

## [New Head of Corporate Affairs at the Student Loans Company](#)

Adam Treslove has been appointed Head of Corporate Affairs for the Student Loans Company. SLC is headquartered in Glasgow, with further offices in Darlington and Llandudno Junction.

He will be responsible for all internal, media and external affairs for SLC, which administers student loans on behalf of the UK government and devolved administrations.

David Wallace, Deputy CEO at SLC warmly welcomed the appointment, saying, "Adam brings a wealth of experience from both the public and private sector to this enlarged role within SLC. This appointment is crucial to increasing understanding of how SLC enables its customers to invest in their futures through education."

Adam joins from Tesco Bank where he was Head of Media Relations and Public Affairs. During his time at Tesco Bank, Adam oversaw the bank's external communications as it grew to be the UK's leading supermarket bank. Prior to that, he held similar roles at the Food Standards Agency, at Which? and at the BioIndustry Association.

Adam Treslove commented, "The Student Loans Company plays a critical role in delivering student opportunity. With the recent Augar review, SLC's new People Strategy and the renewed focus on technological development, it's a great time to be joining the organisation as it strives to deliver efficiently for customers and partners."

The Corporate Affairs team in SLC has been further strengthened through the internal appointment of Madeleine Firth into the newly created position of External Affairs Manager. Madeleine has been managing the office of the CEO, Paula Sussex for the last two years. Prior to that she was Chief of Staff for a Member of Parliament in her native Australia.

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## [Inclusive Transport Strategy – one year on](#)

This month (July 2019) marks the one-year anniversary since the publication of the [Inclusive Transport Strategy](#). As Transport Accessibility Minister I am very proud of all that has been achieved in the last 12 months and this government remains fully committed to delivering against the commitments set out in the strategy.

Whilst a relatively short period of time has passed since the publication of the strategy, we have already reached some significant milestones and continue to make steady progress in delivering the strategy's commitments.

Achievements include:

Nonetheless, I acknowledge that there is still more to do to ensure that all disabled people have the same access to transport as everyone else and can travel confidently, easily and without extra cost. The government will continue to work with transport operators, charities and disabled people's organisations to ensure we achieve our overall goal, which remains to create a transport system which offers equal access for disabled passengers by 2030, with assistance if physical infrastructure remains a barrier.

I have today written to the Chairs of the APPG for Disability, the Transport Select Committee, the Women and Equalities Select Committee and the Health and Social Care Select Committee, including further detail on the progress of the past year. Copies of this letter have been placed in the libraries of both Houses.

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## **PM speech at Northwood: 8 July 2019**

After I became Prime Minister almost exactly three years ago, one of my very first acts – the first time I spoke in the House of Commons, in fact – was to open the debate on renewing our continuous at-sea nuclear deterrent.

As I said in that debate, "There is no greater responsibility as Prime Minister than ensuring the safety and security of our people."

And doing so is not something any Prime Minister can achieve without you – the brave men and women of our armed forces.

You are not just a part of British life – you are the guarantors of British life.

The foundation of our freedom.

The protectors of our democracy.

And for that, we owe you a debt of gratitude.

It is a debt that stretches back through the generations – as we were reminded last month when the wonderful veterans of D-Day returned to the beaches of Normandy 75 years after they liberated a continent.

And it is a debt that continues to this day, as I have seen every day throughout my time in Government.

I saw it in Salisbury, where specialists from the joint CBRN task force worked around the clock to decontaminate the city in the aftermath of Russia's despicable and deadly nerve agent attack.

I saw it in Iraq, where I met some of the British troops who have trained almost 90,000 local forces in weapons maintenance, counter IED, medical and engineering skills.

I saw it in Kenya, where I witnessed British troops training their local counterparts in mine detection and bomb disposal

I saw it in Akrotiri, where I met the brave men and women of Operation Shader – who have helped destroy the territorial caliphate of Daesh, and who continue the fight against the evil it stands for.

In South Sudan, where British peacekeepers are bringing safety and stability to the world's youngest nation.

In civil emergencies across the UK, where the military have saved lives and property from rising water, raging fire and falling snow.

In Gibraltar, where just last week the Royal Marines boarded and seized an oil tanker suspected of illegally supplying the Syrian regime.

In Somalia, where more than 500 local soldiers have now graduated from the British Security Training Centre.

In the skies above Europe, where our Typhoons scramble to see off Russian transgressors.

In the Mediterranean, where our sailors rescued migrants sent to sea in the rickety boats of people traffickers.

And on the streets of cities across the United Kingdom when, under Operation Temperer, troops from all three services kept us safe in the wake of the horrific terror attack in Manchester.

At home and abroad, by day and by night, at sea, on land, in the air and even in cyberspace...

You are always there, always ready, always serving – and all so that we in the UK might sleep safely in our beds.

In doing so you face many threats, but you do not face them alone.

It was Sir Winston Churchill who said that "There is at least one thing worse than fighting with allies – and that is to fight without them."

And at few places is that spirit of co-operation stronger than here at Northwood, home of the NATO Allied Maritime Command.

In an age of increasing polarisation and division on the global stage, the hand-in-glove co-operation of NATO's militaries provides a model for

multinational organisations everywhere.

We saw what that looks like just last month in the 47th annual Baltops exercise.

One operation saw Royal Marines fast-roping onto a Lithuanian beach, joined by Spanish amphibious vehicles launched from an American landing ship and Romanian ground forces carried in a Polish assault craft.

Across Baltops 50 surface ships, two submarines, almost 40 aircraft and well over 8,000 personnel from 18 nations came together to show the world that, while NATO may be in its 70th year, the alliance is as strong and united as it has ever been.

While the threats we face may vary and evolve, the founding principles of NATO – that we are mightier together than alone and that an attack on one is an attack on all – remain every bit as important and relevant today as they were in 1945.

Because the military and security challenges we face in 2019 are not confined to any one nation or continent.

Terrorists, people traffickers, international criminals and state and non-state aggressors do not respect national boundaries, and nor should our response to the threats they pose.

NATO has a crucial role to play in that response – and I am immensely proud of the role the UK plays in NATO.

Proud that the UK continues to be a significant and active member of the alliance, including hosting the Maritime Command here at Northwood.

Proud that, later this year, the UK will have the honour of hosting the special summit to mark NATO's 70th anniversary.

And proud that the UK continues to meet the NATO target of spending two per cent of GDP on defence – a pledge I fully expect the next Prime Minister to maintain, and one I would like to see many more member states meeting in the years ahead.

Vital though NATO is, it is not our sole vehicle for international military co-operation.

While the operational headquarters of the EU Naval Force may have recently left Northwood, our departure from the European Union will not mean the end of security and defence co-operation with our neighbours.

For example, RAF Chinooks from 18(B) squadron have been supporting French operations in Mali for some time now.

The mission-critical airlift capacity they provide allows French ground troops to conduct anti-terror operations that make the Sahel more stable and, ultimately, make both our nations safer.

And this morning I am pleased to announce that the operation will be extended, so this vital partnership can continue.

But of course, other militaries are not the only partners involved in the success of our armed forces.

In fact the most important partners are not in uniform at all – rather, they are the children, friends and families of the wider forces community, who do so much to support their loved ones who serve.

It is not easy being part of the forces family.

Not easy for children to move from school to school.

Not easy for partners to build new careers and new friendships every time their loved one is redeployed.

I cannot imagine how it must feel to wave goodbye to someone you care deeply about, knowing you won't see them again for many months – or even hear from them, if they are serving out of reach beneath the waves as part of our continuous at-sea deterrent.

And none of us would wish to imagine how it feels to lose a loved one in the service of their country.

Indeed, one of the hardest tasks of my premiership was finding the words to write to a young girl who would never know her father, after he was tragically killed in Iraq.

So I want to take this opportunity to recognise the contribution that you make, and to thank each and every one of you for helping to make our armed forces the very best in the world.

And because our armed forces are the best, they deserve the best.

That is why I increased defence spending by £1.8 billion, continuing our investment in the future of warfare.

By year's end both Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carriers will be at sea.

The first of the Dreadnought-class submarines is already under construction in Barrow-in-Furness.

Cutting-edge Ajax armoured fighting vehicles are rolling off the production line in Merthyr Tydfil, with the first of almost 600 entering service later this year.

RAF pilots are already patrolling the skies in state-of-the-art F-35 jets, with a total of 48 due to join the fleet by 2025.

And we are funding research into military robotics on land and at sea.

Because the United Kingdom is a top tier military nation, and a top tier military nation we will remain.

But we are not only investing in equipment.

We are also taking better care of our most important military assets – the men and women on the front line – increasing the amount we spend on specialist mental health care for armed forces personnel to £220 million over the next decade.

Because any nation's military can acquire expensive kit.

What makes ours so special is its people – and it is people that are the reason for my visit here today.

Sadly there is only room for 100 or so of you in this hall.

But across the country and around the world, almost 200,000 men and women are serving their country in any number of ways.

Royal Navy, Army, and Royal Air Force.

Regular and Reserve.

Long-serving soldiers, sailors and airmen coming to the end of their forces careers...

...and the rawest of recruits still finding their bunks at Catterick, Halton and HMS Raleigh.

Then there are the veterans who have served their country with distinction and deserve our lasting respect.

The civilian staff around the world who provide so much support for today's men and women in uniform.

And of course the friends and families who make this all possible.

First as Home Secretary and now as Prime Minister, I have had the privilege of working with and getting to know a great many men and women from every branch of our armed forces.

The toughest decisions I have had to make were the ones that would put you in harm's way.

But it has been an honour to work alongside you, and to do all I can to support you.

And as I come to the end of my time in office, I am proud to finish the way I started three years ago– by standing up and thanking our fantastic armed forces for all that they do.

You are the best in the world, and I wish you all the very best for the future.

Thank you.

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# Launch of review into persecution of Christians: Foreign Secretary's speech

Good morning ladies, gentleman. Welcome to the Foreign Office.

When I was moving house last year, I came across a book called God's Smuggler which I first read when I was about ten.

At the height of the Cold War, Brother Andrew van der Bijl would smuggle Bibles across the Iron Curtain to communist countries where Christianity was ruthlessly suppressed.

When the Berlin Wall fell 30 years ago, the European nations that Brother Andrew had visited undercover won their liberty and achieved one of the greatest advances of human freedom in modern history.

Yet when I became Foreign Secretary, I learned that almost a quarter of a billion Christians were still enduring persecution around the world.

The evidence shows sadly that the situation is becoming worse.

The number of countries where Christians suffer because of their faith rose from 128 in 2015 to 144 a year later. In the Middle East, the very survival of Christianity as a living religion is in doubt.

A century ago, 20 percent of the region's people were Christians; today the figure is below 5 percent. Britain has always championed freedom of religion or belief for everyone.

I would particularly like to thank Lord Ahmad, our Minister for Human Rights – who was appointed the Prime Minister's Special Envoy in 2018 – for his vital work in this field.

And he has made an immense personal contribution, working across Government, visiting 13 countries to reach across religious divides, and securing funding for programmes in Iraq, Malaysia, Burma and Sudan.

And as someone who himself comes from a persecuted minority, I have always valued his wise counsel and his passion for this cause.

In my first weeks as Foreign Secretary, I prioritised the plight of the Rohingya Muslims, who are targets of a brutal campaign of ethnic cleansing mounted by the army of Burma.

But I am not convinced that our efforts on behalf of Christians have always matched the scale of the problem, or indeed have reflected the evidence that it is Christians who frequently endure the heaviest burden of persecution.

Indeed around the world, Christians are believed to be targets of about 80 percent of all acts of religious discrimination or persecution.

Perhaps because of a misguided political correctness – or an instinctive reluctance to talk about religion – British governments have not always grappled with this problem.

So in December I asked the Right Reverend Philip Mounstephen, the Anglican Bishop of Truro, to review the Foreign Office's support for persecuted Christians and recommend improvements.

I am grateful to Bishop Mounstephen for submitting his final report, which describes in harrowing detail the scale of the suffering and the moral obligation that rests on all of us.

So I thank him and all his team for the work they put into this excellent review which I hope will lead to a sea change in our approach at the Foreign Office.

The Bishop writes: "If one minority is on the receiving end of 80 percent of religiously motivated discrimination, it is simply not just that they should receive so little attention."

His report highlights the "decimation" of some of Christianity's "oldest and most enduring communities".

When Islamist terrorists struck Sri Lanka on Easter Sunday, killing over 250 people, this was the third Easter in a row disfigured by a terrorist attack somewhere in the world.

And these attacks stand alongside the equally appalling attacks on worshippers in mosques in Christchurch in New Zealand, reminding us how people across the world, of all faiths are still in this, the 21st century, being murdered for their religion.

So I warmly welcome this report and its recommendations. We are working across Government to agree a formal collective response as soon as possible.

Let me highlight some of those recommendations in particular.

Firstly, the report recommends that we seek a new UN Security Council Resolution urging all governments in the Middle East and North Africa to protect Christians and allow UN observers to monitor the necessary security measures.

Secondly, it says that for too long, governments have preferred the vague language of general condemnation rather than face the specific problem of anti-Christian discrimination and persecution.

The report recommends that I instruct my officials to define this abuse, and I believe we should do that by calling it out clearly with the label Christophobia.



Thirdly, as we establish independent national sanctions regimes after Brexit, the report says we must be prepared to consider imposing such measures on perpetrators of serious, religiously-driven human rights abuses.

Fourthly, it proposes that we establish a John Bunyan stream of the Magna Carta Fund, named in honour of the author of Pilgrim's Progress, dedicated to helping persecuted Christians. This would, for example, be used to fund trauma care for survivors.

Fifthly, all Foreign Office staff – at home and abroad – should in the view of the report, undergo mandatory training on religious literacy, subject to resources.

And finally, I already expect British Embassies and High Commissions in relevant countries to deliver tailored responses to any violations of freedom of religion or belief.

There will be, for example, a new focus on this subject by our High Commission in Nigeria, including greater engagement with Christian leaders and visits to those communities affected by persecution.

Bishop Mounstephen's review was independent and, in some respects, he is critical of our approach. We must accept such criticism in the constructive spirit in which it was intended.

For example, the report highlights different views of the causes of conflict between largely Muslim herders and Christian farmers in the central belt of Nigeria.

But whether or not the bloodshed is driven principally by competition over land and water, it would be a mistake to overlook religious hatred as an important factor.

Indeed it's hard to avoid concluding that the gunmen who raided a church in Benue state last year, murdering two priests and 17 worshippers, just one of the atrocities highlighted in the report, were motivated by anything else.

So in closing, I repeat my thanks to Bishop Mounstephen for calling our attention to a terrible burden of suffering. As the Christian doctrine of Original Sin reminds us, the capacity for wickedness is inherent in the human condition. We will never be able to extirpate anti-Christian bigotry.

But nor must we shrug our shoulders and walk on the other side of the road.

As a country that has always been a beacon for freedom and tolerance, the United Kingdom will not shirk its responsibilities and I am determined we will look up to them.

Thank you.

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# £150 million pledged to deliver vital upgrades at Gatwick Airport station

- government announces £150 million investment to upgrade Gatwick Airport train station
- holidaymakers and commuters to benefit from a larger concourse, 5 new lifts and 8 new escalators
- improvements set to reduce train delays and provide easier connections across the south-east

Tens of millions of rail passengers travelling to and from Gatwick Airport will benefit from improved accessibility and swifter journeys, after the Department for Transport (DfT) announced a £150 million scheme to upgrade the station.

The renovation will reduce train delays caused by platform overcrowding and congestion, while also improving passenger experience by providing easier connections to other destinations.

[£150 million youtube video](#)

Planned upgrades will include doubling the size of the station concourse, adding 5 new lifts and 8 escalators to improve passenger flow, and widening 2 platforms to reduce overcrowding.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

With 46 million people now using Gatwick Airport every year and 20 million coming by train, it is vital that we make the station more accessible and customer friendly for those travelling through it. The UK's second largest airport has direct rail links to more than 120 destinations and is an important public transport hub.

We want to see Gatwick Airport's success continue to flourish and ensure that it is ready for even more passengers in the future. Through this £150 million investment, we will deliver vital upgrades to boost the station's capacity and provide better, seamless journeys for all.

Stewart Wingate, Chief Executive Officer, Gatwick Airport said:

Gatwick has been transformed in recent years and the redesigned train station will take the airport's redevelopment to the next level by providing a seamless transition between the airport and the station, more lifts, escalators and a doubling in the size of the concourse.

The new station will complement the huge improvements to rail services at the airport, which include new fleets of Gatwick Express and Thameslink trains and services that now leave the airport for London every 3 minutes – as frequently as services on the tube.

The project is a fantastic example of the public and private sector working together to deliver a world-class transport hub that will comfortably manage the expected growth in air passengers and also encourage people to switch to rail as part of our push to get more people to travel to the airport by public transport.

The number of people using Gatwick Airport station each year has grown by 6 million since 2010. Currently the station is not designed for the high volume of daily passengers, often carrying bulky luggage.

The renovation will be managed by Network Rail, in partnership with DfT. Gatwick Airport Ltd and Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership are co-funding the project with £37 million and £10 million respectively.

Paul Harwood, Director of Investment for Network Rail, said:

The transformational enhancement to Gatwick Airport station will provide passengers with a much smoother and more pleasant experience and also reduce train delays.

Along with the recent improvements on the Brighton Main Line and our record £4.3 billion funding settlement for maintaining, operating and renewing the railway over the next five years, this investment is excellent news for passengers, businesses and the economy.

Patrick Verwer, Chief Executive Officer of Govia Thameslink Railway, said:

This much-needed scheme will deliver real benefits for passengers thanks to enhanced platforms, new lifts and a larger concourse. At such a busy station these upgraded facilities will significantly contribute to the smooth running of our services for travellers getting to and from the airport.

Jonathan Sharrock, Chief Executive at Coast to Capital said:

If our economy is to grow, we need a transport network that supports faster, more reliable, and less polluting journeys for business, leisure and freight travel. Gatwick airport is an international destination and its station is a gateway to London and the wider Coast to Capital area.

This plan will greatly improve the interchange for commuters, visitors and business which will support the sustainable growth of the area with Gatwick airport at its heart.

We are delighted to have contributed £10 million and look forward to working with partners to deliver a better experience for passengers.

The improvement works will start in spring 2020 and will take around 2 years to complete. The works will be sequenced to ensure minimum disruption.

The government is investing a record [£48 billion to modernise the country's rail network](#) and deliver significant improvements in performance, punctuality and capacity.