

Suicide bereavement support to be made available across England

People who have lost someone close to them due to suicide will benefit from dedicated bereavement care. The government has announced plans to roll out services on the NHS across England.

The plans mean anyone affected by a family member or friend taking their own life will have access to practical and emotional support in the days and months following their death.

Ten areas will benefit from the £1,082,000 fund, with support ranging from one-to-one sessions with trained volunteers or counsellors, group support, or signposting to specialist mental health services.

The 10 areas receiving funding are:

- North Cumbria – £256,000
- Derbyshire – £71,000
- West Yorkshire and Harrogate – £173,000
- Nottinghamshire – £63,000
- Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland – £64,000
- North Central London – £87,000
- North West London – £113,000
- South West London – £69,000
- Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire West – £98,000
- Devon – £88,000

Statistics show that 9% of people affected by suicide will also attempt to take their own life and 8% will drop out of work.

The tailored help will be implemented in every region across the country by 2023 to 2024, as part of a commitment set out in the [NHS Long Term Plan](#).

The type of support on offer will vary from region to region so it links in with existing local services.

In South West London, a designated suicide bereavement liaison officer, to be hosted by Brent, Wandsworth and Westminster Mind, will be created. The liaison officer will receive referrals for support from police and health care professionals and will proactively contact the bereaved to offer one-to-one support.

In West Yorkshire and Harrogate, a single point of access for those in need will be created to grant people a quicker, streamlined route to vital care.

This will sit alongside one-to-one sessions and group support, support with coroners, signposting, peer-led groups and memorial events, and training for organisations and employers on how to support their workforce if they have been bereaved by suicide.

National mental health spend reached £12.5 billion last year with the NHS Long Term Plan committing an extra £2.3 billion every year over the next 5 years to transform mental health care.

DHSC is working with partners across government, businesses and communities to reduce the national suicide rate. Every area of the country will receive funding for suicide prevention and bereavement services, by 2023 to 2024, from the total pot of money of £57 million allocated through the Long Term Plan.

Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Nadine Dorries said:

When a loved one takes their own life, those left behind can suffer indescribable pain and grief – something I have experienced first-hand.

Every suicide is a tragedy, which is why I am determined to tackle its root causes. But it is also important to support those coming to terms with a loss, ensuring they have access to the right types of sensitive support.

This funding is part of our wider commitment in the NHS Long Term Plan to implement designated suicide bereavement care – making a real difference to people's lives.

Claire Murdoch, NHS national director for mental health, said:

Suicide is a tragedy for both the person and their family and friends – with lives devastated as a result.

These new post-crisis bereavement services will be a lifeline for families and staff who are at heightened risk themselves of experiencing mental health problems.

Vibrant new parks set to benefit communities with government funding

Thousands of people are set to benefit from new pocket parks or the revival of rundown green spaces as Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick launched a £1.35 million fund today (27 October 2019).

Championing the crucial role parks and green spaces play at the heart of our communities, Mr Jenrick opened bidding for the pocket parks programme, which

helps support communities to transform unloved, neglected or derelict urban spaces into new green spaces.

Community groups can now bid for new parks or reimagined spaces that will be used for everything from children's play areas, to vegetable patches and community events, benefiting the mental and physical health of people who use them.

Communities Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

We want to improve the mental and physical health of local people by providing a sustainable and affordable sanctuary away from the hustle of urban life.

That's why we have launched this fund to encourage projects led by community groups to renovate parks and encourage community activities of all kinds.

Establishing more pocket parks is part of our wider ambition to ensure that communities have a real sense of identity and place, and that everyone has the opportunity to enjoy green spaces nearby. This government is determined to protect our nation's parks for future generations to enjoy.

Funded projects will be led by community groups, in partnership with local authorities, to refurbish parks and encourage community activities. Those wanting to develop new parks can bid for up to £15,000. While up to £25,000 is available for plans to refurbish existing parks.

Parks Minister Lord Younger said:

Parks and green spaces are a key asset in towns and cities up and down the country and provide great value to our communities.

The pocket parks programme has seen great success in supporting community-led groups to take over neglected and derelict spaces for the whole community to use.

Our ambition is to extend its transformative effect with a further round of the pocket parks programme and ensure parks and green spaces remain at the heart of our communities. It is now for community-led organisations to take the lead and encourage everyone to apply.

This latest action forms part of the government's ambition to ensure that communities have a real sense of identity and place, and that everyone has the opportunity to enjoy green spaces nearby.

In addition to the pocket parks programme, the government has:

- awarded £9.7 million of new funding to local authorities giving them the resources they need to better maintain, protect and increase their recreational spaces
- awarded over a million pounds to the National Trust and The National Lottery Heritage Fund's Future Parks Accelerator initiative to test new and innovative approaches to managing and funding parks
- extended the Green Flag Award licence by a further five years meaning the people behind Britain's best parks and green spaces will continue to be recognised and awarded for their tireless dedication

Alongside these crucial actions, the government will continue to work with the Parks Action Group, which represents leaders from across the parks sector and provide support and funding for community empowerment programmes, professional development for the parks workforce and alternative park management models to ensure our parks are fit for the 21st century.

Further information on pocket parks

£1.35 million funding to help create new pocket parks and refurbish those that have fallen into disrepair was announced at Conservative Party Conference 2019 earlier this month.

In November 2018, the government announced a £1 million 'pocket parks plus' fund to help communities transform 157 neglected and derelict spaces and create 31 new green spaces in urban areas across the country.

An additional £2.75 million was made available for the pocket parks plus programme to support communities to take the lead in transforming their neglected and derelict spaces.

The [pocket parks plus programme](#) called on local communities to bid for a share of up to £15,000 to build new 'pocket parks' and up to £25,000 to renovate existing parks. Bidding for funding closed January 2019.

In March 2019, nearly 200 communities (198 in total) were awarded funding to create new pocket parks and refurbish existing parks.

See [more information, and how to apply to the fund](#).

Prisons receive £156 million maintenance boost

- funding builds on government's vision for the future of jails
- £2.75 billion package to transform the prison estate

Prisons across England and Wales are set to receive a £156 million cash boost

to tackle the most pressing maintenance issues, the Justice Secretary, Rt Hon Robert Buckland QC MP, announced today (27 October 2019).

The new and significant investment will update critical infrastructure such as fire systems and boilers, refurbish cells and showers and improve conditions for those living and working in prisons requiring the most urgent attention.

The funding builds on the government's previous announcements to transform the prison estate, totalling £2.75 billion:

- with up to £2.5 billion to provide 10,000 additional prison places and create modern, efficient jails that rehabilitate offenders, reduce reoffending and keep the public safe.
- a further £100 million will also bolster prison security, clamping down on the weapons, drugs and mobile phones that fuel violence, self-harm and crime behind bars.
- in addition to the £156 million for pressing maintenance announced today.

Justice Secretary, Rt Hon Robert Buckland QC MP, said:

This substantial investment will drive much needed improvements in our jails – providing our hardworking staff with the right conditions to do their jobs and creating a safe and decent environment that gives offenders hope to move away from a life of crime.

This government is spending £2.75 billion to transform the estate, with modern, efficient prisons that drive rehabilitation and reduce reoffending – ultimately protecting the public.

Work to deliver new prison places is already underway, with the construction of a new prison in Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, Glen Parva in Leicestershire and a new houseblock at HMP Stocken in Rutland, which opened in June.

Plans to convert HMP Haverigg into an open jail with a doubled capacity by the end of the year are also progressing.

The £2.75 billion investment in the prison estate is part of a government-wide crack-down on crime which includes 20,000 more police officers on the streets and stronger sentences for those who commit the most serious crimes.

Continued violence in Iraq: UK statement



Minister for the Middle East, Dr Andrew Murrison said:

I am deeply concerned about the continued violence in Iraq. I send my condolences to the families of those who have died and wish a speedy recovery to those who have been injured.

We continue to urge the Iraqi security forces to show restraint and for protests to be peaceful. More violence will simply worsen an already fragile situation. The Iraqi Government should investigate all credible allegations of criminal violence and use of excessive force by security forces.

Real political and economic reform to deliver on the legitimate demands of the protesters is the only way forward. The UK continues to support the Iraqi government to take quick and effective action on tackling corruption, creating jobs and improving services.

Further information

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UK and Morocco sign continuity agreement

- Trade between the UK and Morocco was worth £2.5 billion in 2018.
- The UK has now secured trade with countries accounting for £109 billion.
- This agreement will ensure British businesses and consumers benefit from continued access to the Moroccan market after we leave the EU.

The Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa Dr Andrew Murrison signed the agreement with the Moroccan Foreign Minister, Nasser Bourita.

Welcoming the agreement, Minister of State Dr Andrew Murrison said:

The UK and Morocco have a close friendship and an important diplomatic history that is over 800 years old.

The signing of this Agreement builds on the UK's deep cultural, political and economic ties with the region and demonstrates our commitment to increase trade and constructive dialogue with Morocco.

Importantly, the Agreement will give exporters and consumers the certainty they need to continue trading freely and in confidence as the UK prepares to leave the EU.

The agreement will ensure British businesses and consumers benefit from continued trade with Morocco after we leave the EU. It provides, among other trade benefits, tariff-free trade of industrial products together with liberalisation of trade in agricultural, agri-food and fisheries products.

Minister of State for Trade Policy, Conor Burns said:

The world is ready to sign free trade deals with Britain, they want to work with our people and have better links with our industries and it is our priority to ensure businesses have the tools they need to continue trading freely after Brexit.

The agreement signed with Morocco today will help provide certainty for businesses, ensuring they can continue to trade on the same terms with our Moroccan partners. On my recent visit to Morocco, I witnessed first-hand the many opportunities available to UK and Moroccan firms to advance our trade together.

I look forward to maintaining and further strengthening our current trade, political and security relationship with Morocco as we continue to work closely together in the future.

In addition to growing trade, today's agreement seeks to deepen UK-Moroccan cooperation across foreign policy, economic, social and cultural ties. The Agreement provides a framework for policy dialogue and to strengthen cooperation on important issues like trade, educational and environmental matters. The Agreement sends a strong signal that Britain is committed to a close bilateral relationship with Morocco and will continue to play a positive role in the region.

Her Majesty's Ambassador to Morocco, Thomas Reilly, said:

Morocco has a well-diversified and modern market across a number of sectors where UK companies and expertise have much to offer. I hope that this Agreement will usher in a new phase of increased bilateral investment in each other's economies, which is so essential for continued stable economic growth.

Notes to editors

- This Agreement will be subject to domestic parliamentary procedures in both the UK and Morocco before it is brought into force.
- This Agreement is designed to take effect when the EU-Morocco Association Agreement ceases to apply to the UK. If we leave the EU at the end of October, the Agreement will come into effect on a provisional basis to maintain continuity before both Parties have completed their respective domestic procedures.
- The UK has signed or agreed in principle 19 Trade Continuity Agreements with 47 countries. A regularly updated list of all signed agreements is available on GOV.UK.
- Statistics sourced from ONS 'UK total trade: all countries, non-seasonally adjusted January to March 2019 release'. Figures relate to 2018. Note that this includes routine data revisions since the previous ONS release.
- The UK-Morocco Association Agreement replicates the effects of the existing trade and non-trade provisions as far as possible. Under the Agreement consumers in the UK will continue to benefit from lower prices on goods imported from Morocco, such as fruit and vegetables. Consumers in Morocco will continue to benefit from lower tariffs on products such as dairy products, meat, fruit and vegetables from the UK.
- [Read the UK-Morocco Political Declaration](#)

Further information