

# Updated G20 Action Plan to support the global economy through Covid-19

News story

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak and fellow G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors agree an updated action plan to support the global economy through Covid-19.



During a meeting with G20 counterparts on Wednesday, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak brokered a series of new commitments in an [updated global action plan](#). These include landmark commitments such as:

- extending the Debt Service Suspension Initiative to June 2021 to help developing countries finance their coronavirus response and recovery programmes
- commitment to consider a further six-month extension to the Debt Service Suspension Initiative at the IMF and World Bank Group Spring Meetings in April 2021
- agreement in principle to a historic Common Framework for Future Debt Treatments to provide debt restructuring to vulnerable countries on a case by case basis – bringing together G20 and Paris Club official creditors for the first time
- supporting the World Bank Group's initiatives to make available \$16 billion of fast track financing for developing countries' access to COVID-19 tools, with the aim of supporting equitable and affordable access for all
- accelerating action to address longer-term global challenges including through harnessing new opportunities through the digital economy and potential for an environmentally sustainable and resilient recovery

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# A Sustainable Recovery for People and Planet

The coronavirus pandemic has presented us all with very many challenges.

But our recovery offers a chance to reshape the global economy.

By investing now, to reduce our emissions, build resilience, and adapt to climate change, we can create jobs and generate growth.

And at the same time, we can protect the planet for future generations.

The international community is integral to realising the potential of a green global recovery.

Countries, public financial institutions, business, and civil society, we must all work together towards building back greener.

On the 12th December, the UK and the UN Secretary General will co-host a summit on the 5th anniversary of the Paris agreement, alongside France, Chile and Italy.

And I invite world leaders to use this to announce ambitious nationally determined contributions.

To commit to long term strategies to get to net zero. And to launch adaptation plans.

And of course, to make enhanced commitments on international climate finance beyond 2020.

It's critical that donor countries deliver on their commitments. And that we collectively demonstrate progress to that totemic 100 billion dollar per year goal.

The UK is doubling its international climate finance to around 11.6 billion pounds over a five year period.

And I hope that many other donor countries will make similar commitments at the event in December.

The international financial system is going to be integral to delivering a green recovery.

The World Bank Group, and Regional Banks, have responded with speed and ambition to the pandemic, making over 200 billion dollars available over the coming year.

Now, I believe, we must clarify precisely how this funding will support a green, inclusive and resilient global recovery.

We need the leadership of the World Bank, and the IMF, and other financial institutions, in guiding countries to develop their recovery plans.

Your expertise and finance is going to be absolutely critical in helping climate-vulnerable countries build their resilience.

We have an opportunity to unite the world to meet shared challenges, at this pivotal moment in our shared history.

So, ahead of COP26, let's work together to make a green recovery a reality around the world.

Creating a prosperous and sustainable future for our children and grandchildren. We owe that to current and future generations.

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## [Christopher Pincher's speech to the District Councils' Network](#)

The first thing on my mind, of course, is the COVID emergency.

Councillors, local government officials, national government officials and MPs – everybody has had a pretty torrid time over the past eight or nine months trying to grapple with this emergency and serve the people as we were elected to do.

I am profoundly conscious that it has been a challenge for everyone both professionally and personally so I want to say, first of all, thank you to everybody for everything that you are doing and will continue to do to support your local communities.

There has been a huge amount of collaboration between national government and local government and it's resulted in some fantastic services to local people.

There's an essay by George Orwell which he wrote in 1941 called The Lion and the Unicorn in which he said that the country is coming together to face a deadly foe. And that's effectively what we had to do over the last eight or nine months during this unique emergency.

I hope you'll agree that government has done as much as it can to support local government through these trials, with £4.3 billion made available to local government to deal with the emergency.

If you take the local government, local businesses, local community funding in total, we've spent £27 billion to support local government.

## **Building**

In the years that come we need to rebuild our economy, we need to rebuild our communities, and we need to build back better.

We need to transform what we build. We've been pretty successful over the last 10 years with respect to housing.

We've built 1.5 million new homes – 240,000 of them last year.

The government's manifesto aim is to build 300,000 new homes each year by the middle of the decade to give people the opportunity to own their own home, as I said in the House of Commons just a few days ago, and also to protect an enhanced environment, increase biodiversity, and to protect our green spaces.

These are all crucial items on our agenda and we need your help to deliver them as you have been doing over the last ten or so years. Because the agenda is ambitious and the present planning system, we do not feel, can meet it.

That is why we're consulting on the local housing need and our white paper on planning reform.

They are two separate consultations. Let me give you a little bit of background as to why we're doing the first and then talk some more about why we're doing the second.

Local plans do not provide for the ambition we have – 300,000 new homes each year – nor enough to meet the demands of organisations and such as KPMG and Shelter, both of which say we need to be building north of 250,000 homes a year to deal with the housing challenges that we have.

So we have commissioned a consultation on the local housing need methodology.

It is a real consultation that closed just under two weeks ago on the 1st of October we will reflect very carefully on the feedback that we have received.

Fundamentally the initial driver, the first driver of need, must be affordability because there are parts of our country, not just in the south and the south east, where the affordability is low and people who want and need to live in a certain place and work in that place cannot afford to do so – cannot afford to buy or to rent – and we need to find ways of dealing with that.

We also need to make sure that we are building homes in the right places to meet our wider aspirations to level up the country.

## **Planning reform**

The longer-term proposals that we have tabled are for our planning reform.

Anybody that's been engaged in the planning process, and you have been more closely engaged than most, will recognise the present system is essentially

opaque, very difficult to navigate, is slow, and is analogue.

There is a lot of bumph to work your way through and we can improve on that massively in the digital age.

And that's why we've proposed a much more simple, straightforward approach to digitalised planning where we have map-based systems that local communities can see and get much more engaged with, so that they can feel more empowered about the design of their communities.

We want a system which is more productive and strategic and upfront rather than one which is rear-guard.

We want one as well which delivers infrastructure where it is needed upfront and in a way that local communities can really buy into.

Crucially, we want to make sure that the new system of planning engenders beautiful design where local communities have a real say in what their built environment is going to look like.

Right now, something like 3% of the local populations engage in the planning process. That can fall to something like 1% when it comes to the design of local plans.

So you we want a system which is much more engaging much more democratically empowering and gives communities a real opportunity to play a role in the design of their environments with the right infrastructure to support it, so we're not building estate after estate after estate, but we are place making.

It's a real challenge. I welcome and value the input that you and your colleagues will provide because to get this right we cannot simply, from Westminster, snap our fingers, legislate and say 'we have said so, make it so.'

The 1947 act, when it was introduced, took something like 15 to 18 years to fully roll out. The 1990 act took a similar amount of time. 4 in 11 changes still haven't been fully rolled out.

If we're going to make this work, we're not talking about legislative change. We're talking about systemic and cultural change about the way we do planning.

And I say all that because the consultation on our white paper is not the end of the process, it's the start.

There will be lots of opportunities for people to get involved, for stakeholders to provide their thoughts on how we can make the new planning system work well and be rolled out quickly.

I invite you and your colleagues to get involved in that challenge, support us, and keep doing what you do so well, which is build out for the 21st century.

So we've got a country we can be proud of – so that we've got better and more sustainable homes in which people and communities can live and enjoy.

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## [Border Force seizes 30 kilos of cocaine at Dover](#)

News story

Border Force officers have prevented an attempt to smuggle cocaine into the UK hidden in a lorry carrying a load of furniture.



The seizure was made on Sunday, 11 October, when officers stopped a Lithuanian registered lorry at Dover's Eastern Docks.

They searched the vehicle and found an estimated 25 kilos of cocaine in a box which had been hidden amongst the furniture, and a further five kilos in the vehicle's cab. The drugs had a potential street value of around £2.5 million and the investigation was referred to the National Crime Agency (NCA).

Chris Philp, Minister for Immigration Compliance and the Courts, said:

Class A drugs like cocaine destroy lives so I'm very pleased this seizure has been made as it has prevented this lethal cargo from reaching our streets.

Working with our partners at the NCA we will continue to do all we can to arrest and prosecute those involved in drug smuggling.

We are also grateful for the ongoing close cooperation we have with the Lithuanian authorities in tackling serious crime.

Lithuanian national Ernestas Urbonas, 27, of no fixed UK address, was charged with the attempted importation of a Class A drug. He appeared at Maidstone

Magistrates Court yesterday (13 October) and was remanded in custody until his next appearance at Canterbury Crown Court on 9 November.

Border Force officers use hi-tech search equipment to combat immigration crime and detect banned and restricted goods that smugglers attempt to bring into the country.

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## [UK and Qatar commit to a stronger defence relationship](#)

During a tour of the base, which is already home to the UK-Qatari joint Typhoon squadron, the two Defence Ministers signed a Statement of Intent setting out how the UK will offer a British base for the Qatari Emiri Air Force's (QEAF) recently acquired nine Hawk aircraft.

The QEAF's latest acquisition opens doors for a potential new UK-Qatari Hawk squadron, which would further deepen the UK's defence relationship with Qatar and contribute to the security and stability of the Middle East.

Qatar and the UK work closely together to protect that stability. The details of the latest strike by RAF Reaper unmanned aircraft against Daesh have also been released today by the Ministry of Defence that were co-ordinated by the RAF's No.83 Expeditionary Air Group in Al Udeid, Qatar.

### **Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:**

Today we mark the start of an exciting new chapter in the longstanding defence relationship between the UK and Qatar, reinforcing and strengthening the bonds our Armed Forces already share.

Building upon the success of our joint Typhoon squadron, this new era of collaboration will deliver prosperity and security benefits for both our nations.

The Defence Secretary and His Excellency Dr Khalid bin Mohamed Al Attiyah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs in Qatar, also officially opened the joint Typhoon squadron (12 Squadron) headquarters during their visit to RAF Coningsby today.

12 Squadron is the UK's first joint squadron since World War Two, and its new headquarters will allow pilots and air crews from both air forces to train

together in state-of-the-art facilities.

Built in under 60 weeks by a team of over 30 sub-contractors from both national and local supply chains, it is expected that the basing of a new Hawk squadron will bring similar benefits to the UK.

Since commencing flying as a joint squadron in June 2020, 12 Squadron have achieved several milestones including training with heavy weapons and taking part in an exercise at sea alongside the Royal Navy.

The Statement of Intent will build on this work by providing the RAF with access to increased flying hours, giving the QEAF access to world-class RAF accredited training, and delivering long-term investment in infrastructure and training facilities to the RAF.

This partnership will also enable the two nations to continue discussions to establish a suitable air-to-air refuelling support solution for Qatar, which would see the RAF and QEAF further aligned on Multi Role Tanker Transport capability.

Today's event builds upon the Defence Secretary's talks with HE Dr Khalid during his visit to Qatar in September, where he also toured the Combined Air Operations Centre in Al Udeid, where strikes are coordinated from as part of Operation Shader.