

Press release: Foreign Secretary: West takes a stand to halt reckless ambitions

Never before have so many countries come together to expel Russian diplomats. By last night, the total stood at more than 20 nations collectively deciding to remove more than 100 Kremlin officials. In the process these allies of Britain have consciously placed themselves at risk of retaliation.

Their principled stand in the aftermath of the use of a nerve agent in Salisbury on March 4 may well carry a price, perhaps in the form of some of their own diplomats being removed from Moscow, so I am deeply grateful to all the nations who have resolved to act. And I believe that yesterday's events could become a turning point.

Do not underestimate the effect of these measures on Russia's networks of espionage. When the Foreign Office evicted 23 undeclared intelligence officers from the Russian embassy in London, we eviscerated the Kremlin's painstakingly assembled operation in Britain.

Yesterday's action delivers a further blow from which Russian intelligence will need many years to recover. But I will resist any temptation to proclaim that the response was all about us. Our allies have responded because they share our view of the threat posed by the Kremlin to their values and security.

The use of a banned nerve agent on British soil falls into a wider pattern of President Putin's reckless behaviour. In the past four years, the Kremlin has annexed Crimea, ignited the flames of conflict in the Donbas region of Ukraine, hacked the German Bundestag, interfered in elections across the world, sought to hide Assad's use of poison gas and joined his onslaught against the Syrian people.

The common thread is Mr Putin's willingness to defy the essential rules on which the safety of every country depends. Hence every responsible nation shares a vital interest in standing firm against him.

Our allies have not been deterred by Russia's usual tactics for avoiding pressure. Sure enough, the Kremlin began pumping out a deluge of lies almost as soon as Sergei and Yulia Skripal had entered intensive care.

So far, my colleagues at the Foreign Office have identified 21 theories broadcast by the Russian state media, ranging from the sublime (Skripal overdosed because he was addicted to novichok) to the absurd (America did it to "destabilise the world") to the offensive (The UK poisoned its own city to spoil the World Cup).

There was a time when this tactic of sowing doubt might have been effective,

but no one is fooled any more. I believe yesterday was a moment when the cynicism of the propaganda machine was exposed for all to see. The western alliance took decisive action and Britain's partners came together against the Kremlin's reckless ambitions.

Originally published [here](#)

[News story: Skills Minister calls on employers to join new T level panels](#)

Leading businesses are being urged to grasp the opportunity of working with the government to develop prestigious new T level qualifications.

Skills Minister Anne Milton has called on industry experts from agriculture, environmental and animal care; business and administration; hair and beauty; creative and design; and catering and hospitality to join the influential T level employer panels and help develop the outline content for new qualifications.

T levels are new courses, which will be on a par with A levels and provide young people with a genuine choice between technical and academic education post 16. The first subjects in digital, education and childcare, and construction will be taught from 2020.

Skills Minister, Anne Milton said:

T levels are about giving greater choice to young people to get the skills they need to achieve good jobs. It is also about businesses – we know they are crying out for a skilled workforce and T levels will create the next generation of talented employees for them.

We are already working with top industry leaders and want even more to join us to make this a success for individuals, businesses and the economy.

T level content is already being developed with the help of top firms like Rolls-Royce, IBM, Lloyds and Morphy Richards, among others.

The Department for Education wants business representatives to step-up and help design the new qualifications in T level routes which will be delivered from 2022:

- agriculture, environmental and animal care
- business and administration
- hair and beauty

- creative and design
- catering and hospitality

Businesses can [apply](#) to be part of the T level qualification panels. The closing date for applications is 5pm Tuesday 8 May 2018.

[News story: Transfer of marine regulation powers and changes to harbour regulations in Wales](#)

Administration of marine and wildlife licence applications and harbour orders will transfer from the Marine Management Organisation to Welsh ministers from 1 April 2018. Natural Resources Wales will act on behalf of Welsh Ministers to carry out these activities.

This follows the commitment by UK Government to devolve further powers to the Welsh Ministers following recommendations made by [the Silk Commission](#).

What this means for marine licence applicants

If you have submitted an application to the MMO prior to 1 April 2018 for a marine and/or wildlife licence, this will continue to be determined by the MMO. Once the licence application has been determined, any post licence requirements, such as monitoring or discharge of conditions, will be considered by NRW.

If you conduct any activities in the Welsh offshore region, please refer to The Marine Licensing (Exempted Activities) (Wales) Order 2011 for details of activities exempt from the requirement for a marine licence in Wales.

If you make an application for a marine licence or a wildlife licence in the Welsh Offshore region after 1 April 2018, this must be made to NRW.

Changes to Harbour Regulations in Wales

Under the Wales Act, from 1 April 2018 the Welsh Ministers will also take over responsibility for port development policy for harbours wholly in Wales apart from major trust ports. This responsibility extends to applications for Harbour Revision and Empowerment Orders, private act ('Admiralty') consents, applications for powers to make harbour directions and confirmation of byelaws.

To help ensure a smooth transition to the new arrangements, the Department for Transport (DfT), the MMO and the Welsh Government have agreed that the

DfT or the MMO will be responsible for certain applications received before 1 April 2018.

All applications received after 1 April 2018 will be handled by the Welsh Government.

Contact Natural Resources Wales

[Website – Marine Licensing](#) Email:
marinelicensing@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk
Telephone: General Enquiries line on 0300 065 3000

[Website – Species Licensing](#) Email:
specieslicence@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk (English)
trwyddedrhywogaeth@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk (Welsh) Telephone: 0300 065 4974 or 0300 065 4921

[News story: Government seeks views to help maritime flourish](#)

Ground-breaking new technology such as autonomous ships and digital ports will be on the agenda with the appointment of a group of experts to help advise on the future of maritime.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling today (27 March 2018) announced the appointment of the team, who will work closely with industry contacts to help make sure the UK stays at the forefront of global shipping over the coming decades.

He has also launched a [call for evidence on Maritime 2050](#) – the government's landmark strategy to make the most of future opportunities for the nation's maritime industries to thrive, which will seek the views of those within the sector as well as those from outside.

Maritime 2050 will set out the challenges and opportunities to allow the government and the UK shipping industry to plan for the long-term, encourage economic growth by giving certainty to investors, and is likely to include digital advances which can help make shipping more efficient, and the use of low-drag paint to reduce fuel consumption.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

The success of the UK depends on our shipping – it helps put food in our cupboards and fuel in our vehicles.

We want to maintain our position as a world leading maritime nation

and working with the experts from within maritime, as well as those with broader experience, will help us ensure we take every opportunity open to this vital sector.

Maritime 2050 is a once in a generation opportunity to set an ambitious vision for the future of this key sector and I encourage all of those who depend on shipping to have their say.

The call for evidence, which closes on 16 May 2018, highlights a number of themes fundamental to the growth of UK maritime:

- technology
- trade
- infrastructure
- environment
- people
- security/resilience.

As part of the strategy, a series of objectives will be set so that progress against each of these themes can be scrutinised.

The expert panel announced today will be chaired by Hugh McNeal, Chief Executive of RenewableUK, and will also be made up of academic and industry leaders, including Lucy Armstrong, Chairman of the Port of Tyne, Sarah Kenny, Chief Executive of the BMT Group.

Alongside the views of the expert panel, the Department for Transport is also encouraging partners across the UK maritime sector to come forward with innovative and ambitious ideas to secure our maritime future.

Hugh McNeal, Maritime 2050 expert panel chairman, said:

I am honoured to be appointed by the Secretary of State to chair the Maritime 2050 Expert Panel, which will offer advice and look strategically at issues of critical importance to the maritime industry to 2050.

The proposed long-term Maritime 2050 strategy is a recognition of the vital importance of the industry to the UK economy. Shaping the future of the sector is not only important for the maritime industry, but also for every UK business that uses maritime services.

This is a unique opportunity to have a say in the direction of the UK maritime sector and I encourage the industry, its partners and academics with a stake in the future of UK maritime to respond to the call for evidence.

The announcement comes a week before the UK will lead the push for the International Maritime Organization to adopt an ambitious strategy to reduce

greenhouse emissions from shipping. This includes calling for zero-emission shipping across the global maritime sector to be achieved as quickly as possible.

The government has also helped set up the Women in Maritime Taskforce, run by Maritime UK, which looks to increase the number of women employed in the sector. The current share of women is around 3% but more diversity in the workforce will also help the industry flourish.

The expert panel is made up of:

- Chairman – Hugh McNeal, Chief Executive of RenewableUK
- Dr Panagiotis Angeloudis, Senior Lecturer in Transport Systems and Logistics, Imperial College London
- Lucy Armstrong, Chairman, Port of Tyne
- Tom Boardley, Executive Vice President and Global Head of Corporate and External Affairs, Lloyd's Register
- David Dingle CBE, Chairman, Maritime UK
- Professor Costas Grammenos CBE, DSc, Chairman, Costas Grammenos Centre for Shipping, Trade & Finance, Cass Business School, City, University of London
- Dr Grahaeme Henderson, Vice President, Shipping & Maritime, Shell International Trading and Shipping Company Limited
- Sarah Kenny, Chief Executive, BMT Group
- Professor David Lane CBE, School of Engineering and Physical Sciences, Heriot Watt University
- Dr David Loosley, Chief Executive, IMarEST (Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology)
- Michael Parker, Global Head for Shipping, Logistics and Offshore Industries, Citigroup
- Neil Roberts, Lloyds Market Association (LMA)
- Martin Stopford, President, Clarkson Research

[Press release: A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon: archaeology shines light on 6,000 years of history](#)

The sites have been uncovered by archaeologists working on Highways England's £1.5bn scheme to upgrade the A14 between Cambridge to Huntingdon.

Neolithic henge monument being excavated on the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon scheme

In total, around 350 hectares have been excavated – an area around half the size of Gibraltar – making it one of the biggest and most complex

archaeological projects ever undertaken in the UK.

The finds mean experts now have a much better understanding of how the Cambridgeshire landscape was used over 6,000 years of occupation.

Dr Steve Sherlock, archaeology lead for the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon project for Highways England, explains:

Highways England is delivering the biggest roads investment in a generation, and we are committed to conserving and where possible enhancing the historic environment.

In the context of a project like the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon improvements, that means undertaking archaeological excavations to ensure we record any significant remains that lie along the 21-mile route. The archive of finds, samples and original records will be stored so that the data and knowledge is preserved for this and future generations.

We now have the evidence to rewrite both the prehistoric and historic records of the area for the last 6,000 years.

The approach to archaeology on the A14 underlines Highways England's approach to protecting the country's cultural heritage. Elsewhere, on the A1, work on another road upgrade recently uncovered new evidence pointing to Roman occupation in northern England earlier than previously thought.

Highways England is required by law to agree plans for how a scheme will deal with the effects it will have on its immediate environment, including local communities, wildlife and plants, and also any archaeological finds that may be found ahead of starting work on any new road or major upgrade.

On the A14 scheme, some 250 archaeologists led by archaeology experts MOLA Headland Infrastructure have dug more than 40 separate excavation areas, uncovering new information about how the landscape was used over 6,000 years and about the origins of the villages and towns along the A14 in Cambridgeshire today.

With most of the archaeological programme now being completed, finds so far date from the Neolithic, Bronze and Iron Ages, as well as Roman, Anglo-Saxon and Medieval periods. The sites uncovered include:

- A Roman trade distribution centre which would have played a pivotal part in the region's supply chain, and was linked to the surrounding farmsteads by trackways as well as the main Roman road between Cambridge and Godmanchester. The discovery of artefacts at the site relating to the Roman army indicates that this trade was controlled centrally.
- The remains of 12 medieval buildings abandoned in the 12th century.

Covering an area of 6 hectares, the entire layout of the village is discernible, with the earlier remains of up to 40 Anglo Saxon timber buildings and alleys winding between houses, workshops and agricultural buildings.

- A massive Anglo-Saxon tribal territorial boundary with huge ditches, an imposing gated entrance and a beacon placed on top of a hill overlooking the region.
- Three prehistoric henge monuments, which are likely to have been a place for ceremonial gatherings and perhaps had a territorial function. These impressive Neolithic monuments, measuring up to 50 metres in diameter, would have been very important places for our distant prehistoric ancestors. They retained their special significance over the millennia with evidence for later Anglo Saxon buildings at these sites.

Highways England has been working closely with Cambridgeshire County Council to ensure that areas of possible historical interest are investigated and preserved.

Cambridgeshire County Council's senior archaeologist in the Historic Environment Team, Kasia Gdaniec, said:

The A14's Archaeology Programme has exposed an astonishing array of remarkable new sites that reveal the previously unknown character of ancient settlement across the western Cambridgeshire clay plain.

No previous excavation had taken place in these areas, where only a few cropmarked sites indicated the presence of former settlements, but we now know that extensive, thriving long-lived villages were built during the Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman and Saxon periods.

The valuable contribution of the A14's excavation programme has also been to unlock major multi-period settlements and populate what had been an empty modern agricultural belt along the A1 west of Brampton with hundreds of people over time.

Earlier prehistoric Neolithic and Bronze Age ceremonial and burial monuments that are 5,500 and 4,000 years old, have also been investigated, but the new Roman pottery industry that has emerged from sites in the Brampton area and at the new Great Ouse bridge sets apart the host sites from others traditionally dug in the county.

The fast-paced archaeological excavations have been extremely challenging, especially during this relentlessly wet winter, but a very large, hardy team of British and international archaeologists successfully completed sites in advance of the road crews taking over to build the road structures.

There is still more to do, but we want to share the archaeologists' excitement over what they are finding with the wider public and hope that they will enjoy the ongoing displays and interpretation that will be a legacy of this national infrastructure project.

Excavating a Roman trade distribution centre on the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon scheme

Over the coming months, there will be opportunities for people to see the A14 archaeology work in action, more information is available on the [Mola Headland website](#).

Highways England is upgrading a 21-mile stretch of the A14 between Cambridge and Huntingdon to three lanes in each direction including a brand new 17-mile bypass south of Huntingdon, with four lanes in each direction between Bar Hill and Girton. The project, which includes 34 bridges and main structures, will add additional capacity, boost the local and national economy and cut up to 20 minutes off journeys.

For the latest information about the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon improvement scheme, [visit the scheme website](#).

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.