

## **Press release: UK House Price Index for September 2018**

The UK HPI shows house price changes for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

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## **Press release: £950 fine for Leicester man fishing with unlicensed rod and line**

Burton Overy man guilty after being found guilty of fishing with an unlicensed rod and line in May 2018.

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A 28-year old man from Burton Overy, Leicester has been successfully prosecuted after being found guilty of fishing with an unlicensed rod and line in May 2018.

The case was brought to Wellingborough Magistrates Court by the Environment Agency on 12 November 2018 where Sam Kirk, of Scotland Lane, Burton Overy, was proved guilty in his absence and ordered to pay a total penalty of £957.

The penalty includes a fine of £220 plus costs of £737 after Kirk was found in possession of an unlicensed fishing instrument, namely rod and line, with the intention of using it for fishing on 5 May 2018 at Beedles Lake, East Goscote, Leicester, contrary to Section 27(1)(b) of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975.

Following the verdict, Pete Haslock, Fisheries Enforcement Team Leader for the Environment Agency said:

We take all kinds of illegal fishing extremely seriously – whether it's those fishing without a licence, or licensed anglers using illegal equipment. This case shows anglers how seriously the courts take these offences and we hope it will act as a deterrent to other anglers who flout the laws.

Illegal fishing is not fair on other anglers who fish within the law, and it also endangers the future of the sport by damaging the sustainability of fish stocks.

We regularly carry out enforcement operations to protect fish stocks and improve fisheries and urge anyone who has any information about any incidents of illegal fishing to report them to us so we can investigate.

Anyone who suspects anglers of illegal fishing are urged to contact the Environment Agency's 24/7 hotline on 0800 807060, or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

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## **[News story: Multi-million investment to support children's early communication skills](#)**

Disadvantaged families will benefit from extra support to nurture their child's early development at home, thanks to multi-million pound projects launched today (14 November) by the Education Secretary Damian Hinds.

The projects, backed by nearly £18 million, will include funding for additional training for health visitors who work with families of young children to identify speech, language and communication needs early on, helping to address and support concerns when they can have the most impact. It will also fund educational games, apps and text message 'tips' for parents and carers from disadvantaged backgrounds, helping them to interact with their children when at home or out and about, making everyday activities an opportunity for learning.

The Education Secretary will today host a summit bringing together nearly 100 businesses, charities and public sector organisations designed to tackle the 'last taboo' in education – supporting parents with learning at home. The summit will draw on a bank of existing research on parents' confidence and behaviour when it comes to learning at home with their children.

Research is clear about the importance of the home environment for a child's early learning, and even small changes can encourage conversations between

parents and their young children. The Sutton Trust found parents are twice as likely to talk to children in face-to-face buggies, as opposed to those where the child faces forwards.

Speaking at today's summit, Education Secretary Damian Hinds is expected to say:

Education begins long before children arrive in the classroom. It begins as soon as they leave the maternity ward, in the crucial early years in the home, where their parents and carers help shape and prepare them to start school. But for lots of parents, as much as they want the best for their children, they lack the support they need to ensure that their children are arriving at school at the same level as their peers.

That is why I am working with experts from around the country, using research from around the world, to propose a set of actions for parents to teach them simple steps to playing with, reading with and chatting with their children.

Because a strong home learning environment is about more than supporting literacy and communication skills – it is the key to building a child's confidence, their belief in their own abilities, and their determination and strength of character.

Organisations including the National Literacy Trust, the National Children's Bureau and the Scouts will get a share of the funding to boost parents' confidence with learning at home, drawing on data that shows a lack of skill or fear of embarrassment can discourage them from interacting in this way. Grants will also go towards improving the training available for professionals working with young children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

One in eight children in receipt of free school meals say they do not own a single book at home, according to the National Literacy Trust. Many of today's new projects will go to voluntary and community groups to improve early language, literacy and communication skills, building on the free childcare offers already available to three and four-year-olds and the most deprived two-year-olds in England.

They will harness technology and the latest global research to make user-friendly resources like text message prompts for parents to teach children new words and numbers, or strategies to help parents manage behaviour in the home.

Alongside this, the Department for Education has confirmed that a £20 million programme of training for early years staff in disadvantaged areas will support children's early language, literacy and numeracy skills, benefitting up to 60,000 pre-school age children.

The announcement comes ahead of today's summit that brings together a

coalition of charities, media groups, technology companies and businesses to explore longer term opportunities to support parents with early learning at home, building on the Education Secretary's commitment in July to raising outcomes for every child – by halving the percentage who leave reception without the early communication or reading skills they need to thrive by 2028.

Successful grants being announced today include:

£6.5 million for projects focused on closing the disadvantage gap at age five and improving the early years education of children with SEND, including:

- ICAN's Change the Conversation about Language project, which will work with disadvantaged parents in three metro mayoral regions using an app called EasyPeasy, a 'Tots Talking' programme promoting language development among two-year-olds most at risk of delayed speech, and by investing in parent champions on the ground;
- National Literacy Trust (NLT) to improve the home learning environment through volunteering and digital support;
- the Scouts Early Years Pilot Programme in partnership with Action for Children to create and test a national volunteer-led Early Years Scouts programme for children aged four and five;
- the National Children's Bureau's consortium of organisations – including the Council for Disabled Children, Contact a Family, ICAN, The Communication Trust and NASEN – to work jointly across councils and with parents to encourage a culture shift in support for children with SEND, through improved training for professionals in speech, language and communication
- Pre-School Learning Alliance's (PSLA) First and Foremost programme, providing families with access to digital activities and support through the early years workforce;

£5 million for trials to be led by the Education Endowment Foundation in partnership with Shine the north of England that will research the best way to help parents in disadvantaged communities to start building their children's skills at home, so that no child starts school behind their better-off peers. This investment will trial new and existing schemes, including

- a text-message scheme for parents aimed at improving literacy, maths and social and emotional development, called TipsByText, based on a similar successful programme in the United States;

£1.8 million for a programme with Public Health England, including new speech, language and communication training for health visitors, delivered by the Institute of Health Visitors; and

£5 million for organisations to investigate what works through bespoke local projects focused on best practice in early language, literacy and maths, to build and share a stronger evidence base. A second round of projects applications has now opened.

Natasha Kaplinsky, broadcaster and co-founder of Mum&You, chairing the summit, said:

Being a parent is the most important job you can do, but it doesn't come with an instruction manual. We are often our child's first teacher, talking or playing together at home and encouraging their early development long before they start school – so the right support needs to be available for parents who may not feel confident about how to do this well.

I'm pleased to be chairing this summit, which is the start of an important national conversation about how we as a society can improve every child's language, literacy and communication skills from the earliest opportunity.

Duncan Selbie, Chief Executive of Public Health England, said:

Every child deserves the best start in life and our work with the Department for Education to promote language and literacy at home will help more children develop the skills they need to reach their full potential.

Sir Kevan Collins, CEO of the Education Endowment Foundation, said:

Parents care very much about the future of their children, whatever their background or wherever they come from. But it can sometimes be difficult to get them involved in their child's learning and we know little about how to do this well.

By testing different ways of improving the home learning environment – from texts to parents to home visits – these new trials will give us much needed information about how we can give parents the tools they need to give their child the very best start in life.

Christine Lenehan, Director Council for Disabled Children:

Early years are a key point of learning and intervention for children with SEN. We know if we can get in early, we can make a lifetime of difference. NCB and CDC are delighted to lead this work with our partners, and continue to ensure young children get the best possible outcomes.

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## Speech: The Potential for the First Free and Fair Elections in DRC History

Thank you Mr President. I would like to thank both of our briefers, SRSZ Zerroughi and Ms Mbela for their briefings. I'd particularly like to thank Ms Mbela for her brave work as a human rights activist in DRC and for making such clear recommendations to the Council, to her government and to the Electoral Commission and I hope to touch on some of those recommendations later.

Mr President as both of our briefers and many of my colleagues today have made clear, the DRC is at a crucial point in her history. The elections scheduled for 23 December could lead to the country's first ever peaceful democratic transfer of power. This would be a huge achievement for the 85 million Congolese people who have faced such devastating conflicts over their history.

These elections are about more than simply democratic rights. Successful elections have the ability to enhance the political security and humanitarian stability in the DRC and the region which will in turn enable future security, growth, trade and prosperity.

A stable, prosperous DRC is vital not only for the Congolese people but also for the region and the world. As we have seen over many years, insecurity in the DRC not only has a negative impact on millions of Congolese, but has devastated the wider region. Therefore it's completely right that we as a Council hold regular discussions, follow the situation closely, and ensure follow-up to the Security Council visit just over a month ago, and in particular to take stock of progress against many of the commitments that we received from the government and other political leaders in the DRC.

Mr President, I do think it's important to register the positive developments that have happened in recent months. We welcome the positive steps taken by the government towards elections, including on voter registration and the publication of the final list of candidates for the elections. We also welcome President Kabila's repeated commitment that he does not intend to stand for a third term as per the Constitution of the DRC. But as Ambassador Haley reminded us earlier today, democracy isn't just about a single event; it's about a process. So we call on all political actors in the DRC to create the conditions for free and fair and credible elections, in particular, by implementing the confidence building measures of the 31 December Agreement, ensuring that civil and political rights are upheld. This includes fully respecting the political space and allowing political parties to gather peacefully.

We welcome President Kabila's commitment to this Security Council during our visit that his government would allow peaceful protests by the opposition. We

are therefore deeply concerned by the reports of further arrests and detentions of protesters and the continued detention of political prisoners. We call on President Kabila and his government to live up to their commitments to allow peaceful protest by the opposition and to release all political prisoners.

Political parties and their leadership must also do their part and encourage their supporters to engage in the democratic process peacefully. Any violence will diminish the credibility of elections in the eyes of the Congolese people and the international community.

We also call on the key political actors, including the opposition, to engage constructively with the electoral process, including on the vexed question of voting machines and the voter register. The efforts of the Electoral Commission are crucial to deliver a credible election. And we join Ms Mbela in calling on the electoral commission to engage with key stakeholders, to address concerns and restore confidence in the electoral process.

One way of restoring confidence in the electoral process and the elections, and in particular in the voting machines, would be through the implementation of the recommendations of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy. We were encouraged that during the Council's visit to Kinshasa, the Electoral Commission said that they were determined to implement the recommendations by the Westminster Foundation. We would encourage the Electoral Commission to continue to implement those recommendations as soon as possible to increase confidence in the voting machines.

Mr President, we commend the logistical support that MINUSCO has provided so far for the upcoming elections and welcome that they stand ready to give further support if needed on request from the government of the DRC. We call on the electoral commission to engage with MINUSCO as soon as possible on any logistical assistance that may be required.

The United Kingdom stands ready to support the political process both in the region, where we've provided funding on voter education, civil society engagement, and women's participation and domestic observation, and here at the United Nations.

Mr President, in conclusion it's not the politicians that stand to win or lose the most in these elections. It is the people of the DRC. The people who have seen devastating levels of conflict and resulting humanitarian suffering since independence. So we call on all leaders to put aside their personal ambition and to do what is right for their people: participate in and support potentially the first of many credible elections in the DRC.

Thank you.