

# News story: Home Office announces revised immigration policy guidance for Grenfell relatives

Revised policy guidance for Grenfell relatives published today states that people with core participant status or those called to be a witness at the Inquiry who are already in the country, will be able to extend their stay in the UK for a further 6 months.

This is to provide certainty for relatives that they will be able to remain for the anticipated period of the Inquiry's oral evidence sessions.

Family members who are overseas with core participant status, who are required to attend or are called as a witness who apply for a visit visa, should also be assured that these applications will be considered quickly on a case by case basis, taking into account the compelling and compassionate circumstances.

Core participants are people or organisations, who have applied for that status because they have a significant interest in proceedings or could be subject to scrutiny. A core participant can be invited to participate during the Inquiry, for example by making statements or suggesting lines of questioning to be pursued.

The Immigration Minister, Caroline Nokes said:

The Grenfell Tower fire was a tragedy that should never have happened. Our highest priority has been to ensure the survivors of the Grenfell Tower tragedy receive the support they need.

We have always been clear that we will do everything we can to make sure that relatives who are required to provide evidence in person, or need to be in the UK to participate in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry are able to do so.

That is why we have published this revised guidance today, to ensure those with Core Participant status are able to extend their stay.

Today's announcement builds on the Grenfell survivors' immigration policy which was introduced in July last year to allow individuals with insecure immigration status who lost their homes in the fire to regularise their status and access support.

Later that year, it was announced that those qualifying under the policy will be able to apply for permanent residence in the UK after 5 years' lawful residence.

You can read further [information](#) relating to the fire at Grenfell Tower and the full [Grenfell relatives' policy guidance](#) on GOV.UK

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## [Press release: The EU \(Withdrawal\) Bill receives Royal Assent](#)

Today the EU (Withdrawal) Bill received Royal Assent from Her Majesty the Queen and became an Act of Parliament.

This historic Act will make sure the UK's laws – entwined with over 40 years of EU law – continue to work from the day we leave, ensuring a smooth and orderly exit.

It does this by transferring EU law into UK law where appropriate and creating temporary powers to correct the laws that will no longer operate appropriately.

Now that the Act has become law, the Government can start to use the powers in the Act to prepare our statute book for our exit from the EU. Work on this will begin in the coming weeks as Departments start to lay the relevant secondary legislation in Parliament.

This marks the next essential step in ensuring that the UK is ready for life after we have left the European Union.

### **Secretary of State for Exiting the EU, David Davis said:**

This is a landmark moment in our preparations for leaving the European Union.

The EU (Withdrawal) Act is a vital piece of legislation that will ensure we have a functioning statute book for exit.

Since the Bill was introduced in Parliament last year, MPs and peers have spent more than 250 hours debating its contents and more than 1,400 amendments have been tabled.

We will now begin the work of preparing our statute book, using the provisions in this Act, to ensure we are ready for any scenario, giving people and businesses the certainty they need.

In total, it's expected that around 800 pieces of secondary legislation will be needed. As part of the first tranche to be laid, the Government will use powers in the Bill to repeal the European Union Act 2011 as agreed by Parliament.

Alongside this programme of secondary legislation, Departments are delivering on a further package of Bills which will deliver the more significant policy changes needed as a result of our exit from the EU.

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## **Notice: CH62 3QB, SRL Performance Limited: environmental permit issued**

The Environment Agency publish surrenders that they issue under the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED).

This decision includes the surrender letter, decision document and site condition report evaluation template for:

- Operator name: SRL Performance Limited
- Installation name: Bromborough Metal Oxide Powder Plant
- Permit number: EPR/RP3130RD/S002

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## **Statement to Parliament: Opening statement for CETA ratification debate**

I beg to move that this House has considered the draft European Union (Definition of Treaties) (Canada Trade Agreement) Order 2018.

Mr Speaker, I am delighted that we have the opportunity once again to debate the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between the EU and Canada, known as CETA, and that it is taking place on the floor of this House. This follows on from the thorough and constructive debate last year, and the overwhelming support shown by the full House in a subsequent deferred division of this House.

I note that a majority of those on the Labour opposition benches who voted in that division, chose rightly, to vote in favour of the agreement. I hope they will continue to do so. A vote for greater trade liberalisation, increased prosperity and closer relations with our Canadian friends and allies.

This debate comes at a crucial point in world trade with the potentially destructive rise in protectionist tendencies. Free trade is the means by which we have taken millions of people out of abject poverty. We must not put that progress into reverse.

We should also realise that trade is not an end in itself but a means to widen shared prosperity. That prosperity underpins social cohesion and in turn political stability. That political stability in turn provides the building blocks of our collective security.

We have an opportunity today to reaffirm Britain's commitment to the principles of free trade and the application of an international rules based system.

This government is clear that CETA is a good deal for Europe and a good deal for the UK. Our total trade with Canada already stood at £16.5 billion last year, up 6.4% on the previous year, with a services surplus of £1.9 billion.

And CETA is an agreement that will improve on this already strong economic partnership. It is an agreement that will potentially boost our GDP by hundreds of millions of pounds a year. It will bring down trade costs, boost trade and investment, promote jobs and growth, and increase our ability to access Canadian goods, services, and procurement markets, benefiting a wide range of UK businesses and consumers.

CETA is a comprehensive and ambitious agreement, the most comprehensive agreement that has so far come into force between the EU and an advanced partner economy.

Canada is an important strategic partner too. As one of the Five-Eyes grouping, a member of NATO, the Commonwealth, the G7 and G20, we have bonds that go far beyond just our trading relationship.

As this House will know, CETA was provisionally applied in September last year, removing 98% of the tariffs previously faced by UK businesses at the Canadian border. And already UK firms are benefiting.

We have seen drinks exporters such as Dorset's Black Cow Vodka and Kent based sparkling wine producer Hush Heath Estate improving their market access and profitability with the reductions in tariff and non-tariff barriers.

Also we are seeing new UK exporters to Canada. These include Seedlip Drinks, the world's first distilled non-alcoholic spirit. Under CETA they do not pay the 11% pre-CETA tariffs on their products.

And Moordale Foods who entered the Canadian market in March 2017 with assistance from DIT. Moordale were helped by CETA duty elimination. Pre-CETA their range would have been subject to duties of up to 12.5%. Their prices in Canada are now closer than ever to their (currency adjusted) domestic UK price. Moordale are in key places in Canadian gourmet food outlets, including the flagship Saks Fifth Avenue foodhall in Toronto.

In parallel, investment into the UK from Canada continues to grow. In 2016

Canada had £18.6 billion invested in the UK and we had £21.1 billion invested in Canada.

Ratifying CETA is also an important step towards our future trading relationship with Canada as we prepare to take advantage of the opportunities offered by our exit from the EU.

During the Prime Minister's visit to Canada in September last year, both she and Prime Minister Trudeau reiterated their intention to seek to swiftly and seamlessly transition CETA into a UK-Canada deal once the UK has left the EU. To ensure as seamless transition as possible they formally announced a Working Group to take this forward.

Officials from our 2 countries have already begun to meet to discuss transitioning CETA. It is important, as a first step, that we prevent a 'cliff edge' for British and Canadian businesses.

But of course, whilst we remain in the EU we continue to support the EU's ambitious trade agenda. Free trade is not a zero-sum game, but rather a win-win. Ratifying CETA will send a strong message about our determination to champion the cause of free trade, seek global trade liberalisation wherever we can, and to support the rules-based international trading system to deliver mutually beneficial outcomes.

This is a key part of the government's vision of delivering a prosperous and truly Global Britain as we leave the EU.

It is important to the UK that CETA is ratified successfully by all EU member states.

Because ratification by all EU member states is required for the treaty to enter fully into force. This will give greater certainty for Canadian and EU businesses that the agreement will continue on into the future.

Those areas that were not provisionally applied include a large part of the chapter on investment, including the new Investment Court System, on which there has been extensive discussion in Parliament and in wider civil society.

The UK supports the principle of investment protection and looks forward to engaging further with the Commission on the technical detail of the Investment Court System. We support the objectives of obtaining fair outcomes of claims, high ethical standards for arbitrators and increased transparency of tribunal hearings.

And I also want to be clear – investment protection provisions protect investors from discriminatory or unfair treatment by a state. This includes protection of UK institutional investors, for example pension funds, where we have a duty to ensure that individual investments are protected. We have over 90 such agreements in place with other countries and there has never been a successful investor-state dispute settlement claim brought against the UK, nor has the threat of potential claims affected the government's legislative programme.

It is also important to note that the customary international right to regulate has been re-emphasised in this agreement.

Moreover, the agreement provides that member states should not reduce their labour and environmental standards to encourage trade and investment – ensuring our high standards are not affected by this agreement.

And let me also say this, nothing in CETA prevents the UK from regulating in the pursuit of legitimate public policy objectives.

This includes the NHS. The government has been absolutely clear that protecting the NHS is of the utmost importance for the UK. The delivery of public health services is safeguarded in the trade in services aspects of all EU free trade agreements (FTAs), including CETA.

Neither will anything in CETA prevent future governments from taking back into public ownership any services currently run by the private sector – the legal text makes this clear if honourable members opposite would like to read it.

In fact, robust protections in CETA are covered across a number of related articles and reservations in the text. A key article is Chapter 9, Article 9.2 (Cross Border Trade in Services) which excludes services supplied in the exercise of governmental authority from measures affecting trade in services.

In addition, in Annex II (Reservations Applicable in the European Union), the UK has gone beyond the EU-wide reservations and included additional national reservations for doctors, privately funded ambulances and residential health facilities and the majority of privately funded social services.

The UK government will continue to ensure that decisions about public services are made by the UK, and not our trade partners. This is a fundamental principle of our current and future trade policy.

Let me also say something on scrutiny. We have committed, through our White Paper published last year, that we will ensure appropriate Parliamentary scrutiny of trade agreements as we move ahead with our independent trade policy. The government can guarantee that Parliament will have a crucial role to play in the scrutiny and ratification of the UK's future trade agreements and we will bring forward proposals in due course.

And now I would like to provide further reassurance to this House of the government's ongoing commitment to openness and transparency. Indeed, we have scheduled a debate on the floor of the House of Commons on the EU-Japan EPA, which my Rt Hon Friend, the Minister for Trade Policy will be leading straight after this debate. This is already over and above the engagement required for EU-only trade agreements.

Mr Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to make the case for CETA to Parliament, and to give the opportunity for full scrutiny of this important agreement, as the government has done for previous EU Free Trade Agreements.

During the implementation period, the United Kingdom will retain access to EU

free trade agreements. But we will also be able to negotiate, sign and ratify new UK-only free trade agreements for the first time in more than 40 years. In doing so, we will safeguard the benefits achieved in CETA for UK businesses and consumers and lay a foundation for an even stronger relationship in the future.

Canada is a progressive, dependable and honest trading partner, committed – as we are – to the WTO and the international rules based system. This is an important time to show our commitment to a free trading Commonwealth, G7 and NATO ally.

Mr Speaker, I commend the order to the House.

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## **News story: Greater flexibility for apprenticeship levy as transfers extended**

Large employers will soon be able to transfer up to 10% of their apprenticeship levy funds to multiple businesses, helping to boost the number of high-quality apprenticeships across the country.

Apprenticeships and Skills Minister Anne Milton announced the move today (26 June) at an event attended by over 160 top businesses to celebrate apprenticeships and the significant contribution they are making to their businesses and the wider economy.

The apprenticeship levy is giving employers a real opportunity to invest in high-quality training, helping to grow their business and get the skilled workforce they need to thrive and succeed. Only around 2% of employers pay the levy but that investment has funded more than 40% of the apprenticeships started in the last year.

Currently, levy-paying employers can transfer up to 10% of their apprenticeship service funds to one other employer. After listening to businesses, the Minister's announcement today goes further and provides even greater flexibility for businesses, so that from July, employers will be able to make transfers of up to 10% to as many other employers as they choose.

This move will lead to more quality apprenticeships being created and will help employers to work together in partnership, supporting them to take on apprentices who may not have done so otherwise.

Apprenticeships and Skills Minister Anne Milton said:

It's fantastic to see so many businesses taking advantage of the opportunity that the apprentice levy provides. As well as kick starting their apprenticeship programmes, business is now recognising the benefits an apprentice brings to the work place with enthusiasm and new ideas.

We want to keep improving apprenticeships for everyone and I am delighted that we are now extending the flexibility of the apprenticeship levy. If we look at what the Berkeley Group and Norfolk County Council are doing, this is business and the public sector using the apprenticeship programme to change people's lives.

The Berkeley Group Executive Director Karl Whiteman said:

The construction industry is at a crossroads with more people leaving than joining, just as we need to build more homes. The Berkeley Group has always supported our supply chain to recruit apprenticeships. Over the last 2 years, we have had more than 850 apprentices on our sites and in our offices. We welcome the opportunity to continue this not just in an advisory capacity but financially with the new changes which allow us to share our levy with many more contractors.

Norfolk County Council was the first organisation to make a transfer of apprenticeship service funds. A spokesperson for the council said:

From the moment the levy was first announced, Norfolk County Council's leadership team wanted to ensure that some of our levy could be used to support Norfolk people who have all the necessary skills and abilities to complete an apprenticeship successfully but have barriers that sometimes prevent them from achieving successfully.

Working with TrAC, we have developed a pilot designed to help 30 young people to get and achieve an apprenticeship and Norfolk County Council is transferring levy to TrAC to support these apprentices.

All of these apprentices are referred by the council and will be employed by TrAC who will place them with other host employers throughout their programme. Both the apprentice and the host employer receive additional bespoke support throughout the programme.

The announcement follows another significant boost to apprenticeships this week, with new high-quality apprenticeship standards in bricklaying and plastering being approved for delivery by the [Institute for Apprenticeships](#). Around 4,000 apprentices are expected to enrol on the bricklayer

apprenticeship every year and up to 1,500 apprentices to undertake plastering each year.

The new standards were designed by employers and are backed by the Federation of Master Builders. Construction is a growing and important sector and the new standards will give apprentices the skills that the construction sector needs.

Brian Berry, Chief Executive of the Federation of Master Builders (FMB), said:

These higher quality construction apprenticeships have the potential to help solve the construction skills crisis. The bricklayer and plasterer apprenticeships were designed by employers which will ensure they produce the tradespeople they need. The apprenticeships are longer in duration and cover a broader range of knowledge and hand-skills. This not only benefits the employers but also the apprentices who will be arming themselves with a wider range of skills for their future careers.

Sir Gerry Berragan, Chief Executive of the Institute for Apprenticeships, said:

As sector specialists, the Bricklayer and Plasterer Apprenticeship Trailblazer Group really understood employers' needs, and they've worked hard to include the skills and experience that would best serve both employers and apprentices in these occupations for the future. Ultimately, these apprenticeships will produce well trained, skilled employees who can add significant value and help their organisations thrive.