

Charity Commission announces statutory inquiry into Burke's Peerage Foundation

Press release

The Charity Commission has opened a statutory inquiry into Burke's Peerage Foundation over concerns about the charity, including its financial management.



The charity was established to advance education in the subject of genealogy and personal heritage.

The Commission has been in contact with the trustees since February 2022 after a separate inquiry into another charity, [The Mahfouz Foundation](#), identified links with Burke's Peerage Foundation.

A review of the charity's bank statements and a comparison against its published accounts has resulted in the Commission's decision to escalate its engagement with the charity to an inquiry. The inquiry will examine:

- The extent to which the trustees are complying with their legal duties in the administration, governance and management of the charity.
- The charity's compliance with its legal obligations for the preparation and filing of its accounts and annual returns.

The Commission may extend the scope of the inquiry if additional issues emerge.

It is the Commission's policy, after it has concluded an inquiry, to publish a report detailing what issues the inquiry looked at, what actions were undertaken as part of the inquiry and what the outcomes were.

Reports of previous inquiries are available on GOV.UK.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

1. The Charity Commission is the independent, non-ministerial government department that registers and regulates charities in England and Wales. Its purpose is to ensure charity can thrive and inspire trust so that people can improve lives and strengthen society.

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[Together We Can Revolutionise The NHS, Through Individual Responsibility](#)

When the NHS was launched in 1948, the first NHS pamphlet that landed on people's doorsteps said of the new health service: "It's not a charity. You're paying for it, mainly as taxpayers". We certainly do pay for it. This year, the NHS will spend its original 1948 budget, adjusted for inflation, once every month. Our health budget is now bigger than the GDP of Greece.

Health needs the revolution that has already come to other sectors like banking and shopping. With much greater patient choice, innovation, tech and AI – meaning more convenience, lower costs and reduced health disparities.

On Tuesday, in an address at the Royal College of Physicians, I made the case for a programme of comprehensive reform, because we can't just keep pumping more and more money into healthcare. My vision for reform will start what will be one of the most significant transfers of power and funding from the state to individuals and their families in decades.

[Political content removed] I firmly believe in individual responsibility, which is why we need to do so much more on prevention and personalisation. The NHS spends vast sums treating people whose conditions are avoidable, and by some estimates 40 per cent of its costs go on treating preventable conditions. Tackling this is the only way we can reduce the demand on the health service, and the state, in the long-term.

That means helping the whole population to stay healthy, and not just treating those who show up asking for help. We will put the full power of the NHS behind prevention – including the NHS budget. We must also keep adopting new approaches to health and care, like our network of community diagnostics centres, which have been helping millions of patients benefit from earlier diagnostics closer to home, without ever having to set foot in a hospital.

This includes making the most of the huge digital adoption that we've seen throughout the pandemic. Over half of adults in England are now carrying the

NHS App around in their pockets – I want to get this number higher, so we can use the app, and other tools like this, to give people personalised advice to manage their own health.

We know that when healthcare is personalised, built around the person and their family, it works better. My Dad was a smoker, and I remember standing at the top of the staircase overhearing my Mum confront him, saying: “If you die, your boys won’t have a Dad”. He never smoked again.

We all need more power to determine our own health, and I want to put more power in the hands of patients and their loved ones.

I know that people really value the freedom and choice that comes with personalised care and the personal budgets that give patients and their families more control and choice. Although we have a current target for 200,000 people to have a personal health budget by 2024, I want to see a significant expansion of this in the coming years.

Personalisation is also about recognising that the NHS is not just an end itself, it’s a service for every person who relies on it. So we will ensure that the voices of patients and their families are listened to continuously, not just when things go wrong.

We will offer patients ‘the right to choose’

As well as a greater voice, we must bring greater choice too. I know that one area of frustration has been long waits, due to the backlog that Covid has brought with it. We will be making a new offer, offering long-waiters the “right to choose” – with these patients being proactively contacted to discuss alternatives. This could be a trust nearby, a trust that’s further away – together with support for transport and accommodation – or going to the independent sector for treatment.

Prevention and personalisation will put our health service on a stronger and more sustainable footing in the future, but driving improved performance across the NHS itself must start now.

In some areas, such as affordable drugs and accessible care, our delivery is among the best in the world. But if we’re honest, in other areas – like cancer survival, cardiovascular disease, and maternal health outcomes – we all know the NHS must do better.

We are going to build on the digital transformation that we have seen throughout the pandemic, and make sure that innovative solutions don’t just stay where they are, but go far and wide. That’s why I want to explore what more NHS trusts can do by working in partnerships for reform, what they could do with greater freedoms, and how we can help them to share the brilliant work they are doing.

These plans mark the starting point for reform, not the sum total, but they show how we will seize the moment to keep the dream of 1948 alive. The shock of Covid and the urgent need for recovery has brought us to this crossroads

right now. We have a once in a generation chance to reimagine how we do health – let's seize it.

NPT Safeguards Agreement with Iran: E3 statement to the IAEA, March 2022

Chair,

France, Germany, and the United Kingdom thank Director-General Grossi for his report on the implementation of safeguards in Iran, contained in GOV/2022/5.

We fully support and commend the IAEA for its professional, independent and impartial verification of Iran's safeguards obligations, and its efforts to fully clarify information concerning the correctness and completeness of Iran's declarations under its NPT Safeguards Agreement. We re-emphasise the importance of the IAEA continuing to evaluate all safeguards-relevant information available, in line with its mandate.

It is in this context that we note the recent Joint Statement between the IAEA and the AEIOI which aims to "accelerate and strengthen their cooperation and dialogue aimed at the resolution of the issues" as mentioned in details in the Director General's report contained in GOV/2021/52. We strongly urge Iran to now seize this opportunity and fully cooperate with the IAEA after more than two years without substantive engagement. Iran needs to provide the technically credible information, documentation and answers that the Agency deems necessary without any delay, as it is legally obliged to do so.

We reject any public suggestion there is a "political solution" to these issues – the Agency must be able to perform its technical mandate free of political pressure. We remain as committed as ever to upholding the Agency's independence. It is only through Iran's full and substantial technical cooperation with the IAEA that the Director General would be able to report these issues have been clarified and resolved and are no longer outstanding.

The E3 deeply regret that – despite repeated calls by Board members and the June 2020 resolution adopted by the Board of Governors – these safeguards issues have neither been clarified nor has Iran declared related nuclear material, equipment, activities or locations. These are not merely issues of the past: these are about the present and the future, the integrity of the safeguards regime. Indeed, as the DG has repeatedly reported, the Agency had found indications that nuclear material had been present at three undeclared locations. The whereabouts of this nuclear material are still unknown to the Agency. It is essential that the IAEA be able to fully account for nuclear material as per its mandate.

We take note of the Agency's assessment that it has "no additional questions

on the issue related to Location 2 and, therefore, that this issue could be considered as no longer outstanding at this stage". We re-emphasize that legally Iran is legally obliged to declare all nuclear activities and clarify them in a complete manner.

The Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, together with the Additional Protocol, present the current verification standard. We remain deeply concerned that Iran has stopped applying the Additional Protocol more than a year ago. We urge Iran to fulfil its obligations under the CSA and to reapply and ratify the Additional Protocol as soon as possible. This would be an important confidence-building step. It is also a necessary condition for the IAEA to eventually reach the Broader Conclusion that all nuclear material in Iran remains in peaceful uses.

We recall that implementation of the Modified Code 3.1 is a legal obligation for Iran under the Subsidiary Arrangement to its Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement which cannot be modified or stopped unilaterally.

The E3 take note that there have been no further instances of intimidation of IAEA inspectors in Iran since the last report. We reaffirm that the Director General should provide further updates if this situation changes. In addition, we call on Iran to provide the necessary written clarifications requested in the Agency's letter dated 16 November 2021.

Recalling the resolution adopted by the Board in June 2020 upon our initiative, we will follow the implementation of the Joint Statement closely and encourage the Director General to continue reporting to the Board of Governors, as appropriate. We would welcome making this report contained in GOV/2022/5 public.

Thank you, Chair.

[Minister for Tech and the Digital Economy speech at Digital City Festival](#)

Good morning,

I am Chris Philp, Minister for Technology and the Digital Economy, and it's my absolute pleasure to be joining you here today, in person, after what seems like a lifetime of video calls. It's exciting to once again feel the buzz and energy in a room, and I am so proud to be able to be here to champion such a vital and innovative sector.

But before we turn to tech, I think it is right that we call to mind the

terrible atrocities being committed by the Putin regime in Ukraine. The world is appalled at Russia's invasion. The Prime Minister has called this an attack without provocation and without any credible excuse, and it is right that the UK with other countries has referred Russia to the International Criminal Court for investigation into war crimes, including the indiscriminate deliberate bombing of civilians. Our thoughts are with the Ukrainian people as they suffer today.

Our government has launched an unprecedented package of economic sanctions developed with our international partners as well as led the way in providing weapons, in large quantities, to the Ukrainian government to use in protecting themselves. Those weapons are being used as we speak in defence of freedom.

And at DCMS, we have been working with our counterparts and governing bodies around the world to further isolate Russia by preventing them from competing in key international sporting and cultural events.

The tech community has also responded in admirable fashion. Wise were quick to place restrictions on money transfers to Russia. SpaceX have activated their Starlink satellites to give Ukraine a digital connectivity backup. Several major social media platforms have now banned RT from operating in Europe and have worked to ensure that the truth is heard by the Russian people. I would like to thank everyone for the work they are doing to support Ukraine during their hour of darkness.

Finally on Ukraine, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the potential for a heightened threat of cyber attack. I urge all public and private sector organisations to redouble their work on cyber security and be extra vigilant to the risks of cyber attacks at this time.

But let me now turn to a happier topic: the future of the UK's booming tech economy.

Ensuring a thriving tech sector is critical to the future of the UK economy – it is critical to growth, critical to job creation and critical to raising the UK's productivity. It is a top priority for the whole government, from the Prime Minister down. We are determined that the UK will be a science and tech superpower, and lead the world in areas like AI, quantum computing and advanced non-silicon semiconductors. We should be hugely proud of the successes of our tech sector and celebrate the jobs and wealth that has been created. We are unashamed of success, and enthusiastically celebrate what the tech sector has accomplished so far.

To start with, the UK has now given birth to 120 unicorns – private businesses valued at more than \$1bn – joining the US and China as the only nations to have created over 100 unicorns. We are Europe's undisputed tech powerhouse, boasting more unicorns created than Germany and France combined. Last year, the UK created 29 new unicorns – one every 13 days. And the UK is a world leading hub for fundraising. We saw £29.4 billion raised here in 2021 for private tech businesses – far more than any other European country at double second-placed Germany and triple third-placed France. We also easily

led Europe on the public markets, with 37 tech IPOs last year.

As UK tech continues to thrive, I am delighted that our herd of unicorns is spreading across the UK. Seven cities across the UK are now home to at least two unicorn companies. Right here in Manchester we have amazing examples of this in companies such as Matillion, which provides data transformation services for the cloud, and Evergreen Life, a personal health record app used by over 870,000 people.

These successes are due to year upon year of record-breaking growth and investment. The UK's tech startup and scaleup ecosystem is now valued at a staggering \$975 billion.

And crucially these investments are being realised across the whole of the UK. Recent statistics have shown that Venture Capital funding in Manchester increased by 65% in 2021, with tech startups raising a record £309 million in funding. This is a clear show of confidence in Manchester's tech sector, and has been accompanied by new jobs, with tech job vacancies increasing by 164% in 2021.

Sustained investment and growth across the North West means the region's digital sector is expected to grow by at least £2.7 billion in annual Gross Value Added by 2025 and create an additional 50,000 jobs.

However, tech's innovation and our ambitions cannot flourish in a vacuum. To create the best possible conditions for innovators we need talent...we need investment...and we need ideas. On talent, we are investing in 1,000 PhDs in Artificial intelligence, 2,000 Masters conversion courses in AI and this Spring we are introducing new visa routes that make it fast and easy for highly skilled people to come to the UK. If you don't know about these please look up the new routes – including the scale-up visa route for growing tech businesses. On ideas, the autumn budget saw the expansion of R&D tax credits to cover data and cloud compute and government's R&D budget is increasing from almost £15 billion in 2021-22 a year to £20 billion a year in 2024-25. And we've already heard about the record level of investment in UK tech.

But in addition to these things we also need the right regulatory environment.

This government is committed to delivering proportionate, pro-innovation, and coherent regulation. Now that we are out of the EU, we will ensure the UK has a competitive advantage by adopting an approach to regulation that is light touch, promotes innovation and growth and also promotes competition. In the past, over-regulation of areas like Genetically Modified Organisms by the EU has stifled innovation in Europe, and GMO innovation consequently mainly took place in the US. We will avoid that mistake in the future. Areas like data are at risk of being over-regulated by Europe to the point that innovation is inhibited and business growth held back. We have a chance now to take an approach which of course protects data privacy but avoids imposing excessive burdens on business or the research community. Similarly with AI, we can adopt a proportionate approach that allows AI innovation to safely flourish and grow here in the UK. We will make sure that the UK is the best

jurisdiction in the world for growth and innovation – using the freedoms that we now have outside the EU.

When designed effectively, regulation can be an enabler of innovation, not a blocker. It can help create the conditions in which innovation thrives and can trial new products and services – for example, through the use of regulatory sandboxes for emerging technologies or business models. And we can ensure new entrants join the market and compete with established incumbents. Effective and coherent regulation can also enhance consumer trust and drive the uptake of digital products and services. We have seen all this in action in the way that the UK's enlightened approach to Fintech has helped create a world-leading ecosystem here.

2022 will be a landmark year for shaping the rules that govern digital technologies. We will introduce pioneering online safety legislation, unveil our finalised proposals for the new pro-competition regime, drive forward our pro-growth, pro-innovation data reforms and publish a White Paper on AI governance.

We will start – as we must – by addressing harms to users that threaten to undermine confidence in digital products and services. Through the Online Safety Bill, we will take much needed action to protect children and the most vulnerable from illegal and harmful content. Today, we have announced a new duty in the Bill to protect people from scam ads on the largest platforms. Online fraud affects millions every year and the new duty will protect people from this awful crime. In parallel, we have launched a consultation, through our Online Advertising Programme, to seek views on developing a coherent and streamlined approach to regulating online advertising more broadly. Together, these measures will ensure a joined up approach to digital regulation, strengthening trust in the digital economy, while protecting consumers and keeping users safe online.

And now that we have left the European Union, we have a chance to advance our strategic interests through our own independent data protection regime. Our reforms will significantly reduce burdens on business and other organisations. But the real prize from our reforms is creating an enabling environment for data-driven innovation that will massively boost the UK's productivity and the competitiveness of our industries. It will make the UK a destination of choice to host cutting edge data driven scientific and tech activity and as a hub for global, data driven trade.

But it is important to be clear here – the protection of people's personal data will be at the heart of our new regime. Without public trust, we risk missing out on the benefits a society powered by responsible data use has to offer. And far from being a barrier to innovation or trade, we know that regulatory certainty and high data protection standards allow businesses and consumers to thrive.

And through the introduction of our new pro-competition regime for digital markets, we will unlock opportunities for small and challenger firms and make it easier for them to compete and innovate on a level playing field – and in doing so deliver more choice and better services for consumers. These

measures signal our intention to support our nation of startups and place a thriving digital economy at the heart of the government's vision for long-term economic growth. We do not want large dominant incumbents to prevent new businesses from developing or to abuse their market position and extract what amounts to excessive economic rents by overcharging.

The issues that I've talked about already such as online safety, data, AI and digital competition are rightly the subject of much of today's debate given their ground-breaking nature – but we don't want the conversation or ambitions for the UK to end here. Given the right conditions, innovation can generate change at breakneck speed – for example, in quantum technologies, use of blockchain, web 3.0, the expansion of the metaverse, to mention just a few of the hot topics of today and for tomorrow.

To maximise the benefits of these exciting, next-generation developments, to lead this revolution, and to truly turbocharge our digital economy, we must ensure that innovation takes place safely, in a thriving, competitive environment and that it is ultimately in the interests of citizens across the whole of the UK. Regulation must be designed from the outset to deliver these outcomes. Our Plan for Digital Regulation has charted the approach that we will take to these new challenges through light-touch, proportionate regulation that promotes the safety and rights of users, supports a thriving democracy and unleashes competition and growth.

But it goes without saying that we are at the start of a much longer journey. We will need to innovate and adapt our approach to regulation to meet the opportunities and challenges posed by new tech developments. Effective horizon-scanning – drawing on the collective insights of government, regulators, industry, academia – will have a major role to play.

And collaborative horizon-scanning is of course only one part of the picture. We will find ways to make sure that the regulatory ecosystem as a whole is effective and coherent in the face of new challenges. I'm proud to say that the UK is already ahead of the curve on this point, thanks to the steps we are taking to upskill our digital regulators and through the creation of the world-leading Digital Regulation Cooperation Forum, which ensures effective coordination between our key regulators, particularly the ICO, OFCOM, FCA and CMA. The DRCF in particular has a vital role to play in delivering on our vision for a coherent, pro-innovation landscape, and the Secretary of State has today written to the Forum setting out the government's priorities for the digital regulatory landscape as it finalises its work plan for the next year.

Cooperation with like minded international partners will also be critical – building on our successful G7 and Future Tech Forum. There is always more to be done to maximise the benefits of effective collaboration, and we will continue to look for ways to deliver progress on this point.

I would like to hear your views on this today as well. Working together we will make sure that the UK remains on track to become a global science and tech superpower. We have achieved so much in the UK already and secured our position as Europe's leading tech nation. Now, by driving forward the UK as

the best place in the world for ideas, talent and investment – supported by light-touch regulation – together we can together forge an even brighter future.

Thank you.

[Natural England and Environment Agency launch joint legal action in response to River Lugg damage](#)

Press release

Banks of the River Lugg were damaged in December 2020 causing suspected significant and long-term ecological harm.



The River Lugg in Herefordshire, pre December 2020

- Natural England and the Environment Agency are today launching legal action against the landowner
- The area is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which means permissions need to be granted before work can take place

Natural England and the Environment Agency have announced today they are beginning legal action against a landowner for damage to a protected area of the River Lugg in Herefordshire.

This follows a joint Natural England and Environment Agency in-depth investigation into ecological harm to the 1.5 kilometre of the protected stretch of the River Lugg. This investigation followed reports of unauthorised activity including dredging and changing the shape (profiling) of the riverbank in Kingsland in Herefordshire in December 2020.

This has been a serious and complex investigation which has taken a

considerable length of time to complete.

The charges being brought against the landowner relate to:

- unconsented operations and causing damage to a Site of Special Scientific Interest
- carrying out activities within 8 metres of the River Lugg which were likely to cause damage to or endanger the stability of the river
- causing a water discharge activity, namely a discharge of silt into the River Lugg
- failing to take reasonable precaution to prevent agricultural pollution from land management and cultivation practices on agricultural land
- wilfully disturbing spawn or spawning fish, or any bed, bank or shallow on which any spawn or spawning fish may be
- breach of a stop notice

The charges also relate to further works which are alleged to have been carried out by the landowner in December 2021.

Court action will now follow at Kidderminster Magistrates' Court.

Oliver Harmar, Chief Operating Officer at Natural England said:

The decimation of this section of the River Lugg has been devastating to the local environment and to local people, destroying the habitats of iconic wildlife such as otters, kingfisher and salmon. It was heart-breaking to see this beautiful riverside illegally damaged.

The River Lugg, post 2020

The River Lugg, post 2020

The area is protected as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) due to its importance for nature. Consent is required before any works are carried out within a SSSI to the river which had not been granted.

[A press release on the unauthorised work was issued on 7 December 2020.](#)

Natural England is responsible for ensuring protection of SSSI areas and the Environment Agency is responsible for flood risk management, fish and spawning and the way rivers function.

Natural England has regulatory powers to prevent damage taking place to SSSIs and to take appropriate enforcement action, including prosecuting offenders where damage occurs.

The Environment Agency has powers to prosecute under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016; Water Resources Act 1991;

and the Salmon and Fresh Water Fisheries Act 1975.

The hearing will be held at Kidderminster Magistrates' Court on 18 May 2022.

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