

Corporate report: Cefas: Civil Service People Survey 2017

The survey shows responses by theme:

- leadership and managing change
- involvement in work
- management
- team
- learning and development
- inclusion and fair treatment
- pay and benefits

News story: £200 million funding boost for England's roads

£46 million to help repair potholes.

Road users will benefit from an investment of almost £200 million to help improve the condition of local roads up and down the country, Transport Minister Jesse Norman announced in York today (December 14 2017).

This funding will go towards repairing almost 1 million potholes, and will also be used for highways maintenance, developing new technologies to improve highways resilience, and high quality cycle parks.

The £200 million announced includes:

The Transport Minister visited York to see the progress of the innovative pothole spotter trial and a new e-bike, which will be 11th vehicle to have cameras fitted to it as part of the pilot, which is also running in Thurrock and Wiltshire.

The trial sees high-definition cameras fitted to bicycles, buses and bin lorries to monitor road conditions. It gives councils detailed information so they can fill potholes when they occur as well as plan resurfacing works and help prevent potholes and other road defects.

Roads Minister Jesse Norman said:

People need great roads to get about, do business and see friends and family.

We're investing record amounts at present to improve the condition of our roads, so drivers and cyclists don't have to dodge potholes to travel safely.

We're also looking at how new innovations can help councils keep their roads in the best condition, saving money and planning their maintenance better.

Almost 1 million more potholes will be repaired by highway authorities in England, outside London, thanks to £46 million of additional funding, which is on top of the £75 million [Pothole Action Fund](#) already given to councils this year. The £250 million Pothole Action Fund was announced in the 2016 Budget and will fix more than 4 million potholes by 2020/21.

The next round of the local highways maintenance incentive fund was also launched today with £151 million to reward councils for efficiently planning roads maintenance. This money is part of just over £6 billion to authorities to help keep their roads in a good condition.

A new £500,000 competition will also challenge councils to develop pilot projects of new connected technologies for the collection of road condition and pothole data.

A further £4 million will enable the government's Cycle Rail Programme to continue to be funded next year. The project pays for high quality cycle parking built at stations and has seen bike journeys at participating stations increase by nearly 40%. Since 2012, the Department for Transport has invested almost £35 million to build cycle facilities at stations, including cycle hubs which are secure and have retail and repair facilities.

The pilot Cycling and Walking to Work fund will also be extended by 6 months, with Greater Manchester, West Yorkshire and Liverpool benefitting from a share of £1.6 million.

[Press release: BBFC proposed to enforce age verification of online pornography](#)

Age verification will mean anyone who makes pornography available online on a commercial basis must ensure under 18s in the UK cannot access it. This is part of the Government's continuing work to make the UK the safest place in the world to be online.

The BBFC has unparalleled expertise in classifying content and has a proven

track record of interpreting and implementing legislation as the statutory authority for age rating videos under the Video Recordings Act.

This, along with its work with industry on the film classification system and more recently classifying material for mobile network operators, makes them the preferred choice for regulator.

Digital Minister Matt Hancock said:

One of the missions of age verification is to harness the freedom of the internet while mitigating its harms. Offline, as a society we protect children from viewing inappropriate adult material by ensuring pornography is sold responsibly using appropriate age checks. It is now time that the online world follows suit. The BBFC are the best placed in the world to do this important and delicate task.

David Austin, Chief Executive Officer at BBFC said:

The BBFC's primary aim is to protect children and other vulnerable groups from harmful content and we are therefore pleased to accept the Government's proposed designation.

Age-verification barriers will help to prevent children accessing or stumbling across pornographic content online. The UK is leading the way with this age-verification regime and will set an international precedent in child protection.

The government's proposal must be approved by Parliament before the BBFC is officially designated as the age-verification regulator.

The regulator will notify non-compliant pornographic providers, and be able to direct internet service providers to prevent customers accessing these sites. It will also notify payment-services providers and other ancillary service providers of these sites, with the intention that they can withdraw their services.

The Government will shortly also publish guidance on how the regulator should fulfil its duties in relation to age verification.

Notes to Editors:

- Once designated, the regulator will develop and issue guidance (subject to parliamentary approval) on the age-verification arrangements for online pornographic material that it will treat as compliant and the role of ancillary service providers
- With regards to privacy, the regulator's guidance will set out the expectation that age-verification services and online pornography providers should have regard to the ICO's guidance on data protection

and wider data protection laws..

- The Digital Economy Act requires that companies delivering adult content in the UK act responsibly by having robust age verification controls in place to prevent children accessing explicit material.
- The regulator will also have powers to take action where a person is making available extreme pornographic material on the internet in the United Kingdom. Extreme pornography is defined in section 22 of the Digital Economy Act.
- Age verification for online pornography is being taken forward alongside implementation of the Government's recently launched [Internet Safety Strategy](#).
- A 2016 report by the NSPCC found that nearly two thirds (65%) of 15-16 year olds and just under half (48%) of 11-16 year olds had viewed online pornography. Over a quarter (28%) of 11-12 year olds had seen pornography on the internet. It also found that children were just as likely to stumble across pornography (28%) as to search for it deliberately (19%).
- Research shows that viewing pornography at a young age can cause distress, and can have a harmful effect on sexual development, beliefs, and relationships. Pornography tops the list of online risks named by children, with more than one in five young people expressing concern about such content according to [EU Kids Online research in 2013](#).

[Corporate report: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs single departmental plan](#)

Updated: Added the May 2018 version of the plan.

Our single departmental plan sets out our objectives and how we will achieve them.

[News story: Brakes are off as reactor clean-up moves forward](#)

Engineers also used the wheels from a kitchen can opener, attached to the handbrake, to help steer a camera inside the Prototype Fast Reactor (PFR) for

a survey inside the plant.

Conditions inside the reactor make it impossible for workers to access, meaning photographs taken by the piece of kit help in understanding how best to go about dismantling the redundant facility.

Chris Irwin, Senior Design Engineer, came up with the innovative concept. He said:

I was opening a can of beans at home and realised that the cutting wheel of a can opener was exactly what was needed to make the required diamond-shaped wheel.

I bought four of them and took the wheels off. The camera needed to be guided over obstacles within the reactor, so we realised the incremental nature of the clicks on a handbrake would give us the precise control that we needed.

This is the latest in a long line of novel approaches developed by the company's workforce, with blu-tack and Cillit Bang among the everyday items that have previously been used to help deliver safe and cost-effective clean-up on behalf of the site's owner, the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority.

We are delivering one of the most challenging closure programmes in Europe, but this is another example where innovative, simple solutions prove critical in safely delivering complex projects.

PFR is one of three reactors at the former centre of fast reactor research. It was closed down in 1994, 20 years after it began producing power.