

# New education award empowers young people to tackle plastic pollution

Key Stage 3 and 4 students from Partners in Excellence (PiXL) member schools can sign up for the 'Green Edge Award' programme from September and undertake one of three award levels – Apprentice, Pioneer and Graduate.

The award is centred around character development with each award level focussing on 5 attributes – leadership, organisation, resilience, initiative and communication. Students will be encouraged to demonstrate these skills through a series of activities, including plastic waste surveys, organising litter picks, and setting up repair cafes.

The award content has been produced by the Environment Agency's plastics and sustainability team on behalf of the Interreg Preventing Plastic Pollution (PPP) project, which is working with the education, business, community, sports and agriculture sectors.

The aim of the PPP project is to take action to reduce the impact of plastics and encourage positive behaviour changes to help places, people and wildlife.

Kelly Haynes, Environment Agency STEM engagement officer, said:

We are thrilled to be working with PiXL to offer this award, which empowers young people to help tackle plastic pollution and the wider climate emergency.

The Green Edge award is a very hands-on programme, allowing students to develop their knowledge and skills through practical activities, collectively making their schools, homes and communities more sustainable. Young people are the future custodians of our planet so to see such passion and enthusiasm for these activities will be truly inspirational.

The award sits alongside the current PiXL Edge programme, which supports students to independently develop life skills via experiences and provides them with an evidenced record of their achievements.

Rachel Johnson, CEO of PiXL, said:

Young people often report feeling powerless in the face of the climate crisis we face, which will no doubt play a big part in their futures. The introduction of the Green Edge, in partnership with the Environment Agency, means that not only will they learn about the issues at hand, but can start working on practical ways to make a difference and empower themselves and others to bring about change.

To find out more about the Edge award contact [edge@pixl.org.uk](mailto:edge@pixl.org.uk) or [plasticsandsustainability@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:plasticsandsustainability@environment-agency.gov.uk).

## Notes for editors

PiXL (Partners in Excellence) is a large membership network comprising of thousands of schools, colleges and alternative education providers across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. They collaborate, share best practice and equip leaders so they can support their teams and, ultimately, provide everyone in schools with a better future and a brighter hope.

Environment Agency role: preventing waste plastic entering the environment by cracking down on waste crime and poor waste management is a key activity for the Environment Agency as a regulator. As an influencer, it also has an ambition to promote better environmental practices that result in a reduction of plastic waste, helping to achieve the goals and commitments outlined in its 5 year plan to create better places for people, wildlife and the environment, and the government's 25 Year Environment Plan.

Preventing Plastic Pollution: working in partnership with 18 organisations from across France and England, [Preventing Plastic Pollution](#) (PPP) seeks to understand and reduce the impacts of plastic pollution in the river and marine environments. By looking at the catchment from source to sea, the project will identify and target hotspots for plastic, embed behaviour change in local communities and businesses, and implement effective solutions and alternatives.

PPP is a €14million funded EU INTERREG VA France (Channel) England Programme project co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund which works mainly across 7 pilot sites: Brest Harbour, Bay of Douarnenez, Bay of Veys, Poole Harbour, and the Medway, Tamar, and Great Ouse estuaries.

Partners are the Environment Agency, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Queen Mary University of London, LABOCEA Conseil, Expertise et Analyses, Syndicat mixte établissement public de gestion et d'aménagement de la baie de Douarnenez, Office Français De La Biodiversité, Parc naturel marin d'Iroise, Brest Métropole, Centre national de la recherche scientifique, Conseil départemental de la Manche, Institut français de recherche pour l'exploitation de la mer, The Rivers Trust, Syndicat de bassin de l'Elorn, ACTIMAR, Brest'aim, Westcountry Rivers Trust, South East Rivers Trust, Plymouth City Council.

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## [MHCLG appoints a new non-executive director](#)

The Housing, Communities and Local Government Secretary, Robert Jenrick, has

appointed Lord Gary Porter, CBE as a new non-executive director on the MHCLG Departmental Board.

Lord Porter's appointment took effect for 3 years from 7 June 2021.

Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick said:

I am delighted to welcome Lord Porter to the board of MHCLG. His hands-on construction experience and advocacy for building safety will be a huge help to the department's important work as we help the country recover and build back better from the pandemic.

Lord Porter has been the Leader of South Holland District Council since 2003. In 2013, he was made a CBE for services to local government and in 2015 he was elevated to the Lords. He was formerly the vice chairman and then chairman of the Local Government Association. A bricklayer by trade, Lord Porter has spent most of his career in the construction industry. In 2000 he graduated as a mature student with a BA (Hons) in history and politics. In 2011 he gained a post-graduate certificate in shared services and in 2014 was made a Shared Service Architect fellow.

Lord Porter is currently a non-executive director of the Norse Group and chairman of the advisory board for the Effective Governance Forum, a cross-party think tank. He is also a Commissioner on the Association for Public Service Excellence's 2030 commission.

## **MHCLG and the role of the Departmental Board**

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is a ministerial department to create great places to work and live, and to give more power to local people to shape what happens in their area.

The Board is chaired by the Secretary of State and includes other ministers, senior officials (the Executive Team), a lead non-executive and a number of non-executive Board members. The Board's focus is on strategic leadership, performance and delivery. The non-executive directors (NEDs) also attend the 'non-ministerial board', which comprises the executive team and the NEDs and whose focus is on organisational effectiveness, people, and forward planning.

The Board operates according to recognised principles of good corporate governance:

- Leadership – communicating a clear vision for the department.
- Effectiveness – challenging and scrutinising performance, to ensure our plans are realistic and challenging.
- Accountability – promoting the government's goal of transparency through clear and fair reporting.
- Sustainability – taking a long-term view about what the department is trying to achieve.

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# Online submission of Escape Cases from June

News story

The process for submitting Escape Case claims is changing after COVID-19 outbreak restrictions are lifted.



As the government roadmap lifts restrictions following the COVID-19 outbreak, the Legal Aid Agency (LAA) is moving to online submission of Escape Case claims.

Electronic submission and processing of these type of claims has proven to be both efficient and a popular way for providers to submit.

The agency intends to adopt this method of digital working as standard practice and we have developed an amended process to be implemented from late June 2021 onwards.

## **What's happening?**

From 21 June 2021, the LAA will withdraw the contingency approach currently used for submission and processing of Controlled Work Escape Cases, which was published following the update to the COVID-19 [guidance](#) on 16 March 2021.

We will adopt as business as usual this contingency measure to enable providers to continue to submit their Escape Case claims electronically.

Providers will need to submit the core documents required under the contingency approach plus documentary evidence in support of all work completed on the case file of 1 hour or more.

This will allow the LAA to continue to process your claims with the benefits of a digital process whilst allowing the agency to carry out thorough cost assessments ensuring accurate handling of public money.

## **What if I can't submit online?**

For providers who are unable to adopt this approach the LAA will still continue to accept Escape Case claims via paper as before the COVID-19 outbreak procedures.

We will still require the full file in support of the claim.

But we would encourage legal aid providers to use the digital approach as it will also help to drive efficiencies for both themselves and the LAA.

## **Further information**

A [guidance document](#) is available giving full details of how the new process will work. If you have any queries regarding the submission of Escape Cases please contact: [mhu-ec@justice.gov.uk](mailto:mhu-ec@justice.gov.uk)

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## **[Further measures in additional areas to tackle Delta \(B1.617.2\) variant](#)**

- Measures introduced in Greater Manchester and parts of Lancashire to stop spread of the Delta variant
- Follows decrease in cases in Bolton after the introduction of additional measures
- Response to suppress the spread of the variant, and break chains of transmission

The new interventions follow extensive COVID-19 surveillance which has detected a number of cases of the Delta (B1.617.2) variant in these communities.

Introduction of these additional measures will be led by local authorities to ensure the right steps are taken at the right time.

Testing, isolation and vaccinations will – in combination with existing guidance such as hands, face, space and fresh air – help suppress and control the spread of the virus and variants.

As part of the package, there is extra guidance on steps people can take, such as minimising travel in and out of the affected areas, to keep their loved ones and their communities safe.

Support available to local areas will include:

- specialist Surge Rapid Response Teams – these can be deployed to support local authorities with logistics, planning and workforce to support measures such as testing, door-to-door visits to engage with residents and other activities
- military support to help local areas with testing, door-to-door community engagement, planning and logistics with decisions made based on local needs, including support from the nationally funded Military Aid to the Civil Authority (MACA)
- supervised in-school testing
- wastewater testing samples prioritised for sequencing
- specialist communications support to increase awareness and focus engagement with disadvantaged groups
- maximising vaccine uptake by expanding existing assets, developing new capacity and increasing local and targeted communications
- supervised in-school testing and discretion to reintroduce face coverings in communal areas in schools if directors of public health decide it is appropriate
- surge testing and enhanced contact tracing
- enhanced monitoring (genomic sequencing, genotype assay testing)

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said today in the House of Commons:

Working with local authorities, we are providing a strengthened package of support, based on what is working in Bolton, to help Greater Manchester and Lancashire tackle the rise in the Delta variant that we are seeing there. This includes Rapid Response Teams, putting in extra testing, military support and supervised in-school testing.

I want to encourage everyone in Greater Manchester and Lancashire to get the tests on offer. We know that this approach can work – we have seen it work in South London and in Bolton in stopping a rise in the number of cases.

This is the next stage of tackling the pandemic in Greater Manchester and in Lancashire, and of course it is vital that people in these areas, as everywhere, come forward and get the jab as soon as they are eligible because that is our way out of the pandemic together.

Chief Executive of the UK Health Security Agency Dr Jenny Harries said:

This variant is now the dominant strain of this virus across the UK, with cases continuing to rise in some areas. The most important thing that people in these areas can do is remain cautious, work from home if possible and remember to practise hands, face, space and fresh air.

Getting the vaccine gives a strong level of protection against this

variant and I strongly recommend that everyone gets the jab when the NHS invites you – it will protect you and your loved ones.

Early research shows that vaccines provide strong protection against the new variants. Effectiveness against symptomatic disease from the Delta (B.1.617.2) variant is similar after 2 doses compared with the Alpha variant (B.1.1.7), and even higher levels of effectiveness are expected against hospitalisations and death.

The government and its world-leading scientists are closely monitoring the evolving situation and the rates of variants, and the government will not hesitate to take additional action whenever necessary.

Further details about the measures in each area are being made available through individual local authorities.

Lancashire County Council covers:

- Burnley (where further measures are already in place)
- Chorley
- Fylde
- Hyndburn
- Lancaster
- Pendle
- Preston
- Ribble Valley
- Rossendale
- South Ribble
- West Lancashire
- Wyre

Greater Manchester covers:

- Bolton (where further measures are already in place)
- Bury
- Manchester
- Oldham
- Rochdale
- Salford
- Stockport
- Trafford
- Tameside
- Wigan

Further measures are already in place in [Bedford, Blackburn with Darwen, Bolton, Burnley, Kirklees, Leicester City, Hounslow and North Tyneside](#).

Public Health England published its [study into the effectiveness of vaccines against the Delta \(B.1.617.2\) variant](#) on 22 May.

The study found that between 5 April and 16 May:

- the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine was 88% effective against symptomatic disease from the Delta variant 2 weeks after the second dose, compared with 93% effectiveness against the Alpha variant
- 2 doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine were 60% effective against symptomatic disease from the Delta variant compared with 66% effectiveness against the Alpha variant
- both vaccines were 33% effective against symptomatic disease from Delta 3 weeks after the first dose compared with around 50% effectiveness against the Kent variant

Genotype assay testing is a new technology which helps identify mutations linked to variants of concern, [announced by the Department of Health and Social Care on 22 March](#).

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## [Armed Forces support the Police as Cornwall hosts G7 world leaders](#)

World leaders will arrive in Cornwall this week for the three-day G7 Leaders' Summit in Carbis Bay. Devon and Cornwall Police have led on plans to ensure the summit is delivered in a safe and secure way for local communities and dignitaries with wide-ranging support from Defence.

Defence are providing a range of capabilities including naval vessels, aircraft, planning staff, logistics support, facilities and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams. The Armed Forces have vast experience in supporting events of this nature and will help the local police force to maintain security for the many visitors to the area and the local communities.

At the request of Devon and Cornwall Police, Defence is providing explosive search dogs and handlers who will be under police command. Explosive Ordnance Disposal teams are on standby as they are every day, and additional resources will deploy to the area for the event.

Defence are providing facilities to support the delivery of the summit, including RNAS Culdrose and RAF St Mawgan. Defence will also help the police to secure and maintain security for the duration of the summit by providing air defence capabilities and a T23 frigate, HMS Northumberland will be positioned off the coast in addition to other naval assets.

Coordinating the military's contribution to the G7 Leaders' Summit is Commander Littoral Strike Group and Joint Military Command South West, who are working closely with Devon and Cornwall Police to deliver a safe and secure summit.

Commodore Rob Pedre RN, Commander Littoral Strike Group and the head of the



military operation supporting Devon and Cornwall Police, said:

Over the next week, the Armed Forces will be providing hundreds of personnel, as well as naval vessels and aircraft, to support the Police in providing a safe and secure G7 Summit.

We are proud to be involved in this monumental event, and to help enable a global forum where leading democracies will tackle the biggest issues facing the world today.

Hundreds of Armed Forces personnel will be supporting the police force in a variety of roles, including drivers and wider logistical support. Those supporting the police are helping to free up police resources for front line roles.

Military personnel from across the armed services will also perform ceremonial duties to mark the summit including a Guard of Honour for delegates. The Guard of Honour will feature 40 representatives from units in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, the British Army's Coldstream Guards and Royal Air Force's Queen's Colour Squadron.

Superintendent Jo Hall of Devon and Cornwall Police, said:

Throughout our planning of the security operation for the G7 Leaders' Summit, colleagues from the military, who are well versed in logistical planning, have been embedded within our team to provide essential knowledge and assistance.

We're glad to be joined by mutual aid officers and staff from all UK police forces and the armed services, who will be supporting the delivery of a safe and secure event.

Mutual Aid arrangements have allowed officers from across all police forces in England, Wales and Police Scotland to be drafted to assist the existing officers on duty for Devon and Cornwall. This will be funded by the Government so will not incur operational costs to Devon and Cornwall Police.