

# Ahoy! National Highways' funding stream helps historic light vessel's future in Hull

National Highways, who are carrying out major improvements to the A63 at Castle Street, is contributing just over £1m to Hull's maritime regeneration project which will see the Spurn Lightship moved to its permanent home at Hull Marina.

The vessel, to be eventually berthed next to the recently built Murdoch's Connection footbridge, will see her fully rejuvenated with improved accessibility and signage, thanks to Hull City Council (HCC), the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and the government-owned company's [Designated Funds programme](#).

She is expected to open as a key visitor attraction in spring 2023.

James Leeming, Senior Project Manager for the A63 Castle Street and Murdoch's Connection major projects at National Highways, said:

Spurn Lightship was temporarily moved while we built our state-of-the-art Murdoch's Connection footbridge, which is close to Hull marina and will eventually be the lightship's home.

It will be exciting to see a vital piece of the city's 20th century past alongside the A63 Castle Street major work and enhancements to the waterfront which will be accessible for all and fit for the 21st century.

The lightship, which played a key role in Hull's maritime industries by guiding vessels through one of the world's treacherous waterways, the Humber estuary, is now temporarily berthed at William Wright Dock and awaits her conservation work to start at Dunston's shipyard.

The Spurn Lightship's home will be at Hull Marina close to the city's new Murdoch Connection's footbridge and A63 Castle Street improvements. Copyright – National Highways

Built in 1927, the vessel was moored off Spurn in East Riding of Yorkshire and helped vessels to navigate the approach to the estuary – a welcome and thankful sight for sailors and fishermen after long and tiring trips at sea.

Councillor Daren Hale, Leader of Hull City Council, said:

We are delighted to have received this significant funding from National Highways.

This investment will enable the Hull Maritime project to enhance the Spurn Lightship's new home on Hull Marina with landscaping and increased access. These features will improve the experience for all our visitors when the lightship reopens in 2023.

National Highways, formerly Highways England, manages four designated funds, allocated by the Government, to deliver benefits above and beyond building, maintaining and operating England's strategic roads.

From protecting the environment and enhancing the landscape around roads, to improving safety, reducing congestion, and supporting communities, the aim is to make a positive difference to people's lives.

### **General enquiries**

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

### **Media enquiries**

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

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## **[How Rochdale Council became a Top 100 Apprenticeship employer through their work in schools](#)**

### **Apprenticeship action plans**

Andrew Turner is Work Based Learning Skills and Participation Development Officer for Rochdale Council. He works with schools to show the benefits of apprenticeships.

Andrew recognised that schools needed guidance on how to use their levy as they initially felt the levy was not useful for school workforce development. He explained that the levy is an opportunity, rather than another tax being levied on them.

To change attitudes toward apprenticeships, Andrew made appointments with senior leaders in every school to engage them with apprenticeships.

Andrew listened to what the schools felt they needed and came up with action plans to work for their different needs.

Andrew and his team used these action plans to work with training providers and bring specialist elements into the apprenticeships.

For example, schools asked for training on special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Based on this, Rochdale Council offered a Teaching Assistant apprenticeship including SEND training. Around 50 people enrolled onto the programme within the first year.

Andrew also ensures that apprenticeships are an agenda item at almost every school meeting hosted by the council. This means the council apprenticeship team maintain regular conversations with key decision makers.

They use newsletters, events and other opportunities to raise awareness about the success of apprenticeships for the school workforce.

## **Success in Rochdale schools**

In 2018, Rochdale Council were named Northwest Macro Employer of the Year at the National Apprenticeship Awards. In 2020, they were named one of the Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers in the country.

Of the 50 schools Rochdale Council work with, 95% are actively engaged with apprenticeships.

### **Castleton Primary School**

Castleton Primary School were particularly open to Andrew's approach and were receptive to using apprenticeships for workforce development.

In their apprenticeship action plan, the school planned to recruit two teaching assistant apprentices within the first year. However, when recruiting, there were four candidates that were a good fit.

Castleton Primary School worked with Andrew and Rochdale Council to accommodate training for all four apprentices.

They set a clear support plan and held regular reviews to help the apprentices remain on track.

Having four new teaching assistants within the school enabled the senior leadership team to develop from within. For example, the apprentices raised extra funds by offering a new afterschool club.

All four apprentices have now secured permanent positions.

### **Redwood Secondary School**

Redwood Secondary School have also taken a proactive approach to the apprenticeship levy.

Redwood Secondary School is a large secondary school for young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

When the levy was announced in 2016 there was initial concern around the impact on their budget.

Andrew and his team met with business manager, Nancy Wright, to show the opportunities the levy could bring. They talked Nancy through the process to show how the school could develop their existing support staff and learn specialist skills using apprenticeships.

Five apprentices have successfully completed apprenticeships at Redwood Secondary School and secured full time positions.

Seeing the success of apprenticeships, Nancy decided to complete the Chartered Manager Degree apprenticeship.

Nancy had always wanted to study part-time for a degree qualification but was unsure how she would balance study with work. However, her workplace was extremely supportive ensuring she received appropriate time to work on her projects.

The projects benefited the organisation and acted as evidence towards Nancy's apprenticeship portfolio. Nancy felt instantly able to see the benefit of her apprenticeship as her research and learning linked directly to her role at work.

One of Nancy's key projects involved working with the student council to develop outdoor areas at the school.

Nancy commented, 'This was incredibly rewarding as the impact was huge. A new play area provided new opportunities for the young people and contributed towards the school's improvement plan. The project also allowed me to work across different areas within the organisation, which I have found has given me a greater understanding of the organisation as a whole.'

Nancy is the first of Rochdale's apprentices to complete a Level 6 apprenticeship from within a school. Nancy completed her apprenticeship in December 2020, gaining a distinction on her end-point assessment and a first-class BA (Hons) in Business Management.

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**[How a multi academy trust supports their workforce development using the](#)**

# apprenticeship levy

## **Upskilling staff with apprenticeships**

Zoe Batten, CEO, and Diana Taylor, Staff Development and Safeguarding Officer, use the apprenticeship levy across their schools to offer a continuous professional development strategy.

Zoe and Diana developed a professional development map, identifying the apprenticeship opportunities staff can access at different points in their career.

Diana saw an opportunity to upskill support staff using apprenticeships as they make up a large proportion of Plymouth CAST's staff.

During the early stages, they used the apprenticeship levy to support staff through the Teaching Assistant apprenticeship and the Early Years Educator apprenticeship.

They also upskilled business support staff through the Business Administration apprenticeship and Finance and School Business Professional apprenticeship.

Plymouth CAST then started to offer higher level apprenticeships for their staff.

Through this, staff have gained the equivalent of a diploma in education by completing the Level 5 Learning and Skills Teacher apprenticeship. This allows them to progress to train as teachers.

Plymouth CAST also offer staff with an honours degree the opportunity to gain qualified teacher status by completing the Level 6 Teacher apprenticeship.

Through their focus on support staff, Plymouth CAST have successfully supported two support staff to become qualified teachers.

Plymouth CAST have demonstrated that apprenticeships are not just for young people but can be used for ongoing professional development.

## **Getting funding for apprenticeships**

As well as the apprenticeship levy, Plymouth CAST have used the Department for Education bursary funding to fund their continuous professional development plan.

Plymouth CAST have also organised a levy transfer with BD, one of the largest global medical technology companies in the world.

BD will be transferring some of their levy to Plymouth CAST to fund peer coaching apprenticeship training for teachers across the trust.

The transfer enables BD to align to their Corporate Social Responsibility strategy, while allowing Plymouth CAST to upskill more staff.

## **Supporting schools to deliver apprenticeships**

Zoe and Diana recognise that the selection process for a training provider is different for every school. Plymouth CAST choose a provider based on identified success criteria for each school.

Plymouth CAST encourage each school to look at their capacity, what opportunities they need and the training providers that offer them.

Zoe and Diana make sure that off-the-job training happens in a clear and robust way.

It can be hard to release teachers for one day per week, so staff have found creative ways to implement their 20% off-the-job training into their working week.

This includes staff meetings, professional conversations with a colleague, and any other activities not directly linked to their everyday work duties.

## **Benefits of apprenticeships**

Many Plymouth CAST team members have worked in education for several years without much continuous professional development.

Zoe has found that, by offering apprenticeships, Plymouth CAST are developing leaders for the future, investing in people and supporting them throughout their career.

Zoe says, 'We now have a clear strategy with a sustainable legacy.'

Zoe has also found apprenticeships have made upskilling much easier to accommodate, as staff are able to complete training within the workplace.

Diana commented that, 'The benefit is that, not only are we equipping our teams with the skills, experience and learning to make them more effective, but we are also demonstrating that we value them.'

## **Advice for other schools**

Diana recognises that schools often feel they have little access to funds for continuous professional development.

However, she has shown the key is to start with what you have. Diana believes the apprenticeship levy is a valuable resource that schools need to make full use of.

She encourages schools to realise the benefit apprenticeships can bring to individuals as well as schools. This could be by investing in current staff or exploring how you can use the apprenticeship levy when taking on new

members of staff.

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## [Self Assessment deadline countdown begins](#)

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) is reminding Self Assessment customers that on Sunday 24 October, they have one week left to submit paper tax returns and 100 days to go for online tax returns.

The Self Assessment tax return deadlines for the 2020 to 2021 tax year are 31 October 2021 for paper returns and 31 January 2022 if customers complete their tax return online.

More than 10.7 million customers completed a tax return by 31 January 2021, of those 96% submitted it online. Completing it online is the quickest method and with around 100 days to go, customers have plenty of time to get it done.

Even if customers submit their completed tax return now, they do not have to pay any tax owed until 31 January 2022. Anyone who is worried about how to pay their bill [can access support](#) on GOV.UK. Various payment options include:

- paying through a customers' tax code (PAYE customers only)
- Payment on Account
- setting up an online monthly payment plan (self-serve Time to Pay)
- pay by debit or corporate credit card
- pay at a bank or building society

Visit [GOV.UK for a full list of payment options and the eligibility criteria](#). Customers should contact HMRC if they have concerns about paying their bill.

Myrtle Lloyd, HMRC's Director General for Customer Services, said:

There are 100 days left to complete your tax return, but you don't have to wait for the 31 January deadline. Why not do it now and get it out of the way? Visit GOV.UK and search 'self assessment' to find out more.

The 2020 to 2021 tax return covers earnings and payments during the pandemic. Customers will need to declare [if they received any grants or payments from the COVID-19 support schemes](#) up to 5 April 2021 on their Self Assessment, as these are taxable, including:

- the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme
- the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme
- other COVID-19 grants and support payments such as self-isolation

payments, local authority grants and those for the Eat Out to Help Out scheme

The £500 one-off payment for working households receiving tax credits should not be reported in Self Assessment.

HMRC urges everyone to be alert if they are contacted out of the blue by someone asking for money or personal information. HMRC sees high numbers of fraudsters emailing, calling or texting people claiming to be from the department. If in doubt, HMRC advises not to reply directly to anything suspicious, but to contact them straight away and to search [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) for 'HMRC scams'.

Find out more about [Self Assessment](#).

Find out more about [how to declare taxable COVID-19 support in your tax return](#) if you are self-employed, in a partnership or run a business.

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## [Clampdown on landlords with funding boost for councils](#)

- New support for councils to raise awareness and enforce rules banning landlords renting homes with worst performing energy efficiency ratings
- campaign to fund local radio ads, landlord workshops, free property surveys and a thermal imaging drone for inspections in bid to save low-income families £180 on their energy bills
- £10 million also invested to pioneer research and development into energy efficient appliances and green finance services to support homeowners move to low-carbon heating

Over 40,000 families living in cold and draughty rented properties across 59 local authorities in England and Wales can expect warmer homes thanks to a new campaign to help councils clamp down on errant landlords.

Since April last year privately rented homes must meet a minimum energy performance rating of EPC Band E, making it illegal to rent out homes below that unless landlords have a limited exemption. Landlords caught failing to fulfil their obligations can be fined of up to £5,000 per property and per breach.

Badly insulated properties often leave those renting their homes struggling to keep warm and with higher energy bills. The rule change is expected to see energy efficiency upgrades such as loft insulation, double glazing and cavity wall insulation being installed by landlords in around 290,000 properties – with an estimated average bill saving of £180 a year for each home. This move forms part of the government's actions to protect consumers, particularly

those on lower incomes, as we manage the impact of global gas price rises.

The £4.3 million of extra funding from the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to councils across the country is designed to support them make an extra 100,000 engagements with the most difficult to reach landlords with the worst performing properties.

The money will support innovative measures including local radio ads, roadshows and workshops with landlords to raise awareness of the rules, free property surveys, as well as enhanced and targeted mail reminders and translation services to reach those not currently complying. One council will even invest in a drone with thermal imaging capacity to help with on the ground inspections.

Business and Energy Minister, Lord Callanan, said:

This funding will help councils to support landlords with these important energy efficiency changes, but also enforce these standards, helping tackle fuel poverty and ensuring everyone can live in a warm home with fair energy bills.

Heating our homes and buildings makes up almost a third of all carbon emissions, meaning raising the energy efficiency of our properties is something we all have to contribute to help us build back greener and reach our world leading climate ambitions.

Deputy Council Leader of Darlington Council, Jonathan Dulston, said:

We know that the vast majority of private landlords stick to the rules and provide good accommodation, but we are determined to crack down on rogue landlords who do not care about their tenants or the standard of their properties.

These new powers will improve the energy efficiency standards of private rented homes both here in Darlington and across the country, which will in turn improve residents' health, ensuring people do not live in homes that are cold and damp.

To further support private landlords, as well as the overall UK property market, the government has also announced today a new £10 million innovation programme, dedicated to developing world-class energy efficiency products and green finance services – equipping homeowners with new options to decarbonise their homes in a more cost-effective way.

The new Green Home Finance programme, part of the £1 billion Net Zero Innovation Portfolio, will support high-street lenders, financial technology businesses, energy suppliers and others to pioneer world-class innovation into new products which will make it easier and more affordable for homeowners to switch to low carbon heating. This is likely to include

piloting cutting-edge heat pumps, glazing and insulation, as well green finance services such as green mortgages and green equity releases.

The investment comes as ministers this week unveiled the government's [Heat and Buildings Strategy](#), which commits to all new heating appliances installed in homes and workplaces to be low-carbon technologies to help ensure the nation's buildings are fuelled by clean energy by 2035, as well as bringing down the costs of clean alternatives so they are no more expensive than gas boilers by 2030.

Minister of State for Energy and Clean Growth, Greg Hands, said:

Ensuring our buildings and homes are powered by clean energy is an essential step we need to take in order to meet our target of reaching net zero emissions by 2050.

The UK government is stepping up to the challenge with a new Green Home Finance programme to help drive forward the development of cutting-edge green finance products and services for homeowners that will not only transform the nation's green property landscape, but also help create more green jobs, as we build back greener.

The government has set 2035 as the target for all homes across the UK to reach EPC C by 2035 and is currently spending £1.3 billion on improving the energy efficiency of 50,000 low-income local authority homes, through the successful Local Authority Delivery Scheme. Measures include cavity wall, underfloor and loft insulation, and replacing gas boilers with low carbon alternatives like heat pumps.

To help consumers further, BEIS has announced plans to trial automatic switching for customers on expensive default tariffs to cheaper deals, and are extending the Warm Home Discount so an extra 750,000 households get £150 knocked off their bill each year.

- The Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) competition closed on 2 July 2021, with 117 local authorities entering. 59 local authorities were successful and have been allocated funding
- [view the full list of the local authorities to receive the funding](#) to support councils with raising awareness and enforcing the private rented sector rules on properties meeting EPC E
- the Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015, which came into force on 1 April 2018, introduced a minimum energy efficiency standard of EPC E for the private rented sector. From April 2018, private rented homes in scope of the Regulations were required to meet the minimum standard (EPC E) before they could be let on a new tenancy. Since April 2020, the requirement applies to all properties in scope, even when there has been no change in tenancy
- the [Green Home Finance Accelerator programme](#) is funded under the [£1 billion Net Zero Innovation Portfolio \(NZIP\)](#), announced as part of the

Prime Minister's 10 Point Plan. The programme will launch in spring 2022. It will support lenders to research, develop and pilot a diverse range of green finance products which will make it easier and more cost-effective for homeowners (owner-occupiers and private landlords) to improve the thermal efficiency of their properties