

Innovative nature projects awarded funding to drive private investment

Projects to restore kelp forests, create new woodland, deliver natural flood risk management, and improve water quality are among an initial 27 schemes to benefit from a pioneering new fund to drive private investment in nature and tackle climate change, Defra, the Environment Agency & Natural England have announced today (14 July 2021).

Organisations across England have been awarded up to £100,000 each, as part of the ground-breaking £10 million [Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund](#).

The funding will be used to develop the projects to the point they can provide a return on investment by capturing the value of carbon, water quality, biodiversity and other benefits provided by natural assets such as woodlands, peatlands, catchments and landscapes.

Funding has been awarded to environmental groups, businesses and local authorities to develop projects that protect and enhance nature while also demonstrating innovative approaches to generating revenues from the wide range of benefits that nature provides.

Revenues will be generated through the sale of carbon and biodiversity units, natural flood management benefits and through reduced water treatment costs. In developing these revenue streams, the Fund will help create a pipeline of projects for the private sector to invest in, and develop new funding models that can be scaled and replicated elsewhere.

Projects receiving funding focus on tackling climate change and restoring nature through schemes such as woodland and habitat creation, peatland restoration, sustainable drainage and river catchment management.

Examples include developing a carbon credit model for saltmarshes across England; kelp forest restoration off the Sussex coast; woodland creation in North Yorkshire; and peatland restoration in Greater Manchester.

Environment Minister Rebecca Pow said:

To tackle the environmental challenges we face from climate change and biodiversity loss, it is crucial that domestic natural environment projects are able to attract private investment alongside support from the public sector.

Unleashing innovation and growing new sources of finance, such as through the Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund, are fundamental for delivering nature recovery and developing nature-based solutions to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Chair of the Environment Agency, Emma Howard Boyd said:

With the right structure, nature-based projects can be scaled up by private finance, helping to reduce emissions, prepare for climate shocks and create jobs.

From a new business model for multi-functional forestry in Yorkshire, to an investment fund to transform farmland in Norfolk, these projects will provide evidence of funding models to make industries fit for the future, reach net zero by 2050, and create a nature positive future.

With COP26 coming to the UK this year, this demonstrates how to create investable propositions for nature based solutions to the climate emergency.

Tony Juniper, Chair of Natural England, said:

Restoring Nature is essential for tackling climate change and supporting a strong, sustainable economy. Mobilising private finance can make a huge contribution to this and NEIRF is among the steps needed right now to help unlock that investment.

I am very pleased that Natural England is providing technical input into the fund, helping to identify projects that will enable the public, private and charitable sectors to collaborate in genuine partnership to deliver nature recovery and action on climate change.

Working on behalf of Defra and HMT, delivery partners the Environment Agency, Natural England and the Access Foundation for Social Investment will support the projects and make the knowledge generated available to the public to encourage similar approaches to access private sector finance for nature projects in the future.

The Green Finance Institute (GFI) has supported DEFRA and the Environment Agency throughout the Fund's launch including leading a series of educational workshops for interested applicants, and acting as third party assessor and advisor over the application and awards process.

Chief Executive of the GFI, Dr Rhian-Mari Thomas said:

The recent Dasgupta Review made clear the value of nature to our economy and society and the need for investment in nature-positive projects. The Fund will accelerate private investment in nature, as will the learnings derived from the successful applicants and their projects. We look forward to continuing our support for this transformative initiative.

Subject to confirmation, the Environment Agency and Defra are planning to launch a further application round later this year.

Since the Prime Minister's 10 Point Plan publication we have enshrined the UK's sixth carbon budget in law, proposing a target which would reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 78% by 2035 compared to 1990 levels.

We are also encouraging countries to join the UK's call to protect at least 30% of the global ocean within Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) by 2030, as announced by the UK at the UN General Assembly in September 2018. We were also the first major economy to set a legally binding net zero greenhouse gas emissions target by 2050.

For more information contact george.hinton@environment-agency.gov.uk

Further information

A selection of the successful projects benefiting from the Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund are below:

Project: New Forest Net Zero: Investment Models for Nature Restoration

Applicant: New Forest National Park Authority

Funding: £99,229

Details: Mapping the restoration of arable and neutral grasslands to woodland and fens across three public and privately owned sites within the NPA in an area of high development pressure. The project will scope work needed to restore woodlands and wetlands, resulting in carbon sequestration, habitat creation and improvements in water quality. Revenues from these ecosystem services will then be modelled in the form of carbon, nutrient and biodiversity credits to demonstrate a case for private investors.

Project: UK Soil & Farm Carbon Code-Piloting and developing carbon investment readiness

Applicant: Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group South West (FWAG)

Funding: £98,000

Details: Building on a three year partnership investigating regenerative agriculture and carbon, aiming to propose a UK Farm and Soil Code in 2022. Through this project carbon on farms will be monetised, particularly through regenerative agricultural practices enhancing carbon sequestration in soils.

Project: Crystal Clear Clyst Bond

Applicant: East Devon District Council

Funding: £100,000

Details: Seeking to convert farmland to woodland in an area experiencing a growth in development, via an Environmental Impact Bond. This is a council driven project and will lead to the conversion of agricultural land to woodland. It will monetise revenue generation from voluntary carbon credits, biodiversity credits from new habitat recreation and the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Project: The Wildlife Trusts' Habitat Banking Investment Model

Applicant: Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust

Funding: £100,000

Details: Developing a new habitat banking investment model to deliver biodiversity net gain at scale. The project is a consortium of Wildlife Trusts and will define habitat restoration and creation of grassland, wetland and woodland at three sites for carbon storage, improved flood resilience and visitor well-being. The project will monetise potential for revenue generation through biodiversity credits.

Project: Sussex Bay kelp: a carbon model for kelp forest restoration

Applicant: Adur District & Worthing Borough Councils

Funding: £79,000

Details: Restoring the kelp beds that have been lost to trawling and create a blue carbon bank to support and sustain the restoration of a large kelp forest in the new Trawler Exclusion Zone between Selsey Bill and Shoreham. The project will explore the voluntary market in blue carbon sales and proposes to monetise revenue streams from kelp restoration in the form of aquaculture, tourism, coastal erosion and flood risk and water quality.

Project: Wilder Carbon Standard

Applicant: Kent Wildlife Trust

Funding: £100,000

Details: Creating a finance facility to facilitate the restoration of nature at scale funded by carbon finance. The project will test and develop the ability to generate new revenue streams across multiple habitats. In particular, this project will develop a carbon standard which can be linked to wild habitats and generate revenues from biodiversity credits.

Project: Developing a new business model for multi-functional forestry on Swinton Estate

Applicant: Swinton Estate (The Trustees of Swinton Heirs Trust)

Funding: £85,551

Details: Creating and managing woodlands to optimise the balance of environmental and commercial outcomes whilst reducing the intensity of farming on the estate. The project will generate revenue from forestry, including timber, and will monetise wider benefits from carbon sequestration, biodiversity credits, recreation, and water quality.

Project: Greater Manchester Environment Fund: Scaling Up Natural Capital Investment

Applicant: Lancashire Wildlife Trust

Funding: £100,000

Details: Raising investment to restore peatland through the Greater Manchester Environment Fund by modelling revenues from the sale of carbon and biodiversity credits through woodland creation and increasing biodiversity.

Project: Financing Wetlands for the Stiffkey using Environmental Impact Bonds

Applicant: Norfolk Rivers Trust

Funding: £70,000

Details: Developing an Environmental Impact Bond to reduce phosphates and other pollutants entering the River Stiffkey, reducing the harm to biodiversity. The project will model revenues from this intervention in the form of phosphate credits and it will explore other ecosystem services for additional revenue sources.

Project: Wendling Beck Exemplar Project (WBEP)

Applicant: Norfolk Wildlife Trust

Funding: £99,718

Details: Creating an investment fund to deliver a landscape scale catchment project to transform farmland through river restoration, grassland and wetland creation. The project will model revenue generated from sales of biodiversity, carbon and nutrient credits.

Project: An investment model for catchment-scale nature restoration in the Esk Valley

Applicant: North York Moors National Park Authority

Funding: £99,261

Details: Developing catchment scale river restoration, which will be funded through the monetisation of carbon, biodiversity and water management. The National Park will work with the Esk Valley Farmers Group (EVFG) and pilot an approach that will be a blueprint for catchment-scale nature restoration

applicable across all National Parks.

Project: Warwickshire Carbon and Environmental Markets

Applicant: Warwickshire County Council

Funding: £72,000

Details: Building and broadening the scope of the Warwickshire biodiversity net gain market, to bring in wider ecosystem benefits including carbon and catchment services. The primary focus of the project is to expand the biodiversity net gain market to woodland carbon and blend public funding for tree planting with carbon credits.

Project: A Natural Capital Investment Company for Accelerating Delivery of Habitat Banks

Applicant: Surrey Wildlife Trust

Funding: £100,000

Details: Establishing a natural capital investment company to model biodiversity net gain at scale in support of development growth in the southern England. The project will also explore and quantify income from natural flood risk management and carbon sequestration sources.

Project: Making the Case for Investment in the Tamar Valley's Nature-Based Services

Applicant: The National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Funding: £99,163

Details: Developing a local ecosystem service market through testing trading mechanisms which will market benefits from environmental enhancement of five sites in the Tamar Valley. The project will identify and monetise a range of benefits in the form of carbon, biodiversity credits, natural flood risk management, and water quantity improvement.

Project: A case for a UK Saltmarsh Carbon Code: Evidence, Intervention, and Investment

Applicant: UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (UKCEH)

Funding: £99,931

Details: Developing a saltmarsh code to support habitat restoration activities. The project will involve four sites – Skeffling, East Yorkshire (North Humber); Essex (Old Hall Marshes); Dorset (Arne Moors); Somerset (Stear Marshes) – with the potential to build a wide umbrella Blue Carbon Code applicable in wider marine habitats. The project seeks to develop a rigorous and scientifically based voluntary certification standard for those

that want to market the climate benefits of saltmarsh restoration, with assurances to voluntary carbon market buyers that the climate benefits are quantifiable, additional and permanent.

Project: RSPB Natural Capital Investment Aggregation Vehicle

Applicant: RSPB

Funding: £59,638

Details: Developing a method to aggregate equity funding, which would finance habitat creation in a pipeline of projects. It will seek to model revenues through biodiversity and carbon credits at significant scale, and it will model this approach in up to six pioneer sites.

Project: Landscapes for Water in the Calder and Colne Catchment

Applicant: National Trust

Funding: £98,000

Details: Improving woodland cover and leading to wider natural flood management in the Upper Calder and Colne catchment. This will lead to landscape change and monetise a suite of ecosystem service benefits, including from natural flood risk outcome payments, carbon, and biodiversity credits.

Project: Developing a Worcestershire Natural Capital Investment Partnership

Applicant: Worcestershire County Council

Funding: £91,118

Details: Establishing a county-wide natural capital investment framework for selling biodiversity credits via a habitat 'bank'. The framework will offer scalability so that all Worcestershire local authorities can opt in. The project will explore and model investment from a reduction of costs associated with flood risk; sequestration of carbon; provision of pollination services; providing physical and mental health benefits to the public through access to nature.

Project: Doubling Nature Investment Readiness Project (Merseyside)

Applicant: Mersey Forest

Funding: £96,000

Details: Establishing a place based investment vehicle to improve the Bollin catchment through increased tree cover and improvements to heathland, bog and wet grassland. The project will model investment through a bond repayable

through biodiversity, carbon credits and catchment services such as natural flood risk management.

Project: Hadrian Bond

Applicant: Regenerate Outcomes Company

Funding: £100,000

Details: Establishing an Environmental Impact Bond to stimulate regenerative agricultural practices across a suite of farms. The project will seek to fund the Environmental Impact Bond through modelled revenue from regenerative agriculture, carbon, biodiversity credits and potentially wider catchment services such as improved water quality.

Project: Creation of a Hedgerow Carbon Code

Applicant: Allerton Research & Educational Trust

Funding: £81,561

Details: Developing a hedgerow carbon code to support habitat enhancement activities and measurement of carbon sequestration. The project will include field trials leading to the development of a verification code, and determine the potential for enabling farmers to increase the amount of carbon stored in their hedgerows and trade carbon credits.

Project: Buscot and Coleshill – Piloting Place-based Innovation for the National Trust

Applicant: National Trust

Funding: £96,500

Details: Testing place-based natural capital investment approaches centred on woodland and habitat creation, which will lead to wider socio-economic and water management interventions. The project will map and audit the potential monetisation of a range of ecosystem services from biodiversity and woodland creation, flood risk management, improved water quality and ecotourism.

Project: Protected Landscape Investment Bank

Applicant: Cornwall Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Trust

Funding: £99,500

Details: Developing landscape recovery funding and investment strategy which will detail a diverse set of income streams across catchment services, biodiversity and carbon offsetting, tourism and health. As part of the project, the AONB will map and audit the potential revenues from environmental enhancement activities resulting in water quality improvements, carbon sequestration, habitat creation, flood risk mitigation and wider services such as tourism, and health.

Project: Green Investment in Greater Lincolnshire (GIGL)

Applicant: Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust

Funding: £100,000

Details: Establishing market mechanisms to trade biodiversity, carbon and water credits generated through improvements to agricultural land at a landscape scale. The project will quantify demand from buyers of biodiversity, carbon and water credits in Greater Lincolnshire and work with landowners to identify nature-based solutions, establishing a registry of pipeline of shovel ready projects.

Project: Environmental Impact Bond for phosphorus removal from the Irwell catchment

Applicant: United Utilities Water Ltd

Funding: £66,500

Details: Establishing an environmental impact bond model and an investment case to deliver up to ten sustainable drainage systems to industrial estates and other nature based solutions. The project will result in an investment case supported by potential buyers, the transaction details, and how the interventions will be delivered. The project is expected to have relevance across the water sector.

Project: Cornwall Habitat Bank

Applicant: Cornwall Council

Funding: £99,404

Details: Developing a countywide habitat bank aiming to be a one-stop shop with a brokerage service to deliver natural capital enhancements, biodiversity net gain and trial a blue carbon market. The project will identify how to blend biodiversity and carbon credits with tourism and wider funding sources.

Project: The Carbon Bank

Applicant: Ecotricity New Ventures

Funding: £89,675

Details: Identifying and model woodland creation in a number of company sites, which will result in the creation and selling of woodland carbon a new and bespoke web platform to over 200,000 customers.

Clearer choice of high-quality post-16 qualifications

Young people and adults will have clearer qualification and training routes, as part of a shake up of the post-16 system to remove low-quality qualifications that lack job prospects.

The new system will create two clearly defined paths for people who have completed GCSEs or similar courses: academic, meaning qualifications that primarily lead to further study, and technical, those qualifications that primarily lead to skilled employment. This will mean everyone can see more easily how their studies support their future training or job aspirations.

Apprenticeships, A levels and new T Levels will become the main progression options after GCSEs.

There will continue to be other qualifications on offer, for example in creative and performing arts, but the changes will reduce the number of poor-quality courses or duplication across the system. Qualifications will need to prove they give employers the skills they need or lead to good Higher Education courses, and demonstrate why there is a real need for them to be funded. The reforms come after [consultation](#) with the education sector, students and parents and will be phased in from 2023.

Under the new system, employers will also play a key role in helping to design more technical qualifications, so they deliver the skilled workforce businesses and the economy need to build back better from the pandemic.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

As we recover from the pandemic, there can be no room in our education system for second rate qualifications.

Great qualifications are essential to helping everyone – no matter their age or background – to get good jobs and realise their ambitions.

These reforms will simplify and streamline the current system, ensuring that whatever qualification a young person or an adult chooses they can be confident that it will be high-quality and will lead to good outcomes.

Level 3 qualifications include A levels, T Levels and other options such as BTECs and Cambridge Technicals. They are traditionally taken by young people after GCSEs, but also by many adults who wish to upskill or retrain.

There are currently [over 4,000 qualifications at level 3 approved for government funding](#), with multiple qualifications in the same subject areas

available – many of which are poor quality and offer little value to students or employers.

This includes over 200 engineering qualifications, over 200 qualifications in building and construction, and 15 plumbing qualifications, ranging from courses that are 170 learning hours to more than 1,800. In comparison, countries with high-performing technical education systems such as Germany and Switzerland offer fewer than 500 technical qualifications in total.

A recent [survey](#) also highlighted that employers were unable to fill a quarter of all vacant positions because they could not find people with the right skills. It also showed that over a quarter of young people were leaving further education poorly prepared for the workplace, further underlining the need for qualifications to be high-quality and provide the skills that employers say they need.

Jennifer Coupland, chief executive at the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education said:

Qualifications at level 3 play an important role for people at the start of their careers and also those looking to build new skills.

The impacts of the pandemic made it more important than ever that we offer high-quality training to address skills gaps.

This review will help us to do even more to help people gain the knowledge and skills they need for prosperous and successful careers in their chosen industry.

Ruth Ginever, chief of industrialisation, Rolls-Royce Civil Aerospace Division, said:

I take the proposed review of level 3 qualifications as a positive step. The current proliferation of different qualifications and lack of standardised content is confusing to both employers, seeking to recruit and to young people, and their parents, looking to make decisions on qualifications to study.

The lack of clear routes through the different qualification levels and how they link to career paths is not supporting developing a diverse, future ready, technically skilled workforce. Particularly for employers, the lack of standardisation is disruptive and leads to extra costs being incurred in bringing an apprentice into a business, as often funding for extra academic support for learners has to be found to cover gaps emanating from non-standard level 3 qualifications.

Mark McClennon, global chief information officer (CIO), Burberry, said:

Level 3 qualifications are an important gateway for people from all backgrounds. I welcome this review and the plans now being shared through this consultation response to move to a more streamlined system that ensures high-quality training and reflects employers' skills needs.

Lucy Wiltshire, sector lead commercial, Willmott Dixon Interiors, said:

Level 3 qualifications are extremely important to help ensure everyone has clearly defined and high-quality training and career choices after their GCSEs. Willmott Dixon has been keen to play a lead role in supporting and shaping these for the construction sector through employer engagement. We support government plans to improve how the wider system works and help students and employers make the right choices.

As part of the work to boost access to high-quality level 3 qualifications, the government has already taken action to:

- remove funding for more than 160 duplicate qualifications from August 2020, ensuring that students take the newer, more rigorous versions
- remove funding from August 2021 for more than 2,200 qualifications which are not being taken by anyone each year.
- stop any new qualification at level 3 and below from getting approval for funding from 2020, to avoid adding to the already confusing and complicated system of qualifications already available at these levels.

Since April, adults without a full qualification at Level 3 have also been able to access [almost 400 free courses](#), ranging from engineering to healthcare to conservation, to help them gain in-demand skills and open up job opportunities.

The new streamlined system announced today forms part of the government's reforms to post-16 education and training as set out in the [Skills for Jobs White Paper](#), which will ensure everyone no matter where they live can gain the skills they need to progress and secure a great career.

Government publishes world's first 'greenprint' to decarbonise all modes of domestic transport by 2050

- government launches groundbreaking Transport decarbonisation plan to create cleaner, quieter cities and communities for better quality of

life and to improve the way people and goods move around as we build back greener

- plan includes consulting on world-leading pledge to end the sale of all new, polluting road vehicles by 2040 and net zero aviation emissions by 2050
- smart electric vehicle charging that could reduce energy bills, and a commitment to electrify the entire fleet of government cars and vans by 2027, highlight ambition to tackle emissions

Cleaner air, healthier communities and tens of thousands of new green jobs are set to become reality thanks to the UK's revolutionary Transport decarbonisation plan, Transport Secretary Grant Shapps has announced today (14 July 2021).

With just months to go until major climate summit COP26, the plan provides a world-leading 'greenprint' to cut emissions from our seas and skies, roads and railways, setting out a credible pathway for the whole transport sector to reach net zero by 2050.

Cleaner transport will create and support highly skilled jobs, with the production of zero emission road vehicles alone having the potential to support tens of thousands of jobs worth up to £9.7 billion GVA in 2050. This will also ensure the air we breathe is cleaner in our communities and reduce time spent in traffic.

As part of this vision, the government is today announcing its intention to phase out the sale of new diesel and petrol heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) by 2040, subject to consultation – combined with the 2035 phase out date for polluting cars and vans, this represents a world-leading pledge to phase out all polluting road vehicles within the next 2 decades. The consultation proposes a 2035 phase out date for vehicles weighing from 3.5 to 26 tonnes and 2040 for vehicles weighing more than 26 tonnes – or earlier if a faster transition seems feasible.

With billions of pounds in investment already pledged including £2 billion in cycling and walking and £2.8 billion to support industry and motorists to make the switch to cleaner vehicles, the Transport decarbonisation plan also sets out how the government will improve public transport and increase support for active travel to make them the natural first choice for all who can take them – creating a net zero rail network by 2050, ensuring net zero domestic aviation emissions by 2040 and leading the transition to green shipping.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

Transport is not just how you get around. It is something that fundamentally shapes our towns, cities and countryside, our living standards and our health. It can shape all those things for good or for bad. Decarbonisation is not just some technocratic process. It's about how we make sure that transport shapes quality of life and the economy in ways that are good.

It's not about stopping people doing things: it's about doing the same things differently. We will still fly on holiday, but in more efficient aircraft, using sustainable fuel. We will still drive, but increasingly in zero emission cars.

The Transport decarbonisation plan is just the start – we will need continued efforts and collaboration to deliver its ambitious commitments, which will ultimately create sustainable economic growth through healthier communities as we build back greener.

Elizabeth de Jong, Director of Policy at Logistics UK, said:

The Transport decarbonisation plan will help to provide logistics businesses with confidence and clarity on the steps they must take on the pathway to net zero. Consultation on proposed phase out dates for new diesel HGVs should enable business to move forwards with confidence. Rail, shipping and aviation are all essential parts of logistics, so plans to support freight modal shift and develop technologies to reduce emissions across these modes are welcome.

With logistics already embracing the need to decarbonise its operations, Logistics UK looks forward to working in partnership with the government on future action and strategies to realise the net zero ambition together.

Sandy Parsonage, Director of Supply Chain and Logistics for Sainsbury's, which is a principal sponsor of COP26, said:

We welcome the government's ambition and look forward to engaging with the consultation. We are already working across our supply chain to explore alternative fuels and develop a zero carbon fleet of the future. At the same time, we're investing to reduce the emissions across our current fleet. This ambition will accelerate efforts to develop the technologies the UK needs to achieve net zero.

The commitment comes as the government publishes a green paper setting out the regulatory framework requiring vehicle manufacturers to improve the fuel efficiency of new cars, vans and HGVs, enabling the country to meet the ambitious phase out dates while creating new jobs for the automotive sector and delivering certainty for drivers. This includes consulting on the possible introduction of a new phased industry mandate for zero emission vehicles.

The government is also today publishing a 2035 delivery plan, which brings together all of the measures for decarbonising cars and vans, from across government, into a single document. It outlines the key timelines, milestones

and how progress towards the commitment to deliver mass ownership of zero emission cars and vans will be monitored.

This follows recent investments from car manufacturer Nissan to produce its new-generation electric vehicle in Sunderland, alongside Envision's new Gigafactory, as well as Stellantis's investment in Vauxhall's Ellesmere Port manufacturing plant to transform the site for a new era in electric vehicle manufacturing.

Aviation has a vital role to play in tackling climate change, which is why the government is today also launching the Jet zero consultation, which commits the sector to a net zero emissions target by 2050 and sets out an action plan for how it can be achieved – ensuring everyone can continue to fly for holidays, visits to family and business without contributing to climate change.

Reflecting the fact the UK aviation industry is already leading the way in seeking to reduce emissions from flights, the consultation proposes an earlier target for UK domestic aviation to reach net zero by 2040, as well as for all airport operations in England to be zero emission by 2040.

Emma Gilthorpe, COO of Heathrow and Jet Zero Council CEO, said:

I welcome the leadership from government in committing to a target of net zero emissions from aviation by 2050 and recognising that the aviation industry is committed to delivering on this, too. We look forward to working with government to translate this ambition to action and deliver a future where people can continue to enjoy the benefits of air travel – without worrying about their impact on the environment.

Greg Archer, UK Director of the Europe-wide green transport campaign group Transport & Environment, said:

This plan is a milestone in the shift to a more sustainable UK transport system. The decision to only use zero emission road vehicles – including trucks – by 2050 is world-leading and will significantly reduce Britain's climate impact and improve the air we breathe. This complements the goal of net zero internal UK flights by 2040, although there is much more to do to tackle international aviation emissions.

Graeme Cooper, Head of Future Markets at National Grid, said:

This is the first zero emissions transport mandate for a major economy and is a great opportunity ahead of COP26 to show the UK's commitment to clean transport and clean air. The government has already committed significant investment for EV charging

infrastructure and today's announcement will be a further boost, giving the industry and consumers clarity and confidence for the road ahead, not just for cars but other forms of transport too, including heavy goods vehicles.

BVRLA Chief Executive Gerry Keaney said:

We welcome the publication of these plans, which provides a clearer picture of where we are and where we need to get to on the road to net zero. BVRLA members will play a vital role in this journey, enabling millions of individuals and businesses to embrace zero emission road transport and switch to more sustainable forms of mobility. There will be many important milestones along the way and we will continue to work with government and other stakeholders in achieving them.

The government is today also:

- announcing that it has brought forward the target date for the whole central government fleet of 40,000 cars and vans to be fully zero emission by 2027, 3 years earlier than previously planned
- publishing the [government's response to the electric vehicle smart charging consultation](#), committing to laying legislation later this year to ensure that all new private EV chargepoints meet smart charging standards, which can save consumers money on their energy bills
- publishing its rail environment policy statement, which will set the direction for the rail industry on environment issues such as traction decarbonisation, air quality, decarbonising the rail estate, biodiversity and waste

[Expert report: every UK job has the potential to be green](#)

- Independent Green Jobs Taskforce issues call to action on how the UK can deliver a green industrial revolution with government, business and the education sector working together – declaring every job has the potential to become green
- UK government reaffirms its commitment to supporting workers as our economy transitions to a low carbon future with a package of green skills programmes, helping adults of all ages gain the skills needed to progress into green jobs
- today's steps vital to support the government's ambition to create 2 million skilled green jobs by 2030 and build back greener from the

pandemic

Every UK job has the potential to be green, according to a new independent, expert report published today (Wednesday 14 July) and backed by the UK government.

Reaffirming its commitment to delivering a workforce needed for a green industrial revolution and outlining a series of green programmes providing adults with the skills needed to pursue a green career, the UK government has today welcomed 15 new recommendations from the independent Green Jobs Taskforce.

It is already estimated that the Prime Minister's ambitious [Ten Point Plan](#) will support up to 90,000 highly-skilled green UK jobs within this Parliament, and up to 250,000 by 2030. This includes supporting 60,000 jobs in offshore wind, 40,000 new jobs in zero emission vehicles, and 50,000 jobs in greening the UK's buildings – all by 2030. This represents the first steps towards our broader ambition of supporting 2 million jobs in the green economy and its supply chains by 2030.

The Taskforce, [convened by the Business and Education departments in November 2020](#), has published its findings and recommendations on how the UK government, industry and skills sector can best deliver the green jobs and skills of the future. Recommendations include:

- publishing a detailed Net Zero Strategy and using policy to promote good green jobs, skills and competitive supply chains
- industry, the education sector and the UK government working together to ensure green careers advice and pathways into good green jobs
- building on the UK government's skills reforms to support people to work in the new green economy

Today's report assesses how the UK jobs market and the skills sector should adapt to support net zero, from training engineers and construction workers who are building the UK's world-renowned offshore wind farms and nuclear plants, to the retrofitters who will make homes more comfortable and energy efficient, and car mechanics servicing electric vehicles and vans.

UK Energy & Climate Change Minister and co-chair of the Green Jobs Taskforce Anne-Marie Trevelyan said:

As we lead the world in tackling climate change, we need to invest in the UK's most important asset – its workforce – so that our people have the right skills to deliver a green industrial revolution and thrive in the jobs it will create.

That's why today we have welcomed the recommendations put forward by the Green Jobs Taskforce, which are a big step forward in delivering the skilled workers and green jobs essential for the UK's transition to net zero.

Its report, alongside our ambitious skills programmes, will be invaluable to us as we build a pathway into green careers for people from all backgrounds and ensuring that workers and communities dependent on the high-carbon economy are supported as we build back greener into a cleaner future.

Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills and co-chair of the Green Jobs Taskforce Gillian Keegan said:

We are focused on delivering the talent pipeline businesses need for green jobs now and in the future. From Skills Bootcamps to apprenticeships, our skills programmes will ensure people are able to acquire the skills needed for the growing green economy.

We welcome the Taskforce's findings which will help us to drive forward our ambitious green skills revolution, supporting more people of all backgrounds to get the skills they need to build great careers and help us reach our goal of net zero emissions by 2050.

In a further drive to ensure people have the right skills to deliver the transition to a net zero economy and pursue green careers, the UK government has already rolled out a range of initiatives and skills programmes to build low carbon industries across the country and help people thrive in the jobs this will create.

This includes working with employers to boost green apprenticeship opportunities and supporting more adults to gain the skills they need to progress into green jobs through upskilling and training programmes.

These initiatives will build on existing action already underway including green apprenticeships and green skills bootcamps, strengthening the government's ambition to support the creation of 2 million skilled jobs by 2030 to build back greener and reach net zero emissions by 2050.

Director at National Grid and Member of the Green Jobs Taskforce Rhian Kelly said:

Getting the right people and skills in place to achieve the government's ambitious climate goals is a huge challenge. The Green Jobs Taskforce has drawn on insights from across business, trade unions and academia, to identify actions that can have a real impact on building the net zero workforce the UK needs. This won't happen overnight so it's vital we move from intent to action now and that the report is acted upon with urgency.

Executive Director of Aldersgate Group and Member of the Green Jobs Taskforce Nick Molho said:

The Green Jobs Taskforce has been a great example of industry, trade unions, the skills sector, civil society and government working together to make the net zero transition a success for the UK economy, its workforce and citizens. There is strong agreement across all sectors that we can achieve the UK's climate and environmental targets in a way that grows new low carbon supply chains across all parts of the economy and creates a significant number of high-quality jobs across the country. Achieving this ambition is ultimately down to the actions that government, industry and the skills sector will take in the coming years.

To deliver this objective, the UK needs to have a detailed policy plan for its net zero target, mainstream the teaching of climate change and green skills across all stages of the education system and provide those already in the workforce with the financial and flexible learning support they need to have access to reskilling.

Initiatives from the UK government include:

- Green apprenticeships: there are a wide range of green apprenticeships already up and running including Nuclear Desk Engineers, Wind Turbine Maintenance and Operations Engineering Technicians, Research Scientists and Environmental Practitioners that have been endorsed by the Green Apprenticeships Advisory Panel (GAAP). The GAAP is working with employers across England to enhance the current apprenticeships on offer and create new opportunities to adapt to the growing green economy.
- Green Skills Bootcamps: the government is expanding its Skills Bootcamps to other areas of the country, which deliver free, flexible training courses of up to 16 weeks for adults so they can develop in-demand skills and fast-track to an interview with a local employer. This will include offering technical training in green home retrofit management, solar energy installation, sustainable agriculture, nuclear energy deployment, and green transport
- Electrification skills boost: the government has launched the Emerging Skills Electrification Project, which aims to encourage the adoption of cutting-edge skills in electrification technologies, such as battery-powered motors and drives, electric vehicle systems and software, battery maintenance, and recycling. The project will fund the development of short courses, teacher training support and free to access 'up-skilling' days for adults in the latest electrification technologies
- Free Courses for Jobs (free Level 3 qualifications): backed by £95 million from the National Skills Fund, the government is fully funding any adult without an existing Level 3 qualifications, which are equivalent to A levels or an advanced technical certificate or diploma, to take a Level 3 qualification for free. The offer includes qualifications that will support adults across England to get the skills that lead directly to jobs in sectors such as Agriculture, Building and Construction, Engineering, Horticulture and Forestry and Science
- Supporting transitioning industries: this year the government announced the landmark North Sea Transition Deal, supporting the oil and gas

industry's transition to clean, green energy – while supporting 40,000 jobs, and the UK's first ever Industrial Decarbonisation Strategy, to help industry decarbonise in line with net zero, while remaining competitive and without pushing emissions abroad

- Plans for jobs: more than a third of the working population, including 14.5 million jobs, have been supported since the coronavirus pandemic began, one year on from the announcement of the government's landmark Plan for Jobs

As part of government's immediate response to the Green Jobs Taskforce report, it has announced it will set up a cross-cutting delivery group to include representatives from industry, the skills sector and other key stakeholders to oversee the development and delivery of the government's plans for green jobs and skills. This group will maintain the momentum generated by the Taskforce and drive meaningful action across the green skills agenda.

The evidence collected by the Green Jobs Taskforce, and official recommendations, will now be considered by the government, feeding into the development of government's ambitious Net Zero Strategy, due to be published ahead of the UN's climate summit COP26 in Glasgow this November. The Net Zero Strategy will clearly set out the government's path to achieving net zero emissions by 2050 and meeting the UK government's targets to cut emissions and create new jobs and industries across the whole country.

Additional Green Jobs Taskforce member quotes

Chair in Carbon Management & Education, Director of Edinburgh Climate Change Institute, University of Edinburgh Professor Dave Reay said:

In this crucial year for climate action, and with the long shadow of COVID-19 still hanging over us all, this report and its recommendation couldn't be more timely. The UK's successful transition to net zero depends on every sector of our economy; every job of the future will be shaped by it and many thousands will be created by it.

We now have a real opportunity to simultaneously deliver on our climate goals, supercharge a green recovery, and realise a fairer and more inclusive future for the whole nation. To do this, our education and skills systems needs to be bang on point, green career pathways must be open for all, and investments need to be matched with local needs and opportunities right across the country.

In navigating this perfect storm of climate emergency, nature crisis and global pandemic, these recommendations can be a bright green beacon to guide the way.

Prospect Senior Deputy General Secretary Sue Ferns said:

The drive for Net Zero is not only essential for the future of the planet, it has the potential to usher in a new wave of good quality, high-skilled jobs right across the country. But this won't happen without coordinated action from government, industry, and trade unions.

Together we need to work to make sure that we properly deploy the skills we have, develop those we need, and create green jobs in every nation and region- and this report sets out a plan to do it, starting with the creation of a new national body to help guide the important process of workforce transition so that no worker is left behind as we green our economy.

Notes to editors

Today's Green Jobs Taskforce report calls for a holistic approach across the 'lifecycle' of green jobs to ensure the UK grasps the opportunities that a green industrial revolution will create, focusing on action to:

1. unlock industry investment in good quality green jobs and skills
2. promote diversity within emerging low carbon sector and ensure pathways exist for people of all ages to go into green careers
3. to ensure a just transition for workers in high carbon sectors.

The cross-cutting delivery group will maintain the momentum generated by the Taskforce and drive meaningful action across the green skills agenda.

The government will not be endorsing Green Jobs Taskforce recommendations at this stage or adopting them as official policy. Formal response to the recommendations will come within the Net Zero Strategy, published ahead of COP26, building on the work already underway to deliver the skills for net zero.

Building on this world-leading progress and following last year's announcement of the Prime Minister's ambitious UK's Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution, the government launched the Green Jobs Taskforce, bringing together business, trade unions, education sector and Local Enterprise Partnerships to set out world-leading steps to build back better and greener, use our recovery to level up the country, and support jobs throughout the UK as we accelerate our path to net zero by 2050.

There are already over 410,000 jobs in low carbon businesses in the UK and their supply chains across the country, with turnover estimated at £42.6 billion in 2019, and the value of goods and services exported by UK low carbon businesses exceeding £7 billion.

The green apprenticeships advisory panel will help focus efforts to make sure the right skills are in place for the future workforce to deliver the green technology shift the UK needs. The panel is supported by an advisory

community of employers. The community offer greater expertise on occupations. They share insight with the panel and help them shape their final recommendations.

Ban on knives, firearms and offensive weapons comes into force

Cyclone knives, spiral knives and 'rapid-fire' rifles are among those covered by the ban, all of which have been associated with serious violence in communities across the country.

A new legal definition of flick knives, banned since 1959, also takes effect, resulting in more of these bladed weapons being outlawed.

All weapons banned in public by the Criminal Justice Act 1988, including zombie knives, shuriken or death stars and knuckledusters, will now also be banned in private, meaning people can no longer keep them at home.

Anyone unlawfully possessing a firearm covered by the ban will face up to 10 years in prison and those possessing one of the other weapons can be sentenced to up to six months' imprisonment or a fine or both.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

There is no place in our society for violent crime and harm caused by such knives and firearms. Lives have been lost through serious violence, and this ban will help save lives by getting more knives and other weapons off the streets and out of the hands of violent criminals.

The human suffering and hurt caused by the tragic loss of life through violent crime is unacceptable, which is why the government will stop at nothing to give the police the powers needed to stop violent crime and protect the public.

From today, anyone possessing one of these deadly weapons unlawfully will face the full force of the law.

National Police Chiefs' Council lead on knife crime, Deputy Assistant Commissioner Graham McNulty, said:

The harm caused to families and communities through the tragic loss of life relating to knife crime is devastating and that is why focusing on this issue remains a top priority for policing.

We welcome the changes to legislation being introduced by the Offensive Weapons Act. These measures will help officers to seize more dangerous weapons, deal with those intent on using them to cause harm and suffering, and crucially, make it more difficult for young people to get hold of knives and other dangerous items in the first place.

Knife crime is not something that can be solved by policing alone. We are working with businesses, schools, charities and community schemes to educate young people and explain why carrying a knife is never the right choice. This early intervention plays a vitally important role in stopping young people from turning to a life of crime.

The provisions are set out in the government's Offensive Weapons Act, which received Royal Assent in May 2019.

From December 2020 to March 2021, the government ran a scheme allowing members of the public to surrender to the police any items that fell within the new ban and claim compensation from the Home Office.

During the period, 14,965 knives and offensive weapons, 1,133 'rapid fire' firearms (as defined within the Offensive Weapons Act) and more than 32,000 items of ancillary equipment were surrendered, with the Home Office receiving and processing 829 claims for compensation.

The government is also reminding members of the public about forthcoming changes to the law around antique firearms.

The Antique Firearms Regulations 2021, introduced in March this year, provides for the first time a legal definition of 'antique firearm' to prevent criminals exploiting a lack of clarity in law to gain possession of such a weapon for use in crime.

Owners of firearms which have ceased to be antiques as a result of the 2021 regulations have until 22 September this year to apply to the police for a firearms certificate, which allows them to own these weapons legally. Alternatively, they can surrender, sell or otherwise dispose of the firearm before 22 September.