

Press release: National Data Guardian 2017 report published

The National Data Guardian (NDG), today publishes the [National Data Guardian for Health and Care 2017 report: Impact and Influence for patients and service users](#)

The publication marks 3 years since Dame Fiona Caldicott was appointed as the first NDG, looks back over this first term of office and describes future priorities. It sets out a clear case for the independent advice and challenge the role provides to ensure that confidential data collected by the NHS and social care services is properly safeguarded and used appropriately to improve care. It also anticipates the NDG role being placed on a statutory footing during this Parliament.

The report reinforces the fundamental requirement of building public trust for successful advancements in health and care based on data sharing. [The 3 principles that have informed the NDG's work](#) since she was asked by the Secretary of State for Health to take up the role remain crucial:

1. To encourage sharing of information in the interests of providing care to individuals.
2. There should be no surprises to citizens and they should have choice about the use of their data.
3. There must be dialogue with the public, helping to increase their knowledge and choices about how data is used to improve health and care.

Dame Fiona said: "New technologies and ways of sharing data mean that we can now gain huge benefit from the sharing of health and care data, both in terms of individuals' own care and the broader social good of advancing research and treatment. However, as NDG I have seen time and again that the most praiseworthy attempts at innovation falter if they lose public trust.

"Those entrusted with looking after and using patient data must demonstrate their right to be trusted by adopting the highest standards of data security and giving people a right to a genuine choice over how data is used. The public must be included in understanding and supporting innovation which relies on data generated by their use of health and care services."

Press release: UK House Price Index for October 2017

The lowest number of repossession sales in August 2017 was in the East of

England.

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The [UK Property Transaction Statistics](#) showed that the number of seasonally adjusted transactions on UK properties with a value of £40,000 or greater has increased by 9.2% in the year to October 2017. Between September 2017 and October 2017, property transactions increased by 1.7%.

The Bank of England's [Agents' summary of business conditions](#) reported that housing market demand has strengthened overall but with a divergence between the regions, as there are signs of excess supply in London and the South East but excess demand in the majority of other UK regions.

Looking more closely at regional levels of the UK, the largest annual growth was in the East Midlands at 7%, up from 6.3% in September 2017. It was followed by the South West, which showed annual growth of 6.7%. The slowest annual growth was in London at 2.1%, a fall from 2.9% in September 2017. This is the 11th consecutive month where the growth in London house prices has remained below the UK average. The second slowest annual growth was in the North East at 2.4%.

1. The UK House Price Index (HPI) is published on the second or third Tuesday of each month with Northern Ireland figures updated quarterly. The November 2017 UK HPI will be published at 9.30am on 16 January 2018. See [calendar of release dates](#).
2. From this month, we are making some changes to improve the accuracy of the UK HPI. We are not publishing average price and percentage change for new build and existing resold property as we have previously done, because there are not currently enough new build transactions to provide a reliable result. This means that in this month's UK HPI, the earliest new build/existing resold property breakdown is for August 2017, in line with the sales volumes currently available.
3. The UK HPI revision period has been extended to 13 months, following a review of the revision policy (see [calculating the UK HPI](#) section 4.4). This ensures the data used is more comprehensive.
4. Sales volume data is also available by property status (new build and existing property) and funding status (cash and mortgage) in our [downloadable data tables](#). Transactions involving the creation of a new register, such as

new builds, are more complex and require more time to process. Read [Revisions to the UK HPI data](#).

5. Revision tables have been introduced for England and Wales within the downloadable data. Tables will be available in csv format. See [about the UK HPI](#) for more information.
6. Data for the UK HPI is provided by HM Land Registry, Registers of Scotland, Land & Property Services/Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency and the Valuation Office Agency.
7. The UK HPI is calculated by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and Land & Property Services/Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. It applies a hedonic regression model that uses the various sources of data on property price, in particular HM Land Registry's Price Paid Dataset, and attributes to produce estimates of the change in house prices each month. Find out more about the methodology used from the [ONS](#) and [Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency](#).
8. The [UK Property Transaction statistics](#) are taken from HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) monthly estimates of the number of residential and non-residential property transactions in the UK and its constituent countries. The number of property transactions in the UK is highly seasonal, with more activity in the summer months and less in the winter. This regular annual pattern can sometimes mask the underlying movements and trends in the data series so HMRC also presents the UK aggregate transaction figures on a seasonally adjusted basis. Adjustments are made for both the time of year and the construction of the calendar, including corrections for the position of Easter and the number of trading days in a particular month.
9. UK HPI seasonally adjusted series are calculated at regional and national levels only. See [data tables](#)
10. The first estimate for new build average price (April 2016 report) was based on a small sample which can cause volatility. A three-month moving average has been applied to the latest estimate to remove some of this volatility.
11. Work has been taking place since 2014 to develop a single, official HPI that reflects the final transaction price for sales of residential property in the UK. Using the geometric mean, it covers purchases at market value for owner-occupation and buy-to-let, excluding those purchases not at market value (such as re-mortgages), where the 'price' represents a valuation.
12. Information on residential property transactions for England and Wales, collected as part of the official registration process, is provided by HM

Land Registry for properties that are sold for full market value.

13. The HM Land Registry dataset contains the sale price of the property, the date when the sale was completed, full address details, the type of property (detached, semi-detached, terraced or flat), if it is a newly built property or an established residential building and a variable to indicate if the property has been purchased as a financed transaction (using a mortgage) or as a non-financed transaction (cash purchase).
14. Repossession data is based on the number of transactions lodged with HM Land Registry by lenders exercising their power of sale.
15. For England, this is shown as volumes of repossessions recorded by Government Office Region. For Wales, there is a headline figure for the number of repossessions recorded in Wales.
16. The data can be downloaded as a .csv file. Repossession data prior to April 2016 is not available. Find out more information about [repossessions](#).
17. Background tables of the raw and cleansed aggregated data, in Excel and CSV formats, are also published monthly although Northern Ireland is on a quarterly basis. They are available for free use and re-use under the Open Government Licence.
18. HM Land Registry's mission is to guarantee and protect property rights in England and Wales.
19. HM Land Registry is a government department created in 1862. It operates as an executive agency and a trading fund and its running costs are covered by the fees paid by the users of its services. Its ambition is to become the world's leading land registry for speed, simplicity and an open approach to data.
20. HM Land Registry safeguards land and property ownership worth in excess of £4 trillion, including around £1 trillion of mortgages. The Land Register contains more than 25 million titles showing evidence of ownership for some 84% of the land mass of England and Wales.
21. For further information about HM Land Registry visit www.gov.uk/land-registry
22. Follow us on:

Press release: PM announces new measures to tackle effects and causes of climate change

- £140 million of new funding to help the world's poorest communities address the effects of climate change
- Expansion of UK and Canada-led Alliance to reduce international use of unabated coal
- UK to host international Zero Emission Vehicle Summit in Autumn 2018

The Prime Minister will attend the One Planet Summit in Paris today where she will announce a raft of new measures to tackle both the effects and causes of climate change.

The UK will provide a £140 million boost to poorer communities around the world which are disproportionately affected by climate change whether through deforestation or vulnerability to natural disasters and climate extremes. This will include an additional £30 million through DFID's Building Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Extremes and Disasters (BRACED) programme.

This funding will help two million more of the world's poorest people to cope with climate shocks, bringing the total to 7 million people supported with irrigation for better harvests, support in planting more resilient crops, improved forecasting and help to develop insurance schemes. And by helping to build resilience to extreme weather we will reduce the need for communities to call on emergency humanitarian support when disaster strikes, reducing dependence on aid.

The Prime Minister will also announce £15 million of additional support for reconstruction on the island of Dominica in the Caribbean, one of the regions that is most affected by extreme weather associated with climate change. This money will support reconstruction of the island's water system which was destroyed by Hurricane Maria. UK funding will help rebuild the system to make it better able to withstand future extreme weather events.

To help other individual countries and territories in the Caribbean become more resilient the UK will give £8 million of additional funding for activities including better crisis and response operations on the islands; training and improvements to communications systems; casualty management training; and mapping of high risk areas.

Poor communities are also disproportionately affected by climate change through deforestation, with one billion people around the world reliant on forests for their livelihoods. That is why today the Prime Minister will commit a further £87 million through DFID's Forest Governance, Markets and

Climate (FGMC) Programme. This money will help local communities who depend on forests to accelerate efforts in the fight against illegal logging and support trade in legal timber.

In her remarks at the Summit the PM will underline how the UK is leading an international effort to meet the commitments made under the Paris Agreement. She is expected to set out how the UK and Canada-led Powering Past Coal Alliance is driving the international community and big business to phase out the use of unabated coal.

Since being launched at a UN climate change conference last month in Bonn nearly 30 countries and regions have signed up and today will see a number of additional partners join the alliance including Sweden, California and large businesses such as EDF and Unilever.

And the Prime Minister will demonstrate the UK's commitment to putting clean growth at the heart of our Industrial Strategy by announcing that the UK will host a global Zero Emission Vehicle Summit next autumn, bringing together Ministers, industry leaders and sector representatives from around the world to further the development of the low emission and electric car market. The Summit will cement the UK's position as a world leader in the low emission and electric vehicle industry and build on the government's manifesto commitment for almost all cars and vans to be zero emission by 2050.

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

Tackling climate change and mitigating its effects for the world's poorest are among the most critical challenges that we face. That is why I am joining other world leaders in Paris today for the One Planet Summit and committing to stand firmly with those on the front line of extreme weather and rising sea levels.

And by redoubling our efforts to phase out coal, as well as build on our world leading electric car production, we are showing we can cut emissions in a way that supports economic growth.

Speech: "I repeat the United Kingdom's call for North Korea to allow human rights actors immediate and unhindered access to assess the human rights

situation”

Thank you Mr President.

And thank you also to High Commissioner Zeid and Merislav Jenca for their harrowing words on the dire situation in the DPRK. Sadly it is unsurprising that the regime maintains a stranglehold on every aspect of its citizens' lives. The United Kingdom, like other Security Council members, views the human rights situation in North Korea with deep concern and dismay.

The regime's treatment of its own people is yet another example of its unashamed contempt of the international rules based system.

That is why we fully support the Security Council's wish to draw attention to the shameful living conditions of the North Korean people as well as to North Korea's illegal nuclear and ballistic missile programmes, which we have condemned in Resolutions 2371 and 2375.

We must maintain international focus on the human rights situation in North Korea through both the UN in New York and the Human Rights Council in Geneva.

We welcome the UN visit last week and we encourage the regime to engage in a meaningful way.

Evidence of the leadership's appalling behaviour towards its own people is impossible to ignore.

People lack freedom of religion and expression. They have minimal control over their livelihoods and resources. The state controls what they see, what they consume and how they behave, using the threat of extreme punishment to keep people under its thumb.

Naysayers are disappeared, or jailed, or publicly executed to demonstrate the price of freedom. The Global Slavery Index estimates that more than a million people are victims of modern slavery.

Yet we know from defector testimonies that, despite the fear instilled in every North Korean, there are many brave individuals who would rather take their chances fleeing than remain gagged and bound by the regime.

Like the soldier who recently defected across the Demilitarised Zone. His daring escape was act of desperation as well as of hope. His starved physical condition speaks volumes about the standards of health and welfare in a country that professes to put the military first. And therefore how it treats those who are most vulnerable.

We urge all Members not to return defectors back to this miserable situation. This sends a message that we condone the behaviour.

We also urge all Members not to profit from the people of North Korea's misery by employing North Korean nationals who are sent abroad to generate

foreign currency, which is used by the regime to fund its illegal missile programmes, as stated in Resolution 2321.

The systematic violations of human rights by the regime goes beyond its own citizens or borders. The death of US citizen Otto Warmbier following his detention; the 17 Japanese nationals abducted by the regime; the assassination of Kim Jong Nam in Malaysia. These are all examples of the North Korean regime's contempt for the international rules based system.

This contempt is further exemplified by the regime's denial of access to independent observers of the human rights situation. Or to engage in meaningful dialogue. Or to act on the 2014 Commission of Inquiries Report that highlighted "wide ranging and ongoing crimes against humanity". The regime has rejected the Third Committee Resolution that called upon it to respect the basic rights of its people.

Today, I repeat the United Kingdom's call for North Korea to allow human rights actors immediate and unhindered access to assess the human rights situation in the country.

Our message to the regime must be clear and united. We must use all the diplomatic and economic tools at our disposal to deliver this message.

There is a very different path that is still open to the regime. This path leads to security and prosperity. It leads to improved lives for their citizens. All the members of this Council and beyond, must work together to persuade the North Korean leadership to pursue this path.

To do so it must end illegal missile tests. It must genuinely engage with the international community. It must take serious steps to improve the human rights situation for all its citizens.

Real positive change to the livelihoods of the North Korean people will not happen overnight. But it will not happen at all for as long as North Korea pursues its current course.

Mr President, we are committed to working with partners on the Council, and beyond, to tackle this challenge. The world looks to us all, and above all the North Korean regime, to support a change for the better.

Thank you.

[News story: Space Climate Observatory agreed ahead of One Planet Summit in](#)

Paris

Artist's impression of MicroCarb. Credit: ESA.

At an event in Paris, the UK Space Agency signed up to the global agreement to improve long-term sustainability and accessibility of climate data captured by satellites.

The Heads of the national Space Agencies have committed to implementing the Space Climate Observatory and working together on activities such as increasing observations of key climate variables and validating the data – which the UK's world leading climate community is well placed to deliver.

Space agencies have also agreed to promote free and open data policies as well as satellite data products that can be used by scientists, businesses and governments all over the world. Data from satellites operated by different organisations will be brought together, alongside tools to model, validate and calibrate the measurements they make.

Science Minister Jo Johnson said:

"The Government is committed to tackling climate change while growing our economy, and the space sector will play a vital role in driving clean growth as part of the Industrial Strategy.

"This new agreement recognises the importance of satellite observations and highlights the vital role UK science and industry can play in delivering solutions to global issues."

Climate Change and Industry Minister Claire Perry said:

"The UK is a world leader in tackling climate change and we want to help other countries do the same. We played a vital role in the formation of the historic Paris Agreement, and the One Planet Summit marks two years to the day since its adoption.

"This global commitment to improve climate data captured by satellites demonstrates the UK's leadership and excellence in research and development, and shows that there is no rowing back on the Paris Agreement."

The UK Space Agency recently announced an investment in a satellite mission called MicroCarb in partnership with the French space agency CNES. The satellite, which measures carbon emissions and absorption by the cities, oceans and forests, is being assembled and tested in the UK by Thales Alenia Space and is due to launch in 2020. The UK is providing world leading climate scientists to the mission team and the UK Space Agency will support the delivery of a number instrument sub-systems from UK institutions.

The UK has a long history of working collaboratively with international organisations such as the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS)

and the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS) to maximise the benefits of earth observation from space.

The UK Space Agency runs a satellite instrument technology programme that is building capability and expertise in monitoring the planet from space, funding a number of instruments and projects. The UK Earth Observation Technology Strategy published in November, outlines how the UK will develop innovative technology to drive growth and leadership in the area, with £3.4 million of funding currently available for new projects.

Chief Executive of the UK Space Agency Graham Turnock, who signed the agreement in Paris, said: "The UK is working with international organisations to encourage the use of space data and technology to tackling climate change.

"It's important we come together and agree to work towards improving the quality and sustainability of climate data from space and ensuring it is made freely available to researchers around the world."

The One Planet Summit, convened by the French Government, the UN and World Bank, is taking place in Paris on 12 December to mark two years since the adoption of the Paris Agreement and increase access to finance for climate action. The Powering Past Coal Alliance, which was recently launched by the UK and Canada to bring together countries, public bodies and businesses to phase out coal in the power sector, is expected to be discussed further at the summit.