

[Press release: Hurricane Irma update](#)

Shelter kits provided by UK aid are being distributed in Anguilla to help those left homeless by Hurricane Irma.

The kits, transported by Britain's Royal Fleet Auxiliary ship Mounts Bay, are being delivered to people in need by the Anguillan Red Cross.

Crews from RFA Mounts Bay are also today delivering UK aid including shelter, food and water to those affected on Gorda in the British Virgin Islands.

On the Island of Tortola, British military troops are delivering food and water having already helped to make the area secure, enabling aid to be delivered.

In addition, the UK has helped to distribute water bottles to 700 of the most vulnerable households affected by Hurricane Irma on the British Virgin Islands.

There are now 1,000 UK military troops in the region helping with the relief effort.

International Development Secretary Priti Patel said:

The UK government continues to deliver UK aid to the victims of Hurricane Irma as a matter of extreme urgency.

We have over 40 tonnes of DFID aid in the region, and more aid is arriving every day.

Our military troops, police officers and aid workers are doing an amazing job on the ground, to get vital supplies to those who need it most.

To suggest the UK reacted slowly and is not doing enough is just plain wrong. We are leading the way, and other countries, are now coming to us for help.

In addition to providing support on the ground, the UK Government is working closely with affected governments to continue to understand what assistance is needed to ensure the right aid is getting to the right place.

Yesterday, International Development Secretary Priti Patel spoke to the Governor of the Virgin Islands, Augustus Jaspert, to discuss emerging needs on the island. Earlier today she briefed the Cabinet on these latest developments.

HMS Ocean, which was loaded in Gibraltar with 5,000 hygiene kits, 10,000 buckets and 500,000 water purification tablets, is due this evening to be

deployed to the region.

The government has made £2.5 million available to the Pan American Health Organisation to ensure critical health services are provided in the region, and to reduce the risk of disease spreading.

This is part of the £32 million it has so far pledged to the relief effort.

DFID has deployed 18 staff in total to the region, including to Turks and Caicos, using British expertise to provide urgent relief to those in need and support efforts to restore infrastructure.

The UK Government is being supported by companies in the private sector, including:

- Thomson and Thomas cook who have delivered over 8,000 buckets on commercial flights
- Virgin, who offered free transport to dispatch relief items including 1776 shelter kits, to Antigua yesterday.

Today, we expect another 288 kits to fly the same route with them.

Notes to editors

[Press release: Return of further powers to Rotherham](#)

The move to return the functions, which include community safety and waste collection, follows the [latest report](#) by the government-appointed Commissioner team that noted steady improvement by the council.

This council has already regained 8 powers in the last 9 months.

Communities Secretary Sajid Javid said:

The council is continuing to make progress under the watchful eye of our commissioners and the return of additional powers to Rotherham reflects this progress.

However, the commissioners will remain in place and continue to work with the council to help restore full democratic powers.

Steady progress by the council

The Commissioner team, led by Mary Ney, who replaced Sir Derek Myers as Lead Commissioner in April 2017, outlined continuing improvements in her progress report of 18 May 2017.

The Communities Secretary will hand back control of the following functions to the council:

- performance management in each of the council's service areas
- waste collection
- community safety which includes community cohesion and domestic violence
- human resources
- asset management including both land and property assets

To give further assurance to residents, the community safety service will be returned with enhanced oversight by the commissioner team over services supporting victims of domestic violence. This would allow the relevant commissioner to veto any Cabinet decision if they feel necessary.

Commissioners will retain executive decision making power over children's social care services, special allowances, and also the appointment and dismissal of any statutory officers. They will also continue to have oversight over all returned functions.

Mr Javid will continue to receive 3-monthly reviews from the commissioners.

Further information

Commissioners with executive responsibilities at Rotherham metropolitan borough council are:

- Lead Commissioner – Mary Ney
- Children's Social Care Commissioner – Patricia Bradwell
- Supporting Commissioner – Julie Kenny CBE

The intervention is expected to end on 31 March 2019.

[Press release: Improving work health for a healthy economy](#)

A healthy population is the engine of a healthy economy, says Public Health England's (PHE) Chief Executive.

Speaking at the opening of PHE's annual conference, Duncan Selbie said we must look further than the NHS if we are to ensure everyone has a fair chance

of good health.

PHE believes that health and wealth are 2 sides of the same coin. Having a job is the key to a long, happy and healthy life.

Illness among working age people costs the UK economy £100 billion a year. About 330,000 every year become unemployed because of health-related issues.

For every unemployed person who gets a job there is an estimated saving to society of £12,035 in a one-year period.

We take an estimated 137.3 million days of sick leave and more than a third of those (£46 million) are due to poor mental health and lower neck and back pain.

But workplace health and wellbeing programmes such as exercise, healthy eating and stop smoking support can make a real difference. Successful programmes such as these have been found to return £2 to £10 for every £1 spent, benefiting staff wellbeing and economic productivity.

Most big employers already have some plans in place that help to improve and protect their staff's health but many small and medium enterprises (SMEs) do not currently benefit from such programmes.

PHE and Healthy Working Futures, a workplace health provider, has set out advice for SMEs, which account for 60% of private sector employment.

It gives SMEs a series of questions on health and wellbeing including smoking, fitness and sleep, which staff can answer anonymously, enabling them to assess the specific needs of their workforce and create tailored steps to improve their staff's health and wellbeing, based on evidence.

Later this week, Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) will also publish new guidelines on how businesses can improve their workers' health, with advice on physical and mental health.

PHE has also created a series of guidance for employers on important issues, such as musculoskeletal (MSK) and mental health, impacting on employees with Business in the Community. Further advice is being developed covering issues including:

- physical activity
- diet and weight
- drugs
- alcohol
- tobacco

Duncan Selbie, Public Health England (PHE) Chief Executive, said:

Work is the key to a long, happy and healthy life. But sickness absence and tackling early retirement due to ill health are still major challenges for the economy.

This new package of support for small businesses will help businesses improve the health of their staff.

We can no longer see the health service as the only solution to our ills. We've got individual responsibility, and so do employers. Keeping people healthy not only benefits the individual but also benefits the economy and the local community.

We must do more to improve health outcomes, and in turn the health and economic productivity of the country. I urge employers to take advantage of this support.

Mike Cherry, Chairman of the Federation of Small Businesses, said:

Improved wellbeing benefits individual businesses. But more than that, it helps the wider economy, government and public services, as well as the local communities where small businesses play such an important role. There's never going to be a 'one size fits all' approach and not every idea will work for every business – that's why we're very pleased to be working with Public Health England in particular to help smaller businesses and the self-employed.

The FSB will soon launch its first wellbeing campaign aimed at providing some simple ideas and suggestions that smaller firms can look to adopt to support themselves and their staff. This sits alongside the medical and health advice service we already offer our members. We are delighted to receive the support of PHE for our campaign and we hope it acts as a catalyst for a positive conversation on wellbeing and mental health.

Louise Aston, Wellbeing Director, Business in the Community, said:

We are delighted to be working in partnership with Public Health England, taking an innovative co-production, whole person, whole system approach to producing a suite of interconnected toolkits that address the two leading causes of days lost at work – mental and musculoskeletal health.

Our suite of toolkits consolidates the very best evidence with the very best employer practice, aligned with freely available resources that are useful to all employers, wherever they are on their journey.

PHE and Business in the Community have developed a series of [toolkits for employers](#).

Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust introduced a physiotherapy service for staff with MSK absence from work because it was the second

highest reason for sickness absence among staff, and employees had asked for support in this area in health and wellbeing surveys.

Following a successful pilot of early intervention for staff with MSK absence at Wansbeck General Hospital in 2014, the service was extended trust-wide in January 2016.

An additional whole-time equivalent physiotherapist was provided to deliver the service for staff who can either self-refer using the online referral system or be referred by their manager, ideally on the first day of absence.

Staff are then given an appointment with a physiotherapist within 3 days.

Findings show:

- 15% of staff (86) on short-term MSK absence were referred to the staff physiotherapy service
- absence length for staff on short-term absence was reduced by 31% when referred on first day of absence, compared to day 2 or more
- 25% of staff (44) on long-term MSK absence were referred to physiotherapy
- absence length for staff on long-term absence was reduced by 11% when referred on first day of absence, compared to day 2 or more

For further information on this case study, please contact Jaclyn Curry, Media and Communications Officer, Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust on 0191 203 1654 or jaclyn.curry@northumbria.nhs.uk.

[Public Health England](#) exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities. It does this through world-class science, knowledge and intelligence, advocacy, partnerships and the delivery of specialist public health services. PHE is an operationally autonomous executive agency of the Department of Health. Follow us on Twitter: [@PHE_uk](#) and Facebook: www.facebook.com/PublicHealthEngland.

[Press release: Predatory paedophile has his sentence increased by 3 years](#)

Abingdon man who used fake online profiles to abuse children has his sentence increased by the Court of Appeal.

An Abingdon man who was using fake online profiles to abuse children has his sentence increased by the Court of Appeal following a referral under the Unduly Lenient Sentence scheme.

Alex Orr, 27, pleaded guilty to 16 offences against children including

extreme pornography and arranging the commission of a child sex offence. Orr received a 6 year custodial term and a 4 year extended licence when he appeared at Oxford Crown Court in January. Today this sentence was increased to 9 years' imprisonment with a 4 year extension.

Orr created a fake Facebook profile and tricked young teenagers into performing sexual acts for him to view online. He also incited his victims to engage in sexual activity with other children, including one who was just 1 or 2 years' old.

Speaking after the hearing, the Attorney General Jeremy Wright QC MP said:

"This offender deceived a large number of young victims and manipulated them into doing unspeakable acts, resulting in serious psychological harm.

"Just because these crimes were committed from behind a screen doesn't make them any less serious. I hope the increased sentence shows how seriously the Courts take these matters."

[News story: Better co-ordination to stop illegal waste carriers](#)

The Environment Agency and Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) have agreed on steps to stop illegal waste carriers and improve road safety in England.

Sir James Bevan, Environment Agency Chief Executive, and Gareth Llewellyn, DVSA Chief Executive, signed an agreement today (12 September 2017) in London.

How being a waste carrier works

Companies must [register as a waste carrier](#) if they:

- transport waste
- buy, sell or dispose of waste

However, some carriers operate illegally without the necessary licence, and don't dispose of waste legally.

Companies who use a waste carrier must [check they're registered to dispose of waste](#), and not allow the waste carrier to dispose of their waste illegally.

Every year waste crime costs taxpayers and businesses £1 billion. The Environment Agency spent almost £15 million stopping illegal waste activity between April 2015 and March 2016.

What the agreement will do

The Environment Agency and DVSA will share intelligence and carry out joint operations in England to:

- stop waste being illegally transported
- target unsafe drivers and vehicles

The agreement will see:

- DVSA staff working within Environment Agency teams, making sure enforcement action is coordinated and effective
- information and intelligence shared between the 2 agencies, increasing the effectiveness of roadside enforcement activity on waste industry vehicles
- enforcement teams provided with up-to date and relevant intelligence about waste industry operators

A DVSA traffic examiner inspects a waste carrier

This will all help to:

- identify high-risk or illegal goods vehicle operators who are involved in the transport of waste
- reduce the number of seriously and serially non-compliant waste industry vehicles on England's roads

Report unsafe operators

You can report any information you have about to unsafe vehicle operators to DVSA.

Building on years of joint work

Sir James Bevan and Gareth Llewellyn (right) talk to Environment Agency and DVSA staff at a joint operation in London

For a number of years, the Environment Agency and DVSA have worked together to stop waste crime, making sure companies are operating legally and vehicle safety is improved.

Gareth Llewellyn said:

DVSA priority is to protect you from unsafe drivers and vehicles.

I am delighted that we will be working with the Environment Agency to tackle those who illegally transport waste. By combining our enforcement powers and intelligence we'll be able to target those who break the rules more effectively.

DVSA traffic examiners will issue fines to those waste carriers we find to be operating in an unsafe manner. These operators are

putting themselves and other road users at risk and pose a danger to our environment.

Sir James Bevan said:

We want to protect people and communities from the impact that vehicle and waste crime can have and create a level playing field for all operators.

This memorandum of understanding with DVSA will help both organisations target the waste industry to improve compliance and vehicle and driver safety standards.

To help us with this, we are encouraging people to check with the Environment Agency if the company they are employing to take their waste away is a fully registered waste carrier.