

Notice: Old Bedford River: upstream of Welney and Salters Lode

When: 11 to 25 April 2017

What's happening: essential fisheries surveys will be taking place along the stretch of the Old Bedford River.

Press release: New charity investigation: Believe in Magic

The Charity Commission, the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales, has today (6 April 2017) confirmed that it opened a statutory inquiry into [Believe in Magic, registered charity number 1145557](#) on 7 February 2017, and has frozen its bank account.

The charity has objects to relieve the needs of children and young people up to the age of 18 in the UK suffering from serious or terminal illness and their family and carers as the trustees shall determine.

The Commission engaged with the charity's trustees in August 2016 about a number of regulatory concerns identified from multiple complaints about the charity and from the Commission's own scrutiny of the charity.

An investigation has now been opened as the Commission has been unable to adequately address any of its concerns with the trustees and because there are indications of misconduct or mismanagement. The investigation will:

1. Consider whether, and to what extent, the charity is operating in furtherance of its charitable objects and for the public benefit.
2. Examine the administration, governance and management of the charity by the trustees, in particular the extent to which the trustees have:
 - acted in the charity's best interests and acted in accordance with their legal duties
 - responsibly managed the charity's resources and financial affairs
 - ensured that conflicts of interest in the charity have been adequately avoided or managed
 - properly authorised benefits to trustees and connected persons
3. Examine the trustees' non-compliance with their reporting duties, specifically the non-submission of the charity's annual accounts and reports.

To protect the assets of the charity, the Commission has frozen the charity's

bank account under section 76(3)(d) of the Charities Act 2011 which will prohibit the charity from making payments or withdrawing money from the account unless they have the Commission's prior authorisation. The Commission has also directed the charity under section 47 of the Charities Act to provide information and documentation that will assist the inquiry.

It is the Commission's policy, after it has concluded an inquiry, to publish a report detailing what issues the inquiry looked at, what actions were undertaken as part of the inquiry and what the outcomes were. [Reports of previous inquiries](#) by the Commission are available on GOV.UK.

The charity's details can be viewed on the Commission's [online charity search tool](#).

Ends

PR 31/17

Notes to editors

1. [The Charity Commission](#) is the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales. To find out more about our work, see our [annual report](#).
 2. Search for charities on our [online register](#).
 3. Details of how the Commission reports on its regulatory work can be found on [GOV.UK](#).
 4. Section 46 of the Charities Act 2011 gives the Commission the power to institute inquiries. The opening of an inquiry gives the Commission access to a range of investigative, protective and remedial legal powers.
 5. The Commission's decision to announce the opening of a statutory inquiry is based on whether it is in the public interest to do so and with consideration of our objective to increase public trust and confidence in charities.
 6. An order was made on 10 March 2017 to restrict the charity's bank account under section 76(3)(d) of the Charities Act 2011.
 7. A direction was made under section 47 of the Charities Act on 10 March 2017.
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[Notice: RH5 6HN, Europa Oil & Gas Limited: environmental permit](#)

application advertisement

The Environment Agency consults the public on certain applications for waste operations, mining waste operations, installations, water discharge and groundwater activities. The arrangements are explained in its [Public Participation Statement](#)

These notices explain:

- what the application is about
- where you can visit to see the application documents
- when you need to comment by

The Environment Agency will decide:

- whether to grant or refuse the application
 - what conditions to include in the permit (if granted)
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News story: Perceptions of A levels and GCSEs in England: wave 15

Highlights from the survey:

Perceptions of GCSEs, AS and A levels

1. Confidence in the GCSE, AS and A level systems is significantly higher than in previous years. Levels of trust and confidence in the maintenance of standards have also improved.
2. Overall figures show that, compared to last year and previous waves, significantly higher proportions of stakeholders agreed that GCSEs “are a trusted qualification” (65% to 72%), that “standards are maintained year on year” (30% to 40%), and that “marking of GCSEs is accurate” (26% to 38%).
3. A significantly higher proportion of stakeholders also agreed that “AS and A level standards are maintained year on year” (37% to 47%), and that “the marking of AS and A levels is accurate” (31% to 41%).
4. Around twice as many young people agreed than disagreed that GCSE and AS and A level marking was accurate. The net proportion of teachers in

agreement was also larger for both sets of qualifications than in previous years.

Perceptions of GCSE reform

1. The proportion of stakeholders who, in autumn 2016, were aware of the new 9 to 1 grading system was significantly higher than in wave 14. However, this improving picture of understanding is unlikely to reflect current levels of awareness, as Ofqual has since undertaken a wide-ranging communications and engagement campaign to raise awareness and understanding of the new grading system.

National Reference Test

1. The first National Reference Test was undertaken in England in February and March this year. The data suggest that in November last year about half of surveyed head teachers were aware of the test. Ofqual, and its delivery partner NFER, have since provided more information to schools, so these results are unlikely to be a true reflection of the current picture. Awareness and familiarity of the test is expected to improve as more schools are engaged with it over coming years.

Review of marking and appeals

1. Parents, young people and the general public strongly agreed that the systems used by schools and colleges to challenge GCSE, AS and A level results in England are fair. Teachers were also more likely to agree than disagree.
2. There was no change in the proportion of stakeholders who were aware of the review of marking, moderation and appeals systems compared with last year, and head teachers remained the group with the highest claimed awareness, at 75%.
3. When asked about whether they felt that they had adequate information about exam boards' review of marking, moderation and appeals systems, overall more stakeholders disagreed (45%) than agreed (28%).
4. Awareness of the systems for appealing vocational qualification results was much lower, with only half of head teachers and a quarter of teachers responding that they knew about the process.

Special consideration, reasonable adjustments and

malpractice

1. Head teachers and teachers agreed by significant margins that they have adequate information about the arrangements and adjustments available for eligible GCSE, AS and A level students. They also agreed that it is fair, and that the right adjustments are made for the right students.
2. They also strongly agreed that they have adequate information about what constitutes malpractice and to whom it should be reported and that allegations are fairly investigated.

Commenting on today's release, Michelle Meadows, Deputy Chief Regulator, Ofqual, said:

We are pleased that confidence in GCSEs, AS and A levels is improving. This bears out anecdotal feedback we have had from stakeholders about how we have engaged the sector with the reform programme and other changes we have introduced.

This is one of many positives reflected in the report.

We continue to be in period of major reform and many of the systems and processes surveyed in this report are currently changing. There will inevitably be a period of bedding in as teachers and schools become more familiar with the changes. This is certainly true of the National Reference Test.

We also know that since this research was carried out we have done even more work around the new 9 to 1 grading structure, so the current position is likely to be better than reported here, but it still encouraging to see the figures increasing from this time last year.

Read the [full Official Statistics](#).

[Speech: Malaysia and Britain: Partners in a post-Brexit world](#)

Good afternoon, and thank you all for that welcome. It is a pleasure to be here in Malaysia, and a privilege to be able to address the representatives of some of this country's leading firms.

Before I begin, I must start by thanking all of those who have made today's event possible.

Firstly, I am grateful to my Malaysian counterparts – the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, for hosting today's event and providing such an excellent venue.

The Malaysian External Trade Development Council and the Malaysian Investment Development Authority have also been instrumental in helping to deliver this event.

And, of course, The National Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia, and their counterpart the British Malaysia Chamber of Commerce, must be thanked for marketing this event, and ensuring such a distinguished audience.

A huge variety of industries are represented here today, from business services to infrastructure to aviation and everything in between.

Your presence here today is not only a gesture of commercial interest, but it is also an act of friendship, a signal of your desire to enhance Malaysia's trading relationship with the United Kingdom, as we open a new chapter in our nation's history.

As I'm sure many of you will be aware, last week the UK triggered Article 50, formally initiating our departure from the EU.

We are at the beginning of a 2 year-process, and over the next 24 months, Britain will not only negotiate a new relationship with the European Union, but will fundamentally recast our place in the world.

The UK government's ambition is to build a Global Britain – a nation that is outward-looking and internationalist, rejecting insularity and continuing to play a prominent role in global affairs.

Trade is central to this ambition.

We want Britain to become a global champion of free trade, a nation at the heart of world commerce, working with our international allies and partners to remove barriers and liberalise trading practices.

The UK is looking to agree a comprehensive new trading relationship with the European Union, but at the same time renew our commitment to our oldest and closest international partnerships, as we seek to embrace the wider world.

Our relationship with Malaysia is very important to the UK.

Our 2 countries have always enjoyed a close commercial, political and diplomatic partnership.

At an individual level, the relationship between the British and Malaysian peoples has never been stronger. There are over 17,000 Malaysians currently studying in the UK.

In addition, there are nearly 80,000 more studying for UK qualifications in Malaysia – a figure second only to China. We are very lucky to count Prime Minister Najib as a former student – one of half a million Malaysian alumni of British institutions.

Internationally, our co-operation remains as strong as ever. This is reflected not only in our membership of the Commonwealth, but also in the Five Powers Defence Arrangements.

Your economy is consistently ranked among the most competitive in the world, and like the UK, you are one of the top nations in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index.

Malaysia and the UK share a common attitude to trade and investment and a welcoming commercial environment.

At a time when protectionism and barriers to trade are going up across the world, Malaysia has a respect for trading freedoms that welcomes international investors.

This is exemplified by ASEAN, a network that is a world leader in economic growth and commercial opportunity. As a prominent member, Malaysia is an increasingly important partner not just for the UK, but the whole world.

I need hardly remind those here today of the fundamental strengths of the Malaysian economy.

It is because of this energy, drive and dynamism that I am here today, strengthening the economic and commercial ties that unite our nations.

Our partnership has already delivered much for both our countries.

A recent survey by the High Commission found that the UK's 24 leading investors in Malaysia, many of whom are represented here today, employ over 80,000 Malaysians and are responsible for investments worth over 90 billion ringgit.

These British companies have a unique confidence in Malaysia and her booming economy, and other UK investors are also helping to develop new industries and commercial sectors.

Dyson, for example, employ over 1,000 local engineers, and BAE Systems employs 400 highly skilled people here in Kuala Lumpur working in its Cyber Security Global Engineering Centre, including a graduate recruitment programme working in conjunction with local universities.

Such jobs are harnessing the talent and ambition of young Malaysians, and spreading the experience, knowledge and expertise of leading UK firms to the next generation.

They are investing in Malaysia's future.

International trade is, of course, a 2 way process, and the United Kingdom

has in turn benefitted hugely from Malaysian investors in recent years.

As the Malaysian economy has boomed, so has your investment in the UK. In the 5 years to 2016, it grew by an astonishing 200%, and was valued at £28.5 billion Ringgit, approximately £5.2 billion.

Among the most visible investment projects in the UK is the £10 billion regeneration of Battersea Power Station.

This iconic London landmark has been given a new lease of life by our partnership with Malaysia.

This country's investment has advanced a huge variety of the UK's industries, from healthcare to leisure to automotive engineering. It has become part of the fabric of British life.

Yet, for all these successes, there is more to be done.

Although we in the UK have been buying ever more Malaysian goods and services, our exports to your country have suffered a decline.

Overall, the value of our mutual trade has shrunk by 2.7% since 2013. It is a disappointing statistic for 2 such complementary economies.

There is no reason why this should be so. Both of our economies are experiencing remarkable growth.

The UK and Malaysia are both business friendly, outward-looking nations, brimming with commercial and investment opportunities.

I am here today to open a new chapter, to further promote our joint commerce and stimulate our mutual trading relationship.

In recognition of the substantial bilateral trade and investment opportunities that exist, the Prime Minister last year appointed a [Trade Envoy](#) to Malaysia, Richard Graham MP.

He is here with me today and has, with the support of our partner, the British Malaysia Chamber of Commerce, been busy scoping new opportunities for British and Malaysian companies to work together in Johor.

You can expect to see a lot more of him in the future!

My own Department for International Trade has been working to promote opportunities across key sectors.

Last year, DIT signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation, a move that has led to 2 UK visits, and significant interest from the UK technology and research sector in the huge opportunities available here.

Later this year, a 'mega-mission', of 50 of the UK's leading tech companies will visit Malaysia, looking to cement this relationship.

In 2016, the Education is GREAT campaign was officially launched, aiming to expand a sector that has been at the heart of our bilateral relationship for 2 centuries, since the first English international school opened in Penang in 1816.

Today, there are over 100 international schools teaching the British curriculum in Malaysia, 5 university branch campuses, and over 125 institutions that offer UK degrees.

This is a truly remarkable achievement, and will form the basis of a cultural, political and commercial partnership that will stretch far into the future.

The [GREAT campaign](#) is the largest of its kind in the world, a global drive to promote the UK as a destination for trade, investment, tourism and study.

Yet it is also about working with our partners to spread UK knowledge and expertise across the globe.

This Formula One season, [McLaren will become our official GREAT partners](#), working to promote British research and development strength and education in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

Look out for their GREAT branded cars at your own Grand Prix in October!

McLaren's involvement in the GREAT campaign illustrates a wider point that I wish to leave you with today.

Our government will do everything it can to promote trade and investment, but we cannot do it without you, our leading companies, to capitalise on these opportunities and expand that relationship.

You are the wealth creators. You are the ones who generate jobs, stimulate economic growth, and spread prosperity between our countries.

Our businesses matter. Not for nothing is Malaysia ranked among the best places in the world to do business.

Events like today are crucial if we are to build those business-to-business relationships, and seize the opportunities of the future.

My department is listening, and our team at the British High Commission will do everything they can to help you on that journey. But we cannot make it for you.

Malaysia is important to us, and our 2 countries have a long and prosperous history together.

But I firmly believe that the best days of our partnership lie ahead.

Our economies are complementary, we share the same values, and the connection between our nations, at every level, is stronger than ever.

As the UK leaves the European Union, we have an unprecedented opportunity to work with our partners across the world to drive prosperity, champion free trade, and deliver a better future for all our citizens.

Malaysia, and Malaysian companies, are our partners on this journey.

Thank you.