

EU Commission publishes new announcement on no deal preparations

This month, the EU Commission made another announcement about its preparations in case the UK leaves the EU without a deal. You can [find the announcement here](#).

Even though the UK government is clear that leaving under the Withdrawal Agreement is the preferable option, we also continue to prepare for all Brexit scenarios, and to provide advice on how you can ensure your rights as UK nationals living in the EU are protected.

In Portugal, the national government has already passed a [law with contingency measures to protect the rights of UK nationals living in Portugal in case of a no deal](#), which includes the right to stay for residents, the right to access healthcare, and the right to access public education.

There are some actions you can take now to prepare for the UK's exit from the EU, whether that is with or without a deal:

- make sure you are correctly registered as a resident
- register with your local health centre for access to public healthcare in Portugal
- register your address with the IMT or exchange your UK driving licence for a Portuguese one
- regularly check our [Living in Portugal guide](#) for updated information
- sign up for [our email alerts](#)

New Charity Inquiry: Sree Bharathalaya

The Charity Commission has opened a statutory inquiry into Sree Bharathalaya [\(1138682\)](#), a charity which exists to promote charitable purpose for the benefit of asylum seekers, refugees and the ethnic minority community in Coventry. It does this by advancing education and providing recreational facilities.

The Commission has serious concerns regarding the management and governance of the charity. The trustees repeatedly failed to file their accounts and annual returns on time in full for 3 years in a row, with one set being filed 736 days late. The Commission previously included the charity in a class inquiry for these failures, but opened a new investigation due to continued non-compliance.

An examination of the accounts submitted by the charity revealed that the accounts do not balance and there are also discrepancies between those submitted to Companies House.

In addition to this the Commission has concerns about the trustee board. Directors of charitable companies are also its trustees, but there are inconsistencies with the information displayed on Companies House and that which has been given to the Commission.

The Commission's inquiry opened on 14 June 2017. It has been unable to announce or progress its investigation before now so as to avoid prejudicing a separate HMRC investigation into the charity. The inquiry will now examine:

- The extent to which the trustees are complying with their legal duties to administer, govern and manage the charity, in particular their compliance with legal obligations to prepare and file the charity's annual financial information
- The extent to which trustees have complied with previously issued regulatory guidance
- Whether the charity has been operating in accordance with its objectives for the public benefit

It is the Commission's policy, after it has concluded an inquiry, to publish a report detailing what issues the inquiry looked at, what actions were undertaken as part of the inquiry and what the outcomes were. Reports of previous inquiries by the Commission are available on [GOV.UK](https://gov.uk).

Ends

Notes to Editors

- The Charity Commission is the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales; our role is to regulate charity trustees' compliance with the charity law framework.
- The Commission has not made any conclusions and the opening of the inquiry is not a finding of wrongdoing.

More sustainable way to refurbish reed

beds is trialled

For the first time the Coal Authority has replanted existing reeds – rather than planting new ones – when refurbishing a reed bed at one of our mine water treatment schemes.

The experiment could offer sustainability benefits while also saving time and money, and it is hoped that many more of our sites across Britain could benefit from this approach in the future.

The trial is part of a series of operational changes made at our Deerplay scheme – which removes iron from water pumped out of the former colliery of the same name near Bacup in Lancashire – to improve the discharge into the River Irwell.

Reed beds are used as the final stage of the treatment process, to filter out remaining finer iron particles, but over time the resulting ochre build-up affects their performance and they need ‘desludging’.

At Deerplay, uneven reed growth was also creating preferential flow paths, which allowed water to run through the bed too quickly for effective treatment.

Previously when we have refurbished a scheme, new reeds have been used – but if these are young they can’t be planted until early spring and take longer to establish, while if they are mature they are more expensive and can struggle to adopt to the harsh environment.

Ian Osborne, project manager from our environment team, said:

The existing reeds were flourishing in places, so we knew they had already adapted to the challenging weather conditions and mine water quality.

As we started work in October 2018, transplanting them helped us to meet the project timescale.

This has also extended the life of the reeds, cutting waste disposal costs and reducing land fill emissions.

Desludging work was carried out in 3 sections, to enable the reeds to be trimmed and transplanted as clusters, with nutrient-rich top soil to enhance growth.

The reed bed was brought back online in 3 stages, while being continuously monitored and maintained, and is currently operating at full flow.

It won't be known until the end of the growing season, in September, how effective the new technique has been, but the reeds are in good condition and growing well.

[title of video](#)

Members of our Deerplay project team will be attending the Constructed Wetland Association annual conference, where you can talk to them about our wide range of environmental work and how it ties in with the government's [25 Year Environment Plan](#) and the United Nations' 17 global Sustainable Development Goals.

The event, Wastewater Management and Beyond, takes place at the Hilton Birmingham Metropole on Tuesday 16 and Wednesday 17 July.

Sir Stephen O'Brien named as new DIT Board member

Following an open and competitive recruitment process, the Department for International Trade (DIT) has appointed Sir Stephen O'Brien as a Non-Executive Board Member for a three-year term from June 2019.

Sir Stephen's experience as a former International Development Minister and more recently as the United Nations' Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs will complement the Board's existing and extensive business experience as DIT advances trade and development initiatives to grow developing economies sustainably through trade.

Julie Currie and Lead Non-Executive Board Member Simon Walker's terms of office, which were due to end in November, have been renewed for a further three years.

Welcoming Sir Stephen's appointment, International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox MP said:

I am delighted to welcome Sir Stephen to the DIT Board. His expertise in leading development and humanitarian programmes in government and in the United Nations is a vital addition to the team as we grow our role in providing official development assistance through trade.

In the last 25 years, free trade has increased prosperity, lifting a billion people out of poverty. That prosperity is the basis for social stability, which in turn provides political stability – underpinning our global security.

I am very grateful to Dr Pippa Malmgren for her exceptional hard work and service to DIT over the last few years. I wish her well in her business venture.

My thanks also go to Julie Currie and Simon Walker, who play a pivotal role in the DIT Board, and I look forward to continue working with them.

Sir Stephen O'Brien said:

I am delighted that the Secretary of State has decided to appoint me to the Board and greatly look forward to working with them.

The Board is the senior governance forum providing leadership for DIT's business. It is chaired by the Secretary of State.

ENDS

Notes to editors

Biography: The Rt Hon Sir Stephen O'Brien KBE

Sir Stephen O'Brien has significant international and UK legal, industrial, business (executive and non-executive) and political experience, as well as relevant development experience. He served as Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for International Development from 2010 – 2012. Most recently, he was the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator. He is currently Chairman of Motability Operations Group PLC and Vice-Chairman of Savannah Petroleum PLC.

UN Human Rights Council 41: Statement under Item 2

Thank you Mr President

The United Kingdom welcomes the High Commissioner's report.

We express our deep condolences for the many people killed in the appalling attacks in Sri Lanka over Easter. We stand in solidarity with the people of Sri Lanka and stress the need for an inclusive response that builds trust among all communities, including respect for freedom of religion or belief. We urge Sri Lanka to maintain its moratorium on the use of the death penalty

We remain deeply concerned by serious human rights violations and abuses in Cameroon's North and South-West regions, and the further narrowing of political space. We note Cameroon's openness to engaging with the UN on human rights, but this must now be matched by a credible political dialogue that addresses the root causes of conflict.

We urge the Philippines to conduct thorough investigations into all killings associated with the war on drugs, and to ensure the safety of human rights defenders and media professionals. We strongly urge against any re-instatement of the death penalty.

In Vietnam, we are concerned about restrictions on freedom of expression and on media freedom. We encourage the acceptance of our recent UPR recommendations. We welcome Vietnam's commitment to use its UNSC seat to address the legacy of conflicts and to support women, peace and security issues.

Kem Sokha's continuing detention without trial in Cambodia is of grave concern. We urge Cambodia to maintain open and constructive dialogue with the EU on Everything But Arms trade procedures, to prevent negative impacts on the most vulnerable.

In Nicaragua, we welcome the release of political prisoners, and call for any remaining in custody to be freed. We are concerned that the recent amnesty law suppresses free speech and provides impunity to perpetrators of violent repression.

I echo the High Commissioner's comments about Hong Kong. We welcome the decision to suspend the extradition bill indefinitely, but events of the past week show that large sections of Hong Kong's public remain concerned. We encourage dialogue between all sides.

Thank you.