

News story: Venturefest East Midlands: business growth and innovation support

If you're an entrepreneur or innovator you could benefit from a networking event to help grow your business through smart use of technology.

[Venturefest East Midlands](#) will invite businesses and investors to come together next month to network and share expertise. The event – supported by Innovate UK – is being held on Wednesday 22 March 2017 at Derby Arena, Derby. Entry is free.

The event theme is smart innovation. The aim is to help businesses unlock opportunities to engage in innovation. There will be a focus on how businesses can use technology to improve their processes and become more cost efficient.

Attendees will range from those who want to get or provide finance, and win or contract for new business.

Key speakers include:

Delegates will be able to meet other local businesses and discover how they've improved their business through innovation and design.

News story: Unknown World War 1 soldiers graves rededicated

A funeral service was held for three unknown soldiers who enlisted into The Lancashire Fusiliers, the New Zealand (NZ) Infantry and of an unknown regiment on Tuesday 7 March 2017 at Perth Cemetery (China Wall) near Ypres, Belgium.

The service, organised by the MOD's Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC), part of Defence Business Services was conducted by Reverend Chris Kellock, Chaplain 1st Battalion The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers.

The service was supported by The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers and by staff from the New Zealand Embassy. In attendance were delegates from both British and New Zealand Defence, regimental representatives and local dignitaries.

Three sets of remains were discovered near Zonnebeke in December 2012 and accompanying military insignia indicated the casualties were World War 1 soldiers of The Lancashire Fusiliers and NZ Infantry; no identifying insignia

accompanied the third soldier. Despite extensive research, the JCCC was unable to identify the casualties and they will be buried as 'Soldiers of the Great War known unto God'.

Beverley Simon, JCCC said:

We owe a huge debt to those who fought in the Great War and we at JCCC take immense pride in ensuring all those who died in the service of their country are laid to rest with the appropriate dignity, ceremony and respect.

Reverend Chris Kellock QCVS RChD, Chaplain 1st Battalion The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers said:

It is always an immense privilege to be involved on such occasions as this. As the current Chaplain to the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers it is an honour to join with other Fusiliers, past and present, alongside our friends from New Zealand to ensure a fitting remembrance to those who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

The memory of these unknown soldiers, in particular the Lancashire Fusilier, is part of our history but more importantly provides the motivation for our young Fusiliers as they follow in the proud traditions of wearing the hackle.

Headstones for the unknown soldiers have been provided by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC), who will now care for their final resting place in perpetuity.

[News story: A generation to drive society forward](#)

During this year's National Apprenticeship Week, Highways England have committed to recruiting a further 90 apprentices and 46 graduates.

Current apprentices at Highways England (left to Right) Ben Matthews, Amelia Kirwan, Liam Burns and Johnny Bowen (Daniel Hambury/Stella Pictures)

We will recruit the posts over the next 7 months as we increase our capability and capacity to deliver £15 billion worth of improvements across the country. We will continue to recruit at a similar level for the next 3 years at least.

To find out more, sign up for e-mail alerts and apply for an apprenticeship [visit the apprenticeship web page.](#)

San Johal, Human Resources Director at Highways England, says:

Our apprentices tell us they find their work varied, engaging, challenging and exciting.

This is a great time to join our team. By 2021, we will have delivered a £15 billion government investment in our motorways and major A-roads to keep drivers and businesses moving, boosting the country's economy.

To do this, we are investing in the next generation. As an apprentice, you are learning whilst you are earning. Our apprenticeships are available to everyone and are a real alternative to traditional routes like university. Visit our website and explore our apprenticeship opportunities to begin a fantastic career with us.

The Highways England apprenticeship scheme supports the government's goal to create 30,000 apprenticeships in road and rail by 2020.

Amelia Kirwan, apprentice project manager, said:

I'm over the moon to have got a Higher Level Apprenticeship within Highways England, they want you to do well within your role and look after their employees. I'd say being only 18 and having a pension plan already set up and running is pretty good going.

Roles at Highways England including Project Managers, IT, civil engineering, finance, HR, business admin and customer service are open for applications and continue throughout 2017. There are opportunities across the country, including Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham, Bristol, Bedford and Guildford.

New recruits will be helping to play a part in modernising England's motorways and major A-roads by developing and delivering technically advanced projects. These include schemes like the A303 Stonehenge improvements and the Lower Thames Crossing.

Looking further ahead, we are developing strong relationships with schools and colleges as part of a wider 'early talent' recruitment plan, to encourage children to continue the study of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects. This will help them to become the engineers and construction professionals of tomorrow.

[News story: Crime news: April to June 2017 and July to December 2017 duty rotas](#)

New duty solicitor rotas are available covering the period from 1 April to 30 June 2017.

April rotas

You can now go online to view the latest duty solicitor rotas – see link below.

Revised members' lists on which the rotas are based have also been published.

If you have any feedback about these rotas or members' lists you should use the contact details below.

July rotas

An amendment notice is also available on the crime tender page about the second rota period, which will begin on 1 July and run until 31 December 2017.

Guidance has also been published on when you will be invited to submit a CRM12 for this rota, should you wish to make changes to your duty solicitors details for the July rota.

2017 standard crime contracts

A copy of the 2017 standard crime contract is available on gov.uk – see link below.

Further information

[Duty solicitors: rotas, information and guidance](#) – duty solicitor rotas covering 1 April to 30 June 2017 and revised members' lists

[Legal aid crime tender 2017](#) – process for amendments to the July rota process

[Standard Crime Contract 2017](#) – final version of 2017 standard crime contract

crm12@legalaid.gsi.gov.uk – for feedback or enquiries about rotas or members' lists

Speech: Dormant Assets Commission report launch

Good morning ladies and gentlemen, and let me begin by thanking Nick and the Dormant Assets Commission for inviting me to speak today.

I'm extremely grateful to you and your superb team for all the work you have done over the past year. You have written a very impressive and detailed report – but I'm afraid you will all have to wait a little longer for my formal response. I will need to study its detail very carefully.

As you may be aware, this Government is committed to building a shared society, where everyone has the opportunity to get on in life, no matter who they are or where they come from.

We want the benefits of economic success to be felt by everyone, not just the privileged few. As Minister for Civil Society, the Prime Minister's vision is central to everything I do. It is my mission to ensure we make a difference and improve peoples' daily lives.

I believe that our approach to dormant assets in this country is an outstanding example of the Prime Minister's vision for a shared society. Government, business and the voluntary sector working together to make society work that little bit better for everyone. And the results of this collaborative approach have been impressive.

The existing dormant assets scheme was launched in 2011 to encourage banks and building societies to identify dormant accounts. After identification, they have to make all reasonable efforts to reunite assets with their owners.

Only after this and where there was a surplus, should any money be distributed for the benefit of good causes throughout the UK.

Now, it has been a great success so far. More customers have been reunited with their money, and 360 million pounds has been distributed for the benefit of good causes, with more to come.

In England, this money has been used through social investment to establish Big Society Capital, the world's leading social investment bank, and I'm pleased to see Cliff Prior in the audience today. BSC has matched 300 million pounds of reclaimed funds with 500 million pounds of additional investment into activities with a social purpose.

I have seen for myself the impact this has had on communities. Two projects I have visited, Think Forward in North East London and Reconnections in Worcestershire, are both social impact bonds that were funded by Big Society Capital. One was specifically for young people in London and the other the elderly in Worcestershire – yet without this source of money, they might have struggled to find the funding to start these projects.

Encouraged by this success, last year I established an independent Commission on Dormant Assets. It was asked to consider how we might improve the current scheme to include a wider range of dormant assets, beyond banks and building societies, and I asked Nick to be its Chairman.

The Commission has since identified a potential two billion pounds in assets that at the moment are simply gathering dust in dormant accounts, when they could either be reunited with their rightful owner or used to change millions of lives across the country.

Now as you'll all appreciate, a broader scheme cannot be set up overnight. Getting a new dormant assets scheme in place is a big task and it's going to take time. And as I said earlier, I will need to consider this report carefully before broadening the current scope of activities.

I also want to carry out a wider public consultation to allow everyone with an interest to feed in their views. So there's a lot of work ahead of us. But thanks to the Commission, we have a report and its clear advice on the next steps we might take to take this forward.

I will also continue to think creatively about how the existing scheme can be improved, so even more money is released and even more organisations can benefit from the funding.

But Government really can't do this on its own. If we're going to make a success of an expanded dormant assets scheme, then the partnership of those represented here today will continue to be absolutely essential.

So, I look forward to working with you – financial services companies, consumer groups, charities, communities and individuals across the country.

Together we must ensure we put in place a scheme that really delivers for good causes; that continues to protect consumers and reunites owners with their assets wherever it's possible to do so.

More than anything, I want to see us transform the provision of social investment and support of good causes here in the United Kingdom. This could then make a real and lasting difference to the lives of the people in our country who need our help the most.

Reuniting dormant assets with their owners, while using any surplus to benefit good causes, is exactly what a decent and caring Government should be doing.

Positive action from the State is bringing together Government, business and the third sector, working together for the benefit of taxpayers, consumers and beneficiaries.

So I am very grateful to the Commission for all its hard work over the past twelve months to unearth these new resources, helping our charities and voluntary groups to become more sustainable and independent. This report will shape and inform how we make best use of dormant assets in the years ahead.

I will now hand over to Nick, who can talk more about the work of the Commission and its main findings and recommendations.

Thank you.

ENDS