

Action to tackle misery of drug misuse

The government has appointed Dame Carol Black as an independent advisor to drive forward progress in tackling drug misuse across society.

Dame Carol's independent review on drugs exposed the scale of the challenge of illegal drug misuse and made clear that a joined-up approach across all parts of government is needed to tackle this issue.

The government is today (Tuesday 27 July) setting out its initial response to parts 1 and 2 of Dame Carol's review. The response commits to a comprehensive, whole-system approach to tackling drugs – actively disrupting criminal supply chains which fuel illegal markets, supporting people through treatment and recovery, and ridding communities of the harm drug misuse causes.

Dame Carol will advise the government on the development and delivery of a new drug strategy – to be published by the end of the year – which will set out a full response to her review recommendations. The strategy will take a genuinely cross-government approach to tackle the supply and demand for illegal drugs simultaneously.

The response also includes immediate actions to deal with the problems of drug misuse, including by expanding Project ADDER – which combines targeted law enforcement against drugs gangs with improved treatment and recovery services – to eight new local authorities with £31m in new funding for the next 2 years.

Project ADDER sites will be set up in 2 London boroughs (Hackney and Tower Hamlets), 3 local authorities in Liverpool City Region (Liverpool City, Wirral, Knowsley), Bristol, Newcastle and Wakefield. The programme brings together partners across health, enforcement, employment and housing to tackle the problems of drugs misuse across the board.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

Drugs destroy lives, ruin families, and tear apart communities and I will do everything in my power to stop this poisonous cycle.

We will not let criminal gangs continue to cash in on vulnerable people, which is why we are setting up new targeted projects in eight areas in England to disrupt drug supply and support those in need with treatment and recovery.

With drug misuse costing society £19.3 billion a year, and deaths rising, the need to address this has never been more urgent. I welcome Dame Carol Black's appointment to advise the government as we prepare to launch an ambitious strategy to tackle this problem at its root.

Dame Carol Black said:

Drugs inflict serious and increasing harm on society and, as my review shows, the provision of services for those addicted requires a reformed whole-system approach.

I am pleased that the government have signalled their intention to prioritise this by establishing the Joint cross-Government Unit which was one of my recommendations.

I am also delighted to have been given the opportunity to continue to advise the government which shows that they want to put treatment, recovery and prevention at the heart of the upcoming strategy. I will use this role to keep holding all partners to account and to support efforts to combat the drugs that ruin so many lives.

Health and Social Care Secretary, Sajid Javid, said:

Drug misuse can have a tragic impact on people's health, their families and their livelihoods.

Not only is the sale and use of drugs driving serious violence but drug-related deaths are at an all-time high. It is heart-breaking to see so many people needlessly losing their lives.

I am committed to tackling the root causes of substance misuse and working with Dame Carol to ensure high quality services are in place to support the treatment and recovery of drug users in the community.

Further measures set out in the government response include:

- supporting police to expand drug testing on arrest across England and Wales for a wider range of offences where the use of certain Class A drug is suspected to be a contributing factor
- holding a summit with employers, universities, schools and police to explore how a range of partners can play their part in reducing demand, particularly among those who regard their drug use as harmless – it will provide us the opportunity to discuss how to ensure those who misuse drugs, regardless of who they are or when they use, face consequences
- establishing 10 health and justice partnership coordinator roles across the probation service with £700,000 of funding in order to improve continuity of care from custody to the community

- delivering telemedicine in 86 prisons with £1.3 million of funding to enable prisoners to make contact with treatment providers in the community and continue the treatment they need to help them stay away from crime after their release
- a Local Outcomes Framework and a Commissioning Quality Standard to support any future enhancement of the treatment and recovery system will be drafted in consultation with the local system to increase transparency, commissioning standards, joint working and accountability for treatment and recovery outcomes

The response builds on existing work to tackle drugs across society. It follows a [£148m package](#) of new investment, announced in January, aimed at protecting people across the UK from the scourge of illegal drugs. The package included:

- £40m of new money to tackle county lines, bringing the total to £65m since November 2019. So far, this investment has seen more than 1,000 drug lines closed, over 5,800 arrests, over £2.9m in cash seized, and more than 1,500 vulnerable people safeguarded
- £28m to set up pilots of Project ADDER in five areas with some of the highest rates of drug misuse – Blackpool, Hastings, Middlesbrough, Norwich, and Swansea Bay
- an extra £80m to invest in drug treatment services across England to provide support to offenders with drug addictions

The [government response to Dame Carol Black's review](#) has been published.

[Eurasian Curlews released on the Sandringham Estate](#)

HRH The Prince of Wales was joined by Natural England's Chair, Tony Juniper, on the Sandringham Estate today (Tuesday 27 July) to release of one of the country's most iconic threatened species – the Eurasian curlew – following an innovative Natural England-led partnership project to boost populations in the East of England.

The curlew is Europe's largest wading bird and is now red-listed, meaning it is of the highest conservation priority, needing urgent action. The UK is

home to roughly a quarter of the global breeding population of curlew – some 58,500 pairs – but the species has suffered very significant declines since the 1970s due to loss of habitat and predation, with lowland England experiencing some of the most severe declines.

The project collected 147 eggs from airfields, where nesting curlew presented a serious risk to air safety. 106 were transported to a new purpose built rearing facility at Pensthorpe Conservation Trust (PCT) in Norfolk, with 41 taken by the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT) for a project in Dartmoor. The experts at PCT and WWT used their skills to ensure as many as the eggs as possible hatched into chicks, and were reared to fledging age to be released.

The partnership project with the Defence Infrastructure Organisation and the Royal Air Force collected eggs at a total of eight military and civilian airfields across England, rearing the birds so they are ready for release into the right habitats for them to thrive. Over 80 chicks are now available for release at the two Norfolk release sites; Sandringham Estate and Wild Ken Hill.

The releases aim to expand an existing breeding population of curlew in Breckland, creating a new curlew nature recovery network. Some of the birds have been fitted with GPS or radio tags by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), so we can continue to monitor their progress after they are released, gathering information on their dispersal, habitat use and survival.

Natural England Chair, Tony Juniper said:

Curlews have suffered significant declines over the past 40 years and their plight now presents one of England's most pressing conservation challenges. A range of actions will be needed to restore these wonderful birds and we hope that the translocation of curlews at this large scale, a method that has never been tried before, will make a real difference to the population in the east of England.

Today's release on the Sandringham Estate marks a significant milestone for the recovery of this iconic bird. We're proud to be leading such an innovative project, which will not only improve the prospects of curlew in Norfolk, but will help inform action to recover curlew across England. It is a fine example of the kinds of partnerships that will be needed to achieve nature recovery more widely and as such we hope will be an inspiration for much more of the same.

Airfields provide the kind of open grassland habitat preferred by ground-nesting curlew, but due to the dangers to air safety posed by curlew nests close to runways, eggs were – until Natural England's project began – destroyed to prevent the, potentially catastrophic, risk of collision between birds and aircraft.

This new project, funded by Defra and Natural England, builds on a local and

national partnership already in place between Natural England, Defra, Pensthorpe Conservation Trust, the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, British Trust for Ornithology, the Sandringham Estate, the Ken Hill Estate, Defence Infrastructure Organisation, the RAF, Army Flying Service and USAF, bird control contractors such as NBC Environment and the Zoological Society of London.

Head of Species Management at Pensthorpe Conservation Trust Chrissie Kelley said:

Conservation of the Eurasian curlew as a breeding species in England is of paramount importance. Pensthorpe Conservation Trust has reared over 80 curlew chicks to fledge this year, this has been a privilege and a significant step to safeguard and boost the wild population in the East of England.

BTO Senior Research Ecologist, Samantha Franks said:

The varied landscapes of Breckland are a stronghold for curlew in lowland England, but even here, there are too few chicks produced each year to maintain a stable population. This unique partnership project can buy us time to understand the specific conservation measures required to improve breeding success, and for a diverse suite of stakeholders to work together to deliver these on the ground.

Dominic Buscall, Project Manager, Wild Ken Hill said:

We're delighted to be involved in this vital national effort to recover one of our most beloved and threatened birds. This is a large project with many great organisations working together – our contribution at Wild Ken Hill is to provide the headstarted young curlew excellent habitat and safety from predators. We hope they can survive to link up with the hundreds of adult birds that usually spend the winter here.

Dr James Robinson, Director of Conservation at the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT) said:

The rapid disappearance of curlew from southern England is incredibly sad and a clear indication that we need to change the way we are looking after our landscapes. We are delighted to be part of this ambitious project and that WWT's pioneering work on "headstarting" this iconic species is being used to safeguard the future of these remaining curlew breeding areas.

Inspector of Safety RAF, Air Commodore Sam Sansome said:

To have over 140 eggs collected from RAF Stations was fantastic and to see so many of them now successfully reared and released into habitats that are safe for them, and safe for us, is fabulous. It is a real privilege to be involved in such an important conservation exercise.

Joe Hamer, Ecologist at the Defence Infrastructure Organisation said:

With the success of the trial in 2019, it's great to see this project being expanded with continuing success. DIO are proud to work with our partners on such an innovative project to increase the curlew population whilst also increasing flight safety.

Prolific Burnley based waste criminal sentenced to three years imprisonment

- Allison appeared at court on Friday 23rd July where he was sentenced to three years immediate imprisonment.
- Staff at two waste companies were also charged for depositing hazardous waste at Allison's unpermitted sites.

The Environment Agency has successfully prosecuted a prolific offender, John Leslie Allison, for undertaking illegal waste activities at two sites in Colne without a permit.

Allison allowed hazardous, large scale, mixed household and commercial waste materials to be deposited at the sites without a permit and was sentenced to three years immediate imprisonment. Allison's actions caused unacceptable risks to the environment, highlighted by a number of significant fires at the site and numerous complaints from the public.

Speaking of Allison, His Honour Judge Parry stated:

"I am thoroughly depressed to see you before me again. I have no option but to imprison you. You have proven yourself to be completely ignorant of the need to resist the temptation to deposit further waste onto your land. It's thoroughly depressing."

Referencing Allison's previous imprisonment following an order to clear land in April 2018, his Honour, Judge Parry added: "When I sentenced you in 2018 this is what I said to you: I really hope this is the last time I see you."

Otherwise you will be back before me again, people of your age do go to prison.”

Staff at two waste companies were also charged for depositing hazardous waste at Allison’s unpermitted sites.

Hazardous waste was delivered to Allison’s site by Environmental Concern Ltd whose former director, Kenneth Morris (71 of Hams Road, Birmingham), and driver Matthew Dyer (42 of Bromsgrove Road, Redditch, Worcestershire) were also prosecuted for their actions.

At the time of being sentenced Environmental Concern Ltd and Kenneth Morris asked the court to take into account further offences committed as a result of similar deposits of hazardous waste made at two sites in Yorkshire.

Environmental Concern Ltd has been ordered to pay £47,969.50 in compensation to the Environment Agency for clean-up costs and £16,800 in compensation to PW Nettleton Partnership for the costs they incurred removing hazardous waste from Summit Farm, Dalton. Environmental Concern Ltd were also fined £12,000 and ordered to pay costs of £26,240.66.

Kenneth Morris former director of Environmental Concern Ltd pleaded guilty and has been sentenced to 18 months imprisonment, suspended for two years. Morris is also subject to an electronically monitored curfew for three months between 7pm and 7am and has been fined £10,000 with six months imprisonment in default of payment.

Matthew Dyer, driver for Environmental Concern Ltd, pleaded guilty and has been sentenced to 240 hours unpaid work and fined £1000 with one month’s imprisonment in default of payment. Dyer was also ordered to pay costs of £2993.79.

Large scale, mixed household and commercial waste materials were also delivered to Allison’s site by the now dissolved company Eco Enviro Group Ltd. Former operator Carl Rodgers (46 of Red Rock Lane, Haigh, Wigan) was prosecuted for his involvement.

Carl Rodgers, former operator of Eco Enviro Group Ltd, has been sentenced to 14 months imprisonment suspended for 2 years and 200 hours of unpaid work. Rodgers is also subject to an electronically monitored curfew for three months between the hours of 8pm and 5am and has been fined £10,000 with six months imprisonment in default of payment. Rodgers has also been ordered to pay costs of £34,341.62.

An Environment Agency spokesperson said:

“We welcome the result of this prosecution and welcome the three year sentencing handed down by His Honour Judge Parry for the offences committed by prolific offender Mr Allison. This sends out a strong signal to others that we will continue to fight tirelessly to combat illegal waste crime and bring those responsible to justice.

“We also welcome the strong sentencing and fines imposed on Kenneth Morris, Matthew Dyer, Carl Rodgers and Environmental Concern Ltd. This reflects the seriousness of the crime and its impacts on business and communities.

“The Environment Agency will continue to work tirelessly to tackle environmental crime which can have a devastating impact on the environment and local community.

“I would urge everyone to check that a waste carrier, broker or dealer is registered before using them by checking the waste carriers register on line at Gov.UK.”

Environmental incidents can be reported to the Environment Agency 24/7 on 0800 807060, waste crime can also be reported anonymously via Crimestoppers online or on 0800 555111.

[Secretary of State announces appointment of new chief commissioner for Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission](#)

Press release

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the Right Honourable Brandon Lewis CBE MP, has announced the appointment of Alyson Kilpatrick as the new Chief Commissioner of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission.



The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the Right Honourable Brandon Lewis CBE MP, has announced the appointment of Alyson Kilpatrick as the new Chief Commissioner of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission.

Ms Kilpatrick will take up the appointment with effect from 1 September 2021.

Ms Kilpatrick is a Barrister specialising in public law, human rights, socio-economic rights and policing. She is a former Human Rights Advisor to the Northern Ireland Policing Board. She currently holds an appointment as Vice-Chair of the Northern Ireland Co-ownership.

Background

The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (the 'NIHRC') was created by the Northern Ireland Act 1998, as part of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement.

The NIHRC was established in 1999 and operates as an executive non-departmental public body sponsored by the Northern Ireland Office.

The NIHRC is a national human rights institution with 'A' status accreditation from the United Nations (UN). Its powers are set out in legislation and its responsibilities as a national human rights institution are set out in the UN Paris Principles.

The NIHRC's functions include keeping under review the adequacy and effectiveness in Northern Ireland of law and practice relating to the protection of human rights and promoting understanding and awareness of the importance of human rights in Northern Ireland. Further information about the work of the Commission can be found at: <https://nihrc.org/about-us>

Terms of appointment

- This position is for a period of five years ending on 31 August 2026.
- The position receives an annual remuneration of £74,912.
- The position is pensionable.

Political Activity

All appointments are made on merit and with regards to the statutory requirements. Political activity plays no part in the selection process. However, in accordance with the original Nolan recommendations, there is a requirement for appointees' political activity in defined categories to be made public.

Ms Kilpatrick has declared that she has not been politically active in the last five years.

Regulation

The Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointment (OCPA) regulates appointments to the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission.

Statutory Requirements

The Secretary of State makes appointments to the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission in accordance with the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

[ARSAC to launch online approval process for practitioners](#)



The new online application portal, called Jira, will transform the way applications to the Administration of Radioactive Substances Advisory Committee (ARSAC) are submitted.

Uploading applications to the Jira online portal will offer a quick and simple way to apply for approval of new practitioner licences, track the status of approvals and share with colleagues.

Nasreen Parkar, Scientific Adviser to ARSAC, said:

Moving to the new system will mean all new practitioner licence applications will need to be made through the Jira online portal from September 2021. The application system is straightforward and will allow applicants to submit and track the progress of their application. We are currently using this system for research approvals and so far it has been working really well.

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