

## [Health and Social Care Secretary Steve Barclay's Red Box Op-Ed](#)

Yesterday I visited Moorfields Eye Hospital in London, where staff have significantly ramped up the number of cataract operations they can do in a single week – thanks to two of the 91 surgical hubs that are already enabling our NHS to carry out more operations quickly and efficiently under one roof.

I want to reassure Times readers who are waiting for vital operations, or have a friend or loved one who is, that we are taking action. Today, I announced that hundreds of thousands of people across the country will benefit from more than 50 new surgical hubs, backed by £1.5 billion of government funding, to help us bust the Covid backlog.

So far, locations for 16 of these new hubs have been confirmed and existing hubs are being expanded with new facilities. Bids for the remaining hubs will be considered over the coming weeks and months.

From the Midlands to the South West, these new hubs will be located on existing hospital sites, speeding up the waiting times for common operations such as cataract surgeries and hip replacements that make up a large part of the waiting list.

For example, United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is using its surgical hubs to reduce the length of time that patients undergoing hip and knee replacements stay in hospital by about two days – meaning more people can recover in the comfort of their own home the day after surgery.

Crucially, these new surgical hubs will deliver almost two million extra routine operations over the next three years – expanding on the progress we are already making.

Thanks to the hard work of NHS staff, waits of over two years for routine treatment have already been virtually eliminated, the first target set out in our elective recovery plan. There has also been a drop of almost one third in people waiting 18 months or more for care since January.

These new hubs will help us maintain this momentum and ensure more people can access life-changing operations more quickly.

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## [India receives largest share of UK](#)

# study, work, and visit visas

World news story

India has now overtaken China as the largest nationality being issued sponsored study visas in the UK.



The latest UK Immigration Statistics published today (25 August) show that nearly 118,000 Indian students received a Student visa in the year ending June 2022 – an 89% increase from the previous year. India has now overtaken China as the largest nationality being issued sponsored study visas in the UK.

The UK continues to be a popular destination for Indian holidaymakers too. Indian nationals accounted for the highest proportion (28%) of Visitor visas granted. More than 258,000 Indian nationals received visit visas in the year ending June 2022 – a 630% increase compared to the previous year (when travel restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic were still in place).

In the year ending June 2022, Indian nationals also received nearly 103,000 Work visas (which includes skilled and seasonal workers) – a 148% increase over the previous year. Indian nationals continue to be the top nationality granted Skilled Worker visas, accounting for 46% of all skilled work visas granted globally.

**Alex Ellis, British High Commissioner to India, said:**

India first again. I'm delighted that Indian nationals were issued the largest number of UK study, work and visitor visas in the year ending June 2022. More strength to the unique living bridge that connects our people.

As this shows, we're experiencing unprecedented demand for visas. I encourage students starting courses soon to apply as early as possible.

## Further information

All figures quoted above relate to UK immigration statistics from July 2021 to June 2022. The full statistical release is available on [Gov.uk](#) here: [student visas](#), [visit visas](#), [work visas](#).

For media queries, please contact:

David Russell, Head of Communications  
Press and Communications, British High Commission,  
Chanakyapuri, New Delhi 110021. Tel: 24192100

Media queries: [BHCMediaDelhi@fco.gov.uk](mailto:BHCMediaDelhi@fco.gov.uk)

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## [119 hen harrier chicks fledge in England in 2022](#)

Natural England and partners, including the RSPB, have recorded 119 hen harrier chicks fledging successfully from nests across uplands in County Durham, Cumbria, Lancashire, Northumberland and Yorkshire in 2022 – a record number.

This was the first time in over 100 years that more than 100 hen harriers were added to the English population, showing real progress in efforts to protect and restore their numbers.

Hen harriers were once found across upland and lowland Britain including throughout many English counties. However after 1830 they became exceptionally rare breeding birds in England due to persecution, which was made illegal in the 1954 but continues in some places today. The hen harrier now is one of England's rarest breeding birds of prey.

Hen harriers are one of our most distinctive birds with a characteristic owl-like face and stiff facial feathers that direct sound toward their ears to enable them to hunt more effectively.

Natural England chair Tony Juniper said:

It is very encouraging to see the progress made this year on the

recovery of this majestic species, tipping the numbers fledged to more than 100 for the first time in over a century.

It is testament to the dedication of the volunteers, landowners and staff from all our partner organisations who work so hard to protect, support and monitor these vulnerable birds.

Despite this year's success, we clearly still have a long road to travel to see hen harrier numbers truly recover to where they would naturally be without illegal persecution – with many birds sadly still going missing. We are committed to continuing to work with our partners to drive down persecution rates and achieve a permanent long-term recovery.

This is the sixth successive year of increases, following a low in 2016 when only eight chicks fledged. There were 49 nests recorded in 2022, of which 34 were successful in producing chicks. Lancashire remained a stronghold, with 18 nests recorded in Bowland, and there was also a cluster of territories in Northumberland (nine nests). There were 10 nests across the Yorkshire Dales & Nidderdale region, seven in the North Pennines, and five in the Peak District. This represents an encouraging increase in numbers across their range compared with the recent past, when only a few pairs nested each year, mostly in Bowland.

The total number of chicks includes 13 birds taken from four nests on grouse moors, reared and released as part of the Brood Management Trial. This aims to test whether this technique can influence attitudes among the moorland community and reduce persecution, as well as contributing healthy adult birds to the population. Brood-managed birds from previous years also bred successfully, with five birds producing 10 chicks between them in 2022.

Natural England is involved in a number of initiatives to help ensure hen harriers recover including through the [Hen Harrier Action Plan](#) published by Defra in 2016.

These include:

1. Satellite tracking to improve understanding of the birds' movements and behaviour
2. Issuing licences to allow people to provide additional food to breeding Hen Harriers ('diversionary feeding')
3. Setting up a project to reintroduce hen harriers to southern England
4. Working with the National Wildlife Crime Unit, through a secondment of a senior enforcement officer from NE into the police, to deliver improvements in how Natural England, the police, local communities and other relevant stakeholders can work together to prevent, identify, and take effective enforcement action in relation to raptor persecution incidents.

5. Brood management, in which nestlings are taken from grouse moors, reared safely in captivity, and later released, with the aim of contributing healthy adults to the breeding population, changing attitudes and reducing persecution.

The hen harrier is considered vulnerable within Europe and is on the red-list of birds of conservation concern in the UK. It is a species of principal importance for biodiversity conservation in England.

Further information:

- A wide range of organisations have come together to work in partnership to ensure that the hen harrier chicks are well looked after and protected for the future. These include: Natural England, RSPB, Forestry Commission, the Moorland Association, United Utilities, the National Trust, Hawk and Owl Trust, Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, Northumberland National Park Authority, Peak District National Park Authority, Nidderdale & Forest of Bowland Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Northumberland Wildlife Trust, Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust, local police forces, individual Estates and their keepers, farmers, and a large number of volunteer raptor enthusiasts.
- The hen harrier is listed on Annex 1 of the EC Birds Directive as it is considered vulnerable within Europe and is on the red-list of birds of conservation concern in the UK. It is a species of principal importance for biodiversity conservation in England under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

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## [Over 50 new surgical hubs set to open across England to help bust the COVID-19 backlogs](#)

North West Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS FT Clatterbridge Hospital  
North West Pennine Acute Hospital NHS Trust NCA Childrens Hub – Royal  
Oldham Hospital North West Pennine Acute Hospital NHS Trust Fairfield  
General Hospital North West Manchester University NHS foundation trust  
Trafford Hospital – Elective Hub North West Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh  
NHS FT Wrightington Hospital (GM Specialist Orthopaedic Centre) North  
West Manchester University NHS FT Withington Hospital North West  
Blackpool Teaching Hospital NHS FT Blackpool Victoria Hospital (Ophthalmology  
Surgical Unit) North West Lancaster Teaching Hospital NHS FT Chorley and  
South Ribble Hospital North West East Lancashire Hospital NHS Trust  
Burnley General Hospital North West East Lancashire Hospital NHS Trust  
Royal Blackburn Hospital North West University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay  
NHS FT Westmorland General Hospital NEY Northumbria Healthcare NHS FT  
Alnwick Infirmary NEY Northumbria Healthcare NHS FT North Tyneside

General Hospital NEY Northumbria Healthcare NHS FT Wansbeck General  
 Hospital NEY Northumbria Healthcare NHS FT Hexham General Hospital  
 NEY North Tees and Hartlepool NHS FT University Hospital of Hartlepool  
 NEY Hull University Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust Castle Hill Hospital NEY  
 York Teaching Hospital NHS FT Bridlington and District Hospital NEY  
 Harrogate and District NHS FT Harrogate and District NHS FT NEY Northern  
 Lincolnshire and Goole NHS FT Diana, Princess of Wales Hospital NEY  
 Northern Lincolnshire and Goole NHS FT Goole and District Hospital NEY  
 Barnsley Hospital NHS FT Barnsley Hospital NEY Sheffield Teaching  
 Hospitals NHS FT Northern General Hospital (Sheffield DSU) NEY Sheffield  
 Teaching Hospitals NHS FT Northern General Hospital (Balborough Treatment  
 Centre – Sheffield Hand Centre) NEY Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS FT  
 Northern General Hospital – Ophthalmology NEY Calderdale and Huddersfield  
 NHS FT Calderdale Royal Hospital NEY Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS FT  
 Calderdale Royal Hospital NEY Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust Chapel  
 Allerton Hospital NEY Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust Wharfedale  
 Hospital Midlands The Royal Orthopaedic Hospital NHS FT Royal Orthopaedic  
 Hospital – Surgical Centre Midlands University Hospitals Birmingham NHS  
 FT Solihull Hospital Elective Hub Midlands Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust  
 Walsall Manor Hospital Midlands The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust Cannock  
 Chase Hospital Midlands Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust Birmingham  
 Treatment Centre (City Hospital) Midlands George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust  
 George Eliot Hospital – Day Proc Unit and Day Case Theatres Midlands  
 University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust University Hospital  
 (Coventry) – Rugby Midlands University Hospitals Coventry and  
 Warwickshire NHS Trust University Hospital (Coventry) – University Hospitals  
 Coventry and Warwickshire Day Surgery Unit Midlands South Warwickshire  
 NHS FT SWFT Warwick Hospital Midlands South Warwickshire NHS FT Stratford  
 Day Case Midlands University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS FT  
 Ilkeston Community Hospital Midlands University Hospitals of Derby and  
 Burton NHS FT Sir Robert Peel (SRP) Community Hospital Midlands  
 University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS FT Burton Hospital Treatment  
 Centre Midlands University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS FT Kings  
 Treatment, Royal Derby Hospital Midlands Worcestershire Acute Hospitals  
 NHS Trust Alexandra Hospital Elective Hub Midlands University Hospitals  
 of Leicester NHS Trust Glenfield Hospital – Elective Hub Midlands  
 University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust LLR Alliance Community Hospital –  
 Elective Hub Midlands United Lincolnshire Hospital NHS Trust Grantham and  
 District Hospital – Elective Surgical Hub Midlands Sherwood Forest  
 Hospitals NHS FT Newark Hospital (King’s Mill Hospital) – Elective Hub  
 Midlands The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust Royal Shrewsbury  
 Hospital – Cataract Suite (Cophthorne Building) East of England Cambridge  
 University Hospitals NHS FT CUH at Princess of Wales Hospital East of  
 England Cambridge University Hospitals NHS FT Addenbrooke’s Hospital  
 (Cambridge Eye Unit) East of England West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS  
 Trust St Albans City Hospital Elective Hub East of England Mid and South  
 Essex NHS FT Braintree Community Hospital London St George’s University  
 Hospitals NHS FT St George’s at Queen Mary’s Hospital London Croydon  
 Health Services NHS Trust Croydon University Hospital London Epsom and St  
 Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust South West London Elective Orthopaedic  
 Centre London King’s College Hospital NHS FT Orpington Hospital

London Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust Queen Mary's Hospital Sidcup  
London London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust Central Middlesex  
Hospital London Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust Charing Cross  
Hospital London Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS FT Chelsea and  
Westminster London The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS FT Hillingdon – Mount  
Vernon Treatment centre London Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS FT  
West Middlesex Elective Hub London Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital  
NHS Trust Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital London University College  
London Hospitals NHS FT UCLH – Grafton Way London Royal Free London NHS  
FT Chase Farm Hospital London Moorefields Eye Hospital NHS FT Moorfield  
Eye Hospital – St Ann's London Moorefields Eye Hospital NHS FT Moorfield  
Eye Hospital – City Road London Royal Free London NHS FT Edgware  
Community Hospital London Whittington Health NHS Trust The Whittington  
Hospital London Barts Health NHS Trust Whipps Cross – Plane Tree  
London Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust King  
George Ilford – Queens Hospital London Barts Health NHS Trust Newham  
General Hospital – BHOC London Homerton University Hospital NHS FT  
Homerton University Hospital South West Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS  
FT Sulis Hospital – Bath – Elective Surgery Hub South West Royal Cornwall  
Hospitals NHS Trust Royal Cornwall – St Michael's Elective Hub South West  
Royal Devon and Exeter NHS FT Nightingale Hospital Exeter – Elective Surgery  
Centre South West University Hospitals Dorset NHS FT Christchurch  
Hospital – Dermatology Unit South East Royal Berkshire NHS FT West  
Berkshire Community Hospital South East Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS  
Trust Wycombe Hospital South East Oxford University Hospitals NHS FT  
Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre (NOC) South East Royal Berkshire NHS FT King  
Edward VII Hospital (Prince of Wales) South East Frimley Health NHS FT  
Heatherwood Hospital South East University Hospital Southampton NHS Trust  
Lymington Hospital South East Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust  
Queen Alexandra Hospital South East Hampshire Hospitals NHS FT Andover  
War Memorial Hospital South East Hampshire Hospitals NHS FT Basingstoke  
General Hospital South East Hampshire Hospitals NHS FT Winchester County  
Hospital South East Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust Maidstone  
Hospital South East Ashford and St Peter's Hospital NHS FT Ashford  
Hospital South East University Hospitals Sussex NHS FT Sussex Orthopaedic  
Treatment Centre

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## **PM call with President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi of Egypt: 25 August 2022**

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi





The Prime Minister spoke to President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi this afternoon, to welcome the cooperation between the UK and Egypt during his premiership and discuss ways to further boost the relationship between our countries.

The leaders highlighted increased trade, business and education links, including the creation of the UK-Egypt Investment Council and new investment opportunities in Egypt.

They also welcomed our countries' close defence and security cooperation, and the Prime Minister thanked President Sisi for his role in helping to get grain out of Ukraine's ports and on route to countries facing desperate food shortages as a result of Russia's blockade.

The Prime Minister and President Sisi discussed resolving the consular case of Alaa Abdel Fattah, and the Prime Minister expressed his hope for swift and positive progress on the issue.

The leaders also looked ahead to the UK handing over the COP Presidency to Egypt at COP27 in November, emphasising the importance of driving forward the transformative action on climate change agreed in Glasgow last year.

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