

## [News story: Emotional reunion for coastguard helicopter crew and Regan Green](#)

'I've been doing search and rescue for nearly twenty years and Regan was the first fisherman I've taken out of the water who was conscious and alive, but he was also the first fisherman I took out of the water wearing a lifejacket.'

These are the powerful words of coastguard winchman 'Spike' Hughes who lifted fisherman Reegan Green out of the water when he was flung into the sea in treacherous conditions. Reegan was wearing a lifejacket which kept him alive for over an hour before the coastguard helicopter rescued him. Reegan and his crewmates have been overwhelmed by the positive reaction his incident has had on fishing communities around the UK.

It was an emotional reunion when HM Coastguard Newquay helicopter crew, Capt Sharky Finn, Capt Jorg 'Yogi' Brunner, winch operator Phil Warrington and winchman Mark 'Spike' Hughes met fisherman Reegan Green for the first time after his dramatic rescue off the Salcombe coast. Coastguard winchman 'Spike' Hughes said: 'The sea state was pretty big that night – about 20ft with 70 knot winds, so it was quite a horrific night. It's the type of night you don't want to be going outside in. I saw Reegan looking at me from the water – I could see the whites of his eyes and he could see the whites of mine and that was a good moment. By then I was only a matter of feet away and within about two minutes the rescue was complete. It's really, really good to see him here today, having an outcome such as this is absolutely fantastic.'

[Reunion footage](#)

---

## [News story: GRAVES OF TWO IRISH SOLDIERS KILLED DURING THE GREAT WAR ARE REDEDICATED A CENTURY LATER](#)

The resting places of Lieutenant (Lt) Gilbert Donnelly and Captain (Capt) John Forsythe Harvey, were honoured on Thursday 21 March during two rededication services held at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's (CWGC) Ste. Emilie Valley Cemetery and Noyon New British Cemetery in France.

The services, organised by the MOD's Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC), part of Defence Business Services (DBS), were conducted by the

Reverend Nathan King CF, Chaplain to 1st Battalion The Royal Irish Regiment and were attended by ten members of The Royal Irish Regiment.

The Reverend Nathan King conducts the rededication service for Lieutenant Donnelly

Rosie Barron, JCCC said:

It has been an honour to organise these rededication services for two Irish Officers who are still much loved by their families. The memory of their sacrifices has been kept alive throughout the generations. It is rewarding to know that these men have been found and that their families are now able to visit their final resting places for generations to come.

The rededication service at Ste. Emilie Valley Cemetery was attended by twenty-five members of Lt Donnelly's family. Lt Donnelly's great nephew, Dan Donnelly, was pivotal in finding him, having submitted his research regarding his final resting place.

Dan Donnelly, great nephew of Lt Donnelly said:

We know Gilbert's father and siblings were left bereft at news of his loss and that they had tried to find out the details and whereabouts of his death. We are therefore delighted to gather on their behalf and remember this brave young man who voluntarily left the comfort of home for the horror of war.

The location of Capt Harvey's grave was identified by the historian Michael Nugent. The JCCC and the National Army Museum (NAM) corroborated his research which confirmed the identification of the grave. The rededication service at Noyon New British Cemetery was attended by eight members of Capt Harvey's family.

Pauline McConaghy and Valerie Larmour, great nieces of Capt Harvey said:

As we grew up our grandmother's brother John Harvey's death in WW1 was often talked about and there was always an added sadness that he had no known grave. So as a family now over 100 years later we are very grateful Michael Nugent's research for his book has identified his grave and the JCCC have involved us in the rededication service. We feel very privileged to be able to represent the family at this Rededication ensuring Cpt. John Forsythe Harvey's memory and resting place is assured for future generations.

Members of The Royal Irish Regiment and the family of Captain Harvey look on

during the rededication service at Noyon New British Cemetery

Lieutenant Gilbert Donnelly Upon receipt of Mr Donnelly's research further investigations were undertaken by the JCCC and NAM to corroborate the submitted evidence and the identification of the 'Unknown Soldier' grave was finally confirmed. Lt Donnelly, aged 20, was serving with 1st Battalion The Royal Munster Fusiliers, when he was killed at Sainte Emilie on 21 March 1918, the first day of the German Spring Offence. Before he was Commissioned, Lt Donnelly had been studying medicine at Queen's University, Belfast.

He fought at the Battle of Messines, the Third Battle of Ypres (Passchendaele) and at the Battle of Cambrai. On 21 March 1918, Lt Donnelly was acting as a "spotter" for a Lewis machine gun crew near the village of Sainte Emilie, when he was killed by a sniper. Listed as missing, Lt Donnelly is commemorated on the Pozières Memorial (a WW1 Memorial, located near the commune of Pozières, in the Somme department of France).

Captain John Forsythe Harvey Capt Harvey from Castlereagh, County Down, was serving with 9th Battalion The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers when he was killed on 23 March 1918, aged 23. Before he was Commissioned in July 1916, Capt Harvey had worked in the Linen Trade in Belfast.

Capt Harvey was killed during heavy fighting near the village of Brouchy, south west of Saint-Quentin, and was buried in Brouchy Churchyard. In 1934 his remains were reinterred in Noyon New British Cemetery where he was buried as an unknown Captain. He is also commemorated on the Pozières Memorial.

The Reverend Nathan King said:

By such acts of rededication, we remember again and renew our thoughts about those who have passed and are known not only to God but also to family members past and present. We are reminded again of the great sacrifices made and recognise in them the courageousness of the human spirit. There is an important spiritual element to such remembrance with a sense held in the Christian faith that the souls of the faithful rest in the presence of God and that peace has been found.

Two new headstones bearing the names of Lt Donnelly and Capt Harvey have been provided by the CWGC, who will now care for their final resting places in perpetuity. The headstones now bear the names and personal inscriptions chosen by the respective families on behalf of those who loved them a century ago.

Brigadier Mike Murdoch, Deputy Colonel of The Royal Irish Regiment, presents a Union Flag to the family of Captain Harvey

Catherine Nell, CWGC Commemorations Officer said:

Although Lieutenant Gilbert Donnelly was buried in Ste. Emilie

Valley Cemetery and Captain John Forsythe Harvey in Noyon New British Cemetery after the war it was not possible to identify them, and for almost a century their names have been recorded on the Pozieres Memorial to the Missing. Today, thanks to the efforts of many and in the presence of their respective families, we are able to rededicate their graves with new headstones and renew the commitment of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission to care for them, forever.

---

## **Press release: Gigabit broadband voucher scheme boost for Wales**

The UK's Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme is to be given a boost in Wales thanks to a new partnership between the Welsh and UK Governments. Ministers from both Governments are now urging Welsh businesses and communities to apply for the funding to get gigabit speeds.

The announcement follows an agreement between the UK and Welsh Governments, and reflects the higher costs of deploying fibre infrastructure in Wales, as a result of the country's topography and the location of premises.

The UK Government's Gigabit broadband vouchers – worth up to £2500 – are currently available to small businesses and surrounding local communities to contribute to the installation costs of a gigabit-capable broadband connection.

Under the new arrangements, the Welsh Government will provide an additional £3,000 for businesses up to a certain size and an additional £300 per residential property. This means that for group projects in Wales up to £5,500 is available per business, compared with £2,500 elsewhere in the UK. Up to £800 will now be available per residential property in Wales, compared with £500 elsewhere.

UK Minister for Digital Margot James said:

This exclusive scheme for Welsh businesses and communities is a vital part of our modern Industrial Strategy and build a Britain that is fit for the future. Working with the Welsh Government, together we can make sure that everyone in Wales has the connectivity they need for the digital age.

Deputy Minister for Economy Lee Waters said:

Although the vast majority of premises in Wales can now access superfast broadband, we are working hard on assisting the remaining five per cent that cannot access it and where commercial companies have no plans to reach. There is no one size fits all solution to reach the final premises, and the Gigabit Broadband Voucher scheme is an important part of a suite of measures to achieve this.

This voucher scheme can provide a vital funding source for group connectivity projects, and could be of great benefit to communities currently without access. I'm pleased we've been able to work with the UK Government to provide an enhanced scheme for Wales, taking into account the particular challenges we face here with geography and the location of premises.

The voucher scheme forms part of a package aimed at improving connectivity in Wales. The Welsh and UK Government funded £200 million Superfast Cymru programme has already taken superfast broadband speeds to more than 733,000 Welsh homes and businesses commercial companies had no plans to cover. The Welsh Government is also investing a further £22.5 million to reach an additional 26,000 premises and the UK Government is introducing a Universal Service Obligation that will make fast broadband a legal right for every home and business in Wales by 2020.

UK Government Minister for Wales Nigel Adams said:

Improved connectivity for homes and businesses in Wales is at the centre of the UK Government's efforts to strengthen our economy and support our rapidly expanding digital sector.

This voucher scheme will ensure more people in Wales have access to reliable broadband speeds, marking another significant leap forward in both governments' efforts to ensure Wales has a broadband network fit for the future.

## Notes to Editors

- The enhanced Gigabit Voucher Scheme will replace the Ultrafast Voucher scheme in Wales, which provided an average of £4,300 per scheme.
  - The Welsh Government also runs the Access Broadband Cymru scheme which can provide grant assistance for residents and businesses without superfast broadband to do so through different technologies
  - Group projects are when two or more businesses get together – or businesses with residents – to combine their vouchers towards the cost of building the infrastructure for installation. Up to ten residents can get together with one business to create a group of community project.
  - More information on the USO is available [here](#)
-

# News story: Multi-billion-pound deal for early warning radar aircraft

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson has signed a \$1.98Bn deal to purchase five E-7 aircraft.

The E-7 fleet will replace the current Sentry aircraft and ensure the continued delivery of the UK's Airborne Early Warning and Control (AEW&C) capability.

Named "Wedgetail" by the Australian Department for Defence, the E-7 aircraft can fly for long periods of time and manage the battlespace from the sky.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

The E-7 provides a technological edge in an increasingly complex battlespace, allowing our ships and aircraft to track and target adversaries more effectively than ever. This deal also strengthens our vital military partnership with Australia.

We will operate state-of-the-art F-35 jets and world-class Type-26 warships, and this announcement will help us work even more closely together to tackle the global threats we face.

Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier, said:

Today's announcement about the procurement of five E-7 'Wedgetail' Airborne Early Warning and Control aircraft is excellent news for both the RAF and wider Defence. This world-class capability, already proven with our Royal Australian Air Force partners, will significantly enhance our ability to deliver decisive airborne command and control and builds on the reputation of our E3D Sentry Force.

Along with Defence's investment in other cutting-edge aircraft, E-7 will form a core element of the Next Generation Air Force, able to overcome both current and future complex threats.

The new fleet will be able to track multiple airborne and maritime targets at the same time, using the information it gathers to provide situational awareness and direct other assets such as fighter jets and warships.

The E-7 is a proven aircraft that is currently in-service with the Royal

Australian Air Force and has been used on operations in the battle against Daesh in Iraq and Syria.

The E-7 is based on a standard Boeing 737 NG airliner modified to carry a sophisticated Northrop Grumman active electronically-scanned radar. This can cover four million square kilometres over a 10-hour period.

Modification of the aircraft will be carried out in the UK, sustaining over 200 highly skilled jobs at Marshall Aerospace and Defence Group in Cambridge, and there will also be opportunities for British suppliers to be involved in future training and support arrangements.

This announcement builds on a growing military capability and industrial relationship between the UK and Australia, after the Australian government selected the British Type 26 design for its future frigate.

E7 infographic. RAF Copyright.

---

## [Press release: New trans-Pennine roads study announced](#)

The study – due to start in April – will consider what enhancements could be made to road connections between the end of the M65 at Colne and communities like Skipton in North Yorkshire and Keighley and Bradford in West Yorkshire.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

We are investing more than £13 billion to improve transport across the North so people can get around more easily, quickly and safely.

This study is part of our ongoing work to ensure the routes between Lancashire and Yorkshire are fit for the future – helping link communities better and boosting the economy to supercharge the Northern Powerhouse.

Beyond the M65, there is currently no consistent strategic route for trans-Pennine traffic, with the limited alternative routes suffering from congestion and drivers facing poor journey times given the large distances involved. The M65 route between Preston and Leeds is five miles shorter than journeys via the M62 but takes 40 minutes longer.

The corridor is home to many manufacturing industries which could benefit from improved roads. Investment could boost economic growth not only in East Lancashire, and West and North Yorkshire, but also beyond, across the whole of the North of England; this could support jobs, housing and economic opportunities in the area in line with the aspirations of Transport for the

North (TfN), the partnership making the case for pan-Northern strategic transport improvements.

Investment to upgrade this corridor would also help to relieve congestion on the M6 and M60 in the longer term as well as providing greater network resilience.

Highways England Chief Executive Jim O' Sullivan said:

This study will look at the issues currently facing road users in the trans-Pennine corridor, the extent to which the lack of strategic connection hinders growth, and options for improving those journeys and boosting economic growth. It will also look at how improvements could be used to support other trans-Pennine routes such as the M62.

This initial strategic assessment will be followed by analysis of potential options – and will consider the difficult terrain, environmental impacts, economic growth, the role of other modes in the corridor and concerns and aspirations of key road user groups.

Working with TfN, Highways England is aiming to conclude and publish its findings by the end of the autumn, delivering a Strategic Outline Business Case for ministers to consider if there is a case for future investment.

## **General enquiries**

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

## **Media enquiries**

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.