

Press release: Boris Johnson pursues global figures to ensure girls' education around the world

Political heavyweights Boris Johnson and Gordon Brown today (Wed 16th) joined forces to discuss improving education for the world's most marginalised girls.

The Foreign Secretary met the former Prime Minister as part of his campaign to deliver 12 years of quality education for women and girls around the world.

The meeting with Mr Brown – now the UN's Global Education envoy – is the latest in a series of high profile engagements Mr Johnson has held as part of his #LeaveNoGirlBehind campaign.

In recent weeks, Mr Johnson has discussed his campaign with girls' education activist and Nobel Prize Laureate Malala Yousafzai, senior adviser to President Trump, Ivanka Trump and philanthropist Melinda Gates.

The Foreign Secretary has also spoken to HRH Prince Harry and Ms Meghan Markle about his campaign during a star-studded launch at last month's Commonwealth Summit.

Mr Johnson hopes that his drive will build a coalition of political heavyweights and cultural icons that will lobby the world's leaders to prioritise girls' education.

Speaking after the meeting the Foreign Secretary said:

Girls' education is manifestly in the global interest. It is the Swiss Army knife, the Rosetta Stone, the Black and Decker toolkit that solves a multitude of the world's problems.

If we fail to educate girls, we store up huge problems for the future and wilfully miss out on boosting economic growth, managing population pressures and creating stable, prosperous societies – and most importantly, it is the right thing to do.

Gordon understands this, which is why he is a passionate advocate of improving education for women and girls around the world.

It was a pleasure to listen to his ideas and exchange views on the ways which the UK can become the global leader in ending the gross sexism behind attitudes which shut 130 million girls out of the classroom.

Appallingly 90 per cent of world's poorest children leave school unable to read and write. Mr Johnson believes that one of the root causes of girls' illiteracy and poor schooling is sexism masquerading as 'tradition', which is holding millions of the world's poorest girls back. Britain is leading by example by providing £212 million through the Department for International Development to ensure one million vulnerable girls across the Commonwealth get 12 years of quality education by 2030.

The Foreign Secretary believes that the single biggest thing that can be done to improve stability and reduce conflict in the world is to make sure that every girl gets 12 years of quality education.

During last month's Commonwealth Summit, Mr Johnson pushed for firm commitments from Foreign Ministers to make girls' education a priority. He will also use the UK's Presidency of the UN Security Council in August, to influence General Assembly members on the need to remove barriers to education.

Further information

- Follow the Foreign Secretary on Twitter [@BorisJohnson](#) and [Facebook](#)
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[News story: British army officer killed during WW1 is honoured as he is](#)

[laid to rest](#)

2nd Lieutenant (Lt) Eric Henderson who served with the 8th (City of London) London Regiment 'Post Office Rifles', has finally been laid to rest after he was killed on the first day of the Battle of Messines during WW1. 2nd Lt Henderson was buried during a moving ceremony at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) Oak Dump Cemetery, near Ypres in Belgium.



The Royal Artillery Regiment bearer party carry the coffin of 2nd Lt. Henderson (Crown Copyright), all rights reserved

The service, organised by the MOD's Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC), part of Defence Business Services, was held on Wednesday 16 May 2018 and was conducted by the Reverend Thomas Hiney CF, Chaplain to the 19 Royal Artillery Regiment.



The Royal Artillery Regiment bearer party take 2nd Lt. Henderson to his final resting place (Crown Copyright), all rights reserved

Nicola Nash, JCCC said:

It's a great honour to be here today to lay this brave man to rest, who fought so courageously alongside his comrades. I am particularly grateful that Eric's family were able to be here to witness him being finally laid to rest after so many years.

Although over 100 years have passed since Eric's death, we passionately believe in continuing to honour his sacrifice and the sacrifice of all members of the Armed Forces who are lost in battle.



The Royal Artillery Regiment bearer party ceremonially fold the Union Flag during the service (Crown Copyright), all rights reserved

2nd Lt Henderson initially joined the 28th Battalion London Regiment in July 1915 as a Private. He was soon commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant and eventually joined the 8th Battalion London Regiment, also known as the Post Office Rifles.

2nd Lt Henderson was killed in action on 7 June 1917 aged 21 years old, near the village of Messines in West Flanders, Belgium. He was found a century later during road works in the area of Eekhofstraat, near Voormezele in Belgium. He was found with several artefacts including a silver coin that was engraved with '2nd Lt. Eric Henderson, London Regiment'. Further research, conducted by the JCCC, showed that the location of the soldier was exactly where the Oak Reserve Line was during the Battle of Messines, which corresponded with the location of Eric's regiment on the day of his death.

The beginning of the Battle of Messines was signalled by the explosion of 19 mines that had been laid under German lines. The shock of the explosion was overwhelming and devastating to the enemy. The objectives of the Post Office Rifles on the day were to capture portions of the four lines known as Oak Trench, Oak Support, Oak Reserve and Oak Switch as well as a formidable strongpoint known as the 'Dammstrasse'. Many of the casualties of the Battalion were due to machine-gun fire from the White Chateau, one of the objectives of the 7th Battalion. Some of the 1/8th took part in the attack on this Chateau, and materially assisted in its capture.



2nd Lt. Henderson's great nieces (l to r) Judith Leyman, Sarah Foot and Lucy Cocup stand with the Royal Artillery Regiment and military representatives (Crown Copyright), all rights reserved

Family members who paid their respects to 2nd Lt Henderson included his three great nieces, Lucy Cocup, Sarah Foot and Judith Leyman, as well as members of their own families.

Mrs Judith Leyman, Eric's great niece, said on behalf of the family:

Being here in Ypres, and knowing Eric's resting place, means an awful lot to us. He wasn't a dusty memory in our family, but part of our mental landscape.

Reverend Thomas Hiney CF said:

These war cemeteries of northern France and Belgium are one of the wonders of the modern world. To add to one is of course poignant. These stories still feel very alive to our national memory.

Sub Lieutenant Harry Lewis from the British Embassy in The Hague was also in attendance. Current members of the Royal Artillery Regiment paid their own tribute by providing the bearer and firing party.

Mel Donnelly, CWGC Commemorations Manager said:

For almost a century, 2nd Lieutenant Eric Henderson was remembered with honour on the CWGC's Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial to the Missing – one of tens of thousands of young men whom the fortune of war denied a known grave. When the memorial was unveiled in 1927, the assembled mourners were told 'He is not missing. He is here'. Today, thanks to the efforts of many, that statement has new meaning for Eric and his family.



2nd Lt. Henderson's headstone bearing a poignant message (Crown Copyright), all rights reserved

A new headstone bearing 2nd Lt Henderson's name has been provided by the CWGC, who will now care for his final resting place in perpetuity.

[Press release: Response to the Big Brother Watch report](#)

I welcome the publication of the [Big Brother Watch report](#) as in my view it adds value to a much needed debate on a matter of growing public interest, the public interest which demands clear legislation, transparency in governance and approach and a coherent and effective regulatory framework in

which they can derive confidence whenever and wherever their civil liberties are at risk from the state. I shall consider the report carefully.

The effective regulation of use of face identification technology (commonly referred to as Automated Face Recognition or AFR) by the police is a priority of the National Surveillance Camera Strategy and a matter which I have been addressing as a priority for some time now, engaging with the National Police Chief's Council, the Home Office, fellow regulators and Ministers alike.

The police have to abide by the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice which I regulate under the terms of Section 33(1) Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. Those familiar with the content of the code will know that it is explicit in that face identification technologies used by the police in England and Wales will be regulated by it. That is not to say that I consider existing or indeed anticipated legislation as being wholly sufficient in these matters. I do not. My fellow regulators, the Biometrics Commissioner and in recent times the Information Commissioner have added welcome contributions to the debate.

I do think that the police are genuinely doing their best with AFR and to work within the current and anticipated legal regulatory framework governing overt surveillance. That framework is far less robust than that which governs covert surveillance, yet arguably the evolving technological capabilities of overt surveillance is the equal in terms of intrusion, to that which is conducted covertly. It is inescapable that AFR capabilities can be an aid to public safety particularly from terrorist threats in crowded or highly populated places. Andrew Parker, the DG of the Security Service rather eloquently set out the threat context to our society only recently. It is understandable that there is an appetite within law enforcement agencies to exploit face identification capabilities, an appetite which is doubtlessly borne out of a duty and determination to keep us safe. This technology already exist in society for our convenience and therefore it is arguable that the public will have something of an expectation that those technologies are so used by agents of the state to keep us safe from serious threats, but only in justifiable circumstances where their use is lawful, ethical, proportionate and transparent.

In the context of safety, the public also need to be safe from unlawful, disproportionate and illegitimate state intrusion, and they must have confidence that those technologies have integrity. In my view, the challenge is arriving at a balance and for that to happen there need to be a clear framework of legitimacy and transparency which guides the state, holds it to account and delivers confidence and security amongst the public. I have yet to have confidence that government has a satisfactory approach to the issue in delivering a framework upon which the police and others can rely and upon which the public can have confidence, but I do believe that we are on a journey to that destination and a journey is fuelled by constructive and challenging debate.

The commissioner is available for media interview and contactable at scc@sccommissioner.gsi.gov.uk

[Press release: Government announces it will fully fund unsafe cladding removal in social housing](#)

The government will fully fund the removal and replacement of unsafe cladding by councils and housing associations, estimated at £400 million, it was announced today (16 May 2018).

Local authorities and housing associations, which are non-profit making, will be given access to the money to help with reasonable costs of removing and replacing unsafe cladding from buildings which they own to ensure people are safe in their homes.

In the wake of the Grenfell Tower tragedy, the government quickly established a comprehensive [building safety programme](#). It made clear that aluminium composite material (ACM) cladding on buildings over 18 metres which was not compliant with building regulations guidance should be remediated by the building owners.

The fund follows the government's offer last year of financial flexibilities to assist local authorities with essential fire safety work. From conversations with social sector landlords, it has become apparent that they are having to take decisions about how to prioritise important services, repairs and maintenance work and investment in new homes.

The government has listened to their concerns, discussed the issue in Cabinet, and decided that, although social landlords have made good progress on replacing unsafe cladding, it is right to provide further support. It is therefore today announcing additional funding for the social sector. It recognises the tough decisions that are being made to carry out fire safety work as well as the potential impact on other services.

The government will also continue to provide financial flexibilities to councils for other essential fire safety measures and is directing local authorities to take cladding-related issues into account when carrying out reviews of housing conditions in their areas.

Social landlords have been working hard to replace unsafe cladding. Interim safety measures are in place in all affected buildings and latest figures from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government show that over 65% (104 out of 158) of social housing buildings with unsafe cladding are currently going through the process of remediation.

The additional money will enable social housing providers to focus on providing safe properties for people to live in.

Housing Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said:

People must always feel safe in their own home.

Since the tragic events at Grenfell Tower, we have taken steps to ensure the immediate safety of all high rise buildings.

This money will ensure local authorities and housing associations are being given the support they need to get this work done now as well as removing the uncertainty around funding.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond said:

We have always been clear that unsafe cladding must be removed from tower blocks so that people are safe in their own homes.

But we do not want vital safety work to put at risk our high priority house-building programmes. So we have decided to provide funding to ensure that housing associations and councils can carry out this vital work.

The government is clear that building owners in the private sector must ensure private sector homes are made safe.

The Secretary of State, Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, will meet industry representatives to ensure that remediation work is completed as soon as possible.

The industry roundtable will take place shortly.

Further information

The government will set out further details shortly about how councils and housing associations can apply for funding, including conditions attached to the grant.

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[Press release: Update on fire doors investigation – risk to public safety remains low](#)

Housing Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP today (16 May 2018) updated Parliament on the fire door investigation and confirmed experts advise the risk to public safety remains low.

Earlier this year the Metropolitan Police informed government a fire door installed at Grenfell Tower designed to resist fire for up to 30 minutes – as required by building regulations guidance – failed after approximately 15 minutes when tested by the police.

Government immediately sought advice from its independent expert panel to see what action was required, and have undertaken further testing and investigations focusing on composite flat entrance fire doors manufactured by Manse Masterdor – a company that has not been trading since 2014.

The expert panel has concluded there is a performance issue with these Manse Masterdor fire doors, which do not consistently meet the 30 minute fire resistance standard. Nevertheless, the National Fire Chiefs Council has advised the expert panel the risk to public safety remains low. They point out that fire protection in a building is developed using a range of measures so a failure of one protection measure – such as fire doors – should not significantly change the overall safety of residents. In addition, all doors

provide essential protection in a fire if they are properly closed.

Based on this advice, the expert panel advise that owners of buildings with this type of door should review their building's fire risk assessment and consider how quickly these doors should be replaced. The expert panel has published guidance to assist building owners.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is writing to customers of Manse Masterdor identified in the company's records as having been supplied with these doors. It is also looking at the wider fire door market and intends to test fire doors from other door suppliers.

Housing Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said:

Public safety is paramount. When we were informed about an issue with a Grenfell Tower fire door, we acted quickly to seek independent expert advice and established a wide-ranging investigation.

Based on the results of these investigations to date, the expert panel advise the risk to public safety remains low. However they advise there is a performance issue with Manse Masterdor which is why we are taking the responsible step of writing to relevant building owners setting out clear advice on what they should do.

Fire service advice to residents remains the same. Regularly test your smoke alarms, ensure your front door is properly closed and in the event of a fire follow existing fire procedures for the building.

What is the safety advice for residents?

- The National Fire Chiefs Council has advised that the risk to public safety is low.
- In the event of a fire people should follow existing fire procedures for the building.
- Residents should also test their smoke alarms regularly to ensure they work and ensure that their flat front door is fitted with a working self-closing device.
- All doors provide essential protection in a fire if they are properly closed.
- Fire safety advice for residents is available at:
www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk/High-Rise-Safety-for-Residents

How do I know if I need to replace fire doors in the building I own?

- The department is writing to customers of Manse Masterdor identified in the company's records as having been supplied with these doors and is

considering what further support building owners may require to assist with taking timely action.

- The expert panel has published [guidance for building owners](#) who are replacing or want to inspect their flat front entrance fire doors.
- The department is now looking at the wider fire door market, and intends to test fire doors from other door suppliers and will provide an update on these tests in due course.

What is your advice for owners of buildings which have been installed with these fire doors?

- Owners of buildings where Manse Masterdor 30 minute composite fire doors have been installed should review their building fire risk assessments and consider how quickly these doors should be replaced.
- The expert panel's advice is that these doors should be replaced using a risk-based approach, and they have published [advice for building owners](#) who are replacing 30 minute composite front entrance fire doors.
- General advice for building owners on how to ensure the safety of residents in blocks of flats is available at: www.local.gov.uk/fire-safety-purpose-built-flats

How do I know if my landlords have installed these doors to my flat?

- We are writing to all customers of Manse Masterdor identified in the company's records as having been supplied with these doors, to notify them of the issue.
- Residents should contact their landlords who will be able to advise whether they have been supplied with the affected doors. If there is uncertainty the expert panel advise that a suitably qualified person can inspect the doors and this advice is set out in their [advice note on fire doors](#) which can be accessed from the [building safety programme website](#)

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