

Press release: Change of Her Majesty's Ambassador to Israel: June 2019



Mr Neil Wigan OBE has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the State of Israel.

Mr Neil Wigan OBE has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the State of Israel in succession to Mr David Quarrey CMG who will be transferring to another Diplomatic Service appointment. Mr Wigan will take up his appointment during June 2019.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Full name: Desmond Patrick Neil Wigan

Married to: Yael Banaji

Children: Two

2015 to 2018 FCO, Director, Africa Directorate

2013 to 2015 Mogadishu, Her Majesty's Ambassador

2010 to 2013 Kinshasa, Her Majesty's Ambassador

2008 to 2009 Cabinet Office, Deputy Director for Middle East and Wider World, Foreign and Defence Policy Secretariat

2006 to 2008 FCO, Head, Arab, Israel and North Africa Group

2002 to 2006 Tel Aviv, Head, Political Section

2000 to 2002 FCO, Policy Adviser, EU Economic Policy, Europe Directorate (Internal)

Further information

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News story: Technological trials to help future proof roads

Buckinghamshire Ringway Jacobs (Contractors), Transport Systems Catapult, Aylesbury Garden Town, Aylesbury Vale Council, Coldharbour Parish Council, Bucks and Thames Valley LEP and Enlight The council would work with Transport Catapult Systems and an innovative partner to manufacture recycled plastic/composite columns to mount lighting sensors, 5G antenna and large format schemes in public areas. They will also use sensors to collect data across their highway network including the use of a central management data system to collect data on air quality, road surface temperature, ANPR, CCTV. They will also include the application of gully sensors at various locations to help improve efficiency in highways maintenance service. In addition they will use new kinetic energy recovery from the carriageway to harvest energy in roadside battery units. The Live Lab will also introduce new solar energy generation including solar roads and footways. The bid includes a new turbine to help harvest energy to power street furniture using the wind. It will also include on-street charging points, a new e-bike hire scheme and a trial at Aylesbury of autonomous pods. £4.49 million Central Bedfordshire Ringway Jacobs (Contractors), Morgan Sindall, Jacobs and Vinci The bid would test solar power in a number of footways to create and store energy. The bid also would install a surface course in Flitwick town centre using solar or kinetic power capability. They would include a "Power Road" solution, already piloted successfully in France, to use geothermal energy connected to water pipes laid just below the surface to de-ice car parks/bus stations in sub-zero weather conditions. £1.05 million Cumbria University of Nottingham, University of Central Lancashire, University of the Sunshine Coast (Australia), University of California (USA), MacRebur Ltd and Gaist To extend Cumbria's existing trial of the use of plastic roads. The trial will also would produce a guidance document on the use of this new surface material solution and also an APP. £1.6 million Staffordshire Amey (Contractor), Keele University and UI This project addresses the issue of how the concept of a Smart Highways network can be extended from primary roads to a local road network. The project will be developed around the private road network on the "small town" living laboratory of the Keele University campus. The project will develop, test and demonstrate how such a network can be enabled to retrofit Smart Highway design, construction and maintenance to support the use of alternative approaches to both people and freight transport. A control centre to function as an asset and data manager will be integrated with sensor and control technologies. The living laboratory will be adjacent to a proposed public transport hub to enable rapid roll-out of development The Highways and AV living laboratory base at Keele University will focus on the development, testing and demonstration of Smart infrastructure and its interaction with new service propositions, CAVs and people and alternative fuels with a particular focus on rural and small community roads. The objective will be to develop new approaches to: instances of congestion and incidents; improved user / customer experience / perceptions and health; improved real-time network understanding (assets and their use); improved citizen engagement; optimisation of network assets and whole system

performance and improved air quality through the development of carbon reduction approaches. To deliver these objectives the project will establish a new control centre to act as an asset manager and data broker between different services and provide the platform to which new technology can be tested, as far as possible in a plug and play approach. This will be integrated with the deployment of a number of different sensors across the Keele Campus road and energy network to establish what is required for a minimum viable product. £3.95 million Kent Amey (contractor), University of Birmingham, MAP16, UI and Rezatec The bid would be for a local highway asset management technology incubator and would create a centralised digital hub for all asset management data. This would link to dynamic network sensors which are linked to assets such as drainage, winter service (gritters) and gulleys. It should lead to more efficient highways maintenance service and allow funding to go further. Reading Siemens, University of Reading, 02 Telefonica, Peter Brett Associates, Wyra, Smarter Grid Solutions, Wokingham BC, Bracknell Forest Council, West Berks Council, Slough Borough Council, Royal Borough of Windsor Council, Thames Valley LEP and Shoothil The proposal will utilise existing infrastructure and smart communication technology. Existing sources of data from traffic signal detectors will be fused with mobile phone data in order to provide a multi-modal view of real time movement across the Thames Valley. This will link with air quality data to produce a public health exposure model. The data is expected to inform transport, environment and planning projects throughout the Thames Valley region. £4.75 million Suffolk Kier Infra (Contractor), Kier Housing, University of Suffolk, Proving Services and Future Highways Research Club, CU Phosco, Telensa, enLight, British Telecom, British Standards Institute (BSI), Institution of Lighting Professionals and HEA Adapt or replace lighting columns to make them suitable for use as charging points or Wi-Fi hubs. Plus trialling sensors from multiple suppliers to see which work best in various conditions. All trials to be scalable so suitable for rolling out nationwide. £4.41 million Solihull and Birmingham (part of Transport for West Midlands) Joint Bid Hanwha Corporation, T.I.S (Mansfield Ltd), 4sight Imaging, University of Birmingham (along with Walsall Borough Council, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council and Warwickshire County Council TfWM would support and lead the collaboration. The team would take data from video analytics pilots in 10 selected local road corridors, collect, analyse and model it. The pilots would build up a picture using video analytics to work out point to point vehicle journey times during different time windows. Analytics will also learn journey times. As well as number plate recognition it will identify other features and colours from vehicles such as e.g. logistics company brands. Further lines of investigation may include monitoring of cycle usage and pedestrians, which would be of benefit in programmes such as the West Midlands rollout of Next Bike regional bike share schemes. The team will bring analytics through to push messaging via existing applications like WAZE, City Mapper and Google who would help target messaging; as well as vehicle manufacturer navigation systems (OEMs) and variable-message signs on local roads. The messaging would enable people to make travel decisions with a higher degree of accuracy. The result would be to re-mode, re-time, re-route or remove their journey. Video analytics would enable the team to monitor the impact of the messaging around areas of planned disruption. At the same time the project would look at human

behaviour– using ethnographic and market research along the selected corridors and seeing how people react and take action as a results of the messaging. This would build out from a piece of work on personas undertaken by Exploring Intelligent Mobility. £2.65 million

[Press release: Drug detection technology arrives at 10 prisons](#)

- Prisons Minister announces arrival of drug detection scanners in all 10 prisons
- Machines able to detect drugs on clothes, paper and mail
- Part of new approach to tackle violence and improve standards

The technology can detect invisible traces of drugs, including psychoactive substances, soaked into clothing and paper – a technique increasingly used by criminals attempting to smuggle drugs into prisons.

Staff have undergone training to operate the machines, and will be taught how to handle and preserve evidence. A positive result gives officers grounds to carry out further investigation, which could result in sanctions or criminal prosecution.

The Prison Service and Ministry of Justice are now considering whether the technology should be rolled out across the entire closed male prison estate.

The introduction of the scanners is the latest development in the ‘10 Prisons Project’, which aims to reduce drugs and violence, while improving standards, in the country’s most challenging jails – providing a template for the wider estate. The roll-out of x-ray body scanners at the 10 prisons is also underway.

This project is part of a much wider £70 million drive to restore stability to the prison estate.

Prisons Minister Rory Stewart said:

Drugs in prison, particularly psychoactive substances, have been a game-changer – they drive self-harm and extreme violence, putting both prisoners and prison officers at risk.

My key priority has been to toughen security and searching. We need to make it much more difficult for anyone to get drugs into prisons. So, in the 10 priority prisons, I am emphasising the use of technology to search letters, bags and people – including

visitors and prison officers – as well as netting to prevent drones and throw-overs.

This improved physical security combined with good existing work on intelligence and drug treatment is already making a difference in some of our most challenged prisons. And, if this pilot is successful, I would hope to introduce the same measures across all our local prisons.

The machines will allow staff to observe emerging drug trends, providing them with intelligence which can be passed on to security colleagues who will investigate and act. They will also help prisons identify where, and by whom, drugs have been stored and handled. This will assist decisions on which prisoners and cells require further investigation.

The 10 Prisons Project was announced in August 2018 and is being funded by an initial £10 million investment.

Various measures have already been implemented. Each prison now has extra specialist staff and teams in place, including a drugs strategy manager, additional entry searching staff and more dog handlers.

These prisons are also investing in changes to the prison environment to improve decency and provide clean and appropriate sanitation as well as refurbish cells and shared areas.

The wider estate is benefitting from a range of investments, including £16 million to improve conditions for prisoners and staff and £7 million on new security measures, such as security scanners, improved searching techniques, phone-blocking technology and a financial crime unit to target the criminal kingpins operating in prisons.

This has come against a backdrop of rising prison officer numbers, with more than 4,300 now recruited since October 2016 and staffing levels at their highest since 2012.

Notes to editors:

- Geographical groups of prisons in Yorkshire, the north Midlands and London have been selected for the project. The prisons are: Hull, Humber, Leeds, Lindholme, Moorland, Wealstun, Nottingham, Ranby, Isis and Wormwood Scrubs.
 - We are on course to spend the full £10 million budget by the end of this financial year.
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News story: Home Secretary announces new police powers to deal with knife crime

As part of decisive action to enhance police powers, the government will seek to amend the Offensive Weapons Bill to introduce Knife Crime Prevention Orders.

This new deterrent can be imposed on any person aged 12 or over to prevent vulnerable young people from becoming involved in knife possession and knife crime.

It can be imposed on anyone who police believe is carrying a knife, are habitual knife carriers or people previously convicted of a knife related offence.

This fills a gap which is not covered by existing preventative orders such as gang injunctions and criminal behaviour orders.

On introducing the measures, the Home Secretary, Sajid Javid said:

I have been clear that I will do everything in my power to tackle the senseless violence that is traumatising communities and claiming too many young lives.

The police already have a range of measures they are using to keep our streets safe, but there is more we can do to help them in this battle. I have listened to their calls and will be introducing these new orders to stop gang members carrying knives in the first place.

It is vital we continue to focus on improving the law enforcement response while at the same time steering young people away from criminal activity in the first place.

The new civil orders will also restrict behaviour by placing curfews and geographical restrictions on individuals as well as limiting their social media use – preventing the rapid escalation of rival disputes.

To ensure compliance with these restrictions, breach of the order will be a criminal offence and the holder can be sent to prison for two years if convicted.

The Home Secretary will also be taking further action against retailers found to be selling knives to children. A new £500,000 prosecution fund will help Trading Standards teams to secure the prosecution of retailers who repeatedly sell knives to under 18s.

As part of these further measures to intervene early, the Home Office is set to launch the next phase of #Knifefree in the spring. The campaign, aimed at young people, looks to inspire them to pursue positive alternatives. This announcement comes just months after the Home Secretary launched a new range of innovative measures to address violent crime in the UK including, a consultation on a new legal duty to underpin a 'public health' approach to tackling serious violence, a new £200 million youth endowment fund and an independent review of drug misuse.

This continues the work of the ambitious Serious Violence Strategy which, backed by £40 million of funding, puts greater focus on steering young people away from a life of crime.

[News story: Carbon-cutting rail schemes share in multi-million pound government funding boost](#)

- five innovative projects to receive £350,000 each from government to adapt their schemes for the rail network
- announcement comes as rail minister welcomes industry response to DfT's challenge to cut diesel emissions on the network
- battery hybrid trains expected on the Lakes Line in the early 2020s could be an early example of the new technology

Solar panels that directly power trains and a system that uses hydrogen and oxygen to produce steam to power engines are just 2 projects that have been given a share of £1.75 million in government funding for use on the rail network, Rail Minister Andrew Jones announced today (31 January 2019).

Five projects have been chosen for development funding in the second round of the Department for Transport's (DfT's) First of a Kind (FOAK) competition, which focuses on innovative schemes that can cut the carbon footprint of the UK's railways – part of the government's drive to a cleaner, greener economy which is a key part of its modern Industrial Strategy.

It comes as rail industry leaders publish the interim Rail Industry Decarbonisation Taskforce report addressing the challenge set by the DfT last year for cutting emissions and removing diesel-only trains from the network by 2040.

Rail Minister Andrew Jones said:

We want a cleaner, greener rail network and transforming our trains will help make this a reality. The targets we set for 2040 are

ambitious but are within our reach.

It is encouraging to see the huge efforts already underway to make this happen. This funding will be vital in helping these fantastic projects adapt to the demands of rail and enable their potential roll-out, delivering a cleaner, healthier network for passengers.

It also underlines the shared commitment of government and industry to ensuring we have a modern railway that protects our environment.

The FOAK competition, run by Innovate UK and part of the DfT's wider [Accelerating Innovation in Rail scheme, was launched in 2017](#) and focuses on two themes in this second round of funding – decarbonising of the railway and improving the passenger experience in stations. The five decarbonisation projects will get £350,000 each to allow them to be adapted for the rail network.

Simon Edmonds, Manufacturing, Materials & Mobility Director, Innovate UK said:

Travelling or moving goods by train is rightly seen as more sustainable. Yet there is more we can do to make the railway cleaner and greener by decarbonisation. This can be achieved by deploying more energy-efficient systems, using lighter rolling stock and looking at technologies from other industries.

The pioneering projects for which we have announced funding today can reduce both the costs and the carbon footprint of the railway industry and help innovative companies succeed, both here and in export markets.

The taskforce report, authored by former Angel Trains CEO Malcolm Brown, concludes that the removal of diesel-only passenger trains can be achieved by 2040, and outlines aims for further investment on a range of alternatives including bi-modes, hydrogen and battery trains.

Among the priority lines for potential battery hybrid trains will be the Lakes Line in Cumbria. Train operator Northern will shortly submit a business plan for it to potentially be one of the first lines to benefit from this innovative technology.

Manufacturer Alstom, engineering company Viva Rail, and rolling stock owners Angel Trains and Porterbrook are also developing a range of alternatively-fuelled trains for the UK network, including battery hybrids and hydrogen powered units.

Malcolm Brown, Chairman of the Rail Industry Decarbonisation Task Force, said:

Our report sets out a credible set of options to meet the challenge to decarbonise. We believe that there is a real opportunity for the rail industry in Great Britain to become a world leader in developing and delivering low carbon solutions.

The report also highlights significant opportunities to cut carbon emissions in stations and depots, and underlines levels of support available from research and development funding.

The UK is a world-leader when it comes to clean growth – reducing emissions while seizing the economic opportunities. Since 1990 the UK has cut emissions by more than 40% while continuing to grow the economy.