

# News story: Double win for Sellafield Ltd

The company was named 'Large Employer of the Year', while employee Laura Pugh took the title of 'Young Apprentice of the Year' at the annual ECITB awards event in London.

Steve Bostock, Site Director for Sellafield Ltd attended the ceremony. He said:

For the company to receive an award like this during a year of such unprecedented change is testament to the people driving forward the Sellafield clean-up mission.

Laura is a shining example of that, and to see her recognised as an outstanding role model for the next generation of engineers, is fantastic.

Not only has she excelled in her training and subsequent employment, she goes above and beyond to support colleagues and promote the value of apprenticeships.

The awards celebrate the brightest and best from the engineering construction industry, including those delivering world class education and training.

Steve added:

We are home to some of the most complex challenges in the world, but have one of the most innovative and determined workforce and supply chains.

Although the mission at Sellafield is changing, engineering and construction skills will be needed for decades to come.

We are proud to be developing world class education and training to help create a pipeline of skills, building the UK's workforce of tomorrow.

Laura, aged 23 from Workington, was praised for her commitment to learning and her work to inspire younger people to pursue STEM subjects.

She said:

I was just happy to be nominated for an award as it meant that my hard work has been noticed, but I'm stunned to have won.

Balancing academic studies with work and STEM activities for four years was difficult at times, but I was keen to give it my best and I had great support from my mentor and managers.

Having completed an apprenticeship in electrical design, she is now an electrical and instrumentation designer at the nuclear site, while working towards a degree with the University of Cumbria.

Judges said Laura demonstrated excellent performance during her apprenticeship, commitment to her own personal development and a passion to raise the aspiration of local school students.

Last year Lydia Rowell took home the 'Women in Engineering' award, and the company continues to be praised for its impressive female apprentice intake.

Steve added; "We are extremely proud to have 42% female apprentices, the highest of any STEM employer in the UK, and trainees like Laura provide positive role models for women in the engineering profession."

Having completed her training in a portacabin on a construction site at Sellafield, Laura said:

Nuclear is obviously a male dominated industry, but I never felt like this was a barrier. I have been extremely supported by both males and females, including my colleagues, mentor and line manager.

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## [News story: Public asked for views on the digital economy](#)

People urged to have their say on whether competition in the digital market is being stifled by powerful tech giants.

An independent panel of experts – led by former Obama advisor Professor Jason Furman – today (12 October 2018) launches a call for evidence as they look at competition in the digital sector.

The UK is at the forefront of the technological revolution and ministers want to ensure that everyone benefits from this. Competitive markets mean that companies offer consumers more choice, better value for money, and higher-quality products and services.

Experts, businesses, and the general public can have their say on:

- the pros and cons for consumers of the current market set-up, where a small number of companies dominate digital markets
- whether their accumulation of people's data is holding back new companies that could offer people innovative products and services
- how we can further strengthen our rules to boost competition and give consumers more choice and quality in services they access online
- how we can make sure people continue to benefit from new products and services by enhancing innovation in digital markets.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond, said:

We will ensure the UK remains at the forefront of the technological

revolution as we build an economy fit for the future and equip people with the skills they need to succeed in it.

But there are concerns that the big players could be accumulating too much power in our new digital world. Therefore we must ensure we have the right regulations so that our digital markets are competitive and consumers are protected.

I would urge people to have their say, and look forward to receiving the panel's recommendations.

Chair of the independent review, Professor Jason Furman, said:

We want to hear from people of all ages, businesses of all sizes, and experts from all fields, to help inform our review so we can ensure all parts of society benefit from the technologies of the future.

Digital markets have produced significant consumer benefits and we are focusing on how to ensure that remains the case, while fostering competition and boosting the economy.

The review is investigating the UK's competition regime in the context of the digital economy. It is examining how this affects consumers, and the impact of competition policy on the UK's growth, productivity, wages and labour markets.

The panel started its work in September and will publish in early 2019 a final report of recommendations. Over the course of the review, the panel is meeting with a wide range of academics, businesses and representative groups.

### **Further Information**

[The call for evidence can be found on gov.uk and is open until 7 December 2018.](#)

The panel consists of:

### **Professor Jason Furman**

Professor Jason Furman served as the top economic advisor in the Obama administration, including his role as chair of the Council of Economic Advisers from August 2013 to January 2017, acting as both chief economist and a member of the cabinet. In academia, he has conducted research in a wide range of areas including: fiscal policy, competition policy, tax policy,

health economics and international and domestic macroeconomics.

### **Professor Diane Coyle CBE**

Professor Diane Coyle CBE is the Bennett Professor of Public Policy at the University of Cambridge and has held a number of public service roles including Vice Chair of the BBC Trust (2006-2014), member of the Competition Commission (2001-2009), and member of the Migration Advisory Committee (2009-2014). She is currently a member of the Natural Capital Committee, an expert adviser to the National Infrastructure Commission and a member of the Council of Economic Advisers.

### **Professor Amelia Fletcher OBE**

Professor Amelia Fletcher OBE is the Professor of Competition Policy at the Centre for Competition Policy, University of East Anglia. She is a Non-Executive Director at the Competition and Markets Authority, the Financial Conduct Authority and the Payment Systems Regulator. She was previously Chief Economist at the Office of Fair Trading (2001-2013).

### **Professor Derek McAuley**

Professor Derek McAuley is Professor of Digital Economy in the School of Computer Science at the University of Nottingham. He is Director of Horizon, an interdisciplinary Digital Economy research institute and previously founded the Cambridge Microsoft Research facility and the Intel lablet in Cambridge. He is a Fellow of the British Computer Society and member of the UK Computing Research Committee's executive committee.

### **Professor Philip Marsden**

Professor Philip Marsden is Professor of Law and Economics at the College of Europe, Bruges, and Senior Director, Case Decision Groups at the Competition and Markets Authority (until end September) and CMA representative at the NESTA Open Banking panel. He is also Deputy Chair of the Bank of England's Enforcement Decision Making Committee and co-founder and General Editor of the European Competition Journal.

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## **[Press release: Flying success for Bats in Churches project](#)**

A groundbreaking project led by Natural England to help churches that host large bat roosts has been granted £3.8 million of funding by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

This new round of funding will help deliver a five year partnership project,

bringing together wildlife, heritage conservation and church organisations to save bats and protect churches for future generations.

The UK's bat population has suffered significant historical decline which is why they are protected by UK law. Loss of natural habitats means some bat species have been forced to find safe havens in buildings including historic churches.

Many church communities live harmoniously with bat roosts. However, in some cases bats are causing irreparable damage to historically significant church monuments and memorials as well as impacting upon the people who use the buildings.

Recently approved techniques and a new licence developed by Natural England to permit necessary work will be used to improve both the natural and historic environment and to support the people who care for them.

The Bats in Churches project will:

- Find practical solutions to enable 102 of the most severely impacted church communities to reduce the impact of bats on the church, without harming them
- Create a new network of fully trained volunteers who can undertake bat surveys and support congregations who have bat roosts at their church
- Train professional ecologists and historic building specialists in new techniques and build knowledge to improve their advice to congregations
- Collect and collate up-to-date data from over 700 churches across England, helping to build a specialist knowledge base of bats and their use of churches
- Strengthen local communities so people value and engage with their local natural and historic built heritage

Natural England is working in partnership with The Church of England, Historic England, Bat Conservation Trust and Churches Conservation Trust to deliver this ambitious and innovative project.

Natural England Chairman, Andrew Sells, said:

England's bat population has suffered historic decline which has forced many to find refuge in some of the nation's historic churches.

The funding announced today will give great impetus to the partnership of heritage, wildlife and church organisations which aims to resolve conflicts. Together these groups are demonstrating astonishing passion and drive in working together to save these wonderful animals and protect cherished churches across the country.

Ros Kerlake, Chief Executive of the Heritage Lottery Fund, said:

Places of worship and nature are both priorities for us, but they don't always coexist harmoniously. Finding ways to solve this problem is beneficial to bats, churches and their congregations and is a really good use of National Lottery players' money.

Kit Stoner, Chief Executive of the Bat Conservation Trust, said:

We are absolutely delighted with the news that HLF will continue to fund the Bats in Churches project. This means we can build on the collaborative and innovative approach we have taken so far in finding sustainable ways to support churches with large bat roosts in a way that will benefit bats and people.

Church and conservation communities can continue to work together to protect historic medieval church buildings, artefacts and bats.

Protecting our natural and historical heritage will create a lasting legacy that will benefit present and future generations.

Deborah Lamb, Deputy Chief Executive at Historic England, said:

Volunteers caring for historic places of worship face a great challenge. When they also have to share the building with bats the situation can be overwhelming.

I am delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has agreed to support the Bats in Churches partnership so we can apply the outcome of a decade of research to places that need help. This should make life easier for everyone who uses or loves historic churches that host bats.

Peter Aiers, Chief Executive of the Churches Conservation Trust, said:

I love churches, iconic buildings of England and I love bats, however, humans and bats are not always happy pew fellows!

Many of the CCT's historic churches have co-existed in harmony with bats for a long time. We want that to continue, but we also rely on volunteer support to keep our churches open and used by the community.

Increasingly volunteers find it a struggle to look after a church with large numbers of bats. This project is critical to our understanding of how we can support them and better look after our heritage, and we are delighted that the HLF has decided to back this creative partnership project.



Rt. Hon. Sir Tony Baldry, Chair of the Church Buildings Council, said:

Bats are part of God's creation and this project will enable churches to maintain their primary role as Places of Worship whilst ensuring the sustainability of both our historic and natural heritage.

Dame Caroline Spelman, Second Church Estates Commissioner, said:

This ground-breaking partnership project means that at long last churches will be empowered to tackle the issues that have caused tension between churches, communities and bats leading to benefits for all involved'

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## **[News story: Home Office provides £2m to stem human trafficking in Albania](#)**

A £2m boost to deliver work in Albanian human trafficking hotspots has been announced today (Thursday 11 October), by Minister for Crime, Safeguarding and Vulnerability Victoria Atkins.

The programme will help tackle the flow of modern slavery to the UK by supporting victims to rebuild their lives and by deterring vulnerable people from falling into the hands of traffickers in Albania. The UK will also support criminal justice officials to ensure perpetrators of this awful crime are brought to justice.

The package was agreed as part of a meeting held in London, between Victoria Atkins and Albanian Deputy Minister of Interior Rovena Voda, yesterday. In 2017, over 770 potential modern slavery victims were referred to UK authorities and identified as Albanian nationals – the highest figure for a country outside Britain.

Minister for Crime, Safeguarding and Vulnerability Victoria Atkins said:

Modern slavery is an abhorrent crime that entraps the most vulnerable people globally and denies them their liberty.

The UK is regarded as a world leader in tackling this crime, not only due to our tough laws and support for victims at home, but also our work abroad to support victims, ensure offenders are caught and stop vulnerable people falling into the hands of

traffickers.

By working with our Albanian partners, we can make a crucial difference to the lives of those who have had some of their most basic rights stolen from them.

Government research has highlighted that the capital Tirana and the 3 northern districts of Diber, Shkoder and Kukës, in Albania, are where the majority of victims originate. It is in these districts where the UK will focus its support.

Testimonies from Albanian victims who have been trafficked into the UK highlight the importance of working to tackling modern slavery in the region:

First there was no life, because I was held against my will.

When I accessed services my life started, because now I am free and now I can laugh and I can make friends, I can chose to do what I want, all because of my support workers.

The funding runs until March 2021 to assist Albanian victims with their reintegration into society once they are identified, as well as educating vulnerable communities about the dangers of trafficking.

Kathy Betteridge, Director of Anti Trafficking and Modern Slavery for The Salvation Army, said:

In recent years The Salvation Army has seen a continued growth in the number of potential victims of modern slavery from Albania. It is overwhelmingly the country from which we receive the highest number of people, mainly women, referred for support to recover from the exploitation they have experienced. This trend shows no sign of abating.

Their stories tell of organised crime and sexual exploitation which will require a coordinated effort to address. We therefore welcome the willingness of the Albanian government to engage with the UK in tackling this issue at source.

We hope this funding will effect a reduction and ultimate end to the flow of vulnerable people from Albania to be exploited across Europe and into the UK.

The Salvation Army has held the government contract to provide specialist support to adult victims of modern slavery in England and Wales for 7 years and has supported more than 7,000 victims in that time.

The package, from the Home Office's Modern Slavery Fund, also includes training for Albanian criminal justice officials so that they are better prepared to deal with human trafficking cases, meaning those responsible are more likely to face justice.

Albania has endorsed Prime Minister Theresa May's international Call to Action to end modern slavery. The UK is committed to working closely with Albania to combat the issue.