

Press release: Foreign Office Minister reaffirms UK's commitment in Vietnam

Mark Field, the FC0 Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific, arrived in Vietnam today (2 January) on the first leg of his visit to Vietnam and South Korea. He will be visiting both Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, before going on to Seoul and Busan. This is his third visit to Vietnam since January 2018.

The two-day visit will involve meetings with the Vietnamese government, as part of the UK and Vietnam's Strategic Partnership. These will cover issues including trade and investment; prosperity and economic development; education; the Illegal Wildlife Trade; defence; protection of British nationals overseas; human rights; and cooperation on modern slavery and human trafficking.

Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific, the Rt Hon Mark Field MP said:

I'm greatly looking forward to my third visit to Vietnam as Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific. I will be meeting the Foreign Minister Pham Binh Minh to discuss how we can work more closely together in the future.

The Strategic Partnership enjoyed by the UK and Vietnam means we are able to continue to address a huge range of issues important to both our countries. I am particularly looking forward to build our cooperation in other areas, such as media freedom, which is a growing priority this year.

To promote UK financial services, Minister Field will also speak at a seminar on corporate governance, meet the chairman of State Securities Commission, and discuss opportunities for UK business where the new revised Law on Securities will allow greater involvement of foreign businesses in various sectors.

During the visit to Hanoi, Minister Field will also meet representatives from non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society to discuss media freedom.

On 3 January, Minister Field will visit Ho Chi Minh City to highlight UK businesses' expertise and involvement in sectors such as education, manufacturing and finance. This includes a visit to a clothing factory for UK brands and a visit to the Vietnamese University of Economics and Finance which offers joint degrees with the University of Gloucestershire. He will also give a speech at an event hosted by KPMG focusing on anti-bribery and corruption obligations.

The Minister will also meet leaders of Ho Chi Minh City and sign a Memorandum of Understanding covering bilateral cooperation on the development of Smart

Cities. Mr Field will end his visit by being the guest of honour at a reception with the business community and the British Business Group in Vietnam.

Further information

[Press release: Foreign Office Minister reaffirms UK's commitment in Vietnam](#)

Minister Field arrives in Hanoi on the first stop of a visit to Vietnam and South Korea.

[News story: Grayling slashes rail fares for a generation of rail passengers](#)

- up to 1.2 million more young people to benefit from half price rail travel as new railcard extends child fares to 16 and 17 year olds (including peak and season tickets) in time for new academic year in September
- millions of 26 to 30 year olds will also benefit with the roll-out of the industry-led, government backed 26 to 30 railcard today, cutting a third off most rail tickets
- government committed to a fairer deal for young people travelling on the rail network to school, training and work
- fare rises tied to inflation for sixth year in a row, no more inflation-busting fare rises of the past

A brand new rail card that extends half-price child rail fares to 16 and 17 year olds has been announced today (2 January 2019) by Transport Secretary Chris Grayling.

The new 16 and 17 railcard will be launched this coming September (2019) with up to 1.2 million young people guaranteed a 50% discount on rail travel to coincide with the new academic year.

The announcement comes on the same day the rail industry launches the 26 to 30 railcard, benefitting an extra 3 million people with a third off their

travel. It now means that rail travellers from the ages of 16 to 30 will be able to benefit from cut-price fares across the country.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

The new 16 and 17 and 26 to 30 railcard will cut fares for a generation of travellers, ensuring more young people than ever will be able to travel on our railways for less.

Today's announcement of a new 16 and 17 railcard could cut the cost of travel by hundreds of pounds a year for young people and their parents, making it cheaper to get to school, college and work.

This builds on the roll-out of the new 26 to 30 railcard and our record investment into our railways, ensuring people get the frequent, affordable and reliable journeys they deserve.

The new railcard will guarantee 50% off rail travel until the cardholder reaches their 18th birthday. Further details will be available ahead of the card's launch in the summer.

The move comes as the government freezes regulated fares in line with inflation for other travellers for the sixth year running. Since 2014 fares have, on average, remained below the annual inflation cap.

The government wants to see lower fares in the future and has launched root and branch review of the rail industry looking at fares reform and affordability for passengers. Reforms will begin in 2020.

[Press release: UK tests self-driving Martian robots](#)

Testing in the Sahara Desert of UK software for an autonomous Martian robot has now completed, with the robot travelling over 1.4km without human interaction.

[News story: 10 year olds in the UK](#)

have consumed 18 years' worth of sugar

Children have already exceeded the maximum recommended sugar intake for an 18 year old by the time they reach their tenth birthday, according to Public Health England (PHE). This is based on their total sugar consumption from the age of 2.

This figure comes as a new [Change4Life](#) campaign launches today (2 January 2019), supporting families to cut back on sugar and to help tackle growing rates of childhood obesity.

While children's sugar intakes have declined slightly in recent years, they are still consuming around 8 excess sugar cubes each day, equivalent to around 2,800 excess sugar cubes per year.

To help parents manage this, Change4Life is encouraging them to 'Make a swap when you next shop'. Making simple everyday swaps can reduce children's sugar intake from some products (yoghurts, drinks and breakfast cereals) by half – while giving them healthier versions of the foods and drinks they enjoy.

Parents can try swapping:

- a higher-sugar yoghurt (for example split-pot) for a lower sugar one, to halve their sugar intake from 6 cubes of sugar to 3
- a sugary juice drink for a no-added sugar juice drink, to cut back from 2 cubes to half a cube
- a higher-sugar breakfast cereal (such as a frosted or chocolate cereal) for a lower sugar cereal, to cut back from 3 cubes to half a cube per bowl

While some foods and drinks remain high in sugar, many companies have reformulated products such as yoghurts, breakfast cereals and juice drinks, meaning these swaps are a good place for families to start.

Making these swaps every day could remove around 2,500 sugar cubes per year from a child's diet, but swapping chocolate, puddings, sweets, cakes and pastries for healthier options such as malt loaf, sugar-free jellies, lower-sugar custards and rice puddings would reduce their intake even more.

Severe obesity in 10 to 11 year olds has now [reached an all-time high](#). Overweight or obese children are more likely to be overweight or obese as adults, increasing their risk of heart disease and some cancers, while more young people than ever are developing Type 2 diabetes. Excess sugar can also lead to painful tooth decay, bullying and low self-esteem in childhood.

Dr Alison Tedstone, Chief Nutritionist at PHE, said:

Children are consuming too much sugar, but parents can take action now to prevent this building up over the years.

To make this easier for busy families, Change4Life is offering a straightforward solution – by making simple swaps each day, children can have healthier versions of everyday foods and drinks, while significantly reducing their sugar intake.

Families are encouraged to look for the Change4Life 'Good Choice' badge in shops, download the free Food Scanner app or search [Change4Life](#) to help them find lower sugar options.

Popular brands – including Nestlé Shredded Wheat, Nestlé Low Sugar Oat Cheerios, Petits Filous and Soreen (malt loaf) – will display the 'Good Choice' badge online, in-store and throughout their advertising, to help parents find healthier options.

Customers can also find healthier options in supporting supermarkets including Asda and Aldi, as well as in Londis and Budgens convenience stores.

With a third of children leaving primary school overweight or obese, tackling obesity requires wider action and is not just limited to individual efforts from parents. PHE is working with the food industry to remove 20% of sugar from the products contributing the most to children's sugar intakes by 2020.

In May 2018, PHE published [progress against the first-year sugar reduction](#) ambition of 5%, which showed an average 2% reduction in sugar across categories for retailers and manufacturers.

While breakfast cereals and yoghurts and fromage frais were among the categories meeting or exceeding the 5% ambition, some products in these categories are still high in sugar – this is why Change4Life is making it easier for parents to find lower-sugar options.