

Press release: £61.4m roads package to keep drivers moving in the East of England

A12 Resurfacing, road markings, safety improvements, safety barrier repairs, traffic signals, bridge repairs, safety improvements November 2017 – March 2018 A120 Slip road improvements, bridge refurbishment, signage improvements, safety improvements, lighting renewal, carriageway repairs, resurfacing November 2017 – March 2018 A47 Bridge repairs, safety improvements, road markings, safety improvements, pedestrian warning signs, traffic signals, layby resurfacing, weather station renewal Ongoing, completion by March 2018 M11 Resurfacing, drainage works, embankment repairs, barrier repairs, sign replacement Ongoing, completion by November 2017 A14 (Suffolk) Weather station relocation, signage improvements, safety improvements, lighting renewal, bridge repairs, concrete carriageway repairs, resurfacing Ongoing, completion by March 2018 A14 (Cams) Resurfacing, bridge repairs, road markings and fencing October 2017 – March 2018 A428 Signs and road markings safety improvements January 2018 A1 / A1(M) Signs and road markings, resurfacing, safety improvements, bridge repairs, weather station upgrade, electrical repairs, drainage repairs, technology improvements, upgrading street lighting to LED, vegetation removal, landscape improvements Ongoing, completion by March 2018 M1 Resurfacing, bridge repairs, road markings, technology improvements, electrical repairs, upgrading street lighting to LED November 2017 to March 2018 A421 Signs and road markings, electrical repairs, safety improvements October 2017 A5 Signs and road markings, weather station upgrade, upgrading street lighting to LED, traffic signal improvements October 2017 to March 2017 M40 Noise barrier installation at seven sites along the M40; technology renewal at three locations in Buckinghamshire January 2018 – March 2018

Press release: A new era for marine science: Green light for new Cefas headquarters in Lowestoft

A new era of marine science is set to become a reality, with planning permission granted to the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas) to redevelop its headquarters site in Lowestoft. The proposals will invest £16m to create a leading centre for applied science by building a new and modern office facility and by refurbishing existing laboratory facilities.

The project will provide Cefas and Defra with significant running cost

savings, greatly enhanced scientific collaboration and innovation workspace and improved environmental performance. Refurbishment work is planned to start in November 2017 and the new office building is planned to commence in January 2018, once final partnership funding is in place. Morgan Sindall have been appointed contractors to lead the project works which are planned to complete by March 2019.

Fisheries Minister, George Eustice said: "Cefas has always been at the forefront of marine research and innovation, and I'm pleased this new centre is one step closer to reality. Once complete it will help bolster our research and understanding of sea life – solidifying our position as a world leader in marine science and a champion of sustainable fishing."

Tom Karsten, Cefas Chief Executive said: "Since 1902, Cefas has been providing UK Government with scientific evidence and advice to support the fishing industry and to ensure the sustainable use of the marine environment. I thank Defra, local Councillors and Planners for their commitment to these exciting proposals for our new Lowestoft Headquarters. This project represents a vital step in realising our vision for Cefas; to deliver world class science for the marine and freshwater environment."

Notes:

1. The Centre for the Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas) supports governments, businesses and society in the UK and internationally to ensure that seas and rivers are healthy and productive, thereby enabling food security and sustainable development. Cefas is the UK's most diverse centre for applied marine and freshwater science. Starting as a small fisheries laboratory in Lowestoft in 1902, Cefas now employs 550 staff between the sites in Lowestoft and Weymouth, and our offices in English ports, Kuwait and Oman.
 2. Cefas is an executive agency of the Department for Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) within the UK government. It provides ministers and government officials in the UK with impartial expert advice and evidence relating to marine and closely related environments and is a provider of UK statutory monitoring and inspection services, including national emergency response capabilities.
 3. For more information contact: estates2020@cefas.co.uk or visit the [Cefas Estates webpage](#).
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News story: Memorandum of Understanding between Canada and United Kingdom

The UK and Canadian Governments have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) relating to each nation's ambitions for Digital Government.

Canada and the UK will now work together towards four shared goals:

- to provide better digital public services
- to ensure that we support everyone in using digital public services
- to promote economic growth
- to use open standards for government information, data and software

Minister for Digital Matt Hancock said:

Over the past six years the UK has developed a model for digital government transformation that is recognised as among the best in the world. This Memorandum of Understanding reflects the UK and Canada's shared ambition to make sure that digital innovation continues to underpin the delivery of our public services.

Scott Brison, President of Canada's Treasury Board, said:

It's a pleasure to sign this Memorandum of Understanding with the UK's Minister for Digital, Matt Hancock. This MOU commits us to working together to deliver improved government services to those we serve, and to do so in an open, transparent manner. I'm excited about the potential of what we can do.

The UK was a pioneer in the first wave of digital and technology reform of the public sector, and by 2016 we were ranked first by the United Nations in their digital government benchmark.

Our technology reforms alone saved over £4bn between 2011-2015 and specific initiatives such as crown hosting and the digital marketplace continue to deliver savings at significant scale through better commercial terms and diversification of supply.

Press release: New leave allowance for bereaved parents will be one of the most generous in the world

- New laws will give employed parents two weeks' paid leave if they lose a child under 18
- The bill goes significantly further than most other countries in providing this kind of workplace right for employees
- Businesses will be able to claim back parental bereavement pay from the Government

Employees who have suffered the death of a child will benefit from significant new paid leave allowances [under proposed laws published today](#) (13 October).

While the Government expects employers to be compassionate and flexible at such a difficult time, there is currently no legal requirement for employers to provide paid time off for grieving parents.

But under proposed new laws, for the first time employed parents who lose a child under the age of 18 will have the right to two weeks' paid leave to allow them time to grieve. This will honour the manifesto commitment to introduce a new entitlement for parental bereavement leave.

The Parental Bereavement (Pay and Leave) Bill, introduced by Kevin Hollinrake MP and supported by the Government, will give a day-one right to parental bereavement leave and employees with a minimum of 26 weeks' continuous service will be eligible for statutory parental bereavement pay.

Kevin Hollinrake MP, bill sponsor, said:

Sadly I have had constituents who have gone through this dreadful experience and while some parents prefer to carry on working, others need time off.

This new law will give employed parents a legal right to two weeks' paid leave, giving them that all-important time and space away from work to grieve at such a desperately sad time.

Margot James, Business Minister, said:

We want parents to feel properly supported by their employer when they go through the deeply distressing ordeal of losing a child.

That's why Government is backing this bill which goes significantly further than most other countries in providing this kind of

workplace right for employees.

Francine Bates, CEO of The Lullaby Trust said:

We warmly welcome this new law giving paid leave to bereaved parents. Losing a child is one of the most devastating experiences that a parent can go through and it is vitally important that they are supported by their employer and not made to return to work before they are ready.

We know many bereaved parents who have campaigned tirelessly for paid compassionate leave after the death of a child and are very pleased to see that the UK is now leading the way in supporting parents who need time away from work to grieve for their child.

Debbie Kerslake, Chief Executive of Cruse Bereavement Care, said:

Cruse Bereavement Care welcomes legislation introducing parental bereavement leave recognising that the death of a child is devastating.

It is vital that at such a distressing time those who are bereaved can take time away from work.

Small employers will be able to recover all statutory parental bereavement pay while larger employers will be able to reclaim almost all of it.

Details of the proposed new law were published today in Parliament ahead of the bill's second reading on 20 October, with the ambition of it becoming law in 2020.

Notes to editors

1. Currently under the Employment Rights Act, employees have a day-one right to take a "reasonable" amount of unpaid time off work to deal with an emergency involving a dependant, including making arrangements following the death of a dependant. What is "reasonable" depends on the circumstances but in practice the length of time off will be agreed between the employer and their employee
2. In the unlikely event that employee and employer can't agree what is "reasonable", this can be resolved through Acas or an employment tribunal
3. Acas has also published good practice guidance for employers on managing bereavement in the workplace.
4. We estimate the annual cost of statutory payments under this proposal to be between £1.3m and £2m

Press release: New charity investigation: Jole Rider Friends

The Charity Commission, the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales, has opened a new statutory inquiry into Jole Rider Friends, registered charity number 1112914. The investigation was opened on 5 September 2017.

The charity's objects are to advance education, in particular by providing or assisting in the provision of facilities and equipment at educational establishments in Africa.

The trustees have failed to submit their charity's annual accounts on time for the last two financial years; the charity is currently 257 days overdue in submitting their 2016 accounts. The charity's 2015 accounts contained an independent examiner's report which highlighted concerns surrounding potentially unauthorised payments and the charity's stock control.

The Commission has therefore opened a statutory inquiry to address significant regulatory concerns with regard to the administration, governance and management of the charity by the trustees.

The Commission stresses that opening an inquiry is not in itself a finding of wrongdoing. The purpose of an inquiry is to examine issues in detail and investigate and establish the facts so that the regulator can ascertain whether there has been misconduct or mismanagement; establish the extent of the risk to the charity's property, beneficiaries or work; and decide what action needs to be taken to resolve the serious concerns, if necessary using its investigative, protective and remedial powers to do so.

It is the Commission's policy, after it has concluded an inquiry, to publish a report detailing what issues the inquiry looked at, what actions were undertaken as part of the inquiry and what the outcomes were. [Reports of previous inquiries](#) by the Commission are available on GOV.UK.

The charity's details can be viewed on the Commission's [online charity search tool](#).

Ends

PR 68/17

Notes to editors

1. The Charity Commission is the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales. To find out more about our work, see our [annual report](#).
2. Search for charities on our [online register](#).

3. Section 46 of the Charities Act 2011 gives the Commission the power to institute inquiries. The opening of an inquiry gives the Commission access to a range of investigative, protective and remedial legal powers.