

Christine Elliott appointed interim Chair of College of Policing

Christine Elliott has been appointed by the Home Secretary as interim Chair of the College of Policing, following her nomination by the College Board.

She takes over the role from outgoing Chair Millie Banerjee.

Christine has been a College Non-Executive Director since April 2015. She is the College's first Senior Independent Director and has chaired the Audit and Risk, and the Nominations and Remuneration Committees and currently chairs the College Regulatory Consultative Committee.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

Christine will be a strong and effective interim Chair of the College of Policing.

Her experience gained across a variety of senior leadership roles will help the College advance the professional development of all police officers across the country as this government recruits 20,000 new officers and ensures that policing prioritises reducing crime.

Christine is also Chair of the Health and Care Professions Council, which regulates fifteen professions, and is an independent lay member of the Editors' Code Committee, which reviews and revises the code used by all UK press regulators.

Her career spans across the public, private and non-profit sectors. Notably she previously served as Director of Bletchley Park, the World War 2 code breaking site, helping it become an internationally renowned heritage attraction backed by millions in government infrastructure investment and private donations.

Christine Elliot said:

We all rely on brave and talented police officers and staff to protect us in increasingly complex circumstances and I'm looking forward to helping strengthen our connection with the frontline and deliver important pieces of work to support the service.

A fair and open process to recruit a substantive Chair will take place in the coming months.

Gaming technology trialled in training UK Armed Forces

The new platform will use the latest advances in gaming innovation to improve training for personnel – making it more realistic, intuitive and immersive, while lowering the costs.

SimCentric, a veteran-run software company, has been awarded £300,000 by the Defence and Security Accelerator (DASA) to develop and trial the simulator. After initial successful trials with the Parachute Regiment and officers at the Infantry Training Centre, Catterick, further tests with the Army, RAF and Royal Marines will take place later this year.

The virtual simulator will be part of the Armed Forces wider training programme, and will be used to support and enhance real life training exercises.

Service personnel trial the new virtual reality equipment.

The simulator, which can be used by over 30 personnel at the same time, uses intuitive gesture control designed to match real actions on the battlefield. HD surround sound and highly realistic visuals bring to life training scenarios tailored for VR interaction.

Rather than click a mouse while sitting at a desk, personnel will be able to hold a 'gun' and crouch and crawl when necessary, just as they would on a real-life exercise. They will be able to practice this virtual exercise as many times as needed before going into the field for real, preparing them more effectively for operational deployments.

Former Army Air Corps Officer Tom Constable is now Director of Innovation at SimCentric:

As a veteran and current Reservist, I'm proud to help train the Armed Forces of the future.

I joined the Army in 2006 and later served in Afghanistan. This gave me a passion for building technology that will reduce the risk to our Armed Forces and improve the quality of training, with the ultimate aim of saving lives.

Professor Dame Angela Mclean, Chief Scientific Advisor to the Ministry of Defence, said:

The MOD is committed to developing radical and innovative ways to combat the challenges our Armed Forces face today, and equip them for the threats of tomorrow.

This new simulator is just one way we are bringing training into the next generation, using technology drawn from the world of gaming to support our troops in training.

[UK Government allocates £3 million to support UK Nationals in the EU](#)

- Charities and organisations that support UK nationals living in the EU have been awarded a share of the funding
- The £3 million fund will assist UK nationals to apply to protect their residency rights
- Residents in Spain, France, Germany, Cyprus, Italy, and several other EU countries will benefit

Charities and organisations will receive government funding to provide practical support for UK nationals living in the EU with their residency applications. This includes potentially at-risk groups such as pensioners and disabled people.

The organisations will each receive government funding to support those who may find it harder to complete all the paperwork required for residency applications. This includes pensioners, disabled people, those living in remote areas or who have mobility difficulties, and those who require help with language translation or interpretation.

One of the beneficiaries of the fund is “Age in Spain” – a charity that helps older British expatriates. They will be working across Catalonia and the Balearic Islands. Another example is the armed forces charity, SSAFA, who will continue to support and work closely with British veterans and their families in France, Germany and Cyprus.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

These organisations are doing vital work to support UK Nationals in the EU and this funding will help secure their rights under the Withdrawal Agreement, so that they are given the security and stability they need.

Now that the UK has left the EU, some UK nationals living in certain EU member states will need to take actions to secure their residency rights, so

that they can continue to live and work in their host country as now.

Over 1 million UK nationals live in EU and EFTA countries. Charities and organisations receiving funding from the 'UK Nationals Support Fund' include:

- The AIRE Centre
- Age in Spain
- Asociación Babelia
- Cyprus International Financial Services Association
- Franco British Network
- International Organisation for Migration
- SSAFA

This extra assistance will build on the information and support that British Embassies are already providing.

Under the terms of the Withdrawal Agreement, UK nationals living in the EU at the end of the transition period can continue to live and work in their host country.

In many countries, UK nationals will need to register or apply for residency in order to secure their rights under the Withdrawal Agreement. The exact steps they will need to take will vary by country.

As part of the ongoing information campaign, the government is encouraging all UK nationals in the EU to visit the Living in Guide on gov.uk for the country they live in and sign up for tailored alerts to receive the latest information about what actions they may need to take.

[Fund to cover children's burial and cremation costs used over 1,000 times](#)

- government fund saved over £500,000 for families
- work continues to increase awareness of the fund to help grieving parents

Parents grieving the tragic loss of a child have used a government fund to cover the costs of their burial or cremation more than 1,000 times since the scheme's inception last July.

The Children's Funeral Fund for England (CFF) provides bereaved parents with valuable practical support at a very difficult time. The scheme aims to reduce the financial burden for families by reimbursing burial and cremation authorities, and funeral directors directly.

Since it launched the fund has awarded over £500,000 to spare families

footing the bill and is available regardless of the family's income.

Justice Minister Alex Chalk said:

The loss of a child is an unimaginable tragedy for any parent.

While nothing can ever remove the pain that bereaved families experience, this government is determined to do everything in its power to support them.

I am proud that the scheme has already helped so many, and we continue to increase awareness of the help available during such a distressing time.

Labour MP Carolyn Harris (Swansea East), who tragically lost her own 8-year old son, Martin, campaigned successfully for the introduction of the fund to help bereaved parents.

Ms Harris MP said:

Sharing my family's heartbreak and my son Martin's memory was the one of the hardest things I have ever had to do, but I knew how desperately important a Children's Funeral Fund would be to other bereaved parents.

It saddens me that so many children have died since the fund was established and my heart breaks for all those families whose lives have been so devastatingly torn apart. I only hope that by lifting the financial burden of funeral costs from parents, we have been able to offer a glimmer of light in what will be a very dark place.

Every year in England an estimated 3,800 children die under the age of 18, and there are a further 2,700 stillbirths. The Ministry of Justice wants to help as many people as possible who find themselves in such a devastating circumstance, and continues to improve awareness of the fund.

Nikki Lancaster, who lost their 10 year old son Lennon in 2017, said:

Both myself and my partner gave up work in order to provide round the clock medical care for our son Lennon. It was struggle financially but we made work. In 2017 Lennon sadly died aged 10. We had no savings and all of the benefits we were claiming stopped on the day he died. In the weeks and months after Lennon died we struggled to pay our bills and had to borrow money to pay for Lennon's funeral. It put a huge strain on us during the worst time in our lives.

As the parent of a bereaved child I know what a huge difference this fund will make to families like my own. It may not seem a lot,

but it is one less thing to have to worry about during such a distressing time.

Andy Fletcher, Chief Executive of Together for Short Lives said:

It is good news that so many bereaved parents facing the worst circumstances possible have benefited from this support. No family should have to worry about money when they are coming to terms with the death of a child. It is crucial that every family who is eligible for the Child Funeral Fund is given the opportunity to access it.

The only conditions for the scheme are that the child is under 18 at the time of death or is stillborn after the 24th week of pregnancy, that the burial or cremation takes place in England, and that the claim is submitted no later than 6 months after the funeral.

Notes to editors

- The CFF came into force on 23 July 2019.
- Carolyn Harris MP (Swansea East, Labour) led a cross-party campaign for a fund to spare bereaved parents the additional distress of having to meet the cost of their child's funeral at an extremely difficult time. In leading this campaign, she drew on her own personal experience of having to meet the funeral costs of her 8-year old son, Martin, who was killed in 1989.
- Under the fund arrangements, no bereaved family will have to pay the fees charged for a child's cremation or burial or for a number of prescribed associated expenses.
- The fund provides for burial authorities and cremation authorities to apply to Government for the reimbursement of the fees which would otherwise be charged for the provision of the burial or cremation of an eligible child.
- It also provides for funeral directors to apply for reimbursement of certain associated expenses, including a £300 contribution towards the price of a coffin.
- If the person responsible for organising the burial or cremation chooses not to use a funeral director but makes the funeral arrangements themselves, they will be able to claim directly for the eligible associated expenses (with the burial or cremation fees being reimbursed directly to the provider).
- The only conditions for the scheme are that the child is under 18 at the time of death or is stillborn after the 24th week of pregnancy, that the burial or cremation takes place in England, and the claim is submitted no later than 6 months after the funeral.
- The scheme is not means-tested, and the residency or nationality of the deceased child, or of the person organising the burial or cremation, is not relevant in determining eligibility.
- Both the Welsh Government and the Scottish Government have established

schemes, under devolved powers, to make financial support available to providers of burial and cremation for children.

London pioneers first 'virtual power station'

- Ground-breaking battery trial which pays households to store energy to power the grid during peak demand to be rolled out further
- smart battery trial in capital is already reducing bills – and cutting carbon emissions from electricity by around 20% for average households
- home batteries help electricity network companies avoid digging up the streets of the capital to replace electricity cables

A revolutionary trial to use household batteries to help support the electricity grid in London is being rolled out further to help deal with peaks in winter demand and reduce carbon emissions in the capital.

An initial trial by UK Power Networks (UKPN) paid 45 households to store energy in batteries in their homes, which the network operator drew on in times of need. It was so successful that it reduced household evening peak electricity demand by 60% and helped cut carbon emissions from electricity by 20% for average households.

The home batteries allow consumers to buy electricity when it's cheapest and store it for use when grid prices are more expensive, helping lower household electricity bills.

Now the government-backed company behind the battery system, Powervault, is rolling the scheme out as part of a second commercial contract in south London. The scheme in St Helier will help further improve flexibility in the electricity network.

Energy and Clean Growth Minister Kwasi Kwarteng said:

The UK has already cut emissions by almost 45% since 1990, while growing our economy by more than 3 quarters. This cutting-edge battery technology, being made right here in London, will help create a smarter, cleaner energy system for the UK.

These smart batteries are part of the UK's green revolution, with the government investing more than £3 billion in low carbon innovation, as we aim to end our contribution to climate change entirely by 2050.

Powervault is working with energy suppliers and electricity network operators to reduce dependency on fossil fuels by shifting energy demand away from peak times. This flexibility helps enable the roll-out of electric vehicles and accelerates the UK's transition to a decentralised low-carbon energy network.

The batteries use Artificial Intelligence to optimise home electricity use, meaning they could help reduce or avoid digging up and replacing cables entirely. They can store self-generated clean energy from solar panels, which households can sell back to energy companies using new export tariffs. On top of this, they allow owners to get paid for storing renewable energy from the grid when there's an excess of generation.

An Imperial College study estimates that greater electricity system flexibility, for example through using batteries, could save the UK between £17 billion and £40 billion by 2050. Powervault has already sold its batteries into hundreds of UK homes and is in discussions with Renault about rolling out the system across Europe.

Chief Executive of Powervault, Joe Warren, said:

Home energy storage is essential if we are to reduce our net carbon emissions to zero. Our vision is that Powervault will become as commonplace as a washing machine or dishwasher, allowing clean, zero carbon energy to be stored in the home for when it is needed most and allowing home energy use to be optimised.

In this way we can make the grid more resilient, allowing more electric vehicles and heating systems to be installed, and reducing carbon emissions and energy costs.

Smart energy technologies are an area of export potential for the UK with global investment in smart networks standing at more than \$303 billion.

The UK is the first major economy in the world to legislate for net zero emissions by 2050 to end the UK's contribution to climate change entirely. There are now 850,000 homes with solar panels in the UK and over half of our electricity is now generated by low carbon sources.

London-based Powervault designs and manufactures smart energy storage systems that help customers lower their electricity bills, increase their energy security and reduce their carbon footprint. They focus on changing consumers' energy consumption behaviours by encouraging energy efficiency and the adoption of renewable energy technologies.

The pilot is being part-funded by Energy Entrepreneurs Fund (EEF) which funds state of the art technologies, products and processes in the areas of energy efficiency, power generation and heat and electricity storage. It has supported over 130 projects that have gone on to leverage over £100 million in private sector funding.