

News story: Statement from Defence Secretary, Gavin Williamson

I am both honoured and excited to have been appointed Defence Secretary. I have always had the greatest admiration for the professionalism and valour of all those who serve in our country's Armed Forces.

The United Kingdom faces rising threats in a worsening international security situation, making Defence's work all the more important. It is imperative that we continue to take the fight to Daesh and keep Britain safe. As we leave the European Union, and forge a new Global Britain, Defence has the opportunity to deepen old friendships and contribute to building new ones around the world.

I am determined to ensure that the Armed Forces receive the recognition they deserve for the great work they do, including through the Armed Forces Covenant, and that they evolve both to meet the changing threats that we face, and to ensure that they properly represent the modern society that they defend.

Press release: David Mundell addresses Scottish Parliament committee

Scottish Secretary David Mundell will today [Thursday 2 November 2017] urge the Scottish Government and Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) to engage fully with the Brexit process, so together we can deliver the best possible deal for Scotland and the whole of the UK as we leave the EU.

Mr Mundell will give evidence this morning [Thursday 2 November 2017] to the Scottish Parliament's Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Relations Committee.

The following week [Wednesday 8 November] Mr Mundell and DExEU Minister Robin Walker will give evidence to the Scottish Parliament's Finance and Constitution Committee. Mr Walker and Cabinet Office Minister Chris Skidmore will also give evidence that day [Wednesday 8 November] to the Scottish Parliament's Delegated Powers Committee.

Speaking ahead of his appearance before the Committee today [Thursday 2 November 2017] Mr Mundell said:

"There is a huge task ahead of us as the UK Government negotiates our exit from the EU. It is crucial that the Scottish Government and the Scottish

Parliament are fully and constructively engaged with the Brexit process, so we can together deliver the best possible deal for Scotland and the whole of the UK as we leave the EU.”

“The Scottish Parliament has a job of work to do, including preparing for new powers which will come to Holyrood as a result of Brexit, and working with the UK Government to determine where we will need common frameworks.

“People in Scotland, rightly, expect their two governments to work together and we want to work collaboratively with the Scottish Government and MSPs on this challenge.”

[News story: Transport Secretary visits leading manufacturers in Northern Ireland](#)

Scores of low emission buses will be dispatched around the UK thanks to a multi-million pound grant awarded to a Northern Irish manufacturer, supporting local jobs.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling has today (2 November 2017) visited a leading manufacturer in Ballymena, Northern Ireland, where engineers are producing low emission buses for councils and bus operators across the UK.

Many of these vehicles are being built as a result of the [government providing more than £40 million in 2016 and 2017 under the Low Emission Bus Scheme \(LEBS\)](#) to help buy over 450 low emission buses. This is part of making the UK a global leader in their development, manufacture and use.

Wrightbus Ltd, based in Ballymena, is a leading bus manufacturer with a large range of low emission models. Around 70 of their low emission buses are being produced with funding from LEBS, as part of the government’s wider commitment to investing more than £1 billion in ultra-low emission vehicles by 2020.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

I am determined to push forward with a green revolution in transport, and low emission buses are an important part of our plans.

We have already provided funding for over 450 low emission buses through the Low Emission Bus Scheme, with hundreds more to be funded by the next round of the scheme which we will be launching in the coming months.

New greener buses will be more comfortable for passengers, they are cost-efficient and are good for the environment. It has been fascinating to witness first-hand how these vehicles are made.

While at Wrightbus Ltd, the Transport Secretary took a tour of the site and saw a new fleet of low emission buses being manufactured.

The company is in the forefront of these new technologies, including developing innovative hydrogen and electric battery technology to produce buses that emit zero emissions.

Speaking at the time of the visit Wrights Group Chairman and CEO Mark Nodder said:

It was a great privilege to show the Secretary of State for Transport the latest zero-emission bus technology produced by Wrightbus. This is a glimpse of the future where buses will have a pivotal role to play in reducing harmful emissions and improving air quality.

While in Northern Ireland, the Transport Secretary also attended meetings at Belfast International Airport and Thales UK – another company exporting cutting edge products around the globe.

Together Wrightbus Limited and Thales UK employ around 2 thousand people in Northern Ireland.

Belfast offers direct flights across the UK, Europe and America, and has seen air passenger trips increase by 10% to 8 million. Crucially, through its links to larger UK airports, and especially Heathrow Airport, passengers and businesses in Northern Ireland can reach the fast-growing economies of Asia, South America, and Africa.

[News story: Justine Greening launches new Institute for Teaching](#)

The [Institute for Teaching](#) – which has received government funding to set up bespoke training programmes for teachers – will support and spread great teaching.

Its courses will be available for teachers at all stages of their career, including those wishing to become experts in their subject or wanting to learn the most effective ways to share best practice.

This investment in the profession is part of the government's wider drive to build an education system that creates clear and rewarding career pathways for the people entering and progressing in teaching. It aims to provide support not just in those areas that are already set up to succeed, but – more importantly – in the areas where it is needed most.

Addressing an audience of teachers in Manchester, Education Secretary Justine Greening said:

It is an honour to launch the Institute for Teaching and see first-hand how thousands of teachers will benefit from these new training opportunities. We want to ensure every child can reach their potential, wherever they are growing up and great teachers are at the heart of this.

I want high-quality professional development to be a fundamental part of a teacher's career and these new programmes – backed by government funding – will give them the skills, confidence and knowledge they need to provide a world class education for all children.

The Institute for Teaching will operate mainly in the North and central England, including in the Education Secretary's [Opportunity Areas](#) which have been identified as social mobility 'cold spots'.

The Institute for Teaching has received government funding as part of the £75 million [Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund](#). This fund supports new programmes to deliver knowledge and skills-based training for teachers. The first eight projects to benefit from the fund have now been announced and include programmes focused on leadership, managing challenging pupil behaviour, improving the quality of teaching and phonics.

Director of the Institute of Teaching, Matt Hood said:

Having an expert teacher in every classroom is the best way to make sure that every pupil, regardless of their background, gets a great education. But teaching is complex – becoming an expert isn't easy. To improve teaching, we have to improve the training teachers get because most of what's out there isn't helping them to get better. Working with our partners, we're trying to change that.

[News story: Hundreds of Service](#)

personnel support London Poppy Day

Servicemen and women descended upon the capital today to lend their support to The Royal British Legion's (TRBL) annual London Poppy Day.

Around 980 personnel from the Royal Navy, the Army and the Royal Air Force greeted commuters at underground and mainline railway stations across London. It was part of a bid to raise more than £1 million for TRBL in 24 hours.

The day began with the official fundraising launch in Covent Garden, where Service personnel joined celebrity supporter Phil Daniels, star of *Quadrophenia* and *EastEnders*. At noon fellow *EastEnders* actors Barbara Windsor and Shane Richie visited Liverpool Street Station, where The Band of the Parachute Regiment performed.

Military bands played at a number of stations to brighten up the day for those heading to work while uniformed collectors gathered donations. Defence Minister Harriett Baldwin showed her support at Westminster tube station in the morning while Defence Ministers Earl Howe, Mark Lancaster and Tobias Ellwood helped the fundraising efforts at Waterloo Station at lunchtime. The Band of the Grenadier Guards livened up the busy Waterloo concourse in support of the appeal.

Scotland's capital city was also awash with poppies for Edinburgh Poppy Day, with military volunteers collecting on the streets, transport hubs and shopping centres.

Remembrance Sunday falls on 12 November this year and members of the Armed Forces around the world will mark the occasion. Today's Armed Forces are inspired by their predecessors and continue the proud traditions of service and achievements of those who have gone before them.