

Press release: Ofsted: a force for improvement

Ofsted has today (29 September) published a new 5 year [strategy](#).

The strategy, developed in conjunction with serving heads, teachers, and social workers from around the country, sets out how Ofsted will deliver its mission of improving the lives of children and young people.

The strategy centres on a fundamental guiding principle that the organisation will be:

“A force for improvement through intelligent, responsible and focused inspection and regulation”.

The strategy describes how Ofsted will conduct inspection and regulation that is:

- intelligent: our work will be evidence-led and our evaluation tools and frameworks will be valid and reliable.
- responsible: our frameworks will be fair. We will seek to reduce inspection burdens and make our expectations and findings clear
- focused: we will target our time and resources where they can lead directly to improvement

The principle will be underpinned by 3 core values:

- children, young people and learners first
- independence
- accountability and transparency

The strategy commits to an ambitious programme of work, which will inform the 2019 inspection framework development. Ofsted is currently undertaking a series of parent focus groups to understand how our reports can provide more information and enable choice. Ofsted will undertake research and learn from others to ensure that Ofsted is reliably measuring the right things, and that these measures add up to a meaningful overall judgement. For example an international seminar on the validity of lesson observation in November which will inform future practice, and research is being undertaken on the impact

of the current grading structure.

Amanda Spielman, Chief Inspector of Ofsted, said:

I am pleased to announce our new corporate strategy, which will set Ofsted's direction during my tenure as Chief Inspector. I am determined that Ofsted will be a force for improvement.

By really drilling down on how, where and why we inspect and report, we can ensure that inspection and regulation are more than the sum of their parts. One of our greatest strengths is our bird's eye view of the education, training and care systems. Over my time in office, we will do more to aggregate the insights from individual inspections, so that we can better encourage and support improvement across all the areas we inspect and regulate.

This high-reaching strategy commits us to inspection that is intelligent, responsible and focused. It will allow us to tackle emerging challenges and take advantage of new opportunities, ensuring that we can have maximum impact in improving young people's lives.

Julius Weinberg, Chair of Ofsted, said:

With our new Chief Inspector, Amanda Spielman well established in post, and Ofsted celebrating its 25th anniversary this is the ideal time to set out our new 5 year strategy. We have taken this opportunity to ensure that our strategy is evidence based and takes account of the wider environment; educational, political and economic.

The strategy is the product of significant engagement with both our inspection workforce and those we inspect. Through that engagement we have been able to build a clear picture of where Ofsted adds most value and what more we need to do to fulfil our mission of being a force for improvement.

The strategy also recognises the vital importance of Ofsted's independence and commits it to being transparent and accountable in all its work, just as others are held others to account by Ofsted.

[News story: Environment Secretary](#)

meets Northern Irish industry leaders on the future of UK agriculture

Environment Secretary Michael Gove met representatives from Northern Ireland's food and farming sectors today to discuss the future of their industries outside the EU.

Following a meeting with industry leaders including the Northern Ireland Agricultural Producers Association, Northern Ireland Environment Link and Northern Ireland Food and Drink Association amongst others in Stormont, the Environment Secretary visited a local farm hosted by members of the Ulster Farmers Union.

The visit was an opportunity to discuss the key opportunities and challenges facing the sector ahead of EU exit, and for regional industry leaders to share their ambitions and expectations for future farming policy as we prepare to leave the European Union.

Speaking after the meetings, Environment Secretary Michael Gove said:

Food and drink is the leading sector in the Northern Ireland economy, employing tens-of-thousands people and generating around £5 billion from food sales alone.

As we prepare to leave the EU, we have the chance to design a new approach to food and farming that works for the whole of the UK, not least for Northern Ireland.

Today's meeting with agricultural leaders was a chance to hear first-hand from them as we move towards life outside the EU. We will continue to work closely with industry to ensure we grasp the opportunities that leaving the EU presents.

The roundtables held today are part of a series of ongoing engagements across all parts of the UK ahead of EU exit.

ENDS

News story: Prime Minister Reappoints National Heritage Memorial Fund /

Heritage Lottery Fund (NHMF / HLF)

Trustee

Jim Dixon has been reappointed by the Prime Minister as a Trustee of NHMF/HLF for a term of three years, ending on 30 September 2020

Jim Dixon is a biologist who has worked in landscapes, public bodies, business and voluntary organisations in a career spanning 35 years. He has a portfolio of non-executive, advisory and media roles. His non-executive roles are with NHMF/HLF, the Water Industry, the Rural Payments Agency and the private sector and he advises organisations on rural strategy, tourism, corporate sustainability and leadership. He writes for a variety of publications, including a monthly Nature Notebook feature for The Times. Jim is also Chairman of a small specialist Travel company and trades in antiquarian books and antiques. Previous to this he was Chief Executive of the Peak District National Park until December 2014, including four years during which he led the UK partnership of 15 national parks and led their work on housing and planning, conservation, education, transport and communications. Previous roles have included leading strategy for the newly-formed Defra and leading agriculture and rural policy work for English Nature and the RSPB. Jim studied Biology at Cardiff University.

The role is remunerated at £6,560 per annum. This reappointment has been made in accordance with the Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments. It is a requirement of the Code that political activity by those appointed is declared. Jim has declared no such political activity.

Speech: PM's address to British Troops at Tapa Military Base in Estonia

I'm delighted to be here today and to have this opportunity to pay tribute to all of you for the work you are doing in this vital NATO mission to protect the security of the Alliance's Eastern flank.

Russia's continued aggression represents a growing danger to our friends here in Estonia – as well as in Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. And our response must be clear and unequivocal.

That is why this mission that you are carrying out is so important. By stepping up NATO's deterrence and defence posture, you are showing that we are equipped to respond to any threat we face. You are showing that we are ready to do so. And you are showing – through our actions as well as our

words – that our collective commitment to NATO's Article 5 remains as strong as ever. And that an attack on any one of our NATO allies, would be treated as an attack on us all.

So I am proud that over 800 British servicemen and women are here leading a multinational effort, together with their French and Danish partners, and working alongside their Estonian hosts – and that this British deployment is one of the largest we have made to Eastern Europe in recent times.

For when a nation like Russia deliberately violates the rules based international order that we have worked so hard to create, we must come together with our allies to defend that international system – and the liberal values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law by which we stand.

I am clear that Britain will always stand with our allies in defence of these values.

From the fight against Daesh in Iraq and Syria to our commitment to meet the target of spending 2 per cent of our GDP on defence, we have been at the forefront of the NATO alliance and that is exactly where we will remain.

And while we are leaving the European Union, as I have said many times, we are not leaving Europe. So the United Kingdom is unconditionally committed to maintaining Europe's security. And we will continue to offer aid and assistance to EU member states that are the victims of armed aggression, terrorism and natural or manmade disasters.

Our resolve to draw on the full weight of our military, intelligence, diplomatic and development resources, to lead international action, with our partners, on the issues that affect the security and prosperity of our peoples is unchanged.

And our determination to defend the stability, security and prosperity of our European neighbours and friends remains steadfast.

But these commitments are only possible because of the work that you are doing.

It is your work across differences in language, culture and technology that has brought together an international combat-ready battlegroup able to defend the Baltic region by responding to the full range of threats that might exist.

It is your part in the current series of major multinational NATO exercises that is helping to provide deterrence and demonstrate our military capability to counter those who would threaten us.

It is your deployment – in the British case, the fielding of a combined arms battlegroup – that is reassuring our European partners of the scale and scope of our commitment to their security.

And beyond your military contribution, the work you are doing in communities

across Estonia is deepening the friendship between our countries and our peoples – and showing you to be some of the finest ambassadors we have.

As with all our brilliant servicemen and women – and I know I speak for President Macron, Prime Minister Ratas and Prime Minister Rasmussen too when I say this: our countries have nothing but the deepest admiration for everything you have achieved and the exceptional courage and professionalism that you have demonstrated in achieving it.

Away from your families for months at a time, the sacrifices you make, the expertise that you bring and that sense of service that you embody is what gives meaning to the commitments we make and the values that we stand for.

So as many of you move on shortly to new deployments, I hope you will do so with an incredible sense of pride.

And to the British servicemen and women in particular, let me say a heartfelt thank you, on behalf of our whole country, for all that you have done here in Estonia, for the security of this region, for the commitments of this Alliance and for the defence of the values and the way of life that we all hold dear.

News story: Contract termination notice

In line with announcements in March 2017, the NDA has now served notice of termination to Cavendish Fluor Partnership (CFP) for the management and decommissioning of the UK's 12 Magnox reactor and research sites.

The termination notice is effective from 1 September 2017, allowing for a 24 month notice period, ending on 31 August 2019.

NDA and CFP have reached agreement on the work to be performed on the sites during the contract's remaining two years, as well as the arrangements and agreed state in which CFP will leave the sites at the end of the contract.

The NDA continues to believe that this is the best course of action for the taxpayer, removing the legal risk and ensuring the continued safe, secure operations of the sites.