

New industry leaders partner with Team Tempest to deliver next generation combat aircraft

Launched in 2018, Team Tempest is a group of ambitious industry partners – representing the deep breadth of innovation and expertise across the nation – working in collaboration with the MoD on the UK's Future Combat Air System (FCAS) project.

The UK's Future Combat Air System is the £1.9bn project working to develop the next generation combat aircraft, known as Tempest, which will replace the Typhoon.

These pioneering companies will bring new innovations and designs, enabling Team Tempest to carry on developing ground-breaking concepts and technologies that will guarantee combat dominance in the air.

The alliance is quickly gaining recognition for its work and notched up a world first within two years of launching by designing a generator that delivers unprecedented levels of electrical power.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace confirmed seven new companies had signed agreements to collaborate on Team Tempest at the virtual 2020 Farnborough International Airshow (FIA Connect).

Welcoming the news Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

Just two years after Team Tempest was created they delivered a world first. It's no surprise; when you attract the very best of British engineering and design, technological leaps like these are guaranteed.

That's why I'm delighted seven more companies have joined this mission to work in collaboration with the MoD, under the Team Tempest banner. They will bring the ambition, invention and expertise that will deliver the breakthroughs we will depend on for decades to come.

These pioneers will strengthen our ability to develop a next generation aircraft and allow us to continue making vital contributions to UK, European and global security.

Concept imagery of the Tempest aircraft. Crown copyright.

The companies who have signed a partnership are: GEUK, GKN, Collins

Aerospace, Martin Baker, QinetiQ, Bombardier and Thales UK, along with UK universities and SMEs.

Since its creation in 2018, Team Tempest has already employed more than 1,800 highly skilled engineers and programmers.

Set to increase to 2,500 by next year, the programme is securing the UK's position as a global leader in combat air.

The new members of Team Tempest will join forces on established projects and development work with core members BAE Systems, Leonardo UK, MBDA UK, Rolls-Royce and the Ministry of Defence, bringing the best of British expertise and ingenuity on designing, manufacturing and operating combat air systems.

Defence Minister Jeremy Quin said:

Today's announcement demonstrates further progress in delivering the UK's combat air strategy, with more companies collaborating on the future of the UK's Air Defence. This is a highly innovative project based around cutting-edge technology and drawing on a skills base where the UK excels.

I am delighted that the success and strengths of Team Tempest are being enhanced through drawing on UK expertise; working with industrial partners and highly capable international team we are configured for future success.

Together the companies will develop more than 60 technology prototypes and demonstration activities.

New processes will also deliver technology and intellectual property in half the time and at significantly lower cost than previous complex combat air programmes.

Concept imagery of the Tempest aircraft. Crown copyright.

Two new appointments and one extension to the Legal Services Board

The Lord Chancellor has announced the appointment of Flora Page and Stephen Gowland as new non-law members of the Legal Services Board (LSB) for 4 year terms with effect from 1 August 2020 until 31 July 2024.

The Lord Chancellor has also announced an extension to Marina Gibbs' tenure

as lay member of the LSB until 31 March 2021 while a recruitment campaign is carried out to fill the position on a permanent basis. Flora Page has been both a solicitor and a barrister. She started her career at Clifford Chance in 1996, and subsequently worked for the Law Commission, the University of Law, and set up her own firm, Old Bailey Solicitors. Having obtained higher rights of audience in 2002, in 2013 she cross-qualified as a barrister, and joined 23 Essex Street Chambers. Her practice focused on financial crime, and she prosecuted and defended in equal amounts. She was a leading junior, a Grade 4 Prosecutor, and a facilitator for Advocacy and the Vulnerable training.

In 2019, Flora moved to the Financial Conduct Authority, where she has worked in both enforcement and consumer redress policy development. She is also a part-time PhD student at University College London, researching corporate misconduct. She was a long-serving committee member of the Solicitors' Association of Higher Court Advocates, and then a member of the Executive of the Criminal Bar Association. She was on the 23 Essex Street Equality and Diversity Committee, and is a Financial Conduct Authority Equality and Diversity Superuser.

Stephen Gowland was the 50th national President of Cilex (The Chartered Institute of Legal Executives) and the first who also qualified as a solicitor. He spent ten years on the Cilex board. He started his career as an apprentice and qualified as a lawyer whilst working full time. He was the first Cilex apprentice to sit on the Cilex board and has championed apprenticeships throughout his career. He has worked in various law firms dealing with general civil litigation which included dealing with civil actions against the police and sexual abuse claims. He ran his own successful high street firm for twelve years before moving on to pursue other opportunities.

Stephen now works in-house and sits as a police misconduct judge for seventeen police forces across England and Wales. He also works as an associate with the College of Policing assisting them with recruitment and promotion for UK police forces. He has an interest in regulation in various sectors and sits as a lay member on the regulatory panels of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales and the Chartered Institute of Public Relations. He will be resigning his position with the ICAEW in order to take up his role with the LSB.

Marina Gibbs has been Director of Competition Policy at Ofcom since September 2007 where she leads Ofcom's policy work in relation to the postal sector as well as focusing on competition matters in the telecommunications market.

Prior to joining Ofcom, Marina worked as a strategy consultant for many years, latterly as Telecoms Partner at Spectrum Value Partners where she advised clients internationally in relation to corporate and commercial strategy development and regulatory and public policy matters. Marina also provided commercial due diligence support to financial and trade investors in the telecoms and media sectors.

The LSB is the independent body responsible for overseeing the regulation of

lawyers in England and Wales. The LSB came into being on 1 January 2009 and took on the majority of its statutory powers on 1 January 2010. Its goal is to reform and modernise the legal services market place by putting the interests of consumers at the heart of the system. It is independent of government and the legal profession and oversees the approved regulators, which themselves regulate lawyers practising throughout the jurisdiction.

LSB also oversees the Office for Legal Complaints and its administration of the Legal Ombudsman scheme that resolves complaints about lawyers.

These appointments have been conducted in accordance with the Cabinet Office Governance Code on Public Appointments.

Appointments to the LSB are made by the Lord Chancellor in consultation with the Lord Chief Justice for England and Wales.

Benefits fraudsters are shown the red light by government scheme

A government scheme designed to tackle fraudsters has identified almost £2 billion of fraudulent benefits claims and overpayments.

Since it was set up in 1996, the National Fraud Initiative has identified thousands of attempts to defraud taxpayers, with attempts to steal money from pension frauds, council tax claims and even the abuse of disabled parking badges.

Latest figures show that between April 2018 and April 2020, a total of £245 million of fraud and overpayments was detected across the UK, taking the total figure identified since 1996 up to £1.9 billion.

One of the government's key manifesto pledges was to ensure those who commit benefit fraud are punished. And action taken under the National Fraud Initiative, which uncovers some of the more difficult to track fraud cases, has resulted in £57.7 million of fraudulent payments being recovered and a further £132 million of payments being prevented between 2018 and 2020 in England alone.

The most common cases included the abuse of housing benefits, with £26.3 million of fraud found between 2018 and 2020 and claims for single person council tax discounts, with £17.2 million of fraudulent claims detected over the same period.

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Michael Gove, said:

Schemes such as those to reduce council tax and provide housing

benefit are there for the most vulnerable people in our society, not those who will try to cheat the system and fraudulently claim money that they don't deserve.

We know that there will always be a small minority who try to cheat the system and the work of the National Fraud Initiative shows that we will not let them get away with it.

Among the most recent National Fraud Initiative cases, the London Borough of Greenwich identified a woman who claimed she was homeless and needed social housing, despite owning five other properties across the country, some of which she had bought under the right-to-buy scheme. An investigation into her finances later revealed she had an estate worth over £1.5 million.

Further investigations over the past two years resulted in 6,092 false applications made by people across the country being removed from housing waiting lists.

Other common frauds include the abuse of disabled parking badges and subsidised travel cards. Between 2018 and 2020, investigations led to 151,815 travel passes and 46,750 blue badges being cancelled.

The misuse of blue badges belonging to people who had actually died is estimated to have cost taxpayers £26.9 million in the past two years. People fraudulently using concessionary travel cards which belonged to dead people is predicted to have cost a further £3.4 million.

John O'Connell, the chief executive of the TaxPayers' Alliance, said:

With billions lost every year in benefits fraud, schemes like this are delivering real bang for their buck.

Every penny of fraud is a slap in the face for struggling taxpayers, so continuing this low-cost crackdown is very much called for.

Well done to ministers for sticking up for taxpayers and waging a welcome war on benefits waste.

Following the coronavirus pandemic, it has also been confirmed that the National Fraud Initiative will be extended to help make sure that grants for emergency relief have only been paid to those who deserve it.

George Eustice speech on environmental recovery: 20 July 2020

I would like to begin by thanking all those who have been working hard to protect and enhance our environment over the past few months. It is great to see sites open to the public again but I am also conscious that this crisis has had financial impacts on many organisations, impacts on membership and that you face real pressures in keeping nature reserves and parks open.

The impacts of this pandemic will be felt deeply for many years, but the experience has also led people to appreciate the difference that nature makes to our lives in a new way. There is an increased awareness of the link between our own health, and that of the planet.

Studies across the spectrum, from health to financial risk, remind us that it is in our best interests to look after nature. We know that a connection with nature contributes to well-being, and improved mental health. So starting this autumn, we'll be investing a further £4m in a two-year pilot to bring green prescribing to four urban and rural areas that have been hit the hardest by coronavirus and then we want to scale that project up.

When we destroy nature, we undermine our very foundations. Every country faces a choice as they map out their recovery – store up problems by sticking with the status quo, or get back on our feet by building back better and greener.

In our own country, nature has been in decline for decades. The last breeding populations of Kentish plovers were lost in 1928. Between 1932 and 1984, we lost 97% of our species-rich grassland – and heathlands have fared little better. Five species of butterfly have become extinct in the last 150 years. And our farmland bird indicator stands at less than half its value of 1970 – following a precipitous decline during the 1980s and 90s, and further losses since.

This Government's pledge is not only to stem the tide of loss, but to turn it around – to leave the environment in a better state than we found it.

In a few months' time the Transition Period will come to an end, and the UK will be free to chart a new course. It is an important moment for policy makers and nowhere more so than in our approach to the environment.

As a country we have opted for the freedom to act and to decide our own environment policies in future. But with that freedom comes new responsibilities. It will no longer be the case that the UK can register a position as an outlier around the table during the development of a particular EU dossier, safe in the knowledge that a QMV voting system will always drive out something more nuanced. Instead we must learn to temper our own approach. And we will not be able to hide behind EU law when there are difficult decisions to make or indeed blame the EU when things don't work.

Instead we must level with people about difficult decisions and take responsibility for delivering the change that is required.

Tackling environmental challenges requires a long-term approach and political commitment to that journey – even when the political cycle can be short term. So we will shortly be publishing a paper that sets out our approach to setting long-term targets on biodiversity, waste, water, and air quality through the new Environment Bill, so they are established in time by October 2022. We will shortly be launching the appointment campaign for the first Chair of the Office for Environmental Protection so that they will be in place to lead a new Public Body in 2021 – to scrutinise and assess progress towards these targets.

When it comes to our new approach to the environment, we must have an appreciation of what worked in the EU in the past, and also what didn't work. Where there were approaches inside the EU that helped our environment, we should recognise these and be willing to borrow features from them.

But there is no point leaving the EU to keep everything the same. The old model has not stopped the decline in our natural world. We must therefore challenge ourselves to think creatively, to innovate and to consciously avoid clinging to processes and procedures just because they are familiar. On environmental policy, we can do better or differently, and I want to open a discussion in this space today.

And of course, leaving the EU table does not mean retreating from our role in the world. In fact it means we should redouble our efforts globally.

Long before we joined the EU, the UK was a driving force in establishing other international conventions to help our natural environment. We turned the IWC from being a forum that decided quotas for whaling to being a force for conservation. We were in at the beginning when CITES was first mooted in 1963 to protect endangered species, when Ramsar protected wetland areas in 1971, when the Bern Convention protected habitats and species, when the convention on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds was introduced, and later when CBD was established to safeguard biodiversity.

Next year we will host COP26 where we will be seeking to secure international action on climate change and biodiversity loss which will include emphasising the role of nature-based solutions in that global endeavour – such as our work to tackle illegal deforestation and promote sustainable supply chains.

So while the environmental legislation we currently have is often credited to flagship EU directives like the Habitats Directive or the Birds Directive, these directives themselves were often principally about implementing at an EU level things that had already been agreed internationally through other international conventions like the Bern Convention. International conventions that the UK was always part of, will remain part of and where we will continue to drive international consensus for change and progress.

Now a few years ago, shortly after becoming a Minister in Defra, I remember being given a huge report running to hundreds of pages setting out exactly

what the UK was doing to deliver its obligations under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. It was a formidable piece of work which listed every piece of legislation we already had including laws like the Protection of Seals Act 1970. But a covering note to the document recommended that I need not waste my time reading it because it said nothing new, committed us to nothing we were not already doing, and was mainly a summary of the laws and measures that we already had in place dating back to the 1960s. When I asked what the purpose of the document was, the answer came back that "it's just a requirement of EU law".

Now EU environmental law always has good intentions but there are also negative consequences to attempting to legislate for these matters at a supranational level. It tends to lead to a culture of perpetual legal jeopardy where national governments can become reluctant to try new things or make new commitments for fear of irreversible and unpredictable legal risks. This in turn creates a culture where there are frankly too many lawyers and not enough scientists and too many reports but not enough action.

So, as we chart a new course for our approach to protecting the environment, we can retain the features that worked and change the features that didn't. We should recognise that the environment and our ecosystems are a complex web of interactions that mankind will never fully understand let alone manage. We should re-balance the way we approach policy development with more focus on science and technical knowledge and less time fretting about legal risks of doing something new or innovative. We should have fewer reports that say nothing new – but more new ideas that we should actually try.

And we should be willing to try new approaches safe in the knowledge that we have the power to change things again if a policy idea fails. Our targets framework should give us a clear set of objectives to work to but to meet those targets our approach to policy development must be agile or iterative and must create the space for more experimentation and innovation.

If we are to protect species and habitats and also deliver biodiversity net gain, we need to properly understand the science to inform these crucial decisions. And we should ask ourselves whether the current processes are as effective or efficient as they could be.

Is there sufficient access to data and knowledge to know which species should be assessed? If we had better more up to date data about things such as flood risk, habitats, species, and air quality could we design plans for sustainable new projects and developments more effectively and efficiently than we do now? Do we have enough focus on improvements at a landscape scale? Do Local Authorities adopt a consistent approach to the screening process through Environmental Impact Assessment? Do they have the capability to engage over the lifetime of a project?

Later this autumn we will be launching a new consultation on changing our approach to environmental assessment and mitigation in the planning system. If we can front-load ecological considerations in the planning development process, we can protect more of what is precious.

We can set out which habitats and species will always be off-limit, so everyone knows where they stand. And we can add to that list where we want better protection for species that are characteristic of our country and critical to our ecosystems that the EU has sometimes overlooked– things like water voles, red squirrels, adders and pine martens. We want everyone to be able to access an accurate, centralised body of data on species populations so that taking nature into account is the first, speedy step to an application.

So today I can announce a £5m pilot on establishing a new Natural Capital and Ecosystem Assessment. At the heart of our approach is a simple premise. If we can improve the baseline understanding of habitats and species abundance across the country in every planning authority, then we can make better decisions towards achieving our vision to leave the environment in a better state than we found it. We can reduce process while simultaneously improving the quality of the data that informs our decisions. We can move quickly to rule out issues that we know don't exist leaving us time to focus on the protections that matter most for the species and habitats most affected – so we ensure that new developments really do mean a net gain for people and for nature.

In conclusion, in recent decades, our approach to environmental regulation, particularly in regards to nature and biodiversity, has been to protect what is left and to stem the tide of decline. We have had some successes so far as that approach goes and should acknowledge this. However, if we really want to realise the aspirations that the public have for nature then we need policies that will not only protect but that will build back – with more diverse habitats that lead to a greater abundance of those species currently in decline.

Delivering this change is what lies at the heart of our approach to future farming policy, our approach to biodiversity net gain in the planning system, and also behind other initiatives like highly protected marine areas that we intend to pilot. Building back greener means what it says, and I want to work with all of you to make that happen.

[Environment Agency resumes on-site bathing water monitoring](#)

Press release

Bathing water monitoring has resumed at designated bathing water sites in England.



The Environment Agency has resumed sampling at bathing water sites following the government advice on easing lockdown restrictions.

Throughout lockdown, regulatory work has continued to maintain the quality of bathing waters, including pollution prevention measures such as ensuring that permitted discharges do not affect water quality.

Now that on-site monitoring can resume, the data from this will help highlight trends in bathing water quality and provide useful data to the public this summer.

Bathing water quality in England remains high with 98.3% of bathing waters passing the minimum standard in 2019, and of these, 71% are classified as Excellent.

The latest classifications for over 400 designated bathing waters in England can be found on [our water quality website](#).

Our daily pollution risk forecasting service has been providing updates on water quality throughout lockdown. This year the system has been upgraded providing even more accurate forecasts of when a temporary reduction in water quality is likely. [Information on pollution risk forecasts and warnings can be found on gov.uk](#).

The Environment Agency will continue to seek improvements to bathing water quality, but everyone has a part to play. You can protect the quality of bathing waters and beaches by following some simple advice:

- Always put litter in the bin at the beach or take it away with you to dispose of at home;
- Wet wipes, cotton buds and sanitary items should go in the bin and not be flushed.
- Don't pour fats, oils and grease down the sink, these can pollute rivers and coastal waters and can set in pipes causing blockages.

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