

[Dstl and DASA speaking at Innovate Local](#)

News story

Dstl and DASA will be speaking at Innovate Local: Southern Pioneers on 8 to 9 March 2021.



The virtual event is for pioneers, entrepreneurs, businesses, support agencies and practitioners interested in navigating and capitalising on the innovation ecosystem across the South Coast and neighbouring areas.

With more than 20 different sessions and workshops taking place, this is a great opportunity for anyone interested in learning about the latest innovation support on offer, both locally and nationally.

The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) delivers high-impact science and technology (S&T) for the UK's defence, security and prosperity. Dstl will explain how small and medium-sized enterprises and businesses can work with defence to help protect the UK's armed forces.

DASA, the Defence and Security Accelerator, finds and funds exploitable innovation to support UK defence and security quickly and effectively, and supports UK prosperity.

An introduction to Dstl and DASA will be presented on their stand between 1pm and 2pm each day. One-to-one appointments are available throughout the day for more detailed discussion.

The event also features:

- Local economic priorities and the growth opportunities for businesses developing new ideas across the South Coast.
- National and local support agencies to help form collaborative partnerships, undertake research and development, access funding and finance, and develop skills and talent for your business
- Networking and collaboration opportunities, to fast track innovation
- Different sessions and workshops each day; when you sign up, you will be

able to choose the sessions that you're most interested in

This event is organised by Innovate UK, Solent Local Enterprise Partnership, Venturefest South and KTN in partnership with the Catapult Network and Business Growth Hub networks.

Published 25 February 2021

[Hugh Clay: 60 years of science](#)

However, this James Bond-like CV is a world away from Hugh Clay's initial career aspirations – he had planned on becoming an accountant to exploit his talent with mathematics.

The 77-year-old grandad from Waterlooville, then a fresh-faced teenager, only applied to the Ministry of Defence (MOD) to gain precious interview practice.

He said: "I had no perception when I was 17 that one day I would be managing major projects for the MOD with a good outcome.

"I've been here a long time. I like the camaraderie, I like the technical challenge, I like the variation so I just like coming to work."

[The People Inside: Hugh Clay](#)

Hugh started work shortly after his interview as an apprentice electrical fitter at Portsmouth Dockyard in September 1960 working on the HMS Victorious aircraft carrier.

Five years later he was promoted to be the civilian officer in the Dockyard Calibration Laboratory to work on early electronics and radar.

He then progressed as a Naval Weapon Combat System engineer and an expert in computerised systems on a new generation of ships.

In 1983 he jumped ship and started leading on Submarine Electronic Warfare System on nuclear submarines during the Cold War before helping to develop pioneering periscope technology for Trident class submarines. He was also the first civilian to hold the post of submarine periscope manager which he says is one of his proudest achievements.

In 1995 Hugh started working for the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (DERA) on Above Water Warfare and was due to retire in 2000 after 40 years of service.

However, he stayed on to be in charge of Surface Defence and Security Operations at the newly established Defence Science and Technology Laboratory

(Dstl).

Asked about his career highlights Hugh said:

There are several. One clearly was deployment on a nuclear submarine, which I've done a couple of times. I deployed over to Scandinavia, I also deployed down to Portugal which was quite exciting.

I've worked with the US Marine Corps and the US Navy on developing ammunition rounds and that meant going into the deserts of Arizona and Nevada on trials and that was quite exceptional. They are people to really admire and I highly enjoyed working with them.

Finally up to date now where I am actually involved in developing equipment that will go into the new generation of fighters.

His various roles have led to him travelling the globe from the Arctic Circle to the South Atlantic to test weapons and defence systems.

In 2015 after 55 years of working on naval projects his career took an upward trajectory with his current role as senior principal project manager looking after air survivability concepts project within air systems in Dstl.

The dad-of-three said:

It is strange not being able to talk to your family about the details of what you do but it doesn't really matter. You can explain it in very broad terms that makes it sound quite exciting – as it really is.

Most of the programmes I've worked on, in fact all of them, they have all been exciting and I've transferred from one project to another and the element of excitement is always there but I have never actually, from the outset, realised how exciting they can be.

In his spare time Hugh plays squash, badminton and golf and enjoys travelling and fishing.

He added:

What makes Dstl unique is this variation of work, is the fact that on any day a unique situation can arise because of conflicts around the world and one has to then rise to those requirements and try and find solutions to help the armed forces.

If there is one project that has taken me back it is the surface warfare project, my previous project. It was a surprise to me being involved with weapons, intimately involved with weapons, small

arms, being able to take part in how to use small arms, to actually feel the weight of a gun, how hot it is when you are firing it.

The difficulties the armed forces have. As an engineer scientist it gives you a feeling of how difficult it is to use this equipment. I've been extremely lucky.

Veterans UK start an exercise to correct some Restored Widows' Pensions

News story

Veterans UK are conducting an administrative exercise to re-visit commencing dates for restored widows' pensions under the War Pension Scheme, to identify and pay additional amounts where necessary, after a Court of Appeal ruling.



Veterans UK logo

We are now beginning to contact and pay widows and estates where we know pensions have been restored from an incorrect commencing date. Where we have any contact details recorded in cases where widows have died, we are writing to people to make them aware of how to apply if they think that there may be money owed because a pension was restored from the wrong date.

However, we do not hold full details of the estate for all those customers who are now deceased, so you should claim if you believe you have an entitlement. More detailed information about the exercise, guidance on eligibility and how to apply can be found on [Additional period of Restored War Widows/War Widowers Pension](#).

It is likely to take a considerable amount of time to work through contacting people and then deal with applications, we will provide updates on progress on GOV.UK.

Presentation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly: UK chair of the Security Committee

Thank you for that kind introduction Chair.

I am honoured to have been invited to address this Committee for the second time as Chair of the Security Committee.

I remain grateful to the Swedish Chairpersonship for putting its faith in me to continue in this role, implementing its priorities in the field of transnational threats.

It is important that OSCE priorities and commitments – in all areas – are realised and implemented in partnership with parliamentarians. In my view, parliamentarians serve three key functions: as enablers to shape national policy; as controllers providing legislative oversight; and as bridge builders bringing together diverging views at all levels, including through meetings such as this one.

I acknowledge specifically the role of the Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism: And I was honoured to have spoken last June at its 7th Meeting and look forward to continuing to engage with its expertise this year.

As many of you know, the Security Committee had in recent years not been able to achieve consensus on deliverables at the OSCE Ministerial Council.

Fortunately this changed last year in Tirana. I am pleased we were able to reach consensus on a Declaration on Strengthening Co-operation in Countering Transnational Organized Crime in the OSCE area.

Transnational organised crime remains a priority of the Swedish Chairpersonship. As a Committee, our meetings on this topic seek to operationalise the Tirana declaration in key strategic areas. Across all transnational threats, there is also a priority to implement existing commitments.

According to the World Bank, the value of transnational criminal networks engaged in various manifestations of organised crime is growing and exceeded \$US 1.3 trillion by 2018 – equivalent to around 1.5 percent of global GDP.

It is particularly important to break the social, situational, psychological, and economic drivers of recruitment and ensure that our institutions fighting

transnational organised crime continue to effective, accountable and free of corruption.

The COVID-19 pandemic of course affects this threat. After some initial disruption to their operations, transnational organised crime groups are benefitting from the ongoing crisis by exploiting or exacerbating long-term or structural vulnerabilities. This makes preventing the scourge even more important.

Our work in the Committee will also include the issues of counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism. This threat has sadly not diminished. Last year saw appalling terrorist attacks and loss of life in the OSCE area, including here in Vienna. As we've seen, the pandemic has provided another febrile atmosphere for terrorists and violent extremists to thrive, including those on the far right.

Our Committee will also focus on cyber security. Malicious cyber activity causes economic loss, individual suffering and poses a national security threat to our countries. The last year has forced all of us to rely even more heavily on digital technologies for nearly all aspects of our lives – this has brought the cyber skills gap and cyber security itself into much sharper focus.

Serious organised crime, terrorism and cyberattacks pose a threat to our collective and individual security. They also undermine and pose a direct threat to democracy, democratic principles and our democratic institutions. None of our countries are immune.

In the delivery of our Security Committee programme, I aim for an inclusive, dynamic and de-politicised debate with more discussion and interaction with and between experts to explore the technical issues in detail.

I will mainstream gender considerations, as well as human rights and fundamental freedoms. Gender dynamics are part of the transnational threat ecosystem. We need to challenge our assumptions and calibrate our responses.

For example, women can be victims of terrorism and organised crime but they can also be perpetrators, facilitators and serve in the same roles as men.

We can also only effectively combat these threats in full compliance with our human rights commitments. The voices and experience of civil society add value here, including to hold governments accountable. I will ensure their voices are heard in the Committee

I will also continue to fully involve the OSCE field missions in our meetings to help bridge the gap between the work in Vienna and activity on the ground. I am hopeful we will this year meet the ambition for the Committee to visit an OSCE field mission.

To conclude, I continue to believe in the potential of the Security Committee as an effective forum for states to share best practice and work together to implement our shared commitments. And I look forward to working together with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in combatting transnational threats in the

OSCE area. Thank you.

Major habitat creation project on the Humber to start this spring

Work on a major project on the Humber will start this spring to realign existing flood embankments and create approximately 175 hectares of new mudflat and saltmarsh habitats on the north bank of the Humber estuary, near Skeffling.

The scheme will also include the creation of 75 hectares of wet grassland habitat in the area north of Winestead Drain.

The 'Outstrays to Skeffling Managed Realignment Scheme' is a joint initiative by the Environment Agency and Associated British Ports.

'Managed realignment' means altering the location of existing flood defences so that new habitats can be created for wildlife that can also increase levels of flood protection by absorbing wave energy.

At this site, it involves moving an embankment further inland to establish a new line of flood defences and then breaching the old embankment so that sea water can enter through the breach to create intertidal habitat.

Delivering multiple benefits

Andrew Gee, project manager at the Environment Agency said:

At the Environment Agency we are always looking for opportunities to deliver multiple benefits when we plan our work.

This exciting project will create vital new habitats for nature to thrive, allowing us to deliver important projects across the estuary whilst also helping make Welwick and Skeffling more resilient to climate change by reducing flood risk.

The existing embankments on the eastern side of the scheme will be replaced with new and more resilient defences and the creation of new areas of habitat will ensure that the unique environment of the Humber estuary is preserved and protected for future generations of wildlife and people.

Simon Bird, Director at ABP Humber, said:

ABP is committed to tackling climate change and the company works in many ways to achieve this: investing in renewable energy and hybridised equipment, working to reduce waste, and using sustainable supply chains.

Alongside that work is a commitment to grow the Humber's green energy sector on both banks of the estuary. In doing this the area can continue to play its vital role in decarbonising our economy. Any growth must be carefully considered to ensure the Humber Estuary can continue to provide its many ecological benefits.

The Environment Agency and ABP have worked hard to develop an exciting scheme, which will enable ABP to further invest in port infrastructure here in the Humber and provide offset habitat.

Work to begin on eastern side

Following the completion of final agreements between the Environment Agency and Associated British Ports (ABP), there are now plans to begin work on the eastern side of the scheme along with the wet grassland element of the west.

The land owned by the Environment Agency on the western side of the site, south of Winestead Drain, will not be developed into intertidal habitat at this stage but it will remain as a site for future environmental development.

Work is planned to start on site this spring when the project team will carry out surveys and investigations to inform detailed designs. More archaeological surveys will also be done to increase knowledge of the history of the site and the findings will be shared with the local community.

As part of the proposals, work will also be done to increase the capacity of Skeffling pumping station.

The additional benefits for public access and recreation will be delivered, as planned, on the eastern side.

For further information on the project, visit the [Citizen Space page](#)

If you want to get in touch with the project team you can contact us by email Welwick.Skeffling@environment-agency.gov.uk