

British Embassy Warsaw presents: #PolishBritishStory



100 years of friendship

Chris met his future wife, Joanna, at a tap-dance contest. Together, they run a dance school in the Polish city of Lodz. Terry always dreamed of being a radio presenter, and now he runs a popular program in English, in which he shares the perspectives of expats in Wroclaw. John was a war correspondent for "Time", but after years full of adrenalin, he decided to settle down and open a guesthouse in the north of Poland.

These are only some of the interesting, inspiring and funny stories of UK nationals living in Poland, presented by British Embassy Warsaw through its #PolishBritishStory campaign.

The campaign praises the strength of people-to-people connections between the UK and Poland, and highlights the contribution of UK nationals to Polish society, business and culture. All this, as part of the celebrations of [100 years of renewed diplomatic relations between the UK and Poland](#).

All stories can be watched on the [Facebook page of the British Embassy Warsaw](#) and on Youtube.

Watch the Polish-British Story of Chris and Joanna, who met at a tap-dance contest and now run a dance school in Lodz:

Watch the Polish-British Story of Chris and Joanna, who met at a tap-dance contest and now run a dance school in Lodz:

Watch the Polish-British Story of Terry and his English-language radio program in Wroclaw:

Watch the Polish-British Story of John, former “Time” correspondent and now owner of a guesthouse in the north of Poland:

Watch the Polish-British Story of Jimmy, TV presenter and music producer:

Watch the Polish-British Story of James and his blues band:

[RWM welcomes community leaders at the LGA Conference 2019](#)

Held over three days in Bournemouth (2-4 July) the [Local Government Association \(LGA\)](#) Conference 2019 gave community representatives from across the country the opportunity to meet with experts from Radioactive Waste Management (RWM) to learn more about a Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) and the benefits it would bring.

RWM at the LGA conference 2019

A GDF is a highly-engineered network of underground vaults and tunnels that will provide safe and secure disposal of the country’s radioactive waste.

As a multi-billion pound programme, a GDF would provide long-term local employment and the opportunity for a local area to benefit from significant investment. Formal engagement in the process brings benefits starting at £1 million and rising to £2.5 million per year without any commitment.

At the conference, a suite of animations explained the GDF story, and how RWM will work with communities. Using virtual reality, delegates were able to take a future trip 1km underground to explore a state of the art GDF. RWM’s expert geologists were also on hand to explain National Geological Screening and the role geology plays in site selection for a GDF.

A conference delegate takes a trip 1km underground into a GDF, 100 years from now

Ann McCall, Siting & Engagement Director for RWM, said:

The process to find a site for a GDF is consent-based with communities at its heart. We were delighted to be at the LGA Conference to discuss geological disposal and the investment opportunities and benefits a GDF could bring to a local community.

Join the conversation: RWM has published detailed [guidance for communities](#) who would like more information about geological disposal.

[91st session of the Executive Council of the OPCW](#)

Thank you Chair and warm congratulations on your new role. Welcome also to the new Executive Council members. A very fond farewell to colleagues who are leaving. We will miss you.

Thank you Director General for your comprehensive statement.

The United Kingdom fully aligns with the statement made by the Ambassador of Finland on behalf of the European Union.

It is a year and a day since a British national, Dawn Sturgess, died following an appalling chemical weapons attack in my own country. Many thousands more have suffered terribly in Syria in recent years. The membership of this organisation came together in response in June 2018 and made emphatically clear that such actions would carry consequences. Real progress was made but there is more to do to strengthen the OPCW and uphold the legal commitments we all undertook when we ratified the convention.

We are disappointed that, since we last met, an objection was lodged to the Canadian, Dutch and US proposal to add two families of Novichok nerve agents to the Convention's Schedules. The proposal will now be taken up at the November Conference of States Parties, and we urge all States Parties to support its adoption.

Tragically the threat of chemical weapons use in Syria remains very real and we welcome the recent reports of the Director-General on Syria's chemical weapons programme. It is obvious that despite the Technical Secretariat's exhaustive efforts to implement Decisions made by this Council and the Conference of States Parties that serious problems remain.

Let us be clear, Syria bears full and sole responsibility for providing a complete Declaration – something it has failed to do for five long years. New aspects of Syria's chemical weapons programme continue to come to light, as

catalogued in the most recent DAT reports. This only serves to underline our concern about the extent of Syria's undeclared chemical weapons programme. And now we learn that Syria is refusing to grant visas for Technical Secretariat staff to visit, in contravention of Articles seven and eight of the Convention, Decisions taken in this Council, and Security Council Resolution 2118.

Mr Chair, this is completely unacceptable. Syria insists that it has no chemical weapons programme – why then is it trying so hard to prevent those who have used chemical weapons on its territory from being identified? It is incumbent on all states parties to fully support the Technical Secretariat in delivering its mandate and that includes the work of Investigation and Identification Team. We stand ready to support the IIT in the months ahead as investigations progress and look forward to the first report issuing.

Mr Chair,

We welcome the fact that the Director-General presented a budget proposal last Friday. We note that it proposes zero nominal growth in terms of assessed contributions which is welcome. We particularly support the proposal to focus more on enhancing the capabilities of laboratories around the world – the UK is targeting some of our £1.1 million commitment to this important work this year.

Independent and trusted financial oversight is critical for any organisation. For that reason we will also be supporting efforts to reform and update the rules of procedure of the Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters, to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

We are grateful to Ambassadors Gomez and Puja for convening consultations on the Director-General's paper on ensuring a diverse and qualified workforce; as well as the proposal to establish a new Open Ended Working Group. We would of course need to have clarity on the purpose and mandate of any new working group in order to support it. The UK is ready to engage constructively with any specific suggestion, be it within the context of existing facilitations or outside them, in order to strengthen implementation of the Convention.

Thank you Mr Chair.

Small boat people smuggler jailed

A man who organised cross-Channel people smuggling attempts has been jailed for 3 years and 4 months on 8 July.

Published 9 July 2019 From: [Border Force](#)



Sarbast Mohammed Hama, 31, of no fixed UK address, pleaded guilty to assisting unlawful immigration at Lewes Crown Court in a case led by Immigration Enforcement Criminal and Financial Investigations (CFI).

A CFI investigation was started into Hama, who is an Iraqi national, after he was discovered on board a rigid-hulled inflatable boat (RHIB) in the early hours of 27 March 2019.

The vessel had been intercepted close to Folkestone by a Border Force cutter with 13 migrants, including 2 children, on board. Home Office checks revealed Hama had been encountered previously on a different RHIB off the coast of Deal on 25 December 2018 with 10 other Iraqi nationals. Following this, he had presented himself as an Iranian national and submitted an immigration application which was ongoing. When he was encountered in the Channel for a second time in March, Hama was arrested on suspicion of assisting unlawful immigration.

Steve Whitton, from Border Force's maritime command said:

When he was intercepted by Border Force, Hama was involved in reckless attempts to smuggle people, including young children, into the UK. The vessels used were unfit to cross the channel in the best of conditions, let alone in the middle of winter.

Our cutter and coastal patrol vessel crews will continue to work closely with CFI colleagues to ensure those responsible for this type of dangerous and illegal crossing face justice.

CFI enquiries revealed that the vessel used in March 2019 was purchased the day before the crossing from a watersports shop in the Netherlands and was paid for in cash. CCTV showed Hama on the 22 March and 26 March purchasing a RHIB on each occasion as well as boat motors and lifejackets. Hama can be seen signing a receipt on the 22 March. Footage from the 26 March also shows Hama changing the number plates on his car outside the shop.

Assistant Director David Fairclough, from CFI, said:

It was detailed forensic examination of the vessel involved in the

March incident – conducted by colleagues from the National Crime Agency – that identified where the boat had been purchased.

That was a real breakthrough and the CCTV we collected from the Netherlands made for a damning case against Hama.

This complex investigation is an excellent example of law enforcement agencies working effectively together to strike people smuggling at source and tackle the criminals behind these extremely dangerous crossings.

People smuggling by small boats is not an issue that any agency can solve in isolation, but working closely with our partners at home and abroad we will continue to put those involved in this type of criminality before the courts.

Anyone with information about suspected immigration abuse can contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 anonymously or visit <http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org>.

Crime news: extension of 2017 crime contract to 31 March 2021

We are extending the 2017 Standard Crime Contract by 12 months to 31 March 2021.

A headline intentions document is available on GOV.UK informing providers about the extension.

Why is this happening?

This is being done so that we can consider the outcome of Ministry of Justice reviews into criminal legal aid and the means tests before we put a new crime contract in place.

These reviews are due to report towards the end of summer 2020.

Next Steps

We will begin to issue contract extension notices to individual providers in the next month. The new schedules will be issued before the end of March 2020.

Further information

[Standard Crime Contract 2017](#) – to download ‘headline intentions’ document

[Criminal legal aid review](#)

[Means test review into thresholds for legal aid entitlement thresholds](#)