

# [Diamonds could be forever in nuclear-powered battery project](#)

Scientists at the UK Atomic Energy Authority are working with academics at the [University of Bristol](#) on world-leading technology in order to make diamond batteries, which could provide decades or thousands of years' worth of energy without a recharge.

Items such as computer chips, smoke alarms, pacemakers, or small satellites could all be operated by such a device.

Tritium scientists at UKAEA's [Hydrogen-3 Advanced Technology facility \(H3AT\)](#) are at the early stages of establishing a pilot project which could see them eventually become partners in establishing a production line for the diamond batteries.

The battery would be powered by small amounts of graphite from former nuclear reactors – presenting the opportunity to recycle both carbon-14 and tritium into micro-power diamond devices.

Each battery would be very small. Estimates suggest 50kg of carbon-14 would be sufficient for millions of units.

Professor Tom Scott from the University of Bristol initially helped to develop the technology utilising the electrical properties of diamond to produce diamond batteries. The devices operate in a similar way to the photovoltaics used in solar panels (where the conversion of light into electricity occurs) but these devices will harness fast electrons from within the diamond structure rather than using particles of light (photons).

The first small diodes producing power from carbon-14 beta particles have already been demonstrated on a small scale at the University of Bristol.

Scientists at Bristol have been working with UKAEA to trial the placing of deuterium into this diamond structure. Following analysis, they will then attempt the same with tritium.

H3AT tritium engineer Anthony Hollingsworth said: "The fast electrons emitted by the tritium and carbon-14 do not go through the outer layer of the battery. These diamonds are extremely tough – in addition the radioactive part is coated in a non-radioactive diamond layer."

Professor Scott added: "Bristol are working with Culham to form a spin-out company and set up a pilot run of making these devices. We would look at producing 10,000 or 20,000 devices a year, but ultimately want to be producing millions of devices annually.

"It's an extremely exciting project – we are aiming to be world leaders in diamond batteries."

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## [COVID-19: Changes to standard and enhanced ID checking guidelines](#)

Due to current measures that have been put in place as a result of the coronavirus outbreak, we're aware that organisations are having difficulty following the DBS ID checking guidance.

Currently, when validating ID documents, it is best practice to carry the examination out face-to-face with a live video link as an alternative method. Under the current guidance, the ID checker must be in physical possession of the original documents so they can be checked for indicators of fraud.

As the public is being advised to work from home where possible, this is causing difficulties in receiving the physical documents and is delaying applications, and in some cases, preventing applications from being submitted.

To ensure that the necessary DBS checks can still be carried out, the DBS standard and enhanced ID checking guidance will be changed for a temporary period.

The change will enable:

- ID documents to be viewed over video link
- scanned images to be used in advance of the DBS check being submitted

The applicant will be required to present the original versions of these documents when they first attend their employment or volunteering role.

**The change will come into effect from today, 19 March 2020.**

Please ensure that you follow the advice on GOV.UK around checking identity documents for indicators of fraud, which can be found [here](#).

For more information about the changes, please contact [customerservices@db.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@db.gov.uk).

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## [Guildford man has manslaughter sentence increased](#)

A Guildford man who killed a stranger in a one-punch attack has had his

sentence increased after the Solicitor General, Rt Hon Michael Ellis QC MP, referred it for being too low.

In the early hours of 12 October 2019, Barney Coyle, was outside a kebab shop in Surrey after a night out. Coyle, aged 23 at the time, had been kicked out of the shop after acting aggressively and throwing punches at a customer.

At the same time, Jamie Smith, 24, was nearby and waiting to get a pre-booked minicab home after an evening out with friends. But when his cab arrived, Coyle, who he had never met before, jumped into the car.

Jamie Smith explained to the driver that it was actually his booking and asked the offender to leave. But Coyle got out of the car and punched Jamie Smith forcefully in the head from behind.

The victim had no opportunity to defend himself and was immediately knocked unconscious, falling backwards and hitting his head on the ground. He was taken to hospital but had suffered a fatal brain injury and subsequently died.

Coyle left the scene but was arrested later that day.

On 6 January 2020 Coyle was sentenced to 7 years and 6 months' imprisonment for manslaughter at Guildford Crown Court.

Today, following a referral to the Court of Appeal by the Solicitor General under the Unduly Lenient Sentence Scheme, the sentence has been increased to 9 years and 9 months' imprisonment.

After the hearing the Solicitor General said:

"The offender launched a cowardly, callous attack on a defenceless victim which cost the victim his life. Taking into account the severity of this attack, increasing the length of the sentence was necessary for justice to be done. I am pleased the Court of Appeal agreed and I hope this brings some comfort to the victim's family."

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## **Fire Safety Bill**

The proposed Fire Safety Bill builds on action already taken to ensure that people feel safe in their homes, and a tragedy like the Grenfell Tower fire never happens again.

The bill will amend the Fire Safety Order 2005 to clarify that the responsible person or duty-holder for multi-occupied, residential buildings must manage and reduce the risk of fire for:

- the structure and external walls of the building, including cladding,

balconies and windows

- entrance doors to individual flats that open into common parts

This clarification will empower fire and rescue services to take enforcement action and hold building owners to account if they are not compliant.

Minister for Security James Brokenshire said:

We remain committed to implementing the recommendations made following phase one of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, and the government has already made major reforms to building safety.

Today's bill will help bring about meaningful change to improving building safety.

Chair of the National Fire Chiefs Council Roy Wilsher said:

I am pleased to see the announcement of the new Fire Safety Bill. We have been calling for additional powers since 2017 and these changes should contribute to the public feeling safer in their homes.

We look forward to seeing additional supportive measures to assist fire and rescue services, identify different types of cladding and take appropriate measures.

The bill will provide a foundation for secondary legislation to take forward recommendations from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry phase one report, which stated that building owners and managers of high-rise and multi-occupied residential buildings should be responsible for a number of areas including:

- regular inspections of lifts and the reporting of results to the local fire and rescue services
- ensuring evacuation plans are reviewed and regularly updated and personal evacuation plans are in place for residents whose ability to evacuate may be compromised
- ensuring fire safety instructions are provided to residents in a form that they can reasonably be expected to understand
- ensuring individual flat entrance doors, where the external walls of the building have unsafe cladding, comply with current standards

The bill will also give the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government the powers to amend the list of qualifying premises that fall within the scope of the Fire Safety Order by way of secondary legislation, enabling the government to respond quickly to developments in the design and construction of buildings.

Alongside today's bill, a number of actions are being taken across government to improve building and fire safety including:

- the announcement by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government on 20 January 2020 of a new Building Safety Regulator
- introduction of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's Building Safety Bill, which will provide clearer accountability and stronger duties on those responsible for high rise buildings
- £1 billion of grant funding to tackle unsafe cladding systems on high-rise residential buildings over 18 metres in both the private and social sectors
- a new Building Safety Bill to bring about further changes to building safety
- the relaunch of the government's [Fire Kills campaign](#)

To accompany the introduction of the bill, the Home Office is also announcing today the publication of the summary of responses received to the Fire Safety Order 2005 (FSO) call for evidence.

The [call for evidence](#) invited views on the application of the FSO and sought to identify any changes that might be needed and how they could be best achieved.

While respondents identified some areas where the FSO could be amended to provide greater clarity, most respondents agreed that the scope and objectives of the FSO remain appropriate for all regulated premises, that it should retain its focus on protecting lives over property, and that it should continue to provide a framework for a risk-based and proportionate approach to regulating fire safety. A consultation will be held later in the year on proposals and next steps.

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## [Windrush Lessons Learned Review](#)

With permission, Mr Speaker, I would like to make a statement on the long awaited [Windrush Lessons Learned Review](#).

I dedicate this statement today to the Windrush generation.

I have personally been deeply moved reading the report.

Given the national significance of this issue, I have published this review immediately.

And I want to thank Wendy Williams and her team for the important work they have undertaken.

Mr Speaker, the Windrush Lessons Learned Review gives voice to members of the Windrush generation who arrived legally to the UK to help rebuild post-war Britain.

These are the men and women who built their lives and their home in Britain.

These are the people who have done so much for this country, from staffing the NHS to rebuilding Britain, these are the very people who worked hard, paid their taxes and had every right to be in this country.

They contributed to our communities, culture and society – helping our public services and economy to thrive.

They made our country stronger, more vibrant and more successful as a nation.

Which is why we were all shocked to discover, that they and their families were subject to such insensitive treatment by the very country that they called home.

Mr Speaker, as this review makes clear, some members of this generation suffered terrible injustices spurred by institutional failings spanning successive governments over several decades.

Including “ignorance and thoughtlessness towards the race and the history of the Windrush generation”.

Today’s publication is part of an ongoing mission to put this right and ensure events like this can never happen again as there were far too many victims of Windrush.

Paulette Wilson was detained in an immigration removal centre and warned she faced removal after living in the UK for 50 years.

She spent decades contributing to the UK – working for a time in this very House – and yet she was treated like a second-class citizen.

Junior Green had been in the UK for more than 60 years, raising children and grandchildren here.

But after a holiday to Jamaica he was refused re-entry despite holding a passport confirming his right to be in the UK.

The injustice that he suffered was compounded when, because of this action, he missed his mother’s funeral.

Lives were ruined and families were torn apart.

And now, an independent review has suggested that the Home Office’s “institutional ignorance and thoughtlessness towards the issue of race and the history of the Windrush generation” contributed to this.

This is simply unacceptable.

Mr Speaker, I have heard people speak of ‘decision making’ as a process that grinds people down to the extent that it makes you want to give up.

I have heard people speak of being dismissed, labelled as a group of people who just didn’t matter and whose voice on this issue was irrelevant.

People have spoken to me about the indignity and inhumanity they still feel today by the experience of being made to feel unwelcome in their own country.

They have described their experiences as unthinkable and unimaginable.

However, Mr Speaker, there are people across the UK, and even some members of this House – including myself and the Shadow Home Secretary – for whom this is unfortunately all too relatable.

There are lessons to learn for the Home Office.

But also, society as a whole.

Despite the diverse and open nature of our country, too many people still feel that they may be treated differently because of who they are or where their parents came from.

And today's report – which suggests that in the Home Office there was an "institutional ignorance and thoughtlessness towards the issue of race and the history of the Windrush generation" is worrying for us all.

In her report, Wendy Williams is clear that lessons must be learned at all levels and by all political parties.

She describes a set of measures that evolved under Labour, Coalition and Conservative governments. These measures cover decades.

She states that ministers did not sufficiently question unintended consequences.

And, that officials should and could have done more.

But we must all look to ourselves.

We must all do better at walking in other people's shoes.

We must all take responsibility for the failings that led to the unimaginable suffering of this generation.

Let me be clear, Mr Speaker.

There is nothing that I can say today which will undo the pain, the suffering and the misery inflicted on the Windrush generation.

What I can do, is say that on behalf of this and successive governments.

I. Am. Truly. Sorry.

For the actions that spanned decades.

I am sorry that people's trust has been betrayed.

And we will continue to do everything possible to ensure that the Home Office protects, supports and listens to every single part of the community it

serves.

Mr Speaker, action has already begun.

In recent months I have met and listened to people whose lives were shattered.

Since 2018, we have launched measures to put right the wrongs caused to individual members of the Windrush generation.

We have taken action through practical measures to give those who were affected the assistance, certainty, reassurance and support that they need.

The Commonwealth Citizens Taskforce goes into communities to help and support people secure their legal status.

Over 11,700 people have been granted a form of documentation that confirms their right to remain in the UK and guarantee their access to public services

Our Vulnerable Persons Team has provided support to nearly 1,400 people, with around 120 people still receiving support.

The Team has supported over 360 people to secure access to benefits.

And to go some way in addressing the hardship suffered, the Home Office launched the Windrush Compensation Scheme.

This scheme was designed in close consultation with members of the community and Martin Forde QC.

Collectively, they have developed a compensation scheme that is straightforward to use, addresses the bespoke and personal circumstances and needs of every applicant, with dedicated caseworkers assessing claims as quickly as possible.

There is no cap on payments, dozens of which have already been made, and we encourage more applications.

Those who are eligible will receive full compensation.

Over 100 community engagement events have taken place so far. This includes more than 30 Compensation Scheme events across the country – from Southampton to Glasgow, Cardiff to Coventry.

But there are still people out there in need of our help who we have not yet reached.

That is why in February, I extended the length of the compensation scheme by a further two years so that claims can be submitted until April 2023.

I set up the Windrush Stakeholder Advisory Group to rebuild links with communities to ensure that they are supported through compensation but also to rebuild the trust that has been broken.

Today, I can confirm we will launch an expanded cross-government Windrush working group to develop programmes to improve the lives of those affected.

That may be through employment support programmes, dedicated mental health support and specialist education and training schemes.

And to make sure people know about the Taskforce and the Windrush Compensation Scheme, we will have a dedicated new communications campaign promoting the scheme.

We will also open a £500k fund for grass roots organisations to promote these schemes including provisions for specialist advice services.

I would like to extend my personal thanks to Martin Forde QC for his support with the creation of the scheme.

Mr Speaker, I also want to put on the record my thanks to my predecessors – my Rt Hon Friends, the Members for Bromsgrove and Maidenhead and the former member for Hastings and Rye – who worked hard to understand and undo the suffering when these issues first came to light.

And to other members of this House, including the members for Tottenham and Normanton, Pontefract and Castleford who shone a necessary light on this injustice.

I also want to thank the thousands of civil servants at the Home Office and across government who work tirelessly every single day in challenging and demanding jobs to keep the public and our country safe.

Whether on the frontline or working to develop policies for the future, their commitment to create a safer country for us all is commendable.

Since these injustices were brought to light, civil servants have used every endeavour to right the wrongs.

Giving people their correct status and supporting them in their financial compensation claims.

However, it would be wrong for the department to ignore Wendy Williams's finding that the Home Office's "institutional ignorance and thoughtlessness towards the issue of race and the history of the Windrush generation" contributed to this.

This is not something that can be resolved with an apology or compensation.

I will review the recommendations Wendy Williams makes in relation to the way the Home Office operates as an organisation. I will continue to look closely at its leadership, culture, practices and the way it views the communities it serves.

Over the coming months, myself and Matthew Rycroft – the new Permanent Secretary – will work together with our dedicated staff, at all levels to review and reflect on the recommendations.

Including those relating to compliant environment policies and cultural change.

Fundamentally I want to make the Home Office a better place to work.

This will include a clarification of the Department's purpose, mission and values – putting at its heart fairness, dignity and respect.

We will put people before process.

Mr Speaker,

The publication of this Review is a small but vital step towards ensuring the Home Office is trusted by all of the people it serves.

I would encourage anyone who thinks they have been affected by the Windrush scandal or requires support or assistance to come forward.

I will bring forward a detailed formal response, in the next six months, as Wendy Williams has recommended, representing a new chapter for the Home Office.

Let me assure this House that everyone at the Home Office will be asking the difficult questions needed to ensure that these circumstances can never arise again.

I commend this statement to the House.