

News story: Defence minister meets teenagers taking part in pilot Army supercamp

The 60 teenagers mainly from local communities in Yorkshire were taking part in a pilot scheme to allow teenagers to learn about Army life by participating in a variety of fun but challenging tasks, including camouflage techniques and assault courses.

Defence Minister Earl Howe, who met students from Keighley University Academy and Bradford Youth Services Group, said:

These camps will educate young people and help the Army build close and long lasting ties with local communities.

An incredible amount of work is being done to ensure these 'Supercamps' are a success and I look forward to seeing more of them taking place across the country.



The teenagers from local communities in Yorkshire were taking part in a pilot scheme to allow teenagers to learn about Army life. Crown Copyright

The two week pilot, which includes 290 students, is being run by 4th Infantry

Brigade, the regional brigade for Yorkshire and the North East.

Lt Col Mark Hunter, who is overseeing the camp, said:

This supercamp brings together people from all communities around Yorkshire, providing them with positive skills to take home leadership and team working skills.

It also provides them with an opportunity to learn about the different things that the Army does, and to know more about the Armed Forces.

Towards the end of his visit Lord Howe presented special certificates to students who took part in the supercamp and also met many of the course instructors.

Press release: Environment Agency tests new powers for volunteer bailiffs

The Environment Agency and Angling Trust are running a pilot project, funded by the fishing licence, testing the benefits of giving members of Voluntary Bailiff Service powers to make fishing licence and byelaw checks. If successful, the initiative's expansion would allow Environment Agency fisheries officers to focus on investigations into other types of fisheries crime.

In the first phase of the project, the Angling Trust recruited over 300 volunteers across England to help Environment Agency fisheries officers by providing information and reporting suspicious incidents on riverbanks and lakes.

In the second phase, the pilot project has now trained 10 of the Voluntary Bailiff Service members from the south east to undertake fishing licence and byelaw compliance checking patrols, reporting offenders in the same way that Environment Agency enforcement officers do.

Judy Proctor, head of fisheries at the Environment Agency said:

The volunteer bailiffs already provide a great service to angling by helping our officers catch people fishing illegally. We will be evaluating the pilot carefully to see what more can be done and how we can improve the service.

There is no excuse for illegal fishing. A fishing licence costs from just £30 for a whole year and you can get one on GOV.UK. Anyone fishing illegally can expect to be prosecuted and face a fine of up to £2,500 and up to £50,000 for byelaw offences. In 2015/16, the Environment Agency's patrols checked 62,076 rod licences and brought 2,043 successful prosecutions for fisheries crime.

The Voluntary Bailiff Service recently inducted a further 35 new Phase 1 recruits in the North East and is currently recruiting in the rest of England. Induction and training days are being held this spring and anyone expressing an interest in joining the VBS should email karen.sarkar@anglingtrust.net

[Superfast speeds check-in at Ceredigion hotel](#)

Fast fibre technology – now available thanks to the Superfast Cymru programme – is allowing the hotel to promote itself more effectively and provide new services for visitors.

The Conrah was originally the mansion house of the Ffosrhydgaled Estate and is set in extensive grounds in the Ceredigion countryside, some four miles from Aberystwyth.

Hotel owners Geraint and Wendy Hughes decided to upgrade to superfast broadband after realising the strong demand for the technology from guests and the overall impact it could have on the business.

The hotel now benefits from offering fast broadband speeds of 80 Mbps – which can be increased even further if required – as a result of the latest fibre-to-the premises (FTTP) broadband rolled out to the area by engineers from Openreach, the local network business which is part of BT Group.

Geraint Hughes said:

“Superfast broadband has made a massive difference to the hotel. The demand is there from guests for faster internet speeds and we’re now able to provide exactly what the customer wants.

“Although they are away from home, visitors are also keen to stay connected, whether it is for business or personal use, and being able to offer superfast broadband can be the difference between a guest booking to stay or going somewhere else.”

Online advertising is just one of the ways, Geraint and his team have been able to improve the business. They are now able to take bookings on the website better than before and make greater use of social media to promote the hotel. It is also vital in their conference facilities offering.

Guests have also been impressed with the superfast connection. They are able to access work as well as stream videos and upload photos from their stay.

Geraint added:

“Superfast broadband has opened a wealth of new opportunities for us. We now employ a member of staff who is solely responsible for our social media, something which we could never have done previously.

“We also sit down with guests, look online and help them plan their stay – where they want to visit, how to get there, which walking routes they’d like to take – it’s a great benefit.”

Minister for Skills and Science, Julie James, said:

“I’m delighted to hear how superfast broadband is making a real difference at the Conrah Hotel thanks to the Superfast Cymru programme.

“It is a great example of how faster speeds can have a positive impact for the business and visitors. Having access to quick, strong and reliable internet connection is increasingly important for guests and the Superfast Cymru roll-out is helping meet that demand.

“Areas such as Ceredigion would have no superfast broadband without the intervention of Superfast Cymru and it’s great to see how the team at the Conrah are making the most of the technology.”

Alwen Williams, regional director for BT Cymru Wales, said:

“The roll-out of superfast broadband across Wales is already having a huge impact on how families and businesses interact online. The Conrah Hotel is another example of how this new high-speed network is making an impact.

“As more and more homes and businesses gain access to superfast broadband speeds every single day I’d urge people to follow in the footsteps of the Conrah Hotel and make the most of this new technology by upgrading their services.

“We appreciate that this isn’t currently possible for small parts of Wales but our engineers continue to work hard to roll out fibre broadband across the country as quickly and as widely as possible.”

Speech: ‘FinTech will transform the way we live and do business’, says the Chancellor

This fantastic building has a proud history as an international marketplace.

One-hundred-and-forty years ago, it opened as the new home of Billingsgate fish market ...the largest fish market of its kind in the world.

But Billingsgate’s heritage as a place of commerce and free trade goes back even further...

...ever since a 1699 Act of Parliament made it “a free and open market for all sorts of fish whatsoever”...

...with a single exception: the sale of eels...

...which was restricted to Dutch fishermen, in recognition of their help in feeding the people of London during the Great Fire.

An early trade agreement that I am sure Prime Minister Rutte will remember during the upcoming negotiations... Global ambition

Of course when this building opened the world was, once again, embarking on an industrial revolution...

...and, like the first, this second industrial revolution was led by British ingenuity and British design.

And whereas the First was characterised by the mechanisation of textile production in the North of England...

...and the advent of the steam engine, first built in the West Midlands...

...the Second saw steel production in Yorkshire take the place of iron...

...the first modern power station constructed in Deptford...

...the first commercial oil refinery in West Lothian...

...and the first commercial telegraph system, just down the road in Euston.

For the first time, merchants in London could send an order to suppliers in India, China or the United States along our international network of telegraph lines...

...to be shipped in steel-built steamships...

...refrigerated where necessary...

...and then distributed by rail to all corners of our country.

These breakthroughs drove the first major wave of globalisation...

...sustaining our economies until the breakthroughs in computing technology and the creation of the World Wide Web...

...led to what is now referred to as the Third Industrial Revolution.

Today we are on the brink of yet another industrial revolution.

One that has the potential, once again, fundamentally to transform the structure of the global economy, and the way we live our lives.

And once again it is British invention and entrepreneurial spirit that is at the forefront of the technologies...

...such as artificial intelligence, robotics, big data analytics, biotech and FinTech...

...that collectively are the drivers of what has become known as the Fourth Industrial Revolution. FinTech

And here in London, it is the combination of financial innovation with available venture capital...

...and the world's largest international financial services marketplace...

...that has put this city at the forefront of the FinTech revolution, changing the way in which financial services are accessed and delivered.

Just as with the telegraph and telephone in the 1870s...

...the first ATMs in the 1960s...

...and the arrival of online banking in the 1980s...

...FinTech will transform the way we live and do business.

Whether it is cashless transactions between friends...

...sending remittances to family in other countries...

...or apps that automatically invest savings at the best rates...

...FinTech provides consumers with better services, more choice, and lower

costs.

And as I found on my recent trip to India...

...it has the potential to transform financial inclusion across the developing world too...

...with more than a billion people now biometrically enrolled in that country and 220 million new bank accounts opened in the last 18 months alone.

For businesses, it can mean access to new and cheaper credit...

...as digitally enabled disintermediation links savers and businesses directly...

...through peer-to-peer lending, crowdfunding and smart lenders with innovative distribution techniques using technology to power credit approvals for on-line SME lending.

And apps that automate firms' compliance processes – so-called "RegTech"...

...have the potential dramatically to cut costs too.

This market is growing at a tremendous pace...

...and with hundreds of millions of people worldwide entering the digital financial system every year that growth shows no sign of abating.

Over the last few months, I have visited Barclay's FinTech accelerators in Cape Town and in Mumbai, and seen the impressive successes they are achieving.

So, I am delighted to announce today that next month Barclays will open its new flagship, 'London Rise'... ..the largest FinTech accelerator of its kind in Europe, offering over 500 workspaces for start-up innovators.

And, also today, HSBC and Tradeshift have confirmed that their new 'procure-to-pay' product will go live in July...

...allowing businesses to manage their entire supply chain and working capital requirements in one place, from any device...

...a great example of a partnership between a banking giant and a FinTech entrepreneur to develop practical solutions to support everyday businesses.

Today is about the UK as the global FinTech hub.

About bringing 450 investors, drawn from every continent...

...together with 100 of Britain's top FinTech firms...

...from Silicon Roundabout in London, to TechNorth in Manchester and Leeds...

...to demonstrate how our entrepreneurs are applying their ingenuity to deliver the next steps in the FinTech revolution.

We have the time zone, the language, the legal system, and the talent...

...in the world's number one financial centre...

...and the fastest growing tech centre in Europe.

And this government is committed – through the Patient Capital Review, and the work of Sir Damon Buffini...

...to ensuring that we have the deep pools of long-term capital, too.

Taken together we have a FinTech sector that generated almost £7 billion revenue last year...

...and now employs over 60,000 people.

And you don't just have to take my word for it...

...EY and Deloitte have independently ranked the UK as the best place in the world to succeed as a FinTech firm. government support

This is not by accident...

...of course we have the talent, the entrepreneurs, and the markets...

...but we also have the regulatory and tax environment to support it too.

Because we have given our regulators a clear mandate to do so.

The FCA has led the way internationally with their 'regulatory sandbox'...

...allowing firms to test their products with consumers in a safe environment.

The Bank of England's FinTech Accelerator gives companies the chance to work on innovative central banking solutions...

...while the Bank is broadening access to its settlement accounts and payment systems;

The FCA are hosting a regulator's summit today, to discuss what more regulators can do to support the market's growth.

The government has also played its part.

In the last year we have introduced a new investors' relief, to support investment into firms looking to scale up...

... provided £400 million of new capital to the British Business Bank to leverage £1bn of investment in UK technology businesses...

...and through our proposal for the Royal Bank of Scotland, we will see funding for a series of initiatives, worth around £750 million, to boost competition in the UK business banking market, and to stimulate further investment in FinTech of the future.

But we can do more.

This government is consulting on a modern Industrial Strategy...

...and high-growth, knowledge intensive business will be at its heart.

Our tech sector already contributes a bigger proportion of our GDP than any other country in the G20.

But we cannot rest on our laurels...

...we must constantly move onward to remain the best place in the world to start and grow a tech business.

Our Plan for Britain points the way:

We must invest to overcome the poor productivity performance that has plagued our economy for well over a decade...

...and that is why at Autumn Statement I announced a £23 billion National Productivity and Investment Fund.

We need a skills system that offers clear routes into work...

...and that is why at Spring Budget I announced funding for new 'T-Levels' for 16-19 year olds.

And we must embrace the technological change that has the potential to transform our economy for the better...

...and that is why I also announced an Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund to keep the UK at the forefront of disruptive technology.

We can't remain the number one place for FinTech and the other technologies of the Fourth Industrial Revolution...

...by simply relying on our ingenuity, talent and openness...

...we have to go out and get the business.

Findings from our sponsors, EY, show that British FinTech firms most want to expand into Asia.

I could sense that excitement in the delegation of FinTech firms that I took to Mumbai last week to the first UK-India FinTech Conference...

...where we agreed with the Indian Government to work on a UK-India FinTech Bridge...

...in addition to similar arrangements, we've reached with China, Korea and Singapore...

...building vital links between markets and consumers in Britain and Asia.

Conclusion If the UK is going to make the most of the freedoms it will have after leaving the European Union...

...we have to build trade links with the fast-growing economies of Asia...

...we have to invest in the skills of the future...

...and our economy must remain at the cutting edge:

Not just of Fintech. But of AI, biotech – of every area in which we have the potential to lead the world into this new industrial revolution.

The world does not owe us a living.

We will have to strive and graft and fight to seize opportunities; and make the most of them.

That means growing and strengthening the areas – like Fintech – in which we enjoy a comparative advantage...

...it means maintaining and enhancing the UK's reputation as one of the best and most attractive places in the world to do business...

...and it means ensuring we are producing the people with the skills and the aptitude to become the next wave of innovators, entrepreneurs and investors.

Because while we need to continue to attract the brightest and the best from around the world to these shores...

...we must also do better at nurturing and developing the home-grown talent to drive our economy forward in the future.

Our vision of an outward-looking, Global Britain that will deliver the high-skilled, high-wage economy of the future...

...that will power the higher living standards we all want to see for future generations.

So I urge everyone here today – innovators, investors, regulators – to help us realise that vision.

Help us keep the UK at the forefront of the FinTech revolution.

Help us build a truly world-beating new tech sector.

Let your ideas, your apps, your services, your equity demonstrate what's really possible when government, business and regulators all pull in the same direction.

Working together, to build the world's greatest FinTech hub.

[News story: Buffer stop collision, Preston](#)

At around 14:50 hrs on 1 April, a passenger train struck the buffer stops in platform 3C at Preston station. The train was travelling at around 6 mph (10 km/h) and several passengers suffered minor injuries.

We have undertaken a [preliminary examination](#) into the circumstances surrounding this accident. Having assessed the evidence which has been gathered to date, we have decided to publish a [safety digest](#).

The safety digest will shortly be made available on our website.