

Sir Chris Whitty among senior figures appointed to Active Travel England advisory panel

England's Chief Medical Officer, Sir Chris Whitty, is one of 4 senior figures to become part of a new advisory panel, Active Travel England, today (22 October 2022).

Working alongside West Midlands' Mayor, Andy Street, Chair of the Office of Rail and Road, Declan Collier and Arup's Global Transport Leader, Isabel Dedring, Whitty will support Active Travel England's aim to make walking, wheeling and cycling the first choice for everyday trips.

National Active Travel Commissioner, Chris Boardman, said:

Active travel is a key part of achieving so many of the government's top priorities, so we want to link up with those agendas from the very start. Providing low-cost, healthy travel options to get to schools, shops and workplaces will revitalise high streets across the country and help us decarbonise at the same time. Active Travel England was created to deliver healthy, sustainable transport growth, and I'm delighted we now have such incredible experts to help us get the job done.

Active Travel Minister, Baroness Vere, added:

This new advisory panel will be key to supporting the government's ambition to get more people walking, wheeling and cycling by transforming active travel infrastructure across the country.

Better infrastructure will not only improve connections to employment, education and local services but improve our mental and physical wellbeing and help to level up the country. I look forward to working with Sir Chris, Andy, Declan and Isabel to achieve this.

The advisory panel will meet quarterly with a mix of online and in-person meetings. The appointments have been made on a voluntary basis, with expenses paid where applicable. The first meeting will take place in late October.

England's Chief Medical Officer, Sir Chris Whitty, said:

Exercise improves health and Active Travel England's mission is shared by the health service. We all want to see more people incorporating active travel into their day as a way to keep

mentally and physically fit.

Mayor of the West Midlands, Andy Street, added:

Active Travel England will be best placed to succeed as a delivery agency if it closely collaborates with local Mayors as well as both Combined and Local Authorities. That's why I'm looking forward to helping ensure that ATE can make a real and rapid difference across England. Enabling more local trips to be taken on foot or on wheels can improve the journey experience, encourage a healthier lifestyle and help us to tackle the climate emergency. Increasing walking and cycling uptake is central to our vision to establish a truly integrated transport network here in the West Midlands and can support local economic growth by breathing new life into our high streets.

Arup's Global Transport Leader and former Deputy Mayor of London, Isabel Dedring, said:

Delivering a step change in active travel requires focus and determination, but it also requires attention to detail, meaningful engagement with communities and their real needs, and integration with the wider transport network. The UK is seen as a leader in many aspects of progressive transport policy and has a fantastic chance through Active Travel England to retain its position as a leader in this rapidly developing area.

Chair of the Office of Rail and Road, Declan Collier, said:

Making local trips, either on foot or on two wheels, is a great way to boost physical health and also mental wellbeing. For those wanting to do their walking or cycling further afield, England's rail and road networks will get you there. I look forward to getting started and working together with the other panel members to bring about positive change in people's lives.

Isabel Dedring

Isabel Dedring is Global Transport Leader for Arup, a leading engineering consulting firm working across the built environment. She works with cities and governments around the world in developing transport infrastructure projects and policies.

Before Arup, Isabel was Deputy Mayor for Transport and Deputy Chair of Transport for London, where she was responsible for designing and delivering a range of progressive transport policies and projects. This included driving

the transition to zero-emission black cabs, the decarbonisation of the city's bus fleet, London's £1 billion cycling investment programme, and TfL's wider £4 billion roads investment strategy and delivery programme.

Before her time at City Hall, Isabel was Chief of Staff and Policy Director at Transport for London. With a background in management consulting, Isabel is a qualified US lawyer and a Fellow of the Institute of Civil Engineers.

Sir Chris Whitty

Professor Chris Whitty is the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) for England, chief medical adviser to the UK Government and head of the public health profession in government. He is a practicing NHS doctor and epidemiologist. The CMOs of the 4 nations publish guidelines on the case for exercise to improve health, building it into daily routines.

Declan Collier

Declan Collier is the Chair of the Office of Rail and Road. Previously, Declan was CEO of London City Airport, a role he held since 2012, and before that, he was CEO of Dublin Airports Authority for 7 years. He is currently a non-executive board member of The Royal Schiphol Group and TCR International NV. He has broad experience in transport and business and has served as President of the World Association of Airports, Airports Council International (ACI), Deputy Chair of the Airport Operators Association (UK), Director of London First Allied Irish Banks Ltd and the Dublin Theatre Festival.

Andy Street

Andy Street was elected as Mayor of the West Midlands in 2017. He grew up in Birmingham. Andy started his career at John Lewis, where he was a graduate trainee. He became Managing Director of John Lewis in 2007 and stayed with the company until 2016. Andy has worked with the local and national government in economic development roles. He was chair of the Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership between 2011 and 2016. He has also been the lead non-executive director for the Department for Communities and Local Government as well as a member of the Prime Minister's Business Advisory Group.

[Infected blood £100,000 interim](#)

compensation payments to be made this month

Thousands of victims of the historic infected blood scandal, which occurred in the 70's and 80's, are being contacted this week to confirm that interim compensation payments will be made by the end of October.

The payments deliver the government's commitment to meet, in full, the recommendations set out by infected blood inquiry chairman Sir Brian Langstaff in his interim report.

Infected individuals and bereaved partners who are registered with any of the four UK infected blood support schemes will receive letters this week confirming the £100,000 alongside details of how the money will be paid.

This follows confirmation that payments will not be subject to any tax or national insurance deductions. Neither will they affect any financial benefits support an individual is receiving.

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Nadhim Zahawi, said:

I know from my own discussions with constituents who are victims of the infected blood scandal just how traumatic their heart-breaking experiences have been and I was proud to campaign as an MP on their behalf and continue that work as a government minister.

No level of compensation will ever make up for the appalling treatment and circumstances that those affected by this scandal and their families have had to endure, but I hope that these interim payments go some way to demonstrate that we are, and always will be, on their side.

Minister of State for Health, Will Quince, said:

The infected blood tragedy should never have happened. That's why we've accepted Sir Brian Langstaff's interim recommendations in full to help right this historic wrong for the thousands of people infected and bereaved partners left behind.

It's right these interim compensation payments are being made as quickly as possible and I want to thank NHSBSA and the other UK scheme administrators for their relentless work on this. We're continuing to listen and will be looking closely at any further recommendations as the Inquiry concludes.

The interim compensation payments will build on the support to those affected

by the scandal already provided by the four UK infected blood support schemes.

The Government will respond to any further recommendations made by the Infected Blood Inquiry and its Chair Sir Brian Langstaff when the Inquiry concludes next year.

These interim compensation payments are expected to reach c.£400 million for the whole UK, with agreement also reached for payments to be made through schemes in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland as well as those in England.

Further information:

The Government announced the plans for interim compensation payments in August:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/infected-blood-victims-to-receive-100000-interim-compensation-payment>

New wave of bombardment is an attack on Ukrainian civilians' way of life: UK statement at the Security Council

Thank you President. Thank you again to Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo for your briefing.

And thank you to Resident Coordinator Brown for your invaluable update on the situation on the ground and the work the UN is doing in the toughest of circumstances.

So far, this war has killed, maimed and psychologically damaged thousands of people. Millions have been forced to flee. Ukrainian towns and cities have been reduced to rubble, with evidence of atrocities left behind in the ruins. We have heard unbearable stories of sexual violence.

And the real objectives of the invasion have been exposed by Russia's attempts to suppress Ukrainian national identity and culture and illegally annex Ukrainian land; an act widely condemned by the UN membership last week.

Unfortunately, an already appalling situation appears to be getting worse.

Under the command of Colonel General Sergei Surovikin, a man infamous for brutalities against civilians in Syria, we have seen a renewed campaign of drone and missile strikes across Ukraine.

Heavily populated areas have been hit, as well as playgrounds, traffic in rush hour, and apartment buildings nowhere near frontlines or military

installations. A new wave of bombardment has deliberately targeted critical national infrastructure, leaving some thirty per cent of Ukraine's power stations damaged or destroyed. These are attacks on Ukrainian civilians' way of life. And they are a clear breach of international humanitarian law.

They are egregious in their own right, but even worse as winter approaches. Russian attacks mean Ukrainians are losing the ability to heat their homes and cook their food.

The intent behind these attacks is clear. Russia is seeking to subjugate Ukraine by terrorising civilians. And it is doing so using weaponry obtained from Iran in violation of Security Council resolution 2231.

Now Russia is trying to distract us with attacks on the UN's integrity and on its mandate to investigate. But resolution 2231 is clear. It asks the Secretary-General to report to the Council on its implementation and there is extensive precedent for site visits.

Of course the key issue is that, wherever these drones come from, their use against civilians is barbaric.

President, Russia's actions are illegal and immoral, and they must come to an end.

So once again, we call on Russia to stop its disinformation and misdirection and its accusations that the West is somehow responsible for its atrocities.

We call on Russia to heed the calls of the international community, respect its obligations under international law and stop attacks on civilians, energy infrastructure, hospitals and health facilities. And we call on Russia yet again to end this war and return to the path of dialogue it abandoned in February.

Finally President,

We recognise as others have the wider negative impact of Russia's war.

The positive impact of the Black Sea Grain Initiative on global grain prices is clear and we have heard more about that today. We welcome and encourage efforts by the Secretary-General to ensure the continuation of the agreement. You have the UK's full support.

United Kingdom reiterates strong anti-whaling stance at International

Whaling Commission

Press release

The United Kingdom helps secure agreement on a Resolution on Marine Plastic Pollution and is appointed Chair of the IWC's Conservation Committee



The Government upheld its long-standing opposition to commercial whaling at the 68th meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) in Slovenia this week, advocating to uphold the moratorium that was agreed 40 years ago.

The United Kingdom also secured further support for the protection of whales, dolphins and porpoises (cetaceans) and has been appointed Chair of the IWC Conservation Committee which carries out vital work to address the wide-ranging challenges facing these species including bycatch, ship strikes, strandings and pollution.

Marine plastic pollution poses a significant issue for cetaceans and the United Kingdom is pleased to have co-sponsored a Resolution on Marine Plastic Pollution, adopted by consensus at the IWC meeting. This will allow the IWC to engage in the UN Environment Assembly process to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution to drive forward effective measures to prevent or mitigate marine plastic pollution impacts on cetaceans.

International Oceans Minister Scott Mann said:

"Whales, and other cetaceans, are awe-inspiring creatures. We must continue to protect these extraordinary animals and bring an end to the unnecessarily cruel practice of commercial whaling globally.

"I'm proud of the leading role we are taking in securing continued support for the IWC and the moratorium on commercial whaling, as well as encouraging countries to recognise the important threat of marine plastic pollution."

The United Kingdom is strongly opposed to commercial whaling and continues to call on whaling nations to cease their whaling activities in favour of well-managed, responsible tourism. A founding member of the IWC in 1946, the United Kingdom is proud to have supported the IWC over the last 75 years.

The United Kingdom was disappointed that the IWC did not agree to create a South Atlantic Whale Sanctuary but will continue to push for the conservation of these unique creatures that play a vital role in our wider ecosystem.

The IWC is the only global body with the competence and mandate for the conservation and management of cetaceans and we are pleased that a budget was agreed for the IWC to continue its critical work.

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[Government backs new law to help pregnant women and new parents stay in work](#)

- new government-backed law to offer pregnant women and new parents greater protection against redundancy
- new legal powers will help to counter workplace discrimination, particularly when new parents return to work

Pregnant women and new parents will receive greater protections from redundancy under new legislation backed by the government today (Friday 21 October).

Under current rules, before offering redundancy to an employee on maternity leave, shared parental leave or adoption leave, employers have an obligation to offer them a suitable alternative vacancy where one exists.

The Pregnancy and Maternity Discrimination Bill, introduced by Dan Jarvis MP and backed by the government, will enable this redundancy protection to be extended so it applies to pregnant women as well as new parents returning to work from a relevant form of leave. This will help shield new parents and expectant mothers from workplace discrimination, offering them greater job security at an important time in their lives.

It follows a government [consultation](#) on these proposals which found evidence of new parents facing prejudice in the workplace, with an estimated 54,000 women a year feeling they have to leave their jobs due to pregnancy or maternity discrimination.

Business Minister Dean Russell said:

Being an expectant or new parent is already a hugely exciting yet anxious time without the added pressure of worrying whether your

job is on the line.

By extending the UK's world class workplace protections, today's reforms will help to remove workplace discrimination and provide improved job security for employees at such an important and precious time in their lives.

The measures will be beneficial to businesses, helping to improve relations with employees and reducing a source of conflict that can be costly and time consuming.

Alongside these reforms the government is also working with the Pregnancy and Maternity Discrimination Advisory Board to update guidance so that this type of discrimination in the workplace continues to be stamped out.

Dan Jarvis MP for Barnsley Central said:

I am delighted that my Private Members' Bill, the Protection from Redundancy (Pregnancy and Family Leave) Bill has passed its second reading in Parliament and is now a step closer to becoming law.

At the heart of this Bill are tens of thousands of women pushed out of the workforce each year simply for being pregnant. I'm proud this new legislation will go some way to providing pregnant women and new mums greater protections in the workplace. I want to thank all those who've supported the Bill and I look forward to working with them to ensure it passes into law.

The measures form part of the government's efforts to ensure more people stay in work and keep more of their pay packet, particularly with global rising costs. It comes at a time when there are more employees on payrolls than ever before – and with unemployment at an all-time low.

This Bill gives the Business Secretary powers to make regulations regarding redundancy during pregnancy and after a period of relevant leave (currently Maternity Leave, Adoption Leave and Shared Parental Leave) has ended.

When a parent is on a relevant period of leave, before offering redundancy, employers already have an obligation to offer them a suitable alternative vacancy where one exists. This is set out in Regulation 10 of the Maternity and Parental Leave Etc Regulations 1999 (MAPLE).

The policy intention is that new Regulations will apply the MAPLE protections through an expanded period covering from when a woman tells her employer she is pregnant until 18 months after the birth. The 18-month window ensures that a mother returning from a year of maternity leave can receive 6 months additional redundancy protection. The 18-month window will also apply to Maternity Leave and Shared Parental Leave.