

# [Speech: Gold standard: The Touchstone Award](#)

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In our current multichannel retail world, where consumers have direct access to global markets, it is essential that hallmarking continues to be enforced. Jewellery represents a particular opportunity for deceit because the person buying the article has no way of knowing whether their 18ct bangle is gold to the core, the fashionstatus trademark on their bracelet is genuine, or their prized cufflinks are merely plated with a thin layer of gold that will soon wear away, to expose base metal below.

High precious-metal prices, the popularity of more expensive brands, and the difficulty in identifying whether an item is what it purports to be, are all driving criminal activity. This can range from a slightly maverick workshop using under-carat components for repairs, to serious organised crime, funded by the mass sale of counterfeited products such as Tiffany, Pandora and Links of London.

## **Spotting non-compliance**

The situation is exacerbated by the lack of consumer understanding of hallmarking legislation. A survey conducted in April 2017, with a Department for Business, Energy and Industry Strategy consumer panel, found “spontaneous awareness of hallmarks was initially extremely low”. When prompted, many people claimed to understand it, but the survey showed their knowledge to be poor and largely inaccurate. So, the consumer is relying on the jeweller to be trustworthy. As a result, enforcement of the legislation depends upon continual trade vigilance and trading standards enforcement.

High street non-compliance is relatively easy to spot. Many Touchstone applications chronicle proactive campaigns that have started by checking that dealers: are displaying notices explaining hallmarks; have correctly calibrated weighing scales; and stock hallmarked items in store. Pursuing non-compliance with these basic requirements regularly reveals significant long-term offences, leading to prosecutions for trademark infringements, among others.

Online sales are far more difficult to monitor. There is undoubtedly a significant lack of compliance online, with goods without a hallmark or incorrectly described being offered by businesses and private individuals on their websites, as well as on specialised jewellery marketplaces and resale platforms, such as eBay. Policing and enforcing compliance within the increasingly significant global, online market is a universal problem across all sectors. Within this market, there is little control over quality, or the reassurance and legal verification of a hallmark.

## Consumer detriment

With local resources overstretched, there is a worry that trading standards officers will focus on more obviously life-threatening or sinister sectors, such as counterfeit drugs, loan sharks or faulty electrical goods. However, every hallmarking investigation reveals evidence that the centuries' old law is not being observed and, frequently, there are other illegal activities related to such infringements. These could be apparently minor, such as illegal weighing scales, but the level of cheating that can be achieved by this practice is significant.

At the other extreme, trading in counterfeit luxury jewellery items could be part of serious organised crime. There is always significant detriment to the consumer and, in many cases, it is the most vulnerable in our society who are being cheated.

Last year's Touchstone applications, from across the UK, reflected complaint intervention, proactive enforcement projects and information operations. There was also evidence of positive longterm activity in hallmarking operations from all applicants. This is encouraging news, but much more is required if effective enforcement is to be exercised over the ever-expanding online offer of jewellery from around the world now accessible in the UK.

## Celebrating success

The winning Touchstone application for 2017 came from the London Borough of Ealing. Its success was down to a well-planned and executed series of inspections, after information that jewellery without a hallmark was on sale in the area.

A range of activities in various high-street premises was headed up by team leader Peter Clark, assisted by enforcement officers Mohammed Tariq and Brian Gohery. Their investigations revealed major noncompliance with the [Hallmarking Act 1973](#) by the jewellers inspected.

A carefully staged approach started with visits to advise all jewellers of their legal requirements. Subsequent visits led to jewellery without a hallmark being seized from several of the 24 premises visited. Inspection by the London Assay Office revealed that 82% of seized items were not hallmarked, and 22% were fraudulently described as 22ct, when they could only have been hallmarked as 18ct or – in one case – 9ct because of under-carated solder. Successful prosecutions followed, with non-compliant traders receiving more than £11,000 in fines. A hallmarking project is now embedded within the Ealing TS annual service plan and priorities.

As ever, the [winning team](#) was well rewarded for its efforts. The Touchstone Award was announced at the 2017 CTSI Conference dinner in Harrogate, and presented to Ealing by chair of the British Hallmarking Council Noel Hunter.

To engage the rest of the council and raise the profile of trading standards within the authority, the award was presented again at an event in Ealing in

November. Finally, the team enjoyed its prestigious training day and excellent lunch with the London Assay Office team at Goldsmiths' Hall.

The 2017 Touchstone applications demonstrated the importance of hallmarking enforcement. It is vital that our trading standards authorities continue to deliver this.

We look forward to receiving your applications for the 2018 Touchstone Award and recognising the hard work of trading standards teams in this area.

## **Author**

Marion Wilson is a member of the British Hallmarking Council's education and enforcement committee.

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## **[Press release: FCO statement on forthcoming Legislative Council by-election in Hong Kong](#)**

We are concerned by the rejection of Agnes Chow's nomination for the forthcoming Legislative Council by-election. The right to stand for election is a fundamental right enshrined in Article 26 of the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and the Hong Kong Bill of Rights.

Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy, and its rights and freedoms, are central to its way of life, and it is important that they should be fully respected.

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## **[News story: New members announced for Ofsted board](#)**

Dame Kathryn August and Pamela Scriven QC have been appointed to serve on the Ofsted Board for 3 years. John Hughes has been re-appointed to serve for an additional 3 years. Linda Farrant and Paul Snell's terms on the Ofsted board have ended today.

Julius Weinberg, chair of the Ofsted board said:

I have encountered great pride and professionalism every day since

I joined Ofsted. It is made up of people who want to make a positive difference to children's lives and help give them a better future.

So I am delighted to welcome Kathryn and Pamela to the Ofsted board, and I am sure their individual expertise and experience will be hugely valuable to the organisation. I am also pleased that John is staying on.

I would like to wish Linda and Paul all the best after they leave. I'm grateful for the huge contributions they have all made to the Ofsted board.

Below is some further information on the board members:

### **Dame Kathryn August**

An education consultant, former head teacher, Ofsted Inspector and National Leader of Education, Dame Kathryn August will bring extensive experience of secondary education and a clear understanding of academies and multi-academy trusts to the board.

### **Pamela Scriven QC**

A QC with extensive experience as a lawyer, Pamela Scriven has significant social care and safeguarding expertise and has had a number of board level roles in her professional life.

### **John Hughes**

A former BP executive with a background in risk management and strategy, John Hughes also previously worked as an FE College lecturer, a teacher and head of physics at a secondary school in London.

Ofsted's board is chaired by Professor Julius Weinberg and also includes John Cridland CBE, James Kempton and Venessa Willms OBE alongside HM Chief Inspector Amanda Spielman.

### **Further information**

The appointments were conducted and agreed in accordance with the Code of Practice issued by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA) and were made on merit; political activity played no part in the decision-making process. However, in accordance with the original Nolan recommendations and the code of practice, there is a requirement for appointees' political activity (if any declared) and other information, to be made public.

The details of the application process and job description were published online and the essential criteria were:

- The ability to think strategically and to contribute to strategic

development in different contexts;

- High level management and/or board experience in the public, voluntary or private sectors;
- The ability to build effective relationships at high levels and/or between organisations;
- A commitment to Ofsted as an inspectorate and regulator, and its role in improving standards in education, children's services and skills; and
- Significant expertise and/or experience working at a senior level in children's social care, including child protection, further education, and/or financial management.

The desirable criteria were:

- Experience or expertise in the maintained secondary school sector; and
- Experience or expertise in information technology and knowledge management.

The roles are remunerated at £8,282 per annum, based on 20 days' work.

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## **Press release: Milestone for £242 million Trans-Pennine road improvements**

The A57 improvement on the Greater Manchester side – featuring new dual and single carriageways between the M67 and Woolley Bridge – is the centrepiece of the Trans-Pennine Upgrade programme and requires special planning permission. There are also other important improvements along the route with safety and technology improvements either side of Woodhead Pass – and a major overhaul of Westwood roundabout in South Yorkshire where the A616 meets the A61.

Highways England unveiled the timetable for the statutory consultation on Monday 29 January. It will run between Monday 12 February 2018 and Sunday 25 March 2018 with a programme of public consultation events and a variety of other ways for people to get involved – including by email, post and online.

Highways England's Trans-Pennine Upgrade project manager Monica Corso Griffiths said:

Having announced our preferred options for this important investment last November this is now the opportunity for everyone concerned to help us shape the detail of the individual schemes before we submit firm and final proposals to the planning authorities.

We'd urge anyone with an interest in the improvements to let us know their views. This is an important investment in one of the most important east to west routes in the country. The improvements form part of the current £15 billion government investment in motorways and major A roads and are a vital element of Highways England's support for the Northern Powerhouse – unlocking the potential for new homes and jobs by tackling congestion.

The proposals included in the public consultation are:

- Mottram Moor link road – a new dual carriageway from the M67 junction 4 roundabout to a new junction on the A57 at Mottram Moor and a new single carriageway connecting to the A6018 Roe Cross Road
- a new single carriageway link from the A57 at Mottram Moor to a new junction on the A57 at Woolley Bridge
- safety and technology improvements – including safety measures focused on addressing accident hotspots and the provision of electronic message signs
- A616/A61 Westwood roundabout – improvements to reduce congestion and improve the flow of traffic through the roundabout in Tankersley, Sheffield

Highways England will need to secure a development consent order (DCO) to enable it to build the new stretches of road at Mottram. To help Highways England prepare its DCO to the planning authorities, statutory consultation events are being staged across both sides of the Pennines during the consultation period. As well as the public exhibitions, paper response forms and consultation brochures will be available at locations open to the public from 12 February and can be handed in at these events or sent to the freepost address provided on the form.

Further information about the venues for the events, scheme proposals and details of the deposit locations, which include some local post offices and libraries, can be found on the [scheme website](#).

Anyone who wants more information or to give their views on the scheme can also email the project team at: [Trans\\_Pennine\\_Scheme@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:Trans_Pennine_Scheme@highwaysengland.co.uk) or call 0300 123 5000, the Highways England's customer care centre.

## **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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# Speech: Prime Minister's speech in China: 31 January 2018

Thank you, Premier Li.

I'm pleased to be here in Beijing today, on my first official Prime Ministerial visit to China.

And although I may be visiting in winter I've had the warmest of welcomes for which I am grateful and I welcome the opportunity we've had today to discuss a wide range of topics in an open way, important issues which face us both and I look forward to continuing discussion over dinner tonight and with President Xi tomorrow.

I am pleased that we have agreed to intensify the "Golden Era" of UK-China relations.

The UK and China are both global powers with a global outlook. You made reference Premier Li to the UK leaving the EU as we do so we become ever-more outward-looking and as China continues to reform and open up, we are committed to deepening our strong and vital partnership and that relationship.

Our relationship is broad and deep, and it delivers real benefits for both countries. We are working together to tackle global and regional security challenges such as North Korea, modern slavery, threats to aviation security; to build sustainable economies of the future and enhance our bilateral trade and investment relationship; and to develop our strong education and societal links.

Allow me to say a few words of detail on each of these.

## **Global issues**

As fellow permanent members of the UN Security Council and the G20, we are committed to jointly addressing global challenges, indeed steel is one of those challenges that the G20 has discussed, and protecting and promoting the Rules-Based International System.

We have discussed North Korea, agreeing that its pursuit of nuclear and ballistic missile programmes is illegal, reckless, and poses an unacceptable threat to international peace and security.

We have agreed the full and effective implementation of UN Security Council sanctions is vital to persuade the North Korean regime to change course and abandon its illegal activity.

And we have agreed today new measures on aviation security, designed to

improve aviation security standards in both the UK and China by sharing more information and undertaking visits to share best practice and observe standards of implementation.

We will also do more together to tackle the scourge of modern slavery. To disrupt and prosecute the organised crime groups responsible and to protect victims. And we will begin new joint work to tackle other forms of serious organised crime, including the illegal supply of synthetic drugs.

## **Trade and investment**

We've discussed how our economies have complementary strengths. Trade between our two countries is already at record levels, worth over £59 billion, UK exports to China have grown by over 60% since 2010. The UK is already one of the largest European recipients of Chinese Foreign Direct Investment. The UK is the world's largest exporter of financial services and UK firms are leaders in China's market.

We are determined to deepen our trading relationship even further, and are ambitious for what our future trade relationship will be.

We will work together to explore all options to deliver a high level of ambition for the future trading relationship and have today launched a joint trade and investment review to identify priorities for promoting growth in goods, services and investment. And as Premier Li has referred to, later today we have the inaugural meeting of the new UK-China CEO Council, which will bring together business leaders and Ministers to strengthen trade and economic cooperation.

To pave the way for this ambitious future trading relationship, we have agreed new measures to improve market access in China and remove barriers to trade, includes an agreement to lift the BSE ban on British beef exports within the next 6 months and to an agreement to allow exports of a broader range of dairy products.

We have also agreed to open up the Chinese market to our great UK financial services expertise to reach more Chinese consumers.

And we'll be pleased to welcome a significant number of major new commercial deals due to be agreed during this visit expected to total over £9 million pounds, creating and securing jobs and prosperity both here and in the UK.

We welcome the opportunities provided by the Belt and Road initiative to further prosperity and sustainable development across Asia and the wider world. And as with the Asian Infrastructure and Investment bank, the UK is a natural partner for the Belt and Road initiative with our unrivalled expertise. And as I've discussed with Premier Li, we've discussed how the UK and China can continue to work together to identify how best we can cooperate on the Belt and Road initiative across the region

We will work together to encourage free and fair trade, ensure a transparent, rules-based multilateral trading system, and build an open global economy that works for all. And as partners committed to global free trade, but as

our companies innovate and create new products they are confident that their intellectual rights and property will be fully protected including against cyber threats.

And as Premier Li mentioned and reminded us we've also discussed overcapacity in global market sectors such as steel and the need to see CG20 principles adhered to and further action taken to ensure unfair trading practices are tackled.

### **People-to-people**

Our societies share broad and deep cultural ties. There are already strong links between the people of the UK and China, not just between our governments.

Chinese students already constitute the largest single source of overseas students in the UK, with the UK welcoming 155,000 students currently in the UK worth as well as adding an estimated £5 billion annually. There are also now some 9,000 young British people studying and interning in China, with numbers up by 60% since 2013.

And today we have agreed to go even further on our education partnership, including by extending the pioneering Shanghai Maths Teacher Exchange primary school programme for a further two years to 2020, and expanding the programme to secondary schools.

We have also agreed to launch a new "Global Partners 2020" programme, to build better direct links and networks between our future leaders across government, business and academia.

### **Conclusion**

The UK and China are global partners for the long-term.

We are committed to building on our deep and mature ties to promote global peace and prosperity in the 21st century.

So Premier Li, I look forward to continuing our discussions.

### **Q+A:**

Question: What do you plan to do differently on brexit and outside of brexit? And on international threats, Trump called China a threat? Do you agree?

PM: On the first point that you raised, in relation to what the government is doing on Brexit and on the domestic agenda. On Brexit we're obviously working to that future trading relationship with the EU, we achieved sufficient progress in December and we're now taking that next step to ensure we get the best brexit deal for the UK and that means will be a deal that takes back control of money, laws and borders and also able to maintain a good trading relationship with the EU for the future, because that is good for both the UK and EU.

On the domestic agenda if you look at what we've been doing over the recent weeks and months I think that there are very many people who want that they and their families can achieve the British dream, of ensuring that each generation has a better future than the last. For a lot of young people that's about owning their own home, being able to get their foot on the housing ladder, we've cut stamp duty for 95% of first time buyers and I'm pleased to say that figures out only last week show that the highest number of first time buyers in the last year for a decade. We've also been ensuring that young people get start the best start in life with a good education, nearly 2 million more children in good and outstanding schools now. And we also want to ensure in the work we do that we continue to cut the deficit and develop a balanced approach to economy, we are seeing good jobs being created, unemployment is at its lowest level since the 1970s and yes we do need to do more, and we need to ensure that we are talking about what we've already achieved to those young people who worry they'll get their own home, to parents concerned about the education their children will be getting and about the jobs for the future for their children. And that's what we'll be doing, and what we're committed to delivering on that.

And if you talk about the role of china, what we've been discussing here is the excellent relations we have with our golden era of UK – China relations. But how we can be working together not just to improve those links between us which will be of benefit in the UK and in China and in delivering and working together on those global issues such as N Korea and other issues like modern slavery which have an impact around the world.

Question: I understand a series of corporate agreements have been signed, same time witnessing rising isolationism – what measures will china and the UK take to boost globalisation and free trade? And to the UK Prime Minister, Brexit is not just an issue for British but also for Chinese people – china the best partners for the UK after Brexit – how do you see prospects of relationship with china?

PM: Thank you and the second question to me was about Brexit and the impact that this will have. As we leave the EU we will become a country that is able to operate an indecent trade policy to sign free trade agreements around the rest of the world. And that is exactly what we will be looking to do. And it is in the best interests of the people in the UK but also those free trade agreements bring benefits to the countries with whom we sign them. Also, we will be a more outward looking country, to build a global Britain that is able to sign those free trade agreements that is able to continue to play its role on the world stage in the various multilateral organisations we're part of, working alongside china and other members for example in the United Nations.

But I think in terms of the future for the relationship between the UK and China after we leave the EU, today we've agreed a joint trade and investment review which I think is a good step towards looking towards what our future trade relationship can be when we have that freedom outside membership of the EU of being able to arrange those agreements by ourselves on a bilateral basis.

And as Premier Li has said, there are many concrete examples already of how that trade relationship is developing between our countries. And I think the message of free trade and the importance of free trade is best seen by the examples of the actual trade we see which brings jobs and investment to China and the UK.