

## News story: Thousands of volunteers aged over 50 recruited as organisations share £2.7m

More than 6,500 new over-50s volunteers will be recruited to support charities and organisations across the country, Minister for Sport and Civil Society Tracey Crouch has been announced today.

Thirteen projects have been awarded a share of £2.7 million from the Second Half Fund to help them tap into the time and talents of people aged 50 or over. The innovative projects will work alongside public services to trial new ways of working.

The fund, launched by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and Nesta in September 2016, provides grants of up to £250,000 for projects supporting children and young people, parents and families, people to age well, and the creation of resourceful and resilient local places.

The new volunteers will be recruited into a variety of roles, including tutoring disadvantaged students, befriending elderly people at risk of loneliness and isolation and promoting reading to help increase wellbeing. This forms part of a series of work from the partners to explore how people can support the important work of our public services.

Tracey Crouch, Minister for Sport and Civil Society, said:

“These projects will benefit hugely from the wealth of talent and experience that older volunteers bring. By volunteering in later life, people can share their valuable skills, build new friendships and help transform lives within their community.”

Vicki Sellick, Director at Nesta, said:

“We know we have much to gain from the considerable talents of people as they enter the second half of their lives, given freely alongside public services. By supporting these innovative social action projects to grow we know they will transform lives, and make a significant impact on some of the biggest social challenges we face.”

The Second Half Fund grantees are:

- FareShare, £177,500: FareShare works with volunteers to distribute thousands of tonnes of food classified as waste by the food and drink industry to charities and community groups. Already helping to feed 500,000 people each week, by mobilising the time and talents of 1,053 over 50s they aim to support 800,000.

- Volunteering Matters, £225,000: Matches young care leavers with a 'grandmentor' – a volunteer aged 50+ – to support good mental and emotional health, positive relationships and independent living skills. They will replicate their model in five new local authorities, supporting 500 more young people during the lifetime of the Fund.
- Aesop Arts and Society, £246,919: Dance for Health uses dance techniques to help in fall prevention. The organisation will grow their programme from six to 35 locations across the country, with the support of over 583 volunteers aged 50+.
- Access Project, £83,500: Volunteers tutor disadvantaged students weekly to boost grades and improve access to top universities. The Access Project will expand their work through mobilising the time and talents of at least 150 new 50+ volunteers.
- BuddyHub, £115,000: A new tech-enabled befriending service aimed at older adults considered at high risk of loneliness and social isolation. The funding will help it grow in North London and mobilise 228 50+ 'Friendship Buddies'.
- St Joseph's Hospice Hackney, £233,844: Will replicate its Compassionate Neighbours programme, which encourages and equips volunteers to support vulnerable neighbours who are in the last years of life, to eight other hospices across London and the South East, mobilising 420 people aged 50+.
- Eden Project Ltd, £136,811: Will mobilise the time and talents of 150 volunteers aged 50+ to support grandparents and their grandchildren (aged 0-5) to explore and learn together – improving school readiness. Particular focus will be with local families where grandparents are taking on a significant caring role or need additional support.
- The Reader Organisation, £270,000: The Reader pioneers 'shared reading' as a way of improving wellbeing, reducing isolation and building community resilience and connectedness. The Fund will help it to make the transition from a staff-led to volunteer-led model by recruiting 474 new 50+ volunteers and establishing 213 new groups across the north west of England.
- Home Start – Greater Manchester, £284,970: HomeStart will grow its Baby Bond programme, which supports parents with mild or moderate mental health issues, from Tameside and Glossop to nine other areas of Manchester. 505 new 50+ volunteers will support at least 370 new families.

- Spice Time Credits 50+, £247,260: Will grow their Time Credits approach – which offers local rewards for volunteering – to adult social care and recruit isolated, low income and over 50s with poor health to volunteer. The model will be rolled out in Westminster, Kent and Greater Manchester, working with at least 1,000 new recruits aged 50+.
- Family Action, £249,900: Will launch a new virtual and telephone helpline and one-to-one befriending service, staffed by 350 50+ volunteers, which will aim to improve emotional and mental well-being of parents and children.
- Volunteer It Yourself, £201,000: 14-24 year old NEETS learn practical trade and building skills by committing to fix local youth clubs and other community buildings. Will recruit 500 over 50s to volunteer their time as mentors and help young people gain qualifications and access to employment and further training.
- St John Ambulance, £249,993: The First Aid Community Advocates initiative will raise awareness of the importance of first aid in target communities – such as carers, those in deprived areas, older and vulnerable groups, – and recruit and train 593 50+ volunteers.

Read [more information](#) about the fund and 13 grantees. Each of the organisations' progress will be documented and findings published in autumn 2018 on Nesta's website.

---

## **Press release: Battle Babies – From Verdun to Passchendaele**

Between 1914 and 1919, 1,634 babies born in England and Wales were named in memory of the First World War. The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and The National Archives today reveal the forgotten stories of those given the name “Passchendaele” to encourage others to look into their own family connection to the War.

At least 10 babies were named after the battle that lasted between 31 July 1917 and 10 November 1917. At 3.50am on 31 July, Gough's Fifth Army launched an attack over a 15 mile front. Despite initial successes, the attack soon became bogged down, hampered by rain which turned the battlefield into liquid mud. By the end of the offensive, the Allied forces had sustained over 320,000 casualties; German losses are estimated to be between 260,000 and 400,000.

While many of the war inspired names have passed out of use, some families have continued the tradition. The Government's call for descendants of the men and women who took part in Passchendaele, Third Battle of Ypres earlier this year unearthed the stories of two people with links to the children named 'Passchendaele'.

Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Karen Bradley said:

Those killed or injured in the battlefields of the First World War are still remembered and it is very touching that so many people were honoured in the names of their children, nieces, nephews and grandchildren. It is fitting, that in its centenary year, we are uncovering the forgotten stories that link people to Passchendaele and I encourage everyone to look into their past and discover more about their families experience in the First World War.

Ella Passchendaele Maton-Cole, aged 19, was unaware of the story behind her unusual middle name until researchers at The National Archives were able to trace it back to Gunner Frederick Fuller, a cousin of Ella's great-great grandmother. Frederick was killed on 30 September 1917 during the Battle of Passchendaele; his cousin named her new born daughter Florence Mary Passchendaele, and her next born son, Frederick, in memory of him. Upon his death, Frederick's sister was sent a letter from his Commanding Officer:

This feeling, I can assure you, is shared also by all the men in the Battery, for he was respected by all... But it must be remembered that all these happenings are witnessed by the eyes of the Maker, who does all things for the best. I was in charge of the party of men who carried him to the dressing station and I can certainly assure you he was perfectly calm and collected. He was known as the coolest man in the Battery

Robert Passchendaele Oswald was named in honour of his uncle Thomas Oswald, who was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for extinguishing camouflage that was on fire, despite being under intense enemy bombardment.

The London Gazette records that Thomas:

Set a magnificent example of pluck and fearless devotion to duty.

Thomas' brother George named his next born son Robert Passchendaele, just months after the end of the battle.

The research has shown that the most common war inspired baby name of the period was 'Verdun' which was given to 901 children. Other major battles feature on the list with 15 babies named 'Somme' after the battle that claimed 57,470 British casualties on the first day alone, and a further 71

named 'Ypres'.

---

## News story: Ambassador Chris Campbell delivers speeches on Global Britain

Ambassador Chris Campbell has certainly kept busy as he visited various Dominican institutions and universities to deliver speeches on BREXIT and Global Britain. This comes at a moment of ever growing interest on BREXIT and the opportunities it might bring to the Dominican Republic. Certainly, the UK wants to be a Global Britain – a true partner to the European Union but also a country that reaches beyond the borders of Europe and goes out, into the world, to build relationships with old friends and new allies alike. With this in mind, invitations poured into the Embassy to hear more about the topic.

On 3 April 2017, Ambassador Campbell was interviewed for an hour on Dominican National Television (on [Channel 4](#), which is a State Owned Channel and is highly viewed by Dominican Audiences). There he spoke about BREXIT and future possibilities and opportunities between Dominican Republic and the UK. Likewise, on that same day, he gave a speech in FUNGLODE, a Dominican NGO and political think-tank. His speech was live-tweeted from the [British Embassy's Twitter account](#).

Ambassador Campbell highlighted Global Britain once again on 6 April, when he was invited as the Keynote Speaker for the International Business Week 2017 at Universidad Iberoamericana (UNIBE). More than 100 people attended this event and it was widely reported on in the Dominican press.

More recently, on 19 June, Ambassador Campbell visited the Universidad Pedro Henríquez Ureña (UNPHU). The event was extremely well attended by undergraduate and postgraduate students. There, he mentioned that the UK will continue to look at markets around the world, including Dominican Republic, where there is growth potential and it will want to make it as easy as possible to do business together. This prompted great interest and questions from the audience.

Finally, on 20 June, the Ambassador delivered a speech in the Dominican Ministry of Defence. There, the auditorium was at its full capacity. Once again, Ambassador Campbell spoke about Global Britain, the UK's role as a world champion of trade and the promotion of UK values around the world.

Ambassador Chris Campbell's message was clear: United Kingdom wishes to emerge from BREXIT stronger, fairer, more united and more outward looking than ever before, as a fully independent, sovereign country, and as the champion of free trade. To deliver that, it needs stronger commercial and political relations around the world with countries such as the Dominican

Republic. This is a great opportunity to strengthen the existing bonds between both countries – it must not be wasted!

## **Press Contact**

Miriam Stern

[Miriam.Stern@fco.gov.uk](mailto:Miriam.Stern@fco.gov.uk)

---

## **News story: International Development Secretary visits Catterick Garrison**

Priti Patel visited members of 32 Engineer Regiment today, as they prepare to deploy in support of the UN Peacekeeping mission in South Sudan.

The deployment of 162 British personnel from Catterick Garrison in Yorkshire will increase the number of UK military in South Sudan to approximately 400.

These troops are primarily split between Malakal and Bentiu in the north of South Sudan, where they are providing engineering and medical support at UN camps and helping to develop logistical routes to improve the delivery of humanitarian aid, a vital task in a country where movement by road is virtually impossible due to a lack of infrastructure.

International Development Secretary Priti Patel said:

The brave members of our Armed Forces are a credit to our country and ahead of their deployment to the UN peacekeeping mission to save lives in South Sudan, I'm delighted to have met men and women from 32 Engineer Regiment.

The situation on the ground in South Sudan is catastrophic and a man-made disaster. Conflict and instability has led to grotesque levels of violence and persecution, and Britain is leading the way in providing life-saving and emergency food, water and medicine to those in need.

The engineering and medical expertise of our deployed British soldiers will make a real difference, bringing skills that the UN desperately needs to protect innocent people in this terrible conflict.

Britain can stand tall in the world, with the dedication of our Armed Forces helping to save lives, rebuild South Sudan and bringing stability and peace to the people who live there.

Priti Patel learns more about the UK's support to the UN Peacekeeping mission in South Sudan. Picture: Matt Lower/DFID

In South Sudan, 6 million people face the daily reality of going without enough food and water and nearly 4 million people have been forced from their homes because of ruthless violence and widespread sexual assault.

The International Development Secretary visited South Sudan in April to urge parties to the conflict stop the spiral of violence, end the atrocious human rights abuses and allow urgently needed aid to reach those in need. This followed intense fighting between Government and opposition forces and restrictions on access for humanitarian organisations trying to deliver lifesaving supplies.

The UK is the second largest bilateral provider of lifesaving humanitarian assistance in South Sudan and is the leading provider of health and education services. This year the UK will provide 500,000 people with food, safe drinking water for more than 300,000 people, and with other donors is providing nutritional supplements to over 100,000 children and pregnant women.

#### **Notes to Editors**

- The UK was one of the first major donors to respond to the UN's appeal to South Sudan – pledging less than 24 hours after the appeal was launched – and we are leading the way by making sure millions of people in South Sudan get urgently needed food, water and medicine, as well as longer term support to provide much-needed education.
- We are providing £100 million of humanitarian assistance to South Sudan this year. This will provide food for over 500,000 people, safe drinking water for over 300,000 people, emergency health services for over 100,000 people and support for 650,000 people to build their livelihoods.
- The UK has also matched £10 million of the public donations to the DEC's East Africa appeal which has raised £60 million since its launch.
- Over half a million new refugees arrived in Uganda in 2016, 88% of them from South Sudan – more than crossed the Mediterranean into Europe. Around 2,200 arrive each day. There are now nearly 1 million South Sudanese Refugees in Uganda.

---

## **News story: Update on rehousing former Grenfell residents**

Update on the housing commitment to residents who lived in Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk.

Finding permanent new homes for former residents of Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk is a top priority for both the government and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC).

Some permanent housing is now available and the council has [published details \(PDF, 108 KB\)](#) of how they will work with families to allocate permanent homes.

No one will be forced to accept any home, and the council will continue to make more offers as long as it is reasonable and practical to do so.

The information for residents also includes a summary of commitments to residents from the council and government, including:

- residents will be offered permanent furnished social housing within 12 months and all moving costs will be covered
- when residents move out of hotels or emergency accommodation (whether to temporary accommodation or a permanent home) they will not have to pay rent, service charges or core utility bills (gas, water and electricity) during this period
- after this 12 month period residents that had held a council tenancy at Grenfell Tower or Grenfell Walk will pay no more in rent and service charges for their permanent social housing than they were paying before; those who did not hold a council tenancy for a flat in Grenfell Tower or Grenfell Walk will be charged at a social rent level

The council will hold meetings with former residents of Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk individually so they can explain the process in detail and answer any questions. They will continue to provide housing advice and support to residents throughout the rehousing process.

If residents have any questions about the housing allocations process they can contact RBKC on 020 7361 3034.