

Press release: Severn Crossing to be named The Prince of Wales Bridge

The Second Severn Crossing will be renamed The Prince of Wales Bridge at a special ceremony later this year, Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns announced today (5 April).

The renaming of the Second Severn Crossing, opened by Prince Charles in 1996, will mark The Prince of Wales' 70th birthday year, and will also mark the 60th anniversary of The Queen 'creating' him The Prince of Wales at the closing ceremony of the British Empire and Commonwealth Games in Cardiff in 1958. The Prince was nine-years-old.

Now known as the Commonwealth Games, this year's competition was officially opened by The Prince of Wales on behalf of The Queen on the Gold Coast, Australia earlier today.

The announcement was confirmed by the Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns who also confirmed that the renaming would be marked in a special ceremony attended by The Prince in Wales later this year.

Welsh Secretary Alun Cairns said:

I'm delighted to announce that – with the agreement of the Prime Minister and Her Majesty The Queen – the Second Severn Crossing will be renamed the Prince of Wales Bridge.

The announcement is a fitting tribute to His Royal Highness in a year that sees him mark 60 years as The Prince of Wales and decades of continued, dedicated service to our nation.

Renaming one of the most iconic landmarks in Wales is a fitting way to formally recognise his commitment and dedication to Wales and the UK as the Prince of Wales.

We look forward to marking the occasion at a special event later this year when the new Prince of Wales Bridge and its sister bridge will be seen as positive symbols of a newly invigorated economic and social partnership between south Wales and south west England, and the strength of the United Kingdom.

The announcement comes in the year that the tolls to use the Severn Crossings will be abolished by the UK Government.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

Lower charges on the Severn bridges have already saved drivers more

than £3 million – helping boost the economy in Wales and the South West. This is a great way to usher in a new era for this iconic crossing.

When the tolls are removed by the end of this year, more people will be able to take advantage of even more new job and business opportunities on both sides of the Prince of Wales bridge.

Tens of millions of motorists a year are set to benefit, saving them money and cutting journey times. Car drivers who use the crossing every day will save a minimum of £115 a month and businesses across the area will see a further benefit by seeing an end to the £16 charge for lorries. The south Wales economy alone is set to receive a boost of around £100 million a year.

Doing so will also drive the biggest economic stimulus Wales has seen in decades and create the most natural economic growth corridor spanning Cardiff through Newport to Bristol highlighted in the recently published Industrial Strategy.

Press release: Digital mortgage signed by borrower and registered at HM Land Registry

Today, the first digital mortgage deed was entered into the Land Register. Part of the 'Sign your mortgage deed' service, HM Land Registry is building for a future without the need for a witness to watch as the homeowner applies an ink signature to a paper mortgage deed, saving time and providing a more secure service to homeowners, lenders and conveyancers.

The registration forms part of [HM Land Registry's plans to transform](#) the conveyancing market through quicker and simpler digital services and improved use of technology, making transactions instantaneous where possible and simplifying the home buying process. The registration of the deed follows months of collaboration and testing with Coventry Building Society and Enact Conveyancing and uses [GOV.UK Verify](#) to enable borrowers to securely verify their identity before digitally signing their mortgage deed online.

HM Land Registry Chief Executive and Chief Land Registrar Graham Farrant said:

By working with partners in the industry, we have secured a simpler and faster service for the benefit of home owners. We are looking forward to rolling this out nationally and will be working with

more conveyancers and lenders to do so.

Peter Frost, Chief Operating Officer at Coventry Building Society said:

We're delighted to have worked with HM Land Registry and Enact Conveyancing on this industry leading initiative to speed up property transactions. Initial feedback has been very positive, with customers finding the process simple, quick and secure. Although this initiative has started with re-mortgages we're excited about the potential for it to be extended to purchases in the future.

Ben Carroll, Enact Conveyancing's Managing Director said:

We emphasise innovation that benefits our customers and improves their experience, so we are extremely pleased to join HM Land Registry and Coventry Building Society on this pioneering effort to transform the conveyancing process. This fully-digitised journey will mean that a customer can sign their mortgage deed online at a time and place of their choosing, securely underpinned by the GOV.UK Verify platform.

Notes to editors

1. Using the 'Sign your mortgage deed' service will mean the borrower will no longer need to apply pen to paper and will instead digitally sign their deed online.
2. Borrowers will save time as they won't have to get their signatures witnessed or risk their documents being lost in the post. They will be able to log in and sign their deed at any time, meaning their application is more likely to move along more quickly.
3. Borrowers using the service will confirm their identity using [GOV.UK Verify](#).
4. HM Land Registry safeguards land and property ownership worth in excess of £4 trillion, including around £1 trillion of mortgages. The Land Register contains more than 25 million titles showing evidence of ownership for more than 85% of the land mass of England and Wales.
5. HM Land Registry's mission is to guarantee and protect property rights in England and Wales. HM Land Registry is a government department created in 1862. It operates as an executive agency and a trading fund and its running costs are covered by the fees paid by the users of its services. Its ambition is to become the world's leading land registry for speed, simplicity and an open approach to data.
6. For further information about HM Land Registry visit [gov.uk/land-registry](#).
7. Follow us on: Twitter [@HMLandRegistry](#), our [blog](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#).
8. Enact Conveyancing is the UK's largest direct conveyancing firm providing remortgage and home mover services to the mortgage industry

and individual consumers.

9. Coventry Building Society is the UK's second largest building society and a top ten provider of savings and mortgages with over 1.8 million members.

Contact

[Press release: Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson responds to defeat of Russia's proposals at OPCW](#)

The international community has once again stood with Britain in the face of Russian attempts to obscure the truth of the Skripal case.

At today's special session of the Executive Council in The Hague called by Russia, Russia proposed a joint UK-Russia inquiry into the attempted murder in Salisbury. Russia demanded this session before the OPCW has completed its technical assistance to the UK. Russia's proposal for a joint investigation was robustly defeated, receiving only six votes from the 41-strong Executive Council. Russia is continuing its diversionary tactics by asking now for an emergency session of the UN Security Council tomorrow, again without waiting for the OPCW to do its work.

Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said:

The purpose of Russia's ludicrous proposal at The Hague was clear – to undermine the independent, impartial work of the international chemical weapons watchdog. Russia has had one goal in mind since the attempted murders on UK soil through the use of a military-grade chemical weapon – to obscure the truth and confuse the public.

The international community has yet again seen through these tactics and robustly defeated Russia's attempts today to derail the proper international process.

It shows that many countries around the world continue to share our assessment of what happened in Salisbury and are determined to stand up to Russia's behaviour.

What's more, none of us have forgotten that today marks a year since so many people were barbarically killed in a chemical weapons attack in Syria. After the OPCW-UN investigation found that the Syrian regime was responsible, Russia blocked that body from doing

any more work.

It seems Russia will never accept the legitimacy of any investigation into chemical weapons use unless it comes up with an answer Russia likes.

Notes to Editors

At the OPCW at The Hague today:

- Only six of the 41 members voted in favour of the Russian draft decision proposing the joint UK/Russian investigation. 15 voted against, including the UK, 17 abstained, 2 were absent, and one was not entitled to vote.
- Only 13 signed up to Russia's statement, according to Russia. There are 192 States Parties, any of whom could have decided to sign up.

Further information

[Press release: PM call with President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi: 4 April 2018](#)

PM call with President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi: 4 April 2018 – GOV.UK

Prime Minister Theresa May speaks with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi.



A Downing Street spokesperson said:

UK Prime Minister Theresa May spoke this afternoon with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi following his re-election over the weekend.

She congratulated President Sisi on the chance to take Egypt further along the path of democratic transition and said that his public commitment to respecting Egyptian presidential term-limits sent an important and powerful signal about his vision for the country's future.

The Prime Minister said she looked forward to working closely with President Sisi during his final term in office and that the UK wanted Egypt to succeed as a stable, prosperous and democratic country.

The pair discussed how the two countries can continue to work together to further Egypt's economic and education reforms and support its counter-terrorism efforts. President Sisi noted the UK's experience and expertise in these areas and the potential benefits to Egypt. They looked forward to developing the bilateral relationship in all fields.

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Thank you for your feedback