

Press release: Change of Her Majesty's Ambassador to Portugal in Summer 2018

Mr Chris Sainty has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Portuguese Republic.

Mr Chris Sainty has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Portuguese Republic in succession to Ms Kirsty Hayes. Mr Sainty will take up his appointment in summer 2018.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Full name: Christopher James Sainty

Married to: Sarah Helen Sainty

Children: Three

2015 – 2017 FC0, European Correspondent and Head of Europe (South) Department, Europe Directorate

2011 – 2015 Rome, Deputy Head of Mission

2008 – 2010 Islamabad, Political Counsellor

2006 – 2008 The Hague, Deputy Head of Mission

2004 – 2006 FC0, Head of EU Presidency Department

2000 – 2004 Madrid, First Secretary (Political)

1998 – 2000 FC0, Head of Newsroom, Press Office

1996 – 1998 FC0, Common Foreign and Security Policy Unit

1992 – 1996 New Delhi, Second Secretary (Political)

1990 – 1992 FC0, Hong Kong Department

1989 Joined the Diplomatic Service

Further information

Press release: Winning design for 2015 Sousse and Bardo Memorial announced

The 'Infinite Wave' by London and Gloucester-based George King Architects has been selected as the design for the memorial dedicated to the 31 British nationals who lost their lives, and to all of those affected by the two terrorist attacks in Tunisia in 2015.

An independent panel shortlisted seven designs from 19 entries, and chose 'Infinite Wave' following consultation with family members of those affected by the two attacks.

As announced last year, the sculpture will be located in Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham, and construction is due to be completed later on this year.

The panel selected 'Infinite Wave' due to its beautiful flow and clever use of the natural environment, as well as positive feedback from family members.

Announcing the winning design, FCO Minister for North Africa, Alistair Burt said:

For those who lost loved ones or witnessed the horrendous terrorist attacks in Tunisia in 2015, resulting in 31 Britons being killed, their lives have never been the same since because of these cowardly acts of terror.

I know several families have tried to ensure something good comes out of these terrible events, such as raising money for charity, or improving awareness of extremism in their community and they should be commended for their positivity.

I hope that 'Infinite Wave' with its beautiful surroundings in Cannon Hill Park, will provide a focal point of tranquillity for families to reflect and remember their loved ones.

Chair of the Creative Panel, Mark Castle, CEO, Victim Support, said:

The panel were only too aware of the significant responsibility to find a design that is not only stunning to look at, but also one that families can connect with.

We knew going into this process that we had a difficult task but the on-line design consultation with families revealed that George King's concept resonated with many people affected by these terrible events.

I think the appeal is not only because of the beautiful flow of the sculpture, and its clever use of the natural environment, but because the single tube of steel in George King's concept shows how the people affected by these terrible events are intrinsically linked.

Suzy Richards, who lost three members of her family in the attack said;

I chose the infinity design because to me it represents never ending loss and pain of losing three generations of my family. My son Joel was just 19, my brother Adrian at 49, and my dad Pat, 79. It also represents our never ending love and beautiful memories we treasure.

George King, Principal of George King Architects said:

It is wonderful and overwhelming to be chosen to design this memorial. We put the families and their experiences very much at the heart of this concept and didn't want to gloss over the immense pain they have been and continue to go through.

We came up with 'Infinite Wave' to show how time stood still for victims on the day of the attacks and designed the surrounding landscape as a series of ripples.

The ripples represent the impact that the events in Tunisia in 2015 had beyond those that lost their lives. They represent the survivors, the families of the victims, the local communities, the national heartache and the global loss.

Cllr Lisa Trickett, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Parks at Birmingham City Council, said:

I am pleased that the memory of those involved in these tragic events will be remembered in such a thoughtful way in Cannon Hill Park.

This is an important Memorial and we believe the designers have paid respect to the beautiful park and that the successful design 'Infinite wave', will enhance the natural environment.

We hope that, as well as providing a place of reflection for all of those affected by these horrific events, the site will also be appreciated and used by more regular park visitors.

Press release: Environment Agency launches consultation to give communities more say in how rivers are managed

The Environment Agency has been working with partners to consider proposals to 're-designate' sections of watercourses in a number of locations

The Environment Agency is considering proposals to transfer 'flood risk management activities' on a number of stretches of watercourses to internal drainage boards (IDBs), lead local flood authorities (LLFAs) and district councils. This will only happen where the watercourses have a low level of flood risk, are not associated with major rivers or major city centres and where the local community supports the change.

A transfer would mean that IDBs, LLFAs and district councils can take on more responsibility for their local flood risk, where appropriate – by carrying out activities such as maintenance or giving permission to carry out works.

The Environment Agency has been working with partners to consider proposals to 're-designate' sections of watercourses in a number of locations. The watercourses will be re-designated from what is currently known as a 'main river' to an 'ordinary watercourse' – a change referred to as 'de-maining'.

Rachael Hill, Flood and Coastal Risk Manager for the Environment Agency, said:

The project aims to bring more choice to communities and local organisations in how watercourses are managed and maintained. We want to strengthen local flood risk management and decision-making by ensuring the right people are managing the right watercourses.

We want to hear from anyone who is affected by, or interested in, the proposals. This consultation explains how the proposed sections of watercourse are currently managed and funded and provides details on future management and funding if de-maining goes ahead.

The project is exploring the potential to re-designate several sections of selected main rivers as ordinary watercourses in: various rivers in Suffolk (East Anglia), South Forty Foot Catchment in Lincolnshire and Stour Marshes in Kent. But if there is support for the approach it could pave the way for

further de-maining in England.

For the Environment Agency, the project will also ensure resources are prioritised where the greatest impact on reducing flood risk can be achieved.

Innes Thomson Chief Executive of ADA (Association of Drainage Authorities) added:

Despite their low flood risk to people and homes, the good management of these rivers still plays a major part in peoples' lives, and the environmental and economic wellbeing of the communities through which they flow.

It is very important for existing and potential new river managers to know what the views of local people are so we can make the right decisions together for the best future of these rivers.

The public will be able to view and give feedback between midday 15 January 2018 and midday 12 February 2018. There will be an option to view information and give feedback on each of the proposals or the de-maining project as a whole by accessing the [consultation link](#).

News story: UK fighter jets intercept Russian bombers approaching UK airspace



One of the Russian Blackjack Tupolev Tu-160 long-range bombers, which were escorted out of the UK's area of interest.

Today (Mon 15 January), RAF Quick Reaction Alert (QRA) Typhoon aircraft scrambled from RAF Lossiemouth to monitor two Russian planes approaching UK

airspace. The Russian Blackjack Tupolev Tu-160 long-range bombers were not talking to air traffic control, making them a hazard to all other aviation.

The RAF worked closely with NATO partners to monitor the jets as they passed through a variety of international airspace, before they were intercepted by the RAF in the North Sea. Subsequently, our fighters escorted the Russian Blackjacks north, out of the UK's area of interest. At no time did the Russian bombers enter UK sovereign airspace.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

The threats this country faces are intensifying and we will not hesitate in defending our skies from acts of aggression.

Our excellent RAF tracked the Russian aircraft every step of the way, and they continue to police UK and international airspace every hour of every day, to help keep the British people safe.

RAF QRA was launched today because the Russian Military aircraft were not talking to air traffic agencies.

The RAF routinely intercept, identify and escort Russian aircraft that transit international airspace within the UK's area of interest and continue to be on call; 24/7, 365.

Published 15 January 2018

[News story: New Nancy and the Meerkats resources](#)

[Nancy and the Meerkats](#), with the help of Big Joe, present a new radio series to engage pupils with the concept of intellectual property (IP). Aimed at primary education, the resource guides pupils through the process of setting up a band and recording and releasing a song, which is promoted and performed live on tour.

Building on the success of the previous two series, Nancy and the Meerkats consists of a new radio series, short videos, comic book, lesson plans and competition. The supporting teaching resource also includes themed activities and engaging lesson plans. Together, these support and develop pupils' understanding of copyright, trade marks and the importance of respecting IP.

Curriculum links are provided for England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

The series will launch on Monday 15th January at 5pm on [Fun Kids Radio](#)