

# New duties for councils to provide support in safe accommodation for domestic abuse victims

Press release

New regulations and guidance set out the level of support councils are required to provide.



- Government publishes guidance setting out how councils should support victims of domestic abuse and their children
- New regulations to help ensure victims and their children are supported in the right accommodation
- Bringing into force changes set out in the Domestic Abuse Act

Domestic abuse victims who need to escape home will be provided with better support in safe accommodation from today (1 October 2021).

New regulations and guidance published today set out the level of support councils are required to provide.

These include:

- A clear expectation that expert specialist support is provided to victims in safe accommodation that best supports their needs, whether in refuges or other safe housing
- Guidance that states B&Bs or mixed homeless hostels are not the right place for victims to recover from abuse.
- Councils will support to victims to stay in their own homes, if the perpetrator has left and the home can be made safe

Councils have already benefited from £125 million to start to meet their duties. Support for victims will include counselling for adults and children, advocacy with services such as GPs, social workers and welfare benefits, support with rehousing, and advice on staying safe. Some victims will need more specialist support, for example interpreters, immigration advice, or

mental ill health, drug or alcohol support.

Minister for rough sleeping and housing Eddie Hughes MP said:

Domestic abuse is a horrendous crime and specialist support from experienced domestic abuse services is key if victims and their families are going to get the help they need to rebuild their lives.

This is an important step in making sure victims up and down the country who need a place of safety receive the level of care they deserve.

Councils will have to work with partners such as police and local domestic abuse charities and publish strategies on how they will provide support to victims who need safe accommodation by January 2022.

A National Expert Steering Group led by the minister with responsibility for homelessness and domestic abuse and the Domestic Abuse Commissioner will monitor the progress of authorities in implementing these changes.

See the [full guidance](#) and [consultation response](#).

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## [Edition 27: News from the Adjudicator](#)

### **Welcome from the Groceries Code Adjudicator**

[Edition 27: News from the Adjudicator](#) (PDF, 187KB, 2 pages)

I have just held my first annual conference and although I was disappointed that it had to be held virtually, I am delighted that so many were able to attend. Participants heard from Small Business Minister Paul Scully and the Chief Executive of the Food and Drink Federation, Ian Wright, among others. The Conference was also an opportunity to share the insights from the YouGov deep dive interviews with suppliers carried out in the summer. Views expressed in these interviews and my recent discussions with suppliers will help shape my activities in the coming months and I set out my priorities in a presentation to the conference. You can watch this presentation on the [GCA YouTube channel](#).

## **Best practice statement on audits**

Lately, I have been hearing concerns about retrospective audit reviews, especially those related to promotional activity. Issues such as an apparent lack of data, or cherry picking of data, the time taken to settle matters and, in some cases, attempts to link settlement of issues to current and future trading have been raised with me. It concerns me such audits can disproportionately affect smaller suppliers.

In a previous newsletter I reported that, with the addition of Sainsbury's from March 2022, all 13 Designated Retailers (Retailers) will be signed up to the commitment that limits the time that each party can reopen audit claims to the current year and the previous two financial years. But I have gone further and developed a best practice statement on audits now published on my website. In agreeing this best practice statement all 13 Retailers have committed to conducting audits in a transparent way to reduce the number of invalid claims.

The statement is intended to promote better working practices by the Retailers, in the spirit of continuous improvement. To that end, Retailers should properly scrutinise claims before they make them, they should share with suppliers the data and documents that support a claim, and claims should be concluded in a reasonable timeframe. The settlement of claims must not be conflated with current or future trading. Where Retailers use third parties to make and pursue claims on their behalf, that should be clear to suppliers from the outset, and Retailers should review how they work with the third party to ensure compliance with the Code. I will continue discussing audits with Retailers and would like to hear from any suppliers who continue to have concerns about this issue.

## **Delisting**

As Retailers are generally reviewing their ranges following the impact of Covid-19 and the change in shopper behaviour, I'm receiving lots of queries around the de-listing process. I have asked Retailers about their de-listing policies and highlighted issues (in a very general way) that have been raised with me. I have sought to ensure that the buyers at the Retailers actively engage in dialogue around delisting decisions so that suppliers really understand the commercial reasons they are being given for decisions.

I have also been monitoring the Retailers to ensure that delisting decisions are properly governed to eliminate, for example, the use of 12 weeks as a fixed delist period. If suppliers are receiving any fixed delist periods, I want to hear about them. The concept of reasonable notice which Retailers must give to suppliers whose products are being delisted is not susceptible to an arithmetical or artificial formula. If I am required to determine whether reasonable notice has been given to a supplier, I will review all the circumstances and I am not limited in what I can take into account in making that assessment. Every facet of the relationship – including length and depth – will be an important consideration.

## Supplier concerns about inexperienced buyers

A strong sentiment in the YouGov interviews was the emergence of what some suppliers describe as a “new breed of buyer” with little experience of dealing with suppliers, many of whom have worked with the Retailers over a long period of time. A telling comment was that many of these buyers “have a spreadsheet approach to relationships”. Among suppliers there is a concern about a lack of knowledge about the Code among these new buyers. But there also seems to be a lack of knowledge about the category that they are working in, with suppliers spending a lot of time and effort educating the buyer, only to see the buyer move category just when the knowledge bank has grown. I am urging the Retailers to not only train their buyers in the requirements of the Code but also in wider relationship building and in really understanding what they are asking suppliers to do. This should help change the perception that buyers are automatons controlled by remote senior managers. Responding to these concerns falls within my priority to drive forward a whole-house approach to Code compliance. I have already been discussing this priority with the senior leadership of the Retailers and I will now be expanding on these previous discussions. In my view, the tone from the top is vital and I will be monitoring this carefully because many suppliers speaking to YouGov were convinced that those buyers they found a challenge were merely passing on messages crafted at the top of the business.

I am sending a clear message to the Retailers that they need to maintain and enhance the progress made in recent years in building constructive relationships with suppliers. That progress has benefitted all parts of the sector and made a real difference to consumers. During challenging times it has shown its worth. The sector obviously faces new challenges, and we still don't know if we are finally through the Covid woods. Constructive relationships must be for yesterday, today... and for tomorrow.

Mark White

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## Meet the CCOs

Mark White has invited the Retailers' Code Compliance Officers to film new videos introducing themselves and explaining how they work with suppliers, including their commitments to maintain confidentiality. A preview of the videos was shown at the annual conference and the full videos will be uploaded to the [GCA YouTube channel](#).

Subscribe to the channel to watch the videos as they are published and other updates from the GCA.

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If you would like to get in touch with the GCA and his team to tell him about your experiences, please email [Enquiries@GroceriesCode.gov.uk](mailto:Enquiries@GroceriesCode.gov.uk) or call 020 7215 6537.

You can also report issues 24/7, 365 days a year, via the completely confidential platform [www.telltheGCA.co.uk](http://www.telltheGCA.co.uk)

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## Insecure ID cards phased out as travel document to strengthen UK borders

- UK Border Force introduces new rules to limit use of insecure ID cards from 1 October.
- Change will prevent organised crime gangs and others who seek to abuse the system.
- ID cards are some of the most abused documents seen by Border Force officers.
- New approach will strengthen UK borders and means many EU, EEA and Swiss citizens now follow the same rules for entering the UK as travellers from the rest of the world.

From today (Friday 1 October 2021), most EU, EEA and Swiss citizens will need a valid passport to enter the UK as the government stops accepting national identity (ID) cards as a travel document.

These ID cards are some of the most abused documents seen by Border Force officers and, last year, almost half of all false documents detected at the border were EU, EEA or Swiss ID cards.

They can be easily abused by people attempting to come into the country illegally and by stopping accepting these forms of ID, the government can prevent organised criminal gangs and illegal migrants using them to enter the UK unlawfully.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

The UK has a proud history of being open to the world, and Global Britain will continue in that tradition. But we must clamp down on the criminals that seek to enter our country illegally using forged documents.

By ending the use of insecure ID cards we are strengthening our border and delivering on the people's priority to take back control of our immigration system.

We are doing this as part of our New Plan for Immigration, which will be firm on those who seek to abuse the system, and fair on those who play by the rules.

ID cards are a notoriously insecure form of travel document, because:

- Some cards do not have biometric data, making it easier to falsify the data recorded.
- They are more difficult to cross-reference with criminal record databases than passports.
- Although a new ID card security standard is being introduced across the EU, cards will still be in circulation for the next 5 to 10 years which do not conform to these standards.
- Inconsistencies in the design and security features of the cards make them easier to counterfeit than passports.

The move was first announced in October 2020.

This change fulfils our commitment to take back control of our borders and means EU, EEA and Swiss citizens now follow the same rules for entering the UK as travellers from the rest of the world. However, the government remains committed to protecting the rights of EU citizens who have made their lives in the UK, and as we agreed when we left the EU, those in the EU Settlement Scheme or with equivalent rights will be able to continue using ID cards until at least 2025.

The move also marks an important step in the government's long-term strategy to deliver a fully digitised border, providing a more streamlined and seamless customer experience for travellers entering the UK.

Those without a passport from 1 October are liable to be refused entry to the UK – although Border Force officers will retain the right to exercise discretion on individual cases.

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## [New era of public health to tackle inequalities and level up the UK](#)

- New body will tackle health disparities across the UK which mean men in the most deprived areas in England are expected to live nearly 10 years fewer than those in the least deprived
- Preventing health conditions before they develop will reduce pressure on the health and care system
- Chief Medical Officer, Professor Chris Whitty, will provide professional leadership to OHID

Health disparities across the UK will be tackled through a new approach to public health focused on stopping debilitating health conditions before they

develop, as the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) launches today (Friday 1 October).

OHID marks a distinct shift in focus at the heart of government in addressing the unacceptable health disparities that exist across the country to help people live longer, healthier lives and reduce the pressure on the health and care system as work is done to reduce the backlog and put social care on a long-term sustainable footing.

The latest figures show clear trends, based on geographical location, of a person's life expectancy and the years they can expect to live a healthy life. For example:

- men in the most deprived areas in England are expected to live nearly 10 years fewer than those in the least deprived. Women in the same areas can expect to live 7 years fewer
- smoking is more prevalent in more deprived areas and one of the leading causes of inequalities in life expectancy; an international study found it accounts for half the difference in mortality between the least and most deprived men aged 35 to 39
- Obesity is widespread but more prevalent among the most deprived areas; prevalence is almost 8% higher among those living in the most deprived decile of local authorities (66.6%) compared to those in the least deprived areas (58.8%)

OHID has been set up to change this – it will co-ordinate an ambitious programme across central and local government, the NHS and wider society, drawing on expert advice, analysis and evidence, to drive improvements in the public's health.

Preventing illness before it develops will help to reduce the pressure on services, saving significant money and resource, and ensuring our record investment in the health and social care system goes as far as possible.

Health and Social Care Secretary, Sajid Javid said:

The pandemic has laid bare the health disparities we face not only as a country, but as communities and individuals.

This must change and this body marks a new era of preventative healthcare to help people live healthier, happier and longer lives.

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities will be the driving force across government, supported by communities, academics, industry and employers, to level up the health of our nation, which will reduce the pressure on our NHS and care

services.

The Health and Social Care Secretary has today written to community leaders, charities, industry experts and key employers to join the OHID's mission to act on wider factors that affect people's health, such as work, housing and education.

With around 80% of a person's long-term health dictated not by the care they receive but by these wider factors, tackling the problem will be a cross-government effort.

Chief Medical Officer, Professor Chris Whitty, will provide professional leadership to OHID. New Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Dr Jeanelle de Gruchy, will advise government on clinical and public health matters as the co-lead for OHID, alongside the DHSC Director General for OHID, Jonathan Marron.

Chief Medical Officer, Professor Chris Whitty said:

Health inequalities in England are stark and they are challenging to address but it is important we do so.

People across the country can live in better health for longer. OHID will support people to do so with an evidence based approach.

Reducing health inequalities and keeping people in better health for longer is in everyone's interest – it is good for the individual, families, society, the economy and NHS. That's why OHID will work collaboratively across the national, regional and local levels as well as with the NHS, academia, the third sector, scientists, researchers and industry.

The biggest preventable killers, such as tobacco, obesity, alcohol and recreational drugs, cost the taxpayer billions of pounds each year to fund treatment and long-term care, as well as putting bed capacity pressure on the health service.

To change course on these preventable issues, OHID will work with the rest of government, the NHS, local government and the wider public health system and industry to improve detection and prevention for people at risk of ill health, as well as applying cutting edge science, technology, evidence and data to target support where it is most needed.

The pandemic has demonstrated the vital importance of having a strong public health system. As Public Health England is replaced, the new UK Health Security Agency will have a laser-like focus on health protection, while OHID will improve health and tackle disparities in health outcomes across the country. The government will continue to work as a system and with our partners in the NHS and local government to deliver.



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# UK commits additional £7.2 million to tackling illegal wildlife trade

- UK government announces funding for conservation projects to protect species including tigers, orangutans and pangolins
- 17 projects around the world awarded UK government funding under Round 7 of [Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund](#)
- Applicants invited to apply for Round 8 to support next year's innovative projects

Endangered species including tigers, orangutans, pangolins and rosewood trees will be better protected under a range of projects funded by government this year aimed at tackling the damaging illegal wildlife trade. Seventeen conservation projects across the globe will receive over £7 million from the UK's flagship [Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund](#).

The illegal wildlife trade, currently estimated to be worth up to £17 billion globally per year is a serious organised crime which threatens species with extinction, fuels corruption, deprives some of the world's poorest communities of sustainable livelihoods and degrades ecosystems ability to store carbon.

The UK Government's Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund provides essential support to projects around the world in tackling the illegal wildlife trade for the benefit of wildlife, nature, local communities and economies, and global security.

The funding granted by the UK government under the fund this year will be vital to bending the curve on biodiversity loss and poverty alleviation around the world. There are eight projects in Asia, six in Africa and three in South America.

## **The projects set to receive funding under Round 7 include to:**

- **Combat pangolin trafficking in Philippines-**

This project will protect two important Critically Endangered pangolin populations by working with local communities to support them manage their natural resources, explicitly linking pangolin conservation to social benefits and disincentivising poaching through strengthened enforcement. (Zoological Society of London). Pangolins are the most trafficked mammal on the planet. Between 2014 and 2018, seizures of pangolin scales increased tenfold and it is now estimated that 1 million pangolins have been trafficked in the last 10 years.

- This project will work in the Banke-Bardia complex – home to the second largest population of endangered Royal Bengal Tigers in Nepal – to build capacity in park rangers, strengthen wildlife enforcement and raise awareness of importance of tigers among local communities. (National Trust for Nature Conservation). Big cats are also threatened by poaching with their body parts often used for luxury home décor and taxidermy purposes, while their bones are used in traditional Chinese medicine. Seizures of tiger products have risen in recent years, as has traffickers’ interest in other big cat parts that can be used as substitutes for these products.

- **Tackle the illegal wildlife trade in Malawi by supporting judicial processes-**

The project will conduct courtroom monitoring, private prosecutions, support open judicial dialogue and case law reviews. This work will drive transparency in judicial processes, reduce corruption and deliver on-the-job mentoring, increasing protection for rhinos, pangolins and rosewood timber. (Lilongwe Wildlife Trust)

- **Tackle criminal networks involved in the illegal wildlife trade of rosewood timber, bears and macaws in Bolivia and Peru-**

This project will disrupt illegal wildlife trade networks in Bolivia and Peru by embedding financial investigation and asset recovery into illegal wildlife trade enforcement practice, building on the successful application of asset recovery techniques to combat organised crime and corruption in Latin America, benefitting people, animals and plants. (Basel Institute on Governance)

- **Protect orangutans and elephants in Indonesia –**

Sumatran orangutans and elephants are extremely vulnerable to illegal wildlife trade as demand for these species is high. This project will enhance illegal wildlife trade legislation and enforcement capacity through on-the-ground protection and support community led wildlife protection. (PanEco)

The trade in illegally logged timber undermines the effective management of forest resources and thereby contributes to deforestation. Demand for tropical hardwood timber has grown significantly in the past two decades, with illegal African rosewood entering some legal supply chains, such as the international wood furniture trade.

## **International Environment Minister Lord Goldsmith said:**

The illegal wildlife trade destroys wildlife, threatens species and fuels corruption. Iconic species including tigers, orangutans and elephants are all moving closer towards extinction and it is important that we do everything we can to reverse this decline.

This year the government is committing more money than ever before under the Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund to combat this terrible trade and these vital projects will help to ensure that these species are protected for generations to come.

## **Independent Chair of the Illegal Wildlife Trade Advisory Group John Scanlon said:**

The illegal wildlife trade has a devastating impact on biodiversity, entire ecosystems and their ability to sequester carbon, security, local communities and national economies, posing a serious risk to human and animal health.

The Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund ensures support for vital local efforts to protect some of the world's most endangered species of wild animals and plants. This well-targeted funding plays a unique and critically important role in the global funding landscape and will support innovative projects that will be a catalyst for sustainable change to help end wildlife crime.

## **Successful Round 7 applicant and ZSL's pangolin Technical Specialist Carly Waterman said:**

Pangolins are the world's most trafficked wild mammals, with one snatched from the wild every five minutes. Philippine pangolin populations are estimated to have declined by more than 80 per cent in the recent past decade due to hunting and poaching for their meat and scales.

It is important that local communities benefit from, and are empowered to protect threatened wildlife. Our project will develop a model for community-led pangolin conservation that can be replicated throughout the species' range, creating incentives for protecting pangolins, strengthening disincentives for poaching, and empowering local communities to manage their natural resources. The support we receive from the Challenge Fund will really aid this work.

The UK is investing over £46m between 2014 and 2022 to combat illegal trade by reducing demand of illegal wildlife trade products, strengthening enforcement, ensuring effective legal frameworks and developing sustainable

livelihoods. This latest boost in funding builds upon previous successful Challenge Fund projects which to date have committed over £34 million to 109 projects in over 50 countries since the Fund's establishment in 2014.

Today's announcement also marks the launch of Round 8 of Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund funding for projects working to tackle illegal wildlife trade in sub-Saharan Africa, East and South East Asia and Latin America. Projects which aim to reduce demand for illegal wildlife trade products are strongly encouraged to apply, however all projects which aim to combat the illegal wildlife trade will be eligible.

Applicants to Round 8 of the fund have until 22 November to submit their Stage 1 application. For more information on previous projects as well as how to apply please visit [www.iwt.challengefund.org.uk](http://www.iwt.challengefund.org.uk)

The UK Government is committed to supporting conservation globally and follows our plan to improve standards both domestically and overseas as set out in our Action Plan for Animal Welfare.

### **Further information:**

- **ZSL (Zoological Society of London)**

Founded in 1826, ZSL (Zoological Society of London) is an international scientific, conservation and educational charity whose mission is to promote and achieve the worldwide conservation of animals and their habitats. Our mission is realised through our ground-breaking science, our active conservation projects in more than 50 countries and our two Zoos, ZSL London Zoo and ZSL Whipsnade Zoo. For more information visit [www.zsl.org](http://www.zsl.org)

- **CASE STUDY: Following the Money I and II – IWT Capacity-Building.**

Between 2016 to 2020, the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) led two projects funded by the IWT Challenge Fund that increased law enforcement and private sector capacity to 'follow the money' and target the ultimate beneficiaries profiting from IWT. To date, RUSI has trained over 300 participants from over 54 government agencies and 40 financial institutions to report and investigate the proceeds of IWT in Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.

On 28th September, Malawian courts sentenced Chinese national Yunhua Lin to serve 14-years in prison for wildlife trafficking and money laundering offences. RUSI's research, funded by IWT Challenge Fund, established a vital evidence base used to encourage global policymakers to increase the use of financial investigations in IWT cases.

**RUSI project lead Alexandria Reid said:**

It is unacceptable that most enforcement action begins and ends with a seizure of illegal wildlife products. Financial investigations – routine for other serious crimes – are seldom undertaken in IWT cases. Financial investigations enable law enforcement to target those who actually profit from the trade.

Without financial intelligence, we cannot reduce the disproportionate focus on low-level figures who are easily replaced members of a criminal network. The Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund has provided essential funding to raise awareness and upskill investigators in the use of 'follow the money' approaches.