

Minister visits government funded veterans support hub in Wales

Woody's Lodge was awarded £35,000 by the government through the Afghanistan Veterans' Fund, to support Welsh veterans impacted by the Afghanistan withdrawal. The grant is being used to increase awareness of the service that they provide and maintain their support team across Wales. The grant has also funded extended home visits for veterans to help them adjust to daily life.

Woody's Lodge was Inspired by the late Paul "Woody" Woodland, who lost his life in service. Paul realised that living in green spaces would support positive mental and physical health, and this has been replicated through the creation of Woody's Lodge in the south Wales countryside.

The charity provides safe indoor and outdoor spaces and activities for veterans to re-establish connections and talk about problems they face.

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster Steve Barclay said:

It was great to visit Woody's Lodge in South Wales today to hear about the amazing work they do with veterans to help provide expert advice and support to them and their families.

I want the UK to be the best place in the world to be a veteran and that means ensuring we give those who have proudly served our country to keep us all safe the support they expect and deserve.

The charity also acts as a referral pathway for NHS Wales, and has hosted over 20,000 veterans socially through its farm hubs and drop-in centres.

Joined by Alun Cairns MP and the Secretary for State for Wales, the Minister met with CEO Graham Jones and Chairman David Trotman, to find out more about how the charity has supported veterans during difficult times such as the Afghanistan withdrawal and the recent anniversary of the Falklands conflict.

The Minister then went on to see a presentation on their Memory Lane app and games, which they have developed for veterans on what they call 'memory Mondays'. The theme for Mental Health Awareness Week this year is loneliness. Woody's has been integral in preventing isolation in veterans of all ages – the charity has dedicated social events for veterans with dementia to socialise, and regular events for veterans and their families.

Secretary of State for Wales, Simon Hart said:

We are immensely proud of our veteran community in Wales and recognise that ex-service men and women may need extra support. It was a pleasure to meet and congratulate the staff at Woody's Lodge

who do such incredible work.

And I was especially pleased to talk to some veterans about their own personal experiences and the help they have received.

CEO of Woody's Lodge Graham Jones said:

Woody's is delighted to welcome The Government's Chief of Staff, Stephen Barclay, as well as Secretary of State for Wales, Simon Hart and our local MP and supporter Alun Cairns.

This visit will enable us to present The Charity's work in supporting the Armed Forces Community as well as those from the Emergency Services and their wider families.

It is a great opportunity for our Veterans to meet and talk to our visitors today, about their experiences during their Service Careers and about their lives following this and how Woody's supports them and their families.

Veterans Commissioner for Wales Colonel James Phillips said:

The Veteran's community forms an important part of Welsh society. Our ex-servicemen and women and their families deserve access to high quality support and I am delighted Woody's Lodge will be able to grow and further assist communities throughout Wales following receipt of the UK Government grant.

[Introducción del requisito de visa para personas salvadoreñas que visitan el Reino Unido](#)

Con efecto inmediato, todas las personas salvadoreñas necesitarán una visa antes de viajar al Reino Unido, incluso para aquellos cuyo objetivo es una visita, anunció el Gobierno del Reino Unido hoy (miércoles 11 de mayo).

La decisión de imponer un régimen de visas se tomó debido al aumento sostenido y significativo durante los últimos cinco años en el número de personas salvadoreñas que no tienen la intención de realizar una visita corta, sino que presentan solicitudes de asilo a su llegada al Reino Unido. Antes de 2017, el Reino Unido recibía menos de 40 solicitudes de asilo al año

de personas salvadoreñas; en 2021 la cifra fue de 703. Esto convierte a El Salvador en la fuente con más solicitudes de asilo en 2021 que cualquier otro país cuyos ciudadanos pueden visitar el Reino Unido sin visa.

Los cambios, que entrarán en efecto inmediatamente, aplicarán a todos los salvadoreños que viajen al Reino Unido. Sin embargo, habrá un período de transición de cuatro semanas hasta el miércoles 8 de junio, durante el cual los visitantes que hayan comprado su viaje antes de las 09:00 horas Tiempo de Centro America (16:00 BST/ 15:00 GMT) del 11 de mayo podrán entrar al Reino Unido sin una visa.

El Embajador Británico en San Salvador David Lelliott mencionó:

Los cambios anunciados hoy ubican a El Salvador con muchos otros países que requieren visas y con los cuales el Reino Unido cuenta con relaciones fuertes y amistosas. Las visas proporcionan acceso al Reino Unido, mientras ayudan a proteger sus fronteras.

La Embajada Británica en San Salvador ha trabajado de cerca con el Gobierno del Reino Unido para establecer arreglos con el fin de permitir que los viajeros salvadoreños puedan aplicar a sus visas en El Salvador, y que puedan seguir uniéndose a los muchos visitantes que el Reino Unido recibe de todo el mundo.

Un Centro Temporal de Aplicación de Visas del Reino Unido operará regularmente en El Salvador, en el cual, los viajeros podrán entregar su pasaporte y proporcionar sus datos biométricos. La primera sesión de este centro está programada para operar el 19 y 20 de mayo, con el objetivo de permitir a los solicitantes recibir sus visas antes del final del período de transición del 8 de junio, con una sesión futura del Centro de Aplicación de Visas planeada para principios de junio.

Las solicitudes de visa se envían y pagan en línea en el sitio web: <https://visa.vfsglobal.com/ind/en/gbr>, después de lo cual los solicitantes reservan una cita para proporcionar sus datos biométricos y entregar su pasaporte.

El Gobierno del Reino Unido busca procesar las aplicaciones de visas dentro de los siguientes 15 días laborales (británicos) luego de recibir el pasaporte y los datos biométricos. Los solicitantes pueden aplicar a una visa hasta con tres meses de anticipación.

Una visa de múltiples entradas al Reino Unido de seis meses de duración tiene un costo de £100 (US\$130). Visas con duraciones más largas también están disponibles. Algunos Centros de Aplicación de Visas, incluyendo el Centro Temporal en San Salvador, son servicios pagados por el usuario, que tendrán un costo adicional de £55 (US\$75) por aplicación. Esta tarifa incluye el costo del retorno por correo del pasaporte y de cualquier documento entregado por el solicitante luego de que la decisión de su visa ha sido tomada. Los salvadoreños también pueden usar Centros de Aplicación de Visas en otros países.

Nacionales salvadoreños que hayan comprado su viaje al Reino Unido antes de las 09:00 horas Tiempo de Centro América (16:00 BST/15:00GMT) del 11 de mayo 2022 podrán ingresar al Reino Unido sin una visa hasta el miércoles 8 de junio 2022. Cualquier pasajero llegando después del 8 de junio requerirá una visa para ingresar al Reino Unido, sin importar la fecha en la que su viaje fue comprado. De igual manera cualquier persona que compre su viaje después de las 09:00 horas de Centro América (16:00 BST/15:00GMT) del 11 de mayo 2022 también necesitará una visa, aun si llega el 8 de junio o antes.

Visitantes salvadoreños que se encuentran ya en el Reino Unido no se verán afectados por este nuevo requerimiento por el resto de su visita, pero una vez abandonen el Reino Unido requerirán una visa para poder ingresar nuevamente.

Las personas salvadoreñas ya están obligados a obtener una visa para otros fines (que no sean de visita), como para trabajar o estudiar. Los solicitantes de visas de estudiante u otras visas ahora tendrán la opción de utilizar el nuevo centro de aplicación de visas en El Salvador, en lugar de tener que viajar a otros países como lo han hecho hasta ahora.

Notas a los editores

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Iain Coucher announced as new Ofwat Chair

Press release

He will take up the post as Chair of the independent economic regulator of water services in England and Wales on 1 July 2022



Iain Coucher has today (11 May) been named as the new Chair of Ofwat, the independent economic regulator of water services in England and Wales.

He will take up the post on 1 July 2022 for a term of four years and will succeed Jonson Cox, who has agreed to extend his tenure as Chair of Ofwat until 30 June 2022.

Mr Coucher has been appointed following a rigorous process conducted in accordance with the Ministerial Governance Code on Public Appointments. The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee held a pre-appointment hearing last month and subsequently supported his suitability for the post. The Environment Secretary has since approved the appointment.

All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. There is a requirement for appointees' political activity (if any declared) to be made public. Mr Coucher has not declared any significant political activity in the past five years.

Biographical details of Iain Coucher

- Iain has held a number of senior executive roles, including that of Chief Executive at the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) and Network Rail.
- He has been a non-executive director for Cadent Gas plc and a Board Member for the Rail Safety and Standards Board.
- He is currently a senior adviser at HIG Capital, a leading global investment fund, as well as a Trustee of the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO).

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[Princess Astrid of Belgium talks](#)

fusion energy at UKAEA

Her Royal Highness Princess Astrid of Belgium discovered how fusion energy could play a key role in addressing climate change following a tour of the UK Atomic Energy Authority's world-leading science centre in Oxford.

Representative of His Majesty the King, The Princess was today able to experience a rare close-up of the Joint European Torus (JET), the largest and most powerful operating fusion energy machine in the world.

There were 12 Belgian scientists directly involved in the record-breaking fusion energy results announced earlier this year.

The tour was arranged as part of the Belgian Economic Mission, the first of its kind since Brexit and the pandemic, and raised the importance of fusion energy in delivering an environmentally responsible future energy supply.

Ian Chapman, CEO, UKAEA, said: "It was an honour to discuss the benefits of fusion energy with Her Royal Highness and the delegation from the Belgian Economic Mission. Belgium is an important partner in the global mission to achieve commercial fusion power and in ensuring the world has access to a safe, sustainable and low carbon energy supply."

Twenty-six representatives from the Belgian delegation covering officials, government, industry, academia and press, toured Culham Science Centre, including: Tinne Van Der Straeten, Minister of Energy, Willy BORSUS, Vice-President of the Walloon Government, Ambassador Dirk WOUTERS, Advisor to Her Royal Highness Princess Astrid, and Bruno Van Der Pluijm, Ambassador of Belgium to the United Kingdom.

Belgium is part of the EUROfusion consortium that runs experiments using JET at UKAEA's world-leading Culham Science Centre.

Sara Moradi, Interim Head of the Fusion Science Department, EUROfusion, said: "It is good to see growing interest in fusion in my adopted country. Currently Belgium contributes to the EUROfusion programme both generally and specifically within the fields of ion cyclotron resonance heating in the JET and Wendelstein 7-X devices at ERM/KMS, and material research at SCK CEN."

The ground-breaking research being done at UKAEA with partners across the globe represents a huge opportunity for the economy.

The UK energy industry invests £13bn annually, delivers nearly £30bn in gross value added on top of the nearly £100bn in economic activity through its supply chain and interaction with other sectors. It supports more than 700,000 jobs across the country.

Belgium ranks highly as a UK foreign trade partner. In 2021, it was the UK's seventh largest client of goods worldwide and sixth largest supplier of goods. The Belgian Economic Mission aims to increase Belgian export to the UK with HRH offering her support.

Chief Social Worker for Adults publishes annual report

- The report acknowledges the tireless work of the sector and gives thanks to key supporting stakeholders
- Priorities include supporting social care reform, training for the workforce, recovery from the pandemic and the impact on staff and people receiving care and support and their families

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the Chief Social Worker (CSW) for Adults, Lyn Romeo, have published the annual CSW report. It highlights key achievements of the past year and sets out objectives for the sector as it looks ahead to 2022/23.

Key achievements in the last year include making the wellbeing of staff more central, with practitioners having better access to supervision and peer support as well as continuing professional development opportunities. Staff have also been better supported to prioritise care and meet individual needs through risk assessment tools and a decision-making framework put together by principal social workers, supported by directors of adult social services. In addition to this the [‘Revisiting Safeguarding’](#) guidance has also recently been published, encouraging practitioners and those responsible for adult safeguarding to reflect on and revisit their current practice.

This year’s annual report broadly summaries the CSW-led focus for the year ahead, including:

- Advising and influencing proposals for social care reform and Covid recovery, including guidance for the sector and support for staff wellbeing and further developing their digital capability
- Promoting and advising on investment in research including advising on further research for emerging issues such as the impact of and recovery from Covid, social work leadership and strengths based social work practice in working with homeless people
- Ensuring the voice of people with lived experiences is at the heart of practice and care, particularly those with mental health issues and increasing the headcount of approved mental health professionals
- To advise the Principal Social Workers Network on best practice and achieving good outcomes as well as reviewing the package of support to develop a cohort of capable and confident supervisors and leaders
- Supporting and strengthening personalisation and choice within care to achieve the outcomes that matter to them and driving for the inclusion of people with lived experiences in designing new policy and guidance
- Promoting improved practice on equality, diversity and inclusion including access to continued professional development for all social care staff

Chief Social Worker for Adults Lyn Romeo said:

I am so grateful to everyone working in the social care sector, especially for their work over the past year during the pandemic

Looking to the year ahead, we'll look to support the social care reform, the vital recovery from the pandemic and strengthen post-qualifying standards to support the workforce. As we learn to live with Covid, social work must redesign and reimagine practice alongside people, their carers and the communities they live in to be ambitious in providing the best outcomes for all.

Minister for Care and Mental Health Gillian Keegan said:

The last two years have been a huge challenge with our brilliant social care workforce going above and beyond.

We've seen the workforce rise to the challenges of the pandemic with compassion and dedication to protect and promote people's opportunities to have the best possible lives.

Thank you to all social workers in the sector for your hard and dedicated work, we have never needed your expertise and insights more than we do now.

The report includes special thanks to stakeholders including the British Association of Social Workers (BASW), Music for Dementia, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, National Institute for Health Research, Research in Practice, Skills for Care, Think Local Act Personal (TLAP) and The Principal Social Workers' Network.

Particularly good work highlighted includes:

- the British Association of Social Workers' publication of a consistent pathway of development for social workers and their employers to ensure reliable and quality care for people with learning disabilities and for social work with autistic adults their carers
- development of guidance on how people with dementia can be supported with music therapies by Music for Dementia
- Research in Practice's continued support of the implementation of the Post Qualifying Standards for supervisors
- Skills for Care's roundtable on anti-racist social work in partnership with Social Work England
- The leadership impact of Principal Social Workers in supporting social workers and practice