

News story: Tech of tomorrow offers more convenient, carbon-friendly living

First-of-a-kind technology with the potential to come to market quickly is being trialled across the UK to improve the lives of citizens.

From schemes that promote cleaner, greener travel to online deliveries straight to your car boot – these are some of the innovative ideas being trialled in Innovate UK's [first of a kind deployment competition](#).

With more than 70% of people estimated to be living in urban areas by 2040, city infrastructure and design requires a drastic change in order to support a high quality of life.

Each of the projects is designed to enable a step change in innovation that will make a real difference to the energy, transport and urban infrastructure of the future. In total, 12 projects will share £18 million to develop their ideas.

The ideas

Projects are exploring the potential to:

- take the flexibility of click and collect even further by delivering orders straight to the consumer's car boot. This project – by [Car Tap](#) – uses new reliable and secure keyless vehicle access technology. The trial will enable 100 customers of [Farmaround](#) to receive deliveries of organic boxes
- address the problem of disposing used batteries – one of the areas of the [Industrial Strategy](#) Challenge Fund – by exploring how old Nissan electric vehicle batteries can be used to store peak electricity from UK homes. There will be a 50 unit, 12-month trial led by [Powervault](#). Partners include Nissan, Aston University, Hyde Housing, Lyra Electronics, M&S Energy and Solarcentury
- ease congestion and problems with parking by operating a virtual loading bay. Commercial vehicle operators will be able to pay to reserve kerb space to load or unload. [Transport for London Road Network](#) (TLRN) is running the trial in Wandsworth, focusing on high-density loading 'hotspots'
- convert electricity into hydrogen at a mass scale to create affordable, green energy for the transport sector. The trial by [ITM Power](#) will provide energy balancing and refuelling for a fleet of 20 fuel cell buses in Birmingham
- encourage the adoption and use of electric vehicles by making charging even easier. [ZAPINAMO](#) is an easily deployable, rapid charging system. It is trialling 2 solutions:

- rapid charging for up to 20 taxis at once at Heathrow Airport, making it easier to park and charge and improving air quality
- a mobile charger to serve 4 Europcar E-Car Club electric vehicles, which comes directly to you as and when you need it

A full list of projects can be found in our list of [funding competition winners 2017](#).

Funding from Innovate UK

The projects are part of a £19 million investment by Innovate UK that invited businesses to test and evaluate new infrastructure technologies in the real world.

This is the second phase of the competition. All of the projects completed a finance and business case in the first phase. Those selected for phase 2 will now demonstrate their innovations in a commercial environment.

[Press release: New fast-track immigration appeal rules proposed](#)

A new fast-track system to speed up immigration and asylum appeals for those in detention, saving millions of pounds every year, has been drawn up by Ministers.

The government today set out plans for a new process for detained foreign nationals appealing a Home Office decision to remove them from the country.

The new rules, which if accepted would apply to detained foreign criminals and failed asylum seekers, could speed up about 2,000 cases every year and save the taxpayer an estimated £2.7million.

The proposals would mean the time between an initial decision and conclusion of an appeal to the First-tier Tribunal would be capped at between 25 and 28 working days – shaving around a third off current average timeframes.

Justice Secretary Elizabeth Truss said:

It is vital that foreign nationals who have no right to remain in the country should be removed as quickly as possible.

We must ensure that foreign criminals and failed asylum seekers are not exploiting the justice system by attempting to stay in the UK after their claims have been rejected.

Our proposals are also better for detainees as it will see their detention time cut.

The new plans would replace the old detained fast track appeals system, which was brought to an end in 2015 after a Court of Appeal ruling.

Proposals laid out today by the Ministry of Justice would include new safeguards, including a case management review and giving judges strengthened powers to decide whether cases can be expedited.

It is now for the independent Tribunal Procedure Committee (TPC), which sets rules for tribunals, to consider whether and how the proposals should be implemented.

1. [The plans](#), published today (18 April) following a consultation, would apply to those detained and appealing an immigration or asylum decision through a tribunal.
2. A previous fast track appeal process was set aside by the Court of Appeal in 2015, but the Court did not disagree with the principle of an expedited appeals process. The Government's proposals have taken the Court's judgment on board, and added new safeguards including a case management stage for each detained appellant, and new powers for judges to decide whether cases should be expedited.
3. The proposals will cut the length of time in detention for foreign nationals by speeding up the appeals process.
4. They propose that the time between the Home Office's decision and determination of the appeal by the First-tier Tribunal should be set at between 25 and 28 working days.
5. The current average for an appeal determination is about 36 working days.

Statement to Parliament: Conduct guidance for elections, 4 May 2017: written ministerial statement

Minister for the Cabinet Office Ben Gummer laid a statement in Parliament on guidance for civil servants in the pre-election period.

On 4 May 2017, elections will take place to local authorities in England, Wales and Scotland, including for directly elected Mayors to 7 combined authorities, and 2 local district councils in England.

As is normal ahead of elections, guidance has now been issued for civil

servants in UK government departments and those working in arm's length bodies on the principles that they should observe in relation to the conduct of government business in the run up to the forthcoming elections.

The guidance sets out the need to maintain the political impartiality of the Civil Service, and the need to ensure that public resources are not used for party political purposes during this period. The period of sensitivity preceding these elections began on 13 April.

The guidance was published on 10 April, and copies have been placed in the Libraries of the House and [on GOV.UK](#).

Press release: Series of inspections to focus on children living with neglect

A new set of inspections will examine how local partner agencies – including local authorities, health and probation services and the police – are working together to protect children living with, or at risk of, neglect.

The series of six joint targeted area inspections (JTAI) involving Ofsted, Care Quality Commission (CQC), HMI Constabulary and HMI Probation will begin in May this year.

JTAI assess how effectively agencies are working together in their local area to help and protect children. Each set of joint inspections also evaluates the multi-agency response to a particular issue or theme.

Following feedback from key stakeholders, the four inspectorates decided that the latest series of JTAI should look at local support services for children living with neglect. In particular, the inspections will focus on the experiences of children aged between seven and 15 years old, who may be at higher risk of going missing or being exploited, or who exhibit challenging behaviours in adolescence

Uniquely for this JTAI, inspectors will also speak with school leaders and staff to get a wider picture of how neglect is identified and referred.

HM Chief Inspector Amanda Spielman said:

Identifying signs of neglect in middle childhood and adolescence can be very complex, as children at this age experience and respond to neglect differently from younger children. However, at any age, the impact of childhood neglect can be lifelong.

It's crucial that local partner agencies understand the long-term effects of neglect and recognise the need for early and appropriate intervention.

These inspections will provide valuable insight into the local area response to neglect. And importantly, they will highlight good practice that others can learn from.

Professor Steve Field, Chief Inspector of General Practice at the Care Quality Commission, said:

Neglect is a terrible and far-reaching problem that can present itself in many aspects of a child's life. We all have a responsibility to safeguard those children who find themselves at risk of neglect, and that means understanding where these risks might be and also where services are doing great work to support children in their area.

By focusing on individual children's experiences and tracking them across services, these inspections will provide an invaluable chance to see how agencies are working together and the impact this has on the welfare of young people.

HM Inspector of Constabulary, Wendy Williams, said:

It is important that all police officers have the correct knowledge to fully understand the signs of neglect. As HMIC has said previously, although the protection of the vulnerable is not just the responsibility of the police, police officers will often be the first point of contact for vulnerable victims.

These inspections aim to provide an understanding of how the police works with partner agencies not just to identify child neglect, but also to provide the best possible support and protection to keep children safe.

HM Chief Inspector of Probation, Dame Glenys Stacey, said:

Many of the children of adult offenders may be experiencing neglect. This programme will give us the opportunity to examine and report on the work of probation providers in improving the lives of children and young people living in very difficult circumstances. Youth offending teams supervise many children and young people who have experienced and continue to experience neglect in childhood and towards adulthood.

We will identify the extent to which youth offending teams work

with these children and young people to reduce the impact of neglect and improve their life chances.

Guidance published [today](#) sets out how the inspections will work in practice.

Each inspection report will include narrative findings, clearly setting out what local partners are doing well and what they need to do to improve.

In 2014, Ofsted produced a report on local arrangements to safeguard neglected children under the age of 10. This multi-agency review of the experiences of older neglected children will build on that evidence base.

When all six inspections are complete, an overview report will be published to highlight learning and good practice on the theme of childhood neglect.

Notes to editors:

1. Joint targeted area inspections were launched in January 2016. The first series focused on children at risk of sexual exploitation and those missing from home, school or care. The individual inspection reports are all available on the Ofsted website and a thematic overview report will be published in the autumn.
2. The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), academies, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.
3. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health and social care in England. It makes sure health and social care services provide people with safe, effective, caring, well-led and responsive care, and encourages care services to improve. It monitors, inspects and regulates services to make sure they meet fundamental standards of quality and safety and publishes what it finds to help people choose care.
4. HMIC is an independent inspectorate, inspecting policing in the public interest, and rigorously examines the efficiency and effectiveness of police forces to tackle crime and terrorism, improve criminal justice and raise confidence. HMIC inspects all 43 police forces in England and Wales, together with other major policing bodies.
5. HMI Probation is an independent inspectorate, sponsored by the Ministry of Justice, and reporting directly to the Secretary of State on the effectiveness of work with adults, children and young people who have offended, aimed at reducing reoffending and protecting the public. Further information about the work of HMI Probation is at www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation.

[News story: GC function explained at lunchtime lecture for European Commission](#)

The Deputy Government Chemist, Selvarani Elahi, gave a lunchtime lecture at the European Commission's Joint Research Centre in Geel, Belgium

The Deputy Government Chemist, Selvarani Elahi, was invited to give a lunchtime lecture at the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (EC JRC) in Geel, Belgium on the 28 March 2017.

Selvarani gave a presentation titled "Dispute Resolution and Fighting Food Fraud – UK Style" in which she gave an overview of the history of LGC, the home of the Government Chemist. She explained the role of the Government Chemist and highlighted three case studies, showing the value the function brings to food testing related disputes.

Selvarani also detailed the benefits of joining the [Food Authenticity Network](#), a free on-line resource developed by UK government to help bring together those involved in food authenticity testing.

Following the lunchtime lecture, Selvarani met with the Head of the EC JRC's Food Fraud Unit and other scientists to discuss and agree avenues for future collaboration. The meeting was very fruitful and it was agreed to pursue future collaboration opportunities.