

# News story: New rules on blood donation come into force

Changes to the rules on blood donation in England come into force on 28 November. The new rules will allow more people to donate blood, without affecting the safety of the blood supply.

The changes were announced in July, on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on the Safety of Blood, Tissues and Organs (SaBT0).

Dr Gail Mifflin, Medical and Research Director at NHS Blood and Transplant said:

The SaBT0 review took into account the latest available medical and scientific evidence. This included more information about the risk of acquiring infections that can be passed on in blood, more evidence on how well donors comply with our guidelines and also more evidence that supports the reliability of the blood screening tests we use.

We have one of the safest blood supplies in the world. Anyone may require a blood transfusion in the future and so it's in all our interests to ensure that we work hard to keep blood safe for patients.

Before every donation, all donors must complete a Donor Health Check and have a private health screening where they may be asked confidential questions based on their completed form.

Subject to meeting the other donation rules, the following groups will now be able to donate after 3 months have passed since the last sexual activity:

- men who have had sex with another man
- commercial sex workers
- people who have had sex with a partner at high risk of having a sexually transmitted infection

Previously, commercial sex workers were permanently excluded from blood donation and the other groups had to wait until 12 months had passed before they could donate. The rules are now consistent for all groups that are deferred due to sexual behaviours.

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# Press release: October 2017 Price Paid Data

This month's Price Paid Data includes details of more than 101,000 sales of land and property in England and Wales that HM Land Registry received for registration in October 2017.

In the dataset, you can find the date of sale for each property, its full address and sale price, its category (residential or commercial) and type (detached, semi-detached, terraced, flat or maisonette and other), whether it is new build or not and whether it is freehold or leasehold.

## **The number of sales received for registration by property type and month**

Property type	October 2017	September 2017	August 2017
Detached	22,849	22,377	22,782
Semi-detached	25,558	24,911	26,056
Terraced	26,394	25,829	26,515
Flat/maisonette	19,048	17,958	17,085
Other	7,159	6,027	6,075
Total	101,008	97,102	98,513

Of the 101,008 sales received for registration in October 2017:

- 74,649 were freehold, a 9% increase on October 2016
- 11,949 were newly built, a 8.5% decrease on October 2016

There is a time difference between the sale of a property and its registration at HM Land Registry.

Of the 101,008 sales received for registration, 27,229 took place in October 2017 of which:

- 479 were of residential properties in England and Wales for £1 million and over
- 253 were of residential properties in Greater London for £1 million and over
- 3 were of residential properties in Greater Manchester for £1 million and over

The most expensive residential sale taking place in October 2017 was of a flat in the City of Westminster, London for £15,750,000. The cheapest residential sale in October 2017 was of a terraced property in Bishop Auckland, County Durham for £18,500.

The most expensive commercial sale taking place in October 2017 was in the City of Westminster, London for £148,922,635. The cheapest commercial sale in October 2017 was in Taunton Deane, Somerset, for £100.

[Access the full dataset](#)

## Notes to editors

1. Price Paid Data is published at 11 am on the 20th working day of each month. Due to the public holidays in December, the November dataset will be published on 2 January 2018.
2. [Price Paid Data](#) is property price data for all residential and commercial property sales in England and Wales that are lodged with HM Land Registry for registration in that month, [subject to exclusions](#).
3. The amount of time between the sale of a property and the registration of this information with HM Land Registry varies. It typically ranges between 2 weeks and 2 months. Data for the two most recent months is therefore incomplete and does not give an indication of final monthly volumes. Occasionally the interval between sale and registration is longer than two months. The small number of sales affected cannot be updated for publication until the sales are lodged for registration.
4. Price Paid Data categories are either Category A (Standard entries) which includes single residential properties sold for full market value or Category B (Additional entries) for example sales to a company, buy-to-lets where they can be identified by a mortgage and repossessions.
5. HM Land Registry has been collecting information on Category A sales from January 1995 and on Category B sales from October 2013.
6. Price Paid Data can be downloaded in txt, csv format and in a machine readable format as [linked data](#) and is released under [Open Government Licence \(OGL\)](#). Under the OGL, HM Land Registry permits the use of Price Paid Data for commercial or non-commercial purposes. However, the OGL does not cover the use of [third party rights](#), which HM Land Registry is not authorised to license.
7. The [Price Paid Data report builder](#) allows users to build bespoke reports using the data. Reports can be based on location, estate type, price paid or property type over a defined period of time.

8. 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.
  9. HM Land Registry safeguards land and property ownership worth more than £4 trillion, including about £1 trillion of mortgages. The Land Register contains around 24 million titles, which show evidence of ownership, covering some 84% of the land mass.
  10. For further information about HM Land Registry visit [www.gov.uk/land-registry](http://www.gov.uk/land-registry).
  11. Follow us on  
Twitter [@HMLandRegistry](https://twitter.com/HMLandRegistry)  
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## **News story: The Chief Inspector's report on the Home Office's asylum intake and casework has been published**

Mr Bolt said:

"The Home Office devotes significant resources to managing asylum claims. Nonetheless, it continues to struggle to keep on top of the volumes of claims it receives. In 2016-17, despite the evident commitment and hard work of those involved, high staff turnover, prolonged staffing gaps and inexperience caused problems that were not easily or quickly fixed.

"As a consequence, the number of claims awaiting an initial decision rose during the year, as did the proportion deemed 'non-straightforward' and therefore set outside the published service standard of 6 months for a decision. The inspection also found issues with decision quality. Given the life-changing nature of asylum decisions, the Home Office's performance needs to improve.

"The Home Office has described the asylum system as "in transition". I am aware of its plans to transform and enable it to cope better with peaks in demand. However, these plans were not sufficiently advanced at the time of

this inspection for their effectiveness to be tested.

“My message to the Home Office is that it needs to accelerate its transformation plans and to ensure it has asylum processing and decision making under control as soon as possible. Otherwise, the next peak in asylum intake, or trough in staffing levels, will see it fall further behind.

“This inspection makes 7 recommendations for improvement. The Home Office has accepted 6 in full and 1 in part. I look forward to revisiting this important area of the Home Office’s work in due course and checking on the progress made.

“In the meantime, for the sake of clarity, while the Home Office response is correct in saying that I found no evidence that asylum policy and processes are gender biased, this was because the data was insufficiently detailed to permit meaningful analysis. This is not a positive finding – data collection needs to improve if the Home Office is to persuade stakeholders that their concerns are unfounded.”

The completed report was sent to the Home Secretary on 25 September 2017.

[An Inspection of asylum intake and casework.](#)

[Home Office’s response to the Chief Inspector’s reports](#)

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## **News story: Apprenticeship Live broadcasts in schools**

Starting with the BBC today (Tuesday, 28 November), students, teachers and governors can speak directly to apprenticeship employers and their apprentices live online. During the broadcast they will hear about the latest opportunities on offer; the skills employers are looking for and how students can best prepare themselves for working life after school or college.

Funded by the National Apprenticeship Service and part of the Apprenticeship Support & Knowledge for Schools (ASK) project, the engaging and interactive experience will stream directly to schools – whether on individual PCs or tablets, an interactive whiteboard in a classroom or on a projector during assembly.

The BBC are delighted to be kicking off the Apprenticeship Live broadcasts.

Naomi Blackburn, Resourcing Specialist at the BBC said:

The Apprenticeships Live broadcasts give us a great opportunity to get our message out about the range of Apprenticeships at the BBC

and to change the perception in young people in that we aren't just looking to fill the typical roles.

We hope that following the live broadcast, young people will feel more confident in applying, know what to put on their application and realise the potential of becoming an apprentice at the BBC and other employers as well.

Over 30 schools have signed up to be part of the first live broadcast. Another 13 broadcasts are scheduled to take place over the coming months, with employers including TUI, IBM, Capgemini and Highways England, already committed.

Sue Husband, director, National Apprenticeship Service added:

These live broadcasts will give young people considering an apprenticeship real insight into what it's like to be an apprentice and what's required from an apprentice in the workplace today. We have some fantastic apprenticeship employers lined up to give their vision of what qualities an apprentice needs to bring to the role and the brilliant opportunities they can expect. These broadcasts will reach thousands of young people and will really give them a taste for how far they can go with an apprenticeship.

Following the BBC Apprenticeship Live broadcast, Highways England will deliver the second broadcast on 30 November.

Schools looking to sign up to a live broadcast should visit the [amazing apprenticeships website](#). The broadcasts will also be available to [view on catch up](#) if schools are unable to view them live.

Share your thoughts with us on the apprenticeship live broadcasts on Twitter: [@Apprenticeships](#).

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## **Press release: Flood barrier drop-ins for residents**

Residents in two north east communities are urged to attend drop-in events to find out how temporary barriers will help protect them from flooding.

The Environment Agency has been working with partners at Gateshead Council and Northumberland County Council to develop flood barrier deployment plans for Dunston and North Blyth.

The two communities have been identified as locations where temporary barriers could reduce the risk of flooding to properties when high tides are expected.

In Dunston, the barriers will be used along Railway Street between Team Street and Staithes Road.

At North Blyth the barriers will be used along the bottom of Worsdell Street, Dale Street and Gray Street.

The Environment Agency is inviting local residents from Dunston and North Blyth to attend community drop-in events to find out more about how the temporary barriers will be used, and to provide residents with the opportunity to speak to staff. Plans will also be available to show where the barriers will be deployed if needed.

The drop-in events take place on:

- Wednesday 29 November, between 4pm and 7.30pm at North Blyth Bar and Social Club.
- Tuesday 5 December, between 4.30pm and 7.30pm at Dunston Community Centre, Collingwood Terrace, Gateshead, NE11 9EB.

The barriers have previously been used successfully at both Newcastle Quayside and elsewhere in Blyth during January's tidal surge.

They are a series of one-metre high, lightweight metal barriers which are clipped together and then covered in tarpaulin, before being weighed down by metal chains and sandbags.

David Clark, from the Environment Agency's Flood and Coastal Risk Management team in the north east, said:

We know the devastating impact flooding has on homes and businesses and are continually looking for ways to protect our communities.

We've already used the temporary barriers in real-time during this year's tidal surge and we are well practised at their deployment to help reduce the impact of the flood.

We've been working hard to develop deployment plans for new locations which will benefit from a temporary barrier deployment and I'd encourage residents at both Dunston and North Blyth to come along and find out more about how it will work in their community.

While we can never completely eliminate the risk of flooding these temporary barriers are another weapon in our armoury.