

Government takes steps to protect healthcare access for UK nationals living in the EU after 31 October

People already living in the EU who have their healthcare funded by the UK, including pensioners and students, will have their healthcare costs covered for 6 months if we leave without a deal.

The government has proposed to each EU member state that, if we leave without a deal, existing healthcare arrangements continue until 31 December 2020 in the same way that they do now.

Discussions are ongoing but if arrangements with all member states have not been finalised by 31 October, Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock has today confirmed the government will provide support to around 180,000 UK nationals living in the EU who currently have their healthcare costs paid for by the UK for a 6-month period following exit day. This includes pensioners, students, those on disability benefits and UK workers temporarily posted in the EU.

The government has also committed to covering the costs of UK nationals in the EU who are in the middle of treatment when we leave the EU, for up to a year.

The government will also provide cover during the time it takes to be registered with a local healthcare scheme. This is to ensure people are not exposed to gaps in healthcare coverage and potentially high costs while they register for healthcare locally. To be eligible for this support, people must apply within local timeframes or no later than 6 months after we leave, whichever is the shortest.

The NHS is writing to 180,000 UK nationals living in the EU to make them aware of the information they need in the country they live in:

The value of the commitment will ultimately depend on which EU countries accept the government's offer. Modelling has been performed to assess the likely costs of the policy if it is required. This suggests the maximum expenditure the government would expect to make under this commitment if no further bilateral agreements are finalised may be in the region of £50 million in 2019 to 2020 and £100 million in 2020 to 2021 but could be significantly lower.

In addition to this, the government has committed to:

- cover the healthcare costs for students who began their courses in the EU ahead of 31 October for the duration of their course
- cover the healthcare costs of UK visitors to the EU who commenced their trip before the UK left the EU until they return to the UK

- ensure that people currently insured by the UK living in the EU can return to use the NHS temporarily in England, Wales and Scotland free of charge

British citizens living in Ireland will be able to access healthcare in Ireland in the same way as before Brexit.

The UK and Spain have each taken steps to ensure that people living in each country can continue to access healthcare as they do now until at least 31 December 2020. This means that your healthcare access will remain the same after 31 October 2019, whatever the Brexit scenario.

See the [NHS travelling and living abroad guides](#) for the latest information on individual countries.

People should not delay taking action to put appropriate permanent arrangements in place for after exit day, particularly as for some EU countries the timeframe for UK nationals to register with their domestic health system is far shorter than 6 months.

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

Protecting the healthcare rights of UK nationals is a priority of this government.

While the government continues to work towards a good deal, I am today announcing that pensioners, students and UK workers living in the EU will have their healthcare costs covered for 6 months after 31 October, whatever the circumstances of Brexit.

All UK nationals in the EU should act now and take the simple steps needed to secure their access to healthcare.

Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Czech Republic, Nick Archer, said:

We are pleased to confirm this additional support, which has been offered to pensioners and others who have their healthcare covered by the UK.

These transitional arrangements provide welcome reassurance to thousands of our UK residents living in Europe who may have their access to healthcare affected after Brexit.

Speech by Alok Sharma at UNGA climate resilience and adaptation event

Thank you Andrew.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, of course, I'm absolutely delighted to introduce the work of our coalition, alongside my excellent co-lead, Her Excellency Minister Fouad.

I'm really grateful for the joint working Andrew, as you've set out – obviously on the UK side – but also particularly with our friends in Egypt and Minister, for your personal commitment to this – I think that has really helped to drive this agenda forward.

I would also like to extend my thanks to my esteemed colleagues from Bangladesh, from the Netherlands, from Malawi and of course, St Lucia for their contributions.

When talking about the climate it is easy to feel overwhelmed by the sheer scale of the challenge we face:

- With almost a million plant and animal species at risk of extinction.
- And with floods, droughts and storms – each one pushing yet more people into poverty.

We must take this threat seriously.

In his remarks, Achim Steiner talked about referencing events in the Bahamas, well Hurricane Dorian is an incredibly sad and yet timely reminder of the urgency that we need in facing this particular threat.

First responders to Dorian described the scenes on the ground as 'apocalyptic.' Roofs ripped from buildings. Homes under water. Families left devastated by the loss of their loved ones.

And it's not as if we haven't been warned before about this.

30 years ago, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher warned about the "insidious danger" of man-made climate change.

We cannot afford to wait.

The UK is proudly leading the way:

- We were the first major economy in the world to enshrine our commitment to net zero emissions by 2050 into law, into legislation in the UK.

- We are deeply honoured to have been nominated, in partnership with our friends in Italy, for the COP 26 presidency next year.
- And of course we are delighted to be co-leading on adaptation and resilience at the Climate Action Summit.

My friend, Minister Fouad has already outlined the package that we plan to put forward. We are rallying the international community, our Call to Action has, as she's already said, got over 100 signatories.

The United Kingdom is committing £236 million towards these efforts, and the package will have three priorities:

Firstly, it's about protecting our natural environment.

Whilst feeding nine billion people, we need a rural transition towards sustainable land use to rise to the challenge, we will need the best experience from around the world to come together.

And while we do this, we need to support those on the front line. Smallholder farmers across the developing world are among the most vulnerable.

We will support them by providing £61 million to develop crops that are drought, flood and disease resistant.

This will support 100 million farmers and lift 30 million people out of poverty.

Secondly, it's about protecting the most vulnerable people in our society from natural disasters.

For every \$100 invested in a humanitarian response, we only invest \$4 in disaster risk reduction.

This has to change.

Tomorrow, we will launch a new Partnership that will make 1 billion people safer from extreme weather and natural disasters by 2025.

By bringing the latest technology together with humanitarian and climate finance, we can prepare for disasters before they strike.

The UK will invest £85 million towards this effort. But we'll still need to respond to the effects of when disasters occur. So we will also invest £90 million to help people respond to emergencies after they have struck.

And finally, it's about building the resilience of our economies.

As we have seen in the United Kingdom, economic growth does not need to come at the expense of our natural environment.

Developing countries need infrastructure to grow their way out of poverty.

Infrastructure that is resilient in the face of a changing climate.

That is why we are working with key private sector partners to launch a Coalition for Climate Resilient Investments. To make infrastructure fit for the future.

In closing, I would just say that our commitment to vulnerable countries is clear. We will support through initiatives like the Least Developed Countries Vision for a Resilient Future, and the African Adaptation Initiative.

My Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, announced last month that the United Kingdom will double our contribution to the Green Climate Fund, which again underlines our commitment.

In closing, I would just add, that it is easy to talk about the scale of the threat. It is of course much, much harder to put these words into action.

But together, we can, and will, rise to the challenge.

Thank you.

UK aid to help protect one billion people from impact of extreme weather

- UK co-creating partnership to protect one billion people in the developing world from extreme weather.
- A new £175 million package will help make people safer and better prepared for disasters such as typhoons and hurricanes, as well as dealing with their aftermath.
- UK and Egypt urgently call for the world to step up preparations for the impact of climate change.

The UK Government is co-creating a global partnership to help protect one billion people in developing countries from the impact of extreme weather events, International Development Secretary Alok Sharma announced today.

The Risk-Informed Early Action Partnership will help ensure the world's poorest people receive earlier warnings of potential disasters such as typhoon and hurricanes – and are better prepared to deal with their effects.

International Development Secretary Alok Sharma, today [September 22] announced £85 million in funding to the partnership. He said:

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges the world is facing, and the world's poorest will be the worst hit.

Early warning systems save lives. Helping developing countries to protect against the impact of extreme weather will ensure that the world's poorest are better able to cope with disasters in the future.

Working with countries across the world and organisations like the UK Met Office and International Federation of the Red Cross and Crescent, the Partnership will improve the availability and quality of weather forecasting information available.

Better information and early warning systems will give people more time to adapt and prepare for extreme weather events, making them easier to predict.

The Partnership will also help the governments of developing countries to make detailed action plans for natural disasters, including ensuring survivors are safe and have access to food, water and shelter.

The UK, working with IFRC and Finland, has led on setting up the Partnership.

At the UN in New York, both the UK and Egypt called for urgent global action to help the world adapt to the effects of climate change.

Speaking at the UN, The International Development Secretary also announced up to £90 million of support for the Global Risk Financing Facility, which will help cut the costs of disaster risk insurance. It will help governments and humanitarian agencies to access funding quicker, ensuring a faster and more effective response in emergencies.

The UK is also leading the charge to make infrastructure more resilient to climate change. Working with Jamaica, insurance company Willis Towers Watson, and the World Economic Forum the UK has brought together organisations to ensure that we work to make buildings, roads, bridges and transport networks fit to withstand climate shocks.

Notes to editors:

The UK is committing £175 million to help make people safer from and reduce the impact of disasters.

This is made up of:

- £85 million through the Risk-Informed Early Action Partnership, a new global partnership of governments and humanitarian and climate experts to help protect one billion people from disaster.
- £90 million to the Global Risk Financing Facility. Co-funded by Germany and delivered by the World Bank, it will use financing services such as

insurance to help governments and humanitarian agencies access funding more quickly to support a faster, more effective response in emergencies.

The International Development Secretary also announced a new Coalition for Climate Resilient, alongside Jamaica insurance company Willis Towers Watson, and the World Economic Forum. This coalition brings together 38 countries, institutions and companies with trillions of assets to ensure infrastructure is designed to withstand climate shocks.

The Secretary of State also pledged to give £61 million at the UN to develop crops, which are better adapted to grow in higher temperatures, can withstand droughts or floods, and have natural resistance to pests and diseases.

These crops are developed specifically for the most vulnerable countries in Asia and Africa. This is made up of:

- £30 million to global agricultural research organisation CGIAR, to support the development and delivery to poor farmers of new crops which are more productive, climate and disease-resistant, and are more nutritious.
- £13 million for developing disease resistant, nutrient-enriched wheat through the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre.
- £18 million, which will go to the Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International to support the tracking of plant pests and diseases; the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology to support pest control work; and the World Vegetable Centre to breed vegetables varieties better adapted to future climate.

UK announces extra £87 million funding for Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh

The United Kingdom is making available an additional £87 million for sustaining the Rohingya refugee operation in Cox's Bazar, lifting our contribution from the start of the crisis in August 2017 to a total of £226 million. The additional funding will help provide food, healthcare, water, sanitation, care and counselling for sexual violence survivors, and protection for vulnerable groups.

Over £20 million is being made available to support development in the Cox's

Bazar district to mitigate the economic and environmental impact the Rohingya crisis is having on the local communities. We are working to ensure that the international response benefits all the district's population.

International Development Secretary Alok Sharma said

"It is hard to truly grasp the size of the humanitarian crisis faced by the Rohingya people. More than 700,000 were forced to flee their home in the face of horrific brutality.

"The UK has worked with the Government of Bangladesh to provide lifesaving aid, including food, water and shelter, as well education and counselling as they rebuild their lives.

"Women and girls represent over half of the camp population in Bangladesh, and this new funding will provide vital support for them, such as critical reproductive health care, and a new emergency shelter for survivors of severe gender-based violence and trafficking.

"This support announced today demonstrates our continued commitment to the Rohingya people."

The new funding will help maintain the humanitarian operation in the camps and increase investment in the communities of Cox's Bazar to help reverse the impact of the refugee presence and improve social cohesion. This will also enable the Government of Bangladesh and the international community to find longer-term solutions for the Rohingya people.

The expected results from this new funding are as follows

- Over £20 million new support to the thousands of already vulnerable Bangladeshi families, who now have nearly one million refugees living in their district
- Over 450,000 refugees will receive protection; including Rohingya women and girls, who have been subject to sexual violence, and children that have survived abduction and trafficking.
- Over 500,000 medical consultations will be provided through 27 primary health care and mobile clinics, along with the early warning system for disease outbreaks.
- Over 250,000 refugees and 50,000 people from the local community will receive clean water and sanitation.
- Covering the basic food needs of 100,000 refugees for a whole year, and containers to protect the food of 150,000 families.
- Providing cooking gas for over 31,000 families, so helping to stop further forest destruction.

British High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Robert Chatterton Dickson said

"The UK and Bangladesh have a strong and enduring partnership, which continues to deepen as Bangladesh transitions to becoming a middle-income country.

"We greatly appreciate the remarkable generosity and humanity the government

and the people of Bangladesh have shown in hosting the Rohingya people.

“The overarching aim must remain finding a solution to this crisis, so that the Rohingya can voluntarily return to Myanmar in safety and dignity. The UK remains committed to ensuring that conditions are put in place to allow this to happen.

Head of DFID Bangladesh, Judith Herbertson said

“Since August 2017, UK aid from British taxpayers has contributed £226 million to provide life-sustaining humanitarian assistance to almost one million Rohingya people.

“This additional £87 million will help deliver stability and security for the Rohingya and for vulnerable local communities in Cox’s Bazar who have been affected by the crisis.

“We appreciate the enormous generosity of the Government of Bangladesh and the people of Cox’s Bazar. And we pay tribute to all those working tirelessly to support the Rohingya living in the camps.”

Further information

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[Independent review calls for radical plan for England’s National Parks](#)

Seventy years after the Act of Parliament that created the first National Parks, a major [independent review](#) – led by writer Julian Glover – has called for bold action to reignite the founding spirit of our great National Park movement in order to make them greener, more beautiful and open to everyone.

The review published today (Saturday 21 September) praises the brilliant work which has been done to maintain the beauty of places such as the Lake District, Exmoor and the Dorset coast.

But it warns that new challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and a changing, urban society mean that new approaches are needed to get the most out of England's most-loved landscapes, including National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs).

Key recommendations include:

- a new National Landscapes Service to act as a unified body for England's 44 national landscapes, including 10 National Parks and 34 AONBs
- creating a 1,000 strong ranger service to be the "friendly face" of our national parks and help engage schools and communities
- giving every school pupil the opportunity to spend a night "under the stars" in these special landscapes to help more children to connect with nature
- new protections, responsibilities, titles and funding for AONBs to help them be greener, more beautiful and more welcoming to the public
- a transformed approach to recover and enhance nature, working with farmers and conservation groups to reverse years of decline and bring landscapes alive
- backing for a new National Park in the Chilterns and a new National Forest, taking in areas such as Sherwood Forest, as part of a drive to increase woodland spaces to fight climate change

The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, which commissioned the review, will now consider the recommendations.

Welcoming the findings, Environment Secretary Theresa Villiers said:

These landscapes are the jewels in the crown of our countryside and are a cornerstone of our rural economy. We are committed to ensuring they flourish as havens for nature and sites that everyone in the country goes to visit for inspiration, adventure or relaxation.

That's why we asked Julian and his panel to conduct this review and I am very grateful to them for their efforts. I welcome and agree with the spirit of ambition, which is in line with our 25 Year Environment Plan, and we will now carefully consider the recommendations set out in the review.

Julian Glover, who led the review, said:

From the high fells of the Lake District to the wildness of Exmoor, England's most beautiful places define our country. Today we are setting out a big, bold plan to bring them alive to tackle the crisis in our natural environment and make sure they are there for

everyone to enjoy.

If we take action, we can make our country healthier, happier, greener, more beautiful and part of all our lives. Seventy years ago this year we created our national parks for a nation that had just won the Second World War. Now it's time to reignite that mission.

Tony Juniper, Chair of Natural England which is the government's statutory landscape adviser, said:

We very much welcome the Glover Review and its core message that our national parks and AONBs should be the very backbone of the new Nature Recovery Network that we are working to build. These are the places that often spring to mind when people think about enjoying the natural world and by making them richer in wildlife as well as more accessible we can help people from all walks of life experience their inspirational beauty.

The report also raises concerns about the process of designating national landscapes. We share these concerns and have taken steps in recent years to streamline the system where possible, in the context of budget difficulties that lead us to do far less than we would like to.

Today's announcement builds on existing government commitments to protect and enhance the natural environment, which include a pledge to restore 75% of our protected sites to favourable condition, invest £50 million to help plant new woodlands through the Woodland Carbon Guarantee, and create a vast Northern Forest – which will see 50 million trees planted from Liverpool to Hull over the next 25 years.

Corinne Pluchino, Chief Executive of Campaign for National Parks said:

We welcome the timely publication of this ambitious agenda for our most beautiful landscapes.

There is an pressing need to address the urgent challenges in our National Parks. We will be reviewing the report in detail and will be working to ensure the momentum is maintained.

AONBs and National Parks are some of England's most cherished sites, spanning from the Lake District, which was recently announced as a UNESCO World Heritage site, to the picturesque Cornwall AONB.

They cover a quarter of England's land and are home to over 2.3 million people – with more than 66 per cent of us living within half an hour of a National Park or AONB. They also generate more than £20 billion for the rural

economy, and support 75,000 jobs.

The review is one of the key commitments of the government's 25 Year Environment Plan, which outlines our vision for improving the environment over a generation by connecting people with nature and helping wildlife to thrive.

It follows a call for evidence which received more than 2,500 responses on how England's 10 National Parks and 34 AONBs meet the nation's needs in the 21st century and whether there is scope for the current network to expand.

The review also makes recommendations to introduce more innovative, enterprising ways to generate funds that can be invested in these spaces, in addition to further government funding.

Further information

The recommendations of the Designated Landscapes review will now be considered and responded to by the government in due course.

The 27 recommendations of the review include:

- new long-term programmes to increase the number of BAME visitors
- expanding volunteering in our national landscapes
- better information and signs to guide visitors
- a ranger service in all our national landscapes, part of a national family
- consider expanding open access rights in national landscapes
- a new National Landscapes Housing Association to build affordable homes.
- new designated landscapes and a new national forest. The review recommended three large AONBs should be considered for National Park status – The Cotswolds, and Dorset. The review would also support the designation of the Forest of Dean as a national landscape. The review also recommended there is a strong case for a new national forest taking in areas such as Sherwood Forest, north of Nottingham and south of Worksop.
- a new National Landscapes Service to bring the National Parks and AONBs together and set greater ambitions
- welcoming new landscape approaches in cities and the coast, and a city park competition
- a new financial model – more money, more secure, more enterprising

Sir Arthur Hobhouse's landmark report in 1947 paved the way for the creation of England's network of designated areas, with the National Parks Act and Access to the Countryside Act passed in 1949.

The Act, described at the time as a "recreational gift to Britain's returning Second World War service men and women", set out to recognise, conserve and enhance access to landscapes deemed to be "of national importance and quality".

These days the rugged mountains, unspoilt coastlines and vast moorlands of

the nation's 10 National Parks attract more than 94 million visitors a year from at home and abroad.

Background

Julian Glover – Lead Reviewer

Associate editor at the London Evening Standard and author of the biography *Man of Iron: Thomas Telford and the Building of Britain*. He has worked as leader writer and columnist at the Guardian and as a Special Adviser in Number 10 and the Department for Transport. Lord Cameron of Dillington.

Cross-bench peer, farmer and landowner. As the former Chair of the Countryside Agency, he is a strong advocate for rural affairs. He is currently the chair of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 Committee and the Advisory Council for the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology. He is also on the Steering Board of the Government's Global Food Security Programme.

Jim Dixon

Chief Executive of the Peak District National Park Authority for 12 years, before stepping down in 2014. He is currently a writer on countryside issues, including for the Times, and a trustee of the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Sarah Mukherjee

Former BBC environment and rural affairs correspondent and previous Director of Environment at Water UK. She is currently Chief Executive of the Crop Protection Association. She is a trustee and advisory group member for several charities, supporting both environmental stewardship and education in farming.

Dame Fiona Reynolds

Formerly the Director-General of the National Trust and current Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge and Chair of the Green Alliance. She is the author of *The Fight for Beauty* (2016), a history of thought and public policy on landscapes and environment in Britain.

Jake Fiennes

Became General Manager for Conservation of the 25,000 acre Holkham Estate in autumn 2018 after 24 years as Estate Manager promoting nature conservation alongside arable farming at Raveningham Estate. He is also a trustee and advisory group member of several organisations including the National Farmers' Union's Environmental Forum and the Norfolk Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group.