

News story: Near miss with track worker, Peterborough

At around 10:52 hrs on 20 July 2018, a track worker, acting as a site lookout for another track worker, narrowly avoided being struck by the 09:16 hrs Leeds to King's Cross passenger service, just to the south of Peterborough station.

The train was approaching along the up fast line at around 102 mph (164 km/h) when the driver saw the site lookout, sounded the train's warning horn, and applied the train's brakes.

The site lookout moved out of the path of the approaching train about three seconds before the train passed him.

Because of the layout around Peterborough station and the speed of non-stopping trains, a distant lookout was needed to warn the site lookout when trains were approaching from the north, so he had enough time to warn the track worker and move off the track and into a position of safety until trains had passed. On this occasion, the site lookout was not warned of the approaching train because the distant lookout was not in place.

A distant lookout had been posted near the south end of Peterborough station, but believed he had been stood down. Another distant lookout, for a group of track workers working north of Peterborough station, was working from this position but looking for trains approaching from the south. As a result, this distant lookout did not see the train approaching from the north nor provide a warning.

Our investigation will determine the sequence of events. It will also include consideration of:

- the actions of those involved
- the number of different work groups using lookout protection around Peterborough station before and during the incident
- the planning of the work of the various work groups in the vicinity
- any relevant underlying management factors

Our investigation is independent of any investigation by the railway industry or by the industry's regulator, the [Office of Rail and Road](#).

We will publish our findings, including any recommendations to improve safety, at the conclusion of our investigation. This report will be available on our website.

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News story: Grouse moors: Working together to achieve shared outcomes

The National Gamekeepers Organisation has provided an industry-led free grouse moor training day at [Snilesworth Estate](#) on the North York Moors (02 August) to help improve land management and enhance local wildlife.

The day gave new Natural England upland staff an insight into the day-to-day management of a driven grouse moor to better equip them with the skills and understanding to work together with land managers, farmers and gamekeepers on the restoration of upland habitats. Organised by John Clarke from the National Gamekeepers' Organisation and Simon Lovel from Natural England, the training was delivered by Snilesworth Estate head keeper, Jimmy Shuttlewood and his team. Natural England is now considering organising a future training day for hill farming later in the year.

The training looked at grouse moor management from an industry perspective, focusing on the life cycle of grouse, habitat management, predator control, medicated grit, which activities take place at different times of year, considerations keepers make in the siting of grouse butts and other infrastructure, and what happens on a typical shoot day.

Natural England uplands policy advisor Simon Lovel said:

Conservation is ultimately about people and by increasing our understanding of those who manage the land, the easier it is to find genuine shared outcomes that can be delivered utilising the local knowledge and traditional skills of the practitioners on the ground. We are planning upland ecology training for gamekeepers and farmers later in the year.

John Clarke from the [National Gamekeepers Organisation](#) added:

This has been a fantastic step towards working together in the future.

Those attending had a greater understanding of how driven grouse moors are managed and the associated range of environmental benefits, including the restoration of upland habitats. Going forward, Natural England staff, gamekeepers, farmers and land managers will be able to work better together to achieve healthy and resilient upland ecosystems, that will support thriving local communities off the back of sustainable land uses.

Natural England's Chairman, Andrew Sells, recently spoke at [the Game Fair and](#)

[highlighted the benefits for conservation of moorland from partnership working.](#)

He said:

We are also seeing more estates coming into partnership agreements with Natural England, voluntarily finding ways to enhance the environment. These deepening relationships will be vital in joining up prime wildlife sites and achieving goals of the [25 Year Environment Plan](#).

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Speech: Rough Sleeping Strategy and prison leavers: Rory Stewart blog

Sleeping out, night after night, in a street or a park, or a doorway, is not simply cold and uncomfortable – it is lonely, and damaging to soul and body. Rough sleepers are seventeen times more likely to be attacked than the general public. They are more likely to have substance misuse problems, and many have issues with their mental health. In addition, nearly one in three female rough sleepers have experienced sexual violence while homeless.

And too many rough sleepers come straight from prison – moving from their jail cells into this outdoor life of isolation, vulnerability and addiction. On the streets, without a job, without mental health support, or a bed for the night – they are sucked back into a criminal life, reoffend, and soon end up back in prison. We must do much more to help rough sleepers, and ex-prisoners in particular, to find a house and re-establish a more stable life. It is not just good for them, it is vital for public safety.

Today (13 August 2018), therefore, as the government launches a £100 million initiative to reduce and ultimately eliminate rough sleeping across England, I am delighted that ex-prisoners are integral to this project. As part of the

rough sleeping initiative we will invest £3 million per year for 2 years in a pilot scheme which will include a new team of dedicated officers, who will spend time with offenders, when they are still in jail and in the community, to ensure that they are much better equipped for life outside the prison walls.

The particular focus of these pilots will be prisoners on very short sentences – often the most difficult group to engage with. The officers will ensure that the prisoners are fully signed up to the benefits, an employment support system and that their bank accounts are setup before they leave prison. But their key task will be to find suitable housing, and to provide support for prisoners to sustain their new accommodation.

Many remarkable charities have shown how even the most frequent offenders can turn away from crime by leaving the streets. We will make this process easier by engaging much earlier with offenders – when they are still in jail– making sure that probation and local authorities understand their needs before they are released. And because female offenders are particularly vulnerable, we will be working with local areas to develop a pilot for ‘residential women’s centres’ in at least five sites across England and Wales. We will also be measuring and judging prisons on how many of their prisoners find accommodation on release.

None of this will be easy. But every time we help an ex-prisoner set up a new and better life, with a roof over their head, relationships with family, basic support, and a job, we dramatically reduce the chance of their reoffending. This is not simply saving an individual from a life of crime and prison. It is protecting all the potential victims of their crime – and reducing the burden of reoffending that costs the public £15 billion a year. Thus, preventing rough sleeping among ex-prisoners is good for them, good for the streets, and good for the public who will be better protected from the misery of crime.

[News story: Rough sleeping strategy: prevention, intervention, recovery](#)

Up to 6,000 vulnerable people will receive rapid specialist assessments and support under new measures in the government’s rough sleeping strategy.

Backed by £100 million of funding, the strategy sets out the next steps towards achieving our aim of supporting everyone off the streets and into a home, and to end rough sleeping entirely by 2027.

Following [£30 million of new funding for areas with the highest numbers of rough sleepers](#) and the launch of the [Housing First pilots](#), this strategy was developed across government and in conjunction with the [Rough Sleeping](#)

[Advisory Panel](#) which is made up of representatives from the homelessness sector and local government. It sets out a three-pillared approach:

- Prevention – understanding the issues that lead to rough sleeping and providing timely support for those at risk
- Intervention – helping those already sleeping rough with swift support tailored to their individual circumstances
- Recovery – supporting people in finding a new home and rebuilding their lives.

This system has prevention at its heart, focusing on stopping people from becoming homeless in the first place and providing them with the right support to find work and live independently.

Longer term, those sleeping rough will be rapidly housed and offered comprehensive support to ensure their specific needs are addressed so that they can move into suitable permanent accommodation at the earliest opportunity.

Communities Secretary, Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, said:

It is simply unacceptable that people have to sleep on our streets and I am determined to make it a thing of the past.

Whether people are at risk of rough sleeping, already on the streets or in need of settled accommodation, we now have a solid plan to help the most vulnerable in our society.

And this is not just about putting a roof over their heads but helping them find a place to call home.

They need and deserve our support and, through our expert-backed strategy, I am confident they will get it.

Prevention

Understanding the issues that lead to rough sleeping and being able to address them before people are forced to sleep on our streets is the focus throughout this strategy. It's clear there is not a one-size-fits-all solution and so we'll be listening to individual groups (like LGBT people) to understand how they experience homelessness as well as working to build our understanding of the links between modern slavery and rough sleeping.

We'll also be launching a range of new pilots to help those leaving prison find stable and sustainable accommodation and have committed new funding to intensive support for those with complex needs leaving care.

Intervention

Building on the work of the [Rough Sleeping Initiative](#), we're setting aside up to £17 million to fund 'Somewhere Safe to Stay' pilots to rapidly assess the

needs of people at risk of rough sleeping and support them to get the right help. We will work locally with NHS England and Public Health England to fill gaps in health services for people sleeping rough as part of the long term plan for the health and social care. This starts with £2 million this year, and we have asked NHS England to spend up to £30 million over the next 5 years on health services for people who sleep rough.

To support this we're also investing in training for front-line staff, including training on how to interact with those under the influence of substances like spice, identifying and supporting victims of modern slavery and domestic abuse, as well as how to effectively support LGBT people who are homeless.

We are also introducing 'navigators'; specialists who will act as trusted confidantes and help people sleeping rough access the appropriate services and accommodation.

There's also funding for [StreetLink](#), supporting the public, business and communities to engage positively with people who sleep rough through an improved platform.

Recovery

A stable home is an essential element in a person's recovery from sleeping rough but it needs to go hand-in-hand with flexible support that is tailored to individual needs to help them keep it.

This includes £50 million of funding that will increase the supply of housing outside of London for people who have slept rough or those who are ready to move on from hostels or refuges and need additional support. A further £19 million of funding provides flexible support in homes provided exclusively for people with a history of sleeping rough and funding from dormant assets will provide up to £135 million, the majority of which will go to supporting innovative financing for homes for people who sleep, or are at risk of sleeping, rough.

There's also funding to help local areas grow enterprises to support vulnerable people into accommodation, offering advice, building stronger relationships with local landlords and making efficient use of local housing supply. Further to this there will now be a homelessness expert in every Jobcentre Plus to offer advice, signpost to information and services, and provide support.

For more information see the rough sleeping strategy.