

Hundreds of solar panels installed as HMP Wayland goes green

Press release

Over 700 solar panels installed at HMP Wayland to cut carbon and save money for the taxpayer.



- first prison to be fitted with 18 more to follow this year
- offenders trained up in new skills to secure jobs on release – reducing reoffending and keeping the public safe
- the overall programme will save prisons up to £800,000 a year and generate 20 percent of each prison's electricity

Hundreds of solar panels at HMP Wayland, Norfolk, are leading the way in slashing carbon emissions and electricity costs across the prison estate in a move that's good for both the planet and the taxpayer.

The jail is the first in England and Wales to be fitted with ground mounted panels as part of the government's ambitious drive to make prisons greener.

HMP Wayland is projected to save the equivalent annual CO2 emissions of 16 average UK homes while reducing its energy costs by £52,000 per year.

Installing solar panels and maintaining the site, also teaches prisoners key new skills – vital in boosting offenders' prospects and helping them find jobs on release.

Prisons Minister, Victoria Atkins, said:

I am delighted to see HMP Wayland become the first prison to reap the benefits of solar panels as part of our ambition to make significant savings for both the environment and the public purse.

The initiative is part of the wider government action to build back greener, with more than £4 billion to construct sustainable

prisons, and help achieve our commitment to reach net zero by 2050.

Today's (21 January 2022) news is part of an unprecedented rollout of green technology across the estate. In August, the government announced plans to install 16,000 solar panels at 19 prisons across England this year – cutting more than 1,300 tonnes of carbon from the atmosphere and providing 20 per cent of each prison's electricity.

The rollout of the solar panels scheme reinforces the department's commitment to make prisoners greener. [The four new prisons](#) this government is building, will also operate as zero-carbon in the future, with an all-electric design, solar panels, heat pumps and more efficient lighting systems to reduce energy demand significantly.

Notes to editors

- HMP Wayland is a Category C prison for males with over 900 places.
- The 18 prisons earmarked for panels are HMPs Bullingdon, Erlestoke, Eastwood Park, Ford, Guys Marsh, Haverigg, Hollesley Bay, Leyhill, Littlehey, New Hall, Onley, Parkhurst, Stocken, Werrington, Whatton, Whitemoor, Bure, and Full Sutton.
- Ground mount solar panels are solar panels that are installed at the ground level and function very similarly to rooftop solar systems.
- In August 2021, the Ministry of Justice [announced](#) that thousands of solar panels will be helping prisons go green.

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[British Army flying new elite attack helicopters](#)

The helicopters have improved sensors and lethality, upgraded weapons systems and heightened communications compared to their predecessor. Comparable to high-end super cars, the new Apaches also boast a top speed of 300kmh (186 mph).

They are able to detect 256 potential targets at once, prioritising the most urgent threats within seconds, up to a range of 16km (10 miles) away – a distance 57 times the length of HMS Queen Elizabeth or over twice the length of the Grand National course.

Wattisham Flying Station has taken delivery of 14 of the new aircraft, with 36 more due to arrive by the summer of 2024. British Army test flights are underway, with a booster to aerial capability anticipated early next year when they enter operational capability.

Defence Procurement Minister, Jeremy Quin said:

“There can be no doubt these impressive Apache helicopters will help the Army sustain its battle-winning capabilities in future operations.

“It’s great news that the long-term support for yet more cutting-edge technology will remain here in the UK, putting millions of pounds back into the British defence industry and supporting hundreds of jobs.”

A 20-year agreement has been signed with Boeing Defence UK to maintain and support this new fleet of impressive attack helicopters.

With £288 million confirmed for the first pricing period in place until July 2025, the agreement will create more than 200 jobs in the UK, including 165 for the Army Aviation Centre at Middle Wallop in Hampshire and 45 at Wattisham Flying Station in Suffolk.

The British Army has been utilising the world-leading Apache capability since 2005, with the attack helicopters seeing action in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya.

The Deputy Chief of the General Staff, Lieutenant General Sir Chris Tickell KBE said:

“I am delighted at the introduction of the 4th generation AH-64E into British Army service, signifying our commitment to investing in the right equipment for our people to compete and win against the threats facing the UK.

“Within Future Soldier, we committed to winning the deep battle so that the close battle is as anti-climactic as possible, thereby reducing the risk to our people. The AH-64E is a truly world-beating capability that will, alongside other capabilities we are introducing, ensure we succeed.”

The Long-Term Training and Support Service (LTTSS) will progressively take over from the initial support and conversion training provided by the US-Government under Foreign Military Sale interim arrangements.

The contract will cover aircraft design organisation services, maintenance, logistics support, plus pilot, maintainer and groundcrew training. Boeing already has more than 40 employees working alongside the Army Air Corps providing training for the Mk1 Apache at the Attack Helicopter Training School at Middle Wallop.

DE&S Director Helicopters, Keith Bethell, said:

“Ensuring the new Apache AH-64E fleet is airworthy and ready to serve the British Army is essential, which is why we were delighted to negotiate a long-term training and support service with Boeing Defence UK as part of our Rotary Wing Enterprise involving the Front Line Commands, DE&S and Industry.

“Not only will it keep the Apaches in the best possible condition for deployment, it will provide expert training for pilots and ground crew while

creating long-term, sustainable jobs for industry.”

The replacement of the MK1 with the AH-64E – built by Boeing and already in service with the US Army – was announced in 2016 as part of a \$2.3 billion deal. This new model, which is now being flown in the UK, has improved sensors and avionics as well as greater performance that will enable the army to sustain its battle-winning capabilities in future operations.

This programme reinforces the ambition laid out in the Defence Command Paper and recent Future Soldier announcement to transform the Army into a more agile, integrated, lethal, expeditionary force, showing the Army’s investment in battle-winning technology.

[UK and Australia conclude first AUKMIN since pandemic](#)

UK and Australian ministers concluded vital defence and security talks today (Friday 21 Jan) following the first Australia UK Foreign and Defence Ministerial meetings (AUKMIN) since the COVID-19 pandemic began.

Discussions focussed on key geopolitical challenges, including concerns around the situation in Ukraine. Ministers agreed on the vital need to defend freedom in the face of Russia’s growing aggression and underpinned their steadfast solidarity with Ukraine.

The ministers agreed to step up collaboration to deter malign threats, promote positive critical technology standards and to support the development of quality infrastructure and standards.

They reiterated their commitment to supporting countries in the Indo-Pacific to strengthen their resilience, security and sovereignty.

Foreign Secretary, Liz Truss said:

With the world facing increasing aggression from malign actors, it is vital that the UK strengthens and deepens our partnerships with our closest allies.

Today (Friday 21 January, 2021) we have committed to new and enhanced opportunities to collaborate with Australia in areas including maritime security, counterterrorism, misinformation, cyber and technology.

Alliances between freedom loving democracies like the UK and Australia are essential if we are to win the battle of ideas.

Discussions also reflected on the progress that has been made to date on AUKUS – our landmark partnership to strengthen our security and defence interests alongside our US allies.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

Britain and Australia share one of the oldest and strongest defence and security alliances.

Operating and exercising side by side, we continue to work together to promote stability, and tackle our shared threats with our like-minded ally, head on.

This week, I have met with my friend and close Defence counterpart Peter Dutton to discuss our cooperation across the Indo-Pacific through AUKUS – the trilateral UK, Australia and US security partnership which will see us collaborating on world leading technologies including nuclear powered submarines.

The AUKUS partnership seeks to deliver a nuclear-powered submarine capability to the Royal Australian Navy. The UK has built and operated world-class nuclear-powered submarine capability for more than 60 years and we bring deep expertise and experience to this partnership.

ENDS

[Maintaining momentum to realise the full promise of the Colombian Peace Agreement](#)

Thank you Madam President.

My thanks to the Special Representative Ruiz Massieu, for your briefing and as ever for the work of you and your team. I thank Luz Marina Giraldo for sharing your important personal perspective with the Council, as a former FARC combatant and now an active participant in the reintegration process.

And I welcome Counsellor Archila, and thank you for joining us today and for your tireless efforts on behalf of peace and the implementation of the agreement..

Madam President as the Secretary-General's latest report notes, the fifth anniversary of the signing of the Peace Agreement in November was an important opportunity for all stakeholders in Colombia's peace process to reflect on the historic progress achieved to date, and to take stock of the challenges that remain.

The UK was proud to play our part in the commemorations, with our Minister for the Americas joining the events in Antioquia alongside the Secretary-General and President Duque.

Following these commemorations, we now look ahead to the next five-year implementation period. It is important to maintain momentum towards realising the full promise of the Agreement, and ensure its continuous and comprehensive implementation including through the upcoming electoral period.

The transitional justice system continues to be vital to this process, and 2022 will be a crucial year for its three components to deliver on their mandates. We reaffirm our ongoing support for their important work. We look forward to seeing the final report from the Truth Commission, and the first sentences to be handed down by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace. These will mark an important milestone in Colombia's reconciliation process and securing justice for victims. We welcome the preparations undertaken by the Verification Mission, in readiness to assume its mandate to verify the implementation of these SJP sentences.

Madam President, the Secretary-General's report notes a reduction in the killings of former combatants from 2020 to 2021. While this downward trend is positive, we all agree around this table that one such killing is one too many. We express concern at the increased threats by illegal armed groups, which have resulted in the relocation of former combatants and their families from former TATRs. And we remain concerned by the persistent killings and threats targeting social and environmental leaders, human rights defenders, women leaders and those from indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities. Just this week, we were shocked and saddened to learn that an indigenous environmental activist was killed, aged just 14 years old.

We urge the Colombian Government to continue stepping up its efforts to increase protection and security and improve state presence in conflict-affected areas, and to strengthen the institutions that can investigate and prosecute the criminal actors responsible for this violence. We also reiterate the need for all institutions to act upon the early warnings of the Ombudsman's Office.

As we look ahead to the elections, we call on all political stakeholders to take steps to ensure that they will be peaceful and inclusive. In particular, we are hopeful that the 16 congressional seats for victims provide a new opportunity to increase the voice of victims in legislative processes and peace implementation.

Madam President, the parties to this Agreement have shown what can be achieved in five years through constructive dialogue and cooperation. We cannot take for granted the gains achieved thus far. We must protect and build upon them. The UK remains fully committed to working with the Colombian government and other stakeholders as they work towards securing a lasting peace.

Minister for Africa visits East Africa to tackle regional challenges and deepen economic ties

- Minister for Africa has visited Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia to deepen partnerships on trade, education and health, and discuss solutions to regional challenges including conflict and drought
- Vicky Ford announced £17 million of UK Aid to respond to region-wide drought, and one million COVID-19 vaccines
- The Minister also announced new investments in East Africa and attended the regional launch of British International Investment (BII), where she announced a £37m BII investment into Kenya's Equity Bank.
- In Ethiopia, she met with Prime Minister Abiy to discuss routes to a peaceful end to the conflict in northern Ethiopia, and UK support for post-conflict recovery.

Minister for Africa Vicky Ford has completed a three-country visit in East Africa, focused on supporting communities impacted by drought and building strong economic partnerships.

Minister for Africa Vicky Ford MP, said:

The UK is deepening our ties with our partners across East Africa.

As the region grapples with one of the worst droughts on record, the UK is providing vital food assistance to vulnerable communities in Kenya, Ethiopia, and Somalia and leading the global effort to support countries on the frontline of climate change.

“The work of British International Investment across east Africa will provide honest and reliable finance, boost growth and create jobs both in the UK and in the region.

I am pleased that there are efforts to make peace in northern Ethiopia, where the conflict has caused great suffering to many millions of people. The UK stands ready to support the peace efforts.

And we are working with our partners in East Africa to tackle some of the key challenges in the region today: security and stability; severe humanitarian crises; getting more girls into school; and increasing access to COVID-19 vaccines.

While in Kenya, the Minister announced a £17 million package of UK funding to support almost a million people across East Africa affected by extreme weather events driven by climate change.

In Nairobi the Minister held an East Africa launch of the new British International Investment (BII) at an event alongside the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Ukur Yatani, and a host of business leaders. BII confirmed a new £37 million investment into Equity Bank to boost small business growth in Kenya at the event.

The Minister also announced that the UK will provide expert analysis and advice on how to boost green manufacturing jobs in Kenya (worth £400,000) and confirmed that UK engineering firm Atkins has been appointed to design Nairobi's new Central Train Station, a flagship project to regenerate Nairobi's Central Business District.

In Uganda, the Minister visited the Onwards and Upwards school in Wakiso district, where she met with students who spoke about the impact two years of school closures have had on them and their aspirations for the future.

The Minister also saw first-hand collaboration between the UK and Uganda at the Uganda Virus Research Institute, where our two countries have collaborated on HIV, Ebola and more recently Covid-19.

Ford announced a new agreement with the Government of Uganda for the UK to donate a further one million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine in the coming months, following 300,000 AstraZeneca vaccine doses donated last year.

The UVRI connections with the UK have existed since its founding in 1936 and UVRI now receives funding from the UK Government through the Medical Research Council and the UK Research Institute.

While in Ethiopia, Minister Ford met with Prime Minister Abiy and State Minister Redwan to call for peace in the north and for the government to engage with the African Union-led mediation efforts and express the UK's readiness to support a peace process.

To meet some of the immediate need, the Minister announced new health and education support for people living in conflict-affected areas (worth £5m), which will see 30,000 children who were forced out of school by conflict back into the classroom.

The Minister also announced a further £4.5m of funding, which will go to local women's organisations in Tigray to provide vital support to survivors of gender-based violence, to peacebuilding work in the Somali region and to building the capacity of the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission.

Minister Ford also met with Finance Minister Shide to discuss UK support for opening up Ethiopia's economy to private investment for low carbon infrastructure.