

Press release: PM launches series of measures to tackle barriers facing ethnic minorities in the workplace

A series of measures to tackle ethnic disparities in the workplace will be announced by Prime Minister Theresa May today – exactly one year after the government published the findings of a world-first Race Disparity Audit on how people of different ethnic backgrounds are treated across society.

Developed jointly by the government and Business in the Community (BITC), the new Race at Work Charter announced by the Prime Minister today will commit businesses to a bold set of principles and actions designed to drive forward a step-change in the recruitment and progression of ethnic minority employees.

The government, which has named WPP UK Country Manager and Chairwoman of MediaCom UK & Ireland Karen Blackett OBE as its Race at Work Champion, has already secured a number of high-profile inaugural signatories to the Charter, including NHS England, Standard Life Aberdeen, Norton Rose Fulbright, Saatchi & Saatchi, KPMG, RBS, the Civil Service and the world leader in communications services, WPP.

In addition, financial services company Lloyds Banking Group, also among the Charter's signatories, is the first FTSE 100 company to set a goal to increase the representation of ethnic minority employees at senior levels.

Alongside the Race at Work Charter, the Prime Minister will also today launch a consultation on ethnicity pay reporting in response to the Race Disparity Audit's Ethnicity Facts and Figures website data, which reveals significant disparities in the pay and progression of ethnic minority employees compared to their white counterparts.

In the first consultation of its kind, the government will invite employers to share their views on a mandatory approach to ethnicity pay reporting, since the number of organisations publishing information on the pay gap for people from different ethnic backgrounds voluntarily remains low.

The consultation, open until January 2019, will set out in detail what information employers should publish to allow for decisive action to be taken while also asking employers how ethnicity data can be collected without placing undue burdens on businesses.

The government is also taking action to ensure the leaders of UK's key public services are representative of the communities they serve. Today, the NHS, Armed Forces, schools and police forces will set out plans to increase the proportion of public sector leaders from ethnic minority backgrounds. These include proposals from school leaders to address disparities in the teaching workforce, and publication of the National Police Chief Council's first

national Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Strategy, which pledges to support the priority government has given to tackling race disparity.

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

Every employee deserves the opportunity to progress and fulfil their potential in their chosen field, regardless of which background they are from, but too often ethnic minority employees feel they're hitting a brick wall when it comes to career progression.

That's why I'm delighted to launch the Race at Work Charter, which gives businesses a clear set of actions to work towards in helping to create greater opportunities for ethnic minority employees at work.

One year on from publishing the Race Disparity Audit, the government is delivering on its promise to explain or change ethnic disparities in all areas of society, taking action to support young people into work with funding of £90 million from dormant bank accounts , and acting on the recommendations of the Lammy review including by increasing diversity within prison officer recruitment.

Our focus is now on making sure the UK's organisations, boardrooms and senior management teams are truly reflective of the workplaces they manage, and the measures we are taking today will help employers identify the actions needed to create a fairer and more diverse workforce.

Sandra Kerr, Business in the Community race equality director said:

All organisations should recruit from the widest pool of talent and support progression. The race at work survey of over 24,000 employees showed that all too often ethnic minority staff are still encountering significant disparities at work. The race at work charter will support leaders and line managers to take practical steps to tackle the barriers, with five clear actions. By signing up, we can ensure the workplace is representative of British society today.

Karen Blackett OBE, WPP UK Country Manager and Chairwoman of MediaCom UK & Ireland said:

Embracing diversity and inclusion is not a choice, it's a business necessity. Clients choose WPP precisely because of the capability and creativity of our people; it's why we're focused on attracting, developing and promoting the best talent from across a range of

backgrounds. Creativity powers business growth and this only happens by having diversity of talent in the room and reflecting society in the content we create.

As the Government's Race at Work Champion, I'm committed to helping businesses address inequality at all levels by taking practical steps such as introducing apprenticeships, offering mentorships and capturing ethnicity data to create a more inclusive and representative workforce.

Baker McKenzie Diversity & Inclusion Partner, Sarah Gregory, said:

Huge progress has been made to improve the experience of ethnic minority colleagues in the workplace, but more still needs to be done. This is why, we are very excited today to be signing the Race at Work Charter and together with the Government and other businesses look at improving ethnic minority representation at all levels of seniority. The Charter builds on our ongoing commitment as a Firm to recognise and celebrate the talent of our diverse workforce and to ensure that everyone can be their authentic selves.

Speech: RIBA Stirling Prize

Thank you for inviting to me join you this evening.

It's a real privilege to be here.

The Stirling Prize is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate British Architecture and since 1996, when it replaced the less august sounding 'Building of the Year Award', it has consistently showcased the immense talent coming out of this country.

When James Stirling won the Royal Gold Medal in 1980 he did so not only for his achievements but also for the potential of those ideas never realised.

That connection between accomplishment and promise, between the past and the future, is embodied each year in the Stirling Prize and its shortlisted nominees.

Helping to honour the legacy and inspire future generations of architects.

Thank you for your contribution to our country, our economy and our cultural life.

And it is to the role of the architect I wish to turn.

You are the guardians of quality.

So often the difference between the ugly and the beautiful isn't because of 'good architect vs bad architect' but rather a case of there being little or no architect at all.

What I know is we need more of your expertise involved in how we build and create communities, not less.

And ultimately, for me at least, that is why we build.

To create communities.

To create great places to live, work and spend time in.

To create places we are proud to call home.

To create that connection between the built environment and our identity.

At the core of this should be an aspiration for beauty.

Whilst we may debate its precise nature, its existence is beyond doubt.

And our spaces and places should embody this value.

As Secretary of State for Housing and Communities, these issues are an important part of my role.

And something I will be returning to in the coming weeks.

From the individual home through to the new settlements we need to build I pay special attention to the quality of design and style.

We need to build homes which fit with the world around them.

Helping to give confidence to people that development will be sympathetic to its surroundings.

Helping grow a sense of community, not undermine it.

Helping to ensure our places are fit for the future, casting our eyes on the coming innovations in technology whilst keeping our feet firmly grounded in what communities want and need.

That's why tonight is so special.

In recognising and celebrating the essential role of style, design and yes, architecture.

I'd like to congratulate all those shortlisted for this prestigious award.

You have all earned rightful plaudits for your work.

Tonight we celebrate not just the winner – but all of you.

Thank you all for what you do.

And the very real contribution you are making in creating communities we can be proud of.

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Speech: PM's words at World Mental Health Day reception: 10 October 2018

I'm really pleased to be able to welcome you here to Number 10 on World Mental Health Day.

And I want to say a huge thank you to everybody here for everything you are doing to transform how we look after mental health, here in Britain but also around the world.

Because as I've been discussing with a number of you and with some young people earlier – for too long, too many people have suffered in silence in fear of the stigma surrounding mental health conditions.

While those who have sought help haven't had the access to care they would have for a physical ailment.

Putting right that historic injustice is – I think – one of the defining challenges of our time.

We all know someone who has been affected by mental health problems – whether a family member, a colleague or a friend.

Yet average global spend on mental health is just 2.8 per cent of government health spending worldwide.

And we have to change this.

For we are not looking after our health if we are not looking after our mental health.

And we need that true parity between physical and mental health, not just in our health systems but elsewhere as well – in our classrooms, our workplaces, in our communities too.

That is why we were so pleased this week to host the first ever Global Ministerial Summit on mental health.

And in this landmark agreement we see more than 50 countries have supported the declaration to achieve equity for mental health in the 21st Century.

And I am delighted that we have representatives from many of those national delegations here with us this afternoon.

Now we must turn those words into action.

Here in the UK, as you've just heard, I have made parity of care a priority for our long-term plan for the NHS.

And as a result, our record investment in the NHS will mean record investment in mental health.

For the first time ever, the NHS will work towards standards for accessing mental health services that are just as ambitious as those for physical health.

The Independent Review of the Mental Health Act, led by Simon Wessely, will enable the government to bring forward historic new legislation – and it is amazing that it has taken so long for us to review our mental health

legislation – to help ensure that all people treated under the act are treated with dignity and respect.

We are investing more than £220 million over the next decade in the mental wellbeing of our brave armed forces – changing the culture, so those in need are not stigmatised but rather encouraged to step forward and then helped to return to the frontline. And we are ensuring that we have the right mental health support for our veterans too.

Our new campaign – Every Mind Matters – will train 1 million people in mental health awareness, with the first pilot beginning today in the West Midlands ahead of a national launch next Spring.

But I want us to go further, in particular in two areas: how we prevent the tragic loss of too many lives from suicide and how we support the mental wellbeing of our young people.

I think it's utterly heart-breaking that suicide is the biggest killer of men under 50 and most likely to occur among those who are disadvantaged in our society today.

And we cannot stand by and allow this injustice to continue.

But to tackle it we need to focus on the full range of challenges that those at risk of suicide are so often facing – from ill-health to debt or unemployment; from family breakdown to bereavement or loneliness; from drugs and alcohol dependency to homelessness.

And we need to break the stigma that so often prevents people from talking when they are at their most desperate.

For this to happen we need to give suicide prevention the priority it deserves.

So I am today appointing Jackie Doyle-Price as the first ever Ministerial Lead for Suicide Prevention.

And what Jackie will be doing is bringing together a national effort to tackle this injustice – working with all of you here – across national and local government, with suicide and self-harm prevention experts, clinicians and those personally affected by suicide. This will include charities like one whose representatives I've just met – the Campaign Against Living Miserably – who have campaigned so tirelessly on this issue.

Jackie will also explore how we can harness the latest technology – such as predictive analytics and artificial intelligence – to identify those at risk of suicide.

She will be looking at the support offered to families affected by suicide.

And she will also help to ensure there are effective suicide prevention plans in every local area – and we'll be publishing a national progress report by Spring next year.

As we do all of this, we are committing up to £2 million for the Zero Suicide Alliance over the next two years to improve suicide awareness and training across the NHS and beyond.

And we will ensure that when people do want to talk, there is someone there to listen.

So we are also committing up to £1.8 million for the Samaritans' helpline over the next four years, to ensure that it remains free for everyone who needs it, when they need it, 24 hours a day.

As I said, I also want us to do more to support the mental wellbeing of young people.

Half of all mental illness, as we know, begins by the age of 14 – and with young people spending more time online, the strains on mental wellbeing are only going to increase.

So it's critical that we not only deliver parity of care between mental and physical health – but that we do the same for prevention too.

That is why we are making education about mental health and resilience a mandatory part of the national curriculum.

And we are developing an entirely new mental health workforce that will support schools to get the right help early to young people with mild to moderate mental health needs.

Recruitment has just begun for the first cohort of trainees. They will begin studying in January and be fully trained working in schools by the end of next year.

But we need to go even further in ensuring that mental wellbeing and resilience is at the forefront of our whole approach to supporting young people.

For generations, we have measured our children's physical health throughout their childhood.

And we have done the same with their academic attainment.

But we haven't done this for their mental wellbeing.

That not only sends the wrong message about the importance of mental health but it also denies us vital data that can help transform the support we provide for generations to come.

So we are going to change this.

From next year, we will publish an annual State of the Nation report every World Mental Health Day to highlight the trends and issues in young people's mental wellbeing.

And we will provide schools with an approved framework which can help them with measuring all aspects of their students' health, including their mental wellbeing.

Now, when I first became Prime Minister, I stood on the steps of Downing Street and pledged to fight the burning injustices in our society.

I think there are few greater examples than the injustice which faces those with mental health conditions.

But working together we can change that.

We can end the stigma that has forced too many to suffer in silence.

We can prevent the tragedy of suicide taking too many lives.

And we can give the mental wellbeing of our children the priority that it so profoundly deserves.

So let's do that. And let me thank you all again for everything that you are doing to support that vital mission.

And let's go forward together, determined to ensure we improve people's mental health and give help and support to those that need it.

Press release: Construction booming in the North West

- Overall construction output in the region up 15%, 10 times the national average
- Total value of construction over the last 3 months is more than £4.6 billion, up more than £600 million when compared to the same 3 months a year ago

The North West has seen construction boom over the last year, according to new figures out today (10 October 2018).

According to the Office of National Statistics, total construction output across the region is up 15% to more than £4.6 billion in the 3 months to August 2018 compared to the same period last year.

Overall construction output in Great Britain for this period is up 1.5% compared to the same period last year meaning the North West's increase is 10 times the national average

The value of construction work on new housing in the North West has increased

by £386 million this quarter compared to the same quarter in 2017 and output of new infrastructure projects has also risen during this period.

Northern Powerhouse Minister, Jake Berry MP, said:

It's wonderful to see how the Northern Powerhouse is driving investment in the North West and helping grow the construction industry to the tune of over £600 million.

Anyone visiting the North West can see the huge number of construction projects underway and these figures show just how valuable they are.

This construction boom is helping build new homes, new infrastructure and a stronger economy in the region.

The [Output in the Construction Industry figures for England, Scotland and Wales](#) are released by the Office of National Statistics