

# [Press release: Kathryn Cearns OBE appointed as Non-Executive Director](#)

Highways England is responsible for operating, maintaining and improving more than 4,300 miles of motorways and main trunk roads throughout England and is delivering the government's £15 billion Road Investment Strategy.

A chartered accountant, Kathryn will join the Board from today (Tuesday 17 April) for three years.

Highways England chairman Colin Matthews said:

I warmly welcome Kathryn to the Board of Highways England. Her strong financial skills and experience will be extremely valuable as we work to achieve the best possible value for taxpayers' money from the government's £15bn investment in England's strategic road network.

Kathryn has extensive senior level experience in both the public and private sectors. Her career has included roles as independent chairman of the Financial Reporting Advisory Board to HM Treasury and as a project director at the UK Accounting Standards Board (now the Financial Reporting Council), as well as working for many years for an international law firm providing finance, audit and corporate governance advice and expertise to leading FTSE companies.

Kathryn holds other non-executive, trustee and advisory appointments, most notably as a member of the External Audit Committee for the International Monetary Fund, a non-executive director for the UK Supreme Court, a non-executive board member and member of the Audit Committee for Companies House and as a trustee for Royal British Legion Industries.

Kathryn will be paid £25,000 for a minimum of 27 days' work per annum, with an additional £3,000 for chairing a board committee. The remuneration for non-executive and senior executive posts is published in Highways England's annual report each year.

## **General enquiries**

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

## **Media enquiries**

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

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## [News story: United Kingdom and New Zealand to increase cooperation in the Pacific and on global challenges](#)

During the meeting, which took place at the Churchill War Rooms, Mr Johnson and Mr Peters exchanged views on a wide range of foreign policy issues of concern to both countries, including defence and security challenges and the importance of cooperation to preserve and advance the international rules-based system at a time when it is under stress.

The two foreign ministers also discussed a range of bilateral issues, including future negotiations on a bilateral Free Trade Agreement once the UK departs the European Union in March 2019, and Mr Peters reiterated New Zealand's support for the UK following the attack in Salisbury.

Following the meeting;

UK Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said:

The UK is one of the Pacific's oldest friends and we want to play an even more valuable role as a partner to Pacific Island countries. We have agreed that the United Kingdom and New Zealand will co-host a Wilton Park forum on Pacific climate change issues in the United Kingdom in December 2018.

Pacific Island leaders have shone a light on the grave impacts of climate change. This forum will further highlight Pacific challenges and priorities, and show how the Pacific can be an early example for how to develop global responses to climate change.

We both agreed that initiatives taken by Heads of Government and Ministers this week will give new energy and focus to the Commonwealth and underline its continued relevance in promoting a more prosperous and sustainable future.

New Zealand Foreign Affairs Minister Winston Peters said:

Secretary Johnson and I discussed the United Kingdom's plans to scale up its engagement in the Pacific. I made it clear that New Zealand welcomes these plans and offered practical support for the UK's efforts, including potentially through regular dialogue on Pacific issues, staff secondments, and practical development cooperation.

One example of collaboration will come in late 2019, when New Zealand is due to open a newly-built High Commission in Honiara, Solomon Islands, on a site shared with the British High Commission.

Our discussions also underlined the ongoing strength of the ties between us, as well as the scope that exists for even deeper cooperation in many areas – whether through policy dialogue on priority issues, secondments and exchanges between government agencies, or practical initiatives to work together domestically and around the world.

## Further information

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# [Press release: New chairman of HMCTS board appointed](#)

Tim Parker will take up his new position as Chairman of the Board of HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS) on 27th April.

The Board is responsible for overseeing the leadership and direction of HMCTS and ensuring that it effectively delivers the aims and objectives set by the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Chief Justice and the Senior President of Tribunals. The Chair provides leadership, vision and direction – ensuring HMCTS is driving forward the Government's £1 billion reform of courts and tribunals.

Tim will bring a wealth of knowledge and experience in business transformation and is currently chairman of the Post Office, Samsonite and the National Trust. He previously spent time as an economist in the Treasury and was chief executive of Clarks, Kwik-Fit and the AA.

His appointment has been made by the Lord Chancellor, Lord Chief Justice and Senior President of Tribunals.

He will formally take up the post at the end of April, following the retirement of Robert Ayling, who has served as Board Chairman since HMCTS was established in 2011. Robert has overseen the design and implementation of the transformation programme for the courts and tribunals service, which will streamline working practices, update and replace currently outdated technology and provide much improved services for users.

Tim Parker, incoming chairman of the Board of HMCTS, said:

I am delighted to be joining HMCTS and look forward to spearheading

its programme of reform – bringing courts and tribunals into the digital age and ensuring they are providing the best service possible for the public.

Lord Chancellor David Gauke said:

Tim's expertise will be vital as we deliver our reform and modernisation of the courts and tribunals system – making it more convenient, easier to use, and providing better value for the taxpayer. I would like to place on record my sincere thanks to Robert for his outstanding service to HMCTS and the wider justice system through his chairmanship over the past seven years.

The Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales, Lord Burnett of Maldon, and the Senior President of Tribunals, Sir Ernest Ryder, said:

We congratulate Tim Parker on his appointment, and pay tribute to his predecessor, Robert Ayling who chaired the Board and led the organisation with dedication, integrity and skill for the last seven years. Tim takes up the reins at a critical time and we look forward to working closely with him.

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## **[Press release: The UK announces further support in the fight against malaria](#)**

As the second largest international donor, the UK has been at the forefront of efforts to reduce the number of cases for many years by investing in treatment, prevention and research, including the fight against the threat of drug resistance.

Today the International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt announced a £100 million fund to be matched pound for pound by the private sector, which will be used to support priority countries with mosquito nets, indoor sprays and the strengthening of health systems.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said:

We know malaria still causes one out of ten child deaths in Africa and costs economies billions every year. We also know progress on

reducing malaria cases has stalled, which is why it is so important it is one of the focuses of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

The UK government is a leader in the fight against malaria and has been for many years. We are the second largest international funder in the world and invest in treatment, prevention and research, including fighting against the threat of drug resistance.

Our new commitment will save countless more lives and build a safer, healthier and more prosperous world for us all which is firmly in the UK's national interest.

Malaria is a major health issue for the Commonwealth, with 90% of Commonwealth citizens living in affected countries.

The UK's new commitment will distribute 26 million nets and ensure more than five million households in target areas are reached with indoor spraying. This money will save more lives and help build a safer, healthier and more prosperous world for us all, which is firmly in the UK's national interest.

Heads of government will be urged to make a commitment to halve malaria across the Commonwealth by 2023 at a Malaria Summit tomorrow in London co-hosted by the governments of Rwanda, Swaziland and the UK.

Today the Prime Minister supported the pledge to halve malaria in the next five years and re-affirmed the government's commitment in 2016 to spend £500 million a year on malaria for five years. UK aid has helped Nigeria cut the estimated number of people who die from malaria in Nigeria every year by more than half – from 210,000 to 100,000 between 2000 and 2016. This year the Department for International Development will launch a new £50 million programme to push for further malaria control in the country.

The UK is also committing £9.2 million of research funding to develop two new safe and effective malaria treatments. The programme will be led by the Mahidol-Oxford Tropical Medicine Research Unit (MORU) which is a collaboration of the University of Oxford, Wellcome Trust and Mahidol University, Thailand.

This comes on top of the UK's leading work in the fight against malaria:

- Since 2011, DFID has distributed 49.7 million long-lasting, insecticide-treated bed nets – saving up to 808,000 lives.
- In September 2016 DFID announced the UK pledge of £1.1 billion to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria over the next three years. In 2016 UK support helped the Global Fund to save 2.2 million lives and avert 50 million new infections from malaria, TB and HIV.
- UK funded research that supported the development of child-friendly malaria drugs has now been used for more than 350 million treatments in malaria-endemic countries.
- The UK also remains committed to its five-year pledge, made in 2016, to spend £500m a year tackling malaria until March 2021.

## Notes to editors:

As part of our £500m a year commitment on malaria, today we are announcing a £100 million investment in malaria. This is a match fund which leverages support from the private sector, giving an additional boost to the fight against the disease.

This money will support the Global Fund's work in priority countries. The Global Fund works in 38 of the 53 Commonwealth countries including Nigeria, Kenya, Malawi and Tanzania.

Tackling malaria not only has a positive impact on improving health services, it also increases economic growth and productivity of affected countries.

Malaria affects economic growth, with the growth rate of the gross domestic product per capita in malaria-endemic countries as much as 1.3 percentage points lower than in countries without malaria.

It can cost as little as £3.25 to avert a case of malaria – with an astonishing return on investment as malaria control brings £36 in social and economic benefits for every pound spent.

DFID supports research on infectious diseases, such as malaria, through the Ross Fund Portfolio. This follows a pledge in 2016 for the department to invest 3% of its budget in high quality, high impact research across all of its policy areas.

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## [Press release: G7 foreign ministers' statement on the Salisbury attack](#)

We, the G7 foreign ministers, of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States of America and the High Representative of the European Union, are united in condemning, in the strongest possible terms, the attack that took place against Sergei and Yulia Skripal, using a nerve agent in Salisbury, United Kingdom, on March 4, 2018. A British police officer and numerous civilians were exposed in the attack and required hospital treatment, and the lives of many more innocent British civilians have been threatened. We express our deepest sympathies to them all and our admiration and support for the UK emergency services for their courageous response.

The United Kingdom has thoroughly briefed G7 partners. We share, and agree with, the [UK's assessment that it is highly likely that the Russian Federation was responsible](#) for the attack and that there is no plausible alternative explanation. We condemn Russia's continued failure to address legitimate requests from the UK government, which further underlines its

responsibility. We call on Russia to urgently address all questions related to the incident in Salisbury. The [Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons \(OPCW\) has now independently confirmed](#) the findings of the United Kingdom relating to the identity of the toxic chemical that was used in Salisbury. Russia should provide full and complete disclosure of its previously undeclared Novichok program to the OPCW in line with its international obligations.

This use of a military-grade nerve agent, of a type developed by Russia, constitutes the first offensive use of a nerve agent in Europe since the Second World War and is a grave challenge not only to the security of the United Kingdom but to our shared security. It is an assault on UK sovereignty. Any use of chemical weapons by a state party, under any circumstances, is a clear breach of international law and a violation of the [Chemical Weapons Convention](#). It is a threat to us all. Their use is abhorrent, completely unacceptable and must be systematically and rigorously condemned. We, participating states of the International Partnership Against Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons, stand together against impunity for those who develop or use these weapons, anywhere, any time, under any circumstances.

The G7 is committed to protecting and promoting the rules-based international system. We stand in unqualified solidarity with the United Kingdom. Our concerns are also heightened against the background of a pattern of earlier irresponsible and destabilizing Russian behaviour, including interference in countries' democratic systems. We call on Russia to live up to its Chemical Weapons Convention obligations, as well as its responsibilities as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, to uphold international peace and security. In order to bring Russia back into the rules-based international system, we will continue to engage with Russia, as appropriate, on addressing regional crises and global challenges.

The G7 will continue to bolster its capabilities to address hybrid threats, including in the areas of cybersecurity, strategic communication and counter-intelligence. We welcome national action taken to constrain Russian hostile-intelligence activity and to enhance our collective security. The G7 will remain closely focused on this issue and its implications.