

The National Food Crime Unit visits LGC

The Food Standards Agency's National Food Crime Unit (NFCU) aims to help protect businesses and consumers from fraudulent supply chains through building relationships with industry, delivering crime prevention initiatives and conducting thorough, proportionate investigations where necessary. This is to support the Food Standard Agency to deliver its overarching strategy that "food is safe and is what it says it is".

Following an increase to its budget, the NFCU has seen significant extension of the unit's capabilities and remit in terms of its investigation and crime disruption capabilities and the prevention of food crime. As part of its outreach programme and as a follow-up to a meeting between Darren Davies, Head of the NFCU and the Government Chemist, Julian Braybrook and Selvarani Elahi in May 2019, colleagues from the NFCU visited LGC.

Selvarani Elahi gave a presentation on the [Food Authenticity Network](#), highlighting the benefits of closer collaboration between this growing global network and the NFCU, both of which were created by the UK government to address the recommendations of the [Elliott Review](#).

NFCU colleagues were taken on a tour of LGC's [National Measurement Laboratories](#) where LGC staff demonstrated research on a range of technologies from point-of-use screening to confirmatory methods capable of combating food crime or food fraud .

30m to spark rollout of next generation 5G in rural Wales and help countryside capitalise on tech revolution

Digital Secretary Nicky Morgan has launched a £30 million UK-wide competition to spark a tech revolution in countryside communities and help rural Britain seize the opportunities of 5G technology.

Up to ten rural locations will be chosen to run innovative trials of 5G applications and stimulate commercial investment in 5G technology which offers mobile speeds 10 to 20 times faster than previous generations.

The Rural Connected Communities competition is the latest wave of £200

million funding to pioneer 5G testbeds across the country and deliver the benefits of the highest speeds of mobile connectivity available.

Monmouthshire has previously been selected as a 5G testbed site to improve rural connectivity. The 5G Rural Integrated Testbed (5GRIT), a partnership of SMEs and universities has been trialling the innovative use of 5G technology across a range of rural applications including smart agriculture, tourism and connecting poorly-served communities, using shared spectrum in the TV bands and a mix of local ISPs and self-provision.

The new funding will build on projects like these and trial other uses of 5G in rural communities to help drive business growth, enhance lives and encourage innovation.

Digital Secretary Nicky Morgan said:

The British countryside has always been a hotbed of pioneering industries and we're making sure our rural communities aren't left behind in the digital age.

We're investing millions so the whole country can grasp the opportunities and economic benefits of next generation 5G technology.

In modern Britain people expect to be connected wherever they are. But poorer connectivity in rural areas risks hampering economic growth and social mobility.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:

This funding demonstrates the UK Government's commitment towards eliminating the disparity in connection between urban and rural areas whilst exploring innovative ways to use 5G technology to develop emerging industries, supporting our rural economy in Wales.

This is a great opportunity for rural areas to boost the productivity and capacity of their digital infrastructure and I'd encourage local partners to come together to apply to benefit their communities.

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Notes to editors

- The deadline for RCC applications is 25 October 2019 with the winning projects expected to be announced before the end of the year. For information about the RCC competition and the process for submitting an application [please go to the competition page](#)
- The UK Government has committed to extend geographical mobile coverage

to 95%, to ensure continuous mobile connectivity is provided to all major roads, and to be a world leader in 5G.

[39 Malaysians get UK Chevening Scholarships](#)

39 Malaysians have been selected as recipients of the prestigious British government's Chevening scholarship to pursue their postgraduate studies in the United Kingdom for the 2019/2020 academic session.

The Chevening award is the UK government's global scholarship programme offered by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office. In addition to the British government's funding, corporate partners including CIMB Group Holdings Berhad, the Prudence Foundation (community investment arm of Prudential), Yayasan Khazanah, Jeffrey Cheah Foundation and British universities are on board to provide additional funding in support of the Chevening programme.

His Excellency Charles Hay MVO, British High Commissioner to Malaysia, hosted a pre-departure briefing and reception for the scholars this afternoon. He said:

A British education is undeniably world class and is very much sought after. I am pleased to announce that the UK is awarding 39 Chevening awards this year to high achieving Malaysians to pursue a master's degree in the UK.

He continued by saying:

Malaysia is the second largest recipient of Chevening awards in ASEAN. This would not be possible without the generosity of our local corporate partners whose sponsorships complemented Chevening funding from the UK government, which allows us to send so many Malaysians to study in the UK. When these Malaysian scholars return to Malaysia after completing their studies, they will be part of the 1,600 strong Chevening alumni network in Malaysia.

Education has been a key pillar in the longstanding and deep relationship between the UK and Malaysia. There are approximately 18,000 Malaysians studying in the UK each year and another 80,000 students currently studying for a UK qualification in Malaysia.

Successful scholars will be heading to the UK as early as September this year to pursue a wide range of Master's programmes at top UK universities, with

the aim of returning to Malaysia to make a significant contribution in a number of priority areas: public policy; human rights, law and science. This year, we have seen the number of Chevening scholars studying law and engineering double compared to last year.

Scholar Dr Mohamed Faruqi Uzair said:

Chevening gives me the opportunity to study law (Medical Law and Ethics) at University of Kent, to engage directly with the best minds in my field, allowing intellectual discussions on issues faced in Malaysia with a goal of implementing positive changes.

Another scholar Anandaraj Sitthaya who will be studying a Master's in Crime Science studies at the University College London said:

Chevening opens the opportunity for me to create a lifelong network of global leaders and noble friends who possess a common passion to improve the peace, security and safety of our nations and together design a better world through efficient crime prevention.

Leong Mei-San (Melody) said:

Thanks to Chevening, I will be pursuing a Master of Public Policy at Oxford University – An incredible opportunity to hone my skills to better serve Malaysia and learn from fellow change-makers from around the world.

The British High Commission is currently receiving applications for those wishing to study in the UK for the academic year of 2020/21. More information is available on the [Chevening website](#).

£30m to spark rollout of next generation 5G in rural areas and help countryside capitalise on tech revolution

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Up to ten rural locations will be chosen to run innovative trials of 5G applications and stimulate commercial investment in 5G technology which offers mobile speeds 10 to 20 times faster than previous generations.

The Rural Connected Communities [competition](#) is the latest wave of £200 million funding to pioneer 5G testbeds across the country and deliver the benefits of the highest speeds of mobile connectivity available.

This technology is already being used in the Orkney Islands to remotely monitor salmon fisheries and improve efficiency of wind farms, and in Shropshire, the 5G trials are showing how farming can be transformed through targeted crop-spraying and soil analysis with drones and tractors.

The new funding will build on projects like these and trial other uses of 5G in rural communities to help drive business growth, enhance lives and encourage innovation.

Digital Secretary Nicky Morgan said:

The British countryside has always been a hotbed of pioneering industries and we're making sure our rural communities aren't left behind in the digital age.

We're investing millions so the whole country can grasp the opportunities and economic benefits of next generation 5G technology.

In modern Britain people expect to be connected wherever they are. And so we're committed to securing widespread mobile coverage and must make sure we have the right planning laws to give the UK the best infrastructure to stay ahead.

The Government has today also launched a [consultation](#) on proposals to simplify planning rules to improve rural mobile coverage.

Reforming planning laws for mobile infrastructure is part of the Prime Minister's plan to level-up connectivity for communities across the UK, further support the roll-out of 5G and boost our economy. The consultation on potential changes to permitted development rights for mobile infrastructure in England includes proposals on:

- changing the permitted height of new masts to deliver better mobile coverage, promote mast sharing and minimise the need to build more infrastructure;
- allowing existing ground-based masts to be strengthened without prior approval to enable sites to be upgraded for 5G and for mast sharing;
- deploying radio equipment cabinets on protected and unprotected land

without prior approval, excluding sites of special scientific interest;
and

- allowing building-based masts nearer to roads to support 5G and increase mobile coverage.

The Government is also seeking views on what measures industry could offer to mitigate the impact of any new infrastructure, including assurances of a greater use of existing sites and the removal of redundant masts.

Minister of State for Housing and Planning, Rt Hon Esther McVey MP said:

We're committed to delivering the homes people across the country need, and that includes delivering the right infrastructure such as broadband connectivity and good mobile coverage. There is nothing more frustrating than moving into your new home to find signal is poor.

That's why we are proposing to simplify planning rules for installing the latest mobile technology – helping to extend coverage and banish more of those signal blackspots, particularly for those living in rural areas.

Mark Bridgeman, Deputy President of the Country Land and Business Association, said:

The vast potential of the rural economy will only be fulfilled when everyone in the countryside has full mobile connectivity, and we welcome DCMS's intent to deliver the Prime Minister's promise of internet access for all.

The current situation, where only 67% of the country can access a decent signal, is unacceptable and Government is right to focus on planning reform as a means to removing current barriers but there must also be a balance between the interests of landowners and mobile operators.

Hamish MacLeod, Director at Mobile UK, said:

The current planning system does not support the fast, efficient rollout of 5G technology that is vital for the UK's digital economy. We welcome the Government looking at simplifying planning processes to deliver better connectivity, and we stand ready to work in partnership to ensure these much-needed reforms happen as quickly as possible.

Julian David, CEO, techUK said:

5G is an essential component of the UK's digital fabric. It underpins innovative technologies from drones to AI. techUK welcomes this initiative and sees this Government has long recognised the benefits offered by 5G to businesses and consumers, making considerable investment already in 5G testbeds and trials, including 5G RuralFirst, led by techUK member Cisco.

As important as the financial support for innovative uses for 5G is, the recognition that the way planning rules are implemented is a big factor in the level of connectivity. I am pleased the Government is now proposing to simplify those rules as they apply to mobile masts in England and urges them to move swiftly to make these changes.

ENDS

Notes to editors

Contact the DCMS press office for more information: 0207 2112210

The deadline for RCC applications is 25 October 2019 with the winning projects expected to be announced before the end of the year. For information about the RCC competition and the process for submitting an application please go to the [competition page](#).

The [consultation](#) on planning reform, which closes on 5 November 2019, is part of the Government's long-term strategy for meeting its digital connectivity targets, outlined in the Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review. The consultation seeks evidence from industry, communities and other stakeholders on the scope of the proposed planning reforms and the impact they could have. Subject to the outcome of this consultation a second consultation on the detailed proposals is likely to be required before introducing any legislation. The consultation proposals relate to England only.

The Government has committed to extend geographical 4G mobile coverage to 95%, to ensure continuous mobile connectivity is provided to all major roads, and to be a world leader in 5G.

[UK Minister for Armed Forces Rt. Hon Mark Lancaster visits Ghana](#)

The UK's Minister for Armed Forces Rt Hon. Mark Lancaster will visit Ghana

from 26th to 28th August 2019 and other partner countries in West Africa. His visit is reflective of the strong and enduring partnership Ghana and the UK share, reaffirming the UK-Ghana defence relationship, whilst reinforcing the UK's strong commitment to Ghana at a time when heightened region security tensions are presenting challenges.

In Ghana, the RT Hon Mark Lancaster will meet with H.E. Alhaji Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia the Vice President of Ghana, where they will reaffirm their long enduring partnership, and discuss the growing regional security threats Ghana faces from the changing dynamics to its north and from piracy, illegal smuggling and fishing in the Gulf of Guinea. He will emphasise the UK's commitment to a strong partnership that enables a secure and prosperous Ghana and wider sub-region, and discuss the regional responses to the security challenges. The Minister of Armed Forces will also meet Ghana's Minister for National Security Hon. Mr Albert Kan Dapaah, the Deputy Defence Minister and other senior officials.

At lunch time he will visit the Veterans Association of Ghana (VAG) Headquarters where, by laying a wreath at the monument of the unknown soldiers, he will reflect on how enormously grateful her Majesty's British Government and people are for the contribution of Ghanaian soldiers who supported the British Army during the Second World War. He will take lunch with a number of Ghana's veterans and Ghanaian ex-British Armed forces servicemen. The UK is committed here in Ghana – as in the UK – to keeping the memory of the fallen alive in the best way possible by ensuring that their veteran comrades are fully supported. In November 2018 the UK established a £12 million fund, to be delivered to 7000 commonwealth veterans and their widows via the Royal Commonwealth Ex-Servicemen's League, to ensure that veterans and their widows can enjoy, at minimum, a basic standard of living. There are many Ghanaians who continue to serve in the UK armed forces and forge outstanding careers.

Securing territorial waters from piracy and illegal fisheries is essential to Ghana's economy and its prosperity. Rt. Hon. Mark Lancaster will visit the ECOWAS Zone F Multinational Maritime Coordination Centre, based in Accra. He will see some of the work the UK is doing to support the centre, and the successful signing of a Memorandum of Understanding for an integrated approach to Maritime Security on 25 Jul 2019 by the signatory countries of Zone F. He will re-emphasise the UK's commitment to this excellent work noting that as 90% Ghana's trade has a link to the sea, essential to have secure seas that are free from organised crime, piracy and illegal activities.

The Minister of Armed Forces final visit will be to the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) where he will take a tour to further understand the pivotal role the centre plays in the region. He will reinforce the UK's commitment to bring UK expertise to the centre. The combination of this expertise, combines with KAIPTC's ability to attract attendees from across the political, civil and military spectrum regionally, ensuring excellent results. Ghana is the 10th largest contributor to UN peacekeeping missions, KAIPTC plays a further crucial role in Ghana's contribution to regional and world peace and security, and the UK remains

committed to partnering with Ghana in these endeavours.

In April this year, the UK and Ghana signed a joint declaration on 3 top priorities- Mutual Prosperity, Regional Security, and Health, Education & Equality and this visit following on from the visit of the previous UK Foreign Secretary reinforces our on-going strong relationship.

Ahead of the visit the British High Commissioner H.E. Iain Walker said: “The visit of the Rt Hon Minister of Armed Forces deepens the strong security ties between Ghana and UK; demonstrating that collaboration is key. As Ghana and the UK change, it is clear through the partnership we continue to forge, we move towards a common secure and prosperous future”.