

# Pow: Water industry must do more to protect the environment

Ofwat must ensure that England's water industry is doing more to protect the environment, the Government has announced today (2 February) as it set out its priorities for the regulator over the next five years.

The new Strategic Policy Statement (SPS), which will be set by the Government and formally laid in Parliament later today, will stress the importance of protecting the environment for the water sector's economic regulator.

It will set out the Government's expectation that Ofwat and water companies will prioritise action to protect and enhance the environment, and deliver a resilient and sustainable water supply.

In particular, it confirms government expectations of water companies to significantly reduce the frequency and volume of sewage discharges from storm overflows. It also urges Ofwat to challenge them to show how they will be more ambitious in protecting the environment, whilst also getting the basics right.

These priorities build on the clear direction the Government has already set through direct action in this area, including:

- additional duties on government and water companies in the Environment Act, including a requirement to publish near real time information on the operation of storm overflows and for government to produce a statutory plan by September 2022 on tackling the issue.
- driving increased monitoring and transparency through the Storm Overflows Taskforce. Monitoring of the network has increased 14-fold in the last five years and the Environment Agency is now monitoring 80% of storm overflows – that will increase to 100% by 2023.
- delivering practical solutions for farmers to reduce pollution from agriculture by doubling the budget for Catchment Sensitive Farming. This is a partnership between Defra, Natural England and the Environment Agency providing free 1-2-1 advice to farmers on reducing pollution through management of farmyard manure and soils, among other things.
- tough enforcement action against water companies. Last year the Environment Agency concluded seven prosecutions against companies with fines of more than £100 million. The Agency has also launched a major investigation into possible unauthorised spills at sewage treatment works.

The SPS also gives greater priority to addressing unsustainable abstraction, protecting priority sites such as chalk streams, and ensuring better flood resilience.

Environment Minister Rebecca Pow said:

“Water quality is an absolute priority. We are the first Government to set a clear expectation that Ofwat should prioritise action by water companies to protect the environment and deliver the improvements that we all want to see. I have been very clear of my expectations of water companies and where they do not step up we will take robust action.

“The priorities that we are setting out today build on the work that we have already undertaken to reduce harm from storm overflows, improve monitoring and reporting of pollution incidents making this more transparent, to tackle run-off from agriculture, and protect the health of our rivers and seas.”

As the economic regulator, Ofwat is responsible for setting out what water companies should focus their investment on during each five-year spending cycle. It is the Government’s responsibility to set the strategic direction and policy priorities as part of that process.

The ambitious agenda set out in the new SPS follows a [consultation](#) on the Government’s draft proposals in July 2021. It is set to influence the next five-year spending cycle, which will run from 2025 – 2030. In the current spending cycle (2020 – 2025), £7.1 billion is already being invested in the environment, including £3.1 billion specifically on storm overflows.

The SPS will come into effect after it has laid in Parliament for 40 days without objection. Ofwat must then act in accordance with this statement, explaining clearly how major decisions support the delivery of the government’s strategic priorities, such as its methodology for the upcoming price review.

The Government will publish a [summary of responses](#) to the consultation. The SPS will also be [published](#) on gov.uk once it has been formally laid in Parliament.

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## [Government unveils levelling up plan that will transform UK](#)

- Twelve bold national levelling up missions, given status in law, will shift government focus and resources to Britain’s forgotten communities throughout 2020s
- Biggest shift of power from Whitehall to local leaders in modern times announced – every part of England to get ‘London style’ powers and mayor if they wish to
- Starting gun fired on decade-long project to level up Britain, with radical new policies announced across the board
- Domestic public investment in Research & Development to increase by at least 40% across the North, Midlands, South West, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland

Today (2 February 2022) the Levelling Up Secretary Michael Gove will unveil the government's flagship Levelling Up White Paper. This document will set out a plan to transform the UK by spreading opportunity and prosperity to all parts of it.

## System change and missions

The White Paper will set out a complete 'system change' of how government works that will be implemented to level up the UK.

At the heart of this new way of making and implementing policy will be 12 bold, national missions – all quantifiable and to be achieved by 2030. These missions ([in full below](#)) are the policy objectives for levelling up, and thus form the heart of the government's agenda for the 2020s. They will be given status in law in a flagship Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.

These missions will be cross-government, cross-society efforts. The first mission, for instance, will see pay, employment, and productivity grow everywhere, and the disparities between the top and worst performing areas narrow. This is the first time a government has placed narrowing spatial economic disparities at the heart of its agenda before.

The Research & Development (R&D) mission will see domestic public R&D investment outside the Greater South East increase by at least 40% by 2030, with these funds leveraging a huge increase in private investment in these areas too.

By 2030, other missions will see:

- the rest of the country's local public transport systems becoming much closer to London standards
- the large majority of the country gain access to 5G broadband
- illiteracy and innumeracy in primary school leavers effectively eliminated – focussing the government's education efforts on the most disadvantaged parts of the country

Other missions will see: hundreds of thousands more people completing high quality skills training every year, gross disparities in healthy life expectancy narrowed, the number of poor quality rented homes halved, the most run down town centres and communities across the country rejuvenated, a significant decrease in serious crime in the most blighted areas, and every part of England getting a 'London-style' devolution deal if they wish to.

The government will do whatever it can to achieve these missions. Government's resources, energy, and focus throughout the 2020s will be re-oriented around achieving them – and thus squarely focussed on helping the people and parts of the country most struggling. Whilst the missions are UK-wide ambitions, in the many instances where they are driven by devolved policy levers, the UK government wishes to work hand in hand with the devolved governments to achieve them.

The missions will be underpinned by a suite of public metrics to track

progress and monitor the evolution of spatial disparities. The government will legislate such that it has a statutory duty to publish an annual report updating the public on the progress of these missions, with a new Levelling Up Advisory Council including members such as Sir Paul Collier, renowned economist at Oxford's Blavatnik's School of Government, providing further support and constructive analysis.

Other parts of the 'system change' include: all policy across Whitehall being aligned with the levelling up agenda and therefore subject to spatial analysis, and a transformation of the government's approach to data and evaluation – with a new independent body created to improve transparency of local government performance.

**Levelling Up Secretary Michael Gove said:**

"The United Kingdom is an unparalleled success story. We have one of the world's biggest and most dynamic economies. Ours is the world's most spoken language. We have produced more Nobel Prize winners than any country other than America.

"But not everyone shares equally in the UK's success. For decades, too many communities have been overlooked and undervalued. As some areas have flourished, others have been left in a cycle of decline. The UK has been like a jet firing on only one engine.

"Levelling Up and this White Paper is about ending this historic injustice and calling time on the postcode lottery.

"This will not be an easy task, and it won't happen overnight, but our 12 new national levelling up missions will drive real change in towns and cities across the UK, so that where you live will no longer determine how far you can go."

**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."

## **Huge shift of power from Whitehall to local leaders**

The government recognises that if it tries to level up the UK alone, it will fail. That is why the White Paper will detail the largest devolution of power from Whitehall to local leaders across England in modern times.

The government recognises the strong local leadership mayors like Andy Street, Ben Houchen and Andy Burnham have shown, and wishes to replicate this success across England.

Fundamental to this 'devolution revolution' will be a new model for England with more mayors for those areas that want one.

We will invite the first 9 areas to agree new county deals and seek to agree further MCA deals, extending devolution across England. The first 9 areas invited to begin negotiations will be Cornwall, Derbyshire & Derby, Devon, Plymouth and Torbay, Durham, Hull & East Yorkshire, Leicestershire, Norfolk, Nottinghamshire & Nottingham, and Suffolk.

The White Paper announces negotiations for a new Mayoral Combined Authority deal for York and North Yorkshire and expanded Mayoral Combined Authority deal for the North East, as well as negotiations for 'trailblazer' devolution deals with the West Midlands and Greater Manchester to extend their powers – with these deals acting as blueprints for other Mayoral Combined Authorities to follow.

By 2030, every part of England that wishes to have a 'London-style' devolution deal will have one.

The local devolution mission is relevant in England only, but the wider policy programme will see decentralisation of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to local areas in Scotland and Wales.

## **Radical new policy to level up announced**

The White Paper represents a long term plan to transform the UK, but it also sets out the first steps the government is taking to achieve this.

### **Boosting pay and productivity, especially in places where they are lagging**

- To contribute towards domestic public investment in R&D outside the Greater South East increasing by at least 40% 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. Commitments to increase public investment have been made by DHSC, MOD, DfT and Defra. For instance, the Department for Health and Social Care will be increasing their medical research investment outside London, Oxford and Cambridge.

- The White Paper also announces 3 new Innovation Accelerators, major place-based centres of innovation, centred on Greater Manchester, the West Midlands, and Glasgow-City Region. These clusters of innovation will see local businesses and researchers in these areas backed by £100 million of new government funding to turbo-charge local growth, learning from the MIT-Greater Boston and Stanford-Silicon Valley models.
- The document further sets out the government's intention to mobilise £16 billion of the Local Government Pension Scheme for investments in local projects – recognising that too much at present is invested outside the UK.
- The government will fund ambitious plans for bus improvements in areas where this can make the most impact, including the mayoral city-regions, Stoke-on-Trent, Derbyshire and Warrington.

### **Spreading opportunities and improving public services, especially where they are weakest**

- 55 Education Investment Areas (EIAs) will be designated in local authorities in England where school outcomes are currently weakest. These areas, 95% of which are outside London and the South East, will benefit from intensive investment and support. This will ensure the worst off schools of the North, Midlands, South West and East of England receive the most support over this decade. They will be supported by the Department for Education (DfE) offering retention payments to schools in these areas ensuring they can retain the best teachers. And will be prioritised for new specialist sixth form free schools that will ensure talented children from disadvantaged backgrounds have access to the highest standard of education this country offers.
- Local Skills Improvement Plans will be rolled out with funding across England, giving local employer bodies and stakeholders a statutory role in planning skills training in their area, to better meet local labour market needs.
- The government will set out its strategy to tackle the core drivers of health inequalities through a new White Paper on Health Disparities published this year.
- Recommendations will be taken forward from Henry Dimbleby's review towards a National Food Strategy. DfE will work with the Food Standards Agency to pilot measures to ensure greater compliance with the school food standards. The government will pilot the Community Eat Well programme, enabling GPs to prescribe exercise and healthy food.

## Restoring local pride

- The government will support 20 of our towns and city centres, starting off with Wolverhampton and Sheffield, undertaking ambitious, King's Cross-style regeneration projects, transforming derelict urban sites into beautiful communities. This work will be spearheaded by Homes England, which will be repurposed to, in addition to its existing functions, regenerate towns and cities.
- The '80/20 rule' which leads to 80% of government funding for housing supply being directed at 'maximum affordability areas' – in practice, London and the South East – will be scrapped, with much of the £1.8 billion brownfield funding instead being diverted to transforming brownfield sites in the North and Midlands. The Metro Mayors will be allocated £120 million of this funding.
- The government will announce a plan that for the first time ever, all homes in the Private Rented Sector will have to meet a minimum standard – the Decent Homes Standard. Section 21 'no fault' evictions will further be abolished, ending the unfair situation where renters can be kicked out of their homes for no reason. We will consult on introducing a landlords register, and will set out plans for a crackdown on rogue landlords – making sure fines and bans stop repeat offenders leaving renters in terrible conditions.
- Home ownership will be boosted due to a new £1.5 billion Levelling Up Home Building Fund being launched, which will provide loans to SMEs and support the UK government's wider regeneration agenda in areas that are a priority for levelling up.
- The government will further commit to building more genuinely affordable social housing. A new Social Housing Regulation Bill will deliver upon the commitments the government made following the Grenfell tragedy in 2017.
- The White Paper will commit the government to significantly increasing cultural spending outside the capital, and commit that 100% of the Arts Council England funding uplift agreed at the latest Spending Review will be spent outside London.
- A new National Youth Guarantee will be launched so that by 2025 every young person in England will have access to regular out of school activities, adventures away from home, and opportunities to volunteer.
- A review of the Community Ownership Fund will occur so that more fans

can take control of their vital local assets such as football club grounds. A £230 million investment in grassroots football will be delivered, with funding this year to deliver 850 pitches in England alone with further funding to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

- £44 million will be unlocked from the Dormant Assets Scheme to support charities, social enterprises, and vulnerable individuals. With a consultation on the best causes for a further £880 million later this year, which will include a community wealth fund, youth and social investment.
- The White Paper will announce 68 more local authorities to be supported by the High Streets Task Force to transform their town centres.
- The government will give local authorities the power to require landlords of empty shops to fill them if they have been left vacant for too long.
- £50 million from the Safer Streets Fund will be invested every year to give Police and Crime Commissioners, local authorities, and also certain civil society organisations in England and Wales the resources they need to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.
- To ensure those who transgress repair the damage they cause, £93 million will be invested in scaling up the amount of unpaid work that offenders to around 8 million hours per year – 1.75 million hours higher than any time since records began in 2015. Police officers will also gain the power to deal with noise nuisance.
- Building on investment from the 10-year Drugs Strategy, the government will work intensively with the local authorities of 10-20 areas most affected by prolific neighbourhood crime.

## **Empowering local leaders**

In addition to the policies announced above, such as offering a 'London-style' devolution settlement to every part of England:

- Announcing for the first time a new devolution framework which sets out a clear menu of options for places in England that wish to unlock the benefits of devolution, whether that is moving towards a London-style transport system to connect people to opportunity, improving local skills provision, or being able to act more flexibly and innovatively to respond to local need.



- The £2.6 billion UK Shared Prosperity Fund will be decentralised to local leaders as far as possible, with investments set to regenerate communities, boost people's skills, and support local businesses.
- A commitment to vastly simplify the local growth funding landscape to allow local leaders to drive tangible, visible change in their communities.

**Stephen Phipson, Chief Executive of Make UK, said:**

"Manufacturers will enthusiastically embrace this strategy which is a vital building block in spreading growth to all parts of the UK. The sector has a significant presence in exactly the areas which need levelling up and is playing a vital role in delivering high value skills. While there is substantially more to be done, this focus on skills and innovation, together with an emphasis on infrastructure and place, is the right starting point and one that industry will back."

## **Annex A: The 12 Missions to Level Up the UK**

1. By 2030, pay, employment and productivity will have risen in every area of the UK, with each containing a globally competitive city, with the gap between the top performing and other areas closing.
2. By 2030, domestic public investment in Research & Development outside the Greater South East will increase by at least 40% and at least one third over the Spending Review period, with that additional government funding seeking to leverage at least twice as much private sector investment over the long term to stimulate innovation and productivity growth.
3. By 2030, local public transport connectivity across the country will be significantly closer to the standards of London, with improved services, simpler fares and integrated ticketing.
4. By 2030, the UK will have nationwide gigabit-capable broadband and 4G coverage, with 5G coverage for the majority of the population.
5. By 2030, the number of primary school children achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths will have significantly increased. In England, this will mean 90% of children will achieve the expected standard, and the percentage of children meeting the expected standard in the worst performing areas will have increased by over a third.
6. By 2030, the number of people successfully completing high-quality skills training will have significantly increased in every area of the UK. In England, this will lead to 200,000 more people successfully completing high-quality skills training annually, driven by 80,000 more people completing courses in the lowest skilled areas.

7. By 2030, the gap in Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) between local areas where it is highest and lowest will have narrowed, and by 2035 HLE will rise by 5 years.

8. By 2030, well-being will have improved in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing.

9. By 2030, pride in place, such as people's satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between the top performing and other areas closing.

10. By 2030, renters will have a secure path to ownership with the number of first-time buyers increasing in all areas; and the government's ambition is for the number of non-decent rented homes to have fallen by 50%, with the biggest improvements in the lowest performing areas.

11. By 2030, homicide, serious violence, and neighbourhood crime will have fallen, focused on the worst-affected areas.

12. By 2030, every part of England that wants one will have a devolution deal with powers at or approaching the highest level of devolution and a simplified, long-term funding settlement.

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## [UK takes first steps towards new trade deal with Israel](#)

- International Trade Secretary Anne-Marie Trevelyan launches consultation today (2 February) for a new UK-Israel trade deal, during a 3-day visit to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories
- 8-week consultation will seek the views of the public and business on an enhanced trade deal
- UK confirms plans for a UK-Israel Innovation Summit this spring, with Israeli PM and a trade delegation set to attend

International Trade Secretary Anne-Marie Trevelyan will today meet with Israel Minister of Economy Orna Barbivai to kickstart preparations for a new trade deal that will deepen economic ties between long-standing allies.

The UK government will launch an eight-week consultation to seek the views of business and the public, ahead of negotiations starting later this year, as

is standard. The UK is Israel's third largest trading partner, with £2.7 billion worth of British exports going there in 2020 and an overall trade relationship worth £4.8 billion.

Last year, Israeli investment into the UK was worth over £200m and secured hundreds of jobs across the UK. A new agreement will aim to play to our strengths as fellow tech superpowers, boosting our strong trade and investment relationship in industries of the future like digital, services and life sciences and creating high-paying jobs across the country.

While services account for 70% of both our economies, they currently only represent 35% of our bilateral trade. An updated trade agreement could address this imbalance by cutting red tape and overhauling the very limited provisions on services and innovation in the current agreement inherited from the EU.

During her three-day visit, the Secretary of State will encourage greater collaboration between UK and Israeli tech industries. She will meet key Israeli investors in the UK, host a reception of leading technology businesses and visit Tel Aviv's new light rail metro project to identify opportunities for UK firms to be involved in the project.

She will also visit the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where she will discuss UK and Israeli agri-tech expertise.

UK businesses are also expected to be able to seize new opportunities in areas like education, healthcare, and food and drink exports, benefiting from lower tariffs and better market access in a country that has a high regard for British products and expertise.

The Secretary of State will also travel to Ramallah to meet with PNA Minister of National Economy Khalid Osaily and visit the UK-Palestinian Tech Hub to strengthen links between UK and Palestinian tech enterprises.

### **International Trade Secretary Anne-Marie Trevelyan said:**

We're using our independent trade policy to revitalise old agreements we inherited from the EU. Unlike in the past, we can now work with friends and allies like Israel to strike deals that are truly tailored to our strengths in areas like digital trade, services, and life sciences.

This new trade agreement is part of our commitment to build a stronger relationship with Israel and is a huge opportunity to deepen ties with a fellow democracy and tech superpower so together we can create well-paid, high value jobs in both countries.

**Chris Southworth, Secretary-General of the International Chambers**

## **of Commerce, says:**

Israel and the UK are two highly innovation focused economies with deep cultural affinity between both nations so this is a fantastic opportunity for both governments to set new standards in trade in services and mirror the success of the Singapore agreement on digital trade. It's really important industry input into the consultation – this is vital if we are to get the kind of agreement that is optimal for trading businesses.

## **Mark Samuels, Chief Executive of the British Generic Manufacturers Association (BGMA), said:**

The UK generics industry has long enjoyed a close relationship with Israel, and it is undoubtedly a centre of excellence for life sciences. We welcome the UK Government's initiative to strengthen this relationship further and provide more opportunities for partnership between our two countries.

As part of her visit, the International Trade Secretary will also confirm plans to host a UK-Israel Innovation Summit this spring.

The UK and Israel have long shared a culture of entrepreneurial, tech-savvy and innovative businesses, and the summit will showcase the shared talents and skills of world-leading British and Israeli companies and galvanise greater collaboration in sectors such as AI, cyber security and life sciences.

The one-day summit will take place in the UK and will see influential entrepreneurs, investors and leading businesses attend, alongside the UK and Israeli prime ministers.

## **Further information**

Please see [here](#) for the consultation.

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## **[PM statement at Ukraine press conference: 1 February 2022](#)**

Thank you very much President Zelenskyy and thank you for welcoming us all to your Mariyynski palace here, it's absolutely fantastic to be back in Kyiv and to see the excitement, the buzz of this capital which has changed a lot since

I was last here five years ago, in many interesting and positive ways.

But we have to face a grim reality which is that as we stand here today Volodymyr, more than 100,000 Russian troops are gathering on your border in perhaps the biggest demonstration of hostility towards Ukraine in our lifetimes.

And the potential deployment dwarves the 30,000 troops Russia sent to invade Crimea in 2014. Since that time of course, as everybody knows, more than 13,000 Ukrainians have been killed and Ukraine has been plunged into nearly a decade of war.

It goes without saying that a further Russian invasion of Ukraine would be a political disaster, a humanitarian disaster, in my view would also be, for Russia, for the world, a military disaster as well. And the potential invasion completely flies in the face of President Putin's claims to be acting in the interest of the Ukrainian people.

The UK and other countries will be judged, by the people of the Ukraine and the world, on how we respond and how we help.

Since 2015 the UK has trained over 22,000 Ukrainian military personnel and provided £2.2 million worth of non-lethal military equipment to Ukraine.

Two weeks ago we sent anti-tank weaponry to strengthen Ukraine's defences further.

Today I have announced a further £88 million of UK funding to support good governance and energy independence in Ukraine. This will bolster your efforts Volodymyr, and those of others to build a free and prosperous Ukrainian society, free of malign influences.

Alongside other countries we are also preparing a package of sanctions and other measures to be enacted the moment the first Russian toe-cap crosses further into Ukrainian territory.

And we have done all this and prepared all this, not as a show of hostility towards Russia, but as a demonstration that we will always stand up for freedom, democracy and Ukrainian sovereignty in the face of aggression.

In recent days I have spoken to the leaders of the United States, France, Germany, Italy, the NATO Secretary General and others – all agree on the fundamental importance of supporting Ukraine's self-determination.

Because the people of Ukraine have the inalienable right to choose how they are governed and indeed which organisations they aspire to join.

And as your friend and partner, the UK will always uphold that right.

It is vital that Russia steps back and chooses a path of diplomacy and I believe that is still possible.

We are keen to engage in dialogue, of course we are, we have the sanctions

ready, we're providing military support and we will also intensify our economic co-operation.

Because we are a firm and enduring ally of Ukraine and a supporter of Ukraine's territorial sovereignty and integrity.

Thank you all very much.

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## MoJ creating more than 2,000 jobs across England and Wales to spread opportunity

- Seven new regional offices to be opened in Leeds, Liverpool, Nottingham, South Tyneside, Cardiff, Ipswich and Brighton
- Move forms part of the Places for Growth programme, relocating civil service roles out of London and level up communities
- Justice system will tap into even more expertise outside London and South East

The new Justice Collaboration Centres will be launched alongside a series of satellite offices as the government's Places for Growth programme continues to move civil service roles out of London and closer to the communities it serves. The scheme will ensure the public sector utilises the vast array of talent across England and Wales with 22,000 roles moving out of the capital by 2030.

Almost 70 percent of the MoJ workforce is already based outside of London and the South East and this move will see more than 2,000 more roles in areas like finance, human resources and digital move out by 2030, with 500 of those heading to Wales.

Deputy Prime Minister, Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice, Dominic Raab, said:

This Government is committed to spreading opportunity more equally across communities and tackling regional inequalities.

By having more of our staff based outside London we can recruit the best people wherever they live so that the justice system benefits from more diverse backgrounds, outlooks and experience.

The department is creating new Justice Collaboration Centres, larger office spaces with a mix of traditional workstations and shared spaces, meeting and

training rooms. They will support face to face work of staff in roles including finance, digital and human resources during training and meetings in Leeds, Liverpool, Nottingham, South Tyneside, Cardiff, Ipswich and Brighton.

Staff will also be based at smaller new regional Justice Satellite Offices, including desk space in pre-existing buildings like courts.

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Steve Barclay, said:

It's brilliant to see the Ministry of Justice is offering increased opportunities around the UK with the opening of seven new offices across in England and Wales, a clear demonstration of the government's ambition to level up local communities by delivering long-term career prospects to their area rather than the previous heavy concentration on central London.

Through our Places for Growth Scheme, we are bringing more opportunities and decision-making closer to the communities we serve.

Ministry of Justice Permanent Secretary Antonia Romeo said:

Broadening recruitment into the Ministry is crucial, not only because it creates opportunities but because it helps us to be more innovative and make better decisions.

Moving more than 2,000 MoJ roles out of London and the South East by 2030 and opening new regional offices across England and Wales will help ensure we are hiring the most talented people from all geographies and backgrounds to help deliver for the society we serve.

Today's announcement follows several other Government departments confirming that they are moving thousands of civil service jobs out of London, better serving the communities they represent such as Cardiff, Wolverhampton and Glasgow. This includes the Home Office, the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the Department of International Trade and the Cabinet Office.

As positions become available they will be re-advertised nationally, rather than tied to a location, an approach that has already seen most new recruits based outside London.