

[News story: UK spectroscopy firm bought for £40 million](#)

Oxfordshire-based [Cobalt Light Systems](#) has been acquired by [Agilent](#) – a US analytical laboratory technologies company that was spun out of [Hewlett Packard](#) – for £40 million.

The deal will see Oxford become Agilent's global centre for Raman spectroscopy. Raman spectroscopy is one of the fastest-growing spectroscopy segments and has the potential to revolutionise the pharmaceutical industry and airport security.

Improving material identification

Conventional spectroscopy solutions have limited detection of materials through sealed, non-transparent containers.

Cobalt Light Systems' highly-differentiated Raman spectroscopic instruments enable non-invasive, through-barrier identification of chemicals and materials. This includes quickly and accurately analysing materials hidden inside objects or through opaque barriers such as plastic, coloured glass, paper or skin.

Applications include analysing whole tablets to measure concentrations of materials for pharmaceutical quality control, or detecting hazardous chemicals or other banned substances inside sealed containers at airport security. It results in time, cost and efficiency savings for those using it. Importantly, it also improves safety.

Supporting product development

Innovate UK granted Cobalt Light Systems a £180,000 smart award in 2012. This helped the company to develop a prototype for screening liquids in sealed containers to detect and identify liquid explosives at airports.

The prototype, built on the proprietary technology SORS (spatially offset Raman spectroscopy), resulted in the company launching Insight100. This instrument can detect dangerous chemicals in unopened containers within a few seconds with very high detection rates. It is now used in more than 70 airports.

We have continued to work with Cobalt Light Systems to support new innovations, including a prototype Insight200, designed to US airport specifications.

A conditional offer has also just been signed for a new project for pharmaceutical applications. This project will develop a low-cost automated system that supports real-time analysis of pharmaceuticals during manufacture, in statistically representative sample sizes. It should improve

quality control while creating efficiencies in time and cost.

Capitalising on a growing market

James Heydari, Smart and Open Programme Lead, Innovate UK, said:

Particularly in the pharmaceutical industry, ambitious young start-ups can find it difficult to develop, trial and commercialise new products.

For a company that's still less than 10 years' old, Cobalt Light Systems' success in capitalising on the growing market of Raman spectroscopy should be celebrated. Early-stage funding gave a helpful start. Now, the acquisition by Agilent will allow them to scale-up further and reach a wider customer base.

More about Cobalt

Since it was formed in 2008, Cobalt Light Systems has attracted many high-profile customers. This includes 20 of the world's largest pharmaceutical companies and airports across Europe and Asia-Pacific.

The company has also been recognised with numerous awards. It received the [Royal Academy of Engineering MacRobert Award](#) in 2014 and [The Queen's Award for Enterprise](#) in 2015. In addition, it was a winner in [Innovate UK's first SME awards](#), for innovation leading to business transformation.

[Press release: New road upgrade for Solent to unlock new homes and jobs](#)

A £13m project to upgrade junction 9 of the M27 between Portsmouth and Southampton has been announced today (Monday 14 August), as part of a Government programme to boost new homes and jobs across the country.

The improvements will deliver a comprehensive package of improvements to the junction and the immediate local road network and support up to 3,500 homes and up to 250 jobs in the Solent area, particularly the substantial development site at North Whiteley. It will be the first project in the South East to benefit from Highways England's Growth and Housing fund – a special budget ring-fenced for road improvements needed for planned major developments.

The Solent scheme is part of a £45.5 million nationwide package being announced today that are set to help unlock the development of more than

6,000 jobs and nearly 10,000 homes in Leicestershire and the South East.

Highways England is making a £19.9 million contribution towards the schemes from its Growth and Housing Fund, with private sector developer contributions and other public funding making up the rest.

The £100 million Growth and Housing Fund was set up as part of the government's £15 billion investment in roads and provides financial contributions towards the cost of road improvements that are needed for new developments, which promise timely delivery of homes and jobs.

Highways England chief executive Jim O'Sullivan said:

England's strategic roads are vital for economic success, connecting businesses, people and supporting the government's agenda of employment and growth. All of these improvements and future upcoming announcements will ultimately ensure England's major roads continue to make a valuable contribution to the prosperity of our country.

The £220m Congestion Relief Fund announced during the Autumn Statement has also played its part in underpinning economic growth, by providing additional funding to the M27, junction 9 scheme. This additional funding will help to tackle congestion in the local area and improve connectivity.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

The Whiteley Way junction upgrade is part of our record investment in infrastructure across the country to improve journeys for motorists.

It will cut congestion on the M27, help unlock thousands of much-needed houses, and boost Hampshire's economy.

The three schemes announced today are:

- M27 junction 9 Whitley Way, up to 3,500 homes and up to 250 jobs – £9.9 million Growth and Housing Fund / £3 million Highways England Congestion Relief Fund. This scheme is being delivered by Hampshire County Council and the Local Enterprise Partnership under the terms of a grant funding agreement. It is the first scheme to be supported by this fund in the South East.
- Anstey Lane (A46 / A560) up to 2,378 homes and around 260 jobs – £5million Growth and Housing Fund / £2.8million private developers. This scheme will be delivered by Leicestershire County Council and the Local Enterprise Partnership in Leicester and Leicestershire.
- M1 junction 23, up to 4,000 homes and 5,600 jobs – £5 million Growth and Housing Fund / £10 million private funding / £3.2 million local growth fund. This scheme will be delivered by Leicestershire County Council and

the Local Enterprise Partnership is Leicester and Leicestershire.

Highways England's Growth and Housing Fund has so far made contributions of over £60 million to 16 improvements to unlock over 30,000 new homes and more than 40,000 jobs around Swindon, Exeter, Weston Super Mare, Darlington, Scunthorpe, Grantham, Warrington, Honiton, Derby, Foxdenton (Oldham), Taunton, Durham, Daventry, Leicester and Southampton.

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.

[Press release: British High Commissioner welcomes Tullow's oil exploration project](#)

British High Commissioner Fergus Cochrane-Dyet OBE has welcomed the launch of Zambia's first ever oil and gas exploration survey by Tullow Oil.

Tullow Oil is a UK company with its Head Quarters in London. Speaking in Kasama when Zambian President Edgar Lungu launched the aerial survey at a ceremony organised by Tullow Oil on 11 August, Mr Cochrane-Dyet said:

British companies like Tullow Oil represent reliable partners for Zambia because they are covered by UK legislation that binds them to the highest standards.

Zambia needs private sector investment from local and international companies, to win the battle against poverty, create jobs, and bring prosperity to all Zambians.

The High Commissioner also made reference to the next Commonwealth Summit in the UK in April 2018, saying one of the goals will be boosting intra-Commonwealth trade and investment, maximising the Commonwealth Advantage.

Further details:

1. The Commonwealth Summit will take place in London and Windsor in the week of 16 April 2018. The Commonwealth is made up of 52 members spanning 6 continents with a combined population of around 2.4 billion people, almost half of whom are under 25. The network includes established economies such as Australia, Canada and New Zealand, as well as emerging markets like India, Malaysia, and South Africa, with trade between Commonwealth countries projected to be worth \$1 trillion by 2020. The summit in April 2018 will see the UK take over as chair of the Commonwealth until 2020.

Find out more about the [2018 Commonwealth summit](#)

1. Tullow Oil is a leading independent oil and gas exploration and production company. The Group has interests in over 85 exploration and production licences across 17 countries which are managed as three Business Delivery Teams: West Africa, East Africa and New Ventures. In 2016, the Zambian government awarded a petroleum exploration licence to Tullow Oil Zambia over block 31 for explorations in Luapula and Northern Provinces following an open bidding process.

Find out more about [Tullow Oil](#)

For further information contact:

Alfred Kapalayi or Tresford Mumba at the British High Commission on +260 211 423200

[Press release: Highways England is doing its V best for festival-goers](#)

Highways England is assuring road users that it's doing its best to make journeys as smooth as possible as tens of thousands of music fans head to V Festival in Staffordshire and Essex this weekend (19 to 20 August).

Festival-goers and road users are advised to be prepared and plan ahead as more than 70,000 people make their way to Weston Park in Staffordshire and 100,000 to Hyland Park in Essex, respectively.

David Patmore, Assistant Emergency Planning Officer at Highways England, said:

Months ahead of the festival, we work hard alongside event organisers, the police and other partners, using our expertise in

handling traffic to help ensure festival-goers have a trouble-free journey to kick off their weekend of fun.

We strongly advise festival-goers and road users in the area to plan ahead, ensure vehicles have sufficient fuel, and to have plenty of drinks, such as water, available in the vehicle in case of any delays.

Signs will direct festival traffic on different routes depending on which direction it is arriving from.

Traffic is also expected to be busy in the same areas on Monday morning as people head home from the festival.

Weston Park, Staffordshire

David added:

The campsite opens at midday on Friday 18 and closes at midday on Monday 21 August, so we expect the run-up to and from these times to be particularly busy. We also expect traffic to be busier in the area throughout the weekend.

The M5 will be operating a contra-flow system between junctions one and two with 30 mph speed restrictions implemented because of the Oldbury renewal scheme. There may be some issues around junction six of the M6 with the ongoing repair scheme on the A38(m) with local traffic busy around junctions five and seven.

Therefore the M5 will be very busy for those heading to and leaving the event from the south west – so they need to pick their travel time very carefully to avoid delays or perhaps even find an alternative route as far south as Worcester or the M50 to the A49 and head onto the A5.

Those travelling from the south should use junction 10a of the M6 and then to travel onto the M54 towards the venue. Using the M54 to junction three from the south is the best way into the festival and attendees can be off the motorway and parked up in less than 20 minutes. Those travelling from the north should use junction 12 of the M6.

Hyland Park, Essex

Although there are no planned road closures, we expect the A12 near Chelmsford, the M11 junctions seven to nine and M25 junctions 29 to 28 to be much busier than normal.

Highways England provides live traffic information [via its website](#), iPhone

app, local radio travel bulletins and electronic road signs. Travel information is also available by phone from the Highways England Customer Contact Centre on 0300 123 5000 and updates will be provided via Twitter @HighwaysEAST and @HighwaysWMIDS.

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Press release: Provisional liquidation for 13 Stroud & Norwegian development companies

Eleven of the companies were involved in the acquisition, development and/or operation of The Convent Hotel & Spa in Woodchester, near Stroud, Gloucestershire, that traded as a hotel and music venue.

The two other companies, The Convent in the Hills Limited and The Convent in the Hills 2 Limited raised investments to acquire land and develop a separate project in Norway.

Private individuals entered into investor agreements with at least eight of the companies raising a minimum of £7.8 million. The land and buildings of The Convent Hotel & Spa are currently under the control of LPA receivers who were appointed in respect of a secured charge held by a financial institution.

The companies all traded from The Convent, Convent Lane, Woodchester, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL5 5HS.

The role of the provisional liquidator is to protect assets in the possession or under the control of the companies pending the determination of the petitions. The provisional liquidator also has the power to investigate the affairs of the companies insofar as it is necessary to protect assets including any third party, or trust monies, or assets in the possession of, or under the control of the companies.

The case is now subject to High Court action and no further information will be made available until petitions to wind up the companies are heard in the

High Court on 20 September 2017.

Notes to editors

The thirteen companies are:

- BBH Property 1 Limited was incorporated on 11 December 2014, registration number 08675992. The registered office of the company is at The Convent, Convent Lane, South Woodchester, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL5 5HS
- BBH Property 2 Limited was incorporated on 11 December 2014, registration number 09012571. The registered office of the company is at The Convent, Convent Lane, South Woodchester, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL5 5HS
- Crowdseed3 Limited was incorporated on 15 September 2014, registration number 09217756. The registered office of the company is at 54 Mallorie Park Drive, Ripon, N Yorkshire, HG4 2QF
- Crowdseed4 Limited was incorporated on 30 January 2015, registration number 09415203. The registered office of the company is at 54 Mallorie Park Drive, Ripon, N Yorkshire, HG4 2QF
- HH Property 4 Limited was incorporated on 02 April 2012, registration number 08016267. The registered office of the company is at The Convent, Convent Lane, South Woodchester, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL5 5HS
- Convent (Stroud) Limited was incorporated on 15 September 2015, registration number 09778052. The registered office of the company is at The Convent, Convent Lane, South Woodchester, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL5 5HS
- Roomco Limited was incorporated on 03 September 2014, registration number 09200891. The registered office of the company is at The Convent, Convent Lane, South Woodchester, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL5 5HS
- Convent Live Limited was incorporated on 15 September 2014, registration number 09218722. The registered office of the company is at The Convent, Convent Lane, South Woodchester, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL5 5HS
- Thornley Property (Stroud) Limited was incorporated on 25 April 2014, registration number 09011046. The registered office of the company is at The Convent, Convent Lane, South Woodchester, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL5 5HS
- Netgiglve Limited was incorporated on 20 November 2012, registration number 08300688. The registered office of the company is at The Convent, Convent Lane, South Woodchester, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL5 5HS
- Music Show Limited was incorporated on 21 November 2016, registration number 10489610. The registered office of the company is at The Convent, Convent Lane, South Woodchester, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL5 5HS
- The Convent In The Hills Limited was incorporated on 03 June 2014, registration number 09068955. The registered office of the company is at The Convent, Convent Lane, South Woodchester, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL5 5HS
- The Convent In The Hills2 Limited was incorporated on 23 July 2014, registration number 09144068. The registered office of the company is at The Convent, Convent Lane, South Woodchester, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL5 5HS

The petitions were presented under s124A of the Insolvency Act 1986. The Official Receiver was appointed as provisional liquidator of the companies on 10 August 2017 by Mr Justice Roth, a Judge of the Chancery Division of the High Court.

Company Investigations, part of the Insolvency Service, uses powers under the Companies Act 1985 to conduct confidential fact-finding investigations into the activities of live limited companies in the UK on behalf of the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS). Further information about live company investigations is [available](#).

The Insolvency Service administers the insolvency regime, investigating all compulsory liquidations and individual insolvencies (bankruptcies) through the Official Receiver to establish why they became insolvent. Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).

All public enquiries concerning the affairs of these companies should be made to: The Official Receiver, Public Interest Unit, 4 Abbey Orchard Street, London, SW1P 2HT. Telephone: 0207 637 1110 Email: piu.or@insolvency.gsi.gov.uk.

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 7674 6910 or 020 7596 6187

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on: