

**Press release: Department for Culture, Media and Sport; HM Treasury  
Wednesday 03 June 2026**

**Universal theme park to create 28,000 jobs between construction and operation, boosting the economy by nearly £50 billion as Bedfordshire destination set to be UK's most popular tourist attraction**

- *Comcast NBCUniversal has committed to invest over £5bn in the entertainment resort complex during the expected 5 years of construction, as well as an additional £1bn in capital investment over the first 10 years of operation*
- *Government will support the project with an investment of £1.3bn on regional and local community infrastructure to ensure the park can operate successfully, with improved transport links for local residents and visitors from across the UK and abroad*
- *Development will create 28,000 jobs between construction and operation across a range of industries, including in Industrial Strategy growth driving sectors like creative, technology, hospitality and construction, and is estimated to generate nearly £50bn of economic benefit for the UK*
- *Future entertainment resort complex will be named 'Universal United Kingdom Resort' as Chancellor visits site where construction will soon begin and meets first UK team members employed on the project*

**One of the largest ever investments in the UK tourism sector has been agreed between the government and Comcast NBCUniversal to build an entertainment resort complex, the Universal United Kingdom Resort, in Bedfordshire that will employ thousands and entertain millions of people.**

Featuring a world-class theme park and resort, the project will be developed by the company's Universal Destinations & Experiences segment and is the brand's first major destination in the UK and Europe.

Comcast NBCUniversal's investment will also bring nearly 20,000 jobs during construction and a further 8,000 jobs when it opens in 2031. With immersive storytelling, thrilling attractions and hospitality, Universal expects the site to generate nearly £50 billion of economic benefit for the economy by 2055.

The government's investment unlocks regional transport and infrastructure improvements that will maximise the benefits of the development and enable wider growth across the region. The theme park and resort is expected to attract millions of visitors each year including more than a million additional overseas visitors.

With enabling works on the site now in progress and construction soon to begin, today marks a significant milestone in Universal advancing this landmark project. Over 100 people in the UK have been employed to work on the project, with Universal receiving expressions of employment interest from over 33,000 individuals. Approximately 80% of employees at the theme park and resort are expected to come from Bedfordshire and the surrounding regions.

To mark this milestone, Chancellor Rachel Reeves and Culture Secretary Lisa Nandy hosted Brian Roberts, Chairman of Comcast Corporation, and Mark Woodbury, Chairman and CEO of Universal Destinations & Experiences, at 11 Downing Street to unveil the name and logo for the theme park and resort.

Additionally the Chancellor visited the site this morning (Wednesday) where she met with Mr Woodbury and other senior executives from Universal Destinations & Experiences, as well as many of Universal's new hires already based in Bedford.

The government is committed to making the UK the best place in the world for investors. Universal choosing Bedford for its first European park is both a testament to the strength of the UK's visitor offering and creative industries, a demonstration that the UK is open for business and the modern Industrial Strategy in action. The package announced today is likely to be one of the most significant investments made in the United Kingdom during this parliament.

Separately, Universal and the government are also cooperating to maximise benefits to local colleges and universities. For example, Universal has committed to world-class training opportunities for the next generation of its workforce, including through a range of apprenticeships and internships. This aligns with the government's ongoing work to unleash the potential of the Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor and lay the foundations for Bedford to become an innovation hub.

As part of its total £1.3 billion investment, the government will provide a grant of £400 million through the exceptional Regional Growth Fund and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport will provide a grant of £438 million to invest in new community infrastructure to maximise the benefits of the development and support growth across the region. These grants will only be paid once Universal has completed the community infrastructure (in the case of the DCMS grant) and officially opened the theme park and resort.

The Department for Transport is also going ahead with plans to upgrade the strategic road and rail network, on the A421 and at Wixams station, which will provide wider resilience and improved connectivity within the region, at an expected cost of £474 million.

As one of the key investment commitments in the UK's Modern Industrial Strategy (2025), this project directly supports the government's plan to increase business investment in the creative industries from £17 billion to £31 billion by 2035, contributing to the broader UK growth mission. The UK's Creative Industries are a global engine of innovation and growth - generating £124 billion for our economy and supporting over 2.3 million jobs. As a cornerstone of our modern Industrial Strategy, this sector drives creativity, competitiveness, and opportunity.

**Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport Lisa Nandy said:**

*"This unparalleled investment is a huge vote of confidence in the UK and puts rocket boosters under our entertainment industry.*

*"When it comes to creating world class experiences, the UK is second to none. We're proud to be backing British industry, investing in local talent and partnering with powerhouses like Universal to create jobs, growth and opportunities across the UK."*

**Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves said:**

*“This landmark investment in the heart of the Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor will unlock nearly £50 billion of economic growth and create tens of thousands of jobs across Bedfordshire in construction, hospitality, creative and technology sectors.*

*“Our own investment in transport and infrastructure means that local people will benefit — improving connectivity, backing our creative industries, and bringing millions of visitors to the UK from across the world.*

*“We have the right economic plan — working with global investors and local leaders so we can deliver jobs, opportunity and long-term prosperity for Britain.”*

**Brian Roberts, Chairman of Comcast Corporation, said:**

*“This historic partnership is a special moment for our company as we bring our first Universal theme park and resort to Europe. We have a long and proud history in the United Kingdom through Sky and NBCUniversal and look forward to creating a spectacular destination that supports the UK creative industries and brings joy to millions for generations to come.”*

**Mark Woodbury, Chairman and CEO of Universal Destinations & Experiences, said:**

*“Today marks a significant milestone on our journey to bring Universal United Kingdom Resort, featuring immersive storytelling, thrilling attractions and unparalleled creativity and innovation to the UK. This new theme park and resort will create so many new opportunities for the people of Bedford and beyond and allow us to share our distinct experiences with guests from around the world.”*

**ENDS**

Notes to Editors

- Please contact Universal Destinations & Experiences for their conceptual artists rendering and logo: [uprcorpcomm@uniparks.com](mailto:uprcorpcomm@uniparks.com).
- More information on the project can be found at [universalukproject.co.uk](http://universalukproject.co.uk).
- This announcement follows the investment agreement in principle reached between Comcast NBCUniversal and the government in April last year.
- On 15 December, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government granted planning permission by way of making a Special Development Order for the theme park and resort, and associated development at the former brickworks and adjoining land at Kempston Hardwick, Bedford. This came into force on 12 January 2026.