

School sponsored by LLW Repository Ltd reach national Lego League final

The LLWR sponsored Gosforth Primary School are making the long journey to Bristol for the England and Wales final of FIRST Lego League after winning the regional tournament.

LLWR's Tom Fletcher, a volunteer with Team Gosforth, said the win, at Lakes College, near Workington, was well deserved.

"Team Gosforth put in a lot of effort, and team members proved themselves thoughtful, cheerful and conscientious along the way, thinking about big issues like accessibility and climate change as they addressed a local problem," he added.

"They're now headed to Bristol to compete at the national tournament. The LLWR coaches could not be prouder."

Hard on their heels were a second LLWR backed school, Millom, who finished runner up on the day, with the support of LLWR volunteer Becky Ruddy.

Lego League comprises 3 strands: the project; the robot challenge and Core Values. Each is assessed separately, and then results are compiled to identify an overall winner.

This year, the tournament theme was 'City Shaper', and the teams had to run a project about a problem faced by a local building or community space.

Team Gosforth chose the problem of parking in their village and had worked hard since September to investigate the issue. They interviewed local businesses and councillors, completed questionnaires with nearby office workers, conducted fieldwork and compared the costs and benefits of different solutions.

In the end they put forward the idea of a delivery van that would enable continued access to shop services, whilst taking cars off the road. Meanwhile, the team also had to learn how to programme a robot to complete various city themed challenges.

Paul Pointon, LLWR Managing Director, said: "Four years ago, when Pete Woolaghan, of REACT Engineering, asked us to get involved in First Lego League we were happy to accept and contribute to his vision of one day having 100 Cumbrian schools take part.

"Lego League's Core Values, Discovery, Innovation, Impact, Inclusion, Teamwork and Fun, are exemplary, and getting involved has put us at the heart of our community. We're proud to play a part in shaping the engineers and problem solvers of tomorrow.

"We've shown our commitment with a £25,000 contribution, over 5 years, and we

also utilise Lego League as a developmental tool for employees. Several of our apprentices volunteered this year, including 3 at Gosforth, and this can only be beneficial in their roles at LLWR.

“Best of luck to Gosforth in the final, but, along with Seascale and Millom, they are already winners to us.”

Sarah Layzell, Assistant Head Teacher of Gosforth Primary, said: “I was in utter disbelief when it was announced we had won, and the children were so pleased, they couldn’t believe it.”

The national final will be held on 22nd February and Team Gosforth will use the intervening period to hone their skills. But Sarah is not getting her hopes up.

“We are going there for the experience,” she said.

LLWR volunteers assisting Gosforth during the season were Tom Fletcher, Leona Middlehurst, Danielle Boyd and apprentices Chloe Glaister, Amy Fox and Jade Murphy.

[Orwell Bridge study offers new hope for reducing high wind closures](#)

Reducing the speed limit over the bridge during high winds, using temporary lane closures to mitigate the effect of high winds on vehicles, and keeping the bridge open in one direction are three potential solutions identified in the year-long study, commissioned by Highways England.

The report was carried out by independent experts at City, University of London using ground-breaking techniques designed specifically for the Orwell Bridge to create a more detailed picture than ever before of how wind speeds on the bridge affect different types of vehicles.

Highways England will take forward all the report’s recommendations to assess their feasibility, with a view to introducing technology able to change the speed limit in high winds before the end of the year.

Simon Amor, head of planning and development for Highways England in the East of England, said:

We understand the vital importance of the Orwell Bridge for people living and working in Ipswich and also for the people and businesses that depend on goods arriving and leaving the UK at the port of Felixstowe.

Commissioning this study is just one of the steps we have taken to improve the resilience of this vital national asset when there are high winds in the area. Aerodynamic modelling is one of the most complex areas of engineering and we are grateful for the expertise that City, University of London have brought to this complex issue. I'm hugely encouraged that the study has identified these potentially workable solutions. We will take forward the next steps at pace and we're optimistic that we could have improvements in place by the end of the year.

The Orwell Bridge opened in 1982 and carries 60,000 vehicles a day. It stands up to 43 metres tall over the River Orwell, and traffic on the bridge can operate safely at head or tail wind speeds of up to 60mph (or 50mph when the wind is blowing from the side). Above these speeds there is a risk of vehicles being blown off course and causing collisions. Since 2013 the bridge has been closed on 18 occasions due to high winds. It is only closed when essential for safety reasons, and for as short a time as possible. In its findings, the aerodynamic study concluded that the thresholds for closing the bridge at the current 60mph limit are the correct ones for safety, but that reducing the traffic speed limit from 60mph down to 40mph during high winds could mean that the bridge may still be able to remain safely open during wind speeds of up to 70mph.

The findings are theoretical and will need to be validated in a physical environment using a wind tunnel. At the same time, Highways England will also start work on designing ways to introduce a changeable speed limit over the bridge.

The study is part of a series of measures being taken to improve the resilience of the Orwell Bridge. Already in recent years, revised signage has enabled closures to be installed and removed within a 20 minute period (rather than 50 minutes before) and a new protocol for making and communicating decisions about bridge closures to give road users more time to make decisions about their journeys.

Working together with partners, Highways England will also continue to look at any and all steps that can help improve the resilience of the Orwell Bridge and keep journeys on it safe and reliable.

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.

Message to UK Nationals living and working in Luxembourg

Hello everyone,

You will have seen that the Withdrawal Agreement signed by the EU and UK last October has now been ratified by the British and EU Parliaments.

This means that the UK will be leaving the EU at midnight tomorrow, Friday 31 Jan. There are two parts of the Withdrawal Agreement that I particularly want to draw to your attention: the Transition Period and the Chapter on Citizens Rights.

The Withdrawal Agreement provides for a Transition Period that will run until 31 December 2020. During this 11-month period, although the UK will have left the EU, we will still be subject to the EU acquis. Free Movement Rights therefore continue until the end of the year, so you can work, study and travel in the EU, as you do now.

The Withdrawal Agreement also includes a chapter on the Citizens Rights of those UK nationals living in the EU (and EU nationals living in the UK) who fall within the scope of the Agreement. In short, anyone currently living or working lawfully in Luxembourg at the end of the Transition Period will be able to continue to do so.

The Luxembourg Government announced last year that UK nationals living in Luxembourg who fall within the scope of the Withdrawal Agreement will be issued with a new residence card that shows that they are beneficiaries of the Withdrawal Agreement. These will be issued automatically to those affected, in phases during the Transition Period, i.e. there is no need to apply for a new document. Existing residency cards will remain valid until the end of 2020.

UK nationals who work in Luxembourg but live in a neighbouring country, and who meet the definition of a cross-border worker (a person who works in one Member State and lives in another Member State, to which they return every day or at least once a week), will be able to continue to do so. According to the Luxembourg Government cross-border workers will need to apply for a document, which certifies their rights deriving from the Agreement. They will set out details of how to do this at a later date.

We are in close contact with the Luxembourg authorities and will update you as soon as there is further information on how these processes will work. In the meantime I encourage you to familiarise yourself with the information that the Government of Luxembourg have made available on guichet.lu and government.lu, and our own Living in [Luxembourg Guide](#).

We plan to hold the next in our series of Citizens' Outreach meetings in early March. We will use the meeting to inform you of what the Withdrawal Agreement means for you, and to answer questions. Details will be announced on the Embassy's Facebook and website pages next week.

In the meantime, we encourage you to:

- Make sure you are registered under the existing system with your local commune
- Exchange your driving licence for a Luxembourgish one if you have been resident here for more than 6 months
- Sign up for alerts to the Living in [Luxembourg guide](#)

Finally, some of you might be wondering how talk of a possible 'no deal' Brexit in December 2020 would affect you. This is a reference to the possibility that at the end of the Transition Period the UK and EU may not have reached agreement on the future trade relationship. This does not affect your rights as set out in the Withdrawal Agreement to continue living and working in the EU.

Many thanks

John Marshall, HM Ambassador

Boost for pensioners in the EU

Under the terms of the Withdrawal Agreement, UK state pensioners living in the EEA or Switzerland by 31 December 2020 will continue to have their UK State Pensions increased annually, in line with those in the UK.

Currently, the basic State Pension and new State Pension are increased by the "triple lock" mechanism, which ensures they will rise each year by the highest of either 2.5 per cent, the rate of inflation or average earnings.

People will get their UK State Pension uprated even if they claim it on or after 1 January 2021, as long as they meet the [UK State Pension qualifying conditions](#) and those of the Withdrawal Agreement.

Also under the Withdrawal Agreement, EEA citizens and Swiss nationals living in the UK can continue to claim benefits on the same terms as now, for as long as they remain lawfully resident and eligible.

The Immigration and Social Security Coordination Bill will ensure the UK can set new rules on benefits and social security. Entitlement for EEA citizens and Swiss nationals arriving in the UK from 1 January 2021 will be aligned with that of non-EEA/Swiss citizens. Non-EEA/Swiss citizens can usually access most benefits after they have been living in the UK for 5 years.

Additional information

about the Withdrawal Agreement

- the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Act confirms these protections in UK domestic law
- these protections will apply regardless of whether any agreement is reached on coordinating social security with the EU for the future
- the position of those who do not fall within this group will be covered by the future relationship with the EU, which is yet to be negotiated
- read the [UK state pension qualifying conditions](#)
- full access to the UK benefit system will only be available after settled status is granted, typically after 5 years

For more information on benefits and pensions

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 3267 5144

Follow DWP on:

[Government Chemist responds to Defra call for evidence](#)



The Government Chemist responded to the [Call for Evidence for the National Food Strategy](#) launched by Defra in June 2019. The purpose of this call for evidence is to gather inspiration to transform the UK food system and develop a National Food Strategy.

The Government Chemist responded to the consultation providing information about its expertise and current involvement in the areas of food allergy, food authenticity, environmental challenges and food innovation.

The Government Chemist, in view of the many synergies that the role has with the responsibilities of Defra, the Food Standards Agency and Food Standards Scotland, provided some general comments in the attached response document.

PDF, 576KB, 7 pages

If you use assistive technology (such as a screen reader) and need a version of this document in a more accessible format, please email government.chemist@lgcgroup.com. Please tell us what format you need. It will help us if you say what assistive technology you use.

For more information about the work of the Government Chemist contact:

Published 31 January 2020