

Press release: Stewartby public consultation deadline extended

The Environment Agency has extended the deadline for its public consultation on the draft environmental permit for the proposed energy from waste facility at Rookery Pit, Stewartby, Bedfordshire, which would be operated by Covanta Energy Limited.

The public consultation period has been extended by 2 weeks and will now run from 11 September to 7 November 2017 to allow people more time to read all the available information.

A permit will only be issued by the Environment Agency if it is satisfied that the facility will be designed, built, operated and maintained in such a way that the requirements of the relevant EU Directives are met and that human health and the environment are protected.

This will be decided following consultation with the relevant local councils and their health departments, the Food Standards Agency, Public Health England, the Health and Safety Executive and other identified statutory consultees.

People wanting to provide comments to be considered during the determination by the Environment Agency should send them to: psc@environment-agency.gov.uk or write to: Environment Agency, Permitting Support Centre, Land Team, Quadrant 2, 99 Parkway Avenue, Sheffield, S9 4WF.

Please quote permit application number EPR/WP3234DY/A001.

To provide comments online and to view the documents that form part of this consultation, please follow this [link](#)

Interested parties can also make an appointment to view a copy of the draft permit and draft decision document at the local Environment Agency office, located at: Bromholme Lane, Brampton, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE28 4NE.

Speech: Defence Secretary launches partnership on mental health and wellbeing with the Royal Foundation

I'm delighted to be here. Warfare's often seen in terms of battles of the body.

Today we recognise it's also about battles of the mind. For those suffering from mental illness the damage trauma inflicts is no less real for being invisible, while the need to address mental, as well as physical shocks, is no less pressing.

It's not simply that the operational effectiveness of our forces depends on them being healthy, outside and in.

We have a duty of care to all who lay their lives on the line and a moral obligation to all who support them.

Now I think it's true to say that whether families or civilian staff, we're better at treating mental trauma than we used to be.

A century ago, in the First World War, an anonymous medical superintendent at one military hospital in York advised a shell shocked patient "to face his illness in a manly way".

Today after 21st century conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq where a lack of safe zones was compounded by the constant threat of roadside IEDs, we no longer expect people to simply "man up", instead we offer expert help through Defence Medical Services for current personnel and through the NHS for veterans, families and civilians. But with some 2.6 million veterans in the UK many at increased risk of developing mental illness, complacency is not an option.

Nor can our sole focus be on the frontline

So part of the reason we're here today is to promote mental health awareness.

No current or ex-member of our Armed Forces family should have to keep quiet about their illness for fear of being thought a failure.

And here I'd like to pay particular tribute to the work of HRH Prince Harry.

As a former serviceman, few understand these matters better.

He has set an inspirational example in speaking about the challenges he has faced.

And having used the Invictus Games to draw attention to the physical effects of war he's now tackling the taboo of mental illness head on.

And we look forward to hearing from him in a moment.

Our strategy to address mental health issues, is about more than just raising awareness, important though that is.

PREVENTION

It's also about prevention.

Mental health conditions are treatable but we have to be better at spotting

the signs

Better directing people to the right treatment and doing more to help those suffering from everyday stresses and strains to deal with the challenges they face.

DETECTION

Second our plans are about better detection.

And today's Royal Foundation Partnership will give individuals the means to identify what's wrong earlier on and our leaders the practical tools they need to support their colleagues.

TREATMENT

Finally, it's about better treatment. We're focused on putting proper treatment in place.

Earlier this year the Prime Minister introduced a package of reforms to improve mental health support throughout a person's life.

Our Defence People Mental Health and Well-being Strategy builds on those plans for our Whole Force utilising the best evidence based practice and joining the dots between the National Health Service, devolved administrations, key service charities, our own Defence Medical Services and academia to provide a more seamless service.

Our new Veterans board announced last week will now co-ordinate all veterans-related work right across government and give this work today much needed focus.

CONCLUSION

So let me conclude, before welcoming His Royal Highness by saying that in a 24-hour society, of constant communication, intensifying threats and multiplying daily pressures it's never been more vital for members of the military to keep mind, body and soul together.

But by joining forces with them, we can shine the spotlight on these hidden scars of mental illness.

We can help change the environment long-term.

We can help combat outdated attitudes and create a culture of well-being, so no member of our Armed Forces Family ever has to suffer in silence again.

Would you please welcome His Royal Highness.

News story: Ministry of Defence and Royal Foundation launch new partnership to improve mental health

The joint initiative between the MOD and the Royal Foundation of The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince Harry builds on the MOD's recently launched mental health and wellbeing strategy, which outlines how the department will improve the mental health of its serving military and civilian personnel, their families, and veterans.

It will see the Royal Foundation provide advice and resources to the MOD to improve training, education and information sharing for the entire Armed Forces. The work will include annual briefings, websites and specialist support to raise awareness of the importance of good mental health.

HRH Prince Harry speaks at the launch of today's partnership between the MOD and the Royal Foundation.

Defence Personnel will be encouraged to use psychology and well-being in the same way as athletes do to maximise performance, emphasising the idea that mental fitness is as important as physical fitness when working as part of the Armed Forces.

The resources will be integrated into staff training courses and briefing processes across the Armed Forces from the middle of 2018, and will be widely available online, to strengthen the mental health support and services already available to Defence personnel.

Announcing the partnership, Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:

By looking after our mental health we are building a more effective armed forces that helps keep this country safe. Our soldiers, sailors and airmen are the best in the world but we will only maintain that if we are as serious about improving mental health as we are our combat skills and cutting-edge technology. So partnering with key groups like the Royal Foundation is an important part of our strategy to improve the wellbeing of our serving Armed Forces and veterans.

Sir Keith Mills, Chairman of the Royal Foundation said:

Through our work with the Invictus Games, the Endeavour Fund, and most recently the Contact coalition through Heads Together, the Royal Foundation has had the privilege of convening some of the best expertise in the field of military mental health. We are delighted that this new partnership with the Ministry of Defence

will see the UK leading the way internationally in prioritising the mental fitness of its entire defence community.

While rates of mental disorder are slightly lower in the Armed Forces (3.2%) than in the general population (3.5%), improving the mental health of the MOD's entire workforce is a key priority.

Sir Michael Fallon and Sir Keith Mills, Chairman of the Royal Foundation, sign the partnership agreement.

The Defence People Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017-2022, launched in July, builds on five years of research and aims to develop a coordinated approach to prevent, detect, and treat mental health and wellbeing issues, as well as introduce measures to promote the importance of mental health.

As part of that strategy, the MOD committed to collaborate with the Royal Foundation to produce Mental Health training to embed within compulsory courses and work with them on communications material. Today's announcement delivers on that promise.

The wider Strategy includes plans to:

- Encompass all Defence People – serving Armed Forces members (Regulars and Reserves), military families, veterans, and MOD civil servants;
- Introduce standardised mental health and wellbeing education and training for all those working in Defence;
- Invest in research on resilience training to ensure that individuals are as mentally fit as they can be to prevent depression and anxiety and monitoring of groups who are more likely to suffer from mental health issues, such as combat troops and medical personnel in support of them;
- Improve access to clinical assessment (such as through digital delivery) and prioritisation for treatment;
- Develop partnerships with key service charities in order to continue anti-stigma campaigning initiatives and share best practice;
- Improve communication to the workforce about what help is on offer.

The Royal Foundation of The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince Harry has made mental health one of its key priorities. The Foundation operates by bringing together people and organisations with passion and expertise to tackle issues that are close to the heart of Their Royal Highnesses.

As part of its work with the Invictus Games, Endeavour Fund, and most recently Heads Together the Foundation has partnered with veterans charities and experts to lead awareness raising activity and to provide support for veterans and serving military personnel as they recover from both physical and emotional challenges.

The Foundation is delighted to have the opportunity to make the most of its expertise and partnerships in this area for the benefit of the Armed Forces.

Press release: Institute for Apprenticeships launches new website

The Institute for Apprenticeships has launched its new website. Content created by the Institute and its publications have been historically hosted on GOV.UK – the move to an independent domain reflects the evolution of the Institute and its independent, employer-led approach.

The new website can be found at www.ifapprenticeships.org

Since its establishment in April 2017, the Institute has published almost 200 apprenticeship standards and is working with employers to develop more. Well over 2000 employers are involved in developing apprenticeships through the Institute.

As apprenticeship standards are being developed they are currently published on GOV.UK. The Institute for Apprenticeships has transitioned to the new website all existing standards approved for delivery. A period of further transition will see all standards, including those in development, published to the new website.

Antony Jenkins, Chair of the Institute for Apprenticeships said:

This new website marks an important step forward for the Institute
– I'm proud of the progress we're making.

It is vitally important for our work that we take a digitally-enabled approach. This is just the first stage for this website, and in time it will form the basis of the way we manage our processes, allowing us to provide a more efficient, more comprehensive and more responsive service to all those involved in our work.

Contact

For more information about this announcement please contact

Ed Hickey, Press Manager
edward.hickey@education.gov.uk
07469 412924

[Press release: PM call with President Netanyahu: 9 October 2017](#)

The Prime Minister spoke to the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu earlier today.

They agreed that security cooperation between the UK and Israel was very strong and would continue, particularly on counter-terrorism where we faced shared challenges.

They also agreed our bilateral trade relationship would continue to go from strength to strength, noting the UK-Israel trade working group had already met and discussions on how to ensure the freest possible post-Brexit trading relationship had been constructive.

They discussed Iran, with the Prime Minister noting the importance of the nuclear deal with Iran which has neutralised the possibility of the Iranians acquiring nuclear weapons for more than a decade. The Prime Minister said the UK remains firmly committed to the deal and that we believe it is vitally important for regional security. The Prime Minister said it was important that the deal is carefully monitored and properly enforced, and that both sides deliver on their commitments.

They agreed that the international community needed to be clear-eyed about the threat that Iran poses to the Gulf and the wider Middle East, and that the international community should continue working together to push back against Iran's destabilising regional activity.