

UK Government sets out ambitious blueprint to transform UK

- The UK government to set 12 new missions to drive real change to people's lives by spreading opportunity and reversing geographical inequalities
- Inspired by the success of the vaccine rollout, Secretary of State Michael Gove to invite the First Ministers of the devolved governments to work together to level up the whole United Kingdom
- Leaders across the UK will be asked to find new ways to collaborate and learn from each other's successes as we face common challenges

The UK government's Levelling Up white paper will today set out an ambitious blueprint to improve lives and expand opportunities across the whole United Kingdom.

Following publication of the white paper, Secretary of State for Levelling Up Michael Gove will invite the First Ministers of Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland to join a new collective effort to level up the whole of the United Kingdom.

Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Rt Hon Michael Gove MP said:

"The United Kingdom is an unparalleled success story with one of the world's biggest and most dynamic economies.

"But not everyone shares equally in the UK's success. Great cities like Glasgow, Belfast, Swansea and Manchester, and proud towns from Aberystwyth to Armagh, to Bangor and Yeovil, have huge potential but contain inequalities which hold too many back.

"Our ambitious plan to unite and level up the whole UK seeks to end that historic injustice and call time on the postcode lottery.

"We will only succeed if all layers of government – UK, devolved, and local – work together.

"We have seen through the success of the vaccine roll-out what we can achieve when we pull together. United, there is no challenge we cannot meet."

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

"From day one, the defining mission of this government has been to level up this country, to break the link between geography and destiny so that no

matter where you live you have access to the same opportunities.

“The challenges we face have been embedded over generations and cannot be dug out overnight, but this White Paper is the next crucial step.

“It is a vision for the future that will see public spending on R&D increased in every part of the country; transport connectivity improving; faster broadband in every community; life expectancies rising; violent crime falling; schools improving; and private sector investment being unleashed.

“It is the most comprehensive, ambitious plan of its kind that this country has ever seen and it will ensure that the government continues to rise to the challenge and deliver for the people of the UK.”

Among the White Paper’s 12 central missions are plans to: close the gap between the UK’s highest and lowest performing cities; improve educational attainment among children leaving primary school; narrow the gap in healthy life expectancy between the best and worst performing areas of the UK; and close gaps in transport and connectivity.

These missions will drive real change by spreading opportunity and prosperity and reverse the postcode lottery of life chances in the UK.

Where policies are reserved, the UK Government will lead on delivery UK-wide. Where missions fall in devolved policy areas, the UK Government will seek to work collaboratively with the devolved governments to deliver for the people we jointly serve.

The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Michael Gove, will write to the leaders of the devolved administrations to invite them to work together to deliver for people across the UK.

Proposals will include using the new structures created in the landmark Intergovernmental Relations Review to drive collaboration to overcome geographical disparities and the creation of new body to share evidence and analyse success in devolved policy areas across the UK.

Amongst the UK-wide policies the UK Government will drive are:

A 40% increase in domestic public investment in R&D outside the Greater South East of England by 2030. The Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) have committed to invest at least 55% of their domestic R&D funding outside the Greater South East by 2024/5. Nationwide gigabit-capable broadband and 4G coverage across the UK and 5G coverage for most of the population.