

PM call with President Zelenskyy of Ukraine: 18 March 2022

Press release

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The Prime Minister spoke to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy this morning.

The Prime Minister reiterated his disgust at Russia's barbaric actions in Ukraine and his admiration for the steadfast resistance of the Ukrainian people in the face of tyranny. He said the entire United Kingdom stands with Ukraine.

President Zelenskyy updated on the situation on the ground and Ukraine's evolving military and humanitarian needs. The Prime Minister set out the additional defensive aid the UK intends to provide and committed to work with allies at next week's NATO meeting to step up military support to Ukraine.

They also discussed progress in ongoing peace talks. The Prime Minister offered his support for Ukraine's position in negotiations and the President said the UK's close involvement was highly valued. The UK will continue to exert pressure at all levels to oppose Putin's act of aggression, including through sanctions, lethal aid and diplomatic action.

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Government providing extra £150 million to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour

As announced in the Levelling Up White Paper, £150 million is available over the next three financial years for police and crime commissioners and local authorities across England and Wales, as well as certain civil society organisations.

The Safer Streets Programme provides funding to areas most affected by crime and anti-social behaviour and will allow local authorities, civil society organisations and police and crime commissioners to bid for up to £500k per year for each project. The latest round of the fund targets neighbourhood crime, violence against women and girls and – for the first time – anti-social behaviour.

Projects from previous rounds of funding have made a huge impact on local communities. For example, in Northampton funding has improved the security for thousands of homes that were vulnerable to burglary with alleyway gates installed to prevent an easy escape for offenders.

In Humberside, one of the most deprived areas in the country, money was given to improve communal entrances to prevent drug dealing, as well as installing storage units to stop bike and motorbike theft. Funding was also used for youth activities such as football and boxing.

The Home Secretary said:

Our local communities are the beating hearts of the UK and I want our streets to be safe for everyone to go about their daily lives without fear inflicted on them by criminals.

The Safer Streets Fund improves the safety and security of areas blighted by crime and helps the police and local councils ensure that everyone is safe on our streets, going to the shops, seeing friends. It also prevents potential perpetrators committing such crimes in the first place so our communities are able to flourish.

Crime, Policing and Probation Minister Malthouse said:

As well as being tough on criminals, we need to outsmart them where we can, preventing their crimes. The Safer Streets Fund does exactly that, giving neighbourhoods the money they need to “target harden” their homes and streets, outfoxing villains and making them think twice before offending.

We want everyone to feel safe in the public space, and as we build safer streets, town by town, I hope that we can restore pride, alongside safety, as something people say about where they live.

Stephen Mold, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire, said:

We have seen first-hand how important the Safer Streets funding has been here.

We've issued thousands of home security packs to residents, installed new CCTV cameras across the county to deter criminal behaviour, have erected alley gates to cut off anti-social behaviour and are installing new doors to improve security at residential properties.

The Safety of Women at Night fund has also helped us to launch our SNOvan for Safer Nights Out, as well as encouraging pubs, clubs and restaurants to take the Licensing Security & Vulnerability Initiative (Licensing SAVI) assessments to improve security at their venues.

All of these schemes have been made possible thanks to Home Office funding which has totalled more than £2 million over the last 18 months, and which has had a hugely positive impact in Northamptonshire.

The funding is also used to tackle violence against women and girls. In Sussex, for example, they have invested in a number of programmes to improve safety for women including providing bystander training sessions to encourage members of the public to feel able to challenge inappropriate behaviour and support victims.

Other projects across the country have focused on setting up neighbourhood watch groups, increased CCTV and introducing wardens to undertake community engagement and train members of the public in crime prevention – demonstrating levelling up in action.

The government has already committed £70 million to the Safer Streets Fund to support local areas across England and Wales to introduce initiatives aimed at preventing crime from happening in the first place. We have also invested £5 million in the Safety at Women at Night Fund.

The Beating Crime Plan also set out our plans to keep our communities safe, to stop crimes happening in the first place, and to keep serious offenders in prison for longer. The plan also lays out the government's plan for tackling crime and anti-social behaviour with a commitment to working with local agencies and partners to use the full powers and tools available.

Lower Otter Restoration Project saves rare plants from sea level rise

Press release

Some of Devon's rarest plants are to be moved to new sites in the county as work continues on the Lower Otter Restoration Project (LORP).



In Devon, divided sedge only grows in the Lower Otter but must be moved due to rising sea levels

The Lower Otter is currently the only known place in Devon where the divided sedge (*Carex divisa*) is found and is one of only a few sites in the South West where it grows – it is deemed nationally scarce.

The survival of these plants is threatened by rising sea levels and the deterioration of embankments at the Lower Otter. Volunteers will be helping to move the yellow-tipped grass-like plant to new sites nearby on 22 March 2022.

Also being moved are some populations of galingale (*Cyperus longus*), which is also scarce nationally, though less so in Devon than the divided sedge. Unlike the divided sedge, the galingale will be able to continue to survive in some areas of the lower Otter valley.

Three sites with similar ecological characteristics have been chosen to replant these rare species and their progress will be monitored over the next 12 months. One of the chosen sites is grazing marsh associated with the Axe estuary, where divided sedge had been known to grow but was last recorded as present in 1934.

Moving the rare plants follows on from 400 southern marsh orchids that grew on the Lower Otter being relocated elsewhere last year.

Dr Sam Bridgewater, Head of Wildlife and Conservation for landowners, Clinton Devon Estates, said:

The divided sedge is an unassuming little plant which you could be forgiven for overlooking, but it's the rarest living thing that the LORP scheme will provide help to.

We hope it will thrive in the new sites it is to be moved to.

New hedgerow planting, using biodegradable protection tubes

This week also saw planting of hedgerows to the north of Little Bank begin. Native species, including hawthorn, blackthorn and dog rose, have been planted in among gaps to existing hedgerows. The LORP project will see a net gain of 1.5km of hedgerow when completed.

The Environment Agency-led LORP project is one of two schemes under the ERDF's Interreg France Channel England funded Promoting Adaptation to Changing Coasts project. The second site of the total €26m project is in the Saône Valley in Quiberville, Normandy.

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[Civil Procedure Rule Committee: Annual open meeting 13 May 2022](#)

News story

Are you interested in observing the rule making process?



The open meeting of the Civil Procedure Rule Committee will take place on the above date via Microsoft Teams.

Guests will be observers only and not be able to participate in the Committee's business or contribute to items in the agenda. However, there will be an opportunity at the end of the meeting for guests to ask pre-submitted questions to the Committee.

Attendance

Due to limitations with the conferencing software, space is limited and all those that apply may not be invited, so we are asking potential guests to complete a short [application form](#) (MS Word Document, 28.2 KB) and return it by 4pm on Monday 4th April 2022 to the secretariat at the following email address:-

Email: CPRC@justice.gov.uk

Applications to attend close on 4 April 2022 at 4pm

Format of the meeting

The nature of the Committee's work means that, at the time of this announcement, we cannot confirm the topics that will be under discussion, however, an agenda will be available for the meeting.

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[Call for businesses to share experiences of supporting LGBT staff](#)

Today (Friday 18 March) the Government's LGBT Business Champion, Iain Anderson, is calling on global and UK employers to share their stories of making workplaces welcoming for LGBT staff.

Ahead of the UK's '[Safe To Be Me](#)' Conference this Summer, the call for submissions will seek to find examples of workplace inclusion and advocacy from around the world. With global businesses to be asked for examples of how employers can support staff in countries where LGBT people routinely face discrimination.

Iain Anderson, LGBT+ Business Champion, said:

"I've been listening to inclusive and socially responsive businesses and hearing some of the great work that is already being done to ensure LGBT

people feel welcome at work.

“Today I’m launching this call for engagement to draw together examples of what works for companies and their LGBT employees. We know that it’s not just about doing the right thing – inclusive businesses are also more successful, boosting their profits, and our economy.

“Ahead of the Safe To Be Me Conference, I want to shine a light on the great work so many companies are doing to ensure their employees feel they can be themselves.”

Iain Anderson was appointed to the role of HMG LGBT Business Champion in September 2021 with a mission statement to drive forward workplace equality for LGBT people.

Since his appointment, Anderson has been meeting with businesses and stakeholders across the country, collecting evidence on how to promote LGBT equality at work. To further this work he has decided to broaden the search for best practice, incorporating some of the best international practice into his work.

Last November he also hosted an event in Manchester, bringing together businesses and civil society organisations such as Google, Asos and Auto Trader, to discuss how to support people to be themselves at work. Anderson will also encourage businesses to network and advise each other as they seek to provide the best possible support to LGBT staff.

Further info:

We want to hear from employers of all sizes based in the UK and abroad. Those that wish to participate can [fill in the call to engage](#).

The call is to seek practical examples and not to gather responses of personal experience. Please do not submit responses containing personal or identifiable information.