

ONWARD >

# LEVEL UP

A major Onward events series on what “levelling up” means, why it matters, and how to achieve it.

*In partnership with:*



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Who funds “levelling up”  
How to level up transport  
Investing in full fibre growth  
Good and secure jobs  
How to build R&D clusters  
Devolution revolution  
The future of manufacturing

**We are delighted to announce *Level Up*, a major series of virtual events to galvanise thinking and generate new policies for the levelling up agenda.**

The Prime Minister has reaffirmed the Government’s commitment to levelling up as the primary economic mission of this Parliament. Far from blowing the Government off course, the pandemic, he argues, “gives us a much greater chance to be radical and to do things differently, to build back better, to build back bolder, and so we will be doubling down on our strategy, we will double down on levelling up.”

This is the right ambition. But it is more easily said than done. The UK is the most regionally imbalanced economy in the developed world. Bringing opportunities to Britain’s lagging places will require concerted action and bold, long-term policymaking. The events will focus on the key challenges for ministers as we emerge from lockdown and seek to deliver a strong and sustainable recovery. We have an exciting lineup of speakers, with more due to be announced over the coming weeks.

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**Full fibre growth**

*How can digital industry and infrastructure drive levelling up?*

**Rt Hon Chris Pincher MP**  
Minister for Housing

Monday 15th March  
11am - 12.15pm

CityFibre

**Full fibre growth: How can digital industry and infrastructure drive levelling up?**

Underpinning so much of our modern economy and society, full fibre has great potential to level up communities across the country. Whilst industry rollout of full fibre continues to accelerate, many obstacles remain - including practical barriers slowing down deployment, and lack of clarity on how rural areas will be included. This panel will explore how we can best navigate and overcome these barriers to meet the new government rollout target and unleash the huge benefits digital can bring.

**When:** Monday, 15th March

**Time:** 11am - 12.15pm

Please register for your place [here](#)

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## Levelling up public transport

*Connecting people, jobs and communities*

**Chris Heaton-Harris MP**  
Minister for Rail

Tuesday 13th April  
2pm - 3.15pm

WEST COAST  
PARTNERSHIP

### **Levelling up public transport: Connecting people, jobs and communities**

Public transport has a key role in facilitating productivity growth and prosperity. Better transport connections can attract new jobs to a struggling town, enable residents to access good jobs and services in a nearby area, and allow businesses to cooperate across a wider geographic area. This event will consider how investment in the UK's transport infrastructure can contribute to levelling up our towns and cities.

**When:** Tuesday, 13th April

**Time:** 2pm - 3.15pm

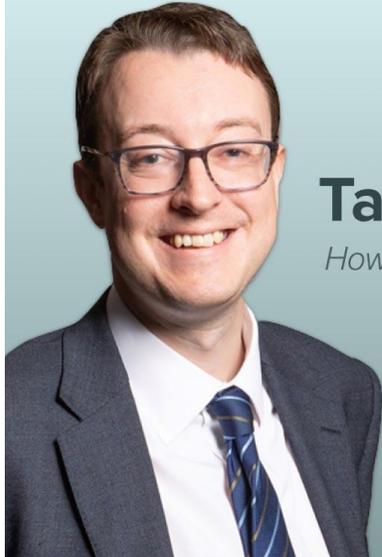
Please register for your place [here](#)

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## Taking back control

*How can a revolution in governance help level up?*

**Simon Clarke MP**

Former Minister for Devolution  
and Levelling Up

Tuesday 20th April  
10.45am - 12pm



### **Taking back control: How can a revolution in governance help level up?**

One of the UK economy's enduring weaknesses is the confusing and weak governance structures that exist at local level. While Germany and the United States, for example, have established regional and local governance, much economic and social policy in the UK originates in Westminster. This event will consider what the future model of local governance could look like, and how best to make it work. Ahead of the publication of the Devolution and Recovery White Paper, it will provide a platform to examine how devolution or other reforms could be a catalyst for more powerful local leadership, stability, and community empowerment.

**When:** Tuesday, 20th April

**Time:** 10.45am - 12pm

**Register for your place [here](#)**

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## Return on investment

*Who funds levelling up?*

**Rt Hon Jesse Norman MP**  
Financial Secretary to the  
Treasury

Tuesday 18th May  
4pm - 5.15pm



### **Return on investment: Who funds levelling up?**

If levelling up is to be successful, it will require investment, often in places with lower growth and productivity. While institutional investors are increasingly investing outside London and the South East, the pools of capital available often pale into comparison with funding pots available in the City of London. How can we unleash more financial support to regional regeneration, when land values and structure factors hold back potential returns? This session will explore the options for financing levelling up.

**When:** Tuesday, 18th May

**Time:** 4pm - 5.15pm

**Register for your place [here](#)**



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## How do we bring good jobs to the places that need them most?

Mims Davies MP  
Minister for Employment

JRF JOSEPH  
ROUNTREE  
FOUNDATION

### **How do we bring good jobs to the places that need them most?**

Economic insecurity and a lack of good jobs are persistent problems in many communities, particularly for people in poverty. The decline of manufacturing and the growth of a more flexible labour market have meant that opportunity for people to find purpose, progression and dignity in work is unevenly distributed. It was wrongly assumed that people would move to find better jobs but this has not been possible for many reasons, including the lack of affordable and available housing, and many people have become trapped in insecure employment or unemployment. How can we build the bridges of opportunity and maximise the potential of workers across the country? This event will consider what more policy-makers can do to bring high-quality jobs to the areas that need them most. It will offer an opportunity to explore how best to create long-term, sustainable and secure work, and to give people back economic hope and social pride in their towns.

**Date and time to be confirmed.**

We will announce registration in due course.

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### **Making it big: The future of UK manufacturing**

UK manufacturing has been in decline for the last fifty years, and with that decline has come the erosion of stable, skilled jobs and the hollowing out of industry in many parts of the North, Midlands and Wales. Towns and cities that formed the engine of the industrial revolution now make up some of the areas most in need of levelling up.

The shift to a services-based economy has tended to benefit city centre locations. If we want to see more good jobs outside city centres, what role can manufacturing potentially play? The UK has a wealth of manufacturing successes, from automotive and aerospace in the Midlands and North, to optoelectronics in Scotland. This event will consider what policies could support UK manufacturing and bring good, skilled jobs to places that need more.

**Date and time to be confirmed.**

We will announce registration in due course.

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## Comparative advantage

*How to build clusters of excellence and innovation*

Lord Bethell  
Minister for Innovation



### **Comparative advantage : How to build clusters of excellence and innovation**

The Government has committed to levelling up R&D across the country and a new place-based innovation strategy. Governments around the world have sought to support local clusters of innovation in specific fields to support competitiveness and drive high value innovation. The life sciences sector in the UK is a top three global hub, the number one recipient for foreign direct life sciences investment in Europe and the industry employs over 250,000 people across the UK. How can this comparative advantage help build more regional clusters? What can Britain learn from Silicon Valley or Tel Aviv in its approach to levelling up? It is possible to accelerate agglomeration in specific parts of the country to lead the world in strategic industries?

**Date and time to be confirmed.**

We will announce registration in due course.

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**If you have any questions regarding the series please contact Katie Faircough, Head of External Relations, at [katie.fairclough@ukonward.com](mailto:katie.fairclough@ukonward.com).**