

News story: UK set for new Birmingham warship and will keep amphibious assault ships, Defence Secretary announces

Speaking in Birmingham, the Defence Secretary outlined that one of Britain's new cutting-edge Type 26 frigates will be called HMS Birmingham, becoming the fourth Royal Navy ship to bear that name.

The 6,900-tonne frigates will be world-class anti-submarine warships and will provide cutting-edge protection for the likes of the UK's nuclear deterrent and the Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers, with the ability to conduct a whole range of other operations anywhere in the world.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

Three of our nation's ships have proudly borne the name Birmingham. Those ships won five battle honours. Today, in honour of this great city, we will be naming one of our eight Type 26 global combat ships HMS Birmingham.

HMS Birmingham is the fourth of the UK's eventual eight Type 26 frigates to be named, with HMS Glasgow, HMS Belfast and HMS Cardiff the first three to be built. The frigates will begin to enter service in the 2020s. All the ships are being constructed by BAE Systems on the Clyde in Scotland, where the project is guaranteeing 20 years of work and safeguarding over 4,000 jobs. HMS Birmingham will be part of the second batch of ships to be ordered in the early 2020s.

She will be the fourth ship to be named in honour of the Midlands city, with the first being launched in 1913 and playing a key role in the First World War. The last, a Type 42 destroyer, took part in a range of missions including safeguarding international shipping during the Iran-Iraq War and patrolling the Falkland Islands before leaving service in 1999. The Defence Secretary also put to bed any speculation about the future of amphibious assault ships HMS Bulwark and HMS Albion being withdrawn from service early.

He said:

To deliver what seems impossible, the Royal Marines need to be able to bring the fight from the sea to the land. As such, I am happy to announce today that I am protecting their vital landing platforms HMS Albion and HMS Bulwark.

The two ships deliver the punch of the Royal Marines ashore by air and by sea. Boats from the landing dock in the belly of the ship can be sent ashore with Marines on-board, whilst assault helicopters can be launched from the flight deck.

Throughout their time in service, the ships have conducted a range of vital missions including securing Iraqi oil platforms, tackling terror and piracy in the Horn of Africa, playing a key role in migrant search and rescue operations and evacuating British citizens from warzones in Libya and the Ivory Coast. HMS Albion is currently supporting peace and security in the Asia-Pacific, promoting UK interests across the world as the nation's flagship.

[Press release: Patients lives to be greatly improved by technology revolutions in healthcare](#)

- Winners announced to receive funding that could revolutionise healthcare
- The projects include developing artificial intelligence for bed availability in hospitals, 3D printing to create tablets and smart phone applications to improve the treatment of complex wounds
- Technology can transform health and social care, improving treatment and deliver better care for patients

Breakthrough technologies to revolutionise UK healthcare get a step closer to becoming reality following a government competition. A GPS app to track where porters and available beds are in hospitals, 3D printing technology for tablets and smartphone apps to monitor and improve treatment of long-term complex wounds are just some of the things being developed by the businesses and academics.

The projects that are collectively to receive over £17 million funding to develop their innovations are based throughout the UK, including Devon, Cumbria, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Cardiff, Manchester, Oxford, Cambridge and London highlighting the breadth of strengths in addressing new and emerging issues in our world-leading healthcare industry.

Business Secretary Greg Clark said:

Technology is revolutionising industries across our economy, and new innovations play a key role in advancing our healthcare sector to make sure people are living longer, healthier and happier lives.

By pooling the expertise of the public and private sectors, as

highlighted through the [Life Sciences Sector Deal](#) and the modern Industrial Strategy, we are making every opportunity to reach our full potential in finding new discoveries and technologies to diagnose illnesses earlier that could lead to more lives being saved.

The funding, through the [Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund](#) managed by UK Research and Innovation, will also support efforts to enable antibodies to be taken orally rather than through invasive injections and increasing the range of medicines that can be delivered through skin patches.

Ian Campbell, Executive Chair of Innovate UK, for UK Research and Innovation said:

The projects we have funded today aim to make a real difference for patients and clinicians. They represent the very best of British innovation, focussing on improved patient outcomes and driving efficiency. The UK health sector is thriving, with SMEs playing a crucial role. By supporting this sector, as part of the government's modern industrial strategy, we can ensure we remain global leaders in health innovation and create the jobs of tomorrow.

The development of new and innovative technologies is changing the economy. Through the modern Industrial Strategy the government is committed to embracing emerging technology to transform industries and increase productivity, create new highly skilled jobs and improve living standards.

Matt Hancock, the Secretary of State of Health and Social Care, said:

Innovative technology has the potential to truly transform healthcare for patients and staff. From artificial intelligence to VR to live tracking of hospital beds and equipment, there are so many ways in which the NHS is embracing tech. We are determined to make the NHS the most technologically advanced healthcare system in the world and today's prizes will help progress towards that goal.

Winners of the Digital Health Catalyst competition include:

- Satalia, working with Great Ormond Street Hospital, London, will use AI to schedule operating theatre use linked to downstream bed availability on ICU and wards
- Medical Data Solutions and Services, working with Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust, will deliver a programme using smartphones apps to support healthcare professionals and patients to monitor and improve treatment of long-term complex wounds
- Kinosis, working with UCL Hospitals NHS Trust, London, will use AI and digital visualisation technologies to improve surgical support and

performance while assisting the standardisation of surgical procedures through better management of real-time information – the ‘Intelligent Operating Room’

- Navenio Ltd, working with the University of Oxford, will accelerate and enhance systems to track location of porters and equipment in a hospital, for maximum efficiency – ‘an Uber for porters’
- Cadscan, working with Chester Hospitals Trust, will deliver a virtual reality platform using VR headsets to help people recover after a stroke

Winners of the Medicine Manufacturing round 2 challenge fund competition include:

- FABRX Ltd, in Ashford Kent, who are developing a 3D printing process to manufacture tablets, allowing the desk-top production of medicines with their doses tailored to individual patients and potentially combining several medicines into a single pill
- Intract Pharma, in Cambridge, who are testing a new technology that will allow antibodies to be taken orally, rather than through invasive injections
- Medherant, in Coventry, who are applying a new technology that should greatly increase the range of medicines that can be delivered by skin patches. This may be particularly suitable for patients where traditional tablets are difficult to administer – such as for very small children or the frail elderly

Round 3 of the Digital Health Technology Catalyst competition is now open. Businesses can apply for:

[News story: Fighter jets join forces with British aircraft carrier to make history](#)

Royal Navy Commander Nathan Gray and RAF Squadron Leader Andy Edgell were the first pilots to land their stealth F-35 Lightning fighter jets on board the carrier, demonstrating the formidable force HMS Queen Elizabeth and her fleet of jets will be.

The first landings and take-offs from HMS Queen Elizabeth are the culmination of a national endeavour lasting more than a decade to bring an aircraft carrier back to the UK’s arsenal. Able to embark up to 36 of the supersonic jets, the carrier provides the Royal Navy with a capability possessed by few others.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

The largest warship in British history is joining forces with the most advanced fighter jets on the planet. This marks a rebirth of our power to strike decisively from the seas anywhere in the world.

The historic first landing on the deck of HMS Queen Elizabeth is a monumental moment in our country's proud military history. It is also a statement of Britain's determination to promote peace and prevent war.

Fighter jets join forces with British aircraft carrier to make history

The landings mark the start of more than 500 take-offs and touch-downs set to take place from the mammoth warship during the next 11-weeks, with the jets being put through their paces in a range of weather conditions.

The return of 'Carrier Strike' to the UK comes eight years after a fighter jet last landed on a British carrier.

Commanding Officer, Capt Jerry Kyd, who was also the captain of HMS Ark Royal when the last Harrier took off from a carrier, said:

I am quite emotional to be here in HMS Queen Elizabeth seeing the return of fixed wing aviation, having been the captain of the aircraft carrier which launched the last Harrier at sea nearly eight years ago.

The regeneration of big deck carriers able to operate globally, as we are proving here on this deployment, is a major step forward for the United Kingdom's defence and our ability to match the increasing pace of our adversaries. The first touch-downs of these impressive stealth jets shows how the United Kingdom will continue to be world leaders at sea for generations to come.

Fighter jets join forces with British aircraft carrier to make history

Commander UK Carrier Strike Group, Cdre Andrew Betton added:

The Queen Elizabeth Class carriers have been specifically designed and built to operate the F-35 Lightning, offering an immensely flexible and potent combination to deliver military effect around the world. Conducting these trials is a critical and exciting step on this journey and I applaud the many thousands of civilian and military personnel who have played a part in bringing the strategic ambition to reality.

While the HMS Queen Elizabeth Class carriers will be able to project British military power across the globe for the next half-century, they can also provide humanitarian relief, deepen defence relationships with key allies and

provide critical support to our forces as they are deployed across the world.

In recent operations, US aircraft carriers like the USS George HW Bush and USS Harry S. Truman have played a central role in the Gulf and the Mediterranean, conducting strikes against Daesh in Iraq and Syria.

This week's historic flight trials come more than 100 years after the UK's HMS Argus became the world's first carrier capable of safely launching and recovering naval aircraft.

The ship will go on to continue her programme off the US east coast. The flight trials are expected to take around 11 weeks, during which time the ship is also expected to call into New York.

HMS Queen Elizabeth remains set to be deployed on global operations from 2021. Britain now has sixteen of a planned 138 F-35 Lightning jets as part of its world-leading fleet of military aircraft.

Fighter jets join forces with British aircraft carrier to make history

News story: Cadet Forces increase social mobility and help young people's self-belief, new report finds

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson has welcomed an independent report highlighting the positive effects of Cadet Forces as dozens of new units across the UK are approved.

The University of Northampton's independent report, published today, finds that joining the cadets offers a range of benefits to individuals and the wider community. Following research across the entire cadet organisation, the report outlines the huge positive impact that Cadet Forces have on social inclusion, mobility and the mental wellbeing of young people.

Speaking today at Aston University Engineering Academy, a state school with an RAF Cadet Force, the Defence Secretary also announced the approval of 30 new cadet units in schools across the UK. Part of the Cadet Expansion Programme, these latest approvals bring the total of units up to 472, benefiting approximately 43,000 cadets.

Speaking at the academy, Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

Being a cadet offers students unrivalled opportunities to develop new skills, enjoy unforgettable life experiences, and be inspired by our world class Armed Forces.

This report confirms that joining the cadets gives people from all communities the confidence to succeed in life and I'm pleased these latest approvals for new units will give even more young people the opportunity to join the cadets.

The report concludes that being a member of the Cadet Forces:

- increased an individual's belief in their ability to complete specific tasks;
- improved their motivation;
- improved school attendance and led to better behaviour and attitudes; and
- may lead to greater academic success which can contribute to increasing social mobility.

Many respondents commented on how being a member of a Cadet Force had improved their confidence, teamwork skills and homework completion. The report also identified links with resilience, leadership, teamwork, attendance, behaviour and communication skills.

Professor Simon Denny, Executive Dean: Research, Impact and Enterprise, The University of Northampton said:

The evidence so far has been overwhelmingly positive and demonstrates that the Cadet Forces make a huge difference to improve school attendance, develop confidence and help young people become more successful.

The new cadet units, established under Cadet Expansion Programme, are backed by £50 million funding from LIBOR funds, which pays for set up costs, cadets uniforms, equipment and training.

The schools that will be setting up new cadet units are:

- Alton School – Hampshire
- Armadale Academy – West Lothian
- Arthur Mellows Village College – East Anglia
- Birkenhead High School Academy – Merseyside
- Blessed John Henry Newman Roman Catholic College – Greater Manchester
- Broadoak Mathematics and Computing College – Somerset
- Camborne Science and International Academy – Cornwall
- Cardiff and Vale College – Cardiff
- Chatham & Clarendon Grammar School – Kent

- Chatham Grammar School for Girls – Kent
- Dame Elizabeth Cadbury School – West Midlands
- East Norfolk Sixth Form College – East Anglia
- Gateacre School – Merseyside
- Harris Academy Chafford Hundred – Essex
- Ixworth Free School – East Anglia
- John Lyon School – Harrow
- La Retraite Roman Catholic Girls' School – London
- Liverpool Life Sciences UTC – Merseyside
- Llandarcy Academy of Sport – Glamorgan
- Millfield School – Somerset
- Reading UTC – Berkshire
- Stamford Welland Academy – East Midlands
- Streatham and Clapham High School – London
- The Boswells School – Essex
- The De La Salle Academy – Merseyside
- The Stockwood Park Academy – Bedfordshire
- Thistley Hough Academy – West Midlands
- Torquay Academy – Devon
- Walkden High School – Manchester
- Wellacre Technology Academy – Lancashire

Press release: Northern Powerhouse attracts record visitor numbers

- Tourists flock to Northern counties to take in the sights and enjoy local attractions
- Overnight stays across the Northern Powerhouse rise by around 5%, while spending increases too
- North East region sees the highest increase in visitors with a 17% increase in the number of trips and a 14% increase in the number of overnight stays

All Northern Powerhouse regions have seen a jump in overnight stays according to new figures out today (28 September 2018).

Overall visitor numbers across the whole region have increased by around 5% in a year. The highest gains in number of trips however, has been witnessed by the North East with over 200,000 more visitors to the area than the year before – a remarkable 17% increase.

According to Visit England, in the 6 months to June 2018 the number of overnight stays in the Northern Powerhouse increased by 4.3% to 33.6 million compared to the same period last year.

People have spent more too – a total of £2.3 billion in fact, an increase on last year's figures.

The UK has enjoyed one of the hottest summers on record, while data recently published by Visit England shows that 8 out of the 10 most visited cities and towns in England were in the Northern Powerhouse.

Northern Powerhouse Minister, Jake Berry MP, said:

As a proud Northerner, I'm delighted to see that thousands more people are flocking to the North to share in the culture, natural beauty and entertainment attractions.

And it's quite easy to see why. There's lots going on for families thanks to investment in landmark seaside attractions like the Spanish City in Whitley Bay and the Blackpool Illuminations in Lancashire, supported by our Coastal Communities Fund.

As people visit the Northern Powerhouse they're spending billions of pounds too, which means more money for smaller businesses and this protects jobs. I'd encourage more people to visit the North and see for themselves why it's such a great place to enjoy and do business.