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City's Brexit brain drain warning to government

Paul Brackley & Ben Comber
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A warning about the impact of a Brexit brain drain has been delivered by leading figures in Cambridge to the government this week.

Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, and the city's Labour MP Daniel Zeichner both voiced concerns about Britain's ability to recruit the finest talent when the country leaves the European Union.

"In a world that is increasingly global and international we cannot isolate ourselves from our nearest neighbours," the Vice-Chancellor said.

Cambridge University cannot be just a university of the United Kingdom. It is an international entity that attracts staff and students from around the world because of its reputation and its capacity to deliver solutions to real-world problems well into the future."

Mr Zeichner stood down from his post as shadow transport minister so that he could vote

Finalists in our Entrepreneurial Science and Technology Awards revealed inside

In our 10-page Business section

against the party line, along with 50 of his colleagues, for a motion calling for the UK to remain in the EU single market.

Then on Friday, he visited the MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology – known as Cambridge's 'Nobel Prize factory' – where he

learned that 37 per cent of all its scientists were from other EU countries. Some 40 per cent of its PhD students, 46 per cent of its post-doc researchers and 33 per cent of its group leaders are from the EU.

After meeting with the LMB's Sir Hugh Pelham, he told the *Cambridge Independent*: "There are 4,000 post-docs in Cambridge – one of the biggest communities of highly talented people in the world and we are potentially turning them away. It's very hard

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Health



Dr Anoop Kuttikat

Improving outcomes for psoriasis

Psoriasis is a skin condition that causes red, dry and thickened patches. These are often covered with silvery scales and can sometimes be itchy. It usually affects the scalp, skin folds over elbows, knees and lower back. It can also cause pitting or colour changes in your nails.

Psoriasis is not an infection and it is not contagious.

It often has an emotional effect, with many reporting depression and anxiety. Some with psoriasis also get a type of inflammatory arthritis called psoriatic arthritis, causing painful swollen joints.

Psoriasis is a common condition affecting two per cent of the UK population. This equates to around 16,000 patients in Cambridgeshire. It affects men and women equally. It can occur at any age although the peak is between late teens and early thirties.

Psoriasis is an auto-immune condition where your immune system mistakenly starts attacking the skin cells, causing inflammation. The specific trigger for the immune system to behave in this abnormal fashion remains unknown. Bad genes and environmental factors such as smoking, stress and certain infections can play an important role.

Psoriasis is diagnosed by your GP after looking at your skin and asking questions. In difficult cases, a referral to a consultant dermatologist will be made. Psoriatic arthritis is usually diagnosed and managed by a consultant rheumatologist.

Psoriasis is usually a lifelong condition, although the severity can vary. Many notice that during summer months their symptoms improve. Initial treatments include moisturising creams, steroid creams and light therapy. Various medications (pills and injections) are available to keep psoriasis under control.

Newer, effective treatments called biologics and targeted disease-modifying drugs are now available as a result of extensive medical research. These have greatly improved the outcomes for those with difficult-to-control disease.

■ Dr Anoop Kuttikat is a consultant rheumatologist at Mulberry Clinic, Hinchingbrooke Hospital, Huntingdon, and at Kettering General. Visit cambridge-kettering-rheumatologist.com.



Jim McNicholas at the Huntingdon end of the A14 work where progress is being made with the new river crossing
Picture: Keith Heppell

Nation's largest road project on track as outline emerges

Ben Comber

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Seven months after construction began on the £1.5billion upgrade of the A14 between Cambridge and Huntingdon, it remains on track for a 2020 delivery.

Pilings and foundations have been laid for some of the 34 new bridges that will be installed, and the project's earthworks team has stripped more than 17 miles of top soil to create several sections of future new road.

Mike Evans, strategic engagement manager at Highways England, said: "We're seven months into the start of the biggest road investment project in the country.

"We've started to build one of the biggest structures that we have to build, which is the viaduct over the River Great Ouse. We've got a deadline to have the road complete

“The biggest challenge is the size of the project”

Mike Evans
Highways England

by 2020 and we're on schedule."

The foundations for the viaduct columns are as deep as 35 metres, and made of steel-reinforced concrete.

They will have to hold the 800 concrete bridge deck panels, which weigh 25 tonnes each, on which the new road will be built.

Casting of these bridge decks has started on the construction site to avoid having to transport them.

"It's a very ambitious project," Mr Evans continued. "We've pushed our

developers hard to ensure the main Cambridge to Huntingdon project will be completed on time.

"Because of the scale there is an awful lot of challenges – we have more than 200 architects out there now doing what they do, and we have to keep traffic moving at the same time as widening the road. But the biggest challenge is the size," he added.

The outline of the 12-mile Huntingdon bypass has now emerged as well.

Chris Griffin, A14 project manager at Highways England, said: "We are continuing to make good progress throughout the scheme.

"We have had mild and dry weather this winter and spring and have been making the most of it to move the project forward quickly and safely.

"I'm pleased that the outline for most of the new road's path has now been created and it won't be long

before some of the first structures are completed."

"We are careful to minimise our impact on the surrounding environment while we work, and the environment keeps reminding us that it is all around us too."

Highways England says planning the environmental mitigation has been an important part of the project, ensuring that by the time the project is completed its footprint on the surrounding natural environment is as small as possible.

A team of ecologists is working with wildlife including water voles, great crested newts, kestrels, bats and barn owls, as well as some protected plant species, to create new habitats.

The team has also committed to planting twice as many trees than have been felled through the project by the time it is complete, which will be selected to fit in with the existing environment.

Have your say on a police, crime and fire commissioner

The county's police and crime commissioner, Jason Ablewhite, has officially launched a public consultation on creating new governance arrangements for Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service.

As previously reported, Mr

Ablewhite is keen to use new legislation which allows PCCs to take on responsibility for fire and rescue services in their area.

"One of my roles as police and crime commissioner is to explore options for collaboration with other emergency services where

there are potential benefits to be had," he said. "I believe that there are many advantages to be gained if I take on responsibility for the governance of the fire and rescue service, such as savings through better use of fire and police estates, closer and

quicker joint working between the services, and savings through a simpler governance process."

A link to the consultation can be found on the PCC's website, with a summary of the proposals.

■ To find out more and to give your views, cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk.