

Press release: Home Office launches review into medical use of cannabis

The review will be carried out by the Home Office and Chief Medical Officer Professor Dame Sally Davies. The Home Secretary confirmed to Parliament that if the review identifies significant medical and therapeutic benefits, then the intention would be to reschedule cannabis for medicinal use.

The [Home Secretary also announced](#) that a licence will today be granted for Alfie Dingley which will allow Alfie's clinicians access to the cannabis-based medicine he needs to treat his rare form of epilepsy.

The Home Secretary said:

Cases like Billy Caldwell's, Alfie Dingley's, and others like it, have shown that we need to look more closely at the use of cannabis-based medicine in healthcare in the UK.

The position we find ourselves in currently is not satisfactory. It's not satisfactory for the parents, it's not satisfactory for the doctors, and it's not satisfactory for me.

I have now come to the conclusion that this is the right time to review the scheduling of cannabis.

The review into cannabis-based medicines will be conducted in 2 parts.

Professor Dame Sally Davies will take forward the first part of the review, considering the evidence available for the medicinal and therapeutic benefits of cannabis-based medicines. This will inform which cannabis-based medicines should be taken forward to part 2 of the review.

The second part of the review will be led by the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) which will provide an assessment based on the balance of harms and public health needs, of what, if anything, should be rescheduled.

The review will not look into the reclassification of cannabis as a Class B drug under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and will not consider the legalisation of cannabis. The penalties for unauthorised supply and possession will remain the same.

Yesterday (18 June) the Policing Minister Nick Hurd told Parliament that the government will establish an expert panel of clinicians to advise ministers on any applications from senior clinicians to prescribe cannabis-based medicines. Today the Home Secretary confirmed the panel will be in a position to start considering applications within a week.

[Press release: Highways England gears up for M27 smart motorway upgrade](#)

15 miles of the M27 will have an extra lane created in both directions, with upgraded signs, signals and technology to inform drivers about conditions ahead.

Today (Tuesday 19 June) plans about the upgrade have gone on show ahead of the start of main construction.

Highways England delivery director Mike Grant said:

This upgrade of the M27 between Southampton and Fareham will tackle congestion and improve journey times not only for the tens of thousands of drivers who use the M27 every day, but also holiday makers using this busy stretch of motorway to get to the south coast ports as well as the South West of England.

Smart motorways are central to our ambitious plans for modernising the motorway network and will add 120 miles of new lanes to motorways in the South East by 2020. They add vital extra capacity, improve journey times and maintain high levels of safety. Drivers will also see better information about conditions through new smart motorway technology which helps us to manage incidents, smooth traffic flow and make journeys more reliable. I encourage anyone interested in this upgrade of the M27 to a smart motorway to come to meet the project team at one of the information events, starting this Friday, 22 June in Southampton.

Drivers, business owners and local residents are invited to find out more about the plans, which will add an extra lane in each direction to the M27 from junction 4 near Southampton (the interchange with the M3) and junction 11 for Fareham, to upgrade it to an all-lane-running smart motorway. New technology will help to manage traffic to reduce delays and give drivers up to date information about conditions on the road ahead.

The M27 is a key strategic road which runs between Cadnam, to the west of Southampton, and Portsmouth and connects the M27 with the M3, and major routes into London and the rest of the UK. Around 140,000 vehicles use the M27 each day.

This stretch of the M27 is heavily used by traffic travelling along the south coast and suffers with heavy congestion, especially during UK holiday periods. The upgrade to a smart motorway will add a third extra capacity on this section, and will improve safety, ease congestion make journey times

more reliable.

Under the plans, the hard shoulder will be permanently converted into a live running lane between junctions 4 and 11 in both directions. New signs and signals will be used to vary the speed limit to reduce congestion at busy times, and to control traffic if there is an obstruction on the road ahead.

Preliminary work is already underway, with main construction scheduled to start later this year. The smart motorway will be fully operational in 2021.

Public information events are starting this week (Friday 22 June, West End Parish Centre, Southampton) with a further 10 events running until Friday 11 August. People are encouraged to attend to find out more about the plans and put any questions directly to the project team.

For more information on the scheme including the public information event dates and locations, [visit the scheme website](#).

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

[Press release: UK Government Ministers support rural businesses at Royal Highland Show](#)

The UK Government will show its support for Scotland's agriculture, food and farming sectors this week (from Thursday 21 June) when it takes part in the Royal Highland Show.

The UK Government's presence at the four day Edinburgh event will give the rural industries and members of the public the chance to speak to UK Government ministers and staff about what is important to them and find out more about how the UK Government delivers for people in Scotland.

Scottish Secretary David Mundell said:

The Royal Highland Show is Scotland's biggest agriculture event and

the UK Government will be taking this excellent opportunity to engage with the industry, underline the importance of the rural economy to Scotland and wider UK and show how determined we are to get a good deal for the sector in our EU exit negotiations.

Scottish agriculture is worth £1.4 billion a year to the UK economy and my message is clear: We need to be bold and ambitious and maximise the opportunities Brexit brings. To achieve this it is vital that the UK and Scottish Governments work together – as well as with businesses – to ensure our rural economy can continue to grow.

Attracting almost 200,000 visitors last year, the show also provides an important platform for show-goers to find out how the UK Government is delivering for people in Scotland – including on funding for childcare, pensions, defence and business start-up support. I look forward to meeting businesses and members of the public over the course of the show, to hear about their priorities over the coming months and years.

The Scottish Secretary will meet industry leaders and tour the show to meet businesses and show-goers. UK Government Environment Secretary Michael Gove, UK Government Minister of State for Exiting the European Union, Lord Callanan and UK Government Minister for Scotland Lord Duncan will also visit the show.

UK Government Environment Secretary Michael Gove said:

I am very much looking forward to attending the Royal Highland Show and celebrating the very best of Scottish farming, food and rural life.

As we leave the EU we want an ambitious agricultural framework that works for all of the UK. This means more freedom for Scotland to support their farming sectors and enhance their beautiful and environmentally rich landscapes.

We are continuing to work together ahead of the Agriculture Bill taking a common approach where it benefits all farmers and consumers to do so.

According to official figures, in 2016 agriculture contributed approximately £1.4 billion to Scotland's economy, employing around 67,000 people.

The Scottish Secretary will also host a Scottish beer reception, showcasing the best of Scotland's brewers.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and Department for International Trade (DIT), will be promoting the GREAT Campaign: Food is GREAT. Overseas Scottish food and drink exports were worth approximately £6 billion in 2017 and food and drink businesses now employ around 115,000

people.

For further information contact the Scotland Office press office on 0131 244 9028.

[Press release: Life sciences sector focus for UK-US event](#)

International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox MP, will set out his vision for increased trade between the UK and the US in the fast-growing life sciences sector tonight (Tuesday 19 June) in front of an audience of large scale investors.

Speaking to members of the American Pharmaceutical Group (APG) and representatives from the US Embassy at the Churchill War Rooms, Dr Fox will set out the UK's world leading research and development capability which enables British businesses and universities to export their goods and services around the globe.

The Secretary of State will highlight:

- opportunity for UK SMEs: there is great potential for UK SMEs specialising in the likes of biotech R&D to secure substantial deals with US pharma companies to export their cutting-edge products and expand their UK operations
- jobs: the APG is made up of 10 of the largest US life science investors in the UK, who together support more than 14,000 UK jobs
- exports: the UK's exported £6 billion worth of pharmaceutical products to the US last year – demonstrating the clear demand for British innovation

The Secretary of State will call for collaboration between the UK and the US to push the boundaries of science in key areas such as cancer treatment, early diagnosis of disease and realising the potential of AI in a healthcare setting. He will also set out how the UK is committed to the continued growth of the sector by highlighting measures such as the £20 million in funding the government has pledged to the joint UK-US CARB-X project to address the global rise of antimicrobial resistance.

As well as calling for joint working in the life sciences sector, Dr Fox will stress that the UK's departure from the European Union offers an unprecedented opportunity to build on our already strong trading relationship with the US, including through a potential future Free Trading Agreement.

International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox MP, said:

The UK and US already has strong ties in the life sciences sector with our world leading innovation helping American companies improve the lives of billions of people around the globe.

As an international economic department, I want us to go further and see even more British businesses making the most of the opportunities presented by this relationship, not just in this sector, as we look to deepen our trading ties with the US after we leave the European Union.

The event comes as the latest statistics from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy show that health and life sciences are worth over £70 billion to the economy and provide jobs for almost 241,000 people across the country.

The recent launch of the government's Industrial Strategy [Life Sciences Sector Deal](#), demonstrates how the government will support the sector to develop and launch the next generation of medicines, technologies and diagnostics and provide better care and treatments for millions of patients.

The Minister for Trade and Export Promotion, Baroness Fairhead, travelled in June to [Bio Conference 2018](#) in Boston with a strong delegation of UK businesses. Whilst at the conference, the Minister emphasised the strength of the sector in Britain as the UK pavilion was designed around a theme of being 'the home of healthcare'.

Total trade in goods and services (i.e. exports plus imports) between the UK and US stood at more than £180 billion in 2017, an 8% increase over 2016.

[News story: David Mundell Statement on Glasgow School of Art](#)

As the House will be aware, on the night of 15 June a fire broke out at Glasgow School of Art's renowned . The Building is one of Glasgow's iconic landmarks and regarded as Mackintosh's greatest work. It is, rightly, respected as of great architectural significance and a unique and irreplaceable building in the eyes of many worldwide.

Indeed the art school was itself a work of art. It is a jewel in a city that sparkles with architectural splendour.

And it is also worth noting that the building next door, the O2 ABC music venue has also been affected. It was an even older building and had a colourful and varied history.

The art school was never a museum piece but a living, breathing, working art school – a powerhouse of creativity, a much loved part of the fabric of Glasgow.

We can, however, be grateful that this tragedy was not worsened by a loss of life. My heartfelt thanks go out to the emergency services, particularly the fire service, who attended the scene under such adverse conditions, in the heart of the vibrant city's nightlife.

Many people, like myself, are still in disbelief that this could happen again after the devastating fire of 2014, particularly so given the painstaking and careful efforts that have taken place over the past years to restore the building.

I visited the building on 1st June for the Degree Show 2018 opening. I saw the restored library and famous Hen Run and was struck by the love and passion of those involved in restoring the building. I am personally devastated by this fire, a fact I communicated directly when speaking to the School's Director, Professor Tom Inns, over the weekend. My heart goes out to the School, its students and supporters who have done so much to raise funds for the restoration after 2014.

At this point we do not know the cause of the fire, but I note that the fire service has assured us that a "comprehensive and professional" probe will be carried out in due course.

The UK Government previously gave £10 million to rebuild the School after the last fire and we stand ready to help again.

There was never any question about the need to rebuild and restore it when tragedy struck just four years ago. The situation is far worse after the weekend's fire, but I hope we can start with that aim in mind.

Obviously there are real questions about what will happen next. But we stand ready to work with the School, the City Council and the Scottish Government. I am visiting the site and meeting the Head of the School on Friday. I will update Members when I am in a position to do so.