

Press release: Dstl Launches 2018 Apprenticeship Scheme

Following on from last year, Dstl has continued to expand its apprenticeship scheme, this year offering opportunities for 18 year olds and beyond. This includes the chance to gain a degree and other qualifications while in employment, with a competitive salary and 25 days paid annual leave.

Jade Ward, Dstl's Apprenticeship Adviser said:

"Dstl has a proven track record of successful apprenticeship programmes. We offer a pathway to earn while you learn while gaining real hands-on work experience without the debt of going to university. We are proud to offer these opportunities supporting the Government's 2020 vision of getting up to three million people enrolled on apprenticeship schemes across the UK."

26 year-old Louise, a first year electrical engineering apprentice, said:

"I have just started my apprenticeship with Dstl and I am thoroughly enjoying it. I was not academically inclined at school, and so was a little concerned, but I have not once felt that I cannot keep up – the tutors are really great and I definitely don't feel disadvantaged."

Dstl employee 20 year-old Zac said:

"I have recently graduated from the apprenticeship and have secured a permanent job. Throughout the apprenticeship I learnt lots of new techniques and skills, which gave me a good foot in to the group I am now working in."

The Dstl apprenticeship scheme is a mix of formal classroom-based study alongside practical hands-on training in our workshop, laboratory and office facilities.

Apprentices are based at sites in Porton Down, near Salisbury and Portsdown West, near Fareham. Dstl has a diverse, inclusive workforce and welcomes applications from all backgrounds to apply.

To find out how to register visit [Dstl Apprenticeship Opportunities](#)

Press release: Charity Commission issues official warning over

governance failures

The Charity Commission has issued an official warning to the Islamic Trust (Maidenhead) after finding misconduct and mismanagement in the administration of the charity.

The Commission opened an inquiry into the charity in April 2017 after its trustees failed to file its statutory returns for 2016 on time. This is despite having previously been part of the Commission's class inquiry into double defaulters and providing assurances to the Commission that they would not default again.

The Commission subsequently issued an order under section 84 of the Charities Act directing the trustees to prepare and submit the outstanding statutory returns, and explain what steps had been taken to prepare them. The trustees complied in full with the order and the outstanding statutory returns were submitted in May 2017.

As part of the inquiry, the Commission met with the charity's trustees and inspected the charity's books and records. The Commission identified a number of deficiencies in the charity's governance which are set out in the report published today.

The inquiry concluded that the trustees did not properly discharge their duties under charity law. In December 2017 the Commission used its regulatory powers to issue the charity with an official warning under section 75A of the Charities Act. The warning sets out that the trustees must take all reasonable steps to ensure that future statutory returns are submitted on time.

The Charity Commission's Director of Investigations, Monitoring and Enforcement Michelle Russell said:

Keeping detailed financial records and filing accounts on time, in addition to being a legal requirement for charities with an annual income over £25,000, is crucial to being able to evidence your charity's effectiveness to donors, beneficiaries and the regulator. It's also necessary to show that charitable funds are being spent on legitimate causes. In this case there were clear failings in the charity's financial management and overall governance, despite receiving previous advice from the Commission as part of our double defaulters class inquiry.

The trustees also failed to keep records of their wider decision-making which meant they were unable to show that they acted reasonably, in the best interests of the charity and took advice where appropriate.

The [full inquiry report](#) is available on GOV.UK

Ends

Notes to editors

1. The Charity Commission is the regulator of charities in England and Wales. To find out more about our work, see the [about us](#) page on GOV.UK.
 2. Search for charities on our [check charity tool](#).
 3. The duty to file accounts and the trustees' annual report with the Commission applies to all CIOs, irrespective of income and to all other registered charities whose gross yearly income exceeds £25,000.
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[Press release: Welsh Secretary to mark resurrection of London Welsh rugby club on eve of Wales v England showdown](#)

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns will laud the “unyielding and commendable efforts” of all involved in the resurrection of one of Britain’s oldest and most famous rugby clubs when he attends a dinner at London Welsh rugby club this evening (9 Feb).

Mr Cairns will be joined at the dinner at the club’s Old Deer Park ground by Welsh Rugby legend Sir Gareth Edwards who will look back on his career and reflect on some of the great players and rugby that defined one of the oldest and most famous clubs in the world.

The event comes in the wake of a challenging year for the club which saw them cease to exist as a professional club, only to be brought back to life through the belief, commitment and dedication of its supporters, staff and sponsors.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns will say:

London Welsh rugby club is a place where we celebrate Welsh people’s passion for the game – a real home from home for Welsh people living in London.

And the fact that we will gather in Old Deer Park this evening is made even more poignant when we consider the challenges this club has faced over the past year.

I want to applaud the unyielding efforts of everyone involved – both on and off the field – who have overcome the hurdles in front

of them to bring the club back to life and to bring it back to its legions of fans.

It is clear that this club gets into your blood and each and every supporter, player, staff member and sponsor should be commended for what you have achieved.

The Welsh Secretary will be speaking at the dinner on the eve of Wales' second Six Nations Championship match. Warren Gatland's men will head to Twickenham fully charged following their bruising defeat over Scotland, and aiming for a second tournament win on the bounce when they take to the field against England.

The event is being held ahead of the [Wales Week in London](#) festival – an annual series of activities and events that celebrate and promote everything that's great about Wales.

Through a calendar of events around St David's Day, which galvanises existing Welsh communities in London, Wales Week in London builds a positive momentum across the capital that is distinctly about Wales.

Mr Cairns added:

Wales Week in London is a fortnight centred around St David's Day where the very best of Welsh business, sport, culture and public life come together in the capital to celebrate everything that's great about Wales.

Businessmen Dan Langford and Mike Jordan – who each have business in Wales – have cultivated this festival of celebration to create a buzz about Wales and all it has to offer.

I would strongly encourage Welsh men and Women who have made their home in the UK's capital to visit the Wales Week in London website and sign up to attend some of the brilliant events they have planned to celebrate our great nation.

[News story: Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund provides conservation boost](#)

The fourth round of the popular Facilitation Fund has been one of the most successful yet, with 37 new groups of farmers from Cornwall to Northumberland

signed up to agreements after a competitive application round, which closed in November 2017.

The Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund rewards groups of farmers for coming together to work out the best ways to improve the natural environment across their land, providing habitats for wildlife on a landscape scale to better aid conservation of important species.

There are now 98 groups working across England with the common goal of better delivering environmental improvements on their land, and the land of their neighbours.

A number of high quality applications were received in this latest funding round, which meant the funding pot was increased by £600,000 to ensure that groups with important work to deliver could access the funding to do so.

All 37 groups have now received their agreements and will be able to receive funding for working together and sharing knowledge to improve the landscape. The addition of these groups to the scheme means that now over 450,000 hectares of holdings in England are delivering landscape-scale measures for wildlife, water management and the historic environment.

Farming Minister George Eustice said:

I am very pleased to see thirty seven new nature conservation groups established with over 700 members involved. The facilitation fund we have established aims to support partnership working and bring together farmers and other land managers to deliver local conservation projects.

It is particularly encouraging to see how many high quality applications we received, which we hope to replicate across the Countryside Stewardship scheme following the steps we have taken to simplify the wildlife packages.

Press release: Prime Minister's meeting with Roberto Gualtieri MEP: 8 Feb 2018

This afternoon the Prime Minister hosted Roberto Gualtieri MEP at Downing Street.

The second in a series of engagements between the Prime Minister and key representatives from the European Parliament, Mrs May and Mr Gualtieri

discussed the Brexit negotiations, with both recognising the importance of the terms of the implementation period being agreed by the March European Council.

The Prime Minister also set out her vision for a bold and close economic partnership with the EU in the future. Mr Gualtieri highlighted his appreciation of the Prime Minister's speech in Florence which he attended.

On citizens' rights, Mrs May and Mr Gualtieri agreed that certainty should be given to people and businesses as soon as possible. Finally, they agreed on the importance of avoiding a hard border between Northern Ireland and Ireland.

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster David Lidington and the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the European Parliament Sir Tim Barrow also attended the meeting. Mr Gualtieri met with the Brexit Secretary David Davis, Chancellor Philip Hammond and Home Secretary Amber Rudd earlier in the day.