

Public safety boosted with 1,000 new probation officers

- Thousand new recruits boosting workforce by 29% to improve public protection
- Major three-year plan to improve training and better share workloads for frontline staff will help reduce reoffending
- Part of Government's plan to make the country safer alongside police recruitment and prison building

With 800 new probation officers already in training, the commitment to recruit at least 1,000 more this year alone will see the workforce grow by 29%.

The move is part of the Government's efforts to make the country safer, with the recruitment of 20,000 more police officers and the building of over 10,000 new prison places.

Public protection will also be improved by staff having a more balanced workload when services are brought back under National Probation Service control next June. Under the changes, probation officers will also support less dangerous criminals with underlying issues such as drug and alcohol addiction, as well as continuing to keep the public safe by supervising high-risk offenders.

The [Probation Workforce Strategy](#) published today also sets out plans to improve training and shift administrative work away from frontline staff so they have more time and skills to better monitor and support offenders and help cut crime.

Prisons and Probation Minister Lucy Frazer QC MP said:

Every day we hear about the work police officers do to capture criminals and bring them to court, but whether offenders first go to prison or get a community sentence, it is probation officers working hard behind-the-scenes who help them turn their backs on crime.

This new vision sets out our long-term plan to boost the workforce not just in numbers, but also in terms of experience and skill, so that the Probation Service continues to play its vital role in reducing reoffending, already at a 12-year-low.

The Probation Workforce Strategy also includes plans to:

- Develop new IT systems with greater automation giving staff more time to

focus on working directly with offenders.

- Foster the skills of the most talented officers through new training programmes and career opportunities, helping retain staff and make better use of their experience and knowledge.
- Create a new route for existing junior probation officers to achieve senior roles helping the Probation Service make quicker use of the experienced staff it already has.
- Improve wellbeing schemes and give more emotional support to frontline staff with professional counselling and buddy schemes.

HM Prison and Probation Service will also review how recruitment and training works to attract a more diverse group of jobseekers and respond better, and quicker, to increased demand. This could mean having more regular intakes, introducing apprenticeships or making changes that make probation as attractive to university leavers as other graduate programmes.

There are also plans to increase diversity with targeted recruitment campaigns, new regional Race Ambassadors and inclusivity training for all staff.

The selection process for new recruits has already changed, with a new online behaviour-based assessment at application-stage and role-play activities at interview that allow applicants to show how they would react to real-life scenarios they are likely to face as probation officers. These innovative changes have already proven to be an effective means of increasing the diversity of those appointed.

Funding boost to crack down on the Illegal Wildlife Trade in Guatemala and Mexico

Protected species across the globe have been given a boost as the British government announces funding for new projects from the Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) Challenge Fund.

The fund has allocated more than £399,000 to strengthening law enforcement in protected areas in Guatemala to reduce the poaching of valuable hardwood species and fauna. The project will include cross-border coordination with Mexico as to identify these illicit routes.

The three-year project (2020-2023) will tackle increased poaching of valuable hardwood species and fauna, which is affecting Guatemala's Maya Biosphere Reserve (Petén), the Calakmul Biosphere Reserve and Balamku State Reserve in Mexico (Campeche).

Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) will implement the project in collaboration with Asociación Balam, ACOFOP, CECON/USAC, Foro de Justicia Ambiental de Petén, FUNDAECO, CONAP and the Public Prosecutor's Office in Guatemala; and ProNatura Península Yucatán, CONANP, and SEMABICC in Mexico.

The project implementers and authorities will work together to:

1. strengthen patrolling/law enforcement in frontier protected areas
2. increase awareness about IWT
3. propel effective legal frameworks
4. advance sustainable livelihoods in Guatemalan and Mexican communities
5. consolidate a binational network for long-term collaboration

The Illegal Wildlife Trade is a criminal industry worth more than £17 billion each year around the world threatening wildlife, bringing species to the brink of extinction and causing despair for communities.

In addition, tackling IWT is also important for the UK as the Covid-19 crisis highlights the direct links between nature conservation and human well-being. The fund also aims to help those institutions addressing the drivers of biodiversity loss and zoonotic disease emergence, notably high-risk wildlife trade, deforestation and unsustainable land-use changes.

The UK government is also inviting new projects to apply for the next round of funding of the IWT Challenge Fund.

The information is available [here](#).

The UK is investing more than £66 million between 2014 and 2024 to take action to counter the illegal wildlife trade.

Joint Statement of the 14th Meeting of the India-UK Joint Economic and Trade Committee

News story

The 14th meeting of the India-UK Joint Economic and Trade Committee took place on 24 July 2020



1. We, Piyush Ved Prakash Goyal, Honourable Minister of Railways and Commerce & Industry and the Rt. Honourable Elizabeth Truss MP, Secretary of State for International Trade, met today for the 14th meeting of the India-UK Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO).
2. At this meeting, we celebrated the strength of our strategic economic partnership and particularly recognised the importance of our close collaboration in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Focusing upon our growing bilateral trade, we noted that UK-India trade has increased steadily since 2000, and grew by 9.74% to over £24 billion in the calendar year [2019](#).
3. We also discussed the shared ambition of facilitating our businesses to succeed in delivering investments, jobs, and prosperity in each other's markets, and reiterated our commitment to the dynamic new India-UK Trade Partnership announced by our Prime Ministers in April 2018, and reinforced by both countries during last year's JETCO. We look forward to go further in building links, bringing down barriers, and creating value between our two economies as the UK assumes responsibility for its independent trade policy. To deliver this, we seek to agree to an Enhanced Trade Partnership as part of a roadmap that could lead to a future FTA. The Enhanced Trade Partnership will seek to address non-tariff barriers to trade, and will establish a specific dialogue to explore routes to removing tariff barriers.

Trade Partnership

1. We welcomed the progress made by the Joint Working Group on Trade to implement the Building Blocks approach agreed at the 13th JETCO, and noted that on each of the core sectors covered by this dialogue – food and drink, information communications technology (ICT), life sciences, chemicals, and services – we made progress on understanding, and taking steps to remove, non-tariff barriers. We agree to continue this progress alongside the Enhanced Trade Partnership, and as a part of this we will continue to consider recognition as a tool to further facilitate trade in relevant areas. We also welcomed a very positive move by UK with Graduate Immigration Route and noted the release of UK's Global Tariff

as a significant step towards an independent UK trade policy.

2. The UK and India continue to share the expertise that will remove barriers for business and advance our economies. In the food and drinks sector, the Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs, along with the Food Standards Agency, held discussions with Department of Commerce and the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) to explore issues impacting food & drink trade and share best practices on regulatory frameworks and clearance processes. We will explore increased cooperation and consider appropriate mechanisms for boosting mutual trade flows. Both sides also welcomed progress under the Memorandum of Understanding between the UK's Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and India's Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying with the first annual meeting of the Joint Working Group taking place earlier this year in Delhi wherein both sides reaffirmed commitment to address market access barriers with an aim to facilitate bilateral trade.
3. We welcomed the progress made at the second annual meeting of the UK-India Joint Consultative Committee, established under the 2018 Memorandum of Understanding concerning co-operation in the sphere of law and justice, which took place earlier this year in London. Recognizing the importance of shared goals of protecting and developing the rule of law in their respective jurisdiction and internationally, India and UK are taking steps for considering a framework for enhancement of cooperation between judicial and legal professionals and on alternative dispute resolution systems. The Ministers agreed to continue supporting the ongoing bilateral cooperation.
4. We noted the proposal of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Department for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport, and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, and encouraged swift progress in concluding it. This will be an important forum for future discussions on data and digital issues. We are hopeful for further discussions between the UK Information Commissioner's Office and the Government of India on data regulation and interoperability. This will help ensure both countries maximize the potential of their digital economies. We also looked forward to the completion of the Memorandum of Understanding between the United Kingdom Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency and the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization. Continued collaboration in all these areas and more will be crucial to delivering a successful Enhanced Trade Partnership.
5. The UK congratulated India on their rise to 63rd place in the 2019 World Bank Ease of Doing Business index – a 14-place improvement compared to 2018. The UK and India celebrated their partnership on Ease of Doing Business, building on the Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2016. Both sides welcomed the collaboration which had taken place since the

last JETCO, including sharing of expertise on Regulatory Delivery and Customs. In light of the economic impact of Covid-19, both sides agreed on the importance of continuing to drive further reforms of the business environment to support greater trade and investment.

6. Both sides recognised the vital role intellectual property (IP) plays as a driver for economic growth and prosperity and an essential feature in facilitating global trade. We will continue to work in partnership with industry to develop and strengthen the positive impact of a strong, reliable environment that supports and rewards and protects innovation and creativity, including initiatives under the existing UK-India IP Memorandum of Understanding. We will continue to highlight the increasing importance of IP and its positive effect on Ease of Doing Business in India through our bilateral trade dialogue.
7. We welcomed that the UK and India are embarking upon Government to Government (G2G) working cooperation under the India – UK Memorandum of Understanding on Defence Technology and Industrial Capability Cooperation signed on 12th April 2019, which underlines the UK's intent to co-develop intellectual property to create future technologies in India.

Covid-19, Healthcare Partnership, and a green recovery

1. Nowhere has the strength of our trade and investment partnership been more apparent than in our continued collaboration throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. The UK welcomes that India has ensured that key supply chains of pharmaceuticals products and surgical masks are maintained. Both sides have worked on the global stage to co-draft the G20 Covid-19 Action Plan, and supported ongoing collaboration on vaccine research, design and manufacturing. Both sides agreed to keep key supply chains open and ensure any restrictions to trade are targeted, proportionate, transparent, and temporary whilst not creating unnecessary barriers to trade.
2. As both economies seek to recover from the impact of Covid-19, increasing investment in each other's markets is more important than ever. Since 2016 Indian firms have raised £11.5 billion in masala, dollar and green bonds on the London Stock Exchange. Both sides recognize London's position as the leading global financial centre and destination for long-term institutional investment. Both sides agreed that fair competition is fundamental for the growth of UK and Indian business, and agreed to work together on measures to increase flows of investment in growing sectors, for example by reducing restriction on FDI. The UK and India are keen to re-affirm the importance of the bilateral investment relationship, with an emphasis on promoting investment flows and a positive investment environment, and look forward to holding a UK-India Investment Dialogue in due course, which can

assess the scope for further cooperation on investment matters. We welcomed the fourth meeting of the UK-India Fast Track Mechanism, held in December 2019, which resolved issues faced by UK companies and secured approval for additional UK investment in India. Both sides committed to hold further meetings of the UK-India Fast Track Mechanism.

3. Both sides looked ahead to COP26 and welcomed the opportunity to strengthen our collaboration as a global force for good on climate action and green recovery. Our shared objectives make us natural partners. The UK is a global leader in driving energy transition, mobilising green finance, and ensuring clean and resilient infrastructure and investment. India's transformational energy efficiency programs on demand side management, particularly on LED bulbs, have been recognized to have global impact. Both sides being the Co-chairs of the Super-efficient Equipment Appliances Deployment (SEAD) Initiative of Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM), held two rounds of discussions and agreed to develop a definite strategy to expand SEAD's membership and increase ambition from countries on product efficiency, including by raising or implementing Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS) across four high energy-consuming product categories – room air conditioners, refrigerators, motors, and lighting in the lead-up to COP 26. Both sides were pleased by the recent \$70 million investment by BP into the Green Growth Equity Fund, an important endorsement by the private sector of this UK-India joint venture to catalyze financing into sustainable infrastructure in India. We also celebrated the collaboration between Indian Railways and the UK's Department for International Development to support Indian Railway's objectives of energy security, consumption efficiency and greening of energy supply. We look forward to deepening our cooperation in catalyzing private sector flows into green projects, and strengthening our combined efforts to tackle global climate change and energy security.

Multilateral System

1. Alongside our bilateral cooperation, we also reaffirmed our commitment to the rules based international system and particularly the need for a fully-functioning World Trade Organization (WTO). The importance of the WTO's work in enhancing free, fair, open, inclusive and transparent trade for achieving sustainable growth and development is undeniable. To this end, we celebrated holding the third UK-India Multilateral Trade Dialogue in January of this year, and stated the ambition to hold the next UK-India Multilateral Trade Dialogue as soon as practicable, to enhance engagement and mutual understanding on multilateral trade policy priorities. We noted the importance of our commitments made at the G20 in relation to post-COVID economic recovery and that the rollback of trade restrictive measures should take place as soon as Members are practicably able. Both sides will continue their co-operation at the WTO, especially with regard to the UK's new schedule of concessions and

commitments. We agreed to work together for a successful outcome at the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference.

2. We emphasized our commitment to the rules-based multilateral trading system, while also recognizing the need for reforms at the WTO, and committed to work closely with each other on this agenda. The reforms need to be inclusive in nature and be carried out in a transparent manner, priority being restoration of the two-tiered Dispute Settlement System of the WTO. The UK welcomed India's election to the United Nations Security Council, and looks forward to working with them at the Council and as co-chairs of the G20 framework working group. Success in this collaboration will enhance peace, security, and global prosperity.

Business-Led Joint Working Groups

1. During the discussions today, the three business-led joint working groups set up during last year's JETCO – ICT; food and drink; and life sciences – reported to us. They made specific recommendations on how to increase trade and investment in each of these sectors, by making progress on removing barriers that will have a materially positive impact to business. We look forward to working together with businesses and to make significant progress on some of these recommendations.

Next meeting

1. We agreed that we plan to meet again later this year for bilateral interaction in New Delhi (or virtually) to review progress made on the Enhanced Trade Partnership. Both delegations committed to continue working together to accelerate the already deepening India-UK trade & investment partnership, and enable the two countries to reach the full potential of this relationship.

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[Appointment of the new Chief of the Secret Intelligence Service \(MI6\)](#)

News story

Foreign Secretary approves the appointment of Richard Moore CMG to succeed Sir Alex Younger



The Foreign Secretary, with the agreement of the Prime Minister, has approved the appointment of Richard Moore CMG as the new Chief of the Secret Intelligence Service (MI6). Richard will succeed Sir Alex Younger, who will leave the Service in the autumn.

Richard is currently Political Director in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and a former HM Ambassador to Turkey. Richard previously held director roles in the Secret Intelligence Service and has been Deputy National Security Adviser in the Cabinet Office.

The Foreign Secretary, Dominic Raab, said:

I am delighted to appoint Richard as the next Chief of the Secret Intelligence Service. He returns to SIS with tremendous experience and will oversee the work of a group of men and women whose tireless efforts are rarely seen in public, but which are critical for the security and prosperity of the UK.

I pay tribute to Sir Alex Younger for everything he has done during his time leading the Secret Intelligence Service. He has carefully and effectively guided the service during a time of increased and more diverse threats.

The Cabinet Secretary, Mark Sedwill, said:

Richard's experience and leadership in the Intelligence field will prove vital in pursuing national interests overseas and protecting the UK from emerging foreign threats. I'm confident Richard will be an excellent Chief, who will embody the values of the Service and act as a fine role model to SIS staff.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Alex Younger for his excellent leadership of the Service over the last six years and his contribution to the protection of UK citizens from outside threats during that time.

Richard Moore said:

I am pleased and honoured to be asked to return to lead my Service. SIS plays a vital role – with MI5 and GCHQ – in keeping the British people safe and promoting UK interests overseas. I look forward to continuing that work alongside the brave and dedicated team at SIS.

Outgoing Chief, Sir Alex Younger, said:

I am delighted by this appointment. Richard is a highly accomplished intelligence officer and we look forward to welcoming him back to the Service.

Biography:

- Richard Moore is currently the Director General for Political Affairs (Political Director) at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office.
- Previously Richard served as British Ambassador to Turkey and has been Deputy National Security Adviser in the Cabinet Office.
- Prior to his time at the FCO, Richard joined SIS in 1987 where he undertook a range of roles across the Service both in the UK and overseas.
- Richard was born in Libya and is married to Maggie, with two children. Outside of work, Richard's interests include playing golf and watching cricket and rugby. He speaks fluent Turkish.

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[Work starts on £6m river clean-up project](#)

The River Nent is the second most metal polluted river in England with very high concentrations of cadmium, lead and zinc which are toxic to fish and the insects they feed on.

The Romans first dug lead out of the North Pennines but the peak of metal mining was in the 1800s. Although almost all the mines had been closed by the early 20th Century, they have since flooded and polluted water continues to

pour out of the ground and will do so for hundreds of years without Government action.

The effect on water quality and aquatic life can be seen for 60km along the River South Tyne through Cumbria and Northumberland, with the metals ultimately accumulating in the River Tyne estuary sediments.

It's estimated that cleaning up the river has the potential to add up to £44million to the local economy over the next 25 years, with additional economic benefits coming from significantly decreasing the amount of zinc which accumulates in the Tyne estuary sediments each year.

Aerial view of the River Nent

3 tonnes of zinc alone enters river

One of the most significant sources of pollution is the Haggs adit, an abandoned mine water drainage tunnel at Nentsberry. Around 3 tonnes of zinc alone is discharged by the Haggs adit into the river each year.

The Nent Haggs mine water treatment scheme will remove the metals from the mine water before they get into the river. The mine water will be captured where the water comes out of the mine in Nentsberry and pumped to the treatment site through a 2.5km long underground pipeline.

The metals will be removed by passing the mine water through three treatment ponds and a new wetland at West Foreshield before being put into the River Nent.

The project is expected to take around 2 years to build. The first phase of work between July and December will see construction of a pumping station, and the installation of the pipeline. The pumps will be housed in a new stone barn near Nentsberry, and associated improvements to the A689 surface water drains are expected to help solve some road flooding issues in this area.

The construction – carried out by I&H Brown – is being funded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) with a budget of £2.1million in financial year 2020/21. The development of the project is also supported by the North East Local Enterprise Partnership's Local Growth Fund, part of the Northern Powerhouse Initiative.

Proposals for a second similar treatment scheme are being developed for the Caplecleugh adit near Nenthead to reduce pollution even further in the river, increasing the economic and environmental benefits.

And the Coal Authority and Environment Agency are working with the [Tyne Rivers Trust](#) which is starting work this summer on more green engineering interventions to reduce contaminated waste around disused metal mines from being eroded into and polluting rivers.

Rachael Caldwell, Environment Manager at the Environment Agency in the North

East, said:

This project will have an immediate impact on water quality in the rivers Nent and South Tyne and in future, will help improve sediment quality in the Tyne estuary.

It will make a huge difference to the natural environment, boosting biodiversity right across the South Tyne river system, and will bring economic benefits, improving tourism and industry.

As well as the new mine water treatment scheme, we're working with Tyne Rivers Trust which is using natural interventions to reduce the impact from spoil heaps.

Our rivers are the healthiest they've been for 20 years but further improvement is now hindered by longstanding chronic types of pollution. Therefore projects like this are playing an important role in ensuring future generations are able to enjoy our clean waters for years to come.

Construction starts on site at Nent Haggs

Green engineering techniques

In addition to the work at Nent Haggs, Tyne Rivers Trust will be working with the Coal Authority and Environment Agency to tackle ten smaller sites that cumulatively pollute the rivers with large quantities of lead and zinc-contaminated sediments.

The Trust is using green engineering techniques to prevent sediments from abandoned spoil heaps being deposited in the rivers, particularly during periods of heavy rainfall. The long-term aim of this work is to establish vegetation on these slopes as this stabilises the sediments and ensures permanent prevention of contamination arising from the sites.

Jack Bloomer, Deputy Director at Tyne Rivers Trust says:

Lead and zinc mining forms a fascinating part of the history of the North Pennines and has left its mark on the landscape of the region through remarkable engineering and man-made structures, many of which are still present today. However, abandoned mine waste contaminates the rivers from the source, right down to the estuary, and can cause significant environmental damage.

We have identified ten sites that are major contributors to this pollution and are working with the Environment Agency and the Coal Authority to address them through green engineering. This includes using log barriers and biodegradable matting to stabilise the

slopes, preventing sediment from entering the river and encouraging vegetation growth, which will be a long-term solution to the issues. This way, we can preserve the history of the region, while cutting pollution off at the source and ensuring cleaner rivers for future generations to enjoy.

The work is part of the Water and Abandoned Metal Mines (WAMM) Programme which tackles water pollution caused by historical metal mining across England. Metal mines played a major part in Britain's history, but abandoned mines now pollute our rivers, harm aquatic life and have an adverse impact on the economy.

In England, this metal mine pollution affects around 1,500km of rivers – 330km in the North East and 130km in the North West as well as Yorkshire, the Midlands and Cornwall.

The aim of WAMM is to create cleaner rivers for future generations, and encourage more wildlife, tourism and opportunities for industry which rely on clean rivers.

Great example of collaborative working

Thomas Mills, Head of Environment at the Coal Authority, said:

Having spent a number of years developing this scheme in collaboration with our partners at the Environment Agency and other local stakeholders we're really pleased to see this project start on site.

The Nent Haggs project is a great example of collaborative working across government organisations. Bringing together expertise to develop, build and operate the Nent Haggs mine water treatment scheme that will protect and enhance the natural environment for our future generations and make a positive contribution to the government's 25 year environment plan.

Helen Golightly, Chief Executive of the North East Local Enterprise Partnership, added:

The Nent Haggs mine water treatment scheme is part of a wider four year programme of investment supported through the Local Growth Fund, and delivered in partnership with the Environment Agency and Defra. It's great to see work has begun on this important project that will help deliver economic and environmental benefits for the River Tyne catchment for many years to come.

Contractors working on the Nent Haggs scheme are following current Coronavirus government guidance around safe working practices and social

distancing measures.

Residents can sign up to receive email updates about the Nent Haggs scheme at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/nent-haggs-mine-water-treatment-scheme-proposed>