

Press release: Minister for Africa visits Zambia and Malawi

Minister for Africa Harriett Baldwin travelled to Commonwealth countries Zambia and Malawi between 25-28 July, to strengthen relations, and focus on shared prosperity, sustainable development, and joint efforts to tackle climate change and the illegal wildlife trade.

In Zambia, Minister Baldwin and Minister Matthew Nkhwa signed the Energy Africa Compact, a partnership between the UK and Zambian governments and the private sector to support the growth of the sustainable energy sector. Minister Baldwin announced £22m of new UK aid funding which will support the development of innovative energy solutions and help millions of Zambians access reliable, affordable off-grid solar energy.

Minister Baldwin said:

The warm welcome I've received in Zambia shows the deep friendship between our countries.

I have reaffirmed our shared commitment to accelerate sustainable economic development, while ensuring that the poorest and most vulnerable are not left behind.

Partnering with Zambia to deliver a more secure and sustainable energy future will help lift Zambians out of poverty, drive economic development, and tackle climate change.

During her visit, Minister Baldwin met with the Zambian Vice-President Inonge Wina and cabinet ministers.

Minister Baldwin also visited UK aid-supported projects to see how the UK is working with local communities and organisations to support development and reduce poverty. She announced £8.5m to improving access to finance for individuals and businesses, for example expanding mobile money to help businesses and families better manage their finances.

In Malawi, the Minister visited Majete National Park to see how the UK is supporting their efforts to tackle the Illegal Wildlife Trade, a serious organised crime. She met members of the British military who are providing training to park rangers. The UK has also been working with African Parks to improve their communications systems, allowing them to track both animals and poachers more effectively. The Minister met people from nearby communities to see how they can benefit from the running of the Park as the UK works to

tackle the crime and corruption the trade causes, which holds back development across the continent.

Minister Baldwin said:

The cooperation between Majete Park Rangers and the British soldiers who are sharing their experience to help them crack down on poachers is a wonderful example of how our two countries can work together to tackle major shared issues, making the world a more secure place.

I have been delighted to visit Zambia and Malawi, close Commonwealth friends, to strengthen our political, trade and development ties. The UK continues to be a steadfast partner for Africa's peace, security and prosperity.

Whilst in Malawi, Minister Baldwin met with government ministers, opposition party figures, and business and civil society representatives, and visited UK-funded projects. Minister Baldwin announced new UKAid funding to the education sector of £37.5 million to support early grade learning and keep more girls in school.

The UK is a long-standing development partner in both Zambia and Malawi.

Further information

- Follow the Harriett Baldwin on Twitter [@hbaldwin](#)
- Follow the Foreign Office on Twitter [@foreignoffice](#) and [Facebook](#)
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Media enquiries

For journalists

Email

newsdesk@fco.gov.uk

Newsdesk

020 7008 3100

News story: Chairman of Natural England speaks at the Game Fair

Andrew Sells today (Friday 26 July) welcomed efforts by the shooting community to safeguard and conserve hundreds of hectares of land for wildlife, when he spoke at the Game Fair. The Chair of Natural England said despite this work “more needs to be done to ensure there is a balance between shooting and conservation.”

He said:

Sustainably-managed shoots are safeguarding wildlife like curlews and lapwings, reducing flood risk and storing carbon.

Natural England will sign a second agreement with the British Association for Shooting and Conservation this weekend placing sustainable land management at the heart of BASC’s mission and recognising that 70 per cent of land managed by those affiliated to the shooting organisation are Special Sites of Scientific Interest (SSSI).

However, he sounded a note of caution arguing that not all shoots are doing enough to protect the environment from damage.

He said:

Too many shoots seem to have lost sight of the balance between shooting and conservation and the natural environment. Has the size of the day’s bag become the dominant consideration? Are some shoots damaging, rather than enhancing, our natural environment? If so, I hope we can work together to eliminate any such practices.

And the recent terrible wildfires near Manchester have shown moorland managers and keepers bravely joining forces with firefighters to limit environmental damage. I applaud their tireless efforts.

We are also seeing more estates coming into partnership agreements with NE, voluntarily finding ways to enhance environment. These deepening relationships will be vital in joining up prime wildlife sites and achieving goals of 25 Year Environment Plan.

[News story: Insolvency Service's busy yet successful year commended at annual event](#)

Now in its third year, the Insolvency Service's annual event 'Insolvency Live!' welcomed more than 90 delegates to the BEIS Conference Centre in Westminster on Monday 23 July.

[Chief Executive Sarah Albon](#) kicked off proceedings welcoming participants and she was followed by the [Insolvency Service's Chairman, Steve Allinson](#), who reflected on the past year in insolvency.

The Chairman revealed that it's been a busy year for the Insolvency Service and insolvency has been prominent in the news over the past 12 months with the collapse of a number of high-profile businesses, as well as proceedings taken against several well-known directors.

However, Steve Allinson added that most cases don't hit the headlines, demonstrating that insolvency affects a substantial number of organisations, employees, creditors and smaller businesses.

The Chairman then highlighted some of the key results from the Insolvency Service's recently published Annual Report, including the number of Bankruptcy and Debt Relief Orders, successful enforcement outcomes and the millions of pounds returned to creditors.

Next on the agenda was [Dr John Tribe of Liverpool University](#), a senior law lecturer with interests in insolvency law, bankruptcy history and equity and trusts. Dr Tribe's engaging presentation looked at the use of [Company Voluntary Arrangements \(CVAs\)](#) on the high street, comparing 2018 to previous years.

Central to Dr Tribe's argument was the idea that while there are low numbers of CVAs with regards to high street businesses, they should be considered as a viable option to help rescue businesses and save jobs.

Following Dr Tribe there were further presentations from the Insolvency Service's Adjudicator office and Statistics team, as well as a panel discussion focusing on how the Insolvency Service handles complex investigations, with a specific look at Carillion.

Delegates were also given the opportunity to engage with various teams from the Insolvency Service at the Trade Fayre and after lunch people had the choice to attend two separate workshops, one looking at insolvency practitioner regulation and the other exploring whether people are choosing the right debt solutions.

The penultimate presentation was delivered by Sarah Albon, who in contrast to the Chairman, looked at the year ahead.

Sarah Albon spoke about the Insolvency Service's core purpose of delivering economic confidence and said that over the coming year, we will continue to help build, improve and maintain business and investor confidence and drive responsible business practices to support the Government deliver an economy that works for everyone.

Supporting those in financial distress, tackling financial wrongdoing and maximising returns to creditors remains central to the Insolvency Service. In particular, we will be preparing for Brexit, ensuring the effective oversight of regulatory system for Insolvency Practitioners, centralising in-bound call handling and continue to handle high-profile cases.

The final act of the day was a Q&A session with the Insolvency Service's [Senior Management Team \(SMT\)](#). Chaired by Steve Allinson, people had been invited beforehand to submit questions to be put to the SMT before the session was opened up to the floor. Questions ranged from will there be changes to forms as a result of Brexit, were there plans to introduce digital creditor applications and the levels of funding for the Insolvency Service's services.

Commenting on the event, Steve Allinson said:

The past year was a successful one for the Insolvency Service but we should not rest on our laurels as there is still more work to do to ensure the UK has the best insolvency framework to support a strong economy.

I would like to thank everyone who attended and participated in what was a productive and engaging Insolvency Live!, while recognising all the hard work put in by my colleagues to bring this event together – congratulations.

[News story: Cannabis-derived medicinal products to be made available on prescription](#)

The Home Secretary decided to reschedule these products after receiving advice from experts during the two-part review he commissioned on June 19. It means that senior clinicians will be able to prescribe the medicines to patients with an exceptional clinical need.

The Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the Medicines and Health

products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) will now develop a clear definition of what constitutes a cannabis-derived medicinal product so they can be rescheduled and prescribed. Only products meeting this definition will be rescheduled. Other forms of cannabis will be kept under strict controls and will not be available on prescription.

In the meantime, clinicians will still be able to apply to the independent expert panel on behalf of patients wishing to access these products. The Home Secretary also confirmed today that all licence fees for applications made to the panel will be waived, and no fees will be charged in respect of applications which have already been granted.

The government is clear that today's announcement does not pave the way towards legalising cannabis for recreational use. The penalties for unauthorised supply and possession will remain unchanged.

Home Secretary Sajid Javid said:

Recent cases involving sick children made it clear to me that our position on cannabis-related medicinal products was not satisfactory.

That is why we launched a review and set up an expert panel to advise on licence applications in exceptional circumstances.

Following advice from two sets of independent advisers, I have taken the decision to reschedule cannabis-derived medicinal products – meaning they will be available on prescription.

This will help patients with an exceptional clinical need, but is in no way a first step to the legalisation of cannabis for recreational use.

In the first part of the review commissioned by the Home Secretary, the Chief Medical Advisor, Professor Dame Sally Davies, concluded that there is evidence that medicinal cannabis has therapeutic benefits.

The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) carried out the second part of the review, considering the appropriate schedule for cannabis-derived medicinal products, based on the balance of harms and public health requirements.

The ACMD recommended that such products meeting a clear definition of what constitutes a cannabis-derived medicinal product should be placed in Schedule 2 of the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001. It agreed that there is evidence of medicinal benefits from some of these products in certain circumstances and clinicians in the UK should therefore have the option to prescribe cannabis-derived medicinal products for their patients.

In line with the ACMD's recommendations, DHSC and the Home Office will develop additional frameworks and clinical guidelines to ensure that

cannabis-derived medicinal products can be prescribed safely to patients but cannot be traded illicitly.

[News story: New dental care approach to be expanded after trial reduces tooth decay](#)

Up to 50 practices in England will be selected to join the 73 currently testing a new approach to dental care.

The new system incentivises dentists to offer full oral health assessments and self-care plans on top of traditional treatments.

In the first year of piloting the new approach, dentists reported that:

- 90% of patients had reduced or maintained levels of tooth decay
- 80% of patients had reduced or maintained levels of gum disease
- 97% of patients said they were satisfied with the dental care they received

The recently published [evaluation report](#) from the first year of testing recommended that a further group of dental practices should be recruited into the programme.

The new practices are currently being selected and will join from October 2018 and January 2019.

The existing 73 practices are continuing to test the new approach, with a new remuneration system added which supports dentists carrying out preventative work.

The scheme could be rolled out nationally from April 2020 if it can be shown to benefit patients, the NHS and dental practice following a thorough evaluation.

Health Minister Steve Brine said:

The government has made great progress in improving the oral health of patients and tooth decay among children continues to decrease – but there is more we can do.

Our new proposed NHS dental contract focuses on prevention and quality of care and will be thoroughly tested to ensure it is financially sustainable for the NHS, patients and dentists.

Chief Dental Officer Sarah Hurley said:

The announcement of up to 50 more prototype practices is an important step in developing the NHS dental service in this its 70th year.

I welcome it and hope that further refinement and testing with the profession will lead us to a model that enables dentists and their teams to play their full part in the delivery of integrated care and further improvement of oral and general health.