



The official e-newsletter of the **British Virgin Islands London Office**



Welcome to the Third Quarter Edition of the BVILO Newsletter

By: Ms Tracy Bradshaw, UK Representative, British Virgin Islands London Office

We are delighted to present our third quarterly newsletter at a time of progress and renewed focus for the British Virgin Islands.

The recent lifting of the Order in Council, which had threatened to partially suspend our constitution, marks a significant victory. It highlights the importance of vigilance, active engagement, and the resilience of our democratic institutions.

We are equally proud to launch the BVILO Educational and Cultural Exchange Initiative in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council schools. This historic programme sets a precedent for other Overseas Territories, showcasing BVI leadership in cultural diplomacy and

education. It amplifies the Territory's voice within the UK, introduces young British citizens to our heritage and achievements, and strengthens recognition of Virgin Islanders living in the UK.

Looking ahead, our focus remains strong:

- Preparation for the annual Joint Ministerial Council (JMC), where the Premier and ministers will engage UK counterparts on the BVI's priorities.

- Continued engagement with our diaspora in Southampton later this year, integrating the Learn-Earn-Return programme to create pathways for skills development, career opportunities, and community connection.

Through these initiatives, our mission is clear: to safeguard the BVI's autonomy, expand opportunities for our people, and strengthen connections at home and abroad.

We invite you to follow our progress on our website and social media channels, and to remain actively engaged in shaping the BVI's future, with determination, optimism, and pride.

Bringing the BVI Story into the UK Curriculum, Building Bridges Through Education and Culture

We are pleased to announce the successful launch of the first phase of an educational and cultural exchange initiative connecting Year 6 students in Hertfordshire with the history, culture, and global significance of the British Virgin Islands (BVI).

This landmark initiative has been made possible through the longstanding partnership between the Government of the Virgin Islands and Hertfordshire County Council, established under a Memorandum of Understanding. It is through this collaboration that the vision of bringing the BVI into UK classrooms has been realised, ensuring that the BVI’s story is taught, experienced, and appreciated by young learners.

This represents the first structured cultural exchange programme between a UK Overseas Territory and UK schools, delivered as part of the Year 6 curriculum. It is a historic milestone for the BVI and a precedent-setting model for other Overseas Territories, with the BVI demonstrating leadership in cultural diplomacy and education.

At its core, this initiative strengthens the BVI’s voice within the UK, enhances our international impact, and introduces the Territory positively to young British

citizens. It showcases the BVI’s heritage, economy, and environmental leadership while supporting Virgin Islanders in the UK through greater awareness and recognition.

Term 1: History & Culture

The first phase focused on the BVI’s history and culture. Students explored colonization, the abolition of slavery, and the journey toward self-governance. They engaged with national heroes, symbols, and celebrations such as the Emancipation Festival. Cultural activities, including music, dance, storytelling, and traditional food such as cassava bread, coconut and pineapple tarts, and gooseberry stew, offered students an authentic taste of BVI life, supported by Dr. Angel Smith and the BVI London Office team.

Programme Roadmap

The programme spans three terms: History & Culture (Sept 2025), Tourism & Economy (Jan 2026), and Environment & Sustainability (July 2026).

Looking Ahead

This initiative is more than a teaching programme, it is a cultural bridge. For the first time, UK students are engaging

with the history, culture, and global role of a UK Overseas Territory as part of their school year. By encouraging empathy, global citizenship, and stronger UK-BVI connections, the BVI is helping shape how the Overseas Territories are understood within the UK.

Building on its success at the primary level, we envision this programme expanding to secondary schools and colleges. This will deepen engagement with topics such as governance, economy, environment, and international relations, reshaping the BVI’s narrative in the UK and ensuring future generations come to know the Territory as a dynamic and forward-looking partner.

We extend our gratitude to our lead facilitator Dr. Angel Smith, Hertfordshire County Council, our participating schools and teachers, and the entire BVI London Office team for their invaluable support. Further updates will follow as we continue this transformative journey.



Empowering BVI Students in the UK

By: Ms Yvonne Hodge-Grant, Assistant Director Consular Affairs, British Virgin Islands London Office

Welcome to the 2025–26 academic year!

Whether you are a new student beginning your journey or a returning student continuing your pursuit of excellence, the Consular Services of the British Virgin Islands London Office (BVILO) extends a heartfelt welcome. We are proud to support and empower BVI students in the UK as you strive toward your academic, personal, and professional goals. This year promises new opportunities, growth, and community—and we are here to walk alongside you every step of the way.

The Consular Services of the British Virgin Islands London Office (BVILO) is dedicated to supporting students from the Virgin Islands as they embark on their academic journey in the United Kingdom. We recognise that moving away from home can be daunting, and for some, even scary, especially without the immediate support of friends and loved ones. That’s why the Consular Services actively seek opportunities to engage our students by keeping them informed and connected through updates on news and resources relevant to their success, growth, and wellbeing.

Prior to departure, the Consular Services offer valuable guidance on university selection, student finance, UCAS deadlines

and accommodation. To ensure a smooth transition, students can access a detailed Student Relocation Guide on our website www.bvi.org.uk, which includes practical advice on opening a UK bank account, securing housing with a guarantor, and staying safe.

Support continues once students arrive in the UK. By registering with BVILO, our students gain access to timely updates, internship, scholarship and mentorship opportunities, and a range of enrichment activities. BVILO also organises community events such as the annual summer BBQ at BVI House, diaspora outreach across the UK, and facilitates engagement with visiting officials including the Premier and other ministers. Students who live outside London benefit from our reimbursement scheme for their transportation to these events.

If any student faces challenges while in the UK—whether academic, emotional, financial, or otherwise, the dedicated Consular Services team will endeavour to provide the resources, guidance, and support they need to overcome their difficulties. We believe in the power of community and compassion, and we are here to ensure that no student feels alone

on their journey. As Albert Schweitzer once said, “The purpose of human life is to serve, and to show compassion and the will to help others.”

The Consular Services at BVILO proudly recognises that our students represent the future of the Virgin Islands. We remain steadfast in our commitment to supporting their success, well-being, and personal growth throughout their time in the UK.

We are excited about our upcoming events which include a Christmas lunch, an enrichment activity in January 2026, and the launch of a mentorship programme, alongside regular updates on internship and job opportunities.

At the BVI London Office, we are committed to ensuring our students are looked after while they are in the UK.

Keeping the BVI's Story Alive in London

The Executive Education Series at BVILO continues to inspire, with renowned historian and archivist Dr. Angel Smith sharing his extensive knowledge of the historical ties between the British Virgin Islands (BVI) and the United Kingdom. Understanding our past is essential in shaping our future and strengthening our connection with the UK.

During his visit, Dr. Smith facilitated a BVILO led programme across several schools in Hertfordshire over the course of a week, introducing Year Six students to the history, culture, and traditions of the BVI, while contributing to a broader effort to shape the narrative of the BVI and Overseas Territories from the ground up. The BVILO also arranged a visit to the UK Hydrographic Office, enabling Dr. Smith to continue his research into BVI history through their extensive archival collections.

The London office team, serving as territorial ambassadors, benefit from this series, remaining engaged and informed as they continue to promote and represent the BVI with pride.

As the territorial song reminds us, “educating your people is the golden key to maintain the success of this territory.” Through initiatives such as these, BVILO is preserving heritage and shaping the leaders of tomorrow.



Past Events and Upcoming Events





The BVI London Office

WELCOMES

NEW & RETURNING STUDENTS

2025-26

Whether you're just beginning your studies or returning for another year, the BVI London Office is here to support you every step of the way. Our dedicated team is ready to help you navigate your academic journey and provide guidance on a range of topics, including:

- *Student Financing*
- *Student Accommodation*
- *Home Fees Status*
- *BVILO internships*
- *BVILO events*
- *Registering with our office - [Link](#)*

*bvi.org.uk
0207 3559570
enquiries@bvi.org.uk*



UK-BVI School Project 2025	15, 16, 19 September
BVILO CPD with Dr A Smith	17 September
United Kingdom Youth Parliament	6 November
Southampton Diaspora Meet and Greet	14 November
Premier’s Meet and Greet with the Diaspora	23 November
Joint Ministerial Council (JMC)	23 – 28 November



In Loving Memory of

Dr Robert A. Mathavious, OBE
1952-2025

The Director and staff at the BVI London Office extend their heartfelt condolences to the family of the late Dr Robert Mathavious, OBE.

Dr Mathavious was a respected leader, a valued colleague, and a dear friend to many of us. We are profoundly saddened by his passing and join his family in mourning this significant loss.

Our thoughts and prayers are with them during this difficult time. May they find solace in their cherished memories, and may Dr Mathavious rest in peace.



BVI LONDON OFFICE IN SOUTHAMPTON

PARTNERING WITH OUR DIASPORA TO GROW THROUGH
RESILIENCE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Got a Business You'd Like to Promote?

Showcase it at our upcoming BVI
Diaspora Event in Southampton -
November 14 at the Novotel Hotel!

Send us your flyer or business card, and
we'll feature it in our Business Display
Area — a great opportunity to connect
with the community and gain visibility.

Submit your materials today and let
your business shine!

GROW YOUR BUSINESS WITH US

www.bvi.org.uk
enquiries@bvi.org.uk
0207 3559570



BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS LONDON OFFICE

*DIASPORA
MEET & GREET*



Friday, November 14, 2025



5.30 pm - 8.30 pm



Novotel Southampton
1 West Quay Road,
Southampton, SO15 1RA

RSVP: enquiries@bvi.org.uk

Food and drinks will be provided



Stay connected with the BVI in the UK



Are you a member of the BVI diaspora living in the UK—or do you know someone who is? Don't miss out on important updates, opportunities, and community events! By registering with us, you'll receive timely information on:

- **Policy updates**
- **Social and cultural events**
- **Crisis communications**
- **Career and educational opportunities**
- **And much more!**

Students – [[Register here](#)] | **Residents** – [[Register here](#)]

Let's stay connected and build a stronger, more informed BVI community in the UK.

Follow us on social media for real-time updates and highlights:

 **Government of the British
Virgin Islands - London Office**

 **@BVIDLondonOffice**

 **@BVIDLondonOffice**

