

# Fusion mission continues in Covid-secure working environment

News story

Our work to bring fusion energy to fruition is back underway at Culham, but working conditions have now changed to reflect the circumstances.



The JET control room

Following the hard work by many staff across the UK Atomic Energy Authority, led by Chief Operating Officer Lyanne Maclean, the site's key research facilities are reopening, with stringent safety, social distancing and hygiene measures to guard against the spread of Covid-19.

UKAEA has restarted operations on the [EU's JET fusion machine](#) at Culham, now with a smaller operational team in the Control Room, and with videoconferencing facilities allowing scientists to participate in experiments remotely.

Meanwhile work continues on the UK's [MAST Upgrade tokamak](#). Despite the challenges of the new working conditions, engineers have successfully tracked down and fixed some elusive earthing issues within some of the complex suite of power supplies, enabling the commissioning process to continue.

At UKAEA's [RACE centre](#), experimental work into robotics has restarted, with distancing between staff working in the facility's large work hall.

Watch this video on how working conditions have changed at Culham: [Restart of operations at UKAEA](#)

Most UKAEA staff continue to work from home – thanks to the great efforts of the IT team, remote home working is proving very effective.

[Please read this article](#) for a reminder about the current status at UKAEA, including procurement contact information. Our recruitment activities carry on as normal and you can find latest job opportunities at:

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## [UK aid will help provide millions of Palestinians with healthcare and education](#)

Press release

UK support will help the UN Relief and Works Agency to continue delivering on its mandate to support and protect Palestinian refugees.



Food parcels being delivered for Palestinian refugees in Gaza, April 2020.  
Picture: UNRWA/Khalil Adwan

The UK has pledged new funds to the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) to provide vital support to Palestinian refugees, the UK's Minister for the Middle East, James Cleverly, announced today.

UK support will help the Agency to continue delivering on its UN mandate to support and protect Palestinian refugees.

The UK has consistently been one of UNRWA's top donors, and its support in the last year has enabled UNRWA to provide education for more than half a million children and helped over 3.5 million Palestinians access health services.

Minister for the Middle East, James Cleverly, said:

Overcrowded living conditions and years of conflict have left

Palestinian refugees particularly vulnerable to the impact of coronavirus. The pandemic has made it more difficult for UNRWA to carry out its essential work, yet its staff continue to work tirelessly to provide help to those in need.

I am delighted the UK is providing this new support to UNRWA so it can continue to deliver its vital services, including healthcare and education, to Palestinian refugees.

The UK continues to support a negotiated settlement leading to a safe and secure Israel living alongside a viable and sovereign Palestinian state; based on 1967 borders with agreed land swaps, Jerusalem as the shared capital of both states, and a just, fair and realistic settlement for refugees.

Until that happens, the UK remains firmly committed to supporting UNRWA and Palestinian refugees across the region.

### **Notes to editors**

- This additional £33.5 million of UK funding announced today brings the UK's total contribution to UNRWA for 2020 to £34.5 million.
- On 23 June donors pledged \$130m at the UNRWA pledging conference co-hosted by Jordan and Sweden.

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## [Charity Commission concludes inquiry prompted by dispute at South London charity](#)

Press release

Charity Commission criticises a group of trustees of Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators over long-running dispute



The Charity Commission has [concluded its inquiry](#) into [Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators](#), finding that one group of trustees' inability to manage a long-running dispute is evidence of mismanagement.

The charity was established to preserve the commons for the purposes of exercise and recreation. In 2014, it sold land access rights (an easement) to Wandsworth Borough Council to allow for a road to a primary school and residential flats being developed on part of the commons.

The granting of the easement led to damaging disputes between the trustees over whether it was sold at an undervalue and whether the sale was in the best interests of the charity. The Commission opened a statutory inquiry into the charity in August 2016, after it failed to resolve the issues with advice and guidance from the regulator.

The inquiry did not find any one individual responsible for any incorrect decision, act or omission, but finds the inability of the trustees in post between 2015 and 2018 to manage the dispute resulting from the granting of the easement has been costly to the charity, and is evidence of mismanagement.

The Commission did not make any findings about the decision to grant the easement or the terms of that grant.

**Helen Earner, Director of Regulatory Services at the Charity Commission, said:**

All too often we see differences of opinion amongst charity trustees deteriorate into entrenched disputes. We would expect charities to resolve such disputes themselves, before they damage the charity's reputation and deplete its funds. Unfortunately, in this case, the trustees failed to make this happen, to the detriment of the charity.

I am encouraged by steps we are seeing towards improved governance, and increased transparency and accountability at the charity. I expect progress to continue, with trustees living up to the high standards of behaviour and conduct that the public rightly expect of charities.

Alongside its own inquiry report the Commission has, in the interests of transparency, published [findings made by an interim manager appointed to the charity in 2017](#). A [full report of the inquiry](#) is available on GOV.UK.

**Ends.**

**Notes to editors:**

1. Due to the long-running issues spanning several years, the report distinguishes between three sets of trustees; the original trustees, subsequent trustees, and current trustees.
2. The Charity Commission is the independent, non-ministerial government department that registers and regulates charities in England and Wales. Its purpose is to ensure charity can thrive and inspire trust so that people can improve lives and strengthen society.
3. It is not for the Commission to take sides or mediate in disputes. The Commission's role is, instead, to ensure that charities are governed effectively, charitable funds are properly accounted for, and trust in charity is maintained.

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## **Scaling up climate action: country strategies and emerging investment opportunities for a green recovery**

Good morning, afternoon and evening to everybody, I'd like to thank the Climate Policy Initiative for organising this event.

It is a pleasure for me to be speaking alongside Germany's Minister of the Environment, Svenja Schulze, and the UN Under-Secretary-General Inger Andersen.

My colleague the COP President Designate Alok Sharma expresses his apologies and with regret, I'm afraid to announce that unforeseen circumstances have resulted in him not being able to attend this event.

The fact that I am speaking from my own department here in London is a reminder of the unprecedented times we are living in.

2020 has seen countries across the globe take extraordinary measures to shut down large swathes of their economies in order to combat the coronavirus pandemic.

Here in the UK, we did this on the 23rd of March whilst also launching a

series of major policy initiatives to protect businesses, workers and consumers through the public health emergency.

Now, as we approach the next step in the phased reopening of our economy, and as we look to recover and rebuild, we are faced with a huge opportunity.

According to the IMF, governments across the world have already provided about 10 trillion dollars for the recovery, and we are only at the start of this process.

On Tuesday this week, the UK Prime Minister unveiled an ambitious economic strategy to usher our nation into the next stage of recovery.

A 'New Deal' to help build the UK economy back to health.

As the Prime Minister said, this moment gives us a much greater chance to be radical and to do things differently.

To build back better.

Of course, this is not just an opportunity for the UK, but for every country.

We all have an opportunity to create a fairer, a greener and a more resilient global economy.

And those of you attending this event today will know that we can only achieve this in partnership with business and finance.

In the last decade, globally we saw the cost of wind power fall by 49%, and that of solar power by 85%.

Renewables are already cheaper than coal power in two-thirds of all countries in the world.

This progress was only made possible through countries, companies and financial institutions coming together in partnership.

They've deployed investment. They've spurred innovation. They've scaled up technologies. And all ultimately working together, we have driven down costs.

But with temperatures still forecast to rise by around three degrees by the end of the century, we know that we must go further and faster to tackle climate change.

So as we look forward to COP26 next November, our aim is to increase ambitions towards a climate-resilient, zero-carbon economy.

We want all nations to submit more ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions, committing to further cuts in carbon emissions by 2030 and to reaching net zero as soon as possible.

As the UK's Minister for Business, Energy and Clean Growth, I have seen many excellent examples of countries working together to drive up ambition.

Minister Schulze will know of the Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action Facility, or NAMA, which is a great example of UK-Germany cooperation and leadership in this area.

Through the NAMA Facility we have invested nearly half a billion Euros in clean energy, electric buses and sustainable farming projects across Africa, Asia and South America.

And I'm pleased to say that, alongside our German friends, we will soon expand this successful programme to launch a special funding window for projects focused on raising NDC ambition in the aftermath of Covid-19.

With this commitment, we will support countries to implement ambitious NDCs and take hold of this unique opportunity to rebuild sustainable and resilient economies.

At this moment, let me pause to mention those countries that have already come forward with improved NDCs. They include the Marshall Islands, Chile, Norway, Rwanda, and yesterday's newest member for this esteemed group, Jamaica.

Welcome to you all. Thank you for the leadership you have already shown.

The UK will come forward with our own more ambitious NDC as soon as possible.

And I look forward to our friends and comrades around the world showing just as much ambition when they submit their new NDCs and Long-Term Strategies.

Ahead of COP26 we have outlined five areas which need particular attention: clean energy, clean transport, nature-based solutions, adaptation and resilience, and tying everything together, finance.

I list finance last because it really is the key to unlocking all further progress.

The OECD estimates that we will need nearly 7 trillion dollars a year up to 2030 to meet the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Last year at the UN, our Prime Minister announced a doubling of the UK's international climate finance commitment to 11.6 billion pounds over 2021 to 2025.

This, in turn, will mobilise further finance from public and private sources.

Helping us meet, and indeed move beyond the 100-billion-dollar goal.

Many of the Multilateral Development Banks represented here today are also looking to align their portfolios with the Paris goals, and I hope we can all work together on this important journey.

As the UK takes up the COP Presidency, we are calling on our international development partners to show similar ambition in their future climate finance, looking ahead to the Finance in Common Summit our French colleagues

are hosting in November.

Today I can announce that the UK's own Development Finance Institution, the CDC, has published an ambitious Climate Strategy.

This strategy sets out a comprehensive approach to align all of the CDC's activities with the Paris Agreement, based on the core principles of reaching net zero by 2050, enabling a just transition whilst strengthening adaptation and resilience.

But of course, public finance alone will not reach the scale needed to drive the transition.

To move from billions to trillions, we will need all finance to align with the Paris Agreement.

In February, my colleague the COP President Designate joined Mark Carney to launch the COP26 Private Finance Action Plan to help private finance support the global economy transition to net zero.

The BlackRock report has stated global sustainable funds have attracted more than 30 billion pounds in the first three months of 2020 – that is an increase of more than 40 percent year-on-year.

This is just one example of the huge momentum that is gathering behind this transition.

And in the lead up to COP26, we want to build on that momentum.

We want all financial institutions to commit to net zero targets, with clear transition plans detailing exactly how they mean to get there.

And today, banks, insurers, pension funds and investors with balance sheets of 139 trillion dollars combined are demanding that the sector engages with the Taskforce on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures.

We have seen over four fifths of the top 1100 global companies now disclosing climate-related financial risks in line with some of the TCFD recommendations.

To take this further, I am asking all financial institutions listening today to commit to reporting a full set of TCFD disclosures in their next reporting round, and to demand TCFD-consistent disclosures from their borrowers and portfolio companies.

This I believe, will send a hugely powerful signal that the private sector is ready and willing to support the climate transition, including in developing countries.

Ladies and gentlemen, we all have a part to play in our planet's future.

So I really hope and trust we can use this event to drive the conversation forward and together endeavour to build a fairer, greener economy.



Thank you all very much.

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## [New online tool to involve young people in policy making](#)

Young people from across the country will be invited to share their views on key issues with the government using a new digital platform launched today (2 July).

The [‘Involved’ Instagram page](#) will be a major step in engaging young people aged 13-25 around decisions made at the heart of government, by asking questions through the app’s polling and stories functions.

Responses will then feed directly into live public consultations and wider policy making across government departments.

The tool, supported by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and managed by the British Youth Council, has been designed by a group of 30 young people aged between 15 and 24 set up last year to offer a youth perspective on decisions made in government.

The Youth Steering Group has already provided valuable advice to Ministers on issues including youth violence, volunteering, youth services and the coronavirus outbreak. In the coming weeks young people will be invited to respond to a range of questions on the ‘Involved’ page regarding the impact coronavirus has had on their lives.

For example, young people will be asked how they feel about social distancing measures, what support they would like in accessing information about coronavirus and what extra help they feel they need during this time.

Harley Taylor, of the Youth Steering Group, said:

Young people are passionate about seeing social change in their communities and must be able to participate in the decision making of government. Involved will serve as an important opportunity to gauge young people’s views on the hot topics within government.

Minister for Civil Society, Baroness Barran said:

Young people often feel like it is hard to get their voices heard. Involved will give them an easy way to contribute their views on issues that matter to them, helping our decisions as Ministers to reflect these better.

This commitment to involve young people's views in policy making is part of our ambitious, long-term plan to support them to thrive as we rebuild and recover from the coronavirus outbreak.

The tool follows the Chancellor's announcement last year of a £500 million Youth Investment Fund for the five years from April 2020, to give young people somewhere to go, something positive to do and someone to speak to.

The British Youth Council have worked with [The Mix](#), [Youth Focus North West](#), [Youth Focus: North East](#) and [Youth Work Unit](#) in Yorkshire and Humber to deliver the project.

The Youth Steering Group is currently recruiting for new members. Young people aged 16-25 are encouraged to apply in writing, by video message or voice note and contact [membership@byc.org.uk](mailto:membership@byc.org.uk). Applications close on 12th July 2020.

#### Notes to Editors

- The questions on the platform are aimed at young people aged 13-25.