fishing without the required number of rod licences, with costs of £127 and a victim surcharge of £30 imposed after a prosecution by the Environment Agency.

Magistrates heard that on 8 September 2016, an Environment Agency enforcement officer found Billy Cox fishing with 3 rods and lines at White Hart Lakes, Dagenham. He was only able to produce one valid licence and further licence checks confirmed that he did not have a second licence to cover the use of his third rod. At the time of the incident a rod licence permitted the use of up to 2 rods and lines which was clearly stated in the terms and conditions supplied with the licence. He was reported for the offence of not being able to produce the required number of licences when challenged by the bailiff.

Billy Cox was convicted in his absence.

Darren Wakenell, of the Environment Agency, said:

The majority of anglers fish legally and purchase a fishing licence. We invest the money from fishing licences back into fisheries improvements, fish stocks and fishing, this is essential for the future of the sport.

The minority of anglers that fail to buy a fishing licence are cheating their fellow anglers and the future of the sport. In addition, fishing licence cheats risk a criminal conviction, a significant fine and could lose their fishing equipment.

During 2015-2016 the Environment Agency checked more than 62,000 fishing licences and prosecuted more than 1,900 anglers for rod and line offences resulting in fines and costs in excess of £500,000.

Anyone witnessing illegal fishing incidents in progress can report them directly to the Environment Agency hotline, 0800 80 70 60. Information on illegal fishing and environmental crime can also be reported anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

You need a valid Environment Agency fishing licence if you are aged 12 or over and fish for salmon, trout, freshwater fish, smelt or eel in England.

Junior fishing licences (aged 12-16) are now free, but you must still get a [fishing licence online](#).

For media enquiries please call us on 0800 141 2743.

Or email us at southeastpressofficel@environment-agency.gov.uk