

News story: Over 50,000 applications to the EU Settlement Scheme on opening weekend

The EU Settlement Scheme was launched on Saturday 30 March following both private and public testing of the application process which began in August 2018.

During the testing phases of the scheme there were over 230,000 applications, of which 210,000 cases have already been concluded. Since the scheme went fully live on Saturday, over 50,000 further applications have been received. This brings the total number of applications to over 280,000.

EU citizens applying to the scheme only need to complete three key steps – prove their identity, show that they live in the UK, and declare any criminal convictions. Applicants can use any laptop, tablet or mobile device to apply.

For those who want to apply entirely online, a custom identity document check app has been developed to allow applicants to verify their identity remotely and swiftly.

While the app is currently available on Android devices, the Home Secretary has confirmed it will also be available on Apple devices later this year.

Home Secretary Sajid Javid said:

Our EU Settlement Scheme is now up and running and after a successful launch, over 280,000 EU citizens have applied so that they can continue to live their lives as they do now.

I'm also pleased to confirm that Apple will make the identity document check app available on their devices by the end of the year.

The app is just one of several ways people will be able to verify their identity, including by post. There will also be over 50 locations where applicants can have their passport scanned and verified. Assisted digital support and a dedicated telephone advice and support service are also available.

To ensure the scheme is a success, the Home Office has boosted EU Settlement Scheme staff numbers to over 1,500, developed an entirely new case working system and created a new resolution centre to resolve telephone, email and online queries.

Deal or no deal, EU citizens will have until at least 31 December 2020 to apply.

Press release: Birmingham prison contract ended

- Mutual agreement with G4S to end contract early
- The costs of the '[step-in](#)' have been covered in the settlement we will receive from G4S
- Improvements to the prison continue at pace

Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) took over the running of the prison for an initial six-month period in August 2018, which was extended in February until the end of the summer.

HMPPS has now decided, with the full agreement of G4S, to end the contract and bring HMP Birmingham back in-house.

Prisons Minister Rory Stewart said:

I am confident that HMP Birmingham has made good progress since the 'step-in' but to build on this, the prison needs stability and continuity.

That is why we have mutually agreed with G4S that the public sector is better placed to drive the long-term improvements required and the contract will end.

Our priority remains the safety of prisoners and staff but this move to restore and consolidate order at one of our most challenging jails will ultimately make sure that we are better protecting the public.

Minister Stewart emphasised that this move was a response to the specific circumstances faced by HMP Birmingham and the Urgent Notification received by the Secretary of State from HM Chief Inspector of Prisons.

He added:

We need to be absolutely clear that we still believe in a mixed economy of providers with some of our private prisons among the best performing in the country.

Indeed, G4S itself is running excellent prisons at Altcourse and Oakwood, and this Government believes passionately that private providers should continue to play a crucial role in our system.

As part of the decision to bring HMP Birmingham back into the public sector:

- HMPPS has agreed a settlement with G4S paying £9.9 million to cover the additional cost of the 'step-in' action – including additional HMPPS staff. This meets the department's commitment to recover 'step-in' costs in accordance with the contract and includes a sum to cover essential maintenance works.
- G4S staff at Birmingham will transfer to HMPPS contracts on 1 July and are being supported through the transition. Trade unions are involved in this process.
- Experienced Governor Paul Newton, who took command of the prison last August at the time of the 'step-in', will remain in post to lead the prison and steer the transformation process.

Work continues to drive-up standards at the prison and the action taken includes:

- The introduction of a new dedicated search team to detect and deter those responsible for bringing contraband into the establishment. A recent full lockdown search was highly successful in addressing contraband.
- A bolstered senior management team and more than 30 additional, experienced prison officers supporting the team on the ground.
- New safety initiatives including the roll-out of the key worker model – ensuring that each prisoner has dedicated support from a prison officer, and a refreshed violence strategy to tackle the causes of violent behaviours.
- Additional training for staff in managing vulnerable and violent offenders.
- The refurbishment of one wing which is now being repopulated. The visitors centre is also undergoing renovation and a new family strategy has been introduced.

Notes to editors:

- The Government [announced its 'step-in'](#) action in August following an Urgent Notification by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons. This was for an initial six-month period.
 - In February, the Prisons Minister confirmed that the 'step-in' period had been extended until the summer.
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Press release: Northern Ireland Housing Executive Chair and Vice Chair Appointment

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the Rt. Hon Karen Bradley MP, today announced that she has appointed Professor Peter Roberts as Chair and Mr John McMullan as Vice Chair of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) Board. In the absence of Northern Ireland Ministers, these appointments were made possible by the Northern Ireland (Executive Formation and Exercise of Functions) Act 2018.

These appointments will take effect from 1 April and will ensure that the NIHE Board can continue to deliver the vital public services within its remit for the benefit of the Northern Ireland community. The Secretary of State also announced short extensions to the terms of appointment of three NIHE Board members who represent the NI Housing Council. The terms of appointment of Councillor Philip Brett, Councillor Catherine Elattar and Alderman Bill Keery have been extended until 1 May 2019 to cover the period leading up to the local elections.

Mrs Bradley said:

My absolute priority is to see the restoration of the Executive. The people of Northern Ireland deserve nothing less. Until that is achieved I have been doing what is necessary to ensure good governance and allow critical bodies to operate effectively in Northern Ireland.

The Northern Ireland Housing Executive Board plays an important role in the management and operation of the NIHE. I am pleased to make these appointments so that the Board can continue to take decisions essential to the proper functioning of the organisation and the key housing services across Northern Ireland.

The Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE)

The NIHE is a Non-Departmental Public Body of the NI Department for Communities and was established by the Housing Executive Act (Northern Ireland) 1971. Under this Act, the NIHE took over the housing responsibilities of 65 separate authorities and became Northern Ireland's overall housing authority. It is currently landlord to approximately 86,500 dwellings and is one of Northern Ireland's largest public sector organisations with a budget of over £740m and a staff of approximately 2,700. It also makes a substantial contribution to better health, education and

wellbeing through housing.

Provision for the NIHE Board is set out in the Housing (Northern Ireland) Order 1981. The principal role of the Board is to set the strategic direction for the Housing Executive and to provide stewardship of all public resources entrusted to it to implement the policies and priorities of the Minister and the Executive. The Board oversees the performance and outputs of the executive team, which is responsible for the day-to-day conduct of the business within the Housing Executive. The Board also sets the attitude and disposition of the organisation towards compliance with applicable laws and best practice.

Terms of appointment

The position of Chair attracts remuneration of £32,827 per year, plus travel and subsistence allowances for a minimum commitment of two days per week. Professor Roberts has been appointed to this role for a two year term

The position of Vice-Chair attracts remuneration of £16,311, plus travel and subsistence allowances, for a minimum commitment of one day per week. Mr McMullan has been appointed to this role for a five year term.

Biography of Appointees

Professor Peter Roberts

Professor Roberts has served on the NIHE Board since 2013. Most of his work over the past four decades has been in the field of strategic planning having worked with local and central government, councils and international bodies. He was responsible for establishing the Academy for Sustainable Communities, through which he was able to create an England-wide organisation across over 100 professional areas. He has served on a number of Boards including the First Ark Group, Audit and Risk Committee for a hospital trust and Home and Communities Agency. Professor Robert's Board experience along with his extensive knowledge and experience in various social housing roles will bring professional finance, governance and specialist experience to the NIHE Chair position. He holds no other public appointments.

Mr John McMullan

Mr McMullan is the former Chief Executive Officer of Bryson Charitable Group, a business he developed from a traditional charity into a modernised fit for purpose Social Enterprise, employing over 900 staff and delivering a range of social purposed services in NI, GB and RoI. He has served on a number of boards including as Chair of Hydebank Wood Young Offenders Centre. Mr McMullan's experience in governance, policy and strategy development along with other areas relevant to social housing will bring significant knowledge and specialist experience to the NIHE Vice-Chair position. He holds no other public appointments.

CPANI Code of Practice

The appointment process for the appointment of Chair and Vice Chair has been regulated by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointment NI (CPANI) and the appointments have been made in accordance with the CPANI Code of Practice.

Political Activity

All independent appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. However, CPANI requires the political activity of appointees to be published. Professor Roberts and Mr McMullan have had no political activity in the last 5 years.

Statutory Requirements

Provision for the NIHE Board is set out in the Housing (Northern Ireland) Order 1981. In October 2018, the Secretary of State for NI introduced legislation in Parliament; the Northern Ireland (Executive Formation and Exercise of Functions) Act 2018 received Royal Assent on 1 November. This legislation provides for the appointment to a number of public offices by the Secretary of State. The NI (Ministerial Appointment Functions) Regulations 2019 came into force on 18 February 2019. This Instrument provides for further critical appointments, including that of the NIHE Board.

Speech: PM opening statement at Serious Violence Summit: 1 April 2019

Good morning everyone.

Thank you very much for coming here to Number 10 today to discuss tackling the issue that is a top priority for government and for the organisations who are represented here around this table. But perhaps more important, it's an issue that families, and young people and communities across the country, are concerned about and want to see us tackling.

And in the recent months we've seen an appalling number of young lives that have been cut short or devastated by serious violent crime, including a number of horrifying incidents which took place just over this weekend. And as we look at what's happened of course what we also see is that in many cases the perpetrators of these crimes are as young as our victims. And this is something that has to be of deep concern to us all.

It is a challenge that collectively affects us as a society, and it is a challenge that as a society we need to rise up to and to act to deal with.

And not deal with as individuals in isolation – as single organisations or single politicians or individuals in the community – but actually dealing with it in a great, co-ordinated, wide-reaching and long-term effort. With all of us coming together to address this issue.

Of course we would always make sure that the resources and tools are there to be able to apprehend and deal with those who are carrying and using knives, and the police have what they need to do – but we cannot simply arrest ourselves out of this problem.

This is a wider problem. It's more deep seated and we need to have a more coordinated effort in response to it.

If you think about it, if it was a devastating disease that was affecting young people yes, we would be treating the symptoms but we would also be asking ourselves the question of what is the underlying cause.

And that is that in relation to this issue we need to take the same approach to the cancer of serious youth violence.

It is more than just law enforcement.

And that is what this week's summit is about. It's about bringing together people from different aspects of society, with different responsibilities ,with different experience to ensure that we can build on the work that's being done as in the Serious Violence Summit, and the Youth Endowment Fund, but also to make sure we come together in this multiagency, whole-community approach to serious youth violence.

And that's where of course this approach, often referred to as the "public health approach", is one of the things we want to be discussing this week.

That's where everybody is working together across the system in multiple agencies – sharing information – but crucially making sure that every contact counts.

And to help make that happen, today we've launched a consultation on a public duty that would underpin such an approach.

I can also announce that we are setting up a new Ministerial Taskforce that will co-ordinate the government's role and make sure all departments are playing their part. It needs, again, to be a collective approach across government as it is between government and other organisations.

And there will be a new Serious Violence Team which will be set up in the Cabinet Office as well which will have representatives from across government to ensure join-up, and will also be well-placed to assist local areas as they build operational equivalents in their own Violence Reduction Units.

In a moment I'll ask the Home Secretary to talk a little more about the size and scope of the challenge we face and the work we have already undertaken to tackle it.

But first we will hear from some of the experts who have joined us today.

I'm grateful to everybody around the table because everybody has come with expertise and understanding and experience of this issue. We have sitting around the table people who have delivered transformational change and real reductions in violence across the UK and the US.

So let me introduce Professor Mark Bellis, from Public Health Wales, and Dr Jens Ludwig, from the Chicago and New York Data Labs. I know you've travelled to be here today so thank you – particularly to Dr Ludwig for travelling as far as you have to be with us here today. We want to be able to learn from you and I know that in the chat that I've had with Mark in the past about the different roles and the importance of the work that you've done, and we very much look forward to learning from both of you.

Nothing that is said today of course will bring back the young people whose lives have been so cruelly taken by serious violence.

But what we can do today is to send a very clear message that “this must stop” and a very clear message that collectively we will do everything we can to make sure that it stops.

And we can begin to shape this new approach that will meet the scourge of youth violence head on, so that more families are spared the unimaginable suffering that sadly too many families have endured in recent months.

So with that I'll pass over to Jens.

Press release: Government to harness power of sport to help tackle youth violence

The Government has renewed its commitment to use sport to support young people in serious violence hot spots, Jeremy Wright, Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, said today.

This afternoon Jeremy Wright chaired a roundtable with Minister for Sport and Civil Society Mims Davies, bringing together sports bodies, charities and creative organisations as part of the Prime Minister's Serious Youth Violence Summit to tackle knife crime.

The Premier League said it will work in partnership with Government to increase one of its flagship community programmes, Premier League Kicks. Currently reaching 75,000 participants a year, the programme uses football to inspire young people to develop their potential and build stronger, safer

communities.

Government will also work with a range of sports' organisations including basketball, boxing and cycling and community-based sports charities to see what more they can do to use sport to engage young people in hard to reach areas.

Sport England, which invests more than £10 million in projects that use sport to support crime reduction, has also pledged to increase investment in sport and physical activity for children in hot spot areas. This will include increasing the number of sports 'satellite' clubs, which are held after school and at weekends for 14 to 19-year-olds and aim to bridge the gap between school, college and community sport. A total of 10,000 satellite clubs have been established in England, helping over half a million young people to get active.

Jeremy Wright, Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, said: "Sport has the power to reach and connect people of all ages and backgrounds.

"We want to harness that power to encourage young people to choose positive activities that build confidence and key skills, rather than turn to crime and violence.

"Sports bodies already do excellent work in the community and we will work with the sector to expand sporting opportunities in youth crime hot spots to reach as many young people as possible."

The Serious Youth Violence Summit in Downing Street will bring together over 100 attendees from a diverse range of backgrounds, including young people with experience living in communities impacted by serious violence, law enforcement, health, the voluntary sector, and businesses and education leaders.

Bill Bush, Premier League Executive Director, said: "The Premier League and our clubs recognise that young people today face huge pressures in their lives. Our education and social inclusion programmes engage thousands of youngsters every week in areas of high need. Working in partnership with a range of Government and third-sector organisations we are determined to use our popularity and reach to strengthen local communities. This includes working together with young people and supporting them in understanding how to deal with the very real dangers of gangs and knives."

Nick Pontefract, Sport England Chief Operating Officer, said: "Sport and physical activity is a powerful and positive force for good in society. That's why we welcome being part of the conversation at today's serious crime summit. Sport builds a sense of community and social trust, provides role models, and new skills that can drive meaningful change. Yet we've only scratched the surface of its potential as a tool to engage young people at risk of being involved in knife crime. Now is a crucial time to ask what part sport and physical activity can play in tackling violence."

The Prime Minister opened the Summit setting out proposals for a new legal duty to ensure public bodies, including hospitals, raise concerns about children at risk of becoming involved in knife crime.

The joined-up approach would ensure professionals in health, education, police, social services, housing, and the voluntary sector work together, and are held accountable for, preventing and tackling serious violence.

During the Summit the Prime Minister also confirmed plans to create a new Serious Violence Reduction Unit, based in the Cabinet Office, to continue to drive cross-government action.

The Prime Minister will also Chair a Ministerial Taskforce, within government, focussed on improving and better coordinating, our response to knife crime.

This will complement the existing Serious Violence Taskforce, set up as part of the Government's Serious Violence Strategy, and Chaired by the Home Secretary, to bring together politicians from across parties, law enforcement and other agencies, regularly on this issue.

Government Ministers from across Whitehall will continue to chair a series of meetings throughout the week, harnessing expert knowledge to boost joint work and drive forward action in specific areas such as the justice system, healthcare and community support.