

# MOD Honours the sacrifice of World War One soldiers during re-dedication services in Ypres

Both services were organised by the MOD's Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC), also known as the 'MOD War Detectives', and were held at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's (CWGC) Ypres Reservoir Cemetery in Ypres, Belgium.

Nicola Nash, MOD JCCC caseworker said:

"After more than 100 years, these four men who were lost, have now been found. There is nothing more rewarding for us than giving a family closure and making sure that every soldier is remembered as he should be."

The first service was held for Lance Serjeant (LSjt) Edward Leonard Cottrell and Serjeant (Sjt) Joseph Frank Brookes Birkin whilst the second was to honour Lance Corporal (LCpl) Wilfred Horace Miller and LCpl Arthur Burton. All four served with the Leicestershire Regiment.

Serjeant Joseph Frank Brookes Birkin

Defence Minister Leo Docherty said:

"We will never fail in our duty to remember those who gave their lives in the cause of freedom during the two world wars. As more fallen servicemen from both world wars are discovered, the MOD Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre will strive to confirm their identities. Their tireless efforts and dedication will ensure these soldiers' names will live on in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's cemeteries."

The four soldiers had no known graves since tragically losing their lives in 1915, however, due to the collective efforts of the MOD JCCC and CWGC following evidence submitted, their final resting places have now been found over a century later.

Private Benjamin Nicolas laying wreath on behalf of members of the Birkin family who were unable to attend

Following submission of research, including from the CWGC, that was considered by the MOD JCCC as the adjudicators, additional research by the team themselves and the National Army Museum led to the four cases being confirmed.

Nicola added:

“Today, we honour those who paid the ultimate sacrifice, along with representatives from the regiment and their family.”

John Williamson, great nephew of Sjt Birkin, said:

“It is wonderful this work still continues; this ceremony gives final closure to the family.”

Birkin family members in prayer during the service

Research by MOD JCCC also led to LCpl Miller’s family being traced meaning they could be invited to today’s service to pay their respects.

Maria Miller, great niece of LCpl Miller, said:

“This has been the most humbling experience and a great privilege to be here today.”

Maria Miller at the graveside of her great uncle Lcpl Miller’s headstone

The services were supported by the Royal Anglian Regiment and were conducted by the Reverend (Captain) Thomas Wilde, CF, Chaplain to the Royal Anglian Regiment, who said:

“When you give a soldier a name you give them meaning a history and a voice.”

The graves will now be marked by headstones provided by the CWGC.

Fergus Read, CWGC Case Officer (Commemorations), said:

“It is always immensely satisfying when we are able to put a name on any headstone. Here, the research for one case helped us to unlock the names of those buried in a further three graves. It is the Commission’s privilege to be part of the work to identify the last resting places of these casualties, and to care for their graves in perpetuity.”

---

## **National Highways to set out new system for connected and autonomous plant at Futureworx event**

National Highways will be unveiling a new industry-wide scoring system for Connected and Autonomous Plant (CAP) to construction bosses at the Futureworx

event next week.

Visitors to the industry event will be given the first look at the new CAP levels which will score machinery according to its level of automation. This standardised measure, the first of its kind, will offer clarity and a clear way to compare different types of machinery to suit different tasks.

The system is the latest development in the CAP Roadmap launched by National Highways and i3P jointly in June 2020 which identified challenges and workstreams to support a goal of making automation business as usual in construction by 2035.

The new CAP levels will establish a common language and a first of its kind framework to enable connected and autonomous plant to be specified and deployed on construction schemes.

This means that all construction clients, like National Highways, can communicate clear expectations to suppliers and manufacturers can describe capability of their products using the same language.

National Highways Head of Innovation Annette Pass said:

Connected and autonomous plant offers a real opportunity to revolutionise the construction sector by making work safer, quicker and brings significant benefits for the environment.

Futureworx is the perfect platform to showcase our new CAP levels which will further our ambitious plans to introduce more connected and autonomous plant onto sites as we continue to develop the roads of the future.

CAP has the potential to improve productivity by more than £200bn by 2040 in the construction sector and we are committed to making it standard industry practice. By establishing more collaborative relationships with innovators and academics we hope to continue to lead in this field.

The term Connected and Autonomous Plant refers to construction plant that is connected to its environment through sensors or wireless transfer of data between a remote operator while the autonomy element refers to aspects of the vehicle's operation and also movement around a site.

The new CAP Levels Maturity Matrix offers a standardised scoring system that enables plant and machinery to be scored according to its level of automation.

An example of currently available technology is Intelligent Machine Control which guides excavators to dig to precisely the right level and profile, meaning more efficient and easier working for machine operators. In future the operator may not need to be in the vehicle and could even control it from the other side of the world.

The roadmap and the CAP levels have been developed in collaboration with TRL – the UK-based global centre for innovation in transport and mobility – as well as i3P, Costain and over 75 industry stakeholders meaning they have been shaped by those who will be guided by them.

The ongoing digital revolution in the construction industry can increase productivity dramatically and generate billions of pounds in savings. At the same time, digital transformation can reduce disruption to the public and improve safety.

Digital technologies are increasingly being introduced in construction and opportunities arise to introduce new techniques such as automating some activities that require manual labour and human intervention but also involve risk.

National Highways' [Digital Roads strategy](#) sets out:

- the company's Digital Roads 2025 vision for safer and greener roads
- how the growth of digital technology and the move to electric, connected and autonomous vehicles will fundamentally change roads in the future.

The Futureworx technology showcase is taking place on 30 and 31 March 2022 at the East of England Arena, Peterborough.

Futureworx will bring together industry professionals keen to find out what is in the pipeline of ideas and technology which will shape tomorrow's construction equipment experience. The two-day event will also include conference sessions, live product demonstrations and technical talks.

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

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

---

## [PM call with Prime Minister Modi of India: 22 March 2022](#)

Press release

The Prime Minister spoke to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi this afternoon.



The Prime Minister spoke to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi this afternoon.

The leaders discussed the grave situation in Ukraine, and the Prime Minister said he believed the actions of Putin's regime were deeply disturbing and disastrous for the world.

The pair agreed that Ukraine's integrity and territorial sovereignty must be respected.

Russia needed to adhere to the UN Charter, the leaders said, and both agreed that respect for international law was the only way to ensure global peace and prosperity.

Prime Minister Modi updated on India's support for the humanitarian situation in Ukraine, and the Prime Minister said the UK and India should intensify efforts to promote peace and de-escalation in the region.

The leaders welcomed India and the UK's strong and prosperous relationship, and agreed to continue to build on trade, security and business ties in the coming weeks and months. They looked forward to meeting in person at the earliest opportunity.

Published 22 March 2022

---

## [Reforms to pet microchipping regulations in England set out](#)

Press release

Consultation launched on microchipping regulations follow the Pet Theft Taskforce recommendations



Image credit: Pixabay

- Changes to database system follow recommendations of the Pet Theft Taskforce
- New requirements will apply to both cats and dogs
- Improvements will make it easier to reunite lost or stolen pets with their owners

New proposals to make it easier to reunite lost or stolen cats and dogs with their owners were set out by the Government today.

An [eight-week consultation](#) will seek views on improvements to the pet microchipping database system, including faster access for approved users and regular reminders for keeping records updated which will help improve breeder traceability.

The recommendations follow last year's [Pet Theft Taskforce report](#), which highlighted the need to improve navigation of the database system and the transfer of keepership records.

The consultation seeks views on new requirements for registering additional details and a single point of access so microchip records can quickly be accessed by approved users to help identify the owners and keepers of pets. The transferring of keepership records will also be strengthened to prevent lost or stolen animals being re-registered without the keeper being aware, and to stop the creation of duplicate records.

The proposals aim to improve breeder traceability by making it compulsory for the breeder's details to remain on the database for the lifetime of the animal – even when the animal changes keeper or when the microchip record is transferred to another database.

### **Animal Welfare Minister Lord Goldsmith said:**

Pets are much loved members of the family, and microchipping is the best way of making sure owners can be reunited if their pet is ever sadly lost or stolen.

We have reviewed the current regulations and the Pet Theft Taskforce's recommendations, and it is clear improvements are

needed to better protect the welfare of our nation's pets. These proposals will create a more effective system to better animal welfare and deter pet theft.

**David Bowles, Head of Public Affairs at the RSPCA, said:**

We are pleased to see Defra launching a consultation into improvements to the microchipping database system. We'd support the introduction of a single, centralised database of microchipped cats and dogs or would love to see better collaboration and communication between the current 16 separate databases.

This would make it much easier to quickly reunite stray, missing and stolen pets with their owners and would also save a lot of time for charities, such as the RSPCA, local authorities and vets when they're trying to trace an owner.

**Justine Shotton, British Veterinary Association President, said:**

We're delighted that the Government is gathering views on how to make the microchipping system fit for purpose. We strongly recommend microchipping as a safe, effective and permanent way to identify individual animals, but the sheer number of databases and the fact that they don't routinely communicate with each other currently present significant barriers to successful reunification of lost pets and owners.

Streamlining the system into a single point of entry and driving up standards across all databases would help to spare heartache for many pet owners and start things on a positive footing when compulsory cat microchipping is rolled out next year.

The changes will also apply to cats after 99% of people supported a proposal to introduce [compulsory cat microchipping](#) in a recent consultation. Cat microchip records will be stored on the existing database system and benefit from the new improvements.

Published 22 March 2022

---

# 2022 Sanctuary Award winner announced

Celebrating their 30th anniversary this year, the Sanctuary Awards are organised by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) and aim to showcase sustainability efforts across Defence, both in the UK and overseas.

Nigel Linge has won this year's prestigious Silver Otter trophy. This award is for the best conservation group-led project or individual conservation effort on the MOD estate. Nigel has worked on the balance of military training requirements with public access provision across Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA) for 15 years. Since his retirement from the MOD in 2014, he continues to work tirelessly to devise and support new plans to improve access management.

The Sustainable Business Award is presented to the best commercial project which delivers sustainable solutions for the Armed Forces to live, work or train. It was won by Op CORDED with special commendation to deployment 7, the 1st Battalion Irish Guards. Op CORDED support rangers in their fight to counter the illegal wildlife trade efforts in sub-Saharan Africa, deploying infantry, military medics and military police to provide training and partner patrolling.

Elephant in Kefue National Park, part of the anti-poaching work of Op CORDED. Copyright: British Army.

Op CORDED showcases how the unique skills of the British Army can be deployed to solve a wide range of problems, and the operation forms a core pillar of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' response to the growing environmental security.

Defence Procurement Minister Jeremy Quin said:

Defence procurement and the Defence Estate offer significant opportunities to support net zero and biodiversity: embedding a culture of sustainability while meeting essential Defence outputs. We are proud of the innovative ideas being generated to drive change.

I send my congratulations to all the winners and nominees of this year's Sanctuary Awards.

The Net Zero and Resource Efficiency Award was given to the Net-zero Carbon Accommodation Programme (NetCAP) which implemented new carbon efficient accommodation across the defence training estate. Delivered by DIO in partnership with Landmarc Support Services and modular construction specialists Reds10, NetCAP is part of a nationwide initiative to improve the lived experience for the Armed Forces whilst supporting the MOD's net zero



carbon emissions goals.

Richard Brooks, DIO Principal Environmental Support and Compliance, said:

DIO is proud to host the Sanctuary Awards to celebrate the positive work taking place throughout Defence on climate change and sustainability initiatives.

DIO takes this work incredibly seriously and we are pleased to continue to contribute to the wider Defence and government sustainability targets. Congratulations to all the winners and thank you for your contribution to making Defence greener.

### **More information**

Browse the [full list of Sanctuary Award winners 2021](#) and details about their individual projects.