

[News story: Our members](#)

Who are our members?

Parole Board Members are public appointees who are appointed through an open recruitment process by the Secretary of State for Justice. They come from a variety of backgrounds, including specialist members who may be judges, psychiatrists or psychologists. Specialist members are allocated based on the facts of a particular case.

Key statistics

- Total number of members: 246
- Independent members: 151
- Judicial members: 44
- Probation members: 5
- Psychiatrist members: 15
- Psychologist members: 31
- 50:50 Male to Female ratio.
- 4% of Members are BAME.

As of January 2018, 100 members out of the total 246 are Chairs, meaning they can act as the lead member on a panel for an oral hearing.

[News story: Cryptoassets Taskforce meets for the first time](#)

The first meeting of the UK's new Cryptoassets Taskforce took place today (21 May 2018). The Taskforce agreed its objectives, which include exploring the impact of cryptoassets, the potential benefits and challenges of the application of distributed ledger technology in financial services, and assessing what, if any, regulation is required in response.

Senior leaders from government and the financial regulators were present, including Katharine Braddick, Director General of Financial Services at HM Treasury, Andrew Bailey, Chief Executive of the FCA, and Dave Ramsden, Deputy Governor of the Bank of England.

Andrew Bailey, FCA Chief Executive said:

Cryptoassets have been an area of increasing interest for markets and regulators globally including the FCA. We look forward to

working with our counterparts at the Bank of England and the Treasury as part of the taskforce to develop thinking and policy on cryptoassets.

Dave Ramsden, Deputy Governor of the Bank of England said:

The technologies that underpin cryptoassets have the potential to deliver benefits both to the financial system and to the economy it serves. This taskforce will enable us to work closely with the Treasury and the FCA to explore how the opportunities posed by these technologies can be realised, while also tackling the risks arising from cryptoassets.

The Taskforce will consider existing analysis by the government and regulators. It will also seek new views from trade bodies, academics, consumer groups and investor representatives.

The Taskforce will host a roundtable in July and publish a report in Q3 2018.

Further Information

- first announced in April by the Chancellor of the Exchequer as part of the government's Fintech Sector Strategy, the Taskforce is a central part of the government and financial regulators' efforts to understand and engage with the implications of new technologies in financial services

[News story: World's first global ministerial mental health summit to be held in London](#)

Health and Social Care Secretary Jeremy Hunt has announced that the UK will host the first ever Global Ministerial Mental Health Summit in London this October.

The summit will aim to help countries work together to increase the evidence for different treatments, and to ensure healthcare systems around the world value mental health as much as physical health.

Ministers, leading academics, policy makers and patients from more than 30 countries will be invited to attend.

The summit is also expected to help countries learn from each other to find

the best ways to deal with issues such as stigma, discrimination and increased rates of depression and anxiety among young people.

Mr Hunt has also announced the launch of the Global Alliance of Champions on Mental Health – set up jointly with his Australian and Canadian counterparts. The aim is to encourage political leaders to raise the profile of mental health, decrease stigma and work together more across world regions.

Around 1 in 4 people will experience a mental health problem at some point in their life and by 2020 the World Health Organization estimates that mental health conditions will account for 15% of cases of disease in the world.

Mental illness is also the biggest cause of lost economic output, with an estimated cost to the global community of nearly US\$2.5 trillion a year, which is expected to increase to US\$6 trillion by 2030.

Health and Social Care Secretary Jeremy Hunt said:

When you look at the extraordinary prevalence and impact on people's lives, it is clear that mental illness is fast becoming one of the defining global health challenges of the 21st century. Until recently, this hasn't had the profile it deserves on a global stage.

I hope the Alliance of Champions for Mental Health and Wellbeing, along with the inaugural global summit, will be the next step that millions of people around the world need right now. Together we will bring about a new level of co-operation between nations and improve people's access to evidence-based services and bear down on stigma and other factors that are exacerbating this crisis.

Press release: Foreign Secretary statement on Venezuela elections

Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said:

I am disappointed, but not surprised, that Maduro pressed ahead with deeply flawed elections to secure his own survival. They were neither free nor fair, and have further eroded Venezuelan democracy. There is an urgent need to restore democratic order, release political prisoners, and respect the National Assembly and political opposition.

The condemnation of the international community is loud and clear.

We shall work closely with our EU and regional partners in the coming weeks to determine how we can continue to support a political resolution.

I remain deeply concerned by the man-made humanitarian and economic crisis, which is growing worse by the day. I urge the Venezuelan government to take immediate action, and let the international community deliver essential food and medicines. The suffering of ordinary Venezuelan people cannot be allowed to continue.

Further information

- Follow the Foreign Secretary on Twitter [@BorisJohnson](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Follow the Foreign Office on Twitter [@foreignoffice](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Follow the Foreign Office on [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#)

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[Press release: Companies House staff thanked for supporting Merthyr man's mammoth cycle challenge](#)

Chris Daniels, 55, is hoping to cover the equivalent 18,000 miles – all while seated on a static bike – to set a world record and raise money for cancer charities.

Former civil servant Chris spent a week peddling furiously in the foyer at Companies House in Cardiff, where staff donated generously and even joined him during the virtual ride.

Chris, from Merthyr Tydfil, is undertaking the feat in memory of his late wife, Rita, who sadly died in 2016 after a battle with bowel cancer.

Chris said:

Rita wanted to raise awareness and funds to fight all forms of cancer so in her honour I will be riding for Bowel Cancer UK, Velindre Cancer Centre and Cancer Research Wales.

Rita was an incredibly inspirational person but sadly we lost her to bowel cancer. I'm doing this for her and everybody else who has been affected by cancer.

He has staged rides at venues across Wales, where people have donated money and joined in to raise funds for cancer charities of their choosing.

So far, the efforts of Chris and his supporters have raised nearly £60,000 for 25 cancer charities.

He added:

We've had amazing support at places like Companies House from amazing people who have shown incredible generosity.

Every bit of that keeps me going.

Louise Smyth, Chief Executive of Companies House, said:

Well done to Chris who has taken on this mammoth challenge for a really worthy cause that affects so many of us.

It's great to see so many people at Companies House give up their time, money and sweat in support of that and with big smiles.

Chris' attempt, which began in December 2017, will be broken into four stages, which will see him cover vast distances across Europe, North America, Asia and Australia.

To donate, [visit his Just Giving page](#).

You can follow Chris' progress on [his Facebook page](#).