

# Joint statement on US Withdrawal from the Paris Agreement

## Government response

The UNFCCC and the Governments of the UK, Chile, France and Italy have issued a joint statement on the US Withdrawal from the Paris Agreement.



There is no greater responsibility than protecting our planet and people from the threat of climate change. The science is clear that we must urgently scale up action and work together to reduce the impacts of global warming and to ensure a greener, more resilient future for us all. The Paris Agreement provides the right framework to achieve this. Our efforts must include support for those countries and communities at the frontline of climate change. It is vital that we take renewed action to hold the temperature rise to well below 2 degrees and take best efforts to limit warming to 1.5 degrees.

On 12 December we will be celebrating the five year anniversary of the Paris Agreement. We must ensure that it is implemented in full. We note with regret that the US withdrawal from the Paris Agreement has formally come into effect today. As we look towards COP26 in Glasgow, we remain committed to working with all US stakeholders and partners around the world to accelerate climate action, and with all signatories to ensure the full implementation of the Paris Agreement.

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## New guidance to support safe care home

## visits during lockdown

- Visits should be tailored to residents and facilities and should prioritise residents and staff's safety to limit the transmission of COVID-19
- Care homes, especially those who have not allowed visits since March, will be encouraged and supported to provide safe visiting opportunities as new national restrictions come into effect
- Measures put in place should provide COVID-secure opportunities for families to meet using visiting arrangements such as floor to ceiling screens, visiting pods, and window visits

All care home residents in England should be allowed to receive visits from their family and friends in a COVID-secure way – with social distancing and PPE – following new guidance to be used while national restrictions are in place from Thursday 5 November.

The guidance will enable care home providers, families and local professionals to work together to find the right balance between the benefits of visiting on wellbeing and quality of life, and the risk of transmission of COVID-19 to social care staff and vulnerable residents.

It will set out clear principles for how visits are conducted – with arrangements to be adapted from home to home, based on the needs of their residents and taking into consideration factors such as layout and facilities – and reiterates the importance of ensuring social distancing and proper PPE use is observed.

Options for safe care home visits in line with the guidance could include:

- visits using COVID-secure visiting areas/pods with floor to ceiling screens and windows where the visitor and resident enter through different entrances, are separated by screens and visitors do not need to enter or pass through the care home
- visits at windows, where the visitor doesn't need to come inside the care home or where the visitor remains in their car, and the resident is socially distanced
- outdoor visits with one other person – visitors can meet outside with a loved one, in areas which can be accessed without anyone going through a shared building
- further support for virtual visits, encouraging the use of video calls

Plans are currently being developed to allow specific family and friends to visit care homes supported by testing. A sector-led group is overseeing the development of these plans with trials set to begin later this month.

A new national programme for weekly testing of professionals who regularly visit care homes, including community nurses and physiotherapists, will also be rolled out in the coming weeks following a successful pilot in Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Northamptonshire.

Health and Social Care Secretary, Matt Hancock, said:

I know how heart-breaking and incredibly frustrating it has been for families and friends who haven't been able to see their loved ones during the pandemic.

Care homes should feel empowered by this new guidance to look at safe options to allow visits to care homes that suit their residents and facilities. We've seen some really innovative solutions used to help families see each other safely, face-to-face, which has been life-changing for some.

It is vital high quality, compassionate care and infection control remains at the heart of every single care home to protect staff and resident's lives, but we must allow families to reunite in the safest way possible.

Minister for Care, Helen Whately said:

I know how incredibly hard visiting restrictions have been for families, friends and residents in care homes. There is no escaping the pain and the very real consequences of being separated for such a long period of time. The accounts I have heard personally are truly heart-breaking, especially where care homes have been unable to reopen for visiting during the summer.

I am determined to bring loved ones back together even during this second wave of the pandemic; that's why I am advising care homes to enable COVID-secure visits across the country.

We are also working to trial testing for visitors, so that we can reduce the risk of indoor visits and give families more opportunities to spend time with relatives in care homes.

We must get the balance right between reuniting families and ensuring care staff and residents are safe from COVID-19.

The government is also working with providers to help them communicate to families and help them plan visits in a way that minimises the wider risks – for example, avoiding travelling to and from the home using public transport, or maintaining social distance from other families when they arrive at the home for their visit.

Visits outside of these principles should still be allowed in exceptional circumstances such as end of life.

Care homes should support the NHS Test and Trace system by keeping a temporary record, including address and phone number, of current and previous residents, staff and visitors as well as keeping track of visitor numbers and

staff. It is recommended homes have an arrangement to enable bookings or appointments for visitors and ad hoc visits should not be permitted.

Protecting staff and residents has been a priority throughout the pandemic, with 120,000 tests being sent out every day solely for the care sector. The government has provided access to £3.7 billion for local authorities through un-ringfenced grants so they can address the expenditure pressures they are facing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including social care, as well as £1.1 billion provided to support infection control in care homes.

In addition, 11,000 iPad tablets, worth £7.5 million, will soon be distributed to thousands of care homes across England to help residents keep in touch with loved ones.

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## 36th Universal Periodic Review: UK statement on Maldives



The United Kingdom recognises Maldives' progress since its 2015 review, most notably in the field of consolidating democracy, improving governance and promoting respect for human rights.

The UK commends Maldives for a number of legislative reforms, which have

further embedded democratic principles, including seeking to strengthen judicial independence.

We welcome the peaceful conduct of parliamentary elections in 2019, but remain concerned that women are under-represented in Parliament.

We recommend that Maldives:

1. Strengthen existing national legislation to ensure that all modern slavery crimes are fully criminalised in line with international conventions, including human trafficking, slavery as a standalone offence, child prostitution, forced marriage, and the involvement of children in armed conflict.
2. Adopt an open, merit-based process when selecting national candidates for UN Treaty Body elections.
3. Expand and protect space for civil society organisations to operate in order to promote social cohesion.

Thank you.

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## [London Hammersmith tobacco company overlooks packaging obligations](#)

Failure to comply with packaging regulations has led to a tobacco company handing over nearly £3,500 to charity.

Philip Morris Limited, which produces tobacco products, and is registered at 10 Hammersmith Grove, London W6 7AP, neglected to register as a packaging producer as required by law during 2014.

This also meant it failed to recover and recycle waste materials used in the course of its business, as would be required of registered companies.

As a result, the company has paid £3,438.11 to UK charity Trees for Cities, in what is known as an enforcement undertaking (EU). The company also had to pay costs, including those of the Environment Agency.

The money will go to supporting the work of the charity, which has completed

34 planting projects in 26 cities.

On discovering the oversight in late 2015, the company worked with the Valpak packaging producer compliance scheme to register for the 2015 compliance year, and submit an enforcement undertaking offer for the year that was missed. It worked with Valpak to make a pro-rata calculation of the amount of packaging handled in 2013, to determine the financial value of its enforcement undertaking.

The company has now incorporated responsibility for complying with the packaging regulations into the role of the Supply Chain Analyst. It also has a written methodology and employs the services of Valpak to ensure that its packaging data is accurately recorded and reported.

Companies handling more than 50 tonnes of packaging a year, and which have a turnover of more than £2 million, must register with the Environment Agency, either directly or through a packaging compliance scheme, and meet their responsibilities for recovering and recycling packaging waste. This comprises any material used to hold, protect, handle, deliver or present goods, such as bags or boxes.

Jonathan Coldicott, Senior Technical Officer in the Environment Agency, said:

It is important that all companies make themselves aware of their environmental responsibilities and ensure that they are appropriately registered.

In this case, Philip Morris Limited came forward voluntarily to make us aware of the error, and worked with us to redress the situation.

Throughout the investigation and EU assessment process, Philip Morris has been extremely cooperative and forthcoming. Representatives of company have been happy to engage with us and attended a face-to-face interview.

Enforcement undertakings allow companies and individuals to make amends for breaching environmental regulations, including through a financial contribution to an environmental project.

To agree this type of civil sanction, the Environment Agency must be satisfied the offender will make changes to its operations, to prevent future breaches of packaging legislation.

The Environment Agency continues to prosecute organisations and individuals where evidence shows high levels of culpability and serious environmental harm.

## **Notes for editors**

Philip Morris Limited was sanctioned under the Producer Responsibility

## Hundreds of the world's top minds debate ethics at Dstl's AI Fest

Dstl – the science inside UK defence and security – is playing a critical role in helping the UK Ministry of Defence understand how it can responsibly and ethically adopt AI in order to deter and de-escalate conflict, save lives and reduce harm.

Harnessing the power of AI and unlocking the strategic potential of data is one of the great challenges of the early part of the 21st century. Organisations that understand and embrace this have been able to fundamentally alter how they operate and have delivered remarkable changes within their sector, for example in retail, finance, healthcare and transportation.

As part of this Dstl's AI Lab held a hugely successful virtual event called "AI Fest" which shared experience and practical approaches on a range of challenges including the importance of curating and exploiting data for UK Armed Forces, how to ensure that AI systems are safe, robust and trustworthy enough for military use, and creating ethical guidelines for military adoption of AI.

Other topics covered how to design data centric systems that are effective, fair and safe; working with data sets that are scarce, poor quality or biased; building a defence "data architecture" that enables the data to get to where it needs to be and the "AI Building Blocks" – the wider technical, system and organisational components required for an effective AI capability.

The event included more than 1700 attendees who represented over 300 different organisations and 35 partner nations. Attendees were able to attend 23 sessions consisting of 76 technical talks which included a number of talks from world leading AI scientists who delivered keynote speeches. The event also included a large online exhibition consisting of virtual booths from leading AI companies.

Professor Steven Meers, the Head of Dstl's AI Lab, said:

Collaboration between government, industry, academia and international partners is particularly vital in this rapidly developing area. AI Fest was an extremely successful event that brought the community together to share insights and best practice regarding the how to responsibly harness the power of AI for defence and security.

Keynote speakers included Dame Angela McLean, the Chief Scientific Adviser for the MOD, who has been at the heart of using data to help the UK government manage its Covid response and Professor Chris Bishop, the Laboratory Director of the Microsoft Research Lab in Cambridge, said:

There is a real AI revolution taking place right now that is truly transformational. For the last forty years we have programmed computers, but for the next forty years we will train them.

Read AI Labs latest biscuit book [here](#)