

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

[News story: BBC Board Members for Scotland and England appointed](#)

Government has today announced the appointment of the Scotland and England representatives for the new BBC Unitary Board following an open and competitive recruitment process. Steve Morrison has been confirmed as the new BBC Board member for Scotland, and Dr Ashley Steel will be the new Board member for England.

Overall the new BBC Board, which will be responsible for overseeing a strong and independent BBC, will be made up of 14 members:

- a Chair appointed via a public appointments process coordinated by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). The selection panel for this appointment was chaired by a Public Appointments Assessor, nominated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments;
- four non-executive board members representing each of the devolved nations, also appointed through a public appointments process coordinated by DCMS;
- five non-executive board members appointed by the BBC Board; and
- four executive members appointed by the BBC, including the BBC Director General, Tony Hall.

Steve Morrison, the new Board member for Scotland, has a career spanning

almost four decades in broadcasting, and was previously Chief Executive of Granada PLC as well as founding Chief Executive of independent production companies group All3Media and subsequently its Chairman, now retired. He is currently the Rector of Edinburgh University.

Steve Morrison said:

As a Scot who has spent his life in television it is a great honour to be the first Scottish Member of the new BBC Board. The BBC is taking important steps to increase programme production both in Scotland and for its network channels. I look forward to contributing my broadcasting experience to the new Board and encouraging the growth of the creative industries in Scotland.

Dr Ashley Steel, the new Board member for England brings with her extensive board experience, and was previously Vice Chairman at professional services firm, KPMG.

Dr Ashley Steel said:

I am delighted to be joining the new BBC Board as the non-executive director representing England. The BBC is one of the best and most respected media organisations in the world, and I look forward to working with Sir David Clementi and colleagues.

The recruitment for a Board member for Northern Ireland will re-commence once the new Northern Ireland executive is in place.

No Board member for Wales has been appointed and another competition will now be launched to fill the vacancy.

ENDS

Media enquiries: DCMS Press Office 020 7211 6145

Notes to Editors:

Steve Morrison's career in broadcasting began at BBC Radio Scotland (Edinburgh) and BBC Television (Glasgow). He then moved to Granada where he worked as both Head of Regional Programmes and Director of Programmes, eventually becoming Chief Executive of Granada plc. During his time at Granada he was joint Chairman of the Granada/Scottish Television airtime sales house.

Steve was the founding Chief Executive of independent production companies group All3Media, and subsequently its Chairman, now retired. All3Media became the leading group of British owned Independent TV Production companies before it was sold to a joint venture of Discovery and Liberty Media.

Steve also holds an Honorary Doctorate of Social Science from Edinburgh and is currently the Rector of Edinburgh University.

Currently Dr Ashley Steel is a non executive director on the boards of National Express plc, the Civil Aviation Authority and Ince & Co, an international law firm. She is a founding member of the global advisory board for Out Leadership, a New York based organisation helping Chairmen and CEO's on LGBT business issues. Previously, Ashley was Vice Chairman at professional services firm, KPMG. During her time with the firm she worked in over 40 countries advising both listed companies and national governments. She also held global leadership roles for the firm's transport and infrastructure practice and, while based in the USA, for its global technology and media practice.

The appointment process was run in accordance with the OCPA Code of Practice. It is a requirement of the Code that political activity is declared; both candidates have declared no such political activity. Remuneration for the role of BBC Board Members is £33,000 per annum.

Under the terms of the BBC Royal Charter, appointment of the BBC Chair and members is made by HM The Queen on recommendation from Ministers (the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, through the Prime Minister).

[Swinney claims North Sea oil was merely an independence 'bonus'](#)

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- Swinney claims North Sea oil was merely an independence 'bonus'

9 Mar 2017



Oil was never the basis for the Scottish economy, but merely a bonus, the Deputy First Minister claimed today.

The admission exposes a split at the top of the SNP in the same week its top financial adviser Andrew Wilson said the complete opposite, and that the nationalists had depended on oil revenues for their financial projections.

Today at First Minister's Questions, Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson challenged Mr Swinney – who was standing in for Nicola Sturgeon – on the contradiction.

However, he refused to explain the differences in opinion, and also dodged

the issue of a fresh SNP drive for separation.

It was reported this morning that Nicola Sturgeon regards the autumn of 2018 as the “common sense” time for a referendum re-run.

This is despite repeated polls showing people don't want it, and little movement in polls Ms Sturgeon said would need to shift significantly before she called another referendum.

Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson said:

“It may have been a new face in the First Minister's seat, but the bluster was the same as ever.

“We now have a very stark contradiction at the heart of the SNP.

“Its chief financial adviser says oil was the basis on which a separate Scotland would have been built.

“But the Deputy First Minister says it was merely planned as a bonus.

“They can't both be right, and this contradiction exposes that the entire economic prospectus on which the SNP based its case for independence was bogus.

“Nicola Sturgeon thinks it's ‘common sense’ to have another divisive and unwanted referendum next year.

“But most Scots don't want to go back to that division and uncertainty, and most think this irresponsible talk will only damage Scotland's economy further.

“That's the kind of common sense the SNP should be deploying.”

SNP strategy chief Andrew Wilson said oil was in fact the “basis” for his party's independence plans in 2014. This is despite John Swinney previously saying it wasn't the basis, but “a bonus”:

<http://www.scottishconservatives.com/2017/03/never-mind-indyref2-snp-must-own-up-to-the-lies-of-indyref1/>

Nicola Sturgeon said today 2018 would be the “common sense” time for another referendum:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/03/09/nicola-sturgeon-autumn-2018-common-sense-time-second-independence/>