

News story: PM press statement in Poland: 21 December 2017

Our ties with Poland are rooted deeply in our shared history.

We will never forget the Polish soldiers who fought with our troops in North Africa and on mainland Europe in World War II, nor the Polish pilots who braved the skies alongside us, standing up for freedom and democracy in Europe.

And we value the significant contribution made by so many Poles in our country today.

So I am in Warsaw today to ensure that we can work even more closely together to ensure the security and prosperity of our nations in the years ahead.

Our annual dialogue demonstrates the common ground we share, the importance we attach to our bilateral relationship and the benefits it brings.

We share a clear commitment to elevate our cooperation and firmly establish the UK and Poland as resolute and strategic allies in Europe.

Our defence and security cooperation is already strong, but we have gone even further today in signing a landmark joint UK-Poland Treaty on Defence and Security Cooperation.

This is only the second such treaty we have signed with a European Union country. There could be no clearer expression of the closeness of the UK's relationship with Poland.

This treaty will provide a framework for defence cooperation on areas such as training, exercises, information sharing, defence industry cooperation and capability development.

It will build on the deployment of our troops to Poland under Enhanced Forward Presence, which of course followed our last meeting in London.

We have also agreed here today to bolster our cooperation to counter Russian disinformation in the region, including through new joint strategic communications projects.

We are both deeply concerned by Russia's attempts to weaponise information. The Kremlin is seeking to undermine the international rules-based system and it will not succeed.

We will enhance our cyber security cooperation with Poland, including by hosting a Polish cyber delegation at our National Cyber Security Centre in March next year to share the UK's world-leading expertise and best practice in this area.

The UK and Poland will also continue to work hand-in-glove across the foreign policy spectrum and we look forward to working closely with Poland at the UN Security Council when it becomes a member next year.

We have agreed to reinforce our commitment to tackle serious and organised crime, including by working together to reduce firearms trafficking from Eastern Europe, and working together to tackle the scourge of modern slavery.

On trade, already worth over £17 billion in 2016, we have agreed to establish a new UK-Poland Business, Trade and Investment Council.

This will meet for the first time in June next year. The Council will help forge even stronger links between UK and Polish business, including through the Polish diaspora in the UK.

The first of its kind for the UK in Europe, the forum will be business-led, and will work to identify any remaining barriers to bilateral trade and investment as we prepare to leave the EU.

And as part of our commitment to work together more closely on ideas and the knowledge economy, we have agreed that 2018 will be a UK-Polish Year of Entrepreneurship, Science and Innovation. This will support our growing links in science, education and research.

Finally, I want to make the point that a key priority for me here today is giving assurances to the nearly 1 million Polish citizens living in the UK that they are a strong part of our society, and we want them to stay.

That's why we worked so hard to get a deal with the EU earlier this month to guarantee the rights of EU citizens living in the UK.

EU citizens living in the UK will have their rights enshrined in UK law and enforced by British courts. They will be able to go on living their lives as before.

As I have said many times before, and as has been repeated here today, although the UK is leaving the European Union, we are not leaving Europe. And today I have reaffirmed to Prime Minister Morawiecki that we want to work with Poland and the other member states in the future to protect our shared values, people and interests.

We are building a strategic partnership with Poland from a base of shared history and deep ties of friendship that will outlast our exit from the EU.

So today's talks have been very productive. There is much we can work on and celebrate together in 2018, Poland's 100th year of independence.

Thank you, Mateusz.

Speech: “We must look at actions to promote climate security in a holistic way. We must recognise that causes and responses are interlinked”

Thank you Mr. President.

And thank you to our briefers, H.E. Halbe Zijlstra, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands and Ms. Caitlin Werrel.

Climate change presents an urgent threat to us all and the planet we inhabit. I am grateful to address the Council on this crucial topic. A topic that is so important to the UK – the first Security Council debate on the relationship between climate and security was convened by the United Kingdom ten years ago.

Since then, climate-related security threats have become more pressing.

Understandably a core focus of this Council is conflict resolution and prevention, however it is striking that in 2016, three times as many people were displaced by natural disasters as by conflict.

This year we have also seen many extreme weather events and climate-related disasters – droughts in Somalia, hurricanes in the Caribbean, flooding in India and Bangladesh.

As the 13th Sustainable Development Goal makes clear, climate change has a direct impact on development. Goal 16 makes clear that development and peace are inexplicitly linked.

Therefore it is irrefutable that climate change needs to be considered by this Council to promote peace, security and development for all.

Without concerted global action to limit and manage the impact of climate change, we could reverse the huge gains in global poverty reduction which we have achieved over the last three decades.

Part of this action must be a quick response to climate related disasters to minimise impact and preserve life. The UK works closely with countries in the Caribbean, Asia and Africa to build resilience. We are providing an additional \$71 million funding to extend this work.

We have provided \$40 million to set up the London based Centre for Global Disaster Protection, in partnership with the World Bank, to ensure an earlier and more rapid response to disasters.

This will not only save lives, but also allow countries to recover more quickly, reducing the long-run impacts on poverty alleviation and economic

growth.

However we recognise that prevention is always better than the cure. If we are to avoid the worst impacts on the most vulnerable, the answer to this is not to react to climate change after the fact but invest now to manage the risk. Helping vulnerable countries to build their resilience to natural disasters and adapt to the impacts of climate change is crucial.

It is for this reason that we have consistently encouraged robust international action on climate security, including by launching the G7's work on climate and fragility in 2013. As my Prime Minister stated this in Paris week, "we stand firmly with those who find themselves on the frontline of rising sea levels and extreme weather".

Together with our partners, we have committed to jointly mobilise \$100bn per year in climate finance to developing countries from public and private sources.

This was instrumental in securing the landmark Paris Agreement, which is crucial for ensuring global economic security and sustainable development.

As part of this commitment, we pledged to provide at least \$7.5 billion of International Climate Finance between 2016 and 2020. We are aiming to support mitigation and adaptation equally. This places us amongst the world's leading providers of climate finance.

We must look at actions to promote climate security in a holistic way. We must recognise that causes and responses are interlinked. Individually sensible actions can miss opportunities or have unintended consequences. We need coherent planning that considers opportunities and risks across sectors and over time.

Doing so is vital to build sustainable peace in conflict areas, to promote sustainable development and to build livelihoods that are resilient to the impacts of climate change. And ultimately create a future that is more secure and more prosperous for us all.

Press release: Custodial sentence for rogue waste operator

David Shrigley was described as a 'willful and persistent' offender who flouted the law for financial gain over a lengthy period of time.

Shrigley and his former wife, Donna, were directors of DRS Demolition National Ltd and operated a waste transfer station at Domellick Manor, St Dennis, Cornwall. Magistrates accepted that David Shrigley, 68, was largely

to blame for the offences and that his ex-wife, Donna Shrigley, 47, had a far lower culpability.

In 2015 the company went into liquidation and its operating licence was disclaimed. Prior to liquidation, the Environment Agency had become increasingly concerned at the growing quantity of waste being stored at the site.

The operator continued to accept waste which generated income, but failed to process and transfer it off site. The build-up of material, that included mixed landfill waste, posed a serious fire risk and could have caused environmental harm. The company saved money by failing to transfer processed waste off site.

Despite repeated requests from the Environment Agency, the company failed to remove excess waste and improve its management of the site before going into liquidation. This culminated in the directors being served with an Enforcement Notice.

In April 2016 David and Donna Shrigley were jointly convicted, at Bodmin magistrates court, with failing to comply with an Enforcement Notice, breaching permit conditions and operating without a permit. Sentencing included the issuing of a court order for all the controlled waste at Domellick Manor to be cleared and taken to a licensed site for safe disposal within 18 months.

On 12 October 2017, an Environment Agency officer visited the site and saw the court order hadn't been complied with. He found evidence of fresh waste deposits and signs that tracked vehicles had been operating at the site.

Richard Cloke for the Environment Agency said:

It is essential waste is managed properly. Failure to do so poses a real threat to people living nearby and to the environment, from pollution, odours and fire risk, and can result in expensive clean-up costs. It also undermines the business and reputation of legitimate operators who are doing the right thing. This case demonstrates that courts are increasingly taking illegal waste activity very seriously. We hope this sentence acts as a deterrent to those that might be tempted to flout the law.

David Shrigley, 68, was sentenced to 40 days in prison and ordered to pay £1,039 costs for failing to comply with a court order made under Regulation 44 of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010.

Magistrates accepted Donna Shrigley had been unable to clear the site without the co-operation of her ex-husband following their divorce. Crucially, he had failed to transfer ownership of the site away from her as promised; placing her at risk of prosecution. As a result, the court imposed a minimal fine of £1.00 with £259 costs.

The court order is still in place and legal responsibility for the removal of waste from Domellick Manor remains with David Shrigley.

News story: VMD offices closing early on Friday 22 December

The VMD offices will be closed and unable to receive phone calls from 13:45pm on Friday 22 December.

The offices and switchboard will re-open at 8:30am on Wednesday 27 December.

The online services should not be affected but we will update this message if the situation changes once the power is restored.

Press release: Bypass is best A5036 option says Highways England

The company confirmed today it would formally defend its decision to opt for a bypass after Sefton Council applied for a judicial review on the basis that a tunnel option was not included as part of the public consultation.

Following the consultation earlier this year, Highways England announced in August it had decided to take forward the design of a new bypass through Rimrose Valley rather than try to improve the existing route between the port and Switch Island junction where the road meets the M57 and M58 motorways.

Highways England announced in the summer it had chosen the bypass option (above)

Highways England chief executive Jim O Sullivan said:

The considerable cost and disruption of constructing a tunnel and ongoing maintenance and operational costs meant it was never going to be a viable solution.

A bypass will provide similar long-term benefits to a tunnel – an almost junction-free link between the port and motorway network – at a significantly lower cost with less construction disruption and a much shorter delivery time when pressure on the existing road is

increasing all the time.

We want to continue talking to the council and local people to ensure we deliver an A5036 Port of Liverpool route which can support the local and regional economy.

The existing route is often heavily congested with vehicle numbers increasing

Explaining why a tunnel was never put forward as an option at the consultation, Tim Gamon, Highways England's regional delivery director for the North West, said a bypass would deliver the same economic benefits as a tunnel but while a tunnel would cost more than £1.5 billion the cost of a bypass was around £250 million.

Mr Gamon said:

The tunnel simply does not provide value for money. Furthermore, the impact of delivering a tunnel through the park would mean the whole of the Rimrose Valley would potentially be 'out of bounds' for recreational use – including the sports pitches – for up to 6 years due to the scale of the construction and safety zones required.

Highways England is working on ideas to help mitigate the impact of a new bypass on the country park, park users and people living nearby, with a package of mitigation and environmental improvement measures including landscaping, planted screening, noise barriers and improved leisure facilities and pedestrian and cyclist links through the valley.

An artist's impression of how the current A5036 could be transformed if replaced by a bypass

Delivering a bypass would mean handing back the existing A5036 to local people to provide a clear separation of local traffic from commercial and commuter traffic between the port and motorway network. Highways England will transform the existing A5036 – delivering improved cycling facilities, better crossing and footpaths, improved connectivity on the inter-city routes crossing the road to benefit local communities.

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.