

# News story: Defence Minister presents Nepalese President with Gurkha Annual Report

Defence Minister Mark Lancaster presents the Right Honourable Bidya Devi Bhandari with the Gurkha Annual Report. Crown copyright.

The Minister for the Armed Forces – who served with the Queen’s Gurkha Engineers himself – handed the document, which provides an update on the state of the Brigade and their work, to the Right Honourable Bidya Devi Bhandari on Monday.

It shows that the Brigade currently boasts more numbers than ever before, and this year commemorated Gurkha troops reaching the summit of Everest for the first time in their history.

His visit coincided with the completion of local, provincial and parliamentary elections under a new constitution, helping to secure a more peaceful, united and democratic Nepal.

Minister for the Armed Forces, Mark Lancaster, said:

Britain has long supported Nepal’s stability and prosperity, and I am delighted to be here at such a pivotal moment in its history. I look forward to continuing the strong bond between our nations, which is underpinned by the magnificent work of our Gurkha troops.

For more than 200 years, Gurkhas have been an integral part of the British Armed Forces – fighting in the First and Second World Wars, the Falklands, Afghanistan and Iraq and winning 13 Victoria Crosses, the highest British award for gallantry.

They were also among the first on the scene when Nepal was hit by a devastating 7.8 earthquake in 2015, helping to rebuild communities and provide aid to those left homeless.

As well as President Bhandari, the Minister also met Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, Defence Minister Bhimsen Das Pradhan, and other senior military and political figures to strengthen defence and bilateral ties.

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# Press release: One week to go to have your say on plans to upgrade major Winchester junction

Residents, businesses and road users in and around Winchester are being encouraged to ensure their voice is heard as a public consultation on improvements to junction 9 on the M3 enters its final week.

The six week public consultation, which began on 9 January 2018 runs until 19 February, is seeking views on plans for a major upgrade to junction 9 of the M3, where the motorway meets the A34.

Under the plans, junction 9 will be redesigned to create dedicated free flow lanes which will allow drivers travelling between the M3 and the A34 to avoid using the junction roundabout. The roundabout itself will be redesigned into a new 'dumbbell' layout, which will increase capacity, improve safety and make journey times more reliable.

Highways England project manager Simon Hewett said:

I would like to thank everyone who has been to see the team at an exhibition or have submitted their feedback through the website. These are ambitious plans which will make a huge difference to people using this busy interchange and there is still time for those who haven't yet had their say on the proposals to do so before the consultation ends on Monday 19 February.

There are still two exhibitions to go, both in Kings Worthy, so it would be great for people who have not yet had their say to come and see the team to talk about the plans.

The proposed free-flow interchange will help to reduce congestion by removing the need for through traffic to use the roundabout, in turn improving safety. The proposals include:

- introducing free-flow slip roads, both northbound and southbound between the M3 and A34, so traffic intending to use the interchange will not need to enter the roundabout at the junction
- reconfiguring the roundabout to a new 'dumbbell' road layout increasing capacity and reducing congestion
- upgrading the cycle routes to complete the gap in route 23 of the National Cycle Network
- upgrades to footpaths and improved bridleway access for horse riders

Highways England has so far held three information exhibitions at venues in the area so that people could see the proposals and put any questions directly to the project team. There are two more events to go on Friday 16

and Saturday 17 February at the Tubbs Hall and Kings Worthy Community Centre, and there is still time for people to collect consultation material at various locations in and around Winchester, and also have their say via the website.

For more information on details of the proposals, public information events and how to have your say, [go to the scheme website](#).

### **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: Webinar 25 April -How to sell consumables to Department of Health](#)**

The Department of Health is working on a transformation programme for the procurement of consumables in the NHS. Consumables includes everything from baked beans to MRI machines, and represents £6 billion worth of sales per annum.

The transformation involves buying these supplies in a different way and the Department is keen to involve SMEs in that supply chain.

Join this webinar to hear from Paul Webster, Head of Supplier Relationship Management at Department of Health and Social Care, on the timetable for transformation and how SMEs can make the most of this valuable opportunity.

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## **[Press release: Nationwide waste crime investigation: two arrested in London](#)**

In a joint operation by the [Environment Agency](#), [the Metropolitan Police Service \(MPS\)](#) and Government Agency Intelligence Network (GAIN), a 29-year-

old man and a 46-year-old man were arrested for questioning in relation to waste crime, fraud and money laundering offences across the country.

The pair are believed to be involved in organised crime across the country, including in Lancashire, Middlesbrough, Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire and Kent.

## **Organised crime**

Both men were arrested at their homes in Chelsea and Hampstead Heath. The properties were also searched as part of the investigation.

Environment Agency team leader Mark Rumble said:

These arrests are part of extremely serious organised crime activity, which involves the dumping of illegal waste, fraud and money laundering across the country. We are working closely with partners to share intelligence on illegal waste activity to ensure the culprits are brought to justice.

We need everyone to play their part in the fight against waste crime – an issue that blights communities and drains valuable resources. Property and landowners are encouraged to be vigilant and report suspicious illegal activity to the Environment Agency.

## **Multiple agencies involved**

The London GAIN co-ordinator said:

Working in partnership, sharing intelligence lawfully and efficiently, the GAIN aims to ensure that government agencies along with law enforcement will help reduce serious and organised crime, in the most cost effective way. This action is an excellent example of adopting a multi-agency approach.

Detective inspector Tim Court, Metropolitan Police Organised Crime Command, said:

Organised crime has many forms but always exploits and undermines individuals, businesses and society for financial gain. It is critical that different parts of the government work together to tackle organised crime, holding offenders to account and removing the financial incentive for their offending. Today's activity has proven that the MPS and organised crime advisors will take action against those involved in any organised criminal activity in order to protect London.

To report illegal waste activity, please call the Environment Agency's incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60 or anonymously to [Crimestoppers](#) on 0800 555 111.

## Advice to land and property owners

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### [Press release: Have your say on new guidance for charities that are connected with non-charitable organisations](#)

The Charity Commission has [opened a consultation about new guidance](#) to help charities manage their relationships with connected non-charitable organisations.

The new guidance is closely based on the core trustee duties as explained in the regulator's existing guidance, and sets out principles for trustees to follow.

The Commission stresses that it is common for charities to have close connections with non-charities, for example trading subsidiaries or charities established by commercial businesses, and that this is not a concern in principle.

However, it says that trustees must manage these relationships properly in order to fulfil their legal duties and maintain public trust and confidence. It is vital that the public can easily distinguish between the charity and the connected non-charitable organisation, particularly where, for example, they share a very similar name.

The regulator says that serious problems can arise when charities' relationships are not managed appropriately, and that a number of its case reports in recent years involve concerns about trustees' handling of these matters.

It says it is keen to hear charities' views on the guidance, especially those of charities that are closely connected to non-charitable organisations. It is also interested in feedback from other interested parties, such as charity legal advisers. It is organising round-tables to facilitate discussions about the guidance.

**Sarah Atkinson, Director of Policy, Planning and Communications at the Charity Commission, says:**

This guidance is designed to help charities benefit from appropriate connections with non-charitable organisations, while preserving and protecting what is special and unique about charity. We want to help trustees make decisions that promote their charity's best interests, and that encourage public trust in charity more widely.

We know that charities want this guidance: currently advice is spread across several different Commission publications and this document pulls it all together in one place. We have also designed some practical aids to help trustees put the guidance into practice.

The guidance is in draft form, and we are keen to hear from as wide a range of charities and advisers as possible, to ensure the final guidance is as clear and helpful as possible.

The draft guidance stresses that trustees must, among other things:

- actively manage the relationship in compliance with their legal duties and the law
- preserve the charity's separation and independence from the non-charitable organisation
- manage the risks arising from the charity's association and/or work with the non-charitable organisation
- make decisions in accordance with their legal duties
- identify and avoid conflicts of interests and loyalty in respect of the non-charitable organisation when making decisions
- be accountable about the relationship, for example by complying with all relevant accounting and reporting requirements

The consultation about the draft guidance will close at 5pm on the 15 May 2018.

Ends

## **Notes to editors**

1. The Charity Commission is the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales. To find out more about our work, see the [about us](#) page on GOV.UK.