

News story: Dramatic finale to mark centenary of end of First World War

Minister for Faith Lord Bourne confirmed the 'Lest We Forget' concert, backed by £90,000 government funding will take place in November 2018 as part of the government's centenary programme of ceremonial events, cultural activity and education.

Hosted at Birmingham's NEC, the concert comes at the end of a 4-year programme to honour and remember those who lived, fought and died in the First World War.

Minister for Faith and Integration Lord Bourne said:

It is vitally important that each new generation is encouraged to remember the enormous sacrifices made in defending the liberties we take for granted today. The stories of individual bravery and the terrible losses experienced by countless families must never be forgotten.

This special concert will enable thousands of young people to play an active dramatic part in the commemorations and hear of the experiences of those only a little older than themselves.

When a campaign for volunteers was launched in August 1914, thousands answered the call to fight. Among them were 250,000 boys and young men under the age of 19. The concert will remember their stories and they will be given a voice by those just a year or two younger.

After being inundated with applications from those wanting to take part some 2,000 young singers and musicians under 18 years of age are now being selected through their schools and regional music education hubs across England and Wales to play.

Music and songs to be featured will include: 'Nimrod' from Elgar's Enigma Variations, which is played at the Cenotaph in London each Remembrance Sunday, 'Silent Night', the Christmas carol said to have been sung by British and German soldiers during the December truce and songs popular among soldiers such as 'Pack Up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit-Bag' and 'It's a long way to Tipperary'. Readings from diaries and letters written at that time will also be given and archive film footage from the trenches will be shown.

The concert was conceived by celebrated children's author and retired education expert Dr Ron Dawson, who also composed the song 'Lest we forget'.

Dr Ron Dawson said:

I am delighted that the Department for Communities and Local Government is making this concert possible. If the spirit and duty of Remembrance is to endure, it must be passed on from generation to generation. The ambition of this Children's Centenary Concert is to renew that remembrance, educate and show our eternal gratitude to those who lived, fought and died in that terrible war a century ago.

The First World War was not just fought on the battlefields of Northern Europe and the concert will also commemorate the vital contributions made by soldiers, sailors and airmen drawn from all four corners of the globe. It will also tell the story of the role of women played on the home front.

The Lest We Forget Children's Concert will take place at the Gentings arena, NEC Birmingham on the evening of Saturday 3 November 2018.

Tickets are expected to go on sale in January 2018.

The concert is part of the government's 4-year programme to ensure that the sacrifices of our armed forces in the First World War are not forgotten. For more information see [First World War centenary](#).

Press release: 'Nameless' Bournemouth angler fined for fishing without licence

A Bournemouth man has been fined £336 for fishing without a licence and failing to state his name and address when asked to do so by the water bailiff.

Lewis Pudwell of Queens Park West Drive, Bournemouth was also ordered to pay £127 costs plus a victim surcharge of £30 following a prosecution by the Environment Agency.

The offence took place on 24 February 2017 at Little Canford Ponds, Wimborne in a place where fishing is regulated for freshwater fish or eels. In addition, contrary to section 35(3) of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975, Pudwell failed to state his name and address to the water bailiff.

The case was heard by Salisbury magistrates on 20 July. Pudwell pleaded guilty to both offences.

Richard Battersby of the Environment Agency said:

The majority of anglers fish legally. The minority of anglers that fail to buy a fishing licence are cheating their fellow anglers and the future of the sport.

An annual licence costs just £30. Anglers risk significant fines and costs, a criminal conviction and the loss of their fishing equipment for such a small fee that gets used to enhance angling and fisheries habitat improvement works.

Money from fishing licence sales is invested in England's fisheries and is used to fund a wide range of projects to improve facilities for anglers, including protecting stocks from illegal fishing, pollution and disease; restoring fish stocks through re-stocking; eradicating invasive species; and fish habitat improvements.

Licence money is also used to fund the Angling Trust to provide information about fishing and to encourage participation in the sport.

You need a valid Environment Agency rod licence to fish for salmon, trout, freshwater fish, smelt or eel in England. Buying a rod licence is easy, simply visit www.gov.uk/fishing-licences/buy-a-fishing-licence.

Anyone witnessing illegal fishing incidents in progress can report it directly to the Environment Agency hotline on 0800 80 70 60. Information on illegal fishing and environmental crime can also be reported anonymously to Crime stoppers on 0800 555 111.

Notes to editors:

[Press release: UK renews push to tackle world's worst cholera outbreak in Yemen](#)

Yemen is on the brink of a catastrophic disaster, International Development Secretary Priti Patel warned today, as she urged the international community to follow the UK's push to stem the country's cholera outbreak – the worst ever recorded in a single year.

The number of suspected cases of cholera is nearing half a million and the UK is working with organisations including UNICEF and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) to tackle the disease which has so far claimed thousands of lives.

The UK's support will provide medical supplies, such as chlorine tablets and hygiene kits, for half a million people and rehabilitate medical facilities to help 250,000 people.

The UK's efforts will prevent and treat cholera across three of the most affected areas of Yemen: 300,000 people will benefit from access to safe, chlorinated water, helping to prevent the further spread of the disease; while seven health centres and 35 oral rehydration points will treat more than 27,300 cases.

British support will also include the secondment of an international health specialist from IOM to the Emergency Operations Centre in Sana'a to strengthen the response to contain cholera.

International Development Secretary Priti Patel said:

Yemen is on the brink of a catastrophic disaster if the world continues to close its eyes to the urgent help three quarters of people across the country desperately need.

The response by the international community is the only hope Yemeni people have to survive. UK aid is providing lifesaving food for 1.7 million people, as well as clean water, emergency healthcare and sanitation to contain the cholera outbreak and prevent it from spreading further.

The international community must follow Britain's lead and join our efforts and step up support to avert famine and cholera engulfing the country.

UK aid is already saving lives – our support to UNICEF has provided cholera treatment kits for 60,000 people and oral rehydration salts to treat over a million people, as well as rehabilitating the rural water supply systems in Hajjah and Sa'ada so that 74,000 people can access clean water.

Other partners, including the Yemen Humanitarian Pooled Fund, are also tackling cholera through re-prioritisation of their work within the UK's existing support. This includes providing medical treatment for vulnerable women and children, training health workers, and establishing oral rehydration centres.

Cholera is a bacterial disease, usually spread through contaminated water, which causes severe diarrhea and dehydration. The risk of cholera is highest when poverty, war or natural disasters force people to live in crowded conditions without adequate sanitation. Cholera can be fatal in a matter of hours if left untreated, but with medical support can be easily remedied.

Prevention is equally important and the UK is supporting chlorination campaigns in more than half the country's governorates, as well as public awareness sessions on how the disease is spread. UK support is also tackling the underlying causes of cholera by helping to provide emergency nutrition,

health, water and sanitation to over a million Yemenis.

Notes to Editors

- The UK is playing a leading role in the humanitarian response as the 3rd largest humanitarian donor to Yemen and the 2nd largest donor to the UN appeal. We have increased our funding for Yemen to £139 million for 2017/18 and are pressing the international community to step up its efforts. Other international and regional partners including the US, EU and Saudi Arabia are also playing a critical role in response.
 - In April we increased UK aid to Yemen to £139m for 2017/18 and are prioritising life-saving aid, including helping to provide food and nutrition support for 1.7 million people and clean water and sanitation for an expected 1.2 million people.
 - The UK is prioritising £8m from the Yemen budget this year for cholera. This includes £6 million for UNICEF and £2 million towards IOM's cholera response.
 - Cholera is an infection of the small intestine that causes acute watery diarrhoea and can lead to rapid dehydration and death if untreated. It is caused by eating food or drinking water contaminated with the bacterium *Vibrio cholera* (faecal-oral transmission). Treatment requires oral rehydration, and in the most severe cases intravenous infusion and antibiotics. Chlorination of water supply and improved waste disposal and hygiene behaviour help control the disease.
 - Last year, UK aid contributed to providing more than 462,000 people with food or food vouchers, provided food and nutrition support for 1.1 million women and children, and provided 123,000 people with emergency or sustainable clean water.
 - The International Development Secretary, Priti Patel, hosted a high-level international event at the UN General Assembly in September 2016 to shine a spotlight on Yemen's 'forgotten crisis'. Over \$100 million in new funding was pledged by the international community and UN agencies to strengthen the humanitarian response.
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[News story: Professor Duncan Wingham appointed as Executive Chair Designate of the Natural Environment Research Council](#)

Professor Wingham has been appointed Executive Chair Designate of the [Natural Environment Research Council \(NERC\)](#) following nearly six years as Chief Executive of the council, Science Minister Jo Johnson announced today.

Professor Wingham's current term heading up NERC has been extended from 31 December 2017 through to 31 December 2020. He will continue as Chief Executive until the end of March 2018 and, upon the creation of [UK Research and Innovation \(UKRI\)](#) on 1 April, will become NERC's Executive Chair.

Executive Chairs will be crucial to the ambition for UKRI to be a world-leading research and innovation organisation. They will lead each of the 9 councils that will be part of UKRI, and the role will combine the responsibilities of the current Chair and Chief Executive of each council.

Announcing the appointment, Science Minister Jo Johnson said:

Professor Wingham's wealth of knowledge and experience in academia and science, and his pivotal role in setting up the NERC Centre for Polar Observation and Modelling, makes him well-placed to take on the role of Executive Chair and continue being a key part of our global leadership in the environmental sciences.

Working in close coordination with research communities across the UK, the UKRI Executive Chairs, along with the Government's additional £4.7bn for research and development, will ensure that we continue to punch above our weight in global science.

Sir Mark Walport, UKRI Chief Executive Designate said:

I am very pleased that Duncan will continue to provide excellent leadership of NERC as its first Executive Chair. As part of UK Research and Innovation's Executive Committee, Duncan will play a critical role in championing and increasing the impact of Environmental Science research through UK Research and Innovation, thus helping to ensure that UK Research and Innovation is the world's leading research and innovation public funding agency.

I look forward to continuing to work with Duncan to make sure that the UK maintains its world-leading position in the Environmental Sciences and maximising the contribution it makes to the UK's

research and innovation landscape.

Professor Duncan Wingham, Chief Executive and Executive Chair Designate of NERC said:

I am delighted to be appointed as the first Executive Chair to lead NERC in its new position within UKRI. Environmental science is central to achieving prosperity in harmony with the environment, both here in the UK and globally across the world. NERC has a proud tradition of contributing to that aim.

UKRI provides us with new opportunities to thread environmental science into solutions to the greatest societal and business challenges we face. I look forward to working with all our colleagues within UKRI and across the research community to achieve that.

1. NERC is the UK's main agency for funding and managing research, training and knowledge exchange in the environmental sciences. It coordinates some of the world's most exciting research projects, tackling major issues such as climate change, environmental influences on human health, the genetic make-up of life on earth, and much more. NERC is a non-departmental public body, which receives funding from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). Working internationally, NERC has bases in the most hostile parts of the planet. They run a fleet of research ships and aircraft and invest in satellite technology to monitor gradual environmental change on a global scale. NERC provides knowledge, forewarning and solutions to the key global environmental challenges facing society.
2. Operating across the whole of the UK and with a combined budget of more than £6 billion, UK Research and Innovation will bring together the seven Research Councils, Innovate UK and a new organisation, Research England. UK Research and Innovation will ensure that the UK maintains its world leadership in research and innovation, by creating a system that "best environment for research and innovation to flourish. It will come into existence on 1 April 2018.
3. Professor Wingham received a BSc from the University of Leeds in 1979, and a PhD from the University of Bath in 1984, both in physics. He joined University College London in 1986, where he held lecturing posts at the Mullard Space Science Laboratory and the Department of Electronic and Electrical Engineering. He was appointed as a Chair in the Department of Space and Climate Physics in 1996, and was Head of the Department of Earth Sciences at UCL from 2005 to 2010. He was founder and Director of the NERC Centre for Polar Observation and Modelling (CPOM) from 2000 to 2005, which among other things discovered the

widespread mass loss from the West Antarctic Ice Sheet and its origin in accelerated ocean melting. He was instigator and Project Scientist of the Esa CryoSat-1 and CryoSat-2 satellite missions. He was first appointed as NERC Chief Executive in 2012.

[Press release: Exercise Ash will test water pumps on Somerset Levels](#)

Environment Agency engineers from across England will descend on two Somerset pumping stations next week (14 to 18 August) for Exercise Ash.

Huish Episcopi Pumping Station and Westover Pumping Station, near Langport, will see pump specialists and incident operatives sharpen their major incident skills in preparation for any serious flood.

High volume pumps – which can fill two average sized bathtubs every second – will be deployed at the stations, increasing water pumping capacity.

Westover Pumping Station removes water through three permanent, electric, submersible pumps at a combined rate of 1,800 litres per second. Huish Episcopi Pumping Station also has three permanent pumps and removes water at combined rate of 5,610 litres per second.

Organiser John Rowlands said:

Somerset has experienced a number of flooding incidents in recent years, most notably in 2013/14 when communities were impacted by flood water. That winter was the wettest for 250 years in parts of the country with only one completely dry day in nearly two months in Somerset.

This unprecedented event led the Environment Agency to consider what else we could do to reduce the impact of a similar flood in the future.

In the summer of 2014, we developed a series of trigger points. When certain criteria is met – more than 100mm of rainfall forecast in 5 days, water levels on the moors rise more than 50mm per hour and a geographical feature (normally a road) is inundated – additional pumping capacity will be deployed at certain locations.

These trigger points were rolled out at a series of community meetings over the autumn and winter of 2014 and Exercise Ash will test this commitment next week.

Severe flooding can also have a detrimental impact on the ecology and agriculture and depending on the time of the flood can take years for the landscape to recover.

As part of the Somerset Levels and Moors 20 Year Flood Action Plan, regular testing of our resilience via training exercises on an annual basis will provide reassurance for communities at flood risk.

The pumps will be loaded onto a lorry at an Environment Agency depot in Bawdrip village a few miles north of the pumping stations on Monday, 14 August. They will reach the pumping stations the same day. It will then take a whole day to unload and deploy them before they are switched on. Different exercise teams will practice attaching the pipes over the course of a week.

John Rowlands said:

Deploying and attaching these pumps takes a significant amount of planning and because these pumps can be used anywhere in the country. We've invited engineers from across the Environment Agency to come and put their incident skills into practice.

This, alongside the work of our partners, will make a huge difference in reducing the frequency, duration and severity of flooding in the future.

Partner organisations have been invited to attend Exercise Ash as observers, including Avon and Somerset Local Resilience Forum, Somerset County Council, Internal Drainage Board and the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service.

It is important that everybody is aware of their own flood risk. People can find out how to get ready and check their flood risk at <https://www.gov.uk/prepare-for-flooding> or by calling Floodline on 0345 988 1188.

Notes for Editors:

There are 21 permanent pumping sites in Somerset. Pumping stations are set to operate automatically according to water levels in the rhyes draining the moor or flood alleviation schemes. These pumps cannot operate if the receiving river is full, when spillways are operating or river banks are

overflowing. This is why trigger points are in place, which alert the Environment Agency to start deploying mobile pumps. Triggers include specific roads starting to flood, the forecast of heavy rain, and moor water levels rising above 50mm/hour.

Huish Episcopi Pumping Station and Westover Pumping Station were built in the 1960 as part of a suite of works around Langport. Another two pumping stations were built at the same time – Long Load Pumping Station and Middelney Pumping Station. They are all located next to rivers – Huish Episcopi and Long Load on the River Yeo, Middelney on the River Isle and Westover on the River Parrett. They pump water from the adjacent moors (38 million cubic metres of water when the moors are full) which form part of the entire 160,000 acre Somerset Levels and Moors.

The 20 Year Flood Action Plan was jointly created by a broad range of local and national organisations and communities, and is overseen by the Somerset Rivers Authority.