

Press release: Traffic officers hit the road to help motorists in Cornwall

As part of a trial announced earlier this year, Highways England's traffic officers have been patrolling a section of the A30 in Cornwall for the first time during the busy holiday periods, and have been on hand to deal with everything from live lane breakdowns, road traffic collisions and debris clearance.

During the summer holidays, Highways England crews have attended a total of 112 incidents during the 31 days of patrols. And on the last Sunday in July, the traffic officers' 'powers of recovery' averted major disruption on the westbound A30 as they were able to assist police by towing a broken down horsebox and vehicle to Okehampton Services.

The current patrols will come to an end on 10 September.

Rob Penney, South West Service Delivery Manager for Highways England, said:

The aim of the initiative is to provide further assistance to motorists on our South West network, and we're delighted to extend our service further south into Cornwall and to continue our close working partnership with Devon and Cornwall Police and Cornwall Council.

The patrols have provided real value, they've been well received, and there may be scope to increase the patrols in the future, dependent on a review of this trial period.

Earlier trial patrols took place over the Easter and May Bank Holidays. During five days over Easter the traffic officers dealt with and assisted 16 incidents on the A30 between Carland Cross and Lifton Down, and during the May Bank Holiday weekend, they attended 13 incidents over the three days, 11 of which saw them help broken down vehicles to safety.

Highways England already works in partnership with Devon and Cornwall Police, forming part of a multi-agency partnership in terms of safety and severe weather handling, and the trial is aimed at providing further support to Devon and Cornwall Police to help meet the demands of increased traffic volumes and related incidents on the A30 in Cornwall.

Welcome to Cornwall sign on the A30 near Liftdown

Traffic officers currently assist drivers in any difficulty, co-ordinate the resources of the emergency services, manage traffic to reduce incident-related congestion and clear debris from the carriageways.

The traffic officers are currently patrolling the A30 between Carland Cross

and Lifford and, based at Bodmin police station and Cornwall Council's Castle Cannyke depot during the peak holiday months, they have been much closer at hand to provide assistance along both the A30 and A38.

Chief Inspector Adrian Leisk, head of roads policing for the Devon & Cornwall Police and Dorset Police alliance, said:

Devon and Cornwall Police is delighted to expand its partnership working with Highways England into Cornwall.

This builds on the considerable success of the operational activity on the M5, A38 and A30 in Devon, where Highways England Traffic Officers have supported police resources in dealing with road traffic collisions and other incidents which have the potential to cause disruption on our strategic road network

This 'one team' approach will undoubtedly help support communities and businesses who rely on a resilient and capable road network in Cornwall, particularly during the busiest periods of the year.

Highways England's Traffic Officer service patrols England's motorways and major A roads, helping to keep traffic flowing smoothly.

Traffic officers are not an enforcement agency, but they do have the power to stop and direct traffic, close lanes and carriageways and manage traffic, and road users must obey their directions.

As well as incident management, they also deal with broken down and abandoned vehicles on the strategic road network, recovering vehicles that are causing a blockage or hazard, and ensure that the scene of an incident is safe, for road users and working partners.

For more information on the roles and responsibilities of a Highways England traffic officer go to the [traffic officer information page](#).

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

[Press release: Consultation due to launch on major upgrade to the A38 in Derby](#)

People interested in plans to upgrade the A38 in Derby are urged to have their say as Highways England prepares to launch a consultation this week on proposals to upgrade a busy bottleneck in the city.

The project, valued at around £225m, will make journeys between Birmingham and the M1 and through Derby quicker and simpler by separating long distance traffic from those making local journeys.

The Kingsway, Markeaton and Little Eaton roundabouts will be replaced with two underpasses and a flyover respectively, which will collectively help to reduce congestion on this busy route.

The consultation is the next step in making the scheme a reality and runs from Friday, 7 September until Thursday, 18 October 2018.

Highways England project manager, Paul Nagra, said:

This upgrade is an important development for the A38 and the tens of thousands of people that rely on the road every single day.

Once this work is complete it will provide smoother and more reliable journeys along this important route helping support future investment and economic growth opportunities in the area.

The design has now been developed in more detail and people attending the consultation can have their say on the proposals.

Anyone interested in the scheme can attend any of the public information events that are running between 7 September and 22 September at various locations throughout Derby.

For more information about the events and about the consultation, please visit the [scheme website](#).

Alternatively email A38derbyjunctions@highwaysengland.co.uk.

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[Press release: Minister for Asia and the Pacific unveils plans to curb Pacific Ocean plastic pollution](#)

Britain has pledged to champion Climate Risk and Resilience at next year's UN Secretary-General's Climate Summit, and has confirmed that its three missions in Samoa, Tonga, and Vanuatu will all be free of avoidable single-use plastics.

The uninhabited Henderson Island was recently established to have the worst levels of plastic rubbish on its shores of anywhere in the world, and marine plastic pollution elsewhere in the region is a growing problem. The UK's three additional diplomatic missions in the region will be barred from using avoidable single-use plastics, and will help promote further joint work on climate change issues in the region.

Making the announcement at the Pacific Islands Forum, Minister for Asia and the Pacific Mark Field said:

Climate change poses a clear and present danger to the people of the Pacific islands like nowhere else in the world. The UK is already working with Vanuatu through the Commonwealth Clean Oceans Alliance to tackle the scourge of plastic pollution, and it is important our own representatives lead by example by cracking down on single-use plastics.

But addressing climate change needs massive transformational change and I am proud of Britain's contribution through the Green Climate Fund. We will be building on this by working much more closely with all the Pacific islands through our missions in the region in the coming years.

The UK is among the largest contributors of international climate finance and in the four years to 2020 will be giving developing countries over £5.5 billion to help them mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

This will build on commitments made at the Commonwealth Head of Governments Meeting in London earlier this year which saw the creation of the

Commonwealth Clean Oceans Alliance.

The government has today also announced that the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu are the first of six countries to receive support through Defra's £6 million Commonwealth Litter Programme, partnering with countries in their efforts to reduce single-use plastics and other litter entering the oceans.

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) will eliminate avoidable single-use plastics from its UK operations by the end of the year, and from its global operations by 2020. It is the first UK government department to announce such a ban and the commitment makes the FCO global a leader in the fight against plastic pollution.

Notes to editors

1. Britain has in the past had missions in Tonga and Vanuatu and is now re-establishing High Commissions in each, along with a new High Commission in Samoa. They will collectively deliver significant bilateral and regional impact and help increase UK influence in multilateral fora.
2. Initial estimates suggest that the FCO globally is consuming at least 3.45 million items of avoidable single-use plastics.

[News story: Safer, more nutritious food for Africa: apply for funding](#)

UK businesses and research organisations can apply for a share of up to £3 million to develop and embed agri-tech and food chain innovations in Africa, collaborating with African countries.

The funding, announced by International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt, is part of a [package of support](#) to help farmers across Africa grow their businesses and protect livestock.

Funding in this Agri-tech Catalyst competition comes from the [Department for International Development](#) (DFID), with the process managed by Innovate UK.

The challenge in Africa

Three-quarters of the poorest people in Africa (75%) live in rural areas and are reliant on agriculture and livestock for their livelihoods.

Yet, while agriculture and food systems are quickly evolving, uptake of new technologies and practices is low in African countries. For example, just 28%

of cultivatable land in Africa grows modern crop varieties, compared with 65% worldwide.

Action is needed to ensure that Africa can adapt in order to deliver a nutritious, sustainable and secure food supply that supports a healthy population.

For UK organisations, there is an opportunity to apply agri-tech skills and knowledge to a new market, further innovate and support international development.

Increase pace and scale up

This competition aims to increase the pace of development and scale up innovative agricultural and food systems in Africa.

It is looking for projects that transform how Africa approaches existing and new technologies and embraces change. These should target farmers and others involved in the food value chain including manufacturers, processors, retailers, distributors and wholesalers.

Projects can be for early-stage feasibility studies, mid-stage industrial research or late-stage experimental development. They should:

- be sustainable and support environmental challenges such as climate change and resource scarcity
- minimise negative outcomes such as pollution, food losses and waste
- promote safe, healthy and nutritious diets for people

They could include:

- primary crop and livestock production, including aquaculture
- non-food uses of crops, for everything excluding ornamentals
- challenges in food processing, distribution or storage, and adding value, such as through a change in the physical state or form of the product
- improving the availability and accessibility of safe, healthy and nutritious foods

Other factors to consider are gender equality, particularly how empowering girls and women could tackle unequal access and control of assets and improve agricultural productivity or food security. Projects should also have the potential to benefit animal welfare.

Competition information

- the competition is open and the deadline for registrations is at midday on 21 November 2018
- to lead a project in the UK, you can be a business, academic organisation, charity, public sector or research organisation. You'll need to work with at least one partner from an eligible African country
- projects can be carried out in the UK or in Africa

- projects can last between 1 year and 3 years with total costs between £100,000 and £1 million, depending on the project type
 - you could get up to 70% of your eligible costs
 - projects must start by 1 April 2019
 - you can register to attend an [online briefing webinar](#) on 10 September 2018 to find out more about the competition and how to make a quality application
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[Speech: Michael Ellis speech at the Art Business Conference](#)

Good morning everybody.

As Minister for Arts, Heritage and Tourism I have a wide portfolio, which gives me the opportunity to do some very enjoyable things.

Like raising the draw bridge on Tower Bridge, visiting galleries, heritage sites, theatres, art centres and libraries across the country, launching the development of a new government soft power strategy at the Foreign Office or speaking at fascinating events like the one today, and I'd like to thank Louise for inviting me to speak.

Today's sessions reflect the wide range of challenges and issues currently faced by the art market.

From the very familiar, such as the question of provenance, to the practical, such as how to deal with new regulations, and the innovative, such as the best use of developing technology.

I am well aware of the importance to the UK of its art market, the second largest in the world, and am delighted that the UK is in this position.

This market contributed an estimated £1.46 billion to the UK economy in 2016, showing our reputation for knowledge, versatility, adaptability and growth.

As a department, and as Arts Minister, I am grateful for the expertise and practice of the art market, with whom we have a strong working relationship.

Today's theme is on the future of our international art market. And the UK plays an important part in this, being hugely global in its reach. For the last nine years London has hosted Masterpiece (according to Tatler, the world's most glamorous art fair) and later this month the Start Art Fair will be showing a range of new and emerging artists from across the globe, as just two examples of this.

I must address – and I think you might probably be aware – the UK will soon be leaving the European Union. We will remain a creative and ambitious

nation, open to the wider world, as we are now in so many respects.

And we will keep working for a strong and globally competitive UK art market that continues to attract talent and investment from around the world.

I want to also address another live area, that of the proposed legislation on the ivory trade, and possible exemptions to the ban. It is important that the measures being taken to regulate the ivory trade are balanced with considered exemptions. My officials are working closely with Defra, the government department responsible for the ivory legislation, to ensure that these exemptions are appropriate and carefully implemented and again, I am grateful to the feedback given by the sector to inform this.

I have also spoken to Michael Gove personally about this.

Museums

Many of the great museums in the UK owe their origins to the art market. The Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge is only one example where a collection is based on discerning purchases by a knowledgeable private buyer. The international network of museums has strong parallels with the art market, and the two have a close economic and cultural relationship.

For many people museums are their first and most enduring contact with art, shaping their perceptions and tastes.

Cultural institutions can play a major role in their communities, both telling the story of a place and its people, and helping to shape it.

Over half of the UK population visited a museum last year and many of our museums are the envy of the world. Three of the DCMS-sponsored national museums were in the top 10 most visited museums in the world in 2016.

The recently-published Mendoza Review of Museums in England found a thriving sector, supported by over £800m of public funding – from a variety of sources – each year.

The current exhibition here in London at the National Portrait Gallery looks at the influence of the singer Michael Jackson on contemporary art and includes amongst its aims a desire to engage an audience who might not otherwise visit an art gallery, or who, equally, might not usually consider buying an original piece of art.

One of the themes of today's conference is how the market can attract new collectors and work with communities at art fairs.

As part of this work, there is real scope for closer relations between the art market and our museums, which would benefit both.

But for this to be successful, customers need to be able to have full trust in the market and feel confident that the object they are buying is what it appears to be.

Opportunities to buy art online have increased, including from general online auction sites. But although these sites have widened access to the art market, they can bring the risk of fraud and forgery.

The writer Walter Benjamin wrote about the “aura” of a work, its quality of uniqueness, and part of a dealer’s skill is to recognise that uniqueness in a genuine piece of art. This assurance may not be available to an inexperienced buyer bidding on the basis of a digital image.

I see from today’s conference that there is a real commitment to integrity from the art market. I hope to see the same level of commitment from all online markets, an acceptance of that duty to protect buyers, sellers and artists and the integrity and legitimacy of the art market.

Fakes and forgeries have been found in the most exalted of collections – even Charles the First is said to have bought a counterfeit classical sculpture. However, since it was a Cupid faked by Michelangelo, we might forgive the King for that lapse.

Authenticity and provenance are fundamental issues for the art market. They can be based on many different elements, including documentary evidence, technical reports on the object or an expert’s judgement that the style of a work conforms to that of an artist.

Not surprisingly disputes can arise, and how these are resolved can affect not only the price of an individual work but the dynamics of relationships in the market afterwards.

There is an idea that the art market might be best placed to resolve the disputes itself, avoiding what are perceived as difficulties with the adversarial judicial system.

A system of mediation and arbitration could produce decisions, based on the evidence of neutral experts, on authenticity, ownership and copyright that are respected by the market.

This, I understand, is the aim of the Court of Arbitration for Art recently set up in the Hague.

I will be watching with interest to see how the art market engages with this system, how it would interact with national and international legislation, and also how its conclusions would be viewed by artists and other groups outside the art market.

It is encouraging to see the market adopting a wide and innovative approach to this fundamental issue.

Equally, the UK government has a strong belief that industries thrive when they embrace the challenges and opportunities offered by innovations in technology.

Digitisation

This includes creative industries and the arts; my Department recently published the Culture is Digital report on how the art and technology sectors can work together.

I am pleased to see that the art market is already engaging with the possibilities of digitising the history of the creation and ownership of a work.

And that the art market is considering an international standard, with a consistent approach to recording provenance and assessing how this would affect collectors, artists and the structure of the market itself.

Potentially, one of the most exciting technological developments is blockchain. This is a technology that the UK government has invested in through Innovate UK and the Research Councils, and one that many government departments are experimenting with, through proof of concept projects.

As a system that could record the provenance of a work, promote regulatory compliance and improve royalty collection for artists, blockchain could have wide applications for the art market.

These possibilities were explored recently in a report: The Art Market 2.0. It concluded that not only could blockchain transform the art market, but given it is at an early stage of development, the art market could also influence the shaping of blockchain. I'm pleased to see that the UK art market is at the forefront of exploring those ideas.

Today's sessions cover a wide variety of suggestions, ideas and possibilities. There is a formidable array of knowledge, expertise and experience, both amongst the speakers, and in the audience.

Events like today are crucial if we are to make sure the magic and wonder of art is to be preserved for future generations, just as others preserved it for us.

I hope you all have an interesting and productive day. Thank you very much.