

# Amy Holmes appointed as Public Guardian



Amy Holmes, currently Domestic Affairs Director in the Economic and Domestic Secretariat at the Cabinet Office, will take over the role of Public Guardian and Chief Executive of the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) in the Autumn.

She was successful in fair and open competition for the role and her appointment has been approved by The Deputy Prime Minister.

Jo Farrar, Second Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Justice and Chief Executive Officer, HM Prison & Probation Service said:

“I am delighted that Amy will be joining us in the vital role of Public Guardian and CEO of the OPG. Amy will bring a wealth of experience from an impressive career in government to lead the OPG’s ambitious plans to improve and modernise its services. I look forward to welcoming Amy when she takes up the post later this year.”

Stuart Howard will continue in the role of Interim Public Guardian of OPG until Amy joins the agency in the Autumn, after which he will continue in his role as OPG’s Head of Legal and Information Assurance.

Published 11 July 2022

Last updated 16 August 2022 [+ show all updates](#)

## 1. 16 August 2022

The Welsh translation has been removed, as there is a separate article in Welsh

## 2. 3 August 2022

Publishing the Welsh translation of this article

## 3. 11 July 2022

First published.

---

# Call to check vehicles before travelling as 41,500 breakdowns caused by tyre issues

Many of those breakdowns could have been avoided if drivers had carried out basic vehicle checks before setting off including checking their tyres.

Now National Highways, which is responsible for motorways and major A roads across the country, has launched a new campaign reminding drivers to check their tyres regularly and always before long journeys.

Tyre issues were the main reason during 2021 that people broke down on National Highways roads with 41,560 people doing so, compared to 35,892 in 2020 when traffic numbers were impacted by the Covid-19 lockdowns. So far this year, there have already been more than 19,300 breakdowns due to problems with tyres.

National Highways Head of Road Safety, Jeremy Phillips, said:

With schools breaking up for summer soon there will be more people on the roads and taking longer journeys. We know that breaking down can be a very upsetting experience, nobody wants to start off their holiday stranded at the side of the road, next to fast moving traffic.

So we are reminding drivers to check their vehicles, particularly the tyres, before setting off. Unsafe tyres put you and others at risk as well as running the risk of attracting a hefty fine and penalty points.

A simple check on tyre tread and pressure could prevent a breakdown and make sure you get to your destination safe and sound.

The summer holiday period is the busiest time of year for breakdowns, National Highways figures show.

In 2021 there were 21,307 breakdowns on the network in July and 20,526 in August, an average of 5,000 breakdowns each week.

As well as running the risk of a breakdown, driving without the legally required amount of tread on tyres can adversely affect grip, braking distance and steering.

While driving with under-inflated or over-inflated tyres can adversely affect braking distances, steering, fuel efficiency and the lifetime of tyres.

If stopped by the police while driving with illegal tyres, motorists face fines of £2,500 and three penalty points per tyre.

National Highways' advice to motorists is:

- ensure tyre pressures are suitable for the load and check the condition of tyres, including the spare.
- look out for cuts or wear across the whole tyre including sidewall.
- all tyres are legally required to have a minimum tread depth of 1.6mm – to check your tyres place a 20p coin into the main grooves of the tread. If you can't see the raised outer rim of the coin (with the words "Twenty pence" engraved), then the tyre has sufficient tread depth

Each vehicle has a different recommended tyre pressure, which may vary depending on the load you're carrying. You can usually find this on the inside of the driver's door, petrol cap or in your vehicle manual.

Stefan Hay, National Tyre Distributors Association (NTDA) Chief Executive, said:

The latest statistics show that tyres remain the most common reason behind breakdowns on the strategic road network. This comes as no great surprise to the NTDA, as our own research showed that 60% of motorists questioned, admitted to never checking their tyres and most had very little knowledge regarding tyre management issues such as the legal tread depth limit.

The NTDA and its members are delighted, therefore, to once again support National Highways with this extremely important Summer Tyre Safety Campaign.

For more advice visit the [National Highways website](#).

## **General enquiries**

Members of the public should contact the National Highways customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

## **Media enquiries**

Journalists should contact the National Highways press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

---

# Call for bids in Kazakhstan: project proposals for the 2022/2023

This financial year the British Embassy is seeking to support projects that will aim to achieve the following objectives:

1. Support Kazakhstan to meet its climate change goals, including, but not limited to the following topics:

1.1. Promote a Central Asian vision for joint climate change action at COP27/28.

1.2. Support the development of Environmental, Social, and Corporate Governance (ESG) principles in Kazakhstan, particularly in the mining and energy sector.

1.3. Develop climate-related data, particularly around measuring pollution and greenhouse gas emissions and their impact on public health, and including gender in datasets. 1. Help Kazakhstan to promote food security and sustainable agriculture through the support to the wheat, seed oil and other agricultural sectors. 2. Support Kazakhstan to fulfil its international human rights obligations in one of the following areas:

3.1 Assist Kazakhstan in building National Preventive Mechanisms and a strong legal framework to (legally) support torture victims in Kazakhstan.

3.2 Support Kazakhstan in its efforts to promote media freedom and protecting the rights of journalists.

3.3 Promote the concept of a "Just Transition" to a low carbon economy and the Powering Past Coal Alliance in Kazakhstan.

3.4 Strengthen and promote women's rights and political leadership, particularly in the Government.

1. Assist Kazakhstan in improving the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA) offer within its WTO commitments.

## **Bid Guidance:**

- Projects are funded for a single financial year that will end on 31 March 2023, with no expectation of continued funding beyond this period.
- All project activity should be completed by 15 February 2023 to allow payments to be finalised well in advance of 31 March 2023.
- This financial year, the British Embassy will fund a maximum of 3 projects with the maximum budget limit of \$46,000 per project.
- This call for bids is a non-committal enquiry i.e. if you submit your project proposal, this will not necessarily guarantee any project funding from the Embassy.

## Assessment:

Bids will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Alignment with the above mentioned objectives.
- Project outputs and objectives are achievable within the funding period.
- Sustainability demonstrating that project benefits continue after the funding ends.
- Clear risk management and financial accountability procedures.
- The organisation's safeguarding policies that ensure protection of beneficiaries.
- Overall value for money.

## Process:

1. Project proposals must be submitted to: [ukinkz@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:ukinkz@fcdo.gov.uk) and [Assemgul.Kaliyeva@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:Assemgul.Kaliyeva@fcdo.gov.uk) by midnight (Kazakhstan time) on Sunday 24 July 2012. Late proposals will not be considered.
2. Proposals must be submitted using the attached forms only. Your bid should include completed Project Proposal, Activity Based Budget and Due Diligence Questionnaire.
3. We aim to notify the successful bidders by 29 July 2022.
4. Grant agreements/MoUs must be signed with successful project implementers by 5 August 2022. Should there be any delay, we have complete discretion to withdraw the offer of funding. Grant Agreement and MoU (the latter is signed with international development organisations only) templates can be found here:

[Grant Agreement Template](#) (MS Word Document, 107 KB)

[MoU Template](#) (MS Word Document, 127 KB)

Revisions to the Grant Agreement and MoU templates will not be accepted. You must agree to sign them in their existing format (if successful) as part of the bidding process for us to consider your bid. Please confirm this in writing when submitting your bid (email confirmation will be sufficient).

## Contacts:

If you have any questions, we encourage you to send your queries to: [Assemgul.Kaliyeva@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:Assemgul.Kaliyeva@fcdo.gov.uk)

## Forms

---

[Pre-recorded evidence for rape victims](#)

## rolled out across Wales

- all Crown Courts in Wales now offer pre-recorded cross-examination
- measure aims to reduce trauma for victims and witnesses to help them give better evidence
- nearly two-thirds of all Crown Courts in England and Wales now provide this support

The provision – which is already available in 47 Crown Courts in England – allows victims and witnesses of crimes such as rape and modern slavery to have their cross-examination video-recorded and played later during trial. This is subject to a successful application to the court.

The recording takes place as close to the time of the offence as possible, while memories remain fresh, and helps victims avoid the stress of giving evidence in a live trial, which many find traumatic.

From today, all 6 Crown Courts in Wales will now offer this support, including in Caernarfon, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Mold, Newport and Swansea.

The move follows the successful implementation for vulnerable victims, such as children or those who have limited mental capacity, across the country – with more than 2,500 witnesses having already benefitted from the technology since August 2020.

Deputy Prime Minister, Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice, Dominic Raab, said:

While rape convictions are up two thirds in the last year, we are determined to ensure even more victims get the justice they deserve.

That's why we have rolled out pre-recorded evidence to seven more crown courts – to spare more rape victims the trauma of testifying in the glare of the courtroom.

We are also recruiting more independent sexual violence advisors, piloting specialist rape support in courts, delivering a new Victims' Bill and boosting collaboration between police and prosecutors.

The measure is also designed to maintain a defendant's right to a fair trial and any decision to pre-record evidence is made by a judge on a case-by-case basis.

It will mean that 54 Crown Courts can offer pre-recorded evidence – nearly two thirds of all Crown Courts in England and Wales. The government is committed to rolling it out nationwide by September 2022.

Secretary of State for Wales Robert Buckland said:

To improve conviction rates for rape and sexual violence it is vital that victims can provide the best possible evidence and are not further traumatised by their experiences in court.

Video evidence works and is part of our ongoing programme to transform the criminal justice system so victims are at its centre. I helped begin this work during my previous role in government and I am delighted to see these measures being rolled out in every crown court in Wales.

Welsh Women's Aid Chief Executive Sara Kirkpatrick said:

Special measures to ensure that victims and witnesses are not further traumatised by their experiences through the courts are a vital component of a victim centred criminal justice system. We welcome that all crown courts across Wales will now have the facility to use pre-recorded evidence of victims, which will help to provide scope and flexibility for individuals to engage with historically intimidating justice systems.

While video evidence is a proactive and positive step in addressing issues of distrust and low public confidence, it must be just one improved element in a wider, systemic change that places survivors at the centre of all processes.

The expansion of pre-recorded evidence is a key pledge within the government's Rape Review Action Plan. The plan sets out clear actions for the police, prosecutors and courts. These include a new approach to investigations, reducing the number of victims withdrawing from the process, increasing the volume of trials being heard, protecting the public and putting more rapists behind bars.

While more must be done these efforts are beginning to have an impact. The latest figures show that across Wales there was a 13 percent increase in prosecutions for adult rape in 2021 compared to 2019.

Last month, the government published the latest Rape Review Progress report and committed to piloting specialist rape support in three courtrooms as recommended by the Joint Inspectorates of the CPS and Police. This would offer support, such as Independent Sexual Violence Advisors, within the court itself, as well as providing trauma training to court staff. These courtrooms will be set up at Snaresbrook Crown Court in London as well as Leeds and Newcastle Crown Courts.

Today's announcement builds on recent government action to make our streets safer and increase confidence in the justice system, including the publication of a draft Victims' Bill. The legislation seeks to amplify

victims' voices, and places greater accountability on agencies such as the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and police for the service they provide to them.

## **Notes to editors:**

- Both the defence and prosecution lawyers will be present in court during the pre-recording as will the judge and the defendant.
- Decisions to grant section 28 hearings are taken by independent judges following an application to the court.
- Pre-recording cross-examination preserves a defendant's right to a fair trial.
- Vulnerable witnesses and victims are defined as all child witnesses under 18 and any witness whose quality of evidence is likely to be diminished because they are suffering from a mental disorder or physical disability or has significant impairment of intelligence and social functioning.
- Intimidated witnesses and victims for the purposes of this pilot are defined as complainants of sexual offences and modern slavery offences who are witnesses in proceedings relating to that offence, or that offence and any other offences.
- The measure is being rolled out to the following courts today:
  - Caernarfon
  - Cardiff
  - Merthyr Tydfil
  - Mold
  - Newport
  - Swansea
  - Preston Crown Court and Family Court (Sessions House)
- The courts already operating pre-recorded evidence for intimidated victims are:
  - Sheffield
  - Doncaster
  - Newcastle
  - Portsmouth
  - Southampton
  - Isle of Wight
  - Winchester
  - Bournemouth
  - Bristol
  - Exeter
  - Gloucester
  - Plymouth
  - Salisbury
  - Truro
  - Liverpool
  - Leeds
  - Kingston-Upon-Thames
  - Harrow
  - Isleworth
  - Wood Green



- Durham
  - York
  - Grimsby
  - Hull
  - Bradford
  - Teesside Crown Court
  - Warwick
  - Shrewsbury
  - Stafford
  - Stoke-on-Trent
  - Worcester
  - Hereford
  - Nottingham
  - Lincoln
  - Leicester
  - Northampton
  - Taunton
  - Bolton
  - Burnley
  - Preston Combined Court
  - Carlisle
  - Lancaster
  - Warrington
  - Chester
  - Manchester Crown Square
  - Manchester Minshull Street
  - Swindon Crown Court
- There are 71 Crown Court Centres in the UK, and a total of 83 Crown Court locations.
  - Rape convictions are increasing – there has been a 15 percent increase in the number of people convicted for rape offences in the last three months across England and Wales. There were 467 convictions last quarter (CPS Prosecution Statistics – October to December 2021), compared to 407, 398 and 376 in the quarters before. Total completed prosecutions for rape cases have increased by 10 percent from 600 (July – September 2021) to 661 (October-December 2021).
  - In England and Wales the average number of days for adult rape from CPS charge to the case being completed continued to fall, down by 38 days (8.3 percent) since the peak in June 2021 – down from 457 days to 419 in October – December 2021.

---

## **Subsidy Advice Unit calls for views on guidance to assist public authorities**

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) is consulting on guidance that

sets out the role of the Subsidy Advice Unit (SAU). The SAU is a new CMA function created by the Subsidy Control Act, which provides a new regime for governing the provision of subsidies within the UK following its exit from the EU.

Subsidies are offered to achieve specific public objectives (for example, car manufacturers could be offered a subsidy to help lower the price of electric vehicles to support the achievement of environmental targets). The SAU will provide advice to public authorities at all levels, evaluating their assessments of financial assistance they provide, via subsidies, to organisations.

The SAU will provide independent, non-binding advice on the assessments of certain high-value subsidies that are referred by public authorities, taking into account any effects that they might have on competition or investment in the UK. The SAU will publish these reports. Decisions on whether or not to offer subsidies are for public authorities, not the SAU or CMA.

In addition, the SAU will periodically monitor and review the operation of the UK subsidy control regime.

The CMA is seeking views on its draft guidance, particularly how the SAU will:

- Exercise its functions, including its information gathering powers, and the procedures it will adopt, including the way it will engage with public authorities.
- Evaluate and report on the public authority's assessment of the subsidy or scheme's compliance with the subsidy control requirements.
- Decide which subsidies and schemes to review when it has discretion to do so.

Rachel Merelie, Senior Director at the CMA, said:

The CMA has been asked to play a specific and important role in the new UK subsidy control regime. We will use our expertise to ensure public authorities have expert and independent advice to help inform their policy decisions.

We're keen to hear a range of voices on our draft guidance to help make sure the UK benefits from a world-leading subsidy control regime.

The draft guidance explains the SAU's proposed approach to transparency, consultation, confidentiality, and publication of its reports. It also provides information about its online Public Authority Portal, which public authorities will use to submit referrals to the SAU once the new regime comes into effect.

The CMA is also [consulting on a draft Statement of Policy](#) in relation to the enforcement by the SAU of its information-gathering powers for the

performance of its monitoring functions.

The CMA welcomes all views on its [draft guidance](#) and Statement of Policy by 10 August 2022 and plans to publish its final guidance later this year.

The launch of the SAU's consultation follows the publication of the [BEIS consultation on the statutory guidance for the Subsidy Control Act 2022](#).

1. The establishment of the Subsidy Advice Unit is one of a series of new measures contained within the Subsidy Control Act. The Act establishes a new system of subsidy oversight and control within the UK to replace the EU State Aid regime.
2. The Act, which was granted Royal Assent in April 2022, will establish the Subsidy Advice Unit within the CMA as a Committee of the CMA Board. The SAU will play a defined role in the UK's new subsidy control regime through its review and monitoring functions.
3. Subsidies can take various forms including; a cash payment, a loan with interest below the market rate, or a guarantee. Subsidies are administered by all levels of government in the UK. The definition of public authority is wide and captures any person who exercises functions of a public nature, including public authorities at any level of central, devolved, regional or local government and non-governmental bodies that are performing a public function.
4. Since 1 January 2021, the UK has complied with the commitments on subsidy control set out in its free trade agreements with other countries, notably the provisions of the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA), and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules on subsidies, as well as the relevant provisions within the Northern Ireland Protocol.
5. The government is exempting a limited set of subsidies from the control principles, such as those required for safeguarding national security and subsidies granted temporarily to address emergencies such as flooding. All subsidies will still be subject to WTO rules.
6. Subsidies which can be referred to the SAU are those which fall under the definitions of a Subsidy or Scheme of Interest (discretionary referral) or Subsidy or Scheme of Particular Interest (mandatory referral). These definitions were [consulted on by BEIS earlier this year](#) and will be confirmed in regulations.
7. Under the Subsidy Control Act 2022, the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy can also call in any subsidy pre- or post-award to be treated as a Subsidy or Scheme of Particular Interest.