

# Linda Knutsen appointed head of Dstl's Exploration Division

News story

Linda has been appointed head of the newly formed division to focus on transformative technology, systems, concepts and strategy.



Linda has worked for the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) and its predecessors since 1994 and brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the role. After completing an MSc in Analytical Chemistry, Linda's career began at the RN Scientific Service as a Forensic Chemist in the Naval Aircraft Materials Laboratory. She moved to Defence Research Agency (DRA) Haslar, which later became DERA, a predecessor to Dstl. She advanced through various roles, most recently as Capability Leader in Dstl's Platform Systems Division. Linda was also responsible for leading a team to establish strategic relationships with senior leaders in the Royal Navy, and provide thought leadership in science and technology.

Linda says:

I am really excited to be the first Division Head of Dstl's Exploration Division. A lot of hard work has gone into launching the division and there has never been a better opportunity for us to capitalise on the Government's commitment to S&T. We are in a fantastic position to demonstrate the difference we can make to UK Defence and Security and I am looking forward to leading my new team in this challenge.

Dstl's Exploration Division will pinpoint futuristic high impact ideas with the greatest potential. Such ideas could be 'over the horizon' technologies, next generation concepts or existing systems that could be adapted for Defence and Security. The initiative will increase Dstl's ability to shape generation-after-next equipment and strategy for the armed forces while continuing to support current operational requirements.

Exploration Division will use AI and data analytics to scan the horizon for transformative technologies such as quantum sensing or quantum cryptography, neuromorphic computing, and telexistence. It will incubate the most promising of these and will imagine entirely new systems to provide the UK's armed forces and security forces with game changing capabilities to create strategic advantage over future adversaries.

Linda and her team will work collaboratively with customers and industry partners to test the value and fitness for purpose of transformative technologies, concepts, systems or services using the best new and existing methods. New and novel working practices will ensure freedom of movement for people into and out of Dstl to work with partners and suppliers.

Published 1 June 2021

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## [Almost £30 million in compensation paid or offered to the Windrush generation](#)

Members of the Windrush generation have been paid over £20.4 million in compensation, Home Secretary Priti Patel announced today (Thursday 27 May).

The Windrush Compensation Scheme paid more than £6.2 million in the month of April and offered a further £9 million – bringing the total amount paid and offered to more than £29.5 million.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

I am absolutely committed to putting right the terrible injustices faced by the Windrush generation under successive governments.

I have been clear that I will listen to victims and act, which is why I overhauled the Compensation Scheme in December, and we are now seeing the positive impact of those changes on people's lives with nearly £30 million paid or offered.

I will continue to work tirelessly to make sure that more money continues to be paid more quickly.

The published statistics show that to the end of April 2021, the Home Office had paid over £20.4 million to 687 people, and had offered over £9 million further.

This is another significant increase in total payments, and has been driven by changes made to the scheme in mid-December. These include increasing the minimum payment to £10,000 – 40 times greater than the previous minimum award available.

Within six weeks of the changes being announced, the Home Office had offered more in compensation than in the first 19 months of the scheme, rising £6.17 million to more than £12 million at the end of January 2021.

Total payments have also risen rapidly since the changes made in December. In the first four months of 2021, the Home Office paid more than six times the total amount previously distributed throughout the lifetime of the scheme, which began in April 2019.

Prior to the overhaul, the scheme offered an average of £294,000 per month. Since the changes made in December, the scheme has offered an average of £5.8 million per month.

The April statistics follow a strong performance in March, when the Windrush Compensation Scheme paid out more than £8 million.

From the outset of the scheme, caseworkers have been instructed to ensure everyone who makes a claim receives the maximum compensation possible under the scheme's rules. This ethos has been continued as the scheme has been overhauled.

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## [Cash boost for apprenticeships launched](#)

From today employers of all sizes in England can now apply for extra funding to help them take on new apprentices, in the latest drive to revolutionise the skills and training offer across the country.

The boost to the apprenticeship incentive scheme was confirmed by the Chancellor in the Budget in March, and will be available to claim from today (1 June). [Businesses can apply](#) to claim £3000 for each new apprentice hired as a new employee from 1 April until 30 September.

The cash incentive is designed to help more employers invest in the skilled workforce they need for the future, as part of the government's Plan for Jobs. It builds on the extensive action already underway to protect, support and create more jobs while bringing our skills and education system closer to

the employer market and widening the opportunities that are available, as we build back better from the pandemic.

Chancellor Rishi Sunak said:

Young people have been hit especially hard by the crisis – which is why our Plan for Jobs launched last year is focused on helping them get the skills they need to get the jobs they want.

By boosting the cash incentives for our apprenticeship scheme we're improving opportunities for young people to stay in and find work – this could not be more important in our economy's recovery.

Gillian Keegan, Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills said:

Apprenticeships are a fantastic way for employers large and small to grow their businesses and will continue to play a key role in our economic recovery.

This cash boost will help even more employers to invest in their future workforce, creating more high-quality apprenticeship opportunities so businesses have the skilled talent pipeline they need to thrive, not just today but also in the future.

Thousands of businesses across the country have already taken advantage of the original incentive scheme, which was first launched in July last year by the Chancellor.

Employers can choose how to spend the cash, for example, covering uniform or travel costs for the apprentice.

Matt Clay, Group Qualifications Manager at Lookers said:

The current climate has the potential to leave a damaging impact on the future of young people. We're delighted to have offered 185 Apprenticeship roles across the Group during this time, enabling opportunities for these young people to build their confidence, skills and experience. Our continued investment into apprenticeships is a result of the recognised value they generate for the business; for every £1 invested we realise a return of £20. The current Government support package will build upon the commercial impact of our apprentices, enabling us to secure the financial future of the Program, having moved into the government co-investment model.

Helena Baxter, apprenticeship lead, Walsall Council said:

Apprenticeships are good for business, as apprentices can be moulded and shaped in their area of expertise, to deliver the exact skills your business needs. Apprentices are the future decision makers, managers and leaders of Walsall Council and continuing to bring apprentices into the business, even in such difficult times, is important to protect our future, whilst ensuring we continue to deliver the vital services our communities depend upon. I would urge all employers to continue to recruit, and to benefit from government incentives to ease financial burden, whilst offering exciting and rewarding careers opportunities to apprentices.

Abby Swift joined MTR Elizabeth Line as a Customer Experience apprentice using the incentive payment scheme. She said:

My apprenticeship so far has been a great opportunity to develop my skills and knowledge whilst working within a great team at MTR Elizabeth line. I would encourage other people to consider it as an option.

Apprenticeships are playing a central role in the government's reforms to post-16 education and training, ensuring more people can gain the skills they need to get the jobs they want in a wide range of exciting sectors everything from digital marketing, engineering and clean energy.

The government is also investing £126 million to help create 40,000 more traineeships in England, for 16-24-year olds in 2021-22.

Traineeships are programmes lasting between 6 weeks and 12 months that offer young people invaluable training and work placements that boost employability, bridge skills gaps and bolster the future talent pipeline of businesses.

[Employers can also apply for a £1000 cash boost to help them deliver traineeships](#) for up to 10 learners per region, in each of the 9 regions of England.

Notes to editors:

- The incentive is paid in addition to the funding available to employers for training and assessing apprentices, and the extra payments we already make to support employers and providers meet the needs of the youngest apprentices and those with an Education, Health and Care Plan.
- An exciting talent planning route for businesses could see an apprentice joining an organisation for a Kickstart placement then progressing onto an apprenticeship with them. Employers would have access to the full range of financial support the government provides for apprenticeships in England.
- The previous incentive offered £1500 for an apprentice aged 25 or over, or £2000 for an apprentice aged 16-24, recruited between 1 Aug 2020 and 31 March

2021.

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## [Cirrus SR22, G-CTAM; anniversary statement](#)

News story

Loss of power, deployment of ballistic parachute recovery system, and ditching near Calshot Split, Hampshire, 31 May 2020



This statement provides an update on the ongoing AAIB investigation into an accident involving Cirrus SR22, G-CTAM, near Calshot Split, Hampshire on 31 May 2020.

Passing 1,400 ft amsl in a descent towards an airfield, the aircraft's engine began to run roughly and then stopped producing power. The pilot turned the aircraft to parallel the coast and deployed its Ballistic Parachute Recovery System. The aircraft descended under the parachute into the sea, and both occupants escaped from the cabin uninjured.

The loss of power was probably caused by fuel starvation, and the investigation continues into why this might have occurred. A full report of the investigation will be published in due course.

Published 1 June 2021

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# NORTHERN IRELAND'S FIRST ROYAL STATUS AWARDED TO HILLSBOROUGH VILLAGE

- Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Brandon Lewis announces Royal status for village of Hillsborough
- The first village or town in Northern Ireland to receive the rare and honoured title

The village of Hillsborough in County Down will become 'Royal Hillsborough' later in 2021, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Rt Hon Brandon Lewis MP has announced today.

Home to Hillsborough Castle, the residence of Her Majesty The Queen and other members of the Royal family when visiting Northern Ireland, it will be the first village or town in Northern Ireland to receive the exceptional title.

Taking place during Northern Ireland's Centenary year, the decision follows a recommendation from the UK Government in support of an application from Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council.

A unique village in Northern Ireland with close ties to the Royal Family, Hillsborough attracts thousands of visitors from across the UK and the world each year to admire its fine Georgian architecture, parkland and lakeside walks. Hillsborough occupies a unique place in the history and affairs of Northern Ireland. It has welcomed many important visitors throughout its history – from the American Founding Father Benjamin Franklin in 1771, to President George W Bush in 2003.

Hillsborough is also birthplace to the renowned Professor the late Frank Pantridge, who in addition to having a distinguished military career, also invented the portable defibrillator saving lives across the world. And for a time, the village was also home to television personality Gloria Hunniford who was awarded an OBE for her services to cancer charities in 2017.

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Brandon Lewis said:

"This is fantastic news for the village of Hillsborough, a truly wonderful place that deserves this special honour.

"The village's Royal status reflects the beauty of Hillsborough as well as its unique history and close connections to the Royal family through Hillsborough Castle.

"I have been privileged to enjoy Hillsborough Castle and the village of Hillsborough over the past year with my family, as have many other Secretaries of State for Northern Ireland before me.

“I hope this news will attract many more visitors to the area and the whole of Northern Ireland, as well as boosting further investment and local jobs as we level up right across the United Kingdom.”

The Mayor of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, Councillor Nicholas Trimble, said: “This is a historic day for Hillsborough, for Northern Ireland and for the UK. Hillsborough has for a long time been a jewel in our local crown. We work closely with the community and local businesses and have invested significantly in the area in recent years, upgrading the Forest and installing new play facilities among other improvements.

“As a Council, we are delighted that our application has been successful. We are excited to support the continued development of Hillsborough as our number one project in the Belfast Region City Deal and the economic and tourism benefits this will bring to Northern Ireland.”

Laura McCorry, Head of Hillsborough Castle and Gardens, said:

“This very welcome news will provide a much-needed boost for tourism in Hillsborough, after a challenging year for the entire industry. Hillsborough is a truly remarkable place, with so much to offer visitors – rich history, stunning surroundings and brilliant spots to eat, drink and shop. Sitting at the heart of all of this is the castle we’re privileged to care for, which has been the backdrop for many milestones in the history of Northern Ireland.

“This week, we’re thrilled to be welcoming visitors back inside Hillsborough Castle again. We’re hopeful that this announcement will help us to really put Hillsborough on the map as a tourism destination, inspiring visitors from across Northern Ireland and beyond to come and see everything we have to offer.”

Following the granting of Letters Patent, the town will officially be entitled ‘Royal Hillsborough’.