

# Housing Minister unveils £30m boost for 'Construction Corridor'

- Today Housing Minister unveils £30 million boost for this 'Construction Corridor'
- Government funding to boost output in Yorkshire factory to 5,000 homes per year
- Investment will promote modern methods of home building in the 'Construction Corridor' in the North of England

The government is creating the industry that will deliver Carbon Free Homes, and an industry that will create jobs & career opportunities for a new workforce.

Yorkshire, as part of the 'Construction Corridor', is getting a £30 million boost from government going to top construction firms ilke Homes, Housing Minister Esther McVey has announced.

The money is part of government's drive to make the North of England the world-leader in the creation of modern, green homes.

Homes England will provide the funding to turbo-charge production at their factory in Knaresborough, North Yorkshire.

By next year, 2,000 modular homes will roll off ilke Homes' production line, rising to 5,000 homes a year within the next 5 years – making ilke Homes a top 10 UK housebuilder.

Because ilke Homes' factory manufactures homes using precision engineering, they are more energy efficient than traditional homes, halving energy costs compared to the average UK property – creating housing that's good for the planet and good for the pocket.

A factory environment also allows ilke Homes to ensure a high-level of quality and consistency is guaranteed for investors, developers and residents.

The result is homes that outperform those built traditionally, with ilke's homes proven to be 100% more energy efficient than the average UK home. The investment from government housing agency Homes England will help drive these improvements further by allowing ilke Homes to scale up its operation.

Housing Minister Esther McVey MP said:

The North of England has the potential to lead the world in the modern methods of construction that are transforming home building. An industry that when matured would be worth £40 billion a year and provide up to 80,000 jobs. We need to fully embrace this.

This £30 million investment in ilke Homes is a significant step forwards in the development of the 'Construction Corridor' – a new hub in the North that is front and centre of building the homes we need.

It's vital we invest in new technology to get Britain building. Homes built using modern methods can be of higher quality, greener and built to last.

Today's investment builds on an announcement last week by Ms McVey that government wants to create a centre of excellence in the north for Modern Methods of Construction to help speed-up house building to meet its target of 300,000 new homes being delivered each year by the mid-2020s.

Modern Methods of Construction are a combination of offsite manufacturing and onsite techniques that provide alternatives to traditional house building, allowing homes to be built quickly, be more energy efficient and better designed. It can deliver high-quality housing at pace. By manufacturing offsite, the precision-engineered homes produced by ilke Homes are delivered twice as fast as traditional methods of construction – while creating 90% less waste.

Dave Sheridan, Executive Chairman at ilke Homes, said:

This deal is testament to the dynamic approach Homes England is taking to address structural issues within our housing and construction industries.

The funding will bring in further private capital, creating hundreds more skilled jobs allowing us to build more homes more quickly for first-time buyers.

We want to continue driving efficiency, quality and sustainability within the housebuilding industry and see this as a fantastic signal to others wishing to do the same.

The £30 million is being allocated from the Home Building Fund, a £4.5 billion fund delivered by government housing agency Homes England.

Nick Walkley, Chief Executive at Homes England, said:

Our role is to be bold and take steps to speed up the delivery of homes across the country and there is huge, untapped potential to unleash by creating more capacity in offsite manufacturing.

Modern methods of construction offer enormous benefits to housebuilding and this deal will have a transformational effect on ilke Homes' production.

---

## [New parking code could give motorists 10-minute grace period in private car parks](#)

### Help us improve GOV.UK

To help us improve GOV.UK, we'd like to know more about your visit today. We'll send you a link to a feedback form. It will take only 2 minutes to fill in. Don't worry we won't send you spam or share your email address with anyone.

Email address

Send me the survey

---

## [UK and Australia team up to use space technology to protect Pacific from climate change and natural disasters](#)

The UK Space Agency is looking for project ideas, to be delivered through UK aid, that use the data collected by satellites to improve decision-making for disaster risk reduction, ocean monitoring, mangrove mapping and maritime management.

This will also see Australia's national science agency, CSIRO, provide match-funding and invite UK organisations and other international partners to work with them to scope projects designed to deliver sustainable benefits to Small Island Developing States in the Pacific.

The work will build on those systems already under way to help prevent and plan for disasters that are a consequence of rising sea levels and climate change.

This follows a recent statement of intent between the [UK Space Agency and Australian Space Agency to establish a 'Space Bridge'](#) to increase strategic collaboration and lay the foundations for swift negotiations for space-related opportunities under any potential future trading arrangements.

Science Minister Chris Skidmore said:

Increasing our investment in space technology demonstrates our determination to become a global science superpower, forming new collaborations with countries across the globe.

We were the first major country to sign our commitment to net zero carbon emissions by 2050 into law, and next year the UK will be hosting the UN's climate conference, COP26.

Space has a crucial and expanding role as a green technology, providing vital data on earth observation and climate conditions, which helps to predict the impact of climate change.

We are world leading in our expertise in satellite technology, and are seeking to become the first country in Europe which will be able to perform both horizontal and vertical launches into space – this fund expands on our growing commitment to become one of the world's leading space nations.

One UK space company already having an impact is Surrey Satellite Technology Limited, which launched its [NovaSAR-1 satellite](#) last year, part-funded by the UK Space Agency.

The satellite uses Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) to provide images day and night and see through cloud cover, making it particularly valuable for Pacific small island states which are frequently covered by clouds.

Artist impression of NovaSAR – Credit: SSTL

CSIRO Chief Executive Larry Marshall said:

As Australia's national science agency, CSIRO's purpose is to solve the greatest challenges using innovative science and technology, like addressing the impacts of a changing climate.

Building on CSIRO's 75-year history in space, through this project we are aiming to use cutting-edge Earth observation technology to co-design projects with our Pacific Island neighbours focused on managing threats like natural disasters.

The UK and Australia will build on this existing collaboration and improve access to services based on radar satellite data for countries in the Pacific region that need them most.

This is one part of a wider call for projects from the UK Space Agency's International Partnership Programme (IPP), with up to £8 million in new funding available to support collaborations between UK space experts and

developing countries and emerging markets, to boost sustainable development through satellite-enabled services.

In addition to the new collaboration with Australia, this call invites applications for projects to address the growing need for developing countries around the world to build resilience to the effects of climate change. This will help forge new partnerships with countries and understand their needs ahead of a follow-on funding call to underpin operational capabilities.

Chris Lee, the UK Space Agency's Chief Scientist and Head of Sustainable Development, said:

IPP is about developing trusted partnerships across government, industry, academia and local communities. Our projects make real and practical differences to the lives of citizens, building skills and expertise across the partnership.

Our own economy gains more than £2 for every £1 invested in these projects and I'm delighted that we continue to foster space-enabled capacity and services for countries that need them most.

IPP is already supporting projects in 44 countries across the world, which are tackling a wide range of challenges, including deforestation, food security and disaster resilience.

Funded by the Global Challenges Research Fund it is the world's largest space for sustainable development programme having provided £128 million of grant funding for 33 projects, involving 120 UK organisations and 147 international organisations since 2016.

One of these projects, led by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research and with support from UK partners including the Satellite Applications Catapult and the Met Office, is using satellite remote sensing technology to build climate resilience and enhance decision making for government teams in Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

Satellite image of Vanuatu – Credit: ESA

All IPP projects are match-funded by consortium members and international partners to ensure maximum value for money. The Programme is fully compliant with Official Development Assistance (ODA), with the Independent Commission for Aid Impact recently reporting that the UK Space Agency had developed robust procedures for ensuring ODA eligibility and was thorough in its ODA compliance screening.

IPP was recently recognised by Space & Satellite Professionals International in the [Better Satellite World Awards](#). Evidence shows that space-based solutions can be [twice as cost effective as ground-based solutions for](#)

[ensuring disaster resilience.](#)

---

## Malawi hosts Media Freedom and Democracy Conference

Media representatives from Malawi and neighbouring countries (Zambia, Mozambique and Tanzania) will come together in Malawi's Capital City, Lilongwe from 4th to 6th November 2019 to discuss the state of and strategies for fostering freedom expression in order to strengthen democracy in the sub region.

The conference has been organised by the British High Commission in Lilongwe in conjunction with Media Institute of Southern Africa (Misa) Malawi Chapter. The conference builds on the momentum from the [Global Conference for Media Freedom](#) at Printworks in London on 10-11 July 2019. The Conference brought together representatives from governments, civil society and the media in the first ever Ministerial gathering of its kind. Over 60 Ministers and 1500 delegates from 100 countries participated.

Delegates to the Lilongwe conference will discuss a number of themes ranging from media regulation, the bane of fake news and disinformation sweeping across the world and how to professionally report sensitive issues such as elections in order to sustain democracy, good governance and rule of law in their respective countries.

The conference will be facilitated by seasoned local media gurus and foreign trainers and mentors from the Thomson Foundation, BBC and Reporters Without Borders. There will also be group of media activists and practitioners from Namibia, currently ranked first on Media Freedom Index in Africa, to inspire and share notes with their colleagues from the region, including Malawi.

### **The British High Commissioner to Malawi, Ms Holly Tett, said:**

We are really delighted to have partnered Misa Malawi to bring together these inspirational voices and media freedom advocates to discuss how the media can step up its role of building healthier and well-informed democratic societies in both Malawi and neighbouring countries, especially at a time when we are seeing a new and dangerous global trend of journalists being targeted simply for doing their jobs.

I think we have a lot to learn from each other on strategies to improve the media operating environments in our countries, and this is exactly what these delegates will do in the next three days, with inspiration and mentorships from the BBC, Thomson Foundation

and others. The UK remains committed to support efforts that shine the spotlight on media freedom and improving capacity and safety of journalists and media workers globally.

**Chairperson of Misa Malawi (co-organisers of the conference), Ms Teresa Ndanga said:**

I am excited that MISA Malawi is co-hosting this regional conference. The conference is very important and gives us a rare opportunity to reflect on the state of democracy and media freedom and freedom of expression in Malawi and the region. United we stand and divided we fall. I believe the conference will strengthen ties and networking amongst media freedom and freedom of expression advocates in the region. Such linkages are critical for stakeholders to speak with one voice and effectively counter efforts to suppress dissent and critical voices in the region.

**One of the delegates from Tanzania, Salome Kitomari, said:**

This conference is relevant, appropriate, and it has come at a right time, given the hostile political environment and oppressive legal framework that the media in Tanzania operate in. I look forward to discussing with colleagues how regional professional organisations can advocate for freedom of expression by raising voices on the issues happening in a particular country; how innovation that is going on all over the world can best be used to improve journalism and make it sustainable.

I hope we can also discuss strategies for increasing women presentation in the news room. Right now most news rooms are man's world but we need women to have seat on editorial board meetings and shape everyday news agenda.

**Another delegate, Mukosha Funga, who is an investigative journalist from Zambia said:**

As a Zambian investigative journalist, I'm always looking forward to opportunities such as the Regional Conference on Media Freedom and Democracy so that I can network with like-minded individuals and brainstorm solutions to the shared problems that we face such as draconian laws. This conference is a mine of knowledge on new ways of not only effectively communicating the truth but also effectively protecting our space to find and speak it.

The UK has a long history of a vibrant and independent media, underpinning

the values of our democracy. The UK has long supported media freedom, both at home and overseas and in 2018 launched the Media Freedom Campaign to shine a global spotlight on media freedom and increase the cost to those abusing it.

Through its network of posts, the UK is working with media organisations and civil society around the world to deliver projects to protect and enable journalists, including through the FCO's Magna Carta Fund for Democracy and Human Rights and the cross-Whitehall Conflict, Security and Stability Fund (CSSF).

---

## [Disability Confident scheme leads to inclusive workforce](#)

More than 29,000 disabled benefit claimants have been supported to start their own business through government funding, new figures show.

This represents almost a quarter of all total start-ups funded by the New Enterprise Allowance, which launched 8 years ago to help unemployed people become their own boss as a route off benefits.

The New Enterprise Allowance offers budding entrepreneurs a cash injection of up to £25,000 for their business idea, as well as the support of a personal business mentor and weekly living allowance.

The figures come as we mark the third anniversary of the Disability Confident scheme, which was created to provide employers with the skills and confidence they need to attract, recruit, retain and develop disabled people in the workplace.

Today the Secretary of State has confirmed a series of changes to the scheme to help businesses achieve their goal of workplace inclusivity, including a new requirement for leading Disability Confident employers to practice what they preach and ensure disabled people are on their payroll.

Work and Pensions Secretary Thérèse Coffey said:

I want to ensure we live in a fair society in which disabled people are empowered to get on in their chosen career. These figures show the huge progress being made under this government to help them realise their aspirations.

While we have made great gains so far, today I am calling on all businesses to take a look at their record on disability employment and think about what they can do to help create a more equal Britain.



Thousands of businesses – including major employers such as Sainsbury's and GlaxoSmithKline – have already signed up to the scheme.

Changes being rolled out imminently include requiring Disability Confident Leader businesses to publicly report on their disability employment using a Voluntary Reporting Framework and extending membership for new signups to 3 years, and changing the terms of membership to make it explicit senior members must employ disabled people.

Minister for Disabled People Justin Tomlinson said:

Disability Confident and the success of the New Enterprise Allowance scheme reflect our bold commitment to get one million more disabled people into work by 2027.

Smart employers recognise that disabled people can bring a wealth of skills and talents to an organisation – and they're making sure they're not missing out.

To date 15,000 businesses have joined Disability Confident.

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 3267 5106

Follow DWP on: