

Government response: Nottingham station fire

Transport Minister Jo Johnson said:

This has clearly been a devastating incident and my thoughts are with all those affected.

I am grateful for the courage of both the emergency services who tackled this fire and those staff who evacuated the station and kept the public safe.

Thankfully it appears that nobody was injured but it is clear that this will have a disruptive effect on passengers who use Nottingham station.

Rail media enquiries

Media enquiries 020 7944 3021

Out of hours media enquiries 020 7944 4292

Switchboard 0300 330 3000

Press release: Appointment of Peter Schofield as Permanent Secretary at the Department for Work and Pensions

The Cabinet Secretary, with the agreement of the Prime Minister, has today announced that Peter Schofield, currently Director General of Finance at the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), has been appointed as the new Permanent Secretary on Sir Robert Devereux's retirement later this month.

Welcoming Peter Schofield's appointment Sir Jeremy Heywood said:

I am delighted to announce the appointment of Peter Schofield as the new Permanent Secretary for the Department for Work and Pensions. Peter has done an excellent job as Finance Director

General at the department and will bring to his new role a wealth of relevant knowledge and experience. I look forward to working with him as he starts his work delivering DWP's important mission.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Sir Robert Devereux for his excellent leadership of the department during his time as Permanent Secretary.

The Rt Hon Esther McVey, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, said:

I look forward to welcoming Peter Schofield as DWP's new Permanent Secretary and to working with him on ensuring we continue to deliver a welfare system that supports people when they need it, and helps them fulfil their potential – no matter who they are or where they come from.

Peter Schofield said:

DWP is a remarkable organisation – in scale, reach, ability to deliver change, and the motivation and pride of my 80,000 colleagues providing high quality support to over 22 million citizens. It is a huge honour to be given the opportunity to lead DWP and support the new Secretary of State and her ministerial team, and to build on Robert's outstanding leadership over the last 7 years. I can't wait to start.

This appointment has been agreed by the Prime Minister, and follows an external recruitment competition.

Peter Schofield has held the role of Finance Director General in DWP since July 2016.

Arrangements for appointing a successor to fill his previous role will be announced in due course.

Follow DWP on:

[Press release: Boaters to benefit from £4.4m Nene-regeneration scheme](#)

The [Nenescape](#) programme, which was launched in November with a £2.6m grant from the [Heritage Lottery Fund](#), will see 16 projects carried out by 11

organisations.

The scheme will invest more than £4.4m in the Nene Valley over the next 5 years, delivering projects that will improve access to the water, restore wetland and wildlife habitat, uncover and celebrate the area's history, and develop tourism.

Renowned destination

Among the initiatives is one aimed at boosting the river's reputation as a nationally-renowned destination for boaters.

Led by the [Environment Agency](#), this part of Nenescape will improve access to and from the navigable part of the river, provide better facilities for those cruising it, and make the most of nearby transport links, communities and attractions. A total of £500,000 has been allocated to this part of the scheme.

Proposals include additional moorings, better routes and access for canoeing, improved links with nearby footpaths and cycleways, and more information for visitors about the area's sights, heritage and wildlife.

Boost for local economy

It is hoped this part of the Nenescape programme will attract more boaters and other visitors to the area, boosting the local economy.

Candy Reed, partnership officer for the Environment Agency, said:

The River Nene is one of the nation's greatest rivers – we're delighted to be playing a part in its future. Our work – and that of the wider Nenescape programme – will help everyone get the most out of this stunning location, which really is a national treasure.

Vision for the future

The Environment Agency's proposals are the result of an extensive study into the River Nene, its surrounding communities, and its economic potential.

In consultation with people who use the river and representatives of the local area, the agency's [Waterspace Study](#) identified opportunities that would improve, protect and promote the Nene, creating a vision for the future that underpins the Nenescape programme and supported the application to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Amanda Johnson, Nenescape project manager, said:

It is so important to create an inviting environment for boaters to enjoy the spectacular views and heritage offered along the Nene Valley and, equally, to maintain a healthy environment for wildlife

to thrive in. We are so pleased to be working with the Environment Agency to deliver these complementary projects and look forward to seeing the benefits for years to come.

At 91 miles, the Nene is the tenth longest river in the UK. It flows through Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire, borders Norfolk and ends at The Wash. Around 65 miles of it is navigable.

Environmental improvements

Away from the navigable stretch, the [River Nene Regional Park](#) is taking the lead on a project to improve the ecology of backwaters, with the Environment Agency's help. This [Resilient River](#) element of Nenescape will restore natural features, boost biodiversity, improve water quality and provide safe and supportive habitats for a greater range of wildlife.

Other Nenescape partners include the [River Nene Regional Park](#), the [Wildlife Trust](#) for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire, [Natural England](#), [East Northamptonshire Council](#), [Angling Trust](#), [University of Northampton](#), [Nene Park Trust](#), [Rockingham Forest Trust](#), [Destination Nene Valley](#), [University of Nottingham](#), [Screen Northants](#) and [Northamptonshire Music and Performing Arts Trust](#).

[Press release: Environment Agency announces £750,000 to tackle single use plastics](#)

The EA's new Plastics and Sustainability team will work with businesses, councils and community action groups to reduce plastic pollution

The announcement follows a pledge to eliminate avoidable waste and crack down on plastics as part of the government's [25-year environment plan](#) launched yesterday.

The pioneer project will see the creation of a new Plastics and Sustainability team across Devon and Cornwall working with businesses, local councils, charities and community action groups, such as the [Bude Cleaner Seas Project](#).

The team will aim to reduce the amount of plastic pollution across land, rivers and the coastline. It will promote better environmental practices across industry, including a reduction in plastic waste from manufacturing, along with community campaigns to clean up pollution locally.

Emma Howard Boyd, Chair of the Environment Agency, made the announcement from Bude, Cornwall today where she met with groups and charities who strive to clean up the coastline and keep it free of pollution.

Emma Howard Boyd said:

The government's ambitious plan for the environment is a significant step forward and the Environment Agency's commitment to reduce plastic pollution shows how we are already working to put the plan into action.

Plastic pollution is a threat to our natural environment and our new team promises to tackle it head on. By working together, we can reduce the amount which enters our land, rivers and the sea and protect wildlife for future generations.

The Environment Agency's work with partners to improve [bathing waters](#) has led to a [dramatic improvement](#) in water quality in recent years which has benefited coastal communities, visitors and tourism. A similar partnership approach will be taken by the new Plastics and Sustainability team. The ambitions for the project include:

- A reduction of plastics reaching land, waterways and shorelines.
- Promotion of better environmental practices in business and a reduction in plastic waste from the start of the manufacturing process.
- Increased local engagement to change public behaviour and encourage more community action to tackle pollution.
- Monitoring and research into ways plastics enter and affect the environment, supporting leading academics in the South West.

During Emma Howard Boyd's visit to Cornwall, she also spent time at Bude Haven school speaking to children about their passion for protecting their coastline and met local business owner Tom Dawe to find out how he had made his beachside restaurant more sustainable.

Emma will return to Bude in June to mark [World Oceans Day](#) and to see the project's progress.

[News story: UK satellite maker acquired in multi-million deal](#)

Glasgow-based miniature satellite manufacturer [Clyde Space](#) will join [AAC Microtec](#) to combine and strengthen the 2 companies' position in the small and nanosatellite market.

The deal – worth £26 million – is a share and sale purchase agreement. AAC Microtec will own 100 percent of Clyde Space, with Clyde Space's owners holding 49 percent of the Swedish space technology company.

Around 80 people are currently employed by Clyde Space in Glasgow. It is expected that the deal will create new jobs in both Scotland and Sweden, as well as other growth markets.

Completion of the deal is expected by the end of January 2018.

[Gamechangers: Clyde Space](#)

Combined companies

In joining, the 2 organisations have emphasised the complementary elements of each business, the opportunities for research and development (R&D) and cross-selling of products.

Since its launch in 2005, Clyde Space has built up an impressive customer base. It has worked with [Nasa](#), the [US Air Force](#), the [European Space Agency](#) (ESA) and the [UK Space Agency](#) to supply over 2,000 subsystems to small spacecraft.

Clyde Space founder and CEO, Craig Clark said:

AAC's complementing operations, advanced technology know-how, well-developed corporate structure and direct access to capital markets provide a great platform for the further development and growth of Clyde Space as well as the AAC group's business as a whole.

AAC Microtec CEO Alfonso Barreiro said:

Our joint R&D capacity will be unique in our segment, enhancing our capability to offer state-of-the-art technology and supporting our strategy to develop robust products based on open architecture platforms to increase flexibility, scalability, and efficiency.

Small satellites

Clyde Space is now a significant presence in the CubeSat sector. CubeSats typically weigh just 4 kg and are about the size of a shoe box. They can take images of the Earth, collect data about weather and ocean behaviour and help connect ground-based communications.

The company led the launch of UKube-1 – Scotland's first satellite in space. This was part of a contract with the UK Space Agency with support from Innovate UK.

Its work with the ESA, and a presence on the Innovate UK-supported

TechDemoSat mission, also helped Clyde Space to innovate and grow.

Its expertise in small-scale satellites will now enable access to further markets with ACC, offering satellites that range from these small CubeSats to 500 kg satellites.