

Press release: Minister for Africa statement on Cameroon elections



Following the recent elections in Cameroon, the Minister for Africa Harriett Baldwin said:

The UK congratulates President Paul Biya on his re-election.

We remain deeply concerned about the deteriorating situation in the Anglophone regions, which continue to suffer from high levels of violence and human rights abuses perpetrated by both security forces and armed separatists. The UK calls on the Government of Cameroon to now take urgent action to address the crisis in the Anglophone regions.

We hope that President Biya will reach out to all sections of Cameroonian society and work to build confidence and trust. It is crucial for all parties to engage in a peaceful and structured process leading to constitutional reforms, as previously set out by the President, and avoid excessive use of force.

The UK is concerned at the worsening humanitarian situation in the Anglophone regions and the impact this is having on the lives of ordinary people. We call on all parties to grant full and unhindered humanitarian access to the affected population.

The UK will continue to work alongside the international community to encourage and support efforts to resolve the Anglophone crisis. It is vital that all parties now work together to secure a peaceful future for all Cameroonians.

Further information

Published 23 October 2018

Press release: Regulator publishes Statistical Data Return 2017 to 2018

Private registered providers of social housing in England have increased the amount of social housing stock that they own, and undertaken a large volume of transfer activity during the year, according to the Statistical Data Return 2017-2018, published today (23 October 2018) by the Regulator of Social Housing.

These national statistics are collated from annual returns submitted by private registered providers of social housing in England.

The 258,370 units transferred into providers' stock this year, the highest amount ever recorded in the SDR, have been driven by providers modifying their group structures through mergers or restructuring. With no Large Scale Voluntary Transfers of local authority stock having taken place this year, there were no major additions to stock from outside of the PRP sector.

Trends in this year's SDR figures include:

- PRPs reported an increase of 1.1% from 2017 in the amount of social housing stock that they own (2,812,320 units/bedspaces) compared with the 0.7% growth seen between 2016 and 2017
- The average net rent (£96.33 per week) for general needs stock owned by large PRPs shows a -0.3% reduction on 2017. The lower reduction in rents reported in 2018 as compared to last year is likely to be as a result of changes to the way in which temporary social housing has been captured in the 2018 data. When the temporary social housing unit data is excluded from the analysis the data indicates a reduction in rents of -1.1% from the previous year.
- The average net rent (£90.08 per week) for supported housing / housing for older people stock owned by large PRPs sees an increase of 2.0% on the previous year. A significant proportion of the increase is driven by a small number of PRPs operating a lease-based supported housing business model, many of which did not appear in the 2017 rent data due to owning fewer than 1,000 units. When these providers' data are excluded from the analysis the increase in supported housing rents is 0.2% on last year.

Fiona MacGregor, Chief Executive of RSH said:

The Statistical Data Return provides a comprehensive picture of how the social housing sector is changing as it grows. We hope that the analysis that we provide supports stakeholders to gain an understanding of key trends in the sector. Publishing analysis of regulatory data is fundamental to our commitment to transparency and delivering our objective to maintain confidence in the regulation of providers of social housing.

The regulator collects data on stock type, size, rent and location of social housing stock at 31 March each year, and data on sales and acquisitions made between 1 April and 31 March. The information is used to inform its risk-based and proportionate approach to regulation and to help a range of stakeholders better understand the housing association market.

The regulator's Statistical Data Return 2017 to 2018 is available on the [RSH website](#) along with the SDR data set. RSH has also introduced provider level and geographic (local authority) level look-up tools for user-friendly access to the underlying data.

Further information

1. The annual releases are available on the [Statistical Data Return statistical releases collections page](#).
2. These national statistics are collated from an annual survey of private registered providers of social housing in England – the Statistical Data Return. In 2017-18 the overall response rate was 95%, with 100% of registered providers who own 1,000 or more units/bedspaces (including Affordable Rent units) completing the return.
3. A total of 1,432 providers completed this year's Return – although this was the same number as 2017 it comprises changes in the structure of the sector, such as mergers, new registrations and some PRPs now becoming larger providers.
4. The SDR publication consists of a statistical release document, additional tables, a full data spreadsheet, full data set zip file, data quality report, and a pre-release access list. It also includes newly introduced provider level and geographic (Local Authority) level look-up tools and a list of registered providers who did not submit a return in 2018 within the timeframes required.
5. Figures do not include non-social housing units built by unregistered entities within PRP groups, which are outside the scope of the SDR.
6. The Regulator of Social Housing promotes a viable, efficient and well-

governed social housing sector able to deliver homes that meet a range of needs. It does this by undertaking robust economic regulation focusing on governance, financial viability and value for money that maintains lender confidence and protects the taxpayer. It also sets consumer standards and may take action if these standards are breached and there is a significant risk of serious detriment to tenants or potential tenants. For more information visit the [RSH website](#).

7. See our [Media enquiries page](#) for press office contact details. For general queries, please email enquiries@rsh.gov.uk or call 0300 124 5225.

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[Press release: Keep Antibiotics Working campaign returns](#)

The 'Keep Antibiotics Working' campaign returns to alert the public to the risks of antibiotic resistance, urging them to always take their doctor, nurse or healthcare professional's advice on antibiotics.

Antibiotics are a vital tool used to manage infections. Public Health England's (PHE's) English Surveillance Programme for Antimicrobial Utilisation and Resistance (ESPAUR) [report](#) published today, Tuesday 23 October 2018, highlights how more than 3 million common procedures such as cesarean sections and hip replacements could become life-threatening without them.

Without antibiotics, infections related to surgery could double, putting people at risk of dangerous complications. Cancer patients are also much more vulnerable if antibiotics don't work; both cancer and the treatment (chemotherapy) reduce the ability of the immune system to fight infections. Antibiotics are critical to both prevent and treat infections in these patients.

Antibiotics are essential to treat serious bacterial infections, but they are

frequently being used to treat illnesses such as coughs, earache and sore throats that can get better by themselves. Taking antibiotics encourages harmful bacteria that live inside you to become resistant. That means that antibiotics may not work when you really need them.

The threat of antibiotic resistance continues to grow. Bloodstream infections have increased and the report shows that antibiotic-resistant bloodstream infections rose by an estimated 35% between 2013 and 2017.

Despite the risks of antibiotic resistance, research shows that 38% of people still expect an antibiotic from a doctor's surgery, NHS walk-in centre or 'GP out-of-hours' service when they visited with a cough, flu or a throat, ear, sinus or chest infection in 2017.

The 'Keep Antibiotics Working' campaign educates the public about the risks of antibiotic resistance, urging people to always take healthcare professionals' advice as to when they need antibiotics. The campaign also provides effective self-care advice to help individuals and their families feel better if they are not prescribed antibiotics.

Professor Paul Cosford, Medical Director, Public Health England said:

Antibiotics are an essential part of modern medicine, keeping people safe from infection when they are at their most vulnerable. It's concerning that, in the not too distant future, we may see more cancer patients, mothers who've had caesareans and patients who've had other surgery facing life-threatening situations if antibiotics fail to ward off infections.

We need to preserve antibiotics for when we really need them and we are calling on the public to join us in tackling antibiotic resistance by listening to your GP, pharmacist or nurse's advice and only taking antibiotics when necessary. Taking antibiotics just in case may seem like a harmless act, but it can have grave consequences for you and your family's health in future.

Professor Dame Sally Davies, Chief Medical Officer for England said:

The evidence is clear that without swift action to reduce infections, we are at risk of putting medicine back in the dark ages – to an age where common procedures we take for granted could become too dangerous to perform, and treatable conditions become life-threatening.

The UK has made great efforts in recent years to reduce prescribing rates of antibiotics, however, there continues to be a real need to preserve the drugs we have so that they remain effective for those who really need them and prevent infections emerging in the first

place. This is not just an issue for doctors and nurses, the public have a huge role to play – today’s data and the launch of the national ‘Keep Antibiotics Working’ campaign must be a further wake-up call to us all.

Professor Helen Stokes-Lampard, Chair of the Royal College of GPs, said:

GPs are already doing an excellent job at reducing antibiotics prescriptions, but we often come under considerable pressure from patients to prescribe them.

We need to get to a stage where antibiotics are not seen as a ‘catch all’ for every illness or a ‘just in case’ backup option – and patients need to understand that if their doctor doesn’t prescribe antibiotics it’s because they genuinely believe they are not the most appropriate course of treatment.

It’s crucial that we continue to get this message out, which is why we’re pleased to support Public Health England’s ‘Keep Antibiotics Working’ campaign to make sure we can carry on delivering safe, effective care to our patients both now and in the future.

Background

1. The Ipsos MORI Capibus Survey, ‘Attitudes towards antibiotics, 2017’ was conducted between 24 January to 5 February 2017 with a representative sample size of 1,691 adults (aged 15+) in England only. 269 contacted a health professional with a respiratory tract infection in the last year – these participants were asked: “What did you expect from the doctor’s surgery, walk-in centre, urgent or out of hours with your cough, throat, ear, sinus, chest infection or flu?”.
2. The campaign will run from Tuesday 23 October 2018 across England for 8 weeks and will be supported with advertising, partnerships with local pharmacies and GP surgeries, and social media activity.
3. The campaign is part of a wider cross-Government strategy to help preserve antibiotics. The Government’s [‘UK Five Year Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy 2013 to 2018’](#) set out aims to improve the knowledge and understanding of AMR, conserve and steward the effectiveness of existing treatments, and stimulate the development of new antibiotics, diagnostics, and novel therapies.

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