

Bank of England Invites Public to Help Choose Theme for Next Banknote Design

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The Bank of England has launched a public consultation inviting people across the United Kingdom and abroad to help shape the theme for the next generation of British banknotes. This marks the first time in more than half a century that the central bank is seeking public input on such a significant aspect of the nation's currency. The initiative reflects an effort to ensure that future banknotes not only meet technical and security

standards but also better represent the identity, values, and culture of the UK today.

The public will have six weeks to submit suggestions and preferences for the overarching theme that will appear on the reverse side of the notes. While the face of each denomination will continue to feature the reigning monarch, the Bank of England is asking the public to weigh in on themes ranging from science and innovation to architecture, arts and culture, natural heritage, and British history. There is also an opportunity for individuals to propose new themes not already listed, offering a broad platform for creativity and national reflection.

Victoria Cleland, Chief Cashier of the Bank of England, emphasized the symbolic importance of banknotes in everyday life. She noted that banknotes are more than just a means of exchange; they are a way to express national identity. This consultation offers the public a rare opportunity to influence the design of one of the most visible and widely used elements of UK society.

The bank has made clear that the process of designing new notes is both complex and long-term. Beyond visual appeal, each banknote must incorporate advanced security features to guard against counterfeiting, while remaining durable, accessible, and functional. With polymer notes now standard, the next series is expected to continue using this more sustainable and resilient material.

Despite the rise of digital payments, cash continues to play an important role in the UK economy. The Bank of England estimates that nearly one in five payments are still made using physical currency. Ensuring that notes

remain relevant, trusted, and inclusive is a central part of the bank's mission.

The consultation will run through the end of July. After reviewing submissions, an advisory panel will recommend a theme to the bank's leadership. Future stages may include additional public engagement before the final design is revealed. In seeking input from the public, the Bank of England is not only updating the look of its currency, it is also inviting the country to participate in shaping a symbol of shared national identity.