

# £12 million boost for youth projects

- Package includes up to £7 million towards positive youth activities and £5 million for the #iwill Fund
- Follows recent announcement of a £500 million long-term commitment towards youth services

Youth projects across the country will receive a £12 million boost as part of the Government's commitment to help young people thrive and level up opportunities, Culture Secretary Nicky Morgan announced today.

The investment includes up to £7 million for a Youth Accelerator Fund that will expand existing successful projects, and address urgent needs in the youth sector by delivering extra sessions in youth clubs, and promoting positive activities in sport and the arts to help young people develop skills and contribute to their communities.

Young people will play a key role in decisions over funding allocation by working directly with policy makers to ensure activities properly meet their needs.

A further £5 million of Government funding will also be invested in the [#iwill Fund](#) to encourage 10 to 20 year olds to take part in social action, such as volunteering in their communities by funding groups delivering these programmes.

Jointly funded by Government and the National Lottery Community Fund, the #iwill Fund has created over 500,000 opportunities for young people since it was launched in 2016.

The funding boost is additional investment and comes after the Chancellor recently announced a new [£500 million Youth Investment Fund](#) for the five years from April 2020, to give young people somewhere to go, something positive to do and someone to speak to.

Nicky Morgan, Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport said:

I have big ambitions for what this government can achieve for young people – inspiring them to grow in confidence and employability, building their character and resilience, while transforming life chances through sports and the arts.

We will use this immediate investment to benefit young people in as many local areas as possible. This will pave the way for the ambitious, long-term infrastructure plans for our youth services that we will deliver over the next five years – led by the views of young people and those that work with them.

If we wish to use all the great talent in our country it is vital

that we offer opportunities to our next generation, not just in school but outside the school day.

Half of the £500 million Youth Investment Fund will be used to fund new youth centres, refurbish existing facilities and create more mobile clubs. The remainder will be invested in a range of activities that teach important life skills, such as digital skills, culture, sport and social action as well as investment in the youth work profession so young people have a trusted person they can turn to.

This will all be underpinned by the establishment of new Local Youth Partnerships across the country, designed to effectively coordinate and sustain local youth activities.

As part of the Government's commitment to the youth sector, it is investing £500,000 this year in a new Youth Worker Bursary Fund to attract youth workers from a variety of backgrounds. Hundreds of students, who otherwise would not be able to pay the fees, will be given places on approved level 2 and level 3 youth worker qualifications.

In order to ensure those working with young people are given the highest quality support and guidance, the Government is also working with the National Youth Agency to renew the entry level qualifications (levels 2 and 3) for youth work, introducing a level 3 youth work apprenticeship and carrying out a full review of the youth work curriculum.

ENDS

### **Notes to Editors**

The Youth Accelerator Fund will be divided between grants for youth projects across England and a place based fund which will be delivered in partnership with DCMS arm's length bodies.

The local community fund will demonstrate how coordinating provision across a range of sectors – such as the arts, sports and creative industries – can have a positive impact on young people in a specific location. Part of this funding will go directly towards existing projects, which are already delivering excellent programmes for young people, through for example, Sport England.

The #iwill Fund was launched in September 2016. To date it has:

Supported the Scouts and Guides to join forces and open new units across the country, extending their reach and tackling historic waiting lists;

Enabled 20,000 more disadvantaged young people to start the Duke of Edinburgh scheme;

Developed social action in education, health, social care and environmental work. Working together with the Pears Foundation this includes working with 28 NHS Trusts to bring more young volunteers into health care as part of last

year's NHS at 70 celebrations.

Ensured that 40% of those taking part are from the 20% more deprived deciles.

The Youth Investment Fund will cost £500 million over five years, including £68 million in 2020/21. It consists equally of £250 million capital and £250 million resource spending.

The Youth Investment Fund is expected to attract match funding from private, local authority and civil society sources in the range of hundreds of millions. The location of the youth centres will be determined through a process run by DCMS.

New and refurbished youth centres need constructive and high quality activities. This investment will deliver a huge range of universal, open access activities and youth services including in digital skills, arts and culture, sports, and social action.

The Government is supporting young people by investing in more services. Since the launch of the Civil Society Strategy in August 2018 it:

Continues to deliver the National Citizen Service, with more than 100,000 young people in the past year alone benefiting from taking part in this youth programme that helps build a more responsible, more cohesive and more engaged society.

Has invested £5 million to create over 10,000 new places in uniformed youth groups such as Fire Cadets and Scouts, for young people in disadvantaged areas.

Has launched a [consultation](#) as part of a review on the statutory guidance placed on local authorities to provide appropriate local services to improve young people's wellbeing.

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## [The security situation in north east Syria remains volatile](#)

The UK welcomes the fact that the US-brokered ceasefire is holding in north-east Syria and that the fighting appears to be over. We note the agreement announced on Tuesday by Presidents Putin and Erdogan that this ceasefire is now permanent and the subsequent announcement statement from the Turkish Ministry of Defence that they see no need for further operations.

In that context, let me say that we call on Turkey, as all actors in this Syrian conflict, to comply with the obligations towards civilians under international humanitarian law.

We will be looking very closely at the details and implementation of the agreements announced, including its impact on governance and the local population.

The security situation in the north-east remains volatile. Military developments have led to 180,000 people displaced, 80,000 of whom are children, and over 10,000 have fled to Iraq. A number of international aid workers felt compelled to leave, which has had a serious impact on operations. It is essential that humanitarian actors have unrestricted access to areas where people continue to be in need.

We hope that these displaced people will soon be able to return to their homes safely and that damage caused to critical infrastructure is swiftly repaired.

Mr President, on 16 October, this Council agreed press elements expressing our collective concern about the impact of recent developments on the humanitarian situation and the possible resurgence of Daesh. The Sochi agreement has not alleviated our concern. It is imperative that the Council is kept informed of the humanitarian situation, including in IDP camps, as well as on the threat posed by Daesh.

We note the return of regime forces to areas of north-east Syria, following the agreement between the SDF and Damascus. Given the appalling record of the regime's security forces elsewhere, the behaviour of these forces is something we will monitor very closely.

We continue to support the rights of Syrian refugees to return to their homes when it is considered safe to do so. But we would have serious concerns about any attempt to force refugees to return to Syria against their will.

Mr President, any returns must be voluntary and in line with UNHCR principles. Any attempt at deliberate demographic change would be unacceptable.

Mr President, the United Kingdom is one of the largest donors to the humanitarian needs of Syrians, and we do so throughout Syria, and in its neighbours. There is no politicisation in our provision of life-saving support. But as we and our European Union partners have previously made clear, we will not provide stabilisation or development assistance in areas where the rights of local populations are ignored.

All of these concerns mean that the role of the United Nations has a much more important in north-east Syria, particularly given the difficulties being faced by other humanitarian agencies. To allow humanitarian agencies to prepare, plan and respond, we would welcome clarity about how the United Nations plans to scale up its response.

Assistant Secretary-General Mueller made clear the need for the renewal of the cross-border aid resolution, 2449. And I'd also like to acknowledge Madame Marcaillou's assessment and depiction of the scale of the challenge. And as UNMAS seeks to step up its efforts, we will need and we expect to see

the regime cooperating fully and allowing access.

Mr President, we cannot let events elsewhere in Syria distract us from the dire humanitarian situation which persists in Idlib. We were extremely concerned to learn of the resumption of airstrikes and shelling last week.

Since the beginning of May, let us remember that over 1,000 civilians have been killed, including more than 500 women and children, and over 688,000 people have been forced to leave their homes. So we urge all parties to respect the ceasefire agreed on 31 August. And we look forward to the Board of Inquiry's investigation into the appalling attacks in Idlib and its subsequent update to this Council.

The United Kingdom would once again like to welcome the first meeting of the Constitutional Committee next week. This is a momentous occasion. Mr Pedersen has the United Kingdom's full backing.

A political process in line with Security Council Resolution 2254 is crucial to peace in Syria. The Syrian people have suffered through nine years of conflict and, as events in Idlib and the north-east testify, that suffering is not over.

Mr President, the Constitutional Committee is an opportunity for Syrians from all sides to sit down, to grapple with the real issues which have caused the conflict. It is an important signal. But it must more than that. It must be the start of real, genuine change. That will require serious engagement and commitment from all participants to succeed. Unless the regime realises that its actions have been a fundamental reason for the conflict, nothing will be achieved. We call on the regime representatives to demonstrate that at the upcoming first meeting.

Thank you, Mr President.

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## [Keeping peace in a changing backdrop in Sudan and South Sudan](#)

Thank you, Mr President. We hope to see both governments seize the opportunities this offers for forging a lasting and comprehensive peace in Abyei, Blue Nile and South Kordofan. We are therefore encouraged by the recent talks between the governments of Sudan and South Sudan and express our hope that this momentum in bilateral relations will continue. A strengthened dialogue is key to securing a lasting resolution to the situation in Abyei.

We remain concerned that armed forces from both sides continue to occupy the safety militarized border zone. We therefore commend the recent commitment by both governments to withdraw all forces from this zone and urge swift

implementation of this commitment.

Mr President, the UK welcomes the first round of preliminary peace talks between the government of Sudan and the armed movements. We encourage all parties to return to talks on 21 November, ready to engage constructively and without preconditions.

We also welcome the government of Sudan's moves to remove bureaucratic impediments on humanitarian actors. We hope this decision will be implemented in full, enabling unfettered humanitarian access across Sudan, including in Abyei and the two areas.

Mr President, against this changing backdrop, we welcome the continuing progress outlined in the Secretary-General's report at the mission level, including on human rights and judicial capacity-building. However, we recognise the persistent operational challenges the mission faces, including delays in issuing visas and entry clearances for mission assets. We regret that the civilian deputy head of mission has not yet been deployed, given the importance of this role in supporting progress on the political track.

Like others around the table, we commend the government of Ethiopia for its contribution to UNISFA. We condemn all attacks on mission personnel and reiterate our condolences to the government of Ethiopia and the family of the peacekeeper who lost his life on 16 July.

Mr President, as the security situation in Abyei remains fragile with an increasing criminality and sporadic presence of armed elements, we share the Secretary-General's assessment that UNISFA continues to have a vital role in maintaining stability. This council should ensure the mission is adequately resourced to deliver its mandate, including through strengthened civilian and police capabilities. This is vital if Abyei and the two areas are to benefit from the opportunities for peace created by recent political developments at the national level.

Thank you, Mr President.

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## [Response to ONS engagement on adjustment of migration statistics](#)

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## [Latest phase of work on major Norfolk chalk stream completed](#)

The latest phase of a 19-year project to restore part of the River Wensum has just finished, and it is hoped this will enhance the habitat and improve fish populations.

The River Wensum Restoration Strategy began in 2008, in partnership with the [Environment Agency](#), [Natural England](#) and the [Water Management Alliance](#), to restore the river and return it to a favourable ecological condition.

In 2009 the river was classified as 'poor' and one of the reasons for this was the physical modifications made to the river as a result of past drainage schemes.

The project, which is due to be completed by 2027, is looking to address these modifications and create a more naturally functioning river.

The latest phase of the project, which ran from July to October, restored a 1.4km stretch of the river downstream of Lenwade Mill through to where the river runs passed Great Witchingham Hall.

Specialist tree surgeons made broken branches safe and allowed daylight into the channel.

Improvements included stabilising the steep cliff-like river banks, installing woody material and refuge areas so that there is more diverse habitat to help fish and other wildlife thrive, and hinging willow trees.

Hinging is a known tree management technique, which bends the tree down into the channel so that it can provide habitat within the water.

Amy Butcher, project manager at the Environment Agency, said:

The River Wensum is a rare and internationally important chalk river habitat and is highly regarded by the local population, tourists, anglers and naturalists alike.

We are pleased that this project is progressing well and would like to thank all the teams who have been involved with the planning and

construction of this restoration work.

We would also like to thank the landowners for their enthusiasm and understanding of the restoration strategy and allowing us access to this beautiful section of river.

Ezra Lucas, SSSI responsible officer at Natural England, said:

The River Wensum has incredible potential to be a thriving habitat for the benefit of both wildlife and people.

We are delighted to be working with landowners and the Environment Agency to reinvigorate the river in order to leave it in a better condition for generations to come.

So far the project has delivered some excellent restoration, and we look forward to even more of this going forward.

The next phase of the scheme is planned for summer 2020 and will provide improvements to 1.3km of the river channel at Attlebridge. The work will include installing gravel glides and woody material and carrying out tree planting to shade the exposed channel.

Alongside this scheme, the Environment Agency is working on an ambitious project to provide a fish passage around the historic mill pool sluice structures at Lyng along with channel improvements along a 2km length upstream.