

# Press release: New £1 million flood competition to protect more communities

A new ground-breaking competition will allow flood defence projects around the country to apply for a share of £1 million to help protect even more homes and businesses, Environment Secretary Andrea Leadsom announced today.

This government funded competition is the first of its kind and will be open to innovative projects that plan to use landscape features such as ponds, banks, meanders, channels, and trees to store, drain or slow flood water.

Natural flood management already forms an important part of the government's flood strategy and funding these new projects builds on £14m already committed to similar schemes across the country.

Environment Secretary Andrea Leadsom said:

I am delighted to offer more support for local communities looking to employ natural flood management measures to better protect their homes and businesses.

We now carefully look at flood risk across an entire catchment area from a river's source to the sea – to make sure we have in place the best tailored mix of natural as well as concrete, engineered defences to better protect communities.

The Environment Secretary announced the new competition in Leicester, where a natural flood management scheme is already successfully in place reconnecting the floodplain with the river.

This scheme has not only reduced the flood risk to 1,200 properties, it has transformed public spaces along the river, with improved seating areas and cycle paths for the local community to enjoy. A total of 100 trees and 7,000 shrubs have been planted and wildlife such as grey heron and little egret are now regularly seen around the area.

The new natural flood management competition will give small-scale natural flood management projects around the country the opportunity to apply for funding, so they too can achieve similar results.

Environment Agency Chair, Emma Howard Boyd, said:

At places such as Leicester, Morpeth, and Medmerry, the Environment Agency has already shown that natural flood management can reduce flood risk alongside traditional flood defences and property

resilience.

There is no 'one size fits all' approach to natural flood management: it's about using a range of measures, from creating ponds and woody dams to redirecting river channels, that work together to reduce flood risk. This competition is a great way to explore the different ways these approaches can benefit communities and the environment.

Details of the competition and how to apply are available [here](#).

The deadline for competition entries is 19 May 2017 and the successful projects are expected to be announced by the end of June 2017.

Notes to editors:

- Applications are to be submitted through existing Catchment Partnerships – bodies formed of local people, landowners and statutory bodies that work together to manage whole river catchments.
- Upstream management of flooding is already a central theme in many areas, including the Cumbria and Calderdale Flood Action Plans.
- The Government has already provided £4.1m to natural flood management demonstration projects in Holnecote (Somerset), Pickering (North Yorks) and Upper Derwent (Derbyshire).

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## **News story: Sir David Norgrove appointed as Chair of the UK Statistics Authority**

Sir David Norgrove has been appointed by Her Majesty the Queen as the new Chair of the UK Statistics Authority.

He has a long-standing record as a public servant and user of statistics, having previously served as Chair of the Low Pay Commission (2009 to 2016) and the Pensions Regulator (2005 to 2010).

Welcoming the appointment, Ben Gummer, Minister for the Cabinet Office said:

Sir David will make an exceptional Chair of the UK Statistics

Authority. Having chaired the Low Pay Commission and the Pensions Regulator, he has an exemplary record and one which will stand him in good stead as Chair of the UK Statistics Authority.

I would also like to extend my thanks to Sir Andrew Dilnot for his excellent work over the last five years and wish him well in his future endeavours.

The appointment was the subject of an open recruitment exercise following the Code of Practice set out by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments, a pre-appointment hearing with the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee, and approval by Parliament.

Sir David will take up the post on 1 April 2017, for a renewable five year term. He does not hold any other ministerial appointments.

### **Further information**

The UK Statistics Authority was established on 1 April 2008 by the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007, with a statutory objective to promote and safeguard the production and publication of official statistics that serve the public good.

Sir David Norgrove is an external member and Deputy Chair of Oxford University Council. He has been a trustee and Deputy Chair of the British Museum, and chaired the Low Pay Commission from 2009 to 2016, the Pensions Regulator from its inception in 2005 until 2010, Risk First from 2012 to 2015 and Amnesty International Charitable Trust from 2008 to 2014. He chaired a Government review of the family justice system in 2010 and 2011 and subsequently served as Deputy Chair of the Family Justice Board, having chaired it from its inception in 2012 until 2016.

David began his career as an economist at the Treasury and worked in a Chicago bank before becoming Private Secretary to the then Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher. He spent 16 years with Marks & Spencer and became a member of the Board there. David was knighted in the 2016 New Year Honours for services to the low paid and to family justice.

The role has a time commitment of 2 days a week and remuneration of £57,000 per annum.

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**Press release: Foreign Office wins  
award for commitment to staff well-**

## being

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has been presented with an award for its commitment to staff wellbeing by the mental health charity Mind.

The FCO was one of 29 organisations to be named in Mind's new Workplace Wellbeing Index, launched this week.

The Index is a new benchmark for best policy and practice and has been designed to celebrate the good work employers are doing to promote and support positive mental health.

The FCO was presented with Bronze level accreditation, reflecting the work it does to support its staff in the UK and overseas – including many who regularly deal with traumatic situations, helping British families and individuals when they have been victim to violent crimes or suffered tragedies.

Specific support networks, including trained mental health first aiders, have been created as part of this work. Recent activities to strengthen this approach have included creating wellbeing rooms, sharing best practice through blogs and supporting activities linked to Mental Health Awareness Week and National Work Life Week.

Speaking about the award Sir Simon McDonald, the Foreign Office's Permanent Under-Secretary, said:

Our staff do a phenomenal job around the world, often in difficult circumstances, and it is vital that we look after their health and wellbeing. It is something we are very committed to and we see many benefits from, both for individuals and the whole organisation.

We are delighted our work to promote good mental health and wellbeing have been recognised by Mind.

Emma Mamo, Head of Workplace Wellbeing at Mind, said:

In the last few years, we've seen employers make great strides when it comes to tackling stress and supporting the mental wellbeing of their staff, including those with a diagnosed mental health problem. We're delighted to recognise and celebrate employers making mental health a priority for their organisation through our Workplace Wellbeing Index. In our first year, we've seen good practice right across the board, from each and every one of the thirty pioneering employers to take part. The Awards event provided an opportunity to recognise those forward-thinking employers who are working hard to promote good mental health and wellbeing among their workforce.

Notes to editors:

For more information about Mind and the Workplace Wellbeing Index visit [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

## Further information

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# [News story: 2017 Appointments to IRP](#)

1. [Home](#)

News story

From:

[Independent Reconfiguration Panel](#)

First published:

31 March 2017

The Secretary of State for Health is seeking to appoint four members (one lay, three managerial) to the IRP.



For more information and to apply please visit the Public Appointments Website at: [Cabinet Office](#)

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## [Press release: Third Round of UK Games Fund winners announced](#)

New innovative video game developers will see their drawing board dreams take a step closer to reality as Culture and the Digital Economy Minister Matt Hancock announced the third round of winners of the UK Games Fund at the launch of the London Games Festival.

Fifteen projects including mobile, PC, console and VR games across the UK have been selected in the third round of funding and will now receive grants to develop their prototypes. Recognising that many small businesses lack the capital to help develop their ideas and attract private investment, the Fund invites businesses to apply for grants to take current projects and make them into working prototype games.

Aimed at helping creative young businesses get concepts off the drawing board and into production, the £4 million UK Games fund was set up to further growth, nurture talent and provide additional support to the sector which is recognised globally for its creativity and skill.

Minister of State for Digital and Culture Matt Hancock said:

I am proud of our global reputation for excellence in games development and hope this cash boost helps these projects become the leading games of tomorrow.

Video games, and the wider creative industries, are at the heart of our work on developing a new industrial strategy, and we will continue to do all we can to help build on the success of the sector and promote it as a major economic and cultural force.

To date, the [UK Games Fund](#) has awarded 55 grants, with many of these supported projects going on to secure further funding, creative development and publishing opportunities as a result of this investment. Now worth £87 billion to the economy, the creative industries are one of the UK's greatest success stories. The Fund forms part of a package of measures government has introduced to boost working capital for the sector including the UK's video games tax relief which supports home-grown studios and attracts inward investment.

The newly published [Digital Strategy](#) highlights how the UK Games Fund helps create the right conditions for the UK games development industry as part of the government's plan to ensure that the benefits of digital are felt by every business and individual across the country.

Paul Durrant, Managing Director, UK Games Talent and Finance CIC said:

Interest in the UK Games Fund has continued at exceptionally high level, reflecting the potential of this sector to continue to contribute to future economic growth. This broad regional spread of talent shows how young games development businesses continue to have potential contribute to productivity increases across the UK.

Third round winners subject to final due diligence and contract include:

- Fourth State Ltd (Ipswich)
- Stormcloud Games Limited (Dundee)
- Bitmap Bureau Ltd, (Southampton)
- Robot House Games Ltd (Waterlooville)
- Quite Fresh Ltd (Brighton)
- Dumpling Design Ltd (Sheffield)
- Crash Lab Ltd (Nottingham)
- Third Kind Games Limited (Leamington Spa)
- Lost Forest Games Ltd (Horsham)
- Rogue Sun Ltd (Guildford)
- Biome Collective (Dundee)
- Vorpai Games Ltd (Manchester)
- The Chinese Room (Brighton)
- Ruffian Games Ltd (Dundee).

The UK Games Fund is managed by UK Games Talent and Finance Community Interest Company. Businesses can apply for the fourth round of funding later this year.

Read Matt Hancock's speech at the [London Games Festival](#)

In October 2015 Government launched the [£4 million UK Games Fund](#) to help boost the development of the UK's video games sector. Key features of the Fund include:

- Grants of up to £25,000 to help new and young games development

businesses create working prototype games.

- Talent development initiatives – this includes competitions for students and graduate teams to create and showcase new games, and mentoring for businesses and individuals.
- The Fund has received more than 500 applications from young businesses since the initiative launched in 2015.