

# [UK Government funding available for Northern Ireland](#)

News story

UK Government funding available for Northern Ireland



The UK government is committed to supporting communities across Northern Ireland to ensure that no community is left behind and to seek to build a more prosperous and stable future as we recover from the Covid-19 pandemic.

A number of new funds were announced at Budget to help build local economic growth and strengthen communities across the whole of the United Kingdom (including Northern Ireland, Wales, and Scotland). Each of these funds has been designed to account for Northern Ireland's unique place within the United Kingdom.

## **Funds open for bids now**

### **Levelling Up fund**

#### **Levelling Up Fund**

£4.8 billion investment across the UK in infrastructure and capital programmes that improves everyday life, including regenerating town centres and high streets, upgrading local transport, and investing in cultural and heritage assets up to 2024-2025.

Bids requiring less than £20 million of funding welcome from businesses, voluntary and community sector organisations, district councils, the Northern Ireland Executive and other public sector bodies as part of a competitive process.

Capital-only fund: no limit to the number of bids that an organisation can submit, with at least £800 million made available across Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland over four years from 2021-2022 to 2024-2025.

Application deadline is midday Friday 18 June 2021. Note: Bidders who are not local authorities will need to demonstrate they have the capacity and capability to deliver capital projects.

Application form [here](#).

## Levelling Up Fund

More info [here](#).

### UK Community Renewal Fund

£220 million investment across the UK in skills, community and place, local business, and supporting people into employment.

Bids welcome from a range of local applicants including but not limited to: business, voluntary and community sector organisations, universities, colleges, district councils and other public sector bodies.

90% revenue fund: no limit to the number of bids that an organisation can submit, up to the total value of the Northern Ireland allocation of £11 million.

Application deadline is midday Friday 18 June 2021.

Application form [here](#).

More info [here](#).

## Funds launching soon

### UK Shared Prosperity Fund

#### PEACE PLUS

#### Community Ownership Fund

A new £150 million fund to help ensure that communities can support and continue

benefiting from the local facilities, community assets and amenities most important to them.

From summer 2021, community groups will be able to bid for up to £250,000 matched-funding to help

buy or take over local community assets at risk of being lost.

Projects could include community-

owned sports clubs, sporting and leisure facilities, cinemas and theatres, music venues, museums, galleries, parks, pubs and shops.

Full bidding prospectus to be published at the end of June 2021.

More info [here](#).

#### UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Replacing EU structural funding (e.g., European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund) with a fund that is better tailored to the UK economy and helps to level up and create opportunity across the UK for people and places.

Will target places most in need, including ex-industrial areas, deprived towns and rural and coastal communities.

A portion of the Fund will target places most in need across the UK, prioritising investment in people, investment in communities and place and investment for local business. A second portion of the Fund will be targeted differently to people most in need through bespoke employment and skills programmes that are tailored to local need.

Funding will ramp up following the launch of the fund in 2022 so that total domestic UK-wide funding will at least match EU receipts reaching around £1.5bn a year.

## UK Shared Prosperity Fund

More info [here](#).

### PEACE PLUS

PEACE PLUS is the new EU cross-border programme that will contribute to a more prosperous and stable society in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland. It will build upon previous PEACE and INTERREG Programmes.

The programme will fund activities that promote peace and reconciliation and contribute to the cross-border economic and territorial development of the region.

The UK is the majority contributor, committing to providing over £500m to PEACE PLUS between now and 2027.

PEACE PLUS is the biggest PEACE programme yet bringing the total budget to approximately €1bn.

More info [here](#).

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## [British High Commission, NBI and GreenCape launch CFA](#)

A new innovative Climate Finance Accelerator (CFA) programme was launched today, which supports South Africa's efforts to implement its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) by bringing together stakeholders that can develop and finance climate projects at scale.

The next ten years represent a critical decade for the planet. We must take rapid action if we are to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement and limit global warming to 1.5 degrees. The NDCs are country pledges which are at the heart of the Paris Agreement and embody efforts by each country to reduce national emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

The CFA is a global technical assistance programme, funded by the UK Government's International Climate Finance. It directly responds to the urgency and scale of the climate crisis by supporting highly promising climate projects to become more bankable and appealing to investors, so that they can secure funding more readily. The CFA approach addresses the fact that there is money available for climate finance, but it is often difficult for it to flow to the places where it is needed.

The global programme is delivered by PwC, in collaboration with Ricardo. The National Business Initiative (NBI) in partnership with GreenCape have been appointed as the national delivery partners for the CFA South Africa.

[A call for proposals](#) is now open for low carbon projects seeking finance. Developers with low-carbon projects looking for funding are invited to apply

to take part in the CFA South Africa.

By engaging with the CFA programme, project developers can benefit from:

- Access to investors
- Coaching and best practice insights
- Networking opportunities
- Increased visibility
- Achieving low carbon project objectives

Acting British High Commissioner, Adam Bye says: “The UK recognises the challenge of ensuring adequate development and private sector finance is available to fund climate projects linked to national climate commitments. I am delighted that, in addition to our significant direct support, we are launching the CFA to help improve the flow of finance to support South Africa’s NDC, helping reduce emissions, support just transition and raise climate ambition”.

The financing available and the capacities to deliver the NDCs vary across different countries, something that the NBI and GreenCape have worked to address in South Africa over the past few years.

The NBI’s CEO, Joanne Yawitch, explains: “South Africa requires a clear pathway to financing and implementing its climate targets as part of achieving a just transition for the country. This transformation must involve a country-driven shift toward policies and technologies that catalyse new investments and mainstream climate change into existing systems, as articulated in our climate commitments.”

Mobilising finance to support the low-carbon transition is one of the four key goals for the UK’s COP26 Presidency this year. Through climate finance, the UK is committed to supporting the development of a high-performing and climate-resilient economy in South Africa, both as a climate response and to ensure it remains competitive in a low-carbon global economy.

**For media enquiries, please contact:**

**British High Commission**

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## **Note to editors:**

### **What is the Climate Finance Accelerator (CFA)?**

- The CFA is a technical assistance programme funded by the UK Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS). The programme will work closely with eight countries, which are eligible for UK Official Development Assistance (ODA), and support them to develop a sustainable pipeline of bankable, low-carbon projects and identify suitable financing options.
- The programme will also contribute to embedding a permanent process in each country to identify financing for low-carbon projects. This will support countries' efforts to implement their NDCs, raise their overall climate ambition, and contribute to equity and social inclusion.
- The CFA programme is managed by local partners in each country. It works by building the skills of project developers and potential investors to respectively attract and supply funding for low-carbon development projects.
- By enabling the funding of low-carbon projects, the CFA can play a part in supporting a greener recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The CFA will promote sustainable growth and green development and support those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.
- The link to the Call for Proposals is available [here](#).

### **About the UKs support to South Africa in Sustainable Finance**

- Over £200 million of UK International Climate Finance (ICF) has been spent on programmes in South Africa that support clean technology developments like battery storage, clean energy, coal transition programming, renewable energy and energy efficiency. In addition, through the bilateral UK PACT programme, the UK is this year spending £3.4m in providing technical assistance to support just and accelerated climate transitions, including supporting projects within the areas of energy, sustainable finance and sustainable transport.

### **About the NBI and GreenCape**

- The National Business Initiative (NBI) is a voluntary coalition of companies, working for the past 25 years towards a resilient and inclusive economy, building trust to enable implementation and enhancing the capacity of their stakeholders to participate in economic and social

transformation. The NBI's membership includes a significant proportion of the country's leading listed companies, a number of the major state-owned enterprises and a variety of medium-sized firms. Since their inception in 1995, the NBI has made a distinct impact in the spheres of climate change, water, energy efficiency, local economic development, public sector capacity building, further education and training, public private partnerships and more recently in the social transformation sphere.

- GreenCape is a non-profit organisation that drives the widespread adoption of economically viable green economy solutions from South Africa. The team works with businesses, investors, academia and government to unlock the investment and employment potential of green technologies and services, and to support a transition to a resilient green economy. GreenCape's vision is to create a thriving and prosperous Africa using green economy principles. Our aim is to be globally relevant in driving the uptake of green economy infrastructure solutions in the developing world context.

## About COP26

- Through its presidency of COP26, the UK is focusing on mobilising finance to achieve our climate goals. This means every company, every financial firm, every bank, insurer and investor will need to change. Countries need to manage the increasing impacts of climate change on their citizens' lives and they need the funding to do it. The UK is doubling our International Climate Finance commitment to help developing nations with £11.6 billion over the next five years up to 2025/2026. We want as many countries as possible to follow our lead and increase their commitment through to 2025. Find out more about the COP26 goals [here](#).

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## [Train collision with tree near Glencarse](#)

News story

Train collision with tree near Glencarse, Perthshire, 21 May 2021.



Damaged train at Stirling station after the accident

At around 16:47 hrs on 21 May 2021, a passenger train travelling from Perth to Dundee struck a fallen tree while travelling at about 63 mph (101 km/h) near Glencarse. The tree penetrated the windscreen causing injuries to the driver and damage to the cab.

We have undertaken a [preliminary examination](#) into the circumstances surrounding this incident. Having assessed the evidence which has been gathered to date, we have decided to publish a [safety digest](#).

The safety digest will be made available on our website in the next few weeks.

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## [One thousand probation officers recruited to protect the public](#)

- Probation Service recruits record 1,000 trainees in past year
- staffing boost will improve supervision of offenders and help cut crime
- further 1,500 to be recruited this year as services are unified

The 1,007 new recruits, a record number for a single year in the history of probation, will allow staff to keep an even closer eye on offenders, including the most dangerous, and prevent more people from becoming victims. That record is set to be smashed again this year, with a further 1,500 by March next year, thanks to an extra £310 million invested in the service over the last 2 years.

Probation officers supervise offenders leaving prison on licence and those serving community sentences. They protect the public by meeting regularly with offenders and ensuring they are complying with the conditions of their

release from prison or sentence and not committing crime. The use of location-tracking GPS tags and close work with the police helps them to do this. They also ensure offenders access services that reduce the risk of them committing more crime, including drug or alcohol treatment, accommodation and education.

Where offenders have been released from prison and breach their conditions or commit further offences, probation officers have the power to recall them back to prison, helping to cut crime and protect the public.

Increased staffing in the Probation Service means probation officers will be able to supervise fewer offenders, and be better able to use their professional skills and legal powers to help stop offenders from committing more crime.

Prisons and Probation Minister Alex Chalk said:

Probation officers are unsung crime fighters, sending offenders back to prison if they breach their licence conditions, and helping others turn their lives around so that they don't commit more crime.

These new recruits are a key part of our plan to make the country safer, alongside 20,000 more police officers, tougher sentences and the building of 18,000 new prison places.

Public safety will be boosted further later this month when the supervision of low and medium risk offenders comes back under public sector control, meaning that probation officers will be able to devote more time to the most high-risk offenders.

With reoffending accounting for around 80% of all recorded crime, these improvements to the service are designed to prevent thousands of people becoming victims each year and save some of the £18 billion annual cost of repeat offending.

As well as increasing the total number of probation officers in training, nearly 1 in 5 new recruits are from an ethnic minority, demonstrating that a crime-fighting career in the probation service is open and welcoming to all.

The Probation Service is working closely with experts in the charity sector who provide specialist services aimed at cutting crime. Last month it was announced that almost £200 million will be provided to charities and organisations across the country to deliver important services to help offenders turn their backs on crime.

If you are interested in finding out more about being a Probation Officer visit [www.traintobeaprobationofficer.com](http://www.traintobeaprobationofficer.com)



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## [How louts dumping litter on M6 were caught on Highways England CCTV](#)

The culprits were travelling northbound through Staffordshire when they decided to pull into an emergency area – designed to help motorists reach a place of safety in the event of an emergency – to empty food packets and other rubbish from bin bags.

But they failed to make a clean getaway thanks to eagle-eyed control room staff at Highways England who were watching them on CCTV.

The team quickly notified Central Motorway Police Group (CMPG) who intercepted the offending vehicle and escorted the culprits back to the emergency area to tidy up their mess.

### [fly tipping](#)

Highways England's senior network planner Frank Bird said:

This was a blatant and reckless abuse of one of our designated emergency areas which are there to help people in the event of just that, an emergency.

We watched the whole incident unfold on our CCTV system in our control room and then quickly passed it to the police who were able to stop the vehicle and escort them safely back to the emergency area to tidy up their mess.

We continue to work closely with our police colleagues who enforce issues like this and we'd remind people to take their litter home and dispose of it safely.

PC Nick James, from CMPG, was one of the officers that dealt with the hapless offenders. He said:

We're grateful to our colleagues at Highways England for their speedy notification of the incident and we quickly found the vehicle which was travelling on the M6. We were able to escort it back to the scene – roughly around a 40-mile round trip – so they could pick up their mess.

The rubbish was mainly things like takeaway wrappings and plastic bottles which can be easily recycled or disposed of safely at home. We reminded the culprits that stopping on a motorway to drop rubbish off isn't the smartest move, especially when they're being

watched on CCTV.

Along with a stern word in the ear of the culprits, their details will also be forwarded to Environmental Health officers for their information so should any future incidents occur there will be a recorded history.

Litter is a serious issue; it's unsightly as well as a risk to wildlife and the environment.

The RSPCA received 7,400 calls to report incidents of animals injured because of litter in 2018.

The incident – which took place on March 28 – is being used as a timely reminder about the dangers of littering which puts our workforce at risk when they have to go out and collect it.

And today Highways England is calling on drivers to 'be part of the pick' and join them in doing their bit to reduce litter levels on the nation's motorways as part of the Great British Spring Clean (28 May-13 June).

The Great British Spring Clean campaign takes place between 28 May and 13 June, however, Highways England picks litter throughout the year. Highways England is responsible for collecting litter on motorways and a very small number of A roads. Responsibility lies with local authorities on all other roads.

During last year's Great British Spring Clean Campaign, we collected 12,000 bags of litter from the network.

Highways England's Head of Customer and Operational Requirements Freda Rashdi said:

We're urging road users to save litter for the bin. Litter picking costs time and money and doing this diverts resources that could be used to improve the network. If people didn't drop litter in the first place it wouldn't need to be picked up. We also work with partners such as Keep Britain Tidy to improve our understanding of why people litter, and to prevent littering in the first place.

Get more information on the [Great British Spring Clean](#)

## **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.