

[News story: IPO helps the cultural sector understand intellectual property](#)

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has published a report on [Digital Culture](#). The report, Culture is Digital, follows a Digital Culture project launched in April 2017 by the Secretary of State for DCMS, Matt Hancock with the [#CultureisDigital](#) online consultation.

That project focused on three areas:

- driving audience engagement
- unleashing the creative potential of technology in the cultural sector
- boosting the capability of cultural organisations

The capability area identified that there are intellectual property (IP) skills gaps in the cultural sector when creating digital content such as digital art installations in galleries or dance performances streamed online.

This lack of expertise limits the content makers' ability to create and exploit digital content. To help address these gaps, the Intellectual Property Office (IPO) have included two commitments in the new report:

- the IPO will work with the British Library's Business and Intellectual Property Centres (BIPCs) and representatives from the cultural sector to develop guidance and training. This will help cultural organisations better understand the IP framework and its relevance to them.
- the space helps artists and organisations make great art and reach new audiences digitally. It will lead work with cultural organisations, cultural rights holders and seek guidance from the IPO to develop a Cultural Digital Rights Code of Practice

This work should improve access to cultural content by maintaining a balance of intellectual property protection and digital innovation.

[News story: Litter Innovation Fund: Government backs new community](#)

projects

A range of innovative projects to tackle litter louts in local communities have been awarded funding by the government, Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey has announced today (9 March 2018).

The first round of funding sees a [number of councils, charities, businesses, and public projects](#) awarded almost £125,000 to take innovative steps to tackle littering in their communities.

The successful projects include developing bins to prevent seagulls from scattering litter on beaches and working with river users to reduce plastic getting into rivers, helping to tackle the issue of litter getting into our marine environment.

The funding builds on the Government's wider [Litter Strategy for England](#), as well as the recent launch of the [25 Year Environment Plan](#) setting out how Government will protect and enhance our natural environment.

Welcoming the new projects, Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey said:

We want to be the first generation to leave our environment in a better state than we found it and these innovative new projects will help reduce the amount of litter which so often plagues our streets, parks, countryside, rivers and marine environment.

We have all seen the damaging effects that litter can have on wildlife and the environment, and I encourage people to do their bit, take responsibility for their litter and recycle more.

Communities Minister Rishi Sunak said:

The Litter Innovation Fund is part of our wider strategy to deliver a substantial reduction in litter and littering while leaving a cleaner, greener and tidier environment for the next generation.

I am looking forward to seeing these projects supporting that strategy while helping communities make a real difference in their area.

Government has recently announced a range of new measures to tackle waste including proposals to extend the 5p plastic bag charge to small retailers and introducing a ban on plastic microbeads.

Keeping the country's streets clean cost local Government almost £700 million last year. Much of this is avoidable litter, and money that could be better spent in the community. Despite this, a worrying 1 in 5 people admit to

dropping litter.

A second round of applications will be launched shortly.

- The Litter Innovation Fund was set up as part of the Government's Litter Strategy for England which was launched in April 2017 as is administered by the sustainability not-for-profit charity WRAP. A total of £450,000 is available for funding to local projects.
- Applications are assessed consistently and against published criteria.
- The funding is evenly provided by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs and the Department for Communities and Local Government and funding awarded is limited to a maximum of £10,000 per project. Projects must also secure match funding.
- The cost of £682m in 2016/17 for street cleaning is from [Official local Government returns to DCLG](#).
- Research on one in five admitting to having dropped litter in the past is from Keep Britain Tidy – Litter Droppers Segmentation research (2010).

[Press release: Waste vehicle seized from gang](#)

A vehicle belonging to an organised gang operating in South East England has been seized by the Environment Agency and Thames Valley Police, as part of an ongoing waste crime investigation. The vehicle is believed to be linked to the operation of an illegal waste site in the Maidenhead area.

The seizure, which took place last week, comes as the Environment Agency and the police move forward in their investigation to capture those responsible for occupying land unlawfully and accepting tonnes of waste, often from unsuspecting sources, leaving behind the rubbish to be cleared at the expense of the landowner or taxpayer.

Illegal waste crime drains the UK economy of £1 billion each year in clean-up costs and lost tax revenues. It has a devastating effect on the environment and local communities with pest infestations and fires, which could lead to water and land contamination plus air pollution from smoke.

Nick Daykin, Environment Agency Enforcement Team Leader, said:

This is a great result in an ongoing investigation with Thames Valley Police to apprehend a group of unscrupulous individuals. The power to seize vehicles is a relatively new and is now an important weapon in our armoury for disrupting this type of criminal activity. This is a big message to the criminal fraternity: you set up site yesterday, we will have one of your vehicles off the road today and we will do it again tomorrow!

Using illegal waste dealers may seem tempting in terms of cost, but it can help fund organised crime. Everyone has a responsibility for their own waste and if your waste is found at an illegal site you could be facing fines of up to £5,000. To avoid this, we encourage members of the public and local businesses to ask their waste carrier for proof of their Waste Carrier's Registration and to ask to see a 'waste transfer note' and if possible take a photo of it on their phone.

All press enquiries: 0800 141 2743

[News story: Reappointment to the School Teachers' Review Body](#)

Sir Robert Burgess has been reappointed as a member of the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) for a second 3-year term to end in November 2021.

Jeanne Watson has been reappointed for an additional 1-year term to end in October 2018.

School Teachers' Review Body

The [STRB](#) provides independent advice to the government on pay and conditions for teachers and school leaders in England and Wales.

Appointments process

The reappointments have been made in line with the [Governance Code on public appointments](#).

Biographies

Sir Robert Burgess

[Sir Robert](#) was the Vice Chancellor of the University of Leicester until September 2014. He previously held a number of roles at the University of Warwick, including Senior Pro Vice Chancellor, Founding Director of the Centre for Educational Development, Appraisal and Research (a cross faculty research centre), and Professor of Sociology.

He has had experience on several national committees, including the Board of the British Library and the Higher Education Academy Board. He is the Chair of GSM London's Governing Body (GSM London provide industry led vocational business programmes) and Chair of the NatCen Social Research Board. He was knighted in 2010 for services to higher education locally and nationally.

Jeanne Watson

[Jeanne Watson](#) was a secondary headteacher for 22 years. Her experience includes 16 years as the headteacher of The Brooksbank School in Calderdale, an 11 to 18 academy, as well as 2 positions as the Executive Headteacher in schools requiring support. Jeanne has also worked as the Chair of Calderdale Secondary Heads Association with responsibility for school-to-school improvement, and she has extensive experience of partnership working, headteacher training and local authority management.

Statement to Parliament: Home Secretary statement on the incident in Salisbury

With permission, Mr Speaker, I shall make a statement on the incident in Salisbury that has been unfolding over the past four days.

Let me first pay tribute to the continued professionalism, dedication and courage of the emergency services. They have handled the incident with their customary attentiveness, alacrity, and sense of public duty. First responders put themselves in dangerous situations on a day-to-day basis, and this incident has underlined that fact – to which, sadly, I shall return later in my statement.

I shall now update the House as far as is possible on the basis of the current facts of the case. At approximately 4.15pm on Sunday afternoon, Wiltshire police received a call from a member of the public who was concerned for the welfare of two people in a park in Salisbury. Emergency services were called, and the two were admitted to the A&E department of Salisbury District Hospital. They were a man in his 60s and a woman in her 30s, with no visible signs of injury. They are understood to be Sergei and

Yulia Skripal. Both remain unconscious, and in a critical but stable condition.

I regret to inform the House that a police officer has also fallen seriously ill. The officer was one of the first responders on Sunday, acting selflessly to help others. The latest update from the hospital is that the officer's condition remains serious but stable, and that he is conscious, talking and engaging. Officers from Wiltshire police are providing support for the officer's family and colleagues. Our thoughts are with all three victims, and their families and friends, at what will be an incredibly difficult time for them.

Wiltshire police began an investigation on Sunday to determine how the individuals had fallen ill, and whether a crime had been committed. They declared a major incident on Monday. On Tuesday the Metropolitan police decided that, given the unusual circumstances, responsibility for the investigation should be transferred to the National Counter Terrorism Policing Network. Samples from the victims have been tested by experts at the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory at Porton Down, who are world-renowned experts in the field. As Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley announced yesterday, that forensic analysis has revealed the presence of a nerve agent, and the incident is therefore being treated as attempted murder. I can confirm that it is highly likely the police officer has been exposed to the same nerve agent.

I spoke only this morning with Assistant Commissioner Mark Rowley, and he confirmed that we remain in the midst of a fast-paced, criminal investigation. As such, I will not comment further on the nature of the nerve agent. We must give the police the space they need to conduct a thorough investigation. All members will recognise that an investigation such as this will be complex and may take some time.

Public safety continues to be the No.1 priority for this government. Professor Sally Davies, the chief medical officer, stated yesterday that, based on the evidence we have, there is a low risk to the public. The UK has a world-leading emergency response. It is regularly tested and exercised to ensure we can deliver an effective response to a wide range of chemical, biological and radiological incidents. The three emergency services are well supplied with state-of-the-art equipment to respond to such threats.

The frontline response is supported by world-class scientific research and advice. This ensures that decision making on the ground, by all agencies involved, is firmly based on the available evidence. This will also support the decontamination activity needed to return the location to normality.

The police are working closely with Public Health England, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the DSTL. They have cordoned all known sites in Salisbury that were visited by the two initial victims before they became unwell, and are taking the necessary measures to protect public safety.

I want now to turn to the speculation – of which there has been much – around

who was responsible for this most outrageous crime. The use of a nerve agent on UK soil is a brazen and reckless act. This was attempted murder in the most cruel and public way. People are right to want to know who to hold to account. But, if we are to be rigorous in this investigation, we must avoid speculation and allow the police to carry on their investigation.

As the assistant commissioner said yesterday, the investigation now involves hundreds of officers, following every possible lead to find those responsible. Some of those leads have come from members of the public. I would like to thank the people of Salisbury for their help and for the calm they have shown over the last four days. I encourage anyone who visited Salisbury town centre and surrounding areas on Sunday afternoon, who has not yet spoken to the police, to get in touch.

We are committed to doing all we can to bring the perpetrators to justice – whoever they are, and wherever they may be. The investigation is moving at pace, and this government will act without hesitation as the facts become clearer. As my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary made clear on Tuesday, we will respond in a robust and appropriate manner once we ascertain who was responsible.

I would like to close where I began, by expressing my sincere thanks to the emergency services and hospital staff for their tireless efforts over the last four days. They have acted with utter professionalism both to minimise the risk to the wider public and to care for the victims of the attack, for which I know we are all very grateful. Our thoughts will be with the victims and their families over the coming days.

Finally, I thank members for their understanding that there will clearly be limits on what we can say as this investigation continues. As and when information can be made public, it will be. I commend the statement to the House.