

Guidance: Woodland creation grant: Countryside Stewardship (from 10 September 2018)

Capital grant for farmers and land managers to create woodland: find out about payment rates and the rules for the scheme. This guidance applies to Woodland Creation grants from 10 September 2018.

Foreign Secretary statement on West Bank settlements

On 5 and 6 August, the Israeli Higher Planning Committee of the Civil Administration announced plans to advance 2,304 settlement housing units in Israeli settlements, in the West Bank.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

We urge Israel to halt its settlement expansion, which is contrary to international law and promotes the effective annexation of the West Bank.

While the Israeli Cabinet approved construction permits for 715 Palestinian units in Area C, much more needs to be done to fulfil the needs of the estimated 300,000 Palestinians there.

The UK continues to urge the Government of Israel to develop improved mechanisms that allow Palestinians to build within Area C.

The UK also remains seriously concerned by the continued demolition of Palestinian property by Israeli authorities, including in Wadi al Hummus on 22 July.

Further information

Record number of disabled people benefitting from workplace funding

Government spending on the Access to Work scheme is up to record levels, with £129.1 million spent last year – a real terms increase of £15 million since 2010.

[Access to Work](#) is a government-run scheme that breaks down workplace barriers for disabled people and those with health conditions by paying for adjustments such as:

People can receive almost £60,000 a year through the scheme, which is more than double the average annual salary and an increase of 40% in just 2 years.

Minister for Disabled People Justin Tomlinson said:

Having a disability or health condition must not be a barrier to enjoying a fulfilling career – and the support available means there's no excuse for employers who refuse to be inclusive.

Access to Work removes the obstacles facing disabled people in the workplace, helping to level the playing field and ensure businesses don't see employing disabled people as a burden.

With more disabled people than ever before supported through Access to Work, thousands more employers across the country are benefitting from the skills disabled people bring to the workplace.

Access to Work is part of a wider government drive to create more job opportunities for disabled people, with nearly 950,000 more disabled people in work compared to 5 years ago.

Work and Pensions Secretary Amber Rudd has committed to reviewing the government's goal to see one million more disabled people in work between 2017 and 2027 with a view to making the target more ambitious.

Ross is a wheelchair user who works for Lloyds Banking Group. He has a support worker to help with workplace tasks, paid for by Access to Work.

Ross said:

Access to Work has made a massive difference to my life. Without it, I wouldn't have a job. I probably wouldn't be earning a living, I wouldn't own my own home, I wouldn't be able to go on holidays

and I wouldn't be able to follow the hobbies that interest me because I wouldn't be able to be employed. It makes a massive, massive difference to me.

Louis, who is visually impaired, also works for Lloyds Banking Group. Access to Work has paid for taxi fares so that Louis and his guide dog Dexter can get to and from work safely.

Louis said:

Access to Work is that key enabler which allows businesses to be as inclusive as they want to be.

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 3267 5126

Follow DWP on:

Foreign Secretary's visit to the USA on 6 August 2019

Following the meeting with the President and Vice President of the United States of America, Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

I was delighted to meet the President and the Vice President on my first visit to Washington as Foreign Secretary. We appreciate the President's warmth and enthusiasm for the UK-US relationship. The UK looks forward to working with our American friends to reach a free trade deal that is good for both countries, and cooperating on the common security challenges we face.

The Foreign Secretary will have further discussions on a range of foreign and security policy issues on Wednesday (7 August) in Washington, including with Secretary of State Pompeo and National Security Advisor Bolton.

Further information

Tackling tyre graveyards as new road surface using rubber is trialled

A section of road between junctions 23 to 22 on the southbound carriageway of the M1 near Leicester has been laid with the new surface which has been developed by Tarmac.

Highways England is funding trials into the new asphalt mix to see if this environmentally-sound innovation could be the way forward for future road surfaces.

Using waste tyres in roads has both economic and environmental benefits.

Some 40 million waste tyres are produced every year in the UK and over 500,000 disused tyres shipped out of the UK each year to be landfilled.

EU rules ban the disposal of tyres in landfill sites. Therefore the tyres generally go to the Middle East and Asia. There are over seven million tyres filling one Kuwaiti landfill site which is so vast that the 'tyre graveyard' is now visible from space.

Tarmac is believed to be the first in the UK to have developed an asphalt technology which recycles tyres by adding granulated rubber to the mix.

It is estimated by Tarmac that up to 750 waste tyres could be used in every kilometre of road surfaced with the new material, depending on the thickness of the road.

The trial on the M1 will test the effective durability of the road surface on a highly trafficked network.

Corporate Group Leader Martin Bolt, who oversees innovations projects for Highways England in the Midlands, said:

Highways England is committed to investing in innovation to help us meet the economic, environmental and efficiency challenges we face in our changing world and also to delivering environment improvements as we strive to ensure our road network works more harmoniously with its surroundings.

This trial could well be the first step to rapidly reducing the number of tyres piling up in the UK and beyond. The economic and environmental potential of this new asphalt is significant and we are delighted to be working with Tarmac in this trial.

Paul Fleetham, managing director of Tarmac, added:

Technical innovation has a key role to play in improving the environmental performance of our roads. As a previously overlooked waste stream, used tyres offer a significant opportunity to unlock the benefits of a circular economy.

There has been a very positive response to our rubberised asphalt since the first local authority trial was announced in May and we're very pleased to be working with Highways England to explore its potential to support the sustainability of the strategic road network.

General enquiries

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

Media enquiries

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