

**Bank of England**

# What theme would you like to see on our next series of banknotes?

Consultation Paper

The consultation was open for response until 31 July 2025 and is now closed

July 2025



## Overview

---

The Bank of England remains committed to providing banknotes which you can continue to use with confidence. As we begin to design the next generation of banknotes, we are considering what theme should be represented to symbolise the UK, and we would like to hear your views.

Our banknotes have showcased notable historical figures since 1970, when William Shakespeare became the first person other than the monarch to feature on a Bank of England banknote. In the 55 years since, we have been able to celebrate many individuals who have shaped UK thought, innovation, leadership, values and society, including Winston Churchill (£5), Jane Austen (£10), JMW Turner (£20) and Alan Turing (£50) who feature on our current banknote series. There are many more individuals from a wide range of fields and backgrounds who could feature going forwards.

However, there are many ways to represent the UK on our banknotes. We want to hear whether you would like us to continue to feature historical figures, or if there are other themes you would prefer to see represented. The potential themes we have identified include:

- notable historical figures
- nature
- architecture and landmarks
- arts, culture and sport
- noteworthy milestones
- innovation

You can also suggest other themes for us to consider. We will still include a portrait of the monarch regardless of the selected theme(s).

---

Please share your views using [this online form](#) or write to us at the following address:

Banknote Imagery Consultation  
Notes Directorate  
Bank of England  
Threadneedle Street  
London  
EC2R 8AH

**This consultation will close at 11.59pm on 31 July 2025.**

## Why are we designing a new series of banknotes?

---

As the UK's central bank, one of our most important roles is to make sure that you have a choice in how you can safely pay for things, which includes providing high quality banknotes that you can use with confidence.

While the use of cash for transactions has declined over the past decade, it is still the preferred payment method for around one in five people, and used by many more.

Current counterfeit levels remain low and we want to ensure the public can continue to use cash with confidence in the future. This involves designing banknotes that incorporate the latest anti-counterfeiting technology and are accessible, which includes large font and tactile features to help blind and partially sighted people identify the value of the note.

## Why are we consulting with you now?

---

It is a complex and detailed multi-year process to design resilient and accessible banknotes, and to print and test them to make sure they are all of a high quality. So we want to start now.

One of the first, and most important, steps in the design process is the choice of images that the new banknotes will feature. Your views are a key part of that choice. At this point, we are seeking your views on the choice of theme for the next series of banknotes.

---

## What do we mean by 'theme'?

---

Our next series of banknotes will continue to feature a portrait of the monarch on each note. We are inviting you to give your views on potential themes which capture the types of other images which could also be featured on the notes.

We have identified six potential themes for you to provide your views on using [this online form](#) or writing to us at the address above. These are:

- **notable historical figures:** This theme, which is used on our current series of banknotes – could be depicted by portraits of specific historical figures who have made an important contribution to UK society and culture. We will not represent living people on our banknotes, with the exception of the monarch.
- **nature:** This theme could be depicted by images of native plants, animals, or natural landscapes such as rivers, lakes, mountains or coastal scenes from around the UK.
- **architecture and landmarks:** This theme could be depicted by images of iconic buildings and other places, such as castles, bridges or heritage sites across the UK.
- **arts, culture and sport:** This theme could be depicted by images of the arts, music, literature, customs, food, film, television or sport which define the UK.
- **noteworthy milestones:** This theme could be depicted by images of important events and movements which have shaped the UK.
- **innovation:** This theme could be depicted by images of important advancements, technologies, discoveries or ideas developed in the UK.

You can also suggest other themes for us to consider. These suggestions will be assessed against our criteria, which are set out below.

---

## What makes a good theme for a banknote?

---

In deciding what theme to use, we will consider the following criteria:

- **symbolises the UK:** The theme should have a direct link to, and therefore represent the UK, e.g. celebrating individuals from a range of fields and backgrounds who are important to UK history or specific landscapes and landmarks from different parts of the UK.
- **resonates with the public:** The theme, and its importance, should be easily recognisable and meaningful to the UK public.

- **is not divisive:** The theme should not involve imagery that would reasonably be offensive to, or exclude, any groups.
- **is enduring:** The theme should not be too modern or relate to a recent trend, or it may become quickly irrelevant or out of date. Banknotes remain in use for many years, and their designs should remain relevant for many decades, if not indefinitely.
- **supports banknote authentication:** The theme, and the images which would be used to depict that theme, should be able to work in harmony with our objective to create banknotes which are accessible, safe and secure for the public to use easily and without worry.
- **is consistent with our legal obligations:** In considering what theme to feature, we will have due regard to the public sector equality duty and other relevant laws, including considering the impact on individuals who share the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

## What happens next?

---

This consultation will close at 11:59pm on 31 July 2025. We will consider the responses in light of our objectives for banknote design. We may not select the theme that receives the most votes because we will also assess how each theme meets our criteria, the range of images available to the Bank to depict that theme and feedback from focus groups and other stakeholders. We may for example decide to use a combination of the above themes or others put forward by the public.

Depending on which theme is selected, we may seek further feedback from the public on the specific images that could be used to show the chosen theme. We will keep you updated, including announcing the final note designs in due course.