

# Britain's second carrier sets sail for sea trials

Eight years after her first steel was cut, the 65,000 tonne warship will head under the iconic Forth Bridges in the coming week to begin her initial sea trials.

Defence Minister Anne-Marie Trevelyan said:

Prince of Wales' departure from Rosyth is a landmark moment for the carrier programme. As the ship takes the next step to becoming fully operational, she carries with her the story of Britain's maritime might.

This tremendous achievement is a testament to the talent of British industry and I look forward to the moment we can welcome her into the Royal Navy family.

The carrier will conduct extensive sea trials off the coast of North East Scotland upon departing Rosyth before arriving at her home port of Portsmouth later this year.

Upon her entry to Portsmouth, she will be officially commissioned into the Royal Navy by her Lady Sponsor, HRH The Duchess of Cornwall, and sit alongside her sister ship for the first time.

Prince of Wales's Captain Darren Houston said:

I am immensely proud of the professionalism and determination that my ship's company have shown in preparing themselves and their ship for this historic day.

Whether through working alongside our industrial partners to support the build and commissioning of key systems or training tirelessly to operate the ship and work as a team, the crew have demonstrated unfaltering dedication and resolve in the face of a multitude of challenges.

The Prince of Wales is only the second ship in the world after HMS Queen Elizabeth to be built from the hull upwards, specifically to operate the fifth generation F35B Lightning II Joint Strike fighter jet.

Sir Simon Lister, Managing Director of the Aircraft Carrier Alliance said:

The Aircraft Carrier Alliance has brought together the very best of British industry, and it is thanks to their hard work, skill and determination that we have reached this important stage in the programme.

By working together as one team, we are now able, on schedule, to start testing this magnificent ship in preparation for handing her over to the Royal Navy.

First Sea Lord, Admiral Tony Radakin said:

This is much more than just the departure of the second ship in the class from Rosyth, but marks a sea change in Britain's aircraft carrier capability. HMS Prince of Wales confirms Britain's place as the leading European carrier strike nation within NATO.

From high-end warfighting to humanitarian assistance, Britain remains ready to deliver on operations anywhere in the world.

The ship has emerged from build two years after her sister ship, HMS Queen Elizabeth, which is currently transiting the Atlantic, including visiting Canada. The deployment, known as WESTLANT19 is an Operational Trial to be conducted with UK F-35Bs off the East Coast of the US.

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## [An Electric Revolution in the Skies](#)

Good afternoon everyone. It's fantastic to be at Cranfield.

A place that has played an integral role in the story of flight in this country.

So, this is a very apt location for one of my first aviation speeches as Transport Secretary – especially as a pilot who chaired Parliament's All Party Group on Aviation.

Now just as Cranfield has shaped UK aviation past and present...

This place will play a major part in its future too.

And today I want to talk about that future, both its challenges and the opportunities – and how we will rise to meet both.

We are today called to meet a challenge...

A priority so pressing that everything we do at the Department for Transport, and across government, must have regard to reducing CO2 emissions.

Some estimates suggest that aviation makes up 12% of average household emissions.

And forecasts suggest that within 3 decades that figure could grow to over a quarter.

With UK annual passenger traffic to soar from 292 million to 435 million by 2050.

A prospect both welcome for families and businesses but that requires action on emissions for the sake of our children and our fragile environment.

Now with this critical mission, comes a once in a generation opportunity.

British industry, and especially British aviation, can lead the world in the technological revolution we need.

We have done this before.

From the pioneering work of Sir Frank Whittle on the jet engine...

To the development of Concorde and the Harrier – a project in which your forebears at Cranfield were intricately involved...

We led the world in aviation innovation.

In my own constituency the world's first jet airliner was developed.

But we can leave nothing to chance in this great national endeavour.

I know that there's so much work already taking place.

The fuel efficiency of aircraft is steadily improving.

You're investing in the development of sustainable, low carbon fuels...

And you are even looking at the possibility of moving away from such fuels altogether.

While the government is doing its part...

And leading on the global stage...

We recently became the first major economy to make a legal commitment to net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

We've announced ambitious plans for the design and manufacture of zero emission vehicles...I drive one myself.

And within aviation – where I don't yet...

But I am proud that the UK has played a major role in creating the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation...

The first truly global scheme to address CO2 emissions in any single sector.

And we'll shortly consult on how we can ensure that aviation fully contributes to the UK reaching its net zero target by 2050.

But we need to keep up the momentum.

Today I've glimpsed the future with technologies being developed by some of you in this room...

Allowing the sector to thrive sustainably in the 21st century.

From a digital air traffic control tower to the Volante Vision.

The possibilities are boundless.

Take electric planes.

As someone who recently became the owner of that electric car...

I've seen how battery power allows us to reduce emissions from road vehicles...

But they also offer incredible economic potential for manufacturers and innovators.

So, I want to create an electric revolution not just on the UK's roads...

But also in our skies.

The UK led the world as a pioneer of international commercial flight in the 20th century...

And I want this country to become a hotbed for the design, manufacture and use of electric aircraft in the 21st...

Seizing a share of a market that could be worth £4 trillion globally by 2050...

And harnessing immense benefits of this transition:

- lower emissions
- greater efficiency
- and the power to transform mobility in towns and cities

I know that Cranfield and Loganair are developing hybrid electric aircraft for commercial passenger flights, through the Fresson Project...

To transport people in the Orkney Islands.

And the CAA is working with pioneering firms, such as air taxi company

Volocopter...

And then there's the brilliant collaborative work taking place on the Airbus and Rolls-Royce E-Fan X Project.

But while I'm excited at the possibilities.

I'm also a pragmatist.

We need the right infrastructure, the right batteries and the right research...

To make the electrification of flights take off.

That's why I was delighted that the Prime Minister recently announced a £300 million joint investment...

From government and industry through the [Future Flight Challenge](#).

Money that will fund electric plane innovation...

And research into other forms of aviation technology...

Including flying taxis and freight carrying drones.

This is on top of the nearly £2 billion we are ploughing into aviation research and technology...

Through the Aerospace Technology Institute Programme.

Only yesterday, through that programme, the government awarded £2.7 million to a start-up company ZeroAvia...

To build a hydrogen fuel cell propulsion system that will aid the development of zero emission aviation technology in this country.

And work is taking place in the sector more broadly...

Take for instance, the £65 million Digital Aviation Research and Technology Centre being built here.

But another key part of our success will depend on ensuring the next generation is ready to take up the mantle.

Everyone, from FTSE 100 companies to tiny flying schools, will have a part in securing our future global leadership.

And I want to directly address General Aviation.

It's a sector that sparks imaginations, provides opportunity and incubates the aviation workforce of tomorrow.

Plenty of air cadets have been inspired to serve in the RAF after a glider flight at their local airfield.

Some of the best aviation engineers started out as flying school apprentices. While countless commercial pilots obtained their licence at their local airfield.

So, it's vital that we protect our network of airfields where so many aviation careers first take flight.

That's why I'm delighted to appoint today Phil Dunnington as our General Aviation Advocate.

Phil was the first balloon pilot to cross the North West Arctic Passage and is a long standing champion of GA.

I know he will do a great job at representing the industry and raising its profile.

Because General Aviation will have a big part in solving some of the most pressing challenges facing the sector.

We must also recruit thousands more engineers, technicians and pilots...

And ensure we draw on all our country's talents.

In this country – the birthplace of Amy Johnson who flew solo from England to Australia in 1930 – just 6 in every 100 pilots are women.

While people from ethnic minorities are remain massively underrepresented.

I think general aviation could help address those issues.

By enabling young people of all backgrounds to gain a deeper understanding of what a career in flight might entail...

Whether that's by taking a trial flight in a light aircraft or talking to an aviator.

But as well as real, tangible experience – we also need to provide positive role models.

There's a saying: 'You can't be it, if you can't see it.'

That's why today I'm delighted to appoint 6 Aviation Ambassadors to inspire the next generation...

Break down any barriers...

And any lingering glass ceilings.

They are:

- Kirsty Murphy, a member of aerobatics display team, The Blades and the first woman to join the Red Arrows
- Patricia Mawuli Porter and Jonathan Porter who have overcome huge

obstacles to pioneer flight training in Ghana for people from all backgrounds – and now here in the UK

- Kate McWilliams, who became the world's youngest female commercial airline captain at the age of 26
- Arthur Williams, a former Royal Marine, who trained to become an airline pilot after being paralysed in a car accident
- Jo Salter, the RAF's first female fast jet pilot

Together, with all of us, they will encourage the next generation of pilots, broaden access and drive social mobility throughout the sector.

So a big thank you to you all and of course also to Phil for your upcoming time, energy and expertise.

These appointments are a sign of this government's focus on ensuring that the aviation industry of tomorrow...

Is the very best it can be.

I want to turn briefly to our evolving role in the world.

Earlier this month I confirmed measures to ensure flights between the UK and EU will continue to October next year – whether we leave with a deal or not.

I also announced that my department would extend the UK's air traffic rights for EU airlines.

I know that preparing to leave the EU has meant hard work.

And the sector's response has been tremendous.

But I'd like to stress that our withdrawal from the EU means that we will continue to enjoy warm friendships with our close neighbours... And embrace the rest of the globe too.

I'm reminded of the first scheduled international commercial flight between London and Paris, that took off 100 years ago last month.

The flight of that little de Havilland plane was not only a feat of daring and engineering endeavour...

It was also an exercise in building international partnership – paving the way to the global aviation network we know today.

So now is the time to cement old partnerships and forge new ones...

With aviation at the heart...

Demonstrating we are truly Global Britain.

So finally, I'd like to thank you all for coming today.

This government's commitment to developing a truly low carbon economy has profound implications for every mode of transport.

And certainly, as I said at the start, the challenges facing aviation are considerable.

But as today has so clearly highlighted this is also a moment of opportunity.

Opportunities for the aviation industry to grow long into the 21st century.

Opportunities for this country to become a global trailblazer for a new generation of aviation technology.

And opportunities for us all to build a cleaner, greener, better connected world.

Thank you and I look forward to working with all of you in the months ahead.

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## Increasing humanitarian access in Syria

Thank you, Mr President.

The situation for civilians in northwest Syria is devastating. Over 1,000 civilians have been killed, including over 500 women and children, and almost 630,000 people have been forced to leave their homes, since the beginning of May. I'd like to thank ASG Mueller for her briefing and for the work which her officials and colleagues are doing. And we commend your work and we commend the work of humanitarian agencies to address the humanitarian suffering of the people in Idlib. The United Kingdom has contributed over \$150 million for humanitarian assistance in Idlib over the past 18 months. And I took careful note of what Assistant-Secretary-General Mueller had to say about the importance of the cross-border resolution in that context. We, of course, support that resolution.

Colleagues, the Security Council must act to protect civilians in Idlib. That is why we fully support the humanitarian penholders, Belgium, Kuwait and Germany, on their proposed resolution. We will be voting in favour – in favour of protecting civilians, in favour of ending indiscriminate attacks. This Council has a duty to protect those suffering on the ground. We need to send a message to the regime that the international community is resolute in condemning their actions and will not let them continue unabated. Only a vote in favour of the co-penholders' resolution will send the message that countries around this table, representing the international community, will not accept the wanton targeting of civilians and civilian infrastructure, regardless of the stated objective. Now is not a time to sit on the fence.

Mr President, we know the Syrian regime do not care how many of its civilians they kill, but Russia says it does. And if so, they should vote in favour of



the co-penholders' text, and they and China should withdraw their text, which would permit continued attacks on civilians. We note Russian claims to the press recently that OCHA's information is not up to date, apparently, given their lack of presence on the ground. This only reinforces the need for Russia to press the Syrian authorities to approve OCHA's request for greater humanitarian access on the ground.

Mr President, on Monday, the Astana guarantors noted their commitment to sustainable peace in Syria, and that this can only be achieved through political and diplomatic methods. We have been waiting a very long time for political progress. We ask again for Russia to maintain pressure on the regime, to fully engage with the political process and, of course, to end the violence in Idlib, which threatens that political process.

Finally, Mr President, we welcome the Secretary-General's Board of Inquiry, which will soon begin to investigate some of the recent appalling attacks in Idlib. We call for the findings of this inquiry to be released to the public. Some of the information underlying those founding findings may need to remain confidential, but it is crucial that this Board is transparent in its mandate and output. The international community – but more importantly, the Syrian people – deserve to be privy to its findings on events in Idlib.

Mr President, ASG Mueller said the world was watching this Council, but the Syrian people – men, women and children – are dying while they watch.

Thank you, Mr President.

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## **UK statement on freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief at HDIM 2019**

Promoting and defending human rights, including freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, is a priority for the United Kingdom.

Over the past year, the United Kingdom has stepped up our work, focusing not only on combatting intolerance, but also, crucially, on promoting respect and understanding between communities. On 12 September 2019, Mr Rehman Chishti MP succeeded Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon as the Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief, and Mr Chishti will now lead the UK's efforts on this fundamental freedom.

The UK has spoken up for the rights of religious minorities across the world, including the over one million Uyghurs detained in so-called "re-education camps" in China, Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia and the Baha'i in Iran and Yemen.

We have also worked multilaterally with our partners and friends to defend Freedom of Religion or Belief. This includes co-sponsoring the Polish-led UN Resolution creating a new International Day to commemorate the victims of acts of violence based on religion or belief, as well as co-sponsoring an informal UN Security Council meeting in New York on advancing the safety and security of persons belonging to religious minorities in armed conflict.

Working closely with faith and belief leaders has remained a key part of our work. Former Special Envoy Lord Ahmad met the Archbishop of Canterbury; the Chief Rabbi of the United Kingdom; the Grand Mufti Shawki Allam of Egypt; and many others to hear their concerns about freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief.

The UK also works very closely with individuals and leaders of no religion or belief, such as Humanists and atheists, whose safety is under threat in many parts of the world. Special Envoy Rehman Chishti will continue this work, to promote religious freedom and champion the cause of those being persecuted for their faith or belief.

In December last year, the former Foreign Secretary announced that he had commissioned an independent review on the support that the FCO provides to persecuted Christians globally. The final report of the independent review presented a series of recommendations on measures the UK can take to support persecuted Christians overseas.

The UK Government accepted all of the recommendations, and work has begun to implement them. We hope that the review will inspire other governments, including those with strong track records on human rights, to look at what else they can do to help some of the most vulnerable people around the world.

Our commitment to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, including the right to change or leave your religion, is unwavering, and we look forward to continuing our work to defend this human right, in line with our OSCE commitments.

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**[Calling all robots – Sellafield challenges launched](#)**



Robots are already in use at Sellafield. For example the Avexis (pictured) offers the ability to 'see' inside a waste silo via cameras attached to its body.

People from across Sellafield Ltd and the supply chain gathered at a robotics and innovation event in West Cumbria today to hear how the development and innovative use of technology is key to the clean-up of Sellafield.

Working alongside the [Robotics and Artificial Intelligence for Nuclear hub](#), one of 4 robotics hubs in the UK, Sellafield Ltd is developing, testing and deploying new robotics systems fit for nuclear environments.

This investment is already making a difference at Sellafield, including robotic systems that are:

There are also plenty of opportunities for the supply chain to bring their innovations to Sellafield.

Three specific opportunities were launched at the robotics event:

- Deployment techniques to allow remote working at height in high hazardous areas
- Autonomous removal of Special Nuclear Material packages from a store to a transport container for export
- Remote inspection of Special Nuclear Material packages

[More information on the challenges can be found on the Game Changes website.](#)

Dr Frank Allison from Game Changers said:

The event highlighted the ways in which robotics and artificial intelligence can be used within Sellafield to support decommissioning. There were exhibitions of cutting-edge robotic technology and three new exciting challenges are now open for the supply chain to find solutions to.

It brought together people from a wide variety of organisations and industries and we're looking forward to nurturing new relationships and paving the way for some really innovative thinking.

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