

Britons urged to get travel smart before they go abroad

- The campaign signposts the actions Britons should take as they prepare to travel abroad
- Campaign recommends travellers check FCDO travel advice for their destination
- Travellers prompted to get appropriate travel insurance

A new campaign starts today urging Britons to Get Travel Smart before they go abroad this Summer.

The campaign, which will run across Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) social media channels, is supported by partners including TUI, Gatwick Airport, Liverpool John Lennon Airport, ABTA and the Association of British Insurers. It will signpost travellers to the essential information they need as they prepare to go overseas.

With people across the country planning holidays, the campaign recommends traveller check FCDO travel advice and get travel insurance before they leave.

Research shows that FCDO travel advice is the most commonly used and trusted source of advice for Britons travelling abroad. In 2021, there were over 150 million views of FCDO travel advice pages.

There is FCDO travel advice for over 200 destinations which is kept under constant review to ensure it reflects the latest information. FCDO travel advice aims to provide objective information and advice to help British people make better-informed decisions about international travel and plan for a trouble-free trip. It covers essential topics including entry requirements, safety and security issues, health risks, details about local laws and information on the threat from terrorism.

The campaign will also emphasise the importance of getting appropriate travel insurance and making sure travellers know what their cover does and does not provide.

Jennifer Anderson, Director of Consular, FCDO, said:

People are naturally excited about what may be their first holiday abroad for 2 years.

The first step for anybody thinking of going abroad is to Get Travel Smart and check the FCDO's travel advice and subscribe to updates.

In the event of an emergency overseas, a consular officer is available 24/7 to provide initial support and advice. But

purchasing the right travel insurance, declaring any pre-existing conditions and familiarising yourself with policy exemptions is an absolute must. Without insurance, you risk being left with a bill of thousands of pounds if things go wrong while abroad

Mark Tanzer, Chief Executive, ABTA – The Travel Association, said:

This summer will be the first time that many people have travelled overseas since the start of the pandemic, so we're keen to remind holidaymakers of the important steps they need to take to have a safe and enjoyable trip such as checking FCDO travel advice, making sure their passport will be valid for their travel dates and taking out travel insurance.

When travelling, people should make sure they arrive at the time advised by their airline, get the travel documents they need ready for check-in, and familiarise themselves with the rules around hand luggage.

In addition to the Get Travel Smart campaign, the British Consulates in Palma and Ibiza are running their annual campaign, now in its third year, encouraging young British holidaymakers to "Stick With Your Mates" and have a holiday to remember, rather than one to forget. The campaign is also set to run in Cyprus.

The Stick With Your Mates campaign was developed in response to a number of tragic accidents involving young British tourists visiting the Balearic Islands – many involving falls. Investigations by the British Consulate in Palma found that the vast majority of serious incidents took place when the individuals were on their own, having been separated from friends. The campaign gives young people tips and advice on how to look after each other and help avoid serious accidents on holiday.

[Ofsted launches consultation on care leavers inspection judgement](#)

News story

The consultation asks for views on a proposed new judgement on the experiences and progress of care leavers.



Today we have launched a consultation on proposals for a new judgement on the experiences and progress of care leavers to be included in our local authority children's services (ILACS) inspection framework.

The consultation runs from 20 June until 29 July 2022. Responses will inform our updated arrangements, which we aim to introduce from January 2023.

We propose to:

- introduce a separate new judgement within ILACS: "The experience and progress of care leavers"
- review and update the existing evaluation criteria to ensure they are relevant and reflect what good looks like for care leavers
- introduce the new judgement once all local authorities have had at least one ILACS inspection outcome

The aim of the proposals is for us to provide a clearer statement about the experiences of care leavers when we evaluate the effectiveness of local authority children's services, and to focus on the things that make the most difference to their lives.

Please [respond using our electronic survey](#).

Yvette Stanley, Ofsted's National Director for Social Care, said:

Our ILACS inspections have done much to shine a light on the experiences of care leavers and the work by local authorities to support them. But we think we can do more. Introducing a separate judgement reflects the priority we think should be given to providing high quality support to care leavers.

We encourage everyone to contribute their views through our consultation, to help us give care leavers a clearer profile within these inspections.

[UK's top scientists join forces to battle bird flu outbreaks](#)

Some of the UK's top scientists are to set to join forces in a major new research consortium in the UK's battle against bird flu, it has been announced today (Monday 20 June).

The eight-strong consortium, headed by the world-leading research team at the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), has received £1.5 million from the Biotechnology and Biosciences Research Council (BBSRC) and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and has been tasked with developing new strategies to tackle future bird flu outbreaks.

[This year's bird flu outbreak has been the largest and longest ever experienced in the UK](#) and in many parts of Europe. The outbreak started earlier than previous years after the virus continued to circulate in Europe over summer 2021 and led to over 100 cases in the UK.

It is hoped the consortium will be able to find new ways to contain future outbreaks. The news will be a significant boost to the UK's poultry sector and rural economy, which has experienced significant disruption from this year's outbreak with compulsory indoor housing measures put in place to protect poultry from this horrible disease.

The consortium will focus on building our understanding in a number of key areas, including:

- what it is about the current virus strains that helps them to form larger and longer outbreaks
- understanding transmission and infection in different bird populations, including how the virus transmits from wild birds to farmed poultry, the gaps in biosecurity that allow the virus to penetrate premises, and how this could be addressed
- mapping and modelling the spread of infection over time and across species
- why some birds, such as ducks, are more resistant to bird flu strains
- developing models to predict how the viruses will evolve and spread in the future; and
- inform risk mitigation measures in birds to reduce disease burden thereby protecting against zoonotic transmission occurring from animals to humans, to prevent future spillovers of influenza with pandemic potential into humans.

UK's Chief Veterinary Officer Christine Middlemiss said:

This new consortium will allow us to combine our expertise at a national level to increase the speed and quality of our research, ensuring we can develop new strategies to aid our efforts against this insidious disease and hopefully in time reduce the impact on the poultry sector.

Professor Ian Brown, APHA's Head of Virology and project manager, said:

This investment in a new research consortium will bring together the greatest minds from eight world-leading British institutions to address gaps in our understanding of bird flu, helping us to control the spread of the disease, while furthering UK animal health science and ensuring we maintain our world-leading reputation in the field.

Professor Melanie Welham, Executive Chair of BBSRC, said:

One of the real strengths of the UK's scientific response to disease outbreaks is the way that we can draw on leading researchers from all over the country, who can pool their expertise to deliver results, fast. This new national consortium will study the unprecedented avian influenza outbreak to better understand this latest strain and how to tackle it. This will feed rapidly into government decision-making and new strategies to protect the poultry industry and reduce the risk of future transmission to humans.

UK researchers are already world-leaders in studying bird flu, with the APHA hosting an International Reference Laboratory, which conducts testing on global samples and rapidly shares the latest information internationally on outbreaks. The knowledge gathered will also be shared with international partners to aid their efforts to tackle the disease with benefits for global risk mitigation.

Members of the consortium will also attend a global session this month, hosted by the US Department of Agriculture, where they will influence and coordinate future investment into animal influenzas on an international basis.

[Regulation of Buy-Now-Pay-Later set to](#)

protect millions of people

- Millions of people will be protected through strengthening regulation of interest-free Buy-Now Pay-Later credit agreements, under plans announced by the government today.
- Lenders will be required to ensure loans are affordable and rules will be amended to ensure advertisements are fair, clear and not misleading.
- Government will expand rules to cover other forms of unsecured short-term credit that pose similar risks to consumers, such as those used for dentistry work.

Buy-Now Pay-Later credit agreements can be a helpful way to manage your finances, allowing people to spread the full cost of a purchase over time. However, people do not currently have the usual full range of borrower protections when taking out this type of loan and they are rapidly increasing in popularity, resulting in a potential risk of harm to consumers.

Under plans set out by the government today it confirmed that lenders will be required to carry out affordability checks, ensuring loans are affordable for consumers, and will amend financial promotion rules to ensure Buy-Now Pay-Later advertisements are fair, clear, and not misleading. Lenders offering the product will need to be approved by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), and borrowers will also be able to take a complaint to the Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS).

Economic Secretary to the Treasury, John Glen said:

“Buy-Now Pay-Later can be a helpful way to manage your finances but we need to ensure that people can embrace new products and services with the appropriate protections in place.

“By holding Buy-Now Pay-Later to the high standards we expect of other loans and forms of credit, we are protecting consumers and fostering the safe growth of this innovative market in the UK.”

Today’s consultation response sets out the government’s proposals for regulation of the sector. Given its complexity, the government will publish a consultation on draft legislation toward the end of this year. Following this, the government aims to lay secondary legislation by mid-2023, after which the FCA will consult on its rules for the sector.

The government has also confirmed that other forms of short-term interest-free credit, such as those used to pay for dental work or larger items like furniture, will be required to comply with the same rules announced today, given the risks posed are similar and consumers should receive consistent protections from similar products. These rules will apply to businesses who partner with a third-party lender to provide credit, and the government is asking for further stakeholder feedback to confirm whether they should also apply to online merchants who directly offer credit for the purchase of their own products.

Today's announcement forms part of the government's plan to grow the economy to tackle the cost of living. The Chancellor has provided £37 billion of support to help, including providing the eight million most vulnerable British families with at least £1,200 of direct payments this year – and giving every household right across the UK £400 to help with their energy bills.

Further information

- Our response to our consultation of regulation of buy-now-pay-later credit agreements confirmed the government's intention to:
- Amend the scope of regulation to capture BNPL and other currently-exempt agreements (which we refer to as short-term interest-free credit (STIFC)) when they are provided by third-party lenders;
- Extend this scope to also capture STIFC provided directly by merchants where it is offered online or at a distance, although further stakeholder engagement is necessary to fully understand the scale of the merchant-offered STIFC market;
- The government will allow exemptions for specific agreements where there is limited risk of potential consumer detriment, and where regulation would otherwise adversely impact day-to-day business activities;
- The government's approach to regulatory controls for agreements that will be brought into regulation will tailor the application of the Consumer Credit Act 1974 (CCA) to these products, and the elements of lending practice most linked to potential consumer detriment. Users of BNPL already benefit from consumer protection regulation. This includes agreements being subject to:
 - rules and guidance on advertising;
 - the Consumer Rights Act 2015 concerning the fairness of contract terms; and
 - the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 in relation to unfair commercial practices.
- [Consultation response](#)

[£500 million boost to create thousands of new prison places](#)

- Local businesses of all sizes to support delivery of £500m construction project, estimated to create over 2,000 jobs
- Significant step in Government's £4 billion programme to build 20,000 new places – boosting public safety and making the streets safer

Thousands of new prison places will be built at prisons across England under a £500 million construction deal, announced today (20 June 2022) by Prisons Minister Victoria Atkins.

Kier and Wates have been awarded contracts to lead an alliance of hundreds of small businesses in constructing new houseblocks at 6 prisons – capable of accommodating more than 2,600 offenders.

They will also build state-of-the-art workshops at the six locations – HMPs Bullingdon, Channings Wood, Elmley, Highpoint, Hindley and Wayland – which will add further momentum to the Government’s drive to cut reoffending and crime by getting more ex-offenders into jobs. This push has already seen the proportion of ex-prisoners employed 6 months after release increase by two-thirds (66 per cent) between April 2021 and March 2022.

Designed with security and rehabilitation in mind, the innovative design of the new houseblocks will include x-shaped buildings with wider landings to increase visibility of multiple wings – helping officers to maintain order. The designs will also mean easier access to supporting facilities such as additional healthcare and kitchens, promoting rehabilitation and helping prisoners to turn their lives around.

It is estimated that the construction of the houseblocks and refurbishment works will generate over 2,000 jobs through the construction phase and over 750 jobs within the new prison facilities.

This includes jobs through Kier’s [‘Making Ground’ initiative](#), which offers prisoners on temporary licence jobs in the construction industry. To date, over 100 serving prisoners and prison leavers have taken part in the programme.

These new builds are in addition to the two planned houseblocks announced earlier this year at HMPs Stocken and Guys Marsh, while construction of a brand-new workshop is already underway at HMP High Down in Surrey.

Prisons Minister Victoria Atkins MP, said:

The government is delivering on its vision for a modern prison estate that places security and rehabilitation at the heart of its design.

This will boost public safety by giving offenders every opportunity to turn away from a life of crime and towards a future of gainful employment.

These houseblocks are also great news for the local firms who will play a central role in constructing them, along with the communities who benefit from the jobs that will be created at the prisons.

Liam Cummins, Group managing director, Kier Construction, said:

Being appointed to the Accelerated Houseblock Development Programme (AHDP) is a fantastic opportunity for Kier to continue the strong

relationship we have built with MOJ over a number of years as a strategic supplier to government. We are excited to be combining our national, custodial expertise with our strong regional delivery capability to unlock value for the MOJ, both at strategic programme and local delivery levels.

As a project integrator, we look forward to continuing to drive forward the high standards we have set in using modern methods of construction, including innovation, technology and pushing the boundaries of Design for Manufacture and Assembly (DfMA). We will also continue our commitment to supporting prisoner rehabilitation through the extensive use of Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) through our Making Ground programme.

Paul Chandler, Executive Managing Director, Wates Construction Group, said:

We have been working closely with the MoJ for almost two decades to support the expansion and modernisation of its estate and look forward to bringing this experience to the Accelerated Houseblock Development programme.

Drawing on the expertise of our in-house engineering and offsite manufacturing specialists, we will be working closely with our Alliance partners to deliver greener, more operationally efficient buildings that support the MoJ's net zero ambitions by 2040. Not only this, but our focus will be on creating environments that boost staff and prisoner wellbeing, and that encourage better rehabilitation outcomes for the people that these buildings serve in the long-term.

These projects are part of the government's £4 billion investment to create 20,000 modern places – the biggest prison-building programme this country has seen in over a century.

The new jails will ensure the right conditions are in place to truly rehabilitate prisoners – giving them the education, skills and support they need to live crime-free lives on release. This will help to cut crime, reduce reoffending and protect the public.

New houseblocks are only part of the agenda to increase capacity across the prison estate, with plans to build four brand-new prisons while refurbishing existing sites to bring out of date prison places back online.

Notes to editors

- Kier and Wates have been awarded the alliance contract to deliver the Accelerated Houseblocks Development Programme (AHDP).
- The alliance was procured via the CCS Framework.
- The six sites covered by the alliance contracts are HMPs Bullingdon, Channings Wood, Elmley, Highpoint, Hindley and Wayland.

- There are also plans to build new houseblocks at HMP Stocken and Guys Marsh.
- The Ministry of Justice has previously committed £4 billion to increase prison capacity by 20,000 additional places by the Mid-2020s.
- The Ministry of Justice has so far completed four refurbishment sites at HMPs Aylesbury, Feltham, Haverigg and Swinfen Hall as well as small-scale investment projects at HMYOI Deerbolt, HMP Hollesley Bay and HMP Warren Hill.
- [The latest statistics](#) show the proportion of ex-prisoners employed six months after release increase by two-thirds (66 per cent) between April 2021 and March 2022.
- It is estimated that the construction of the houseblocks and refurbishment works will generate over 2,000 jobs through the construction phase and over 750 jobs within the new prison facilities.