

New Wolverhampton Housing HQ unveiled

- Communities Secretary hails historic milestone of the first new government HQ outside of London
- 100 staff have been recruited with around 150 more people set to be based here by next April
- This is part of wider government plan to move 22,000 roles out of Westminster and increase diversity of voices in the Civil Service

Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick today (10 September 2021) officially unveiled the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG) second headquarters in Wolverhampton – the first of its kind outside of London.

The headquarters will, for the first time, have a regular ministerial presence outside of the capital. The historic milestone demonstrates the government's commitment to levelling up all areas of the country; MHCLG plays a key role in supporting communities to unlock their full economic potential, and the new office, based in the i9 building in the heart of Wolverhampton, will help create jobs throughout the West Midlands.

Recruitment is happening at pace in Wolverhampton and across the wider region for a range of roles and levels, from entry grade to senior civil servants.

With a mixture of new recruits and staff choosing to relocate to the new office, the department plans to have between 150 and 250 people based here by April next year, with preparations under way to welcome staff to the new headquarters.

Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick said:

I am thrilled that our second headquarters in the i9 building in Wolverhampton has now been officially unveiled and we look forward to welcoming staff to the office, and working here myself along with our other ministers.

We are levelling up all across the country, and our headquarters in the heart of Wolverhampton will bring hundreds of exciting jobs to the city and drive growth across the region.

The new headquarters will provide an opportunity to bring people with different experiences and ideas into the Civil Service and provide improved employment opportunities for those in Wolverhampton and across the West Midlands.

Local voices are vital to influence the creation and delivery of government policy; by moving hundreds of roles out of Westminster we are providing a unique opportunity to develop and expand the UK Civil Service by bringing

decision making into the regions we serve.

[Lord Chancellor addresses the Cambridge Economic Crime Symposium](#)

In my previous incarnation as Solicitor General I was honoured to last speak at the 35th symposium and so it is a particular pleasure to be asked back now as Lord Chancellor.

This is now my third symposium. It's my pleasure to join you as much as now as it was then. As we leave COVID it's great to be here in the company of many, many people who have great expertise in economic crime – the facts of it and how we can and should react to it.

What strikes me is that the facts on economic crime continue to be staggering. Fraud for example is the most common type of crime in the UK with 4.6 million offences in the year ending March 2021 and accounting for approximately 42% of all crime committed against individuals. What is just as stark is the cost to our society, estimated to run into the billions every year.

And what about the toll on people's health – on their mental and physical wellbeing – that is much more difficult to quantify but it is easy to see just how real it is and how damaging its long-term effects can be. It also undermines trust in business, distorts markets, and erodes investor confidence in our economy – all things that we should not be prepared to accept at the best of times but, for obvious reasons, can ill-afford in the current climate.

This type of offending has changed enormously in recent years and COVID-19 has only accelerated that. Indeed, in the two years since the government published its Economic Crime Plan to strengthen the UK's whole system response to economic crime, the increase in the availability and uptake of digital services across the economy, as well as the stark realities of the pandemic, have increased the opportunities for economic criminals to exploit and given rise to new ones.

These include taking advantage of our growing reliance on online banking, shopping and communication in order to commit fraud; making more use of popular crypto assets for the purpose of laundering money; and even targeting COVID-19 stimulus measures in order to try and defraud the public purse.

For us in government, these last 18 months have obviously been dominated by overcoming the challenges posed by COVID and that has been true across almost every area and level of government, but nevertheless we have continued wherever possible to make progress in our mission to deter, to prevent, and

to punish a broad range of economic crimes.

The question at hand when I spoke at the symposium four years ago was: whose responsibility is economic crime and are they really up to it? My answer then was that all of us have a duty in relation to economic crime and that, if we are serious about combatting it, we need a co-ordinated response – one that is rooted in relationships between the criminal justice system and the private sector.

As we continue rising to the challenge of economic crime it is that relationship building which remains a focus for us as policymakers. This was emphasised at the meeting of the Economic Crime Strategic Board chaired by my colleague, the Home Secretary, back in February. It included leading figures from the financial, legal, and accountancy sectors and was able to agree a number of actions within our seven strategic priorities to build on our response to economic crime.

Collaboration is the theme that runs throughout that work. The upcoming delivery of the Fraud Action Plan will outline that whole system response, with specific ambitions such as looking at the ways in which we can work with the private sector to 'design out' fraud right at the source; boosting public/private co-operation more generally to address vulnerabilities; and improving high-value intelligence sharing.

Capitalising on the UK's presidency of the G7 to strengthen the international response to illicit finance and corruption was also among the actions that arose out of that February meeting. I think the G7 is critical to this because these are global criminal enterprises we are talking about and the UK alone cannot put them out of business.

All these actions were of course detailed in the update to the Economic Crime Plan that was published earlier this year. It also gave a snapshot of the progress we are already making. From publishing the third National Risk Assessment of Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing, to allocating tens of millions of pounds of funding for reform and to combat economic crime.

I think it is fair to say that we now know more about this type of crime and are better resourced to meet the threat of it than ever before – but we are not complacent, and we have not slowed down on this, and we are determined to go further.

Now the Beating Crime Plan that we published in the summer is a great example of how we want to capitalise on the gains we have already made. The Plan itself looks at the many different levers we can pull on in government to bring down those stubbornly high rates of crime in our country in a number of different categories, which very much includes economic crime.

Our approach as set out in the plan is about facing up to the realities of the threat as it exists today. As I have already mentioned, we know that it is constantly changing and evolving to exploit weaknesses in new ways of doing things and those new technologies in particular.

That means we need to be agile and, instead of focussing on individual frauds, take a systemic approach to ensure that we reduce the opportunities to carry out economic crimes successfully, as well as making sure that criminal justice agencies have both the tools and skills to deal with it. The Beating Crime Plan sets out a framework for how we will do that.

One of my priorities as Lord Chancellor has been to improve our response not just to crime itself but to how we treat victims of crime. That should be our starting point no matter which part of the criminal law we are looking at and, first and foremost, the framework commits us to providing better care to victims.

This will include specific measures such as expanding the National Economic Crime Victim Care Unit, but we will also look more broadly at how we can improve our communications with the public about this type of crime.

We know that protecting people also means strengthening defences where they are at risk. By working with the technology, financial, telecommunications, and accountancy sectors we are going to agree sector charters that I believe will make people more safe and secure, as well as looking again at the case for additional regulation in paid-for advertising online, which we know is a conduit for fraud.

What it also requires is a more comprehensive understanding of how frauds are perpetrated, so that we are better prepared to combat them. We are replacing Action Fraud with a new national fraud and cybercrime reporting system, as well as bolstering the response from the National Crime Agency and the national security community – so that we can learn more and identify the most dangerous individuals and prolific criminal gangs involved in this sort of offending.

The City of London police naturally deal with more economic crime than many constabularies and act as national lead force for fraud. We want to increase their capacity and that of Regional Organised Crime Units to investigate these crimes; and establish a new fraud investigative function within the National Crime Agency itself, which will target the most complex and serious frauds.

The measures contained within the Beating Crime Plan are a continuation of the work we started in our Economic Crime Plan – they complement, they build upon the changes we have already made as we react to the ever-growing and ever-changing threat of economic crime in our country.

What sits beside all that work is corporate criminal liability law. I am hugely proud of the world-class and internationally renowned work we do to prosecute a range of highly complex economic crimes. But we must always be prepared to look again at whether the law in this area is sufficiently equipped to tackle economic crime, or if we need reforms to better hold companies to account for their own criminal wrongdoing, or that undertaken on their behalf.

Back in 2018 when I was Solicitor General, I posed the question about whether

a new corporate offence of failing to prevent economic crime, similar to those already put on the statute book by this government concerning failure to prevent bribery and tax evasion, could be helpful.

The test for the introduction of new legislation always needs to be a rigorous one, but I know that the Serious Fraud Office have previously raised concerns about restrictions that prevent them from prosecuting these offences successfully and I firmly believe expanding and reforming the law in this area merits more work.

In November of last year I published the government's response to our Call for Evidence on Corporate Liability for Economic Crime and whether the law in this area was fit for purpose. A range of stakeholders responded expressing many differing views on the existing legal framework, but I was not satisfied that the findings provided a conclusive evidence-base on which to justify immediate reform. They did however raise some important questions, in particular about the operation of the identification doctrine which represents the general common law test under which corporations can be attributed with criminal liability.

With that in mind, in November last year, I – along with colleagues from right across government – asked the Law Commission to carry out an in-depth review into the current law on corporate criminal liability for economic crime offences. Specifically, whether new offences need to be created that would make it easier for criminal justice agencies to prosecute fraud, money laundering, and false accounting.

In their current form, there is concern that the law on corporate criminal liability does not always appropriately criminalise corporate misbehaviour, especially when applied to large corporations. Reform may indeed be needed to ensure that organisations of all sizes can be held to account and serious crimes can be punished appropriately.

At the same time, it is of course important to ensure that any reform does not impose an undue burden of compliance on companies – so it must also take account of the impact of increased costs on law-abiding corporations to ensure they are not overburdened by processes they are expected to follow. To help ensure that any options they propose do take account of this, the Commission recently issued a discussion paper and carried out a short consultation between June and the end of August this year.

The responses to this will inform the Law Commission's options paper that will be provided to the Government by the end of this year or early next. This work should give us a more comprehensive understanding of the options for reform and their implications.

The analysis is taking place at an opportune time and will be able to take into account the impact of both the new tax evasion offence introduced under the Criminal Finances Act 2017 and the additional regulatory requirements introduced in the Money Laundering, Terrorist Financing and Transfer of Funds Regulations 2017.

I continue to be grateful to the Law Commission for undertaking this work and I hope that what will result from it are recommendations that will strengthen the law and ensure that firms that aid and abet this sort of criminal behaviour realise that it will not carry on with impunity.

To bring all this back to the question at hand during this symposium, the answer is sadly quite simple. Corruption and illicit finance pose a huge threat to our security, to our prosperity. It has the ability not only to undermine the values we hold dear as a society, but also to prop up the kind of authoritarian regimes that wreak havoc in the world. We are all acutely aware of the knock-on effect this has for human rights internationally and on our efforts to combat environmental damage – both of which it puts in huge jeopardy.

The instability this sort of crime poses both to our economy and in terms of our national security, mean that if we do not get it under control then we will all pay a much bigger price than we are already paying now. But it need not be this way.

By drawing together the various strands of work I have mentioned, I think we are starting to make a real difference. If the public and private sectors can continue to work in tandem, then it will be possible to improve our response – both at the source where these crimes are committed and operationally where they must be met with every resource of the law.

We are determined to keep up the pressure on this issue, so that we can really see results. At the same time, we want to proceed with the sensible caution that will make sure the UK remains transparent on economic crime, as well as being open and fair to global businesses. It is this careful balance that will ensure we maintain the confidence of investors and maximise their investment in our country at a crucial time for our economy.

Ultimately, we want to make sure that it is not society who must pay for economic crime, but instead the criminals who carry it out. As we begin to recover from COVID, it is imperative that we work together to make that happen – particularly on those emerging threats that I mentioned. I know that this symposium is a conduit for debate on that basis and I hope the discussions that you have had and will have throughout the remainder of the week are fruitful ones.

Once again, my grateful thanks to you all.

Ministerial appointments: 10 September 2021

The Queen has been pleased to approve the following ministerial re-appointments.



The Queen has been pleased to approve the re-appointments of:

- Rt Hon Suella Braverman QC MP as Attorney General
- Rt Hon Michael Ellis QC MP as Solicitor General
- Rt Hon Lucy Frazer QC MP as a Minister of State in the Ministry of Justice

This follows the return of Suella Braverman from maternity leave.

Published 10 September 2021

[New appointment to the Natural England Board](#)

Press release

Clare Fitzsimmons has been appointed to the Board of Natural England, with Lord Blencathra, Catherine Dugmore and Henry Robinson reappointed.



Defra Ministers have appointed Clare Fitzsimmons to the Natural England Board for a three-year term. Her first term will begin on 12 September 2021 and will run until 11 September 2024.

Following six-month extensions to their first terms, Lord Blencathra, Catherine Dugmore and Henry Robinson have all been reappointed for a second term. Their second terms will run from 12 September 2021 until 11 March 2024.

Sue Hartley leaves the Natural England Board on 12 September 2021, having completed three-and-a-half years.

Board members play an important role in supporting and encouraging the executive team in improving Natural England's delivery for the natural environment by driving forward substantial change to deliver value for money, excellent customer service and better collaboration with partners.

Natural England plays a key role in delivering Government's environmental priorities. Its general purpose is to ensure the natural environment is conserved, enhanced and managed for the benefit of present and future generations.

The appointment and reappointments have been made in accordance with the Ministerial Governance Code on Public Appointments published by the Cabinet Office. All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process.

There is a requirement for appointees' political activity (if significant) to be declared. Clare Fitzsimmons, Catherine Dugmore and Henry Robinson have declared that they have not taken part in any significant political activity in the past five years. Lord Blencathra declared that he takes the Conservative Whip in the House of Lords. He does not make speeches on party political matters or issues related to Natural England.

Biographical details

Clare Fitzsimmons

- Dr Clare Fitzsimmons is a marine scientist, senior Lecturer and Postgraduate Degree Programme Director at the School of Natural and Environmental Sciences at Newcastle University, where she currently chairs the Industrial Advisory Board and previously served as a member of the Marine Science and Technology Executive Board and Chair of the Board of Examiners.
- She has a background in environmental research, with commercial experience gained in defence and consultancy sectors.
- She is also an active member of the North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority.

Lord Blencathra

- Lord Blencathra is a member of the House of Lords. He chairs a Select Committee and has been appointed to the Council of Europe.

- He is also a Board Member of the Food Standards Agency and sits on the Joint Nature Conservation Committee.
- He was a Minister of State at the Home Office and a Minister at the Department of the Environment in the 1990s. He represented the UK at the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992 and launched the Darwin Initiative.
- From 1983 to 2010 he was a Member of Parliament (MP) for Penrith and The Border, England's largest rural constituency.

Catherine Dugmore

- Catherine is a qualified Chartered Accountant.
- She is currently a trustee of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and WWF-UK.
- She also has a non-executive role at Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust and has worked in the NHS since 2013.
- From 1988 to 2002, Catherine worked at PricewaterhouseCoopers, including as an audit partner.
- Previously she was vice chair and trustee of Action for Children and Chair of Victim Support.

Henry Robinson

- Henry is a trustee of two large estates, Hawk and Owl Trust and chairman of trustees at Rendcomb College.
- From 1999 to 2015, had various roles at the Country Land and Business Association (CLA), including President.
- Henry has farmed in the Cotswolds since 1978.
- Other previous positions include Director of BHR Resources, Member of the CLA, NFA, Associate of Royal Agricultural Studies and Trustee of Bowood, Flete, Brimpsfield Park.

Background

Natural England forms part of the Defra Group. As a non-departmental public body it has its own independent powers and statutory duties and exercises advisory and regulatory responsibilities at arm's length from Ministers. Natural England is accountable to Defra's Secretary of State for the delivery of its objectives.

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[SIA launches new counter-terrorism e-learning today](#)

Press release

Today, Friday 10 September, the Security Industry Authority (SIA) is launching Action Counters Terrorism (ACT) Security e-learning for security professionals.



Security Industry Authority

The SIA developed the new training in partnership with the National Counter Terrorism Security Office and the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure.

ACT Security is free, specialised training for front line security operatives. The custom-built training provides up-to-date counter-terrorism knowledge to help operatives prepare for and respond to terrorist incidents whilst on duty.

The course will take around 1 hour 15 mins and its flexible delivery will allow the user to pause and save progress. This new ACT Security e-learning course follows a successful pilot in August 2021 that included security businesses and operatives.

Paul Fullwood, Director of Inspections and Enforcement, SIA said:

The security industry plays a vital role in public protection. We've been working closely with counter-terrorism experts within the National Counter Terrorism Security Office and the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure to develop specialised e-learning for the security industry. ACT Security will provide operatives with greater knowledge and confidence to detect, deter, or disrupt potential terrorist activity. We urge all security operatives to take this free specialised training to enhance their skills to combat the threat of terrorism.

When taken with ACT Awareness e-learning, the new training covers the entire counter-terrorism content for the licence-linked qualifications and top-up training. There are five modules that cover:

- the role of a security operative in counter terrorism
- current terrorist attack methods
- identifying and responding to suspicious activity
- incident response planning
- responding to a terrorist incident

Security professionals can take the training as follows:

1. Send an email to CTcode@sia.gov.uk with the subject "PIN request for ACT e-learning". The SIA will reply with a PIN.
2. Go to the [ACT e-learning site](#).
3. Enter the PIN sent by the SIA when asked for an access/PIN code.

More information is available on [GOV.UK](#).

Further information:

- The Security Industry Authority is the organisation responsible for regulating the private security industry in the United Kingdom, reporting to the Home Secretary under the terms of the Private Security Industry Act 2001. Our main duties are: the compulsory licensing of individuals undertaking designated activities; and managing the voluntary Approved Contractor Scheme.
- For further information about the Security Industry Authority visit www.gov.uk/sia. The SIA is also on [Facebook](#) (Security Industry Authority) and [Twitter](#) (SIAuk).

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