

# Speech: Crisis 50th anniversary

## **Introduction**

Thank you. I am grateful to Dame Louise Casey for that warm introduction.

I am very honoured to be here with you this morning to mark Crisis' 50th year.

As I've recently discovered, turning 50 can also bring with it a whole range of emotions and sometimes some unexpected challenges.

That's why I'm particularly pleased to be here today. It comes with a sense of pride, perhaps a feeling of accomplishment, yes.

But also a restless determination that comes from knowing there is so much more to do.

But as John Sparkes has rightly said, Crisis' 50th anniversary cannot truly be a celebration.

Half a century later we are still grappling with the challenges of homelessness and rough sleeping.

Too many people still live without the security of a home.

Too many people still lack the simple comfort of a warm bed at the end of a hard day.

Too many people are still living out on the street.

It puts in clear focus what still needs to be done whilst recognising the huge contribution you have made.

And I am in no doubt as to the priority we need to give to bring about change.

Now, my first direct contact with Crisis was as a newly elected many years ago MP – visiting the then centre of operations in the Docklands for the Crisis at Christmas campaign.

I saw first-hand the incredible compassion and commitment you show and heard some of the challenges, barriers and prejudice faced by people forced to live rough on the street.

It's truly impressive that Crisis at Christmas is now the largest volunteer led event in the UK.

It's an example of how communities can come together to show compassion and change lives.

## **Crisis – campaigns**

But I know your work is all year round.

And few charities can claim to have had such an impact on our collective consciousness.

You've led the way when it comes to campaigning for change.

You've put homelessness and rough sleeping at the heart of public debate.

You've helped ensure we never forget that these are people with their own stories, hopes and aspirations.

And as so many of these individuals will say: "I never thought it would be me. I never thought I'd be homeless".

A life of homelessness or rough sleeping is not predestined for anyone.

This was something well understood by Bill Shearman and Ian McLeod.

When they established Crisis, they also recognised that the challenges of homelessness and rough sleeping were too serious to be party political.

That they could only be tackled with cross-party support and powerful coalitions of charities and other organizations.

I couldn't agree more.

Fast-forward 50 years and the [2017 Homelessness Reduction Act](#) is a perfect example of this.

This ambitious legal reform was achieved by working together, bridging political divides to help break the cycle of homelessness.

## **Crisis – front line**

And alongside your tireless campaigning, you also deliver services that help people find their way out of homelessness.

Whether on warm June days like today, or during the coldest depths of winter.

Initiatives like Skylight Centres, as one example, tackle complex homelessness challenges by adapting to local circumstances.

You are arming people with knowledge and skills, helping to meet their aspirations to build better lives for themselves.

And your evidence based approach, through world-class research, such as the Homelessness Monitor, has rightly won respect across the sector. Not least in my department.

These are huge achievements of which you can be rightly proud.

## **Evolving challenges**

But as your report today shows, the challenge is far from over. The very name Crisis reminds us we should never lose a sense of urgency when it comes to tackling homelessness.

While levels of statutory homelessness acceptances are well below the 2003 peak, we cannot deny the numbers have been rising in recent years.

And the challenge has evolved.

Compared to 50 years ago, today's rough sleeping populations are younger, with more women and more foreign nationals.

Half have mental health issues and many more have alcohol and substance abuse problems.

Perhaps most shocking is the average age of death: just 47 years old.

This is simply unacceptable and does not reflect the country we should be and why dealing with it is a key priority for me.

## **We share your ambition**

That is why this government is committed not just to managing or reducing the impact of rough sleeping, but ending it for good.

We are the first government to make such a commitment.

A commitment to halve rough sleeping in this Parliament and eliminate it entirely by 2027.

And to do this we need to tackle the underlying issues.

## **Fixing the broken housing market**

Clearly that starts with secure and affordable housing.

We need to build more homes to meet people's aspirations for a place of their own.

Successive governments have not built enough and the result is a broken housing market and a generation of people held back through no fault of their own.

But we are starting to change this.

Since 2010, we've delivered more than a million homes, including 357,000 affordable homes and 257,000 homes for rent.

Last year, we saw the biggest increase in housing supply in England for almost a decade: over 217,000 new homes.

We are taking bold steps to crack down on rogue landlords, making renting fairer and more secure and giving housing associations greater certainty over their rental income until 2025.

We will put money into schemes that make it easier for those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless to access or sustain tenancies in the private sector.

This will make a real difference when it comes to supporting people out of temporary accommodation.

But I am in no doubt that we have to do more to deliver the 300,000 new homes a year we will need by the middle of the next decade.

To that end, we are investing £9 billion in affordable housing.

This includes a new generation of council housing.

We are giving £1 billion of funding flexibility to help ambitious councils borrow more to build more.

This will support families struggling to pay their rent, because we recognize that people need greater security in their homes.

And none more so than those at risk of homelessness or rough sleeping.

## **Housing First**

One of my very first actions as Secretary of State was to award £28 million of funding to Housing First.

It has an impressive international track record of helping people with complex needs recover, and I think offers real promise.

I pay tribute to Crisis' pivotal role as an early champion for Housing First, helping to bring this innovative scheme into the heart of conversations around rough sleeping.

The new pilot projects for Greater Manchester, the Liverpool City Region and the West Midlands Combined Authority will be an important step that supports around 1000 people.

But I recognise that this is a nationwide problem and I am looking forward to seeing the difference these projects make and assessing the case for a national roll-out thereafter.

## **Action across government**

These pilot programmes expand on steps we are already taking to tackle homelessness.

Firstly, on funding, we've allocated over a billion pounds to reduce and prevent homelessness.

This includes more upfront funding available for local authorities to encourage them to be more proactive – in preventing someone from becoming homeless rather than picking up the pieces after it has happened.

Earlier intervention and prevention are also very much the focus for the Homelessness Reduction Act, which came into force in April.

These important reforms are transforming the way that homeless services are delivered.

For the first time, putting prevention at the heart of our response to homelessness...

...by making sure councils, public services and the voluntary sector work together to actively prevent homelessness for a broader range of people...

... regardless of whether they're a family or a single person, what has put them at risk or if they have a local connection to the area.

Local authorities are getting support from a team of specialist advisors to carry out these new duties.

This is the kind of joined-up approach that will ensure people get the help they need before they face losing their home.

## **Rough sleeping**

And yes, we've redoubled our focus on rough sleeping, through the new Rough Sleeping Initiative.

At its heart is a £30 million fund, targeted at local authorities with high levels of rough sleeping.

In recent months they have been developing targeted plans to achieve reductions in rough sleeping in each of their areas.

And I'm pleased to confirm how this fund will be allocated.

We will fund local areas to hire more than 500 new staff, whose job will be solely focused on rough sleeping.

This will include more outreach workers to connect with people on the streets, specialist mental health and substance misuse workers and dedicated co-ordinators to drive down rough sleeping numbers.

It will also provide for over 1700 new bed spaces, including both emergency and settled accommodation.

And in each area, funds will be put to use where they are most needed.

For example, here in Westminster we will deliver new Housing First units, bed spaces for women and couples and extend existing night shelter provision.

Or in Southend, where there will be specialist outreach workers for those who have experienced domestic abuse and accommodation to cater for their older population.

Or in Manchester, where funds will be directed towards staff working with those leaving prison and young people.

Equally as importantly, the Rough Sleeping Initiative Team – a team of experts from across regional and local government, agencies and charities – will support this work and ensure that resources are applied effectively.

This team will continue to work in partnership with staff in each area to support local authorities, their voluntary sector partners and others to see that this work delivers the real change we need.

They will also be holding local authorities to account and see that this investment will help people escape rough sleeping – for good.

## **Jeremy Swain**

And today, I am also pleased to announce that the Rough Sleeping Initiative will be led by Jeremy Swain.

Jeremy is an outstanding candidate for this position and he brings with him 30 years of invaluable front-line experience.

Jeremy will take up his post in July when we will also publish our Rough Sleeping Strategy.

The strategy – informed by the valuable contributions of our rough sleeping advisory panel, and I know many of you in this room have been working on that, and building on the work of the Rough Sleeping Initiative...

...will set out our ambitions to move towards a housing-led system that intervenes quickly and prioritises finding people a home at the earliest possible stage.

While I will be setting out further details in July, what I can tell you is that our focus will be in three core areas: prevention, intervention and recovery – so that by 2027, nobody should have to sleep on our streets.

Beyond that, I will continue to work with you to respond to the broader challenges of homelessness highlighted by the [Crisis report](#) published today and turning the vision of a place you can call home into a reality.

## **Grenfell**

As we meet today, my thoughts are also with another community in this city.

One that has suffered beyond our imagination.

The survivors of and those grievously affected by profound personal loss from

the Grenfell Tower fire.

Later this afternoon I will make a statement to the House of Commons as we prepare to mark one year since this horrific and avoidable tragedy.

This is an extremely painful time for a community that has suffered so much.

The public inquiry has laid bare the terrible human cost through the extraordinary tributes paid by families and friends.

They remind us that the decisions we take, the work we do are about individual people, individual lives.

We will not shrink from our commitments to them, the justice they seek and ensuring that the lessons learned from this disaster are applied.

## **Conclusion**

In closing, I wanted to start where I began.

In commending Crisis in marking your 50th year.

In underlining the huge difference you have made.

In acknowledging work that remains incomplete.

But I am in no doubt that the passion, the drive, the utter commitment that you have shown over so many years will remain.

Challenging government yes, but working with government too.

To deliver the changes we need for some of our most vulnerable.

To provide them with the stability and safety of a home.

That mission remains and is one we must all support.

I wish you all success for the remainder of today's conference and all the amazing work you do.

Thank you very much.

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## **News story: Coal Authority Public Board Meeting – 14 June 2018**

Our next public board meeting will take place at 200 Lichfield Lane, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG18 4RG, starting at 12:45 on Thursday 14 June

2018.

The board continues to conduct its business in public, as part of its ongoing commitment to giving stakeholders greater access to information on the activities undertaken by the Coal Authority.

[View the board meeting agenda for 14 June 2018](#)

Exceptional items of a commercially confidential nature will continue to be dealt with by the board in closed session.

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## **Statement to Parliament: Hexagon agreement: notification of a contingent liability**

I have today (11 June 2018) laid before Parliament a departmental minute describing 3 contingent liabilities relating to a tripartite deal between Heathrow Airport Limited (HAL), First Greater Western Limited (FGW) and the Department for Transport.

Unfortunately, due to the urgent need to finalise the deal and the confidential commercial nature of the negotiations it was not possible to notify Parliament of the particulars of the liability and allow the required 14 days' notice prior to the liabilities going live. A delay would have resulted in higher HS2 costs and an increased scheduling risk impacting on the December 2026 opening date for Phase One.

The main element of the deal is a service agreement between FGW, HAL and Heathrow Airport Operating Company (HEOC) for the continuation of non-stop rail services between Paddington and Heathrow Airport. Under this agreement FGW will assume operation of Heathrow Express services. Although this is an agreement between private sector companies, there are significant benefits to the department, in particular, savings generated from not building a replacement depot for Heathrow Express rolling stock at Langley (the land on which the current depot is situated at Old Oak Common is needed by HS2 for the construction of the high speed railway).

In order to conclude the deal, and secure departmental/HS2 benefits, the department needed to offer indemnities in relation to 3 risks that the parties were unwilling or unable to assume or manage. The financial exposure is not high – a conservative estimate is c£12 million. But they are unusual and outside the department's normal course of business.

The 3 contingent liabilities are:



First, indemnifying FGW against the cost of any delay to delivery of new rolling stock required to operate Heathrow Express services. The department's exposure is estimated to be £2.25 million.

Second, indemnifying FGW against the cost of any redundancies following the transfer of staff, mainly drivers, from HAL to FGW. The cost is estimated to be c£3.2 million.

Third, an indemnity against contagion from a wider industrial relations dispute – nationwide or franchise wide. The exposure is estimated to be £6.8 million.

The Treasury approved these liabilities before they were activated. However, if any Member of Parliament has concerns, he/she may write to me within the next 14 parliamentary sitting days. I will be happy to examine their concerns and provide a response.

- [Departmental minute: Hexagon agreement contingent liabilities \(DOC, 15KB\)](#)

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## **Press release: Government to launch national detective training programme**

Police will be able to boost the number of detectives by up to 1,000 in the next 5 years following new government funding to develop a national training programme.

The Home Office will work with Police Now, an award-winning police graduate recruitment programme, to develop the scheme.

The Home Office is providing £2.8 million to support Police Now in 2018 to 2019 and will provide an additional £350,000 seed funding for the detective entry programme.

The programme will include digital training to ensure that recruits are equipped to deal with the changing nature of modern crime. It will also focus on problem solving, crime prevention and safeguarding so that detectives on the scheme meet the needs of forces and communities.

Minister for Policing and the Fire Service Nick Hurd said:

Detectives are the fact-finders of our police service. They play an important role in bringing criminals to justice and getting to the bottom of complex crimes.

I'm keen to get more new detectives trained up, so I'm delighted to

support this innovative Police Now programme, which will bring in new talent, train detectives in a matter of months and complement other measures that the government and police are taking to keep the public safe.

The programme will include an expanded version of the innovative summer academy model which Police Now uses to offer accelerated neighbourhood officer training.

Together these steps will help to ensure forces are matching the capacity and capability of their workforce to the demands they face, while also recruiting more people directly into specialist roles via accelerated training programmes.

David Spencer, co-founder and chief executive of Police Now, said:

As a former detective myself, I understand the positive impact that detectives can have on reducing crime, increasing confidence in communities and protecting the most vulnerable in society.

Working with forces and the Home Office, we hope this new scheme will encourage a new group of diverse and brilliant individuals to enter the police service and contribute to the outstanding work being done by existing detectives up and down the country.

The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and the College of Policing are also leading work on providing a national assessment of detectives and developing sustainable solutions to ensure that forces have adequate investigative capacity.

Chief Constable Matt Jukes, the NPCC's National Lead for Detectives, said:

Detectives do a vital job investigating crimes, apprehending offenders and protecting people from harm. The complex nature of investigations and our work to protect vulnerable people has made the role of detectives more challenging than ever.

In order to mirror the changing nature of crime, we need to recruit and develop a diverse group of individuals, who will contribute to this vital area of policing and its future, underlining the critical nature of effective investigations to public confidence and trust.

Police Now is a national police recruitment programme which started in the Metropolitan Police. The former Home Secretary granted more than £5 million to the scheme in 2016, which enabled Police Now to expand and become an independent charity supporting multiple police forces across the country.

Police Now currently operates across 25 forces in England and Wales, and was recognised as offering the best learning and development initiative in the public and third sector by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) in September 2017.

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## **News story: The AAIB has sent a team to South Wales.**

The AAIB has sent a team of inspectors to investigate a light aircraft accident that occurred near Raglan, Monmouthshire, South Wales.

[Learn more about how the AAIB investigates aircraft accidents.](#)