

News story: Top apprentices and apprenticeship employers are recognised at National Apprenticeship Awards 2017 ceremony

Held in London on 18 January 2018, the 'Bright Future' themed ceremony showcased individual and employer success stories, with businesses and apprentices beating off tough competition in regional heats to win in the national finale.

This year's national apprentice winners are:

- The Unilever Award for Intermediate Apprentice of the Year: Shannon Green, Althams Travel Services Ltd
- The PeoplePlus Award for Advanced Apprentice of the Year: Heeran Basi, Severn Trent Water
- The Nuclear Decommissioning Site Licence Companies Award for Higher or Degree Apprentice of the Year: Charlotte Hughes, GlaxoSmithKline

And 2 highly commended in each category:

- The Unilever Award for Intermediate Apprentice of the Year: Ross Jasper, DCH and Matthew Gustard, Nottingham City Homes
- The PeoplePlus Award for Advanced Apprentice of the Year: Hannah Magowan, Dale Power Solutions and Megan Whitbread, Troup Bywaters + Anders
- The Nuclear Decommissioning Site Licence Companies Award for Higher or Degree Apprentice of the Year: Christopher Achiampong, IBM and Thomas Sherlock, IBM

Sarah Barley from South Hunsley School won the Santander Award for Apprenticeship Champion of the Year. She was recognised for the employer led programme she developed, recruiting 50 local employers to support and inspire young people about their next steps, whilst also planning open events to recruit employers interested in offering apprenticeships. Lois McLure from the Co-op and Julie Honour-Jones from Sir John Lawes School were both highly commended in this category.

This year's national employer winners are:

- The Troup Bywater + Anders Award for Small Employer of the Year: Beauty Oasis Spa
- The Royal Navy Award for Medium Employer of the Year: Superior Seals Limited
- The British Army Award for Large Employer of the Year: Dale Power Solutions
- The Open University Award for Macro Employer of the Year: Royal Air

Force

- The BAE Systems Award for Newcomer SME of the Year: Lander Automotive Ltd
- The Rolls-Royce Award for Newcomer Large Employer of the Year: YBS Group (Yorkshire Building Society)

And 2 highly commended in each category:

- The Troup Bywater + Anders Award for Small Employer of the Year: Ginger Nut Media and McCarrick Construction
- The Royal Navy Medium Employer of the Year: Invotra Limited and Maycast-Nokes Precision Engineering Ltd
- The British Army Award for Large Employer of the Year: Volvo Group UK and Eire and Home Group
- The Open University Award for Macro Employer of the Year: BBC and Lloyds Banking Group
- The BAE Systems Award for Newcomer SME of the Year: Blue Logic and Bury St Edmunds Canine Creche
- The Rolls-Royce Award for Newcomer Large Employer of the Year: Magnet and NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT)

Skills and Apprenticeships Minister Anne Milton said:

The National Apprenticeship Awards ceremony is a great opportunity to celebrate the work so many individuals and employers have done to champion apprenticeships.

I want to congratulate everyone that was a part of these awards for their contribution to apprenticeships in England. They are all fantastic advocates of hard work and ambition, and they highlight how apprenticeships are a great route into skilled employment for people of all ages and backgrounds.

Winner of the Rolls-Royce Award for Newcomer Large Employer of the Year was Yorkshire Building Society Group. Andy Tupman, Emerging Talent Manager at Yorkshire Building Society, said:

I'm delighted our apprenticeships programme has been recognised in the National Apprenticeship Awards 2017. Our apprentices are a credit not only to themselves but the whole organisation here at Yorkshire Building Society.

We're committed to providing great career pathways across a number of business areas whether in one of our head offices or throughout the UK in one of our branches. I'm proud of the culture that we have created and display on a daily basis.

For us, there's no such thing as a typical apprentice. You could be just out of school, looking to change your career, newly graduated and looking for something different or just out of retirement.

There's no average age, no average background and no experience required – we are much more interested in finding applicants with the right values and passion for exceeding customer expectations.

Centrica Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers 2017

Also announced was the Centrica Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers list 2017, featuring the most exceptional apprenticeship employers from all of the National Apprenticeship Awards employer categories. The list includes Lloyds Banking Group, EDF Energy and IBM, and shows the breadth of employers offering fantastic apprenticeship opportunities.

PDF, 52.5KB, 4 pages

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Sue Husband, Director of the National Apprenticeship Service added:

The National Apprenticeship Awards showcase the breadth of apprenticeships on offer in a range of dynamic industries across the country. Apprenticeships are for everyone and I thank every employer and apprentice celebrated for their passion for, and commitment to, apprenticeships.

This year's winners are all shining examples of how apprenticeships develop outstanding talent whilst enhancing the incredible work of employers. I am certain all of our winners have a bright future thanks to the enriching benefits that apprenticeships bring.

Exciting changes to the future format of the National Apprenticeship Awards was also announced. More information about the awards will be released in March.

[Speech: PM speech at V&A reception: 18 January 2018](#)

I am delighted to welcome you to the world-famous V&A this evening – a jewel in the crown of Britain's culture. And now, like so much of Britain, further

enriched by a French contribution – with Alice Dietsch as Project Director for the development of the stunning Exhibition Road Quarter which opened last Summer. And I am very pleased that Alice joins us here this evening, together with British architect Amanda Levete, whose practice delivered the whole project.

This evening marks the culmination of the 35th Franco-British Summit.

Traditionally this Summit has focused on our security and defence partnership. And it is right that today we have deepened that partnership further.

And of course we meet in the year that marks a century since the end of the First World War, when our troops fought side-by-side in defence of our shared belief in freedom and resistance against aggression.

And today we stand together against new threats to that same shared belief in freedom. And as I said in my very first speech as Prime Minister in the British Parliament – in the aftermath of the appalling terrorist attack in Nice – “the values of liberté, égalité and fraternité will prevail.”

But tonight is about even more than the defence of our shared values. It is about celebrating those values and the extraordinary depth of the people to people links between our countries.

Here in this Gallery tonight we have partners in business that make up just some of the £71 billion of trade between our countries every year.

Partners in science – from joint space programmes to joint working on genomics in the fight against cancer.

Partners in culture – for example, with your wonderful offer to bring the Bayeux Tapestry to our shores. The first time in almost a thousand years that people right here in Britain will have the opportunity to see a piece of French art that is so important to both our national stories.

Partners in sport – sharing ideas and expertise about major sporting events ahead of the 2023 Rugby World Cup and the 2024 Paris Olympics.

Innovative charity partners like Street League and Sport Dans La Ville – working together to use the power of sport to help young people into jobs and training.

Local partners – with mayors and school leaders who have built links across the Channel, like the new twinnings between Guildford and Versailles, and Tetbury and Chatillon.

And the leaders of the next generation – including representatives from the young leaders’ programme of the Franco-British Council which launched last year and which I know is looking for new candidates for its second cohort – so please help them find the very best of British and French talent.

All of us are here because we believe in the profound importance of the

historic friendship between our countries – and because we want to strengthen it further for the future.

Now as the United Kingdom leaves the European Union, I know there has been some uncertainty about that future and what it might mean for French people living here in Britain.

So let me say this:

En tant que Première Ministre du Royaume-Uni, je suis fière que plus de trois millions de citoyens européens y compris des centaines de milliers de nos amis français aient choisi de faire leur vie et de construire leur foyer ici, dans notre pays. J'attache une grande valeur à votre contribution à notre pays – vous enrichissez tous les secteurs de notre économie, de notre société, de notre culture, de nos vies. Je sais que notre pays serait plus pauvre si vous le quittiez, et je souhaite que vous restiez.

[Translation: As Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, I am proud that more than three million EU citizens [including hundreds of thousands of our French friends] have chosen to make your homes and livelihoods here in our country. I greatly value the depth of the contributions you make – enriching every part of our economy, our society, our culture and our national life. I know our country would be poorer if you left and I want you to stay.]

I know that Emmanuel feels the same about the British community in France.

And we are proud that the agreement we secured at last month's EU council means that French people living here and Brits living in France can carry on living their lives as before.

But the ambition that we share for the future relationship between the UK and France is so much greater.

So today, more than a century on from the "entente cordiale" let us celebrate our own "entente chaleureuse".

And let us show just how much this friendship matters to us all – today and for the generations to come.

**Press release: Business Secretary
chairs taskforce to support small
businesses and workers affected by**

Carillion insolvency

A taskforce set up to monitor and advise on mitigating the impacts of Carillion's liquidation on construction firms, particularly SMEs and those working in the sector, has met for the first time today (18 January 2018). Building on a series of meetings held by the Business Secretary this week with trade associations, unions and banks.

Chaired by Greg Clark, with support from the Small Business Minister Andrew Griffiths, the taskforce's attendees included representatives from leading business bodies, the construction trade sector, unions, banks and government.

The taskforce will act as a means to work together to ensure the impact of the Carillion insolvency on the firm's employees in the private, as well as public, sector is minimised and to help them recover.

In a constructive meeting, members of the Government's Taskforce on Carillion spoke about a range of issues, ranging from support by banks, the [support on offer from HMRC for businesses](#), the [offer from the Construction Industry Training Board for apprentices](#), and identified how relevant information can be shared to keep people in work and training.

Greg Clark, welcoming the input of all the members, said:

Today's meeting is the next step in a series I have held this week. It got key people round the table to drive forward steps that we believe can give confidence to workers and the supply chain; support from banks, the ability to link workers with employment and support for apprentices.

I am determined that collectively we will take the steps necessary to give workers and businesses the information they need at this difficult time.

Issues to be covered in the next meeting will include job matching and contract matching.

Today (18 January 2018), the Business Secretary has [praised several banks](#) who following his request have committed to providing support to small businesses affected by Carillion's insolvency. This follows a meeting he held with them yesterday, where he asked them to [commit to supporting SMEs affected](#).

HMRC's announcement highlighted several ways that the Business Payment Support Service can help those affected, including:

- *agree instalment arrangements if you're unable to pay your tax on time following the Carillion collapse
- *suspend any debt collection proceedings
- *review penalties for missing statutory deadlines
- *reduce any payments on account
- *agree to defer payments due to short-term cash flow difficulties

Today's taskforce meeting follows [action outlined by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy](#) to address concerns set out earlier this week.

Press release: Business Secretary welcomes action by banks to support small businesses affected by Carillion

The Business Secretary Greg Clark has today (18 January 2018) welcomed the decision by several banks to set up funds to support small businesses affected by [Carillion's insolvency](#).

Today, Lloyds Banking Group has launched a £50 million fund, HSBC a £100 million fund and RBS has made £75 million of assistance available.

It follows a meeting held by Greg Clark yesterday with banks where he discussed further support and advice that could be provided by the banks for small businesses affected by Carillion's liquidation.

Greg Clark said:

I welcome this quick and positive move by banks including Lloyds, HSBC and RBS. This follows my meeting with the banks yesterday where I challenged them to see what further support they could provide for SMEs affected by Carillion's insolvency.

It is essential that small businesses exposed are given the support they need by their lenders, and I look forward to other banks following suit.

HMRC has also outlined the [support being offered to those businesses contracted to Carillion](#) that may be concerned about their ability to pay tax. HMRC are providing practical advice and guidance to those affected through its Business Payment Support Service (BPSS).

This follows [action outlined](#) by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to address concerns set out earlier this week.

Speech: PM's speech at the UK-France Summit: 18 January 2018

Président Macron, je suis très heureux de vous accueillir aujourd'hui pour votre première visite au Royaume-Uni en tant que Président.

President Macron it gives me great pleasure to welcome you here today for your first visit to the UK as President.

There can be no more fitting venue than Sandhurst for these talks. For we are gathered here at one institution to celebrate and strengthen another – the enduring alliance between the UK and France.

Ours is a uniquely close relationship between two of the world's oldest and greatest democracies.

We meet in the year that marks a century since the end of the First World War, when our troops fought side-by-side in defence of our shared belief in freedom and resistance against aggression.

And we have been clear again today that as global, outward-looking nations we remain committed to defending our people and upholding our values as liberal democracies in the face of any threat, whether at home or abroad. But our relationship has always gone far beyond defence and security.

Hundreds of thousands of British citizens live in France and a similar number of French nationals have made the UK their home.

And today we have agreed ways in which we can build on these ties for the benefit of all our citizens.

While this Summit takes place as the UK prepares to leave the EU, we are and will remain a steadfast partner to our friends and allies.

And a strong and deep relationship between the United Kingdom and France remains in both of our interests.

Defence

The President and I agree on the importance of the UK-France relationship, not just to our security but to European security.

We are the only European countries who are permanent members of the UN Security Council as well as members of the G7, G20 and NATO.

And we are Europe's two foremost military powers.

It is incumbent upon us to demonstrate leadership in meeting the great challenges of our time, and upholding the international rules-based system.

We have agreed that UK-France co-operation remains critical to European defence and that together we will continue to play a full role to improve the security of the continent.

And today we can confirm that the UK-France Combined Joint Expeditionary Force will be ready to deploy up to 10,000 troops quickly and effectively to face any threat by 2020.

The shared interests of the UK and France and indeed Europe itself extend far beyond our immediate borders. Africa's security and prosperity is vitally important to us all. In recent years the UK and France worked side-by-side to combat the global threat posed by the Ebola epidemic.

And today I can announce that in the same spirit of co-operation we will step-up our efforts in the Sahel to prevent Islamist extremism breeding instability and insecurity, fuelling the migration crisis.

The UK will deploy three UK Chinook helicopters and their crews to the Sahel, and we will continue the support we offer through our heavy lift transport aircraft, increasing the ability of French troops to manoeuvre effectively in their battle against extremists.

During our discussions today the UK and France have also agreed to work together to ensure EU African Peace Facility funding for AMISOM in Somalia, as part of a comprehensive approach on the continent.

Closer to home we will stand together in the face of Russian aggression in eastern Europe, where France has agreed to commit troops to the UK-led NATO battlegroup in Estonia in 2019.

This commitment will build on the successful joint deployment which we visited together last year.

Security

Since the last UK-France Summit we have seen appalling and cowardly terrorist attacks in both our countries, in which British and French citizens have died side-by-side.

There is no circumstance in which we could envisage the vital interests of either the United Kingdom or France being threatened without the other one being affected.

To tackle this shared threat, for the first time in history all of the heads of UK and French intelligence agencies were brought together ahead of this Summit in a single meeting, underlining our unique co-operation in this field. This afternoon they briefed the President and me on the work they do together.

It is clear that this co-operation is preventing loss of life on both sides of the Channel and around the world.

And today we have discussed ways in which we can increase and enhance our collaboration to continue to keep our citizens safe.

Migration

The UK and France share a belief in a comprehensive approach to mass migration. And as our efforts in the Sahel and across Africa demonstrate, we will work together to address the instability which fuels it.

President Macron and I have both confirmed that the UK and France remain committed to the principles of the longstanding Le Touquet agreement, under which the UK is able to carry out full border checks on French soil.

And today we have agreed additional measures which will work in the best interests of both France and the UK, increasing the effectiveness of our co-operation.

We will reinforce the security infrastructure with extra CCTV, fencing and infra-red technology at Calais and other border points.

In 2016 more than 56,000 attempts by clandestines to cross the Channel were stopped at the UK's juxtaposed border controls.

The further investment we have agreed today will make the UK's borders even more secure.

The UK and France also share a determination to tackle the people traffickers and migrant smugglers who exploit the misery of those making the perilous journey to Europe.

We are committed to working closely together to close down the networks of smugglers who seek to profit from the misery of others.

Prosperity

UK-French economic co-operation is vital to our shared prosperity.

We share £71 billion in trade, making France the UK's third largest trading partner and the UK France's fifth largest.

And our trade relationship continues to thrive following the vote to leave the EU.

Airbus, a company whose supply chain and ownership spans Europe, have today announced a multi-billion pound deal to provide Emirates Airlines with 36 A380 passenger aircraft, parts of which will be built in both the UK and France, providing a boost to both our economies.

And just down the road from here in Farnborough UK and French engineers at the company are working side-by-side on the cutting edge Zephyr high-altitude surveillance drone.

This collaboration on innovation runs through our relationship, and today we have agreed to strengthen the global competitiveness of our world-class researchers and innovators, deepening co-operation between our research agencies.

People-to-People

But the UK-France relationship is about far more than a balance sheet.

Both President Macron and I believe that everyone in society deserves the same opportunities regardless of where they come from.

And we will use our relationship to make this happen, supporting children from disadvantaged backgrounds to develop their employability and language skills.

We will create a new fund for exchanges between our schools and revitalising the Entente Cordiale programme with new financing, so that our students can study across the Channel.

Our shared history will also be reflected in the loan of the Bayeux Tapestry to the UK in 2022, the first time it will be on British soil in more than 900 years.

The loan of the Tapestry will form part of a wider cultural exchange taking place between Britain and France over the next four years.

I am honoured at the loan of such a precious piece of our shared history which yet again underscores the closeness of our relationship.

We have agreed to build a new generation of links between our people, with an ambitious programme of twinning towns and regions, bringing together mayors, leaders of City Regions and others as they address today's challenges and harness the potential of emerging technologies.

The UK and France are forever neighbours, united in friendship, and by our common belief in freedom and justice, both at home and in the world.