

[How the UK is helping connect off-grid communities across Africa](#)

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[Africa Minister backs trade and investment opportunities in Angola](#)

Minister for Africa Andrew Stephenson has visited Angola to see how the UK is helping generate trade and investment for both African and British businesses.

The visit comes ahead of the [UK-Africa Investment Summit](#), held in London on 20 January 2020, which will bring together UK and African leaders, businesses, and entrepreneurs to help drive investment, jobs and growth.

Minister Stephenson met Minister for Finance, Vera Daves, and the Governor of the Central Bank of Angola, Jose de Lima Massano, during his two-day trip to Angola, Africa's third largest economy, which ended on Wednesday (January 8, 2020).

He also met the leaders of UK businesses operating in Angola such as Glasgow-based [Aggreko](#), which supplies power generators, and is exploring supplying solar energy powered equipment in the country. The Minister discussed with Aggreko the huge economic potential of Angola, and the UK's commitment to investing in its future.

The Minister also highlighted how he wants to make it easier for African businesses to make the most of trade and investment opportunities, which the UK has to offer, particularly with the City of London as a global financial gateway for investment and expertise.

Following his visit, Minister for Africa Andrew Stephenson said:

Africa is home to eight of the 15 fastest growing economies in the world, according to the latest estimates, and we want the UK to be the investment partner of choice for African nations.

I am proud UK businesses such as Aggreko are leading the way to invest in Africa, improving access to clean energy and power, and helping to drive growth and create jobs.

The UK-Africa Investment Summit in London will build lasting partnerships that will deliver more investment, jobs and growth to create a prosperous future for people and businesses in African countries and the UK.

John Lewis, Aggreko's Managing Director, Africa said:

We are looking forward to the UK-Africa Investment Summit and hope that it helps showcase Britain's world leading expertise on tech and innovation. We are already seeing strong demand for our solutions across Africa and the summit can only encourage closer trading partnerships there.

At Aggreko, innovation is at the heart of everything we do. We are evolving both our technology and commercial offerings to make sure we are best positioned to provide our customers with the solutions that best fit their needs.

Following the visit, Mr Stephenson will travel to Namibia to discuss trade and investment links as the UK remains one of Namibia's strongest trading partners.

Minister Stephenson will visit the [Meat Corporation of Namibia](#) abattoir and product packaging plant. Namibian beef represents 80% of Namibia's exports and 22% of this comes to the UK.

[2019 Inventory of UK Radioactive Waste published](#)

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[Great Yarmouth £40m tidal defence project gets underway](#)

Environment Minister Rebecca Pow MP and Environment Agency Chair, Emma Howard Boyd, joined local partners to mark the start of work on this major scheme which will see thousands of homes and businesses better protected from tidal flooding for decades to come.

The work, which is expected to complete next year, will upgrade the level of protection from tidal flooding to more than 4,500 homes and businesses in the local area. The refurbishment works will extend the working life of the existing defences, and the new innovative construction methods being used will significantly reduce the carbon footprint of the project.

Great Yarmouth has a history of flooding, during the 1953 east coast tidal surge, the tidal river defences in the town were breached in several places resulting in a tragic loss of life.

More recently, in December 2013, approximately 9,000 people were urged to evacuate their homes as a result of the highest ever recorded tide in Great Yarmouth.

This major project will see 46 flood defence walls refurbished at locations across the town using an innovative technique that will extend their lifespan by up to 30 years.

The refurbishment follows on from an initial five-year phase of work which included the use of a specialised dam to inspect and repair the steel sheet piles that form the flood walls.

Environment Minister, Rebecca Pow, said:

I'm delighted to be here to witness the start of work on this vital project which will see homes and businesses in Great Yarmouth better protected from flooding for decades to come.

This innovative scheme, which has received over £32 million of government funding and involves refurbishing 4 kilometres of flood defence walls across the town, will not only provide greater peace of mind to local residents but will also help secure jobs and boost economic opportunities for the town both now and into the future.

Emma Howard Boyd, Chair of the Environment Agency said:

This important project will upgrade over 4km of coastal defences for Great Yarmouth and the surrounding area, better protecting over 4,500 homes and businesses from tidal flooding.

This scheme is a prime example of how we are taking a long-term collaborative approach to tackling both the causes and the impacts of the climate emergency, ensuring that communities, homes and infrastructure are more resilient to the additional risks that the future will bring.

The £40.3 million investment, plus £6.2 million for ongoing maintenance, has come from a range of sources including £32.4 million provided by central government.

Partnership contributions have come from New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, £8.2 million through the Growth Deal programme, and £2.8 million from the Anglian Eastern Regional Flood & Coastal Committee.

Norfolk County Council and Great Yarmouth Borough Council have also contributed towards the project and local quayside businesses are supporting through contributions and the provision of compound space.

This project forms part of the Environment Agency's £2.6bn investment in flood and coastal defences, spanning from 2015-2021, which will better protect over 300,000 homes from the risk of flooding.

Cllr Carl Smith, leader of Great Yarmouth Borough Council, said:

The River Yare Tidal Defences are a huge benefit to everyone who lives in, works in and visits our borough, reducing flood risk to our homes, workplaces, and the highways and other vital infrastructure that we use every day, better protecting communities and helping the borough to realise its full economic potential.

Together with the Environment Agency and local businesses, the borough council has played an instrumental role over the years in securing this crucial and most welcome investment from multiple sources, helping with lobbying and developing the robust business case. I'm pleased that work is under way on the second phase.

Chair of the Anglia Eastern RFCC, Paul Hayden OBE, said:

Our £2.8m contribution to these works comes from a Local Levy collected across Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Southend and Thurrock, and this investment is a demonstration of our commitment to protecting homes, jobs and businesses, and in encouraging further

economic investment in the town.

Doug Field, chair of New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, said:

This project is a great example of how partnership working can deliver projects which have a real impact on our people, places and economy.

Great Yarmouth is a vital part of our all-energy coast. It sits at the centre of the world's largest market for offshore wind and is of huge strategic importance to our region.

By protecting homes and businesses and creating a safe environment for more to be created, these sea defences will allow the town to reach its potential as a key contributor to our economy.

Cllr Andrew Proctor, Leader of Norfolk County Council said:

This refurbishment work will help to safeguard the future prosperity of Great Yarmouth. This is an important funding partnership which we are happy to support.

[Work begins on second emptying machine at Sellafield waste silo](#)

Work has begun to install the second of three emptying machines at Sellafield's Magnox Swarf Storage Silo.

The first piece of the 350-tonne machine – a transfer tunnel – was lifted into the building last month.

[Work begins on second emptying machine at the Magnox Swarf Storage Silo](#)

The silo contains an estimated 60,000 items of intermediate level nuclear waste in 22 chambers.

It was built in the 1960s without a plan for how it would be emptied.

Engineers have been working for decades to design, build, and install three

machines to do the job.

One is fully built, the second is now under construction, and a third will follow.

Waste retrievals are scheduled to start later this year.

By 2024, all three machines should be up and running. Retrievals are set to be completed by 2045.

Decommissioning the building is one of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority's priority programmes.

Chris Halliwell, head of the Magnox Swarf Storage Silo for Sellafield Ltd, said:

This is another milestone on the journey to tackling our biggest challenge.

It's a statement of our intent to press on with the job as quickly and safely as we can.

The machines will move over the top of the building's 16-metre deep chambers on rails.

Once in place over a chamber, it will lock on and tooling will reach in to pull up the waste inside.

The material will be placed in boxes and dispatched out of the building via the transfer tunnel.

The boxes will then be transferred to a new modern storage building on the Sellafield site.

The exact contents of the silo are unknown because record keeping at the time was patchy.

The bulk of its inventory is radioactive scrap metal and contaminated engineering debris.