

## [News story: New member of the Committee on Fuel Poverty appointed](#)

This appointment takes effect from 1 May 2019 and lasts for 3 years.

The CFP advises on the effectiveness of policies aimed at reducing fuel poverty and encourages greater co-ordination across the organisations working to reduce fuel poverty.

Anu is a board level local government and health professional. She has been a statutory Director of Social Services, and is passionate about service improvement and community empowerment. She has led on new relationships with communities for County Councils, City Councils and a London Metropolitan Borough Council.

Anu was Director of Patient & Public Participation and Insight for NHS England. She took the lead for the NHS in ensuring that the voice of patients, service users, carers and the public is at the heart of the way NHS works. She was also responsible for Equalities and Health Inequalities, Person Centred Care, and the national relationship with the Voluntary and Community Sector. Anu is Vice Chair of the Whittington Health Integrated Care Trust in north London.

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## [Press release: Geospatial Commission outlines its 2019-2020 priorities](#)

- Geospatial Commission publishes Annual Plan 2019 – 2020
- The plan sets out the progress made in the Geospatial Commission's first year and the direction for the year ahead, to develop the UK's national geospatial strategy
- Call For Evidence 2018 responses also published alongside the plan

The [Geospatial Commission's Annual Plan](#) is published today, which highlights the ways it is working to maximise the value of geospatial data for the UK.

The plan also sets out priorities for this year of unlocking value in key sectors, including investment into the [underground assets pilots announced last week](#), and developing the geospatial ecosystem through data improvement, skills and innovation.

It is an important milestone towards creating the UK's National Geospatial Strategy, following last year's call for evidence:

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## Press release: Environment Agency uses new powers to tackle illegal waste site

The EA took the action following an investigation into TP & G Specialists Limited which revealed that the company were operating without an environmental permit and causing emissions such as dust and smoke which were affecting neighbouring properties.

Despite efforts to bring the site into compliance, including multiple visits from EA officers, the business has continued to operate illegally. The restriction order, granted by Birmingham Magistrates Court, is the first of its kind – restricting access to the site and prohibiting waste from being accepted on to the site for the next six months.

The new powers were brought in following a public consultation where 90% of respondents supported proposals for the regulator to take physical steps to curb illegal waste activity. These powers allow the EA to apply to the court for a Restriction Order to prohibit access to, and the importation of waste into, premises, or a specified part of premises.

Lyndon Essex, Environment Agency waste officer, said:

We are determined to make life tough for those who damage the environment and blight local communities. While most waste sites are responsible, the bad apples can cause huge damage along with significant costs to landowners to clear up the mess. We are working hard to ensure those who flout their responsibilities are penalised and the new Restriction Orders help us to disrupt waste crime as it happens.

Last year, the Environment Agency stopped illegal waste activity at 812 sites – more than two a day – thereby disrupting illegal operators and helping legitimate business to grow. In 2017/18 the EA made 93 successful waste crime prosecutions resulting in 17 prison sentences.

Everyone who disposes of waste has a duty of care to ensure their waste is handled correctly. Whether you are a business, local authority or householder you must make sure you know where your waste goes so it doesn't end up in the hands of illegal operators.

Waste crime activity can be reported to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

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## News story: NHS hospitals and GP practices to get fibre optic internet

Health Secretary Matt Hancock has announced plans to upgrade every hospital, GP practice and community care service to full fibre connectivity.

Almost 40% of NHS organisations are using slow and unreliable internet supplied through copper lines, which restricts the ability to offer digital services to patients.

Today's announcement supports ambitions in the NHS Long Term Plan to expand and improve online access to NHS services. Under the plan:

- every patient will get the right to choose a 'digital first' approach to primary healthcare, meaning that more of the 307 million patient consultations with GPs each year would in future be offered online, through video consultation, as well as face to face
- hospital outpatient clinics will also be redesigned with more 'virtual clinics' involving video consultations with consultants and nurses, supplemented by face-to-face appointments where necessary
- cloud-based patient records will help clinicians access crucial information, including high-resolution images, anywhere in the country, improving patient safety and speeding up appointments

Upgrading broadband will provide the fast, more reliable connections necessary for video consultations and sharing high-definition images at speed.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said:

"Every day, our NHS staff do amazing work – but too often they are let down by outdated and unreliable technology. It's simply unbelievable that a third of NHS organisations are using internet that can sometimes be little better than dial-up.

"To give people control over how they access NHS services, I want to unlock the full potential of technology – this is the future for our 21st century healthcare system and a central part of our NHS Long Term Plan.

"Faster broadband connections can help us deliver these dramatic improvements – we need clinicians and other healthcare professionals to feel confident they can access fast, reliable broadband so they can provide patients with the best possible care."

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# Press release: Counter Daesh: Middle East Minister hosts roundtable with ambassadors

On 29 April, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office interim Minister for the Middle East and North Africa, Mark Field, met ambassadors from the region to discuss the continued threat posed by Daesh. The Minister said:

Daesh once controlled territory roughly the size of the UK, but thanks to the military campaign by the Global Coalition and its partners on the ground it no longer occupies land. 7.7 million people have been liberated from its rule.

But as the Foreign Secretary, Jeremy Hunt, has said, 'we cannot be complacent. Even without territory, Daesh and its poisonous ideology will continue to pose a threat to the people of Iraq and Syria, as well as to the wider world.'

As the fight moves into this next phase, we will remain steadfast in our commitment to tackling the poisonous ideology of Daesh. I'm proud of the United Kingdom's contribution to this fight, not least through the work of the Counter-Daesh Communications Cell, which has created a unique model for the successful delivery of multinational counter-terrorist strategic communications campaigns.