

Thousands of new prison places to rehabilitate offenders and cut crime

- massive construction project to create thousands of jobs for local communities
- latest step in government's ambitious plans to create 20,000 places by mid-2020s, helping to cut crime and protect the public.

An unprecedented expansion and refurbishment programme will create more than 4,000 new prison places across the country, the Deputy Prime Minister Dominic Raab announced today (18 February 2022).

These new places are part of the government's £4 billion investment to create 20,000 modern and innovative prison places, ensuring the right conditions are in place to truly rehabilitate prisoners. This will give prisoners the education, skills and addiction support they need to live crime-free lives on release, helping to cut crime and protect the public.

The 4,000 places announced today will be created across 16 prisons through the building of new wings and refurbishing jails. They will create thousands of jobs for local communities, boosting economies.

Subject to planning permission, 8 prisons will receive new houseblocks while HMP High Down in Surrey will get a brand-new workshop. The innovative designs will mean easier access to supporting facilities such as healthcare, kitchens and staff offices which will help to protect frontline staff and clamp down on crime behind bars.

New workshops and classrooms will also see offenders getting vital work and training so they are able to find employment on release.

Seven other prisons will also receive comprehensive refurbishments part of a wider £150 million investment in the estate to help bring all jails into the 21st century.

Deputy Prime Minister and Justice Secretary Dominic Raab, said:

Our unprecedented prison-building programme is the largest in more than a century and will deliver an additional 20,000 prison places by the mid-2020s.

We are improving our existing prison estate, putting more offenders behind bars, training them for release and protecting the public.

Today's news is the latest step in the government's commitment to create 20,000 modern and innovative prison places by the mid-2020s.

Construction at 2 new prisons, which are part of the Deputy Prime Minister's

commitment to [build 6 modern jails](#), has already created more than 500 jobs and over 70 apprenticeships. When the two prisons open, they are expected to offer over a thousand permanent jobs – providing a significant boost to the local economy. Thousands of jobs will also be created at the 16 sites planned for expansion through the building process and the additional prison officer roles required.

Notes to editors

- The prison population is expected to increase by 19,000 by the mid-2020s as the government cracks down on crime and recruits 20,000 new police officers.
- At the same time in its recent [Prisons White Paper](#), the Ministry of Justice pledged to commence a large-scale recruitment campaign for up to 5,000 additional prison officers in public and private prisons by the mid-2020s.
- All plans to refurbish and expand existing jails will be subject to planning permissions but the department already has planning for 5 of the prisons, HMPs Stocken, Guys Marsh, High Down, Birmingham and Liverpool.
- The Ministry of Justice has previously announced that [4 prisons](#) would be expanded to increase prison capacity. Today's announcement builds on this, with a total of 16 sites being expanded and refurbished as part of the drive to create 20,000 new prison places by mid-2020s.
- The 7 refurbishment sites are HMPs Norwich, Feltham, Aylesbury, Haverigg and Swinfen Hall, Liverpool and Birmingham. Four have already been completed.
- Sites due to receive additional houseblocks are HMPs Bullingdon, Channings Wood, Elmley, Highpoint, Hindley, Wayland, Guys Marsh, High Down (in the form of a workshop) and Stocken.

[Health Secretary sees how the South West is battling the backlog](#)

- Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid visits the South West region as part of his week-long national 'Road to Recovery' tour
- Javid opens government-funded £56.7 million ground-breaking facility at Porton Down tackling COVID-19 and future health threats
- Visits follow government and NHS publishing COVID Backlog Recovery Plan to reduce waiting times, give patients more control over care and recover from COVID-19

Innovative health and technology hubs were the focus of the Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid's visit to the South West today (17 February 2022), as he continues his 'Road to Recovery' tour across England.

Mr Javid toured three major facilities to meet amazing staff who have worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic and see how the region is building back from COVID-19 and working through the backlog.

This visit comes just a week after the government and NHS published their electives recovery plan to boost recovery, tackle long waits for care with a massive expansion in capacity for tests, checks and treatments.

The government will also join up health and social care services and give people access to the right care, in the right place at the right time. The Integration White Paper published last week will improve health and care systems for the 21st Century, boost the health of local communities, and make it easier to access health and care services.

The Health and Social Care Secretary's ambitious agenda on day 4 (Thursday 17 February) of his tour included visiting:

- A new £4.4 million eye care unit at Musgrove Park Hospital, where he met with staff to thank them for their work during COVID-19 and hear their feedback on the new state of the art facilities.
- Dorset Health Village, a purpose-built centre on the top floor of Beales Department Store in Poole helping to tackle COVID-19 waiting lists.
- Porton Down, where he opened a new facility that will help to tackle both COVID-19 and a broad range of emerging health security threats.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

It's been a privilege to talk with people from Somerset to Dorset and see first-hand the innovative new approaches and technological breakthroughs that will underpin our recovery from COVID-19 and help tackle the COVID backlog currently facing our NHS and social care system.

Our COVID Backlog Recovery Plan, along with the excellent work I have seen today, are necessary to radically rethink how our health service delivers operations, treatment and checks as we look beyond the pandemic and learn to live with COVID-19.

We are committed to tackling the COVID-19 backlog and building a health and social care system that works for everyone across our country.

As part of his commitment to recovering from COVID-19 and tackling the NHS backlog, the Health and Social Care Secretary visited the newly completed £4.4 million eye care unit that has opened at Musgrove Park Hospital in Somerset. The development is one part of Musgrove 2030 – an ambitious programme to transform the hospital's facilities and ensure people are cared for in the right place to meet their health needs. He met with staff to thank them for their work during COVID-19 and to hear their feedback on the new state of the art facilities.

The Health and Social Care Secretary then travelled to Dorset Health Village, a purpose-built centre on the top floor of Beales Department Store in Poole. Using lessons learnt from the creation of the Nightingale Hospitals at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and the mass vaccination centres, the floor has been completely transformed into a clinical area, including an ophthalmology lane, a breast screening unit and 16 clinical rooms which can be adapted for different clinics. This will ensure local people will get seen more quickly, in a convenient way for them.

Finally, the Health and Social Care Secretary, alongside Dr Jenny Harries, Chief Executive of the UK Health Security Agency, opened a new ground-breaking facility at Porton Down. The two-storey, 22,000sqft building is one of two that make up a new £65 million Vaccine Evaluation Centre, built to help develop and licence new vaccines and cement the UK as a global leader in testing against future variants of the virus.

Here, teams are currently sequencing over 1,500 positive PCR tests every day to help slow the spread of COVID-19 and guard against new variants as we learn to live with the virus, as well as shaping our understanding of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases.

Technologies like those at Porton Down are vital to tackling both COVID-19 and a broad range of emerging health security threats, and this has been recognised by the government's £10 million UK aid funding to progress research into vaccines to help future-proof the world from diseases.

Professor Dame Jenny Harries, CEO of the UK Health Security Agency, said:

It was a pleasure to be able to tour these new world-class facilities, with the Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid, which will help further establish the UKHSA and its Porton Down site as a global leader of vaccine testing and variant research in the fight against COVID-19.

The work undertaken at the Vaccine Evaluation Centre will define the UK's future pandemic response as we help develop the next generation of vaccines to protect against this ever-mutating virus.

Vaccines are one of the most important weapons we have against COVID-19 and they have prevented countless deaths and hospitalisations through this pandemic. Our teams will use these new facilities to ensure we stay on the front foot in protecting against future threats.

The Health and Social Care Secretary will use this regional tour to help focus these existing plans for recovery and reform, and inform future plans which are expected within the coming months.

Foreign Secretary statement – Duma requests Putin recognises Donetsk and Luhansk as independent

Press release

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss has criticised the Duma's request that Vladimir Putin recognises the Ukrainian regions of Donetsk and Luhansk as independent.



Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said:

The Duma's request that Vladimir Putin recognises the Ukrainian regions of Donetsk and Luhansk as independent shows flagrant disregard for Russia's commitments under the Minsk agreements. If this request were accepted, it would represent a further attack on Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, signal an end to the Minsk process and demonstrate a Russian decision to choose a path of confrontation over dialogue.

We urge Russia to end its pattern of destabilising behaviour against Ukraine and to implement the commitments it has freely signed up to, including the Minsk agreements.

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Environment Agency warns communities to stay safe and be prepared as Storm Eunice approaches

- The Environment Agency is calling for public to take action to stay safe during Storm Eunice
- Public urged to sign up for flood warning alerts on GOV.UK

The Environment Agency is urging people living in flood risk communities in the Severn and Wye estuaries to take immediate action to prepare for flooding from a forecast tidal surge caused by Storm Eunice this Friday.

The tidal surge is expected tomorrow (Friday) morning, and the Environment Agency is urging people to take steps to protect themselves and their property from the risk of flooding.

The Agency has issued 9 Severe Flood Warnings along the Severn and Wye due to the high risk of flooding from Avonmouth and up the Severn into Gloucestershire and along the Wye from Chepstow to Monmouth. Severe Flood Warnings indicate that there is a risk to life. A further 20 Flood Warnings are also in place.

Flood barriers have also been deployed further up the region in Shrewsbury, Frankwell and Beales Corner in Bewdley and officers are ready to deploy barriers at Ironbridge if needed.

Residents are urged to sign up to Environment Agency Flood Warning messages and to make sure they are prepared for flooding by following the 'Prepare, Act, Survive' guidance:

- Prepare a bag that includes medical and insurance documents
- [Check the latest flood situation online](#)
- Know how to turn off your gas, electricity and water
- Check your insurance to make sure you are covered for flood damage. If you rent your home, it is your responsibility to have insurance for your belongings.
- If you are flooded, call 999 if in immediate danger and follow advice from emergency services.

Kay Champion Area Incident Duty Manager at the Environment Agency, said:

The arrival of Storm Eunice overnight on Thursday has the potential to cause severe flooding with overtopping of defences, very strong winds and high waves. There is potential for record water levels along the Severn and Wye estuary.

We are closely monitoring the situation and working closely with our partners. Our incident response staff are checking defences.

We urge people to make sure they are prepared by signing up to Flood Warnings and making sure they are in a safe place by following guidance from emergency services.

We also strongly urge people to stay away from the coast during the storm as there is a real risk to life during these severe high winds.

You can check your flood risk, sign up for free flood warnings and keep up to date with the latest situation at <https://www.gov.uk/check-flood-risk>, call Floodline on 0345 988 1188 or follow @EnvAgency on Twitter for the latest flood updates.

The Met Office has issued a red warning for strong winds from Storm Eunice. This could cause a storm surge and flooding from large waves, potentially affecting communities in the Severn and Wye estuaries on Friday.

Flooding is possible from Sharpness and up the River Severn into Gloucestershire and along the Wye to Chepstow. With the Met Office weather warning in place people should take extreme care near the estuary and any coastal areas. We are urging people to stay safe and warn wave watchers against the unnecessary danger of taking 'storm selfies'. Please avoid low lying roads and footpaths during this time. There is potential for high water levels between 7:30 and 11:30 am on Friday morning.

[E-seminar: NGS \(part 2\), Instruments, Methods and Implementation](#)

News story

This e-seminar provides an introduction to NGS instrumentation and applications employed with food safety, authenticity, and quality analysis.



The e-seminar provides guidance and best practice on establishing an in-house NGS capability, including Instrument selection and placement, supporting equipment, and staffing requirements. The e-seminar also considers other factors in setting up an NGS facility, such as the need for adequate data storage and data streaming capabilities.

The information presented will equip the viewer with the necessary knowledge and skills to broaden their scope of food safety, authenticity, and quality testing, and is essential viewing for any molecular biologist working in the area of foods analysis, who is considering extending their knowledge into this technique.

The e-seminar is intended for individuals currently working within the food allergens testing arena, the food industry, and those involved with the UK official control system.

The production of this e-seminar was co-funded by the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Food Standards Agency, Food Standards Scotland and the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy, via the Government Chemist, under the Joint Knowledge Transfer Framework for Food Standards and Food Safety Analysis.

[Next Generation Sequencing Part 2, Instruments, Methods and Implementation](#)

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