

Up to £100 million boost to improve HGV roadside facilities

- lorry drivers to benefit from better roadside facilities, backed by up to £100 million investment from industry and government
- operators of truck-stops and roadside services can now bid for a portion of £52.5 million in government investment to match-fund improvements to driver facilities
- investment is part of the government's 33 actions to improve HGV parking and boost drivers' welfare – helping to support recruitment and tackle the HGV driver shortage

Lorry drivers will benefit from improved and safer rest areas and roadside facilities thanks to up to £100 million investment from industry and government, the Roads Minister Richard Holden has announced today (24 November 2022).

From today, [truck-stop and road service operators can bid for a share of the £32.5 million match-funding pot from the government](#). This is in addition to the £20 million match-funding launched earlier this year from National Highways to improve roadside facilities and security for lorry drivers.

Minister Holden will launch the funding at the Red Lion Truckstop in Northamptonshire today which aims to improve security measures for drivers, boost welfare facilities like showers, rest areas and restaurants, and increase HGV parking capacity where possible.

The move is part of the government's comprehensive [33 actions to address the shortage of HGV drivers and boost recruitment and retention](#).

Roads Minister Richard Holden said:

Hauliers and drivers are critical to keep our economy motoring. But for decades, our truckers have had a raw deal when it comes to decent roadside facilities.

This is why I'm so proud that our government is going to provide match funding support to the industry to boost drivers' welfare, safeguard road safety and make sure driving an HGV is a really attractive career option by providing the facilities and respect our lorry drivers deserve.

The funding scheme draws on '[The National Survey on Lorry Parking: Part One](#)' which provides important evidence as to what improvements are needed and where to boost the nation's roadside infrastructure.

The industry is responsible for providing roadside parking and welfare facilities for hauliers, and the department is committed to help the sector achieve the government's long-term objectives of improving driver welfare, boosting drivers' security, and safeguarding road safety.

With hauliers required to take mandatory breaks and rest periods, building better roadside facilities will improve the quality of HGV drivers' rest and recovery, ensuring everyone can feel safe on our roads.

The government's 33 actions to support Britain's haulage sector include making 11,000 HGV driver training places available through Skills Bootcamps, boosting the number of HGV driver tests, and launching our Future of Freight plan to encourage millions of people to kickstart an exciting career in logistics.

As a result, new HGV drivers are taking and passing their driving test in record numbers. Between March 2022 and May 2022, the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) carried out 29,384 HGV tests – 54% more than the corresponding period in 2019 before the pandemic.

National Highways Customer Experience Director, Pete Martin, said:

We continue to work closely with operators of roadside facilities to help improve the standard of parking and other amenities they provide on motorways and major A-roads and are excited to see the results of this investment.

We want all road users to reach their destination safely and encourage everyone, from those who drive as a profession through to people travelling on holiday or for leisure purposes, to plan ahead before setting off and to take regular breaks.

Director of Policy at Logistics UK, Kate Jennings , said:

Logistics UK's members and their employees deserve access to hygiene and rest facilities enjoyed by workers in other parts of the economy, and it is good news that funding is becoming available to help improve the quality and safety of amenities already in place – a swift resolution will now be needed to ensure that the shortfall of lorry parking and necessary facilities can be constructed and opened to support our key workers in the course of their daily travels.

A spokesperson from SNAP, who run a smart payment system for Drivers and Fleet Operators, said:

Enhancing driver welfare and ensuring that hauliers have somewhere clean and secure to park their vehicles is a leading priority of our business – and the £52.5m government funding is a vital step in giving drivers the facilities they deserve.

DfT has SNAP's ongoing support on their mission to improve driver facilities – with SNAP Access & Security aiming to assist by securing HGV locations through industry-leading security packages.

Government to block failing social housing providers from new housing funding

Rochdale Boroughwide Housing (RBH) will not receive its expected £1m funding from the Affordable Homes Programme (AHP 2021-26) or receive any new AHP contracts for new homes, until the Regulator of Social Housing has concluded its investigation and it can prove it is a responsible landlord. The Government will also continue to monitor housing standards of RBH tenancies closely, working with the Regulator and Ombudsman, to ensure that tenants have appropriate housing.

As part of a wider crackdown on poor standards, the Housing Secretary will also block any housing provider that breaches the Regulator's consumer standards from new AHP funding until they make improvements. Michael Gove will also consider stripping providers of existing AHP funding, unless construction has already started on site.

The move comes after Michael Gove wrote to all councils and housing associations this weekend, saying they must raise the bar dramatically on standards and demanding urgent action where people complain about damp and mould.

Holding failing landlords to account for poor safety and quality is not just an issue in social housing.

That is why the Government has today awarded a share of £14m for seven areas with high numbers of poor privately rented homes to crack down on rogue landlords and test new approaches to driving up standards. Projects include:

- £2.3m for Greater Manchester – including Rochdale and surrounding councils – to increase the use of fines where a landlord is found to have committed an offence
- £678k for Leeds to use behavioural science to change culture among landlords, improving knowledge and skills

- £1.14m for Cornwall to create a database of private rented accommodation in the area and record standards to target better enforcement action.

Housing Secretary Michael Gove said:

RBH failed its tenants so it will not receive a penny of additional taxpayers' money for new housing until it gets its act together and does right by tenants.

Let this be a warning to other housing providers who are ignoring complaints and failing in their obligations to tenants. We will not hesitate to act.

Everyone deserves the right to live in safe, decent home and this Government will always act to protect tenants.

[The Regulator of Social Housing has demanded evidence](#) from all housing association and local authority landlords this week, showing they are identifying and dealing with damp and mould issues in their homes. The Regulator will take action where standards are not being met.

[The Social Housing Regulation Bill, currently making its way through Parliament](#), will also ensure tenants' complaints are listened to and dealt with quickly and fairly, with new powers for the Housing Ombudsman to take action on complaints.

A stronger Regulator will have powers to enter properties with only 48 hours' notice and make emergency repairs where there is a serious risk to tenants and the landlord has failed to act, with landlords footing the bill.

To make sure tenants know their rights and can hold housing providers to account, the Government is also launching a £1 million public information campaign early next year.

Russia's systematic attacks on Ukrainian civilian infrastructure are unacceptable, and must end

Thank you President, and thank you Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo for your briefing. We welcome President Zelensky's participation in this Council meeting today.

President, we discussed the situation in Ukraine last week. The Council's message at that meeting was clear: Russia's systematic attacks on Ukrainian

civilians and civilian infrastructure are unacceptable, and must end.

Over the past week Russia has continued its campaign of terror, killing more civilians, attacking more civilian targets, and causing colossal damage to Ukraine's energy infrastructure.

Russia is deliberately bombing hospitals and other medical facilities. The World Health Organization has recorded 703 such attacks since February.

We've heard today that a newborn baby was murdered in a strike on a maternity unit in Zaporizhzhya last night. Russia is destroying lives in Ukraine that have barely started.

As President Zelenskyy said, Russia is trying to achieve with terror and murder, what it could not achieve in nine months on the battlefield – the complete subjugation or destruction of Ukraine.

President, Russia must observe its obligations under international humanitarian law. But this is not a replacement for peace.

President Zelenskyy has presented a comprehensive plan for a negotiated end to the war. The first crucial steps are for Russia to end its unilateral aggression and restore Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, in line with its obligations under the UN Charter.

Russia has spoken of wanting negotiations. But actions speak louder than words.

President, as my Prime Minister said in Kyiv last week, the UK will be providing new air defence equipment, and stepping up humanitarian support for the cold hard winter ahead. We continue to stand with Ukraine as it fights to end this barbarous war and deliver a just peace.

Thank you.

Recognising the importance of open, transparent, predictable international trade systems: UK statement at UN Second Committee

Thank you, Madam Chair

We would like to thank Royston Alkins of Guyana for his work facilitating this resolution, and Felipe Costa of Brazil and Dinushi Rupathunga of Sri Lanka for proposing it on behalf of the G77+China.

We reluctantly called a vote on part of this resolution to highlight that we are unable to endorse language on unilateral sanctions in OP25, but we are pleased to join consensus on the broader adoption of this resolution.

The UK recognises that an open, transparent and predictable international trade system helps countries to grow their economies, create decent jobs, raise incomes, and lift people out of poverty.

We are pleased that this resolution acknowledges progress made at the twelfth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organisation earlier this year, on global food security, pandemic preparedness, the TRIPS Agreement, and fisheries.

We are also pleased it includes a UK proposal recognising efforts to extend preferential market access to a larger number of developing countries.

The UK's Developing Countries Trading Scheme will come into effect in early 2023, and aims to support sustainable growth in developing countries through reducing tariffs, liberalising rules of origin requirements, and simplifying other conditions.

It will apply to Least Developed Countries and other low-income and lower-middle income countries with whom the UK does not yet have Free Trade Agreements.

Madam Chair,

I regret we cannot endorse language on sanctions in OP24 of this resolution, which is why we called for a paragraph vote.

The UK and others use autonomous sanctions to deter, constrain, signal against, and change egregious behaviour of individuals and entities around the world, including serious human rights violations, weapons proliferation, and corruption.

These sanctions are carefully targeted, and provide for exceptions and licensing grounds to support humanitarian assistance.

The UK has recently issued General Licences to provide more clarity for humanitarian providers, so that food and fertiliser can meet acute global demand. We also recently supported the US/Ireland initiative to introduce specific humanitarian provisions across all UN sanctions regimes.

We look forward to continuing to work with developing countries to strengthen international trade which can support sustainable development and progress towards achieving the SDGs.

Thank you

Upholding a universal, holistic approach to international tax cooperation: UK statement at UN Second Committee

Thank you, Madam Chair,

We would like to thank Oche Agbo of Nigeria for his work facilitating this resolution, and Hashim Abubakar of Nigeria for proposing it on behalf of the Africa Group.

In 2015, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda recognised international tax cooperation as a vital component of Financing For Development.

The UK strongly supports developing countries' efforts to scale-up domestic resource mobilisation to finance sustainable development.

We are funding peer-to-peer capacity-building for revenue authorities in African countries including Ghana and Rwanda; contributing to the UNDP/OECD Tax Inspectors Without Borders initiative; and currently chair the OECD Forum on Tax Administration's Capacity Building Network.

We are also committed to building a fairer international tax system for all, including developing countries.

We champion this work through the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which uniquely has the technical expertise and political support to advance this agenda effectively.

Together, we have made significant progress. The Global Forum on Tax Transparency, the Inclusive Framework on Base Erosion and Profit Shifting, and the OECD's Two-Pillar Solution are strengthening our collective ability to address tax evasion and avoidance, combat harmful tax practices, and tackle evolving challenges posed by digitalisation.

We have worked strenuously to ensure these initiatives uphold the commitment at Addis that international tax cooperation be "universal in approach and scope and should fully take into account the different needs and capacities of all countries".

The OECD-housed initiatives are open to all. OECD and non-OECD members participate in these fora on an equal footing. The UK supports efforts to strengthen inclusivity and the voice of developing countries in these mechanisms still further.

We do acknowledge that developing countries have concerns, including regarding capacity and inclusion, and will want to ensure that this work delivers benefits for them.

So we understand the Africa Group's desire to address this at Second Committee.

We voted in favour of the amendments proposed by the United States because the language in OP2 prejudices new initiatives at the United Nations, which could duplicate and potentially undermine existing OECD work at a crucial point in implementation of the Two-Pillar Solution.

Nevertheless, we are pleased to join consensus and look forward to the Secretary-General's report and contributing to its drafting.

Instead of recommending new, potentially duplicative work, we hope the report will focus on recommendations for strengthening the OECD-housed initiatives so that they meet the ambition of Addis and ensure the benefit to developing countries is maximised.

The G20/OECD Roadmap on Developing Countries and International Tax, endorsed by G20 Leaders last week, should be a primary reference. This sets out clear recommendations, such as increasing provision of capacity-building, reform of country-by-country reporting, and increasing developing countries' voice in negotiations. The UK fully supports these recommendations and is working to implement them.

Thank you