

Press release: Ploughshare announces two new board members

The Ploughshare board is pleased to welcome two new members, Professor Penny Endersby and Dr Cerys Rees OBE.

Piers White, Chairman of Ploughshare Innovations, said:

We have worked hard to ensure we have the right balance of skills, experience and backgrounds to match the ambitions of the company. Penny and Cerys bring considerable energy and experience and I am sure their contributions will help us refine and deliver our strategy.

Professor Endersby is currently the Division Head of Cyber and Information Systems Division at the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl), where she has significantly developed the Intellectual Property (IP) portfolio. Penny has a well-established career in the defence industry, starting in the field of armour and explosives before broadening to run Dstl's Physical Sciences Department. She has a degree in physics from Cambridge University, holds a visiting professorship in Electronics and Computer Science at Southampton University, and is a fellow and former council member of the Institute of Physics. She is also the Honorary Treasurer of Wiltshire Wildlife Trust.

Professor Endersby commented:

I am delighted to have the opportunity to serve as a Non-executive Director for Ploughshare. Having followed the fortunes of the company from its inception and worked for many years to encourage the generation of the IP, it will be fascinating to see the details of how it is taken forward. I look forward to a productive relationship and hearing about many more fascinating technological innovations.

Dr Rees is the Dstl Fellow for Chemical and Biological (CB) Analysis and Attribution with responsibility for the delivery of Dstl's research and operational capability in this area to meet the requirements of defence and security stakeholders in the UK. She first worked at Porton Down as a university placement student in the early 1990s, and returned to Dstl in 1999 having completed a PhD to undertake research in microbial hazard assessment and the development of novel medical countermeasures before moving on to develop the CB analysis capability. Cerys is a Dstl Chemical, Biological, and Radiological Senior Scientific Adviser, trained to provide CB tactical and strategic level advice to UK police and military in support of operations; to date, she has supported prosecutions with expert witness testimony under both

the Chemical and Biological Weapons Acts in the UK.

Dr Rees commented:

It is a privilege to have been selected to join the Ploughshare board as a Non-executive Director. Having worked in both fundamental research and in the exploitation of new technologies for many years, I'm excited at the prospect of being able to contribute to the full exploitation of the ground-breaking research which is conducted in government.

Professor Endersby and Dr Rees fill the vacancies left by Jenni Henderson and Dame Wendy Hall.

[Press release: Business Secretary welcomes banks' support for small businesses affected by Carillion insolvency](#)

Business Secretary Greg Clark, Economic Secretary to the Treasury John Glen, and Small Business Minister Andrew Griffiths, met banks today (17 January 2018) to seek assurances that they will support small businesses affected by Carillion's liquidation.

The meeting was called by government to ensure small businesses exposed to [the liquidation of Carillion](#) are given the support they need. Banks represented at today's meeting were:

- Barclays
- HSBC
- Lloyds
- RBS
- Santander
- Shawbrook
- Aldermore

They were joined by the British Business Bank.

Greg Clark said:

It is essential that small businesses exposed to the Carillion insolvency are given the support they need by their lenders.

I chaired a meeting this morning of high street banks to ensure that they are in contact with customers impacted, that they have in place the advice and support needed and that any individual cases are escalated and dealt with sympathetically, swiftly and appropriately.

I will continue to meet with them in the days and weeks ahead to ensure these commitments are being acted on.

Economic Secretary to the Treasury, John Glen said:

I am pleased to see that the UK banks are taking such a constructive approach, proactively contacting affected customers, and taking the required steps to help those facing short term issues as a result of Carillion going into liquidation.

Following today's meeting UK Finance issued a [statement](#) setting out the actions agreed to by the banks.

Stephen Pegge, UK Finance Managing Director, Commercial Finance, said:

UK banks and the government are working closely to make sure the impact of the Carillion liquidation on SMEs in the supply chain is understood and managed in a way that best supports those in need of assistance.

Lenders are contacting customers and, where appropriate, are putting in place emergency measures, including overdraft extensions, payment holidays and fee waivers to ensure those facing short term issues can be helped to stay on track.

Today's announcement follows [action outlined](#) by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to address concerns set out earlier this week.

[News story: New stealth fighter jet 'takes off'](#)

The Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson experienced the world-class technology of the new F-35 today in a Lockheed Martin F-35 simulator in London. Crown copyright.

At an event held at the Institute for Engineering and Technology, the Defence Secretary was joined by MPs and journalists to see what it is like to fly and land the pioneering fighter jet which will protect British lives around the world.

The global F-35 programme will support 20,000 UK jobs over the 30 year production period and already the programme has generated over £9 billion for UK industry. The cockpit demonstrator gave the Defence Secretary a feel for flying the new state-of-the-art stealth aircraft, allowing him to practice landing and taking off from the new aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth.

After flying the jet demonstrator, Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

Today demonstrates that we are investing in our brave Armed Forces by making sure they have the very best equipment, securing tens of thousands of British manufacturing and engineering jobs, and ensuring Britain will always play a leading role in making the world a safer place.

These pioneering stealth jets will protect British lives as we face intensifying and evolving threats at home and abroad.

The F-35 is the most advanced and dynamic fighter aircraft in our history, and will defend this country from terrorists, collect crucial intelligence, and safeguard our national interests from those who seek to do us harm.

The Defence Secretary was guided through the flight by Squadron Leader Andy Edgell and Lieutenant Commander Adam Hogg, two of the UK's F-35 pilots putting the aircraft through its paces over in the United States. Alongside its short take-off and vertical landing capability, the F-35B's unique combination of stealth, cutting-edge radar, sensor technology, and electronic warfare systems provide world-beating capability of a fifth-generation fighter.

The UK currently has 14 F-35s based in the US, operated by around 150 UK personnel. These aircraft will arrive in the UK later this year at RAF Marham and initial flight trials will take place from the UK's new aircraft carrier, HMS Queen Elizabeth, in autumn off the coast of the US.

During his visit to the cockpit demonstrator, the Defence Secretary also met with representatives from some of the 500 UK companies who are in the F-35 supply chain. UK industry will provide approximately 15% of each F-35 to be built and, with more than 3,000 aircraft projected, the programme will support 20,000 UK jobs over the 30 year production phase.

Lockheed Martin UK Chief Executive Peter Ruddock said:

To date, the F-35 programme has generated \$12.9 billion (pounds figure) in contracts for British suppliers and that investment will

grow as we ramp up towards full rate production. The F-35 will provide the UK Armed Forces with a game-changing capability that will allow the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force to project power around the world for decades to come.

Operated jointly by the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force, the F-35 Lightning jets will fly from both land bases and the UK's new aircraft carriers. The programme is on target to achieve Initial Operating Capability (IOC) by December 2018, meaning that UK F-35s will be able to operate from land bases from this point.

Following successful trials on the land based ski-ramp design, which is featured on the UK flagship carrier, and with RAF Marham runway infrastructure now complete as part of a £250m major investment programme, the UK has made significant progress over the last year in preparation for the F-35 arrival later this year.

[Press release: Environment Agency issues permit to Southern Water for Bewl reservoir](#)

The Environment Agency has issued a temporary winter drought permit to Southern Water Services Limited, to help refill Bewl Water reservoir in East Sussex.

The water company made an application on 5 January stating it needed to take more water from the River Medway to help refill Bewl Water, which was only 42% full at the start of the year.

Despite a wet December, the autumn was very dry. There was also lower-than-average rainfall across south east England during the previous winter. This prolonged dry period across the region has left many groundwater supplies and some reservoirs lower than normal for the time of year.

Bewl Water is the largest reservoir in the south east of England and can hold 31,000 million litres of water. It is an important source for Southern Water, which manages the supply of water to over 2.5 million customers across south and south east England. Southern Water already routinely takes water from the River Medway to fill the reservoir. The change to the permit will allow the company to abstract additional water until the end of March.

The change will mean Southern Water can take water when river levels are lower than the previous limit. The water company has requested the change as part of its plan to secure public water supplies for the upcoming summer.

In determining the drought permit application, the Environment Agency has taken into account the very low rainfall, the impact this has had on water supplies, as well as considering the response to the recent public consultation.

Julie Foley, Environment Agency Area Director, said:

Although it has been wet over the past few weeks, overall this winter across south east England there has been lower-than-average amounts of rain. Consequently, we now need above average rainfall for the remainder of the winter to replenish our water resources.

The Environment Agency has to balance the water needs of people, businesses and wildlife so we have carefully considered Southern Water's application. We have decided to grant this temporary change to the existing licence, helping the company to refill the reservoir at a time of year when there will be less impact on the environment. We will carefully monitor any effects and take action if needed to ensure the environment is protected.

We encourage people to follow advice from their water company about saving water. Using water efficiently will help ensure we have enough water for people, businesses and the environment.

All media enquiries: 0800 141 2743. Or email southeastpressoffice1@environment-agency.gov.uk.

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[News story: Interested parties invited to provide information on protests outside abortion clinics](#)

It is the latest step in the review, announced by Home Secretary Amber Rudd in November 2017, following reports that women have experienced intimidation from protesters when visiting family planning clinics to seek information, advice and services from medical professionals.

To understand the scale and nature of these protests, the Home Office is seeking evidence from policing partners, healthcare providers and local

authorities as well as inviting contributions from groups protesting outside abortion clinics and people who have sought medical assistance or advice.

Home Secretary Amber Rudd said:

An abortion is an incredibly personal decision for anyone to take, and so it is completely unacceptable for women to face harassment or intimidation for exercising their legal right to healthcare advice and treatment.

While everyone has a right to peaceful protest, this review is about ensuring the police, healthcare providers and local authorities have the right powers to protect women making these tough decisions.

The review is assessing if more needs to be done to protect those seeking medical assistance and covers:

- the scale, frequency and nature of protests and the powers police have to manage them
- the laws to protect people from harassment and intimidation
- the public's right to peaceful protest and exercise of freedom of speech, within the law
- international comparisons given that similar protests have taken place in Australia, France, Canada and the United States

Work has already progressed to evaluate measures in place in other countries, such as buffer zones around clinics, with policing and healthcare partners providing further evidence for consideration.

The review is considering protests only, and will not consider any aspects of the Abortion Act 1967 which makes abortion legal in the United Kingdom.

All members of the public or organisations, who have experience of protest activity outside abortion clinics, are invited to contribute evidence to the review. You can complete the questionnaire [online](#), or alternatively evidence can be provided directly to ACPReview@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk.

All contributions must be received by 19 February 2018.