

UK sends shelter kits and solar powered lanterns for up to 1300 vulnerable families in Haiti

Press release

The UK Government is sending relief supplies to Haiti, to help vulnerable families affected by the recent earthquake.



Relief supplies leaving the FCDO warehouse in Kemble, Credit: FCDO/ UK Government

- Today (24 August) the UK has sent 20 metric tonnes of aid items to Haiti, to help recovery efforts following the recent devastating earthquake;
- The shipment includes shelter kits and solar powered lanterns for up to 1,300 families, with more such support to follow later in the month;
- The aid left Heathrow via a British Airways/ IAG Cargo flight today and is due to arrive in Haiti early in the morning (UK time) on 25 August;
- The kits will go to vulnerable families impacted by the earthquake and will be distributed by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) across the country;
- This is part of £1m UK support to Haiti announced last week [Gov.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

UK Minister of State for the Caribbean Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon said:

The UK is now providing vital shelter and lighting for up to 1,300 vulnerable families in Haiti, following the recent devastating earthquake.

We committed up to £1m of UK aid and a Royal Navy Royal Fleet Auxiliary ship to support the relief effort and stand ready to provide more to the international response.

Relief supplies being loaded onto the IAG Cargo flight at Heathrow Airport,
Credit: IAG Cargo

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[Maentwrog goes aerial!](#)

Two 18 metre-long bridge beams, each weighing 1.7 tonnes, were lowered onto prepared foundations with 25mm precision.

The bridge has been replaced four times since the Maentwrog began generating carbon-free electricity in 1928. Its exposed mountainside location runs between the plant's two high pressure pipelines that surge 4,000 gallons a second driving the two turbines below.

Andy McAteer, Maentwrog Manager, said:

Weather conditions were near perfect for the operation and it was mesmerising to watch the helicopter pilot skillfully lift the bridge beams into position between the pipelines. It is a great credit to our supply chain partners, Mona Lifting and Heli-Lift Services, for their extensive planning to ensure the installation was successful.

Magnox CEO, Gwen Parry-Jones, added:

Magnox has launched its first sustainability strategy which sets out the actions we will take over the next five years to carry out our mission to create a legacy that future generations are proud of. We will continue to invest in Maentwrog Hydro-Electric plant's operational infrastructure to ensure it contributes to this legacy by generating renewable energy for as long as possible.

The design and fabrication of the footbridge took six months at the Mona facility in Anglesey. This included a mock-up and full trial air lift to ensure dimensional accuracy and slinging trials to guarantee that all the components could be safely lifted by helicopter.

Gethin Jones, Mona Lifting Operations Manager, commented:

A team of 12, including two apprentices, worked on this unique project which began with a 3D dimensional scan of the site to

ascertain the abutment points the new bridge would be attached to. We reformed one of the degraded abutments, erected scaffolding for site access and removed the former wooden structure.

All operations were carried out to approved Safe Systems of Work, RAMS and Lift Plans generated by the Mona Team.

The Mona Group has worked with Magnox Limited for sixteen years manufacturing cranes, bespoke lifting devices, mechanical components and carrying out decommissioning work. The Maentwrog footbridge installation was a challenging and exhilarating experience for us and one that we were very proud to have been involved with.

You can watch the timelapse footage as the bridge constructed and installed below.

[Watch timelapse footage of the footbridge construction through to installation](#)

G7 Leaders Statement on Afghanistan: 24 August 2021

Today, 24 August 2021, under the Presidency of the United Kingdom, we the Leaders of the Group of Seven met virtually to discuss the situation in Afghanistan. We were joined by the Secretaries General of the United Nations (UN) and NATO. We reaffirm our steadfast commitment to the people of Afghanistan, and support the UN Security Council statement of 16 August. We express our grave concern about the situation in Afghanistan and call for calm and restraint to ensure the safety and security of vulnerable Afghan and international citizens, and the prevention of a humanitarian crisis. We call for adherence to obligations under international human rights law, including the rights of women, girls, and minority groups, and that international humanitarian law is upheld in all circumstances. We honour the significant sacrifices made by the Afghan people, people of our own countries, and countless others, who have worked toward a more peaceful, just and secure future for Afghanistan.

The Afghan people deserve to live in dignity, peace and security, reflecting the last two decades of their political, economic and social achievements, in particular for women and girls. Afghanistan must never again become a safe haven for terrorism, nor a source of terrorist attacks on others. Working

with partners, in particular NATO allies, we will continue to fight terrorism with resolve and solidarity, wherever it is found. Any future Afghan government must adhere to Afghanistan's international obligations and commitment to protect against terrorism; safeguard the human rights of all Afghans, particularly women, children, and ethnic and religious minorities; uphold the rule of law; allow unhindered and unconditional humanitarian access; and counter human and drug trafficking effectively. We call on all parties in Afghanistan to work in good faith to establish an inclusive and representative government, including with the meaningful participation of women and minority groups.

We affirm our enduring commitment to the people of Afghanistan, including through a renewed humanitarian effort by the international community. To this end we support the UN in coordinating the immediate international humanitarian response in the region, including unfettered humanitarian access in Afghanistan, and will contribute collectively to that response. As part of that, we will cooperate together and with neighbouring and other countries in the region on supporting Afghan refugees and host communities as part of a coordinated long-term regional response. We call on all partners of Afghanistan to support this effort and wider regional stability through multilateral channels.

As part of this, our immediate priority is to ensure the safe evacuation of our citizens and those Afghans who have partnered with us and assisted our efforts over the past twenty years, and to ensure continuing safe passage out of Afghanistan. We will continue to coordinate closely on this, and we expect all parties to continue to facilitate this, and to ensure the safety of humanitarian and medical personnel, and other international service providers. We will cooperate together, and with neighbouring and other countries in the region hosting refugees, on a coordinated approach to safe and legal routes for resettlement.

We will work together, and with our allies and regional countries, through the UN, G20 and more widely, to bring the international community together to address the critical questions facing Afghanistan. As we do this, we will judge the Afghan parties by their actions, not words. In particular, we reaffirm that the Taliban will be held accountable for their actions on preventing terrorism, on human rights in particular those of women, girls and minorities and on pursuing an inclusive political settlement in Afghanistan. The legitimacy of any future government depends on the approach it now takes to uphold its international obligations and commitments to ensure a stable Afghanistan.

[**Pollinator paradise created along the**](#)

River Great Ouse

Biodiversity and boaters are benefiting from wildflowers, bird boxes, bee hives, bee hotels and shrubbery, which have been installed along the river.

A rowing boat filled with flowers planted by the Environment Agency.

In total, the Environment Agency has introduced:

- 7,000 bulbs
- 1,000 metres squared of wildflower strips – the equivalent of 4 tennis courts
- 600 metres of native hedging
- 120 lavender plants
- 60 bird boxes
- a bee hive with more than 40,000 bees
- 2 large bee hotels

A stretch of wildflowers in Bedford.

Boaters and passers-by have written to the Environment Agency to compliment the work.

Ian Wilson, a leisure boater who has cruised England, said:

The wildflowers at your locks on the River Great Ouse look amazing and have increased my enjoyment of cruising the river.

Besides being so beautiful and calming, they are a great contribution for butterflies and other insects.

Hoverflies on and near a poppy planted by the Environment Agency.

Matt Yallop, Waterways Workforce manager for the Environment Agency, said:

I am really proud of my team's hard work and commitment to help increase the bee and bird population on our navigation sites.

It's very pleasing to see people enjoying the explosion of colour and increased wildlife. We have reduced the areas of grass we cut

to encourage nature, and this also helps lower the overall river maintenance costs.

The boat filled with flowers and the other wildflowers at the lock.

Dick Milthorp, a member of the Waterways Workforce who has been instrumental to this project, said:

Our work doesn't end here. We are planning to add more wildflower strips to Eaton Socon landing stage, Godmanchester and Brownhill. We have also got more hedging to plant as well as bluebells, wild garlic and more.

A close up of some of the flowers.

During the autumn the Environment Agency plans to plant wildflowers across approximately 3 acres of the Denver complex of sluices, near Downham Market. The plants will be a combination of flowers suitable for shady and dry conditions.

The work is part of the Environment Agency's long-term ambition of creating a nation resilient to climate change; healthy air, land and water; green growth and a sustainable future.

On the ground this involves improving more than 4,000 kilometres of river, creating nearly 1,200 hectares of habitat and being on track to be carbon-neutral by 2030.

A bee enjoying the wildflowers.

Government equips staff with Debt Toolkit to help vulnerable

Press release

The Vulnerability Debt Toolkit will help public sector workers and those who are in debt to government.



- Toolkit puts protections in place for vulnerable citizens owing money to government
- Frontline public sector staff will be able to identify and support people facing additional challenges
- Government can now focus resources towards those in debt who are deliberately avoiding repayment

The Government Debt Management Function has published a Vulnerability Toolkit which ensures 'vulnerable' citizens who are in debt to the public sector are handled with compassion and support by frontline staff.

The new guidance will be accessible to government departments and public bodies, enabling them to identify and assist people whose physical or mental health may affect their ability to repay sums owed to the Government.

It will equip employees with:

- Training to handle disclosures of vulnerability
- A framework for gaining more information about an individual's circumstances
- A protocol for supporting people in potentially dangerous situations
- A protocol for supporting people with mental capacity limitations
- Resources for supporting people to get out of debt through improved Money Management

Cabinet Office minister, Lord Agnew, said:

"This new guide will ensure an individual's hardship and circumstances are

factored into their cases by government bodies.

“At a time when the country continues on its path to build back better from the pandemic, it’s vitally important we don’t lose sight of the need to not leave anyone behind in the process.”

By identifying those people who have got into financial trouble due to vulnerabilities, the Toolkit will allow the government to focus on those who are deliberately trying to avoid repaying.

Reasons for debt to public sector creditors include overpayment of benefits, council tax arrears or outstanding fines.

The toolkit can be found [here](#).

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