

Press release: Leader of the Commons to Chair Ministerial Group on Family Support from Conception to the Age of Two

The Prime Minister has asked Andrea Leadsom MP to chair a cross-Government ministerial group which will seek to identify gaps in available provision and make recommendations on how coordination across Departments can be improved.

Rt Hon. Andrea Leadsom MP said: “I am delighted the Prime Minister has asked me to explore what more the Government can do to ensure we act early to help every child get the best possible start in life.

“The vital importance of supporting the first 1,001 days from conception to the age of two has been a long-standing passion of mine. A baby’s earliest experiences determine their lifelong emotional health, so a secure early start can protect young people from later mental health problems and contribute significantly to reducing major social harms.”

“I am greatly looking forward to exploring with ministerial colleagues what more the Government can do to improve the cradle-to-grave effects that result from better outcomes in this critical period of our lives.”

The review will build on recent Government policy in this area including NHS England’s Maternity Transformation Programme, expanding provision for perinatal mental health care, building parents’ confidence to begin the learning process from the home, and supporting thousands of families with access to free childcare.

This includes:

- Record investment in early years education and childcare support of around £6 billion by 2020
- £365 million investment to enable 30,000 more women to access appropriate, high-quality specialist perinatal mental health care by 2020/21
- 15 hours per week of free early education for disadvantaged two-year-olds – nearly 750,000 children have benefited from this support
- Ensuring parents in this critical period can benefit from up to £39 million being invested to reduce parental conflict through evidence-based intervention.

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. The membership of the cross-party working group will be: Rt Hon Andrea Leadsom MP (Lord President of the Council, Leader of the House of Commons); Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP (Chief Secretary to the Treasury);

Justin Tomlinson MP (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Family Support, Housing and Child Maintenance); Nadhim Zahawi MP (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families); Jackie Doyle-Price MP (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Mental Health and Inequalities); Rishi Sunak MP (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Minister for Local Government).

2. For media enquiries, please contact commonsleader@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Press release: What the Dickens?

Author's study table at risk of export

A study table used by Charles Dickens, one of Britain's most famous novelists, is at risk of being exported from the UK unless a buyer can be found to match the asking price of £67,600.

Minister for Arts, Heritage and Tourism Michael Ellis has placed a temporary export bar on the William IV mahogany table to provide an opportunity to keep it in the country.

Estimated to have been made in around 1835, the round table has a revolving drum top above eight drawers and is covered in green leather. It was used by Dickens during most of his career – first in his London home at Devonshire Terrace; then his offices on Wellington Street where he published Household Words and All the Year Round; and finally in his library at Gad's Hill Place in Higham, Kent where he died in 1870.

It is also known to have contained the keys to his wine cellar, and appears to be one of the very first objects to have been formally labelled with Dickens' name; one drawer contains an oval silver plaque stating that the table stood in his library.

Experts believe that the table was bequeathed to Dickens' eldest son Charley, before it was acquired by his younger brother Sir Henry Fielding Dickens at the sale of Gad's Hill Place in 1878. It remained in the possession of Dickens' descendants until it was sold at auction in December 2017.

Michael Ellis, Minister for Arts, Heritage and Tourism, said:

As one of Britain's most famous novelists, it is only right for there to be great expectations on us to protect Dickens' study table for the benefit of the nation.

This substantial piece of furniture was a central feature in

whatever household he lived in through most of his adult life. It is another significant item related to one of Britain's cultural icons.

The decision to defer the export licence follows a recommendation by the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest, administered by The Arts Council. They made their recommendation on the grounds that its departure from the UK would be a misfortune due to its close connection with our history and national life.

Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest member Christopher Rowell said:

On one occasion, when he was abroad, Dickens precisely described this table and its position in his Library so that a friend could locate a set of keys in one of its drawers. His art criticism as well as his descriptive writing reveal his aesthetic sensibility and this elegant, if workmanlike, leather-covered mahogany library table was clearly valued by him. Its associations are of considerable interest to lovers of Dickens' novels and writings.

The decision on the export licence application for the William IV mahogany table will be deferred until 26 October 2018. This may be extended until 26 January 2019 if a serious intention to raise funds to purchase it is made at the recommended price of £67,600.

Organisations or individuals interested in purchasing the table should contact the RCEWA on 0845 300 6200.

Notes to editors

Details of the table are as follows:

William IV mahogany table, previously owned by Charles Dickens

Retailed or made by M. Wilson (the name impressed on one drawer)

Estimated to have been built in around 1835, London

Measured at 74cm high and 107.5cm diameter

A drawer contains an oval silver plaque which bears the hallmark of Robert Hennell, London, and the date cypher for 1873, and is engraved: 'Charles Dickens' Library Table / which stood in / his Library at Gad's Hill.'

Images of the table can be downloaded here ([insert hyperlink to the picture on flickr](#)).

The Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest is an independent body, serviced by The Arts Council, which advises

the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on whether a cultural object, intended for export, is of national importance under specified criteria.

The Arts Council champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. It supports a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries – from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections.

www.artscouncil.org.uk.

News story: Gloucestershire robots sent to teach kids in the US and Australia

Ohbot, a Gloucestershire company that makes robots for the education sector, has secured contracts in the US, Australia, and Canada with support from the Department for International Trade (DIT).

The business recently signed a contract with the Microsoft Store in the US after exhibiting at Bett, a global education training and technology show in London.

The deal will see Ohbots supplied to all 80 Microsoft stores across the US and Canada to help children at its YouthSpark summer camps learn technical skills. The robots are used to help kids have fun while learning how to code. The business also secured its first deal with an Australian distributor to supply robots to schools across the country with additional orders expected over the next year.

The Stroud-based business, founded by Dan Warner and Mat Walker in 2014, designs and manufactures affordable robots to teach children digital skills such as coding.

The Ohbot robot has formed an integral part of digital skills training in schools. (c) Ohbot

Last year, the business began working with DIT to help increase its exports and expand its international presence. DIT identified key target markets where demand for educational technology was growing and introduced the business to potential buyers. It also put the firm in touch with an export manager who offered on-the-ground support and advice about attending South by Southwest (SXSW), a series of film and technology festivals and conferences, in Texas earlier this year.

DIT has also provided financial support to help Ohbot exhibit at global shows

and meet with Microsoft representatives from the US.

To cope with the increase in demand, Ohbot plans to hire 5 new members of staff to work at its manufacturing site at Halliday Mill, as well as brand and marketing specialists.

Mat Walker, co-founder at Ohbot, said:

We're a relatively new company and started Ohbot in 2014 using Crowdfunder and Kickstarter sites. We knew there was demand in the UK for technology that could teach children about coding and robots, but initially didn't have the contacts or the know-how to showcase our robots internationally.

Working with DIT was key to our international success. The team of advisers introduced us to buyers and distributors, which means that children across the globe will be able to learn about technology by using our products.

For businesses that are considering launching their products internationally, I would say don't hesitate. Working with DIT has had a huge impact on our business. If we can succeed on the global stage, so can other South West businesses.

Paul Shand, DIT's Head of South West said:

The UK is leading the way in educational technology and is home to more than a quarter of Europe's edtech businesses. By 2020, the global market for the sector is expected to total £129 billion and it's great to see local, startup businesses like Ohbot tapping into this demand and creating new jobs as a result.

Not only does DIT have a dedicated team of International Trade Advisers across the South West to support ambitious and innovative businesses like Ohbot looking to access new markets and increase exports, but we also have a team of experienced sector specialists and an overseas network in 108 countries. We can offer a range of guidance and support, including international market research and exporting workshops, as well as enabling contact with buyers and distributors in new markets.

For more information or to access online support, including the find a buyer, and export readiness tools, visit great.gov.uk.

Notice: B6 7UR, Timet UK Limited: environmental permit issued

The Environment Agency publish permits that they issue under the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED).

This decision includes the permit decision document:

- Operator name: Timet UK Limited
 - Installation name: Timet UK Limited
 - Permit number: EPR/BM5020IC/V004
-

Notice: DL7 0PF, Daniel Blenkiron trading as Blenkiron Farming Company: environmental permit issued

The Environment Agency publish permits that they issue under the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED).

This decision includes the notice of variation and decision document for:

- Operator name: Daniel Blenkiron trading as Blenkiron Farming Company
- Installation name: Lark Hall Farm
- Permit number: EPR/CP3937CD/V003