

## [News story: Buffer stop collision, Preston](#)

At around 14:50 hrs on 1 April, a passenger train struck the buffer stops in platform 3C at Preston station. The train was travelling at around 6 mph (10 km/h) and several passengers suffered minor injuries.

We have undertaken a [preliminary examination](#) into the circumstances surrounding this accident. Having assessed the evidence which has been gathered to date, we have decided to publish a [safety digest](#).

The safety digest will shortly be made available on our website.

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## [Press release: Reporting matters of material significance: guidance for auditors and examiners](#)

The [revised list of matters of material significance](#) is intended to assist auditors and independent examiners in meeting their reporting requirements to the charity regulators.

The new guidance adds 2 new areas for reporting:

1. If an auditor has concerns regarding a charity's accounts and issues a modified audit opinion report or qualified independent examiner's report.
2. Where an auditor has concerns that conflicts of interests or related party transactions have not been properly managed or declared.

The list has been published by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR), the Charity Commission for England and Wales (CCEW) and the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI).

In all 3 jurisdictions, auditors and examiners have a legal duty to report matters of material significance to the regulator. In order to assist them in this duty there was previously a list of matters which had been prepared jointly by OSCR and CCEW.

Recognising that a number of years had passed since the original list was developed and also that the regulator in Northern Ireland was now also in operation, a decision was taken to refresh the list, considering carefully the regulatory experience to date.

A revised list of matters was prepared and [consulted on from May to September 2016](#). Consultation feedback was fully considered and a final list has now been developed. The new list of 9 matters of material significance includes 2 new matters (matters 8 and 9) that need to be reported and removes one requirement to report ([see 'Notes to editors'](#)).

The [updated list](#) can be viewed on GOV.UK.

**Nigel Davies, Head of Accountancy Services at the Charity Commission of England and Wales, said:**

Auditors and examiners play a vital role in supporting us to carry out our regulatory functions. We have, as regulators, reflected on our experiences to date and it is clear that not all auditors and examiners have been reporting matters to us. We hope that by providing an updated list auditors and examiners may be clearer in their duties. We urge auditors and examiners to read this updated list of matters which has been informed by our regulatory work to report and continue to report these serious issues to the regulators.

**Laura Anderson, Head of Professional Advice and Intelligence at the OSCR said:**

The revised list of matters has been drawn from our experience as regulators. We have been greatly encouraged by the level of feedback we have received through our consultation, which has allowed us to refine the list, ensuring it meets both the needs of the regulators as well as examiners and auditors.

**Myles McKeown, Head of Compliance and Enquiries at CCNI said:**

As a relatively new regulator the list of matters of material significance will be of great assistance to auditors and examiners in our jurisdiction. We have welcomed the opportunity to work together with colleagues in CCEW and OSCR in developing and publishing the final list.

Ends

PR 32/17

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## Notes to editors

1. Matter 8 from the previous list of matters to be reported has been

removed. This is due to the fact that this led to auditors and independent examiners advising the regulator where they had simply ceased to hold office. Where ceasing to hold office occurs due to a reportable matter this is covered by an alternative matter.

2. Matter 8: “Any notification or matter reported to the trustees on resigning as independent examiner or matter that the examiner is aware of on resignation or ceasing to act that falls within the categories of the previously set out reportable matters, or for examiners the notification on ceasing to hold office or resigning from office, of those matters reported to trustees”.
3. Under legislation in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, auditors and independent examiners have a duty to report certain matters to their respective charity regulators. Although the legislation varies in each jurisdiction the broad requirement is that where an auditor or independent examiner becomes aware of any matter, through the course of their work, which they believe is of material significance for the regulator in the exercise of their function.
4. The [Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator \(OSCR\)](#) is the independent regulator and registrar of Scotland’s 23,500 charities and publishes the Scottish Charity Register at [www.oscr.org.uk](http://www.oscr.org.uk). Our vision is for charities in which the public has confidence and which provide public benefit.
5. The [Charity Commission for Northern Ireland](#) is the independent regulator of charities in Northern Ireland, established under the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, responsible for ensuring Northern Ireland has a dynamic and well governed charities sector in which the public can have confidence.
6. [The Charity Commission](#) is the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales. To find out more about our work, see our [annual report](#).

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## **Press release: Employment remains at record high rate of 74.6%**

Official figures released today (12 April 2017) show that the employment rate is at 74.6%, with 31.84 million people in work – an increase of 312,000 on the year and the joint highest rate since records began in 1971.

The Office for National Statistics has also announced that the unemployment rate remains low at 4.7%. It has not been lower since 1975.

Full-time work continues to be the driving force behind the rise in employment. Average weekly wages grew by 2.3% including bonuses over the last year. Wage growth has remained above 2% every month since the beginning of 2016.

Secretary of State Damian Green said:

This is yet another strong set of figures, with unemployment at a rate that hasn't been beaten since the 1970s and more vacancies than ever before.

More people are finding full-time jobs and average wages have grown yet again, meaning more families have the security of a regular wage.

However, there is always more to do. That's why we're creating a welfare system that rewards work through Universal Credit, which helps claimants keep more of the money they earn.

Today's figures also show:

- there are 1.56 million unemployed people, 141,000 fewer than this time last year
- the number of people in full-time employment grew by 146,000 in the last 3 months
- the unemployment rate of 16 to 24 year olds who have left full-time education is 10.9% – a decrease of 1.3% from last year
- long-term unemployment is at 389,000 – the lowest since 2008

Separate figures out today show [1.1 million claims have been made to Universal Credit](#). Of the 490,000 people now claiming Universal Credit, nearly 40% are in work.

Estimates of the Claimant Count are no longer included in the ONS statistical bulletin as they may now be providing a misleading representation of the UK labour market. ONS released a [statement explaining the decision about the claimant count](#) on 23 February 2017.

Media enquiries for this press release – 0203 267 5118

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## [News story: New Lower Thames Crossings to cut congestion and create thousands of jobs](#)

[unable to retrieve full-text content]Preferred route for a new Lower Thames Crossing and A13 widening announced.

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## Press release: More than 130 new free schools to create more good places

Thousands of new school places will be created across the country following the largest wave of free schools approvals this Parliament, giving more parents the choice of a good school place for their child.

Today (12 April 2017) the Department for Education has approved applications for 131 new schools, creating more than 69,000 places. These schools will be led by high-performing institutions, including a grammar-school-led multi-academy trust (MAT) and the largest state boarding school in the country, demonstrating how existing high-performing schools can help raise attainment more widely, as set out in the government's education proposals.

Free schools are one of the highest performing groups of non-selective state schools, with 29% of those inspected rated outstanding by Ofsted. Since 2014, more than 80% of mainstream free schools have been approved in areas where there was a need for more school places, while others are opened in response to parental demand to create competition and drive up standards where existing provision is not adequate.

Today's approvals build on the government's strong record in creating more good school places. Already, there are 1.8 million more children in good or outstanding schools compared to 2010. The new approvals also demonstrate the government's determination to tap into the expertise that already exists within the school system to ensure standards continue to rise.

Education Secretary Justine Greening said:

We need schools that can bring out the best in every single child no matter where they're growing up, how much their parents earn, or however different their talents are.

That's why these new schools are so important – they give us the school places we need for the future, and they also give parents more choices to find a great school place in their area that's right for their child.

New free school proposals approved today include:

- Stone Lodge Academy – a new secondary school for 11- to 19-year-olds in Dartford, proposed by Endeavour Multi Academy Trust. The trust already runs 2 highly successful grammar schools and will use their expertise running selective schools to open a new non-selective free school
- Barton Court Academy Trust Free School – proposed by the Ofsted-

outstanding Barton Court Grammar School, a new non-selective free school providing 1,050 school places for 11- to 19-year-olds in Canterbury

- The Flagship School – a parent-led special school to provide 56 places for 9- to 6-year-old pupils in Hastings, which was identified as an opportunity area earlier this year
- City Enterprise Academy – proposed by the successful City Learning Trust, the school will provide 100 much-needed alternative provision places in Stoke-on-Trent, which was identified as an opportunity area earlier this year
- Sapientia Primary Prep School – proposed by The Sapientia Education Trust, which runs Wymondham College – the largest state boarding school in England. The school for 5- to 11-year-olds will benefit from the expertise and facilities the trust has to offer, and provide 450 primary places in Norfolk
- School 21 Campus and School 21 Sugar House – 2 new schools for 5-to 16-year-olds in Newham, East London, creating over 2,400 places. The schools will be operated by the trust behind School 21, which has been rated outstanding by Ofsted
- Rushey Mead Free School – will provide 1,200 new secondary places in Leicester. It will be opened by the trust behind the Rushey Mead Academy – rated outstanding by Ofsted and consistently one of the highest performing schools in Leicester

124 free schools have opened since 2015, with a further 376 set to open by 2020 – including the schools announced today – which means the government is on track to meet its manifesto commitment of opening 500 more new free schools by September 2020.

As part of its work to open more free schools the government has created a new body – [LocatED](#). The organisation is made up of experienced property specialists to help speed up the process of acquiring sites for new schools and get the best value for the taxpayer.

## **Wave 12 free schools approved today:**

1. 111 free schools in total creating 67,718 new school places:
  - 18 schools in the East of England, creating 8,875 places
  - 9 schools in the East Midlands, creating 8,105 places
  - 7 schools in Yorkshire and the Humber, creating 4,006 places
  - 2 schools in the North East, creating 204 places
  - 5 schools in the North West, creating 4,610 places
  - 27 schools in the South East, creating 15,429 places
  - 15 schools in the South West, creating 7,721 places
  - 12 schools in the West Midlands, creating 9,060 places
  - 16 schools in London, creating 9,708 places
2. In addition, 20 local authority areas have been approved to create a new special school through the [free school process](#) – taking the total number of approvals to 131. This will create 1,700 school places for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. These will be created in Bedford, Blackpool, Bradford, Bristol, Cheshire East, Croydon,

Doncaster, Enfield, Essex, Hampshire, Havering, Herefordshire, Hounslow, Manchester, Portsmouth, Redbridge, Sheffield, South Gloucestershire, Suffolk and Sunderland.

3. Free schools can be set up by parents, teachers, charities, businesses, cultural and sporting bodies, community groups, academy trusts and sponsors, and existing schools in response to demand from the local community, either where there is a shortage of places, or where the parents are not happy with the places on offer.
4. 76% of open mainstream free schools up to September 2016 are located in areas where there was a need for more school places, and almost half are in the 30% most deprived communities in the country. They are also more likely to be rated 'outstanding' by Ofsted than other state schools – and can help to raise standards in neighbouring schools by introducing fresh ideas and competition.
5. [LocatED](#) will be accountable to the Secretary of State for Education, and will be responsible for the acquisition of sites for new schools. It launched in March 2017 and will play a vital role in supporting the department to meet this government's manifesto commitment to open 500 new schools by 2020, almost double the number of free schools opened over the course of the last Parliament.