

# LLWR donation brings festive cheer to families across West Cumbria

Needy families across West Cumbria enjoyed some Christmas cheer thanks to a significant donation from LLWR, who also ensured the scheme guaranteed small independent local retailers a timely boost.

The company gifted shopping vouchers to Copeland communities and ensured they could only be redeemed at local stores.

Jenny Brumby and Jenn Jakubowski, of Around the Combe Community Group, coordinated the assistance in the Millom area, where LLWR's funding helped supply families with Christmas Day lunches.

"It was absolutely amazing to have LLWR offer support at this time of great need in the community," said volunteer Jenny, also Copeland Borough Council's Shop Local Coordinator.

"The need is huge and we're very thankful. The support we've been able to give families has been life changing for some."

Some £2,500 went to families in toy vouchers, to ensure youngsters had presents to open on Christmas morning, whilst 60 care parcels, including toiletries, were distributed, plus 30 baby parcels, including nappies.

In all, around 300 families in the Millom area have received help in part due to LLWR funding, with grants from other sources also playing a major part. Some funding has been held back by the Community Group, so they can continue to provide food parcels for those in most need.

The spark for LLWR's campaign came from Egremont Town Council, who made a successful bid for funding to help support its aim to fund shopping vouchers for 105 struggling families that could only be redeemed in the town, thus also supporting local business.

Cath Giel, LLWR's Director of Communications and Stakeholder Relations, opted to extend the scheme to also include the wider Copeland area, including Millom and Whitehaven.

She said: "We realised there was a great need right across the borough. Deprivation is an issue further exacerbated by Christmas, so we were happy to bring smiles to faces at what should be a joyous time of the year.

"Our donations also gave us the chance to support local businesses who have also been impacted by COVID, so this was a double win for our community."

In addition, the West Cumbria Community Action Trust had identified 100 families who would struggle to fund the festivities, and each was gifted £50 in vouchers from LLWR to spend on meat, fruit and veg in local Whitehaven shops.

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## PM call with Julia Gillard: 25 January 2021

News story

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to Julia Gillard, Chair of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and former Australian Prime Minister.



The Prime Minister spoke to Julia Gillard, Chair of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and former Australian Prime Minister, this morning.

They agreed that ensuring girls everywhere get 12 years of quality education is one of the most important things we can do to help the world recover and build back better from Covid-19.

The UK will co-host a summit this summer with Kenya to drive fundraising and action on getting vulnerable children worldwide into education, and the Prime Minister reiterated the Government's commitment to supporting girls' education in particular through our G7 presidency and beyond.

He noted that the UK remains a world leader in international development and that girls' education is a priority for our aid budget. Ms Gillard welcomed the UK's strong record on funding GPE and they looked forward to working together in the run up to the GPE summit later this year.

Published 25 January 2021

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# Appointment of Civil Service Commissioner for Northern Ireland.

Press release

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the Right Honourable Brandon Lewis MP has announced the reappointment of Sinead Burns as a Civil Service Commissioner for Northern Ireland.



The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the Right Honourable Brandon Lewis MP has announced the reappointment of Sinead Burns as a Civil Service Commissioner for Northern Ireland.

The appointment has been renewed for a period of five years until 7 March 2026.

Sinead Burns is an Occupational Psychologist and a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development with over 20 years' experience in Human Resource Management gained within the public, private and charitable sectors. She served as Commissioner for Judicial Appointments in Northern Ireland from 2005 until 2013.

She is currently a Lay Magistrate and a Member of Council for the General Optical Council, which regulates optical professionals and businesses throughout the UK. She is also a Fitness to Practice Panel Member with the Health & Care Professions Council.

## **The Civil Service Commissioners for Northern Ireland**

The Civil Service Commissioners for Northern Ireland are independent of Government and the Northern Ireland Civil Service, and have a statutory responsibility to uphold selection on merit for appointments to the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS). The Commissioners also hear appeals under the NICS Code of Ethics. Commissioners work in partnership with the NICS and other stakeholders to uphold the merit principle and promote public confidence in recruitment.

## **Terms of appointment**

The position attracts a remuneration of £300 per day and is not pensionable.

## **Political Activity**

All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. However, in accordance with the original Nolan recommendations, there is a requirement for appointees' political activity in defined categories within the last five years to be made public.

The appointee has declared no such political activity in the past five years.

## **Regulation**

This appointment is not regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

Published 25 January 2021

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# **[Call for evidence: An inspection of the use of hotels and barracks as contingency asylum accommodation](#)**

The Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration (ICIBI) has begun an inspection of the use of hotels and barracks as contingency asylum accommodation and is inviting anyone with relevant knowledge or experience to submit their evidence to [chiefinspector@icibi.gov.uk](mailto:chiefinspector@icibi.gov.uk).

The call for evidence will remain open for four weeks (until 19 February 2021).

This inspection will examine the use made of hotels and other forms of contingency asylum accommodation, including Penally Camp and Napier Barracks, since the beginning of 2020. It will focus on the roles and responsibilities of the Home Office and the accommodation service providers, and of other parties, in relation to the use of contingency asylum accommodation, including:

- communication between the Home Office and the accommodation service providers, and with other stakeholders (for example, local authorities, health services, NGOs who provide support to asylum seekers), regarding the need for contingency asylum accommodation in particular areas

- the process(es) for identifying potential contingency asylum accommodation and for testing and deciding about the suitability of specific sites, including with regard to Covid-19 safety
- decisions about individual asylum seekers and their needs in terms of accommodation and other support, including information sharing, record keeping, oversight and review, particularly with regard to vulnerabilities and risks
- communication between the Home Office and/or the accommodation service providers and individuals (“service users”) regarding their asylum accommodation, including any changes to that accommodation
- the strategy for reducing the requirement for contingency asylum accommodation in the short- to medium-term (to the end of 2021-22) and longer-term (through to the end of the current Asylum Accommodation and Support Contracts)

ICIBI would welcome evidence in relation to any of the above points, but also in respect of any other matters that those with knowledge and experience of contingency asylum accommodation consider relevant.

Since the end of 2020, ICIBI has been speaking to and receiving evidence from a number of stakeholders, along with residents of both Penally Camp and Napier Barracks. There is no need for those who have already provided evidence to re-submit it, unless they wish to update or add to it.

Please Note: The Independent Chief Inspector is unable to assist with individual asylum claims or with complaints, but where anyone considers that the details of a claim or complaint are relevant they may include them in their evidence submission.

## **Data Protection**

In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) we need your permission to process and retain the information you submit, by clicking [here](#) a consent statement will automatically be added to your email.

However, if you are using a non-compatible email client then please send your submission to [chiefinspector@icibi.gov.uk](mailto:chiefinspector@icibi.gov.uk) with ‘Contingency Asylum Accommodation submission’ in the subject line and include the following consent statement in the body of your email: “I consent to the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration retaining and processing the information and data in this email.”

Please do not include this statement if you do not wish to give your consent. The information you submit may be quoted in the final inspection report, but it is the ICIBI’s practice not to name sources and to anonymise as much as possible any examples or case studies.

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# Sellafield Ltd plays key role in drone development challenge

Sellafield Ltd has a key role in a consortium of industrial, aerospace and aviation giants that has won a share of a £30 million government challenge fund to develop and test a remotely operated drone system.

The futuristic system will enable remote inspection and monitoring of nuclear sites and has a range of other applications including on construction sites, oil and gas installations, road, rail and telecoms infrastructure and in providing live support to emergency services.

Led by the specialist drone command and control solution developer, Sees.ai, the consortium includes BAE Systems, Atkins, Skanska, NATS, Vodafone and a host of other organisations with unique specialisms and perspectives.

Mark Foster, Head of Specialist Equipment Services, Sellafield Ltd, said:

The specialist equipment services team provides engineering and maintenance support to the whole of Sellafield and we continually seek out areas of innovation to improve services on our complex and congested site.

This new technology has huge potential for our future operations; making our work safer, faster and more cost effective.

We're proud to be at the forefront of a national challenge and our experienced team, together with our local supply chain partners, is demonstrating every day how we can truly make a difference for our mission and beyond.

The funding comes from the Future Flight Challenge, Phase 2 competition, part of the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund delivered by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

UKRI is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy that works in partnership with universities, research organisations, businesses, charities, and government to create the best possible environment for research and innovation to flourish.

As a publicly funded organisation itself. Sellafield Ltd will not receive any of the challenge fund but the Sellafield site offers a unique testbed for the use of this technology on nuclear licensed sites and already has its own team of highly skilled and experienced drone pilots.

The drone system, which uses similar technology to autonomous cars, enables autonomous drones to be flown under tight human supervision by pilots based in a central control room hundreds of miles away.

The challenge put the drone system through a series of increasingly complex tests to see how it would respond in a range of circumstances, demonstrating significant potential for inspections and maintenance of congested and hazardous areas.

Peter Allport, Remote Handling Lead for Specialist Equipment Services, Sellafield Ltd Engineering and Maintenance said:

This technology has the potential to revolutionise how we use drones at Sellafield, increasing the operational envelope and transforming the way in which drones are piloted.

It also closes the loop between our engineering and maintenance and robotics and artificial intelligence programme; ensuring we are always using the best available technology so we can continuously improve our service to the Sellafield site and the rest of the NDA Group.