

[News story: Lifetime ISAs available from 6 April 2017](#)

Opening a lifetime ISA

You can open a lifetime ISA if you are aged 18 or over but under 40. You must be either:

- resident in the UK
- a Crown Servant (for example a diplomat or civil servant)
- the spouse or civil partner of a Crown Servant

As with other [ISAs](#), you won't pay tax on any interest, income or capital gains from cash or investments held within your lifetime ISA.

Saving in a lifetime ISA

You can save up to £4,000 each year in a lifetime ISA. There is no maximum monthly savings contribution, and you can continue to save in it until you reach 50. The account can stay open after then but you can't make any more payments into it.

The £4,000 limit, if used, will form part of your overall annual ISA limit. From the tax year 2017 to 2018, the overall annual tax limit will be £20,000.

Example

You could save:

- £11,000 in a cash ISA
- £2,000 in a stocks and shares ISA
- £3,000 in an innovative finance ISA
- £4,000 in a lifetime ISA in one tax year

Your lifetime ISA won't close when the tax year finishes. You'll keep your savings on a tax-free basis for as long as you keep the money in your lifetime ISA.

Lifetime ISAs can hold cash, stocks and shares qualifying investments, or a combination of both.

Government bonus

When you save into your lifetime ISA, you will receive a government bonus of 25% of the money you put in, up to a maximum of £1,000 a year.

Withdrawals

You can withdraw the funds held in your lifetime ISA before you're 60, but you'll have to pay a withdrawal charge of 25% of the amount you withdraw.

A withdrawal charge will not apply if you are:

- using it towards a first home
- aged 60
- terminally ill with less than 12 months to live

If you die, your lifetime ISA will end on the date of your death and there won't be a withdrawal charge for withdrawing funds or assets from your account.

Transferring a lifetime ISA

You can transfer your lifetime ISA to another lifetime ISA with a different provider without incurring a withdrawal charge.

If you transfer it to a different type of ISA, you will have to pay a withdrawal charge.

Saving for your first home

Your lifetime ISA savings and the bonus can be used towards buying your first home, worth up to £450,000, without incurring a withdrawal charge. You must be buying your home with a mortgage.

You must use a conveyancer or solicitor to act for you in the purchase, and the funds must be paid direct to them by your lifetime ISA provider.

If you are buying with another first time buyer, and you each have a lifetime ISA, you can both use your government bonus. You can also buy a house with someone who isn't a first time buyer but they will not be able to use their lifetime ISA without incurring a withdrawal charge.

Your lifetime ISA must have been opened for at least 12 months before you can withdraw funds from it to buy your first home.

If you have a [Help to Buy ISA](#), you can transfer those savings into your lifetime ISA or you can continue to save into both – but you will only be able to use the government bonus from one to buy your first home.

Contact your provider directly for more information about the lifetime ISA.

News story: Parole Board Quarterly Performance Report

From:

First published:

17 February 2017

Part of:

Statistics and performance information for quarter two of 2016/2017 (July – September).

PDF, 679KB, 7 pages

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The Parole Board is committed to keeping stakeholders informed of our work and progress towards achieving our objectives. As part of this openness we will publish our quarterly performance report which is produced for the Board's Management Committee. This report represents a summary of Parole Board operational performance in all its key areas of external delivery and internal management. It provides a snapshot of that period which is used to advise and guide on performance and executive decision making.

The data in this pack shows the large volume of business being processed by the Board, and how that business feeds into hearing demand and outcomes. The number of cases outstanding is now falling on a consistent trajectory and it is hoped the Board will make further significant progress during the rest of the year as we aim to increase the number of hearings held to 750-800 a month.

Based on the year so far, the Board can be confident that by the end of this year we will yet again have completed more oral hearings than ever before and, as the backlog clears, will safely release more people. The deferral rate of hearings remains a concern despite falling over the last few years, as it remains at a high level. We are considering what further steps can be taken to tackle these problems by sharing the reasons for deferrals with the Public Protection Casework team within NOMS (National Offender Management Service) and the National Probation Service.

The below information is intended to aid understanding of the attached performance report, which covers quarter two of 2016/2017 (July – September):

1. Paper Hearings – MCA assessments This graph shows the outcomes from all paper based hearings on a 12 month rolling basis. All cases, irrespective of sentence type or review category are assessed on the papers in the first instance through the Member Case Assessment (MCA) process.
There are a number of outcomes possible at the MCA stage, depending on the sentence type: no release, direct to oral hearing, release, defer.
2. Listing Queue for oral hearings This graph shows the queue of cases deemed ready to be considered at oral hearing and currently waiting to be allocated a confirmed date. The graph additionally records those cases that have been waiting more than 90 days for a confirmed oral hearing date, including a figure specifically for IPP cases. This highlights the capacity constraints across the system to list all those cases that are ready to be heard.
3. Oral Hearings Outcomes and Release Rate This graph shows the outcomes from all oral hearings on a 12 month rolling basis. In addition it shows the conduction rate (cases that do actually progress to on the day against the original number of cases listed) and completion rate, i.e. those cases that are concluded on the day. The release rate is also captured in the smaller chart.
4. Deferrals These graphs show the number of cases which are deferred on the day for each month in a 12 month rolling period and also by quarter since 2013. Identifying and mitigating against deferrals is a key aim to contribute to reducing the backlog.
5. Generic Parole Process – Cases Outstanding This graph shows the volume of Generic Parole Process cases that are outstanding in a 12 month rolling period (it does not include recall cases) Case outstanding is defined as all cases referred to the Parole Board for a GPP review, where the original target date to conclude the review has now passed but the review is still ongoing, and as such overdue. A case may be outstanding for a variety of reasons including complexity of the case, case readiness, justified and reasonable deferral or because of an inability of the Board to list the case.
This is a key metric for the Parole Board and reducing this number down to pre-Osborn figures of around 1200 by the end of 2017 is a core focus of our strategy.

If you have any questions relating to this report please contact our Performance Team on info@paroleboard.gsi.gov.uk

Press release: West Belfast shooting

From:

First published:

17 February 2017

Part of:

James Brokenshire issued a statement following the shooting of a child in the Forest Street area of West Belfast on Thursday 16 February.

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said:

This was a brutal and shocking attack on a child by abusive criminals.

I will continue to offer all possible support to the PSNI and Department of Justice to ensure that the thugs responsible are held to account. Collectively we will continue to work to build a society where violence of this sort has no place.

News story: Joint Troika Statement Supporting African Union High Level Implementation Panel Peace Process in Sudan

From:

First published:

17 February 2017

Part of:

The Troika (Norway, UK and US) urge signatories of the AUHIP-brokered Roadmap Agreement to honour their commitments.

The Troika (Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States) expresses its

continued support for the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) peace process, led by former South African President Thabo Mbeki. In support of the AUHIP-brokered Roadmap Agreement signed by both the Government of Sudan and the opposition, the Troika urges the signatories to honor the Agreement by concluding comprehensive cessations of hostilities and engaging in an inclusive political dialogue. The Government of Sudan must now create an environment that is conducive to freedom of expression and political participation by both armed and unarmed opposition in Sudan.

The Troika is also encouraged by the Government of Sudan's decision to accept the United States' proposal to support humanitarian assistance to South Kordofan and Blue Nile states (the "Two Areas"). The U.S. proposal is intended to facilitate humanitarian assistance to affected populations in the Two Areas, in line with AUHIP efforts for broader negotiated humanitarian access. The Troika urges the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North to swiftly accept this proposal and facilitate the delivery of life-saving assistance to those in need in the Two Areas. The ongoing unilateral ceasefires are a significant step toward peace throughout Sudan. However, in order to realize sustainable peace, all parties must engage in a political process. The Troika also encourages continued engagement by the armed movements from Darfur with the AUHIP peace process. We call on the Sudan Liberation Movement – Abdul Wahid Al Nur to cease hostilities and immediately engage with the AUHIP peace process. The Troika also encourages the Government of Sudan to make progress on addressing the root causes of the conflict.

Further information

[Press release: Change of Her Majesty's British High Commissioner to the Republic of Ghana](#)

From:

First published:

17 February 2017

Part of:

Mr Iain Walker has been appointed Her Majesty's British High Commissioner to the Republic of Ghana

Mr Iain Walker has been appointed Her Majesty's British High Commissioner to the Republic of Ghana in succession to Mr Jon Benjamin, who will be

transferring to another Diplomatic Service appointment. Mr Walker will take up his appointment in August 2017.

Curriculum Vitae

Full name Iain Walker

Married to Claire Walker

Children Three

2012 – present FCO, Director Finance and Board member

2010 – 2012 FCO, Deputy Director Finance

2010 Joined FCO

2008 – 2010 Price Water House Coopers, Assistant Director, Consulting

2006 – 2008 Cabinet Office, Policy Advisor

2004 – 2006 Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, Head of Commercial and Change

2002 – 2004 GOAL (Global NGO) Programme Management and Change (Malawi, Ethiopia, & Zimbabwe)

1998 – 2002 Ernst & Young, Banking and Capital Markets

Further information