

British Ambassador welcomes donation to fight covid 19 in Guatemala

World news story

Donation by British company AstraZeneca will help Guatemalan health system to cope with the emergency.



Nick Whittingham, British Ambassador and Jorge Luis Calderon, from AstraZeneca

The British Ambassador, Nick Whittingham, has welcomed news that AstraZeneca is donating personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies and quick covid 19 tests to the Guatemalan Government.

The donation from AstraZeneca consists of:

- 1,500 KN95 masks
- 400 insulation gowns
- 3,000 latex gloves
- 500 quick tests of covid 19

Donation will be made to the CONRED for immediate distribution and use in the Guatemalan health system. The company is also making similar contributions to other countries in Central America and the Caribbean.

British Ambassador to Guatemala, Nick Witthingham, said:

We are pleased to see AstraZeneca's vast experience coming to help the Guatemalan health system. The United Kingdom's scientific community is leading the way in battling covid and we want to share these advancements with the world and Guatemala.

AstraZeneca is a global pharmaceutical company with a major UK presence. It works with governments, policy makers and regulatory bodies around the world

to ensure that patients can access innovative medicines when they need them.

The company is also prioritizing a covid 19 vaccine, which was originally developed by Oxford University scientists, who are now working with AstraZeneca on development and production.

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Westferry Printworks: letters to HCLG Select Committee

Letters from the Secretary of State to the Chair of the Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Committee responding to the Chair's letter of 16 June 2020.

The letter of 19 June responds to questions from the Chair of the Select Committee and commits to a further more detailed response regarding the Westferry Printworks planning decision.

The letter of 24 June sets out detailed responses to questions and requests for documents relating to the planning decision regarding Westferry Printworks.

The information release sets out relevant associated documents and communications. It focuses on the time period between the date of closure of the inquiry on 9 September 2019 and the date of Secretary of State's decision on 14 January 2020. It has been redacted for personal data and legally privileged information.

The Secretary of State's Decision Letter and the Inspector's Report are available – [Recovered appeal: land at former Westferry Printworks site, 235 Westferry Road, London \(ref: 3225474 – 14 January 2020\)](#)

The inquiry documents listed on pp. 146-153 of the Inspector's Report are publicly available on application to PCC@communities.gov.uk.

UK and Welsh governments team up on

big broadband boost for rural Wales

- Value of broadband vouchers doubled in Wales to help level up rural communities
- 50,000 rural homes and businesses in Wales are eligible to apply for topped up vouchers
- The vouchers subsidise the costs of installing next-generation, gigabit-capable broadband

Residents and businesses will from today have access to more funding for better broadband, as the Welsh Government “tops up” the UK Government’s Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme.

The scheme helps people with funding to cover the upfront costs of installing new gigabit-capable internet connections.

Vouchers worth up to £3,500 for rural SMEs and up to £1,500 for rural residential premises have been available in Wales since May 2019.

But, due to the Welsh topography, it’s proving more expensive for industry to roll out the infrastructure to some of the harder to reach areas of the country. The Welsh Government is now working with the UK Government to provide an additional £3,500 for SMEs and £1,500 for homes.

This means that the maximum funding available through each voucher has doubled and is now £7,000 for SMEs and £3,000 for residential premises.

The vouchers subsidise the cost of building out next-generation broadband infrastructure – such as fibre-optic cables – to rural villages and towns, so they don’t miss out on much faster speeds. They also incentivise other broadband companies to build in these areas.

Ministers from both governments are now urging Welsh businesses and communities to apply for these vouchers so they can future-proof their internet connections and be ready to reap all the economic and social benefits brought by new advances in technology.

Matt Warman, UK Government Minister for Digital Infrastructure, said:

Our £1.8 billion superfast broadband programme transformed Wales’ digital landscape, allowing many people to work remotely during lockdown.

We are now focusing on future-proofing internet networks with gigabit speeds and, working with the Welsh Government, I am pleased to offer even more vital funding to bring this next-generation connectivity to rural businesses and homes.

I encourage all those who qualify to apply to feel the benefits of much faster internet connections.

Deputy Minister for Economy and Transport Lee Waters said:

Fast, reliable internet is vital for our communities, as the covid-19 outbreak has highlighted. Following our Superfast Cymru programme 95 per cent of premises in Wales can access faster broadband, and we need to look at innovative ways to reach the final five per cent.

We are pleased to provide this top up for the UK Government's scheme which takes into account the challenges of reaching some premises in rural areas. I would urge communities and businesses to explore the options these vouchers will offer so they can access some of the fastest speeds available.

Gigabit-capable broadband enables internet download speeds of up to 1,000 megabits per second (mbps). Current superfast speeds are 30 mbps.

This next-generation connectivity has the potential to revolutionise rural communities and make them more attractive places to live. This will give people the freedom to live and work more flexibly and help develop thriving digital economies.

The UK Government is committed to delivering nationwide gigabit capable broadband as soon as possible, with the ambition to deliver it by 2025.

Before its gigabit voucher scheme, the UK Government's Broadband Connection Voucher Scheme helped more than 40,000 small businesses to achieve a superfast broadband connection from 2013 to 2015.

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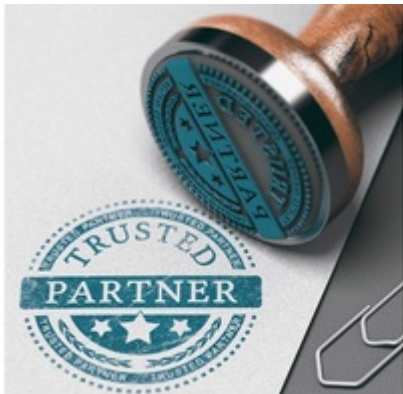
Notes to Editors

- The Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme is a UK-wide, supplier-led scheme offering vouchers used as part of a group project, to pay towards the cost of installing gigabit-capable broadband to premises, i.e., homes and businesses, providing speeds of over 1,000 Mbps or 1 Gbps. Beneficiaries do not have to take those speeds and pay only for what they want to use, knowing they can increase them over time. Anyone who is interested uses a postcode checker to find registered suppliers in their area. Their chosen supplier will guide them through the application. For more information and to check eligibility visit: <https://gigabitvoucher.culture.gov.uk/>
- The Welsh Government also provided top up funding for the first phase of the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme that was designed to encourage broadband service providers to build full-fibre networks in the UK for small to medium-sized businesses and nearby residents when part of a group scheme. The £67m fund was successfully used over two years and has now closed for new applications. Any premises in Wales that were issued vouchers with the top-up allowance prior to the close-down date of 14 May 2020 will still receive their funding.

GAD's support on pension entitlements for fee-paid judges

News story

GAD has worked closely with the Ministry of Justice on its consultation in response to a legal judgment. Our expertise has included remedy design and technical issues.



Pensions experts at the Government Actuary's Department (GAD) have been working closely with the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) on its consultation in response to a legal judgment.

This collaborative approach has helped MOJ to publish a detailed consultation document on proposed amendments to the [Fee-Paid Judicial Pension Scheme](#).

The worked examples shown in Appendix A of the consultation document illustrate some of the support GAD has provided. They aim to present complex remedy principles in a way that affected scheme members can easily understand.

Consultation

This consultation has been issued as part of MOJ's response to the 7 November 2018 judgment from the [Court of Justice of the European Union](#) (CJEU) in the case of O'Brien v Ministry of Justice.

The consultation sets out MOJ's proposed pension remedy for fee-paid judges with service before 7 April 2000. It is aimed at people who were not previously eligible for pension benefits in respect of service before this date.

GAD's role

Since the CJEU judgement GAD has provided support to MOJ in several different areas, including (but not limited to):

- remedy design
- the appropriate treatment of technical issues, such as service caps and variable accrual rates
- the implementation of the proposed remedy, including the calculation of payments in lieu of pension to affected judges

In addition, following the initial judgment [GAD set out 6 scenarios](#) to support the MOJ in its response to the case. This work centred around pension entitlements for specific fee-paid members of the judiciary who were not previously eligible for the judicial pension scheme. (We previously published information about [GAD's work in this area](#), in September 2019.)

Consultation responses

The consultation, which has been launched today (24 June 2020) will close on 18 September with a response set for January 2021.

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[ESFA Update: 24 June 2020](#)

[unable to retrieve full-text content] Latest information and actions from the Education and Skills Funding Agency for academies, schools, colleges, local authorities and further education providers