

# Wildlife crime and conservation expert John Scanlon appointed chair of UK government's Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund

Conservation, sustainability and wildlife expert John E. Scanlon AO has been appointed by International Environment Minister Lord Goldsmith as the first independent chair of the UK government's Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund.

The Challenge Fund tackles the illegal wildlife trade by providing support to projects around the world that develop sustainable livelihoods for local communities and help to strengthen law enforcement, support legal systems and reduce demand for illegal wildlife trade products.

John Scanlon is currently Special Envoy for African Parks and joins Defra as Chair of the IWT Challenge Fund with extensive knowledge and experience in conservation. He previously held the position of Secretary-General of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) for eight years between 2010- 2018, was the founding chair of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime in 2010 and is widely recognised for his work in tackling the illegal wildlife trade.

**Announcing the appointment, International Environment Minister Lord Goldsmith said:**

The illegal wildlife trade not only fuels corruption, it destabilises communities and strips them of their livelihoods. In addition, it is bringing some of the world's most iconic species to the brink of extinction, and for these reasons the UK government is committed to ending it.

John Scanlon has a wealth of experience in global conservation efforts and will undoubtedly support the Challenge Fund to the fullest extent as we continue to tackle this vile trade.

The IWT Challenge Fund provides vital support for projects that tackle the demand for illegal wildlife goods such as rosewood, tiger pelts and bones, rhino horn, elephant tusks, and the world's most trafficked mammal, the pangolin.

To date over £26 million has already been allocated to 85 projects around the world, with the [latest round of funding supporting five projects](#) in Asia, two in Africa and South America respectively and one in Europe.

Projects have helped combat jaguar losses in Bolivia by expanding

intelligence networks, reduced Mackaw trafficking in Honduras by providing technical support to indigenous communities and has saved lions in Uganda through funding anti-poaching training.

### **Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund Chair John Scanlon said**

The illegal wildlife trade has a devastating impact on wildlife, local communities, national economies, security, public health and entire ecosystems. The Challenge Fund is a central part of the UK's efforts to help drive much needed changes to fight these highly destructive crimes across the globe.

The UK has played a leading part in scaling up the fight against illegal wildlife trade and I look forward to this new role and to working with the UK government and a wide array of committed partners.

Together we will support well-crafted projects to end the illegal wildlife trade, to lead or amplify global efforts to protect the world's most endangered species and support communities who live amongst some of our most cherished wildlife.

The illegal wildlife trade is a dangerous and ecologically damaging criminal industry worth over £17 billion a year and threatens both wildlife and people, undermining development and harming local communities.

As part of the [25 Year Environment Plan](#), the government has committed to becoming a world leader in tackling the illegal wildlife trade, in order to protect the world's most endangered species.

The UK is investing more than £66 million between 2014 and 2024 to take action against the illegal wildlife trade through the IWTCF, targeted direct grants and by working in partnership with international organisation. Applications for stage one of [round 7 of the Challenge Fund](#) are now closed and successful applicants through to stage two are expected to be notified later this year.

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## **[Plans unveiled for congestion-busting scheme near Swindon](#)**

Highways England, the company responsible for England's motorways and major A roads, has teamed up with Swindon Borough Council, Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership and developers Persimmon and Redrow to deliver extra lanes at M4 Junction 15 and improve local road access from the

motorway.

The £17.5 million, 12-month project starts on 10 August and will improve journey times and reliability for motorists by tackling congestion at both the busy M4 junction and on the A419, particularly at peak times in the area.

Highways England's Growth and Housing Fund has helped to support economic growth, facilitate employment opportunities and enable housing development across the country, and £5 million is being invested in the junction upgrade, which is being jointly funded by Swindon Borough Council (£4.8m), SWLEP (£3m) and Persimmon and Redrow (£4.35m).

The upgrade follows the start of two major Swindon Borough Council schemes – the Wichelstowe underpass project further south near M4 junction 16, and improvement work at the White Hart junction, a vital link between the A419 and A420.

The M4 junction 15 programme of work will involve:

- widening of the A419 southbound approach to M4 J15 Commonhead Roundabout from 2 to 3 lanes, with a dedicated left lane for London-bound traffic;
- widening of the A419 northbound exit from M4 J15 to 3 lanes up to the Highways England compound entrance, and back to 2 lanes north of the compound exit;
- widening of the A346 to the south of M4 Junction 15 from 1 to 2 lanes; and from 2 to 3 lanes on the immediate approach to the roundabout;
- widening of the M4 J15 eastbound exit slip road from 2 to 3 lanes;
- lengthening of the 3-lane M4 J15 westbound exit slip road;
- widening of the M4 J15 southern circulatory carriageway from 2 to 4 lanes;
- upgrading existing footpaths and installing a new signalised pedestrian crossing over the M4 Junction 15 westbound entry slip road.

Mark Fox, South West Head of Scheme Delivery for Highways England, said:

Our roads are vital for the country and its economic success – they connect businesses and communities and support employment and new homes. All of our improvements will ultimately ensure our roads continue to improve journeys and unlock the potential for new jobs and homes.

During the scheme, embankments will be cleared and remodelled, and the Day House Lane road, although closed to vehicles, will remain open for non-motorised users.

Throughout the project, any work requiring overnight closures and traffic management arrangements will be communicated in advance.

Mr Fox added:

We will make every effort to ensure that the impact on the local community is kept to an absolute minimum, we've started with some preparatory work, and as the scheme progresses we will communicate any changes via roadside signage.

We appreciate that roadworks can be frustrating but we'd like to thank motorists in advance for their patience while this vital improvement scheme takes place.

Swindon Borough Council's £4.8m investment will complement more than £72.5m in road improvements at the nearby New Eastern Villages development.

Councillor Gary Sumner, Swindon Borough Council's Cabinet Member for Strategic Infrastructure, Transport and Planning, said:

Anyone who has sat in the tailbacks at Junction 15 of the M4 at peak periods knows just why these improvements are needed.

I am pleased this vital work is about to start as it will relieve congestion on what is a notoriously busy bottleneck. This is a further example of the Council investing in the Borough's road network to benefit both local residents and the wider Swindon economy.

Paddy Bradley, CEO of the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership, said:

The scheme represents our continued commitment to local businesses and residents and the works will help ensure the economic growth of Swindon and the wider region is not hindered by traffic congestion and unreliable journey times.

The collaboration between partners to bring together the necessary funding will lead to the improvement of major routes around Swindon to keep pace with the future development of the New Eastern Villages.

Highways England's Growth and Housing Fund has been used to match-fund infrastructure projects to unlock developments around the country.

The company has approved contributions to 28 projects at a total cost of £94.8 million. This investment has in turn attracted up to £129 million in other public contributions and £102 million in private match funding and is anticipated to deliver up to 1.74 million square metres of commercial floor space, 44,000 homes and 45,000 jobs over the lifetime of the developments.

To date the specialist fund has made huge improvements and brought benefits to local communities, unlocking homes and jobs in Exeter and Taunton

elsewhere in the South West, as well as Darlington, Harrogate, Scunthorpe, Grantham, Warrington, Derby, Oldham, Northampton, Durham, Daventry, Leicester and Southampton.

## **General enquiries**

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

## **Media enquiries**

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

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# **UK Statement to the WTO Dispute Settlement Body on Appellate Body Appointments**



The United Kingdom continues its support for this proposal for the launch of the selection process and we refer to our previous statements on this agenda item. We also support the statement made by Mexico on behalf of all co-sponsors.

The United Kingdom is a strong supporter of the WTO dispute settlement system, as a central pillar of the rules-based multilateral trading system. An effective and binding dispute settlement mechanism ensures that we can enforce the rules we have negotiated, preserving the rights and obligations of all Members.

We continue to be concerned that the WTO Membership has not been able to launch the selection process for new Appellate Body members, with the result that the Appellate Body is unable to hear new appeals. At a time when the broader multilateral trading system is under strain, we are starting to see the concrete impairment of rights arising from this situation.

The United Kingdom remains committed to finding a permanent resolution to the impasse with the Appellate Body which carries the support of all WTO Members. A fully-functioning two-stage dispute settlement system is key to providing the predictability and stability that businesses need to trade internationally.

We understand the long-standing concerns that have been raised, and we recognise that in a consensus-based organisation, any dispute resolution mechanism must carry the trust of all Members. We stand ready to play a full role in future discussions on dispute settlement reform.

However, finding a solution should not stand in the way of Members accessing their rights to two-stage dispute settlement under the Agreements and the launch of the Appellate Body selection process. We therefore call on all Members to act urgently to restore the system to full functioning, while we prioritise discussions on a permanent solution.

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1. 30 July 2020

Adding 'UK Mission Geneva' as forgot on first publication.

2. 30 July 2020

First published.

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## [127 new employers awarded for supporting the armed forces community](#)

The Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Awards continues to grow in strength year on year. To win an award organisations must demonstrate that they provide 10 extra paid days leave for reservists and have supportive HR policies in place for veterans, reserves, Cadet Force Adult Volunteers, spouses and partners of those serving in the armed forces. They also advocate the benefits of supporting those within the armed forces community encouraging others to sign the Armed Forces Covenant and to engage in the Employer Recognition Scheme.

2020 marks the 7th year of the awards scheme and this year 47% of winners are either micro organisations or SMEs and 38% are public organisations. This demonstrates both the growth in numbers and the depth of supportive employers who cover a wide range of sectors and company size. This year's 127 award winners join a group of 226 winners from previous years, bringing the total to 353 organisations who can share their knowledge and experience on the

benefits of employing those from the armed forces community.

Johnny Mercer, Minister for Defence People and Veterans said:

The breadth and diversity of the winners this year shows how business support for the armed forces continues to grow no matter the sector, company size or location. I am grateful for the positive attitude and flexible policies these organisations have adopted towards the defence community, which is testament to the fantastic contribution our serving personnel, veterans and their families can make to any organisation.

I am delighted that so many companies are supporting our people and that, through this scheme, we can give them the public recognition they deserve.

James Moore, The President of Vetforce UK at Salesforce said:

This award is testament to our continued commitment to support the forces community, whether this be through the provision of career transition assistance, by raising funds for military charities or championing the military community to our organisation. As a former Army Officer, I know first-hand the challenges of finding work after leaving the forces and feel honoured to work for an organisation like Salesforce which recognises the value members of this community can bring to the workplace.

Stephen Corfield, SVP and GM of Industry Sales UK&I at Salesforce added:

We are thrilled to be awarded Gold in the UK Defence Employer Recognition Scheme. At Salesforce, equality is a core tenet of how we run our business and we believe that our business and our community thrive as a result. This is a wonderful recognition of the work our Vetforce team does to build a workplace that respects and values the experience of reservists, veterans and their spouses.

David Gagen, CEO of Engage Technical Solutions said:

Engage Technical Solutions is delighted to have been awarded Gold in the Employers Recognition Scheme. This award represents a significant milestone and reflects the hard work that the team have put in to ensure Engage offers Service Leavers a route where they are fully supported to make the transition into civilian life. With service leavers from the army, navy and the RAF making up to 90% of our Delivery Team Engage strives for a welcoming environment

tailored to each individual's needs.

With a mainly defence and security focused client base, Engage is well placed to use the skills and experience that the Service Leavers bring with them and quickly enables them to develop new skills and enjoy new experiences delivering for our clients.

### **Full list of winners:**

- AAA Caring Caretaker Ltd
- Aberdeen City Council
- Active Plus CIC
- Alun Griffiths (Contractors) Limited
- Angus Council
- Army Families Federation
- Automatic Data Processing Limited (ADP)
- Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
- Barratt Developments Plc
- B D Print
- Bell Decorating Group
- Black Country Chamber of Commerce
- Black Country Housing Group
- BMT Group Limited
- Bridgeway Consulting Limited
- Cable Telecommunications Training Services Limited
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust
- Camor Limited
- Capco
- Cardiff University (Main Building)
- City Hospitals Independent Commercial Enterprises Ltd
- City of Wolverhampton College
- Company X Consulting Ltd
- Consortio Security
- Cornwall Council
- Cranfield University
- Cumbria County Council
- Dover District Council
- East Riding College
- Enbarr Enterprises Limited
- Engage Technical Solutions Ltd
- Equinix
- Finning UK Limited
- Forces Fitness Limited
- Forrest Precision Engineering Company Limited
- Forward Assist Recruitment
- Gentoo Group Ltd
- Glasgow Caledonian University
- Gosport Borough Council
- Greater Manchester Police
- Herefordshire Council



- High Life Highland
- Highways England
- Hire A Hero
- Hull University Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust
- Institute of Supply Chain Management
- Interserve PLC
- Iss Facility Services
- Kent Fire and Rescue Service
- Lancashire County Council
- Leicestershire County Council
- Level Peaks Associates
- Mace Limited
- Marsh Ltd
- Mears Group plc
- Medway Council
- Microsoft Limited
- Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust Pinderfields General Hospital
- Milbank Concrete Products Ltd
- Milton Keynes Council
- Mitie Group Plc
- Monmouthshire County Council (HQ)
- Morrissey Elite Global Group
- Network Training Partnership
- Newcastle Gateshead NHS CCG
- New Model in Technology & Engineering (NMiTE)
- NHS Northamptonshire Clinical Commissioning Group
- Northamptonshire County Council
- Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- North East London NHS Foundation Trust
- Northern Trust
- North Lincolnshire Council
- North Wales Police
- North Yorkshire County Council
- Nottingham Forest Community Trust
- Nottinghamshire County Council
- Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service
- One to One Support Services
- Oxfordshire County Council
- PA Consulting Services Limited
- Pearson Engineering
- Peterborough City Council
- Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust
- Post Office Limited
- Public Health Wales NHS Trust
- RecruitME
- Ringway Jacobs
- Rose Builders Ltd
- Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead
- Rutland County Council
- SA Group Ltd

- Salesforce UK Limited
- Scottish Engineering
- Scottish Water
- Serve and Protect CU
- SHAID
- Simpkins Edwards LLP
- Southampton City Council
- Spectra Group (UK) Limited
- St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- Stoke City Football Club
- Techmodal Ltd
- Teesside University
- Telford & Wrekin Council
- The Military Mutual
- The Queen Elizabeth Hospital King's Lynn NHS Foundation Trust
- The Rift Group
- The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust
- Torfaen County Borough Council
- Torus Logistical Solutions
- Trinity Insurance Services Limited
- UK Veterans Hearing Help
- University of Leicester
- University Of Sunderland
- Veterans HQ
- Vigilance Properties Ltd
- Warwickshire County Council
- Weston College
- West Sussex County Council
- WH Management Group
- Wigan Council
- Wilkin Chapman Solicitors
- Woking Borough Council
- York St John University
- York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

Read the [full list of Employer Recognition Scheme Gold, Silver and Bronze award winners](#).

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## [NHS recovery to put staff wellbeing at its heart](#)

- NHS People Plan to address new pandemic challenges and improve physical and mental health support for staff
- Health Secretary calls on health and social care staff to share where rules and regulations could be amended in bureaucracy-busting push

- Recruitment drive will capitalise on renewed interest in jobs in health, as NHS careers website sees 138% increase in interest in nursing

The [NHS People Plan](#) published today puts NHS staff wellbeing at its heart with a new recruitment, retention and support package. It sets out practical support for wellbeing such as safe spaces to rest and recuperate, wellbeing guardians and support to keep staff physically safe and healthy.

The People Plan builds on the innovations driven by staff during the pandemic and sets out how the NHS can embed them.

This includes:

- the rapid assembly of research nurses and clinical trial assistants to recruit patients for the world's biggest randomised clinical trial
- the surge in volunteers to support those in need
- a new emphasis on flexible working with remote meetings and consultations becoming widespread

The People Plan and a new bureaucracy-busting call for evidence will work together to find and promote positive changes made before and during the pandemic. This could include allowing staff to use secure messaging services like WhatsApp so patients can benefit from rapid access to information and making it easier to link millions of primary care records to the latest data on coronavirus, helping government do the world's largest analysis of coronavirus risk factors.

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

Every single person working in the NHS has contributed to an unprecedented national effort to beat back this virus and save lives. They have protected us and in return this government will do everything in its power to protect and support them.

By making the NHS the best place to work we'll recruit and retain more talent and deliver 50,000 more nurses, 6,000 more doctors in general practice and 26,000 staff primary care professionals.

Our NHS people deserve to get on with caring for patients and this crisis has proved there's bureaucracy that our healthcare system can do better without. So I'm urging people across the NHS and social care to speak up about what red tape you can do without to allow you to better deliver the high-quality care you are renowned for.

Key actions from the NHS People Plan include:

- from January 2021, all job roles across NHS England and NHS Improvement will be advertised as being available for flexible working patterns
- all NHS organisations will complete risk assessments for vulnerable staff, including black and ethnic minority colleagues, and take action

where needed

- encouraging former staff to return to practice as part of a recruitment drive during 2020 to 2021, building on the interest of clinical staff who returned to the frontline to support during the pandemic. A recent survey of returners revealed around half were interested in continuing to work in the health and social care system
- boosting the mental health and cancer workforce, including by offering training grants for 350 nurses to become cancer or chemotherapy specialists
- working with universities to increase over 5,000 undergraduate places from September 2020 in nursing, midwifery, allied health professions and dental therapy and hygienist courses
- a new £10 million fund for clinical placements for nurses, midwives and allied health professionals to support employers in educating and training the next generation of professionals
- every NHS trust, foundation trust and clinical commissioning group (CCG) must publish progress to ensure that at every level the workforce is representative of the overall black and ethnic minority workforce
- the NHS will launch a new quarterly staff survey to better track morale on top of the current annual survey

The pandemic also highlighted areas where unnecessary bureaucracy can be cut, while still ensuring safe, high standards of care. Health and care staff will be invited to share their insights and experiences of overly burdensome bureaucracy in the health and social care system as part of a call for evidence.

Prerana Issar, NHS chief people officer, said:

This plan aims to make real and lasting change in our NHS to benefit our hardworking staff. It includes practical actions based on what our people tell us matters to them, including a more equal, inclusive and flexible organisation.

The pandemic has created huge challenges, but it has also highlighted the courage and innovation we are capable of in the most difficult of times. We have recognised the need for consistently high-quality health and wellbeing support for our staff, so they can better care for themselves and their patients. These changes must remain part of the blueprint of our NHS as we move forward together.

During the COVID-19 period professional regulators such as the Nursing and Midwifery Council and General Medical Council have introduced virtual hearings which saves both those being investigated and giving-evidence time. They have also taken a different approach to revalidation which provides more time to supporting patients. Developments like these should be maintained and built upon.

Local systems are being asked to develop their own People Plans alongside

social care and public health partners, to ensure that local strategies for recovery and to step services back up have a strong focus on the organisations people.

A further People Plan will follow, once the forthcoming spending review has confirmed future NHS education and training budgets. The government will shortly publish its Social Care Winter Plan, building on NHS support for the sector during COVID-19, to ensure the system has the support it needs in preparation for winter and potential future outbreaks.

The Prime Minister recently announced a further £3 billion winter funding for the NHS to relieve winter pressures on A&E and provide additional capacity for the NHS to carry out routine treatments and procedures. This is on the top of a record cash funding boost worth £33.9 billion extra by 2023 to 2024.

## **Case study: Milton Keynes University Hospital**

Milton Keynes University Hospital (MKUH) has developed a unique staff benefits programme for its 4,500-strong workforce. In early 2019, the hospital's executive team asked staff to come up with ideas to improve their working lives – however big or small, however unusual.

The first phase of benefits, which was introduced in May 2019, included:

- enhanced staff health and wellbeing services, particularly around stress and musculo-skeletal conditions
- enhanced bereavement leave, special leave and flexible working
- local gym memberships

The hospital committed to a 3-year programme of benefits for staff, with the next phase including lease cars and looking at childcare provision. Following the implementation of this, MKUH has seen improved retention rates.

## **Background information**

The [NHS People Plan is published on NHS England website](#).

The NHS People Plan aims to make real and lasting change, setting out the focused action that NHS people have said they need, right now and for the next 6 months. It includes specific commitments to:

- look after NHS people, including greater support for health and wellbeing, building on existing support including a dedicated health and care staff support line, specialist bereavement support and free access to mental health and wellbeing apps. Actions include:
  - piloting an approach to improving staff mental health by establishing resilience hubs working in partnership with occupational health programmes to undertake proactive outreach and assessment, and coordinate referrals to appropriate treatment and support for a range of needs to ensure that staff are supported to stay well and in work
  - from January 2021, all job roles across NHS England and NHS

Improvement will be advertised as being available for flexible working patterns

- all NHS organisations will complete risk assessments for vulnerable staff, including black and ethnic minority colleagues and anyone who needs additional support, and take action where needed
- future-proof the NHS by ensuring a pipeline of talent, capitalising on recent interest in healthcare jobs as the NHS careers website has seen an unprecedented number of hits, with the number of people looking for information on nursing rising by 138% between March and June. This has already translated into more UK-based applicants for healthcare courses than ever before, and the latest figures also show there are over 13,500 more nurses working in the NHS compared to last year. Actions include:
  - a new international marketing campaign through 2020 to 2021, to promote the NHS as an employer of choice for international health workers, alongside work to ensure ethical recruitment
  - encouraging former staff to return to practice as part of a recruitment drive during 2020 to 2021, building on the interest of clinical staff who returned to the frontline to support during the pandemic, after a recent survey of returners revealed around half were interested in continuing to work in the health and social care system
  - boosting the mental health and cancer workforce including by offering training grants for 350 nurses to become cancer or chemotherapy specialists
- work with universities to support an increase of over 5,000 undergraduate places from September 2020 in nursing, midwifery, allied health professions and dental therapy and hygienist courses
- a new £10 million fund for clinical placements for nurses, midwives and allied health professionals to support employers in educating and training the next generation of professionals
- encourage and scale up new ways of working and delivering care:
  - a new National Learning Hub for Volunteering has been launched to support the learning, training and development of volunteers across health, social care and the third sector and employers should develop plans to support volunteers who wish to gain jobs in the NHS
  - every NHS trust, foundation trust and CCG must publish progress to ensure that at every level the workforce is representative of the overall black and ethnic minority workforce
  - the NHS will launch a new quarterly staff survey to better track morale on top of the current annual survey