

Active Travel England update

I am pleased to announce further progress standing up Active Travel England, the new executive agency which will help deliver this government's £2 billion commitment to active travel and creating a new golden age of walking and cycling.

A number of senior leadership appointments have now been made for Active Travel England. Chris Boardman MBE has been confirmed as England's National Active Travel Commissioner on a permanent basis.

After his appointment as the Interim Commissioner at the start of the year, he will continue to lead Active Travel England and chair the Interim Board which has now been established.

The Department for Transport (DfT) expects to be able to confirm shortly the appointment of Danny Williams as Active Travel England's Chief Executive, who will be starting full time in August.

He will bring a wealth of experience to the role from successfully setting up and growing both large and start-up businesses and from his dedicated campaigning for improving walking and cycling provision.

Louise Wilkinson has been appointed as Active Travel England's Chief Operating Officer. She has a successful career in financial management for the Civil Service and local government and has most recently been a Finance Deputy Director in the Cabinet Office.

The department expects to confirm shortly the appointment of Graham Grant as its Director of Planning. He was until recently the Assistant Director of Transport at Newcastle City Council.

Brian Deegan has also started as the Director of Inspections. He has successfully developed and delivered street designs for improving active travel in Greater Manchester and London and will work with local authorities to design high-quality schemes. A small number of DfT employees will also transfer to the new body.

Despite only having a handful of officers in place – Active Travel England has already started to deliver significant benefits, in line with the [Gear Change](#) commitment to deliver a step-change in the quality of walking and cycling infrastructure.

It has assessed and awarded £161 million of funding for [134 Active Travel Fund projects](#), announced on 14 May 2022, which will deliver high-quality schemes in 46 authorities in England, outside London. This early work will enable 16 million extra cycling and walking journeys to take place each year.

It has also developed a suite of tools that will help local active travel projects deliver high-quality infrastructure and it has delivered training and engagement events for local authorities. Its work will significantly

improve value for money of cycling and walking schemes.

Improved active travel provision has many benefits. It will play an important role in improving the health of the nation by reducing physical inactivity and it is vital to the government's commitment to achieve [net zero carbon emissions by 2050](#). Better walking and cycling provision will also help make local areas greener, healthier and better places to live.

Chief the General Staff Speech at RUSI Land Warfare Conference

I stand here as the first Chief of the General Staff since 1941 to take up this position in the shadow of a major state on state land war in Europe. As I do, I'm reminded of the words of a man in whose footsteps I tread. In relative obscurity, and recognising the impending danger the nation faced, the then Brigadier Bernard Montgomery wrote this in the pages of that magnificent publication Royal Engineers' Journal of 1937:

We have got to develop new methods, and learn a new technique...
There is no need to continue doing a thing merely because it has been done in the Army for the last thirty or forty years – if this is the only reason for doing it, then it is high time we changed and did something else.

For us, today, that “something else” is mobilising the Army to meet the new threat we face: a clear and present danger that was realised on 24th February when Russia used force to seize territory from Ukraine, a friend of the United Kingdom. But let me be clear, the British Army is not mobilising to provoke war – it is mobilising to prevent war.

The scale of the war in Ukraine is unprecedented. 103 Battalion Tactical Groups committed. Up to 33,000 Russians dead, wounded, missing or captured. A casualty rate of up to 200 per day amongst the Ukrainian defenders. 77,000 square kilometres of territory seized – 43% of the total landmass of the Baltic states. Ammunition expenditure rates that would exhaust the combined stockpiles of several NATO countries in a matter of days. The deliberate targeting of civilians with 4,700 civilian dead. 8 million refugees. For us, the visceral nature of a European land war is not just some manifestation of distant storm clouds on the horizon; we can see it now.

In all my years in uniform, I haven't known such a clear threat to the principles of sovereignty and democracy, and the freedom to live without fear of violence, as the brutal aggression of President Putin and his expansionist ambitions. I believe we are living through a period in history as profound as

the one that our forebears did over 80 years ago. Now, as then, our choices will have a disproportionate effect on our future.

This is our 1937 moment. We are not at war – but we must act rapidly so that we aren't drawn into one through a failure to contain territorial expansion. So surely it is beholden on each of us to ensure that we never find ourselves asking that futile question – should we have done more? I will do everything in my power to ensure that the British Army plays its part in averting war; I will have an answer to my grandchildren should they ever ask what I did in 2022.

We have agency to prevent war now. But only if we take a new approach.

These are extraordinary times. So I will not take the usual approach of a new CGS to this event. It will not be the traditional tour of the horizon covering the full breadth of Army business. I will concentrate on one area alone – how I intend to mobilise the British Army – our Regulars, Reservists and Civilians – to deter Russian aggression. To prevent war.

We are already a busy Army. But today is about mobilisation, and to mobilise effectively we will need to suppress our additive culture and guard against the 'tyranny of and' – we can't do everything well and some things are going to have to stop; it will mean ruthless prioritisation.

From now the Army will have a singular focus – to mobilise to meet today's threat and thereby prevent war in Europe.

This is not the rush to war at the speed of the railway time tables of 1914. It is instead an acceleration of the most important parts of Future Soldier's bold modernisation agenda, a move to a positional strategy, an increased focus on readiness and combined arms training and a broader institutional renewal that creates the culture required to win if called upon. This process, given a name Operation MOBILISE, will be the Army's primary focus over the coming years.

So why do we need to mobilise?

Under the leadership of the Prime Minister and the Defence Secretary, the United Kingdom has risen to meet Moscow's aggression. Defence has worked at a phenomenal pace to bring together a coalition of partners to provide materiel, intelligence and training to sustain Ukraine in its fight against the Russian invaders. Our bi-lateral relationship with Kyiv has gone from strength to strength; this year alone we have supplied 9500 anti-tank missiles, of which over 5000 were NLAW. We have already provided UK-based training for 650 AFU soldiers, and in the coming months, the British Army will deliver battle-winning skills to a further 10,000. It's just started.

The upcoming Madrid Summit is a timely opportunity to demonstrate our leadership in NATO and our enduring commitment to our allies. Mobilising the Army to prevent war is as tangible and concrete an act of leadership as I can offer – the UK will lead by example.

It is dangerous to assume that Ukraine is a limited conflict; one of its

obvious lessons is that Putin's calculations do not always follow our logic. It's also worth remembering that historically, Russia often starts wars badly. And because Russia wages war at the strategic, not the tactical level – its depth and resilience means it can suffer any number of campaigns, battles and engagements lost, regenerate and still ultimately prevail. History has also shown us that armies that have tasted defeat learn more quickly. While Russia's conventional capability will be much reduced – for a time, at least – Putin's declared intent recently to restore the lands of 'historic Russia' makes any respite temporary and the threat will become even more acute. We don't yet know how the war in Ukraine will end, but in most scenarios, Russia will be an even greater threat to European security after Ukraine than it was before. The Russian invasion has reminded us of the time-honoured maxim that if you want to avert conflict, you better be prepared to fight.

So this is the challenge that I will address through mobilisation. And to make it crystal clear – This means focusing on winning the war, working with these allies, against this threat and in this location. And we will see the first orders issued in Madrid tomorrow.

This threat has also materialised at a time when the world is already looking less secure – the viewpoint set out clearly in last year's Integrated Review and the Defence Command Paper. In meeting a revanchist Russia, we cannot be guilty of myopically chasing the ball. Defence cannot ignore the exponential rise and chronic challenge of China, not just within the South China Sea but through its sub-threshold activities across the globe. Beijing will be watching our response to Moscow's actions carefully. But ceding more territory to Putin could prove a fatal blow to the principle of national sovereignty that has underpinned the international order since 1945. And we can't allow NATO states to live with the grim reality of the human cost of occupation that we see in front of us.

Given the commitments of the US in Asia during the 20s and 30s, I believe that the burden for conventional deterrence in Europe will fall increasingly to European members of NATO and the JEF. This is right in my view: taking up the burden in Europe means we can free more US resources to ensure that our values and interests are protected in the Indo-Pacific

And we are not alone in facing this new reality. Looking out at you here today I am reassured by the number of allies and partners I see before me. The faces of friends from previous campaigns where we have shared hardship and laughter, failures and victories. We have shed blood together. We remember those we left behind. And it is our willingness to shed blood to protect our common values and each other's territory that will see us prevail.

So, how are we going to mobilise?

Article V remains the cornerstone of our national security; that makes it a critical national interest. The conflict in Ukraine will herald I think a paradigm shift in how NATO delivers collective deterrence; from a doctrine of reacting to crises, to one of deterring them. This principle is at the heart

of Op MOBILISE: Russia knowing that they cannot gain a quick localised victory – that in any circumstances and any time frame they will lose if they pick a fight with NATO.

Deterrence demands all of the tools of statecraft, underpinned by soldiers, sailors, aviators and Civil Servants operating across all five operational domains. It requires forces across Defence that are modernised, relevant, and harness the potential of the fourth industrial revolution. Effective deterrence also means communicating clearly so we maximise deterrent effect without increasing the risk of mobilisation.

When faced with an adversary such as Mr Putin, with the campaigns of Peter the Great as his reference point, the war in Ukraine also reminds us of the utility of Land Power: it takes an army to hold and regain territory and defend the people who live there. It takes an Army to deter. And this army, the British Army, will play its part alongside our allies.

In Ukraine we've seen the limitations of deterrence by punishment. It has reinforced the importance of deterrence through denial – we must stop Russia seizing territory – rather than expecting to respond to a land grab with a delayed counteroffensive.

To succeed, the British Army, in conjunction with our NATO allies and partners, must be in-place or at especially high readiness – ideally a mix of both. Tripwires aren't enough. If we fail to deter, there are no good choices given the cost of a potential counterattack and the associated nuclear threat. We must, therefore, meet strength with strength from the outset and be unequivocally prepared to fight for NATO territory.

If this battle came, we would likely be outnumbered at the point of attack and fighting like hell. Standoff air, maritime or cyber fires are unlikely to dominate on their own – Land will still be the decisive domain. And though I bow to no one in my advocacy for the need for game changing digital transformation, to put it bluntly, you can't cyber your way across a river. No single platform, capability, or tactic will unlock the problem.

Success will be determined by combined arms and multi-domain competence. And mass. Ukraine has also shown that engaging with our adversaries and training, assisting and reassuring our partners is high payoff activity. Future Soldier's new Ranger Regiment – on the ground in Ukraine before the invasion – and the new Security Force Assistance Brigade are well set for this. With the right partner and in the right conditions persistent engagement and capacity building can be really effective. Operation ORBITAL has made a key contribution to preparing the Armed Forces of Ukraine for this fight and it continues to expand exponentially. And We must be wary of Russia's malign activities further afield – our global hubs, including Kenya and Oman, will still play a vital role as we seek to mobilise to meet aggression in Europe – allowing us to help our partners there secure strategic advantage elsewhere in the world.

This is the war that we are mobilising to prevent, by preparing to win. With our NATO and JEF partners. Against the Russian threat. In Eastern and

Northern Europe. And in doing so it is my hope that we never have to fight it.

So what does this mean for the Army...

My predecessor, and my friend, General Sir Mark Carleton-Smith, laid the foundations for the most ambitious transformation of the British Army in a generation, Future Soldier. We, I owe him a great debt. The Government has also generously committed 41 billion pounds to Army equipment over the next decade.

But as we face a new reality, a race to mobilise, we must be honest with ourselves about Future Soldiers' timelines, capability gaps and risks – and now our own diminished stockpiles as a result of Gifting in Kind to the brave soldiers of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. We should not be afraid of necessary heresies. Defence is only as strong as its weakest domain. And technology does not eliminate the relevance of combat mass.

To mobilise the Army I intend to drive activity across four focused lines of effort:

First, and most importantly, boosting readiness. NATO needs highly ready forces that can deploy at short notice for the collective defence of alliance members. Deterring Russia means more of the Army ready more of the time, and ready for high-intensity war in Europe. So we will pick up the pace of combined arms training, and major on urban combat. We will re-build our stockpiles and review the deployability of our vehicle fleet. And having seen its limitations first-hand as the Commander of the Field Army, I think we need to ask ourselves whether Whole Fleet Management is the right model given the scale of the threat we face. The time has come to be frank about our ability to fight if called upon.

Second, we will accelerate the modernisation outlined in Future Soldier. NATO needs technologically advanced modern armies able to deploy at speed and fight together. They must be able to integrate effects across the domains, all stitched together by a sophisticated and robust command, control and communication network. We will seek to speed up the delivery of planned new equipments including long range fires, attack aviation, persistent surveillance and target acquisition, expeditionary logistic enablers, Ground Based Air Defence, protected mobility, and the technologies that will prove pivotal to our digital ambition: CIS and Electronic Warfare. Most importantly, this will start now – not at some ill-defined point in the future.

Third, we will re-think how we fight. We've been watching the war in Ukraine closely and we are already learning and adapting. Not least to the help of RUSI, Many of the lessons are not new – but they are now applied. We will double-down on combined arms manoeuvre, especially in the deep battle, and devise a new doctrine rooted in geography, integrated with NATO's war plans and specific enough to drive focused, relevant investment and inspire the imagination of our people to fight and win if called upon.

And Fourth, I am prepared to look again at the structure of our Army. If we judge that revised structures will make the Army better prepared to fight in Europe, then we will follow Monty's advice and do "something else". Now of course adapting structures has implications for the size of the Army – and I know that there will be questions on Army numbers locked, loaded and ready to fire from the audience! Put simply, the threat has changed and as the threat changes, we will change with it. My job is to build the best Army possible, ready to integrate with fellow Services and Strategic command and ready to fight alongside our allies. Obviously our Army has to be affordable; nonetheless, it would be perverse if the CGS was advocating reducing the size of the Army as a land war rages in Europe and Putin's territorial ambitions extend into the rest of the decade, and beyond Ukraine.

Importantly, the four mechanisms I have used to illustrate how the Army will mobilise will all be initiated from the line of march. This means now rather than in some distant and ill-defined point in the future.

Op MOBILISE is as much about people as it is about training and hardware. The last 125 days of conflict in Ukraine have shown us if we needed showing the enduring nature of war; its violent and human nature, and its timeless interplay of friction and chance. It has reminded us all that war fundamentally remains a clash of wills. Russia's so called 'Special Military Operation' has shown that while Moscow may have invested in some of the most modernised land technology in the world, it lacked the will to fight when faced with a tenacious Ukrainian defence. Let down by its leaders, we have seen the moral decay of the Russian Army play out in front of us.

The fighting spirit of our people is the Army's single greatest responsibility. The moral component matters. To succeed in mobilising we must ensure that we engender the culture and behaviour required to forge and cohere a confident and winning team, and, in my 37 years' experience, I have learnt that trust increases tempo. I am fully behind the TEAMWORK initiative set up by my predecessor. It is not woke-ism nor in any way a lessening of standards at a time where the British Army must be prepared to engage in warfare at its most violent. To put it simply, you don't need to be laddish to be lethal – in a scrap you have to truly trust those on your left and right.

And when the British Army has been faced with any challenge during its long history, it has always been the ingenuity of our people that has seen us through. I know there will be an opportunity cost to mobilising – and we must continually review and balance our priorities to meet emerging threats. But mobilisation also requires us to cut down that which slows us down. I want to you all, I'm talking to the Army here to identify those areas of our process and bureaucracy that take up your time – like any public institution we have accumulated some barnacles that slow us down – but we are not just any institution, so it's time to strip them back.

Mobilisation is not just an internal focus. We must take industry with us and have the right relationships with our enabling agents to deliver and quicken the ambitious modernisation targets we have set ourselves. I will use the next few months to engage personally with you, our industry partners and

encourage you to use the framework offered by the new Land Industrial Strategy to make the Army more lethal and more effective, with better equipment in the hands of our soldiers at best speed. We can't be lighting the factory furnaces across the nation on the eve of war; this effort must start now if we want to prevent war from happening.

I'd be naïve if I ignored the fact that the Army's platform procurement has not been a smooth journey during the last decade. We have the humility to learn the lessons from where it has gone wrong and the confidence to engage with industry to generate the mutual trust required to get the very latest technology for the best value for money. And we should also be bolder in celebrating our successes – AH64 Echo is flying now, the first Boxer will be in service in 2023, the first Challenger 3 arrives in 2024 'and the Sky Sabre air defence system was deployed and operating in Poland only weeks after entering service.

This speech forms my first order of the day. Mobilisation is now the main effort. We are mobilising the Army to help prevent war in Europe by being ready to fight and win alongside our NATO allies and partners. It will be hard work – a generational effort – and I expect all ranks to get ready, train hard and engage. We must be practical and cut through unnecessary bureaucracy, be prepared to deprioritise where activity is not mission critical, honestly highlight risks where we identify them and avoid falling victim to the say-do gap or the lure of institutional panaceas – conscious of the advice of the late, great, John Le Carre that Whitehall panaceas often simply go 'out with a whimper, leaving behind...the familiar English muddle'.

I expect this change to be command led. And that includes all commanders: from the General in Main Building, to the young Lance Corporal in the barrack room, from the reservist officer on a weekend exercise, to the Civil Servant in Army Headquarters.

And as we mobilise, I echo the words of General Montgomery to his team in the dust of the North African desert in 1942, "we must have confidence in one another"...

As the new CGS I have confidence in each and every one of you. And I am proud to stand among you.

And my final message to you is this:

This is the moment to defend the democratic values that define us;

This is the moment to help our brave Ukrainian allies in their gallant struggle;

This is the moment we stand with our friends and partners to maintain peace throughout the rest of Europe.

This is our moment. Seize it.

Alan Lovell announced as preferred Environment Agency Chair candidate

News story

The Environment Secretary has selected Alan Lovell DL as the Government's preferred candidate for Chair of the Environment Agency.



Environment Secretary George Eustice has selected Alan Lovell DL as the Government's preferred candidate to succeed Emma Howard Boyd as the Chair of the Environment Agency.

Mr Lovell's selection followed a rigorous process conducted in accordance with the Ministerial Governance Code on Public Appointments. The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (EFRA) Select Committee and the Environmental Audit Committee (EAC) will now hold a joint pre-appointment hearing on Tuesday 5 July and report on Mr Lovell's suitability for the post.

Pre-appointment scrutiny is an important part of the appointment process for some of the most significant public appointments made by Ministers to verify that the recruitment meets the principles set out in the Governance Code on Public Appointments.

Pre-appointment hearings are held in public and allow a Select Committee to take evidence from a Minister's preferred candidate before they are appointed. The EFRA and EAC Select Committees will publish a report setting out their views on the candidate's suitability for the post, which will be considered by Ministers before deciding whether to proceed with the appointment.

Subject to the EFRA and EAC Select Committees' report and the final decision being made by the Environment Secretary, Mr Lovell will take up the post in September 2022. Emma Howard Boyd CBE second term as Environment Agency Chair will end in September 2022.

Biographical details of Alan Lovell

- Alan is an experienced Chair of both commercial and not-for-profit enterprises. He is currently Chairman of the Interserve Group Ltd, and is Senior Independent Director of SIG plc and Chair of Safestyle UK plc.
- His executive career included time as a Chief Executive of six companies, including Infinis, Jarvis, Costain and Dunlop Slazenger.
- Alan was also Chair of the Consumer Council for Water for four years and has chaired the University of Winchester and the Mary Rose Trust.

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Homes England agrees Strategic Place Partnership pilot with Greater Manchester

Homes England and Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) have entered into a Strategic Place Partnership (SPP), piloting a new model for partnership working between the government's housing and regeneration agency and local authorities. Homes England is also testing the pilot programme with the Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA).

The model – which is just one of the ways that Homes England is working with places to support the government's levelling up agenda – is aimed at sub-regions with the most ambitious proposals for housing growth as part of their broader social, environmental and economic vision for the area. Importantly they must also have a strong pipeline of potential opportunities to deliver these ambitions. The SPP is then centred around a shared business plan that sets out special and thematic priorities.

In Greater Manchester, this means a shared focus on the delivery of growth locations, affordable housing and town centre regeneration. Through the SPP, the partners have set out how they will work together to progress their pipeline of homes and regeneration projects to achieve this, working with both private and public sector partners across the sub-region.

Peter Denton, Chief Executive of Homes England, said:

This new model of partnership is our way of responding to the most ambitious places where there is significant opportunity and a need to partner more closely. Greater Manchester is a mature, well established partner, with huge ambition and the ability to deliver. Together, we can pool our resources to support place-based growth

and regeneration, including the supply of well-designed new homes.

Mayor of Greater Manchester Andy Burnham said:

This partnership will give a major boost to the work we're already doing across Greater Manchester to address the national housing crisis.

Right now we have to be creating homes and infrastructure that are fit for a better future, and our ambition is to deliver 30,000 good quality, truly affordable net zero carbon homes by 2038. This means unlocking brownfield land for regeneration, and ensuring that development supports sustainable growth throughout the city-region. With the expertise, capacity, and funding tools at their disposal, and working alongside the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and local council teams, Homes England has a vital role to play in this collective effort.

With ASELA, the Partnership aims to transform housing and regeneration in the region – there is a recognised need for, and commitment to, a programme of strategic and tactical interventions that would significantly increase delivery rates. The ambition is to embed outstanding place making principles in every project so local communities can thrive and see a step change in employment and skills, life chances and health and wellbeing.

Cllr Chris Hossack, Chair of the Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA) and Leader of Brentwood Borough Council, said:

We welcome the partnership with Homes England. It will support our vision for south Essex as a place where communities can thrive and where new homes come hand in hand with new jobs and regeneration of our town centres and high streets.

The SPP pilot is just one of the tools Homes England is exploring as part of the Agency's broader efforts to reshape the way it works with places, and will not be suitable for every sub-region. In line with the commitments set out in the government's Levelling Up White Paper, Homes England is adopting a place-first approach to transformational regeneration, responding to the individual circumstances, aspirations and needs of each place, and working with local leaders to unlock barriers.

For example in Sheffield Homes England is developing a bespoke housing solution in collaboration with local stakeholders and have formed the Housing Growth Board to implement this. In Blackpool, the Agency is conducting a study with Blackpool Town Council that will underpin the development of opportunities for investment for reshaping inner Blackpool. While in Wolverhampton, Homes England is working with the City of Wolverhampton Council and the West Midlands Combined Authority to utilise collective

expertise and investment tools to unlock new homes.

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

For more information on Homes England's approach to working with places, Homes England is hosting a webinar on Place-Based Approaches to Delivery on Thursday 14 July, as part of the Agency's Summer Learning Programme for local government. You can register [here](#) and find out more about the Summer Learning Programme [here](#)

UN Human Rights Council 50: UK statement on the nexus between climate change and violence on women and girls

World news story

The UK delivered a statement during the panel discussion on the nexus between climate change and violence against women and girls through a human rights lens, as part of the annual discussion on women's rights.



UK Government

Thank you, Mr Vice-President.

Stopping violence against women and girls is one of the most urgent human rights challenges of our time. It is rooted in discrimination and inequality, and the issue is widespread: one third of all women worldwide will experience physical and/or sexual violence during their lifetime.

The UK recognises that climate change can have implications for the full enjoyment of human rights and have a particularly devastating impact on women and girls, who are more likely to die or be displaced, or suffer from intimate partner violence during climate change-induced crises and disasters. Gender responsive climate action is essential to addressing these global challenges.

Putting women and girls at the forefront of policy-making processes and supporting organisations led by and focusing on women and girls is critical if we are to ensure response and recovery strategies respect, protect and promote women and girls' human rights.

It is for this reason that, last July, the UK joined the Action Coalition on Feminist Action for Climate Justice, affirming our commitment to championing women and girls' climate leadership, education and decision-making. At the COP26 Gender Day in November 2021, the UK announced £165 million of funding to simultaneously tackle gender inequality and climate change.

Mr Vice President,

We would like to ask the panellists to consider what measures can be

implemented to ensure this critical combination of issues is addressed.

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