

News story: Graves of 2 north west soldiers killed in the great war rededicated a century later

The resting place of Lieutenant (Lt) Charles Stonehouse and Private (Pte) Frederick William Birks, have both been rededicated more than a century after their deaths. The rededication services took place today, Tuesday 3 July, at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) Serre Road Cemetery No. 3 on the Somme and Perth Cemetery (China Wall) near Ypres respectively.



New headstone for Lieutenant Charles Stonehouse with Regimental Wreath from the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment, Crown Copyright, All rights reserved

The services, organised by the MOD's Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC), part of Defence Business Services, were conducted by the Reverend Andrew Earl CF, Senior Chaplain HQ NW.

Rosie Barron, JCCC said:

It is an honour to have organised both rededication services for these 2 men and to have, after more than 100 years, given them their names back. It is important that the sacrifices of men such as Lieutenant Stonehouse and Private Birks are not forgotten and their stories are told to future generations.

The Reverend Andrew Earl, said:

It is a privilege to be asked to honour these 2 men who died in the service of their country as we gather and say, 'We will remember them'. We once again recall all those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice and give thanks for the freedoms we enjoy. May they rest in peace.



Five great nephews of Lieutenant Charles Stonehouse who attended today's ceremony in France, Crown Copyright, All rights reserved

Lt Stonehouse was a member of the 11th Battalion, The East Lancashire Regiment, better known as the Accrington Pals. On 1 July 1916, the first day of the Battle of the Somme, he led W Company into the battalion's attack on Serre, he was killed during the attack aged 34. With no known grave Lieutenant Stonehouse was commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial in the Somme region of France.

The rededication service at Serre Road Cemetery No. 3 was attended by members of Lieutenant Stonehouse's family.

Statement on behalf of those family members attending:

Twelve members of the Rowntree and Hoyle families, descendants of Charles Stonehouse's brother, Harry, and sister, Nellie, were very pleased to be able to attend the rededication service and felt a

great sense of humility and pride in the sacrifice made by our great uncle.

Pte Birks was killed on 2 July 1917 whilst serving with 17th Battalion, The King's (Liverpool Regiment) near Ypres. He was aged 36.



Attendees including representatives from the British Embassy and the Regiment at Private Frederick William Birks ceremony, Crown Copyright, All rights reserved

Pte Birks was buried in a small battlefield cemetery until after the great war when he was moved to Perth Cemetery (China Wall). However, by this point the wooden cross marking his grave had been damaged and his name was lost. New research found that this grave of an unknown soldier was in fact that of Private Birks and his name has now been added to his headstone. He was previously commemorated on the Menin Gate in Ypres.



Attendees including representatives from the British Embassy and the Regiment at Private Frederick William Birks ceremony, Crown Copyright, All rights reserved

The final resting places of these two soldiers came to light after researchers submitted evidence regarding their whereabouts. Further research was undertaken by the JCCC and the National Army Museum to corroborate the submitted evidence and the identification of the 'Unknown Soldier' graves were finally confirmed by the JCCC.

Mel Donnelly, CWGC said:

Commemorated on memorials to the missing for almost a century, it is now known that Lieutenant Stonehouse had been buried in Serre Road No 3 Cemetery and Private Birks in Perth Cemetery (China Wall). Thanks to the dedicated efforts of many, they have now been identified and today the Commonwealth War Graves Commission are honoured to be able to mark their graves with headstones bearing their names.

Two new headstones bearing the names of Lieutenant Stonehouse and Private Birks have been provided by the CWGC, who will now care for their final resting places in perpetuity.

[Press release: Sussex land acquisition will unlock development of more than 3,000 homes](#)

Burgess Hill is a 176 ha site capable of delivering 3,080 new homes and is a strategic priority in the recently adopted District Plan.

The Promoters had successfully secured the allocation of the site via the Local Plan Process and had worked closely with the local community to advance the scheme.

The site has been identified for more than 10 years as a key location for major housing delivery.

However, due to the complexities of the different land ownership and the need to deliver significant upfront strategic infrastructure works to provide a link road through the site in advance of homes being built landowners and promoters agreed to dispose of their interest to Homes England.

As land owner for the whole site, Homes England will submit an outline planning application later this year and bring forward early release of the first phases of new homes alongside investing in strategic infrastructure to unlock the site for development.

Stephen Kinsella, Executive Director for Land at Homes England, says:

“Homes England’s reinvigorated land role is seeing us step up and intervene to unlock residential sites to help increase supply of homes where they are desperately needed.

“This acquisition at Burgess Hill shows how we can step in to ensure that complex sites in areas of acute housing need can be brought forward for early delivery through our intervention.

“It is a huge statement from Homes England, demonstrating how we can now intervene and invest to unlock the largest sites. We will now work quickly to achieve an early start on site and ensure the site deliver a great place to live.”

The Rt Hon Sir Nicholas Soames, MP for Mid Sussex, added:

“I have championed the involvement of Homes England in the growth planned by the Government for Burgess Hill. This very significant investment and long term commitment to Burgess Hill will ensure the housing comes forward in a timely manner and is accompanied by much needed infrastructure. It is a vote of confidence in Burgess Hill and Mid Sussex.”

In a separate intervention, Homes England has also recently completed the acquisition of Coypool in Plymouth; a former china clay works near Marsh Mills will become a development of more than 400 homes and play a crucial part in meeting the housing needs of Plymouth. Homes England has worked in partnership with Plymouth City Council to understand the site's potential for new homes and this has now been unlocked by buying the entire 32 Hectare site which is included in Plymouth's joint local plan.

This follows a number of other acquisitions, including:

- Otterpool Park, Shepway – 60 Ha as part of a garden town being promoted by Folkestone and Hythe District Council
- Brue Farm, Somerset – 4.6Ha in the Hinkley Housing Zone will provide 123 new homes and unlock more homes though providing infrastructure to the wider site
- Spencer's Park, Dacorum – 37 Ha in Hemel Hempstead, we have worked with local partners to deliver circa 1,000 new homes. 357 homes are already being built .The rest of the site is going through the planning process with 40% being affordable

The Burgess Hill development will include the construction of two new primary schools, a secondary school and a range of leisure facilities to help build a community. Homes England will promote the site through its Development Partner Panel on a phased basis, with the first phase of the development due to deliver 460 homes.

Ends

For more information contact Tom Hustler, Senior Communications Manager at Homes England 0113 394 9355 / 07876 131488 tom.hustler@homesengland.gov.uk or Patsy Cusworth, PR and Media Manager at Homes England 0207 393 2201 / 07967 782328 patsy.cusworth@homesengland.gov.uk.

Notes to Editors

Homes England

Homes England is the new housing delivery organisation that has been created to adopt a more commercial approach to respond to the long term housing challenges facing this country. The new, expanded agency will play a far bigger role in investing in supply and intervening in the market to help deliver 300,000 homes a year by the middle of the next decade.

Homes England will act differently from its predecessor, bringing together money, land, expertise and planning and compulsory purchase powers to accelerate the supply of new homes and address affordability issues in areas of highest demand.

For more information on Homes England visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/homes-england>.

Rydon Homes

Rydon Homes has built a considerable reputation for creating high-quality developments, whilst unlocking the best value from land in the South East of England.

We seek to work in partnership with local communities to ensure our developments provide a positive contribution towards the local area. Our intention is to build design-led integrated developments, neighbourhoods where people choose to live and that offer a range of homes suitable for all buyers from starter homes to family housing. In every Rydon Homes development, our focus is on designing and building quality homes that stand the test of time.

For more information on Rydon Homes visit <http://www.rydonhomes.co.uk/>.

[Press release: MPs' outside interests: Committee publishes report](#)

The Code of Conduct for MPs should be changed to state that outside interests, whether paid or unpaid, should not compromise their principal role as an MP, according to a new report published today by the independent Committee on Standards in Public Life.

Launching the report, Chair of the Committee, Lord (Paul) Bew said:

The evidence we received for this review demonstrates that there is a wide spectrum of views, both amongst the public and MPs, as well as those who regulate standards for MPs. We also heard convincing arguments about the importance of individual MPs retaining the flexibility to perform their roles in the way they choose, and of Parliament being open to a wide a range of people from different backgrounds and professions.

When we last looked at this issue in our report on MPs' expenses in 2009 ([link](#)), the Committee recommended a balance: that MPs should be able to undertake paid employment, providing that these activities remain within reasonable limits, and that there was transparency. At that time, there was consensus between the parties on this settlement but it is regrettable that the recommendations made then have not been fully implemented by Parliament, MPs and Government.

A majority of MPs do not hold remunerated outside interests, and a number of MPs hold outside interests which would be considered

within 'reasonable limits'. However, where a small number of individuals have taken up outside interests beyond what might be considered reasonable, it risks undermining trust in Parliament and Parliamentarians. We are therefore recommending a package of important reforms to address issues concerning MPs' capacity to fulfil their Parliamentary duties and responsibilities to their constituents and to mitigate the potential for undue influence on our political system.

To demonstrate high standards, Parliament needs to be more transparent with the public about the registration and declaration of interests. The Register of Members' Financial Interests must be more accessible, searchable and usable. Voters should know what outside interests Parliamentary candidates intend to hold if they are elected. The Code of Conduct for MPs should be clarified to state that any MP's interests outside the House should not compromise their principal role as MPs. We also recommend that MPs should not undertake outside employment as Parliamentary strategists, advisers or consultants and that the rules on lobbying need to be clearer.

Foremost, MPs themselves should continually demonstrate leadership and integrity, considering how any outside interests might impact on their work in the legislature and be prepared to be fully open and honest with the public about any outside interests they choose to hold.

In line with the Committee's Code of Practice, the three members of the Committee nominated by the political parties did not take part in formulating the recommendations made in this report. Indeed, they may not necessarily agree with every aspect. We are, however, grateful to our political colleagues for sharing their knowledge and advice on Parliamentary life.

My first report as Chair of this Committee recommended strengthening transparency around lobbying; my final report demonstrates that this continues to be an issue of public concern. As I complete my 5-year term, it is clear that Lord Nolan's principles remain the cornerstone of ethical standards in public life..

Notes to Editors

1. Interview requests and media enquiries should go to Maggie O'Boyle on 07880 740627.

1. The independent Committee on Standards in Public Life advises the Prime Minister on ethical standards across the whole of public life in the UK. It monitors and reports on issues relating to the standards of conduct of all public office holders.

2. Lord Bew wrote to the Prime Minister on 23 March 2017 outlining the [terms of reference](#) for this review. The Committee published a [consultation](#) and invited submissions from anyone with an interest in these issues. The Committee held a roundtable discussion, focus groups and commissioned research as part of its evidence-gathering process. Summaries of the roundtable and correspondence received are [available online](#).
 3. The current members of the Committee are: Lord (Paul) Bew, Chairman, Rt Hon Dame Margaret Beckett DBE MP (Labour), Simon Hart MP (Conservative), Dr Jane Martin CBE, Dame Shirley Pearce DBE, Jane Ramsey, Monisha Shah and Rt Hon Lord (Andrew) Stunell OBE (Liberal Democrat). In line with the Committee's [Code of Practice](#) the three political members did not take part in the conclusions or recommendations made in this report.
 4. You can follow the Committee on twitter [@PublicStandards](#).
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Press release: £19 million fund to support victims of domestic abuse

Almost £19 million of funding to expand support for survivors of domestic abuse services across the country has been launched today (2 July 2018) by the Secretary of State for Communities.

Councils working in partnership with charities and other organisations will be able to bid for a share of funding to support survivors of domestic abuse.

This will be available for a wide range of services to help survivors rebuild their lives; including the provision of refuge beds, education, and employment and life skills training.

This funding builds on £20 million allocated in 2016 to 2018 which has helped provide more than 2,200 new bed spaces in refuges and other specialist accommodation, supporting more than 19,000 survivors with a safe space to rebuild their lives.

Secretary of State for Communities, Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said:

Domestic abuse is a devastating crime and this government is committed to ensuring all survivors have access to the support they need, whenever they need it.

This funding will expand the support available for survivors to

help them rebuild their lives.

This fund has already helped to support diverse projects across the country, including:

Lancashire County Council – Jane’s Place of Recovery Refuge

- Funding was used to establish ‘Jane’s Place’, to accommodate 46 residents, across 15 self contained flats. In the first 7 months the refuge, specialising in providing safe accommodation for those at most risk of harm, accommodated 52 women and their families.

The Hampshire Making Safe Scheme’, led by Hart District Council

- Covering 11 local authorities in Hampshire, this project aims to fund 3 approaches including access to safe houses, enhanced security measures within client’s own homes and effective ways for life after living in safe houses or refuges. This project is particularly targeted at those from BAME communities or those with complex needs.

The government has also published updated guidelines, created in partnership with experts for councils to share best practice with charities and other organisations in meeting the needs of diverse communities including BAME, disabled and LGBT victims.

Katie Ghose, Chief Executive of Women’s Aid, said:

The release of the next round of funding for refuges and other accommodation for women escaping domestic abuse is desperately needed, and much welcomed. Our national network of refuges not only save lives but transform them, helping women and their children to rebuild their lives.

With a decision about the future of refuge funding after 2020 due to be made in the coming months, we look forward to working with the government to ensure the future safety of survivors.

Together we need to ensure that there is a sustainable, long-term funding solution for all domestic abuse services, including lifesaving refuges. Only then can we guarantee that every survivor and her children can get the support they need to build a life free from domestic abuse.

Further information

The 2015 Spending Review contained dedicated long term funding of £40 million to support victims of domestic abuse.

- The first allocations of the £20 million fund was announced November

2016 led by local authorities working in partnership with service providers for work in 2016 to 2018

- A further £1.2 million will be allocated towards domestic abuse services in due course
- See the [full list of allocations](#)

Further case studies of the 2016 to 2018 fund:

- Royal London Borough of Greenwich – The Multiple Needs & Intensive Support Project
Greenwich used part of the funding to employ a Complex Needs support worker, providing intensive support to survivors across the lifetime of the project.
- North Lincolnshire Council
Grant funding was used to secure additional resources to ensure that both female and male victims of domestic abuse were able to access immediate support at times of crisis.

Today's announcement builds on steps taken by government to end domestic abuse, support victims and ensure offenders are prosecuted. Including:

- new powers and laws – a new domestic abuse offence to capture coercive and controlling behaviour, the criminalisation of forced marriage, and the introduction of new stalking laws
- the national roll-out of domestic violence protection orders and the domestic violence disclosure scheme
- £15 million, 3-year Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Service Transformation Fund
- £3.5 million provided in 2015 that funded 46 successful bids from around the country, providing 710 extra bed spaces
- £10 million funding announced by the coalition government for strengthening provision of safe accommodation in the last Spending Review period
- we will shortly be introducing a new landmark Domestic Violence and Abuse Bill to protect and support victims, recognise the life-long impact domestic abuse has on children and make sure agencies effectively respond to domestic abuse

Applicants are required to submit bids no later than 5pm Friday 17 August to DomesticAbuse.Fund@communities.gsi.go.uk

View the government's [updated priorities for domestic abuse services](#).

Office address and general enquiries

2 Marsham Street

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Contact form

<http://forms.communiti...>

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0303 444 1209

Social media – MHCLG

Twitter – <https://twitter.com/mhclg>

Flickr – <http://www.flickr.com/photos/mhclg>

LinkedIn – <http://www.linkedin.com/company/mhclg>

[Press release: Regulator provides update on work of its interim safeguarding taskforce](#)

Reporting of serious safeguarding incidents by charities continues to increase, according to the Charity Commission. The regulator has published an update on the work of its interim safeguarding taskforce, and has confirmed that it received 620 safeguarding related reports in April and May 2018, compared to 196 during the same period in 2017.

In total, since February, the Commission has received and been responding to 1,152 reports of serious incidents (RSIs) about safeguarding (to end May

2018).

The Commission established a temporary safeguarding taskforce in February, which has been managing and handling increased serious incident reports, and undertaking a review of historic serious incident and whistleblowing reports on safeguarding issues.

New reports of serious safeguarding incidents

- 1,152 reports of serious safeguarding incidents received between February 2018 and May 2018, compared to 1,210 during the whole of 2016-17, and 1,580 during 2017-28
- 734 new cases have been opened relating to safeguarding concerns

As set out in [previous updates](#), the reports cover a wide spectrum; some relate to risks of harm that a charity has identified, rather than to incidents of harm – for example internal audits showing that safeguarding procedures were not followed in certain situations.

The Commission has previously [raised concerns about under-reporting of serious incidents by charities](#).

Among the reports are those from some of the 179 charities to which the Secretary of State for International Development wrote in February to seek reassurances that all appropriate incidents had been reported to the Commission. Of the 179 charities DFID issued the assurance request letter to, 34 charities have submitted incident reports to the Commission. In total, these 34 charities have reported 298 incidents. Of these, 218 related to historic incidents.

The Commission has also opened 734 cases relating to safeguarding concerns raised in serious incident reports from charities, or complaints and whistleblowing reports. These have been prioritised according to risk.

Review of historic reports of serious safeguarding incidents

- 5,501 incidents received between 1 April 2014 and 20 February 2018 were selected for review
- 5,238 incidents (95%) have now been analysed

The taskforce has been undertaking a 'deep dive' of its records of serious incident reports on safeguarding matters to identify any gaps in full and frank disclosure by charities, and to establish whether appropriate follow-up actions were taken by charities, including whether incidents were reported to other primary regulators or agencies.

This has required the team to analyse a total of 5,501 serious incidents reported to the Commission between 1 April 2014 and 20 February 2018. 5,238 or 95% of the relevant records reports have now been analysed. Analysis so far has not identified any cases where the Commission has serious and urgent concerns that require it to take immediate action, or where it has had to engage with the authorities about any ongoing risk or unreported criminality.

Of these incidents, 3,000 involved allegations of potential criminal

behaviour; the Commission's analysis has identified that in only one of those incidents was it unclear from its records whether it was reported to the authorities at the time. The Commission has now followed this up and verified that this incident was reported appropriately.

Once the work of the taskforce has concluded, the Commission will publish a report setting out the key findings and lessons for charities.

Ends

Notes to editors

1. Of the 179 charities to which the Secretary of State for International Development wrote in February, 158 are registered with the Commission, the remainder are registered with Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator ([OSCR](#)) or are exempt charities

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