

# Border force seize cocaine worth £4.86 million at Harwich

News story

Border Force officers at Harwich International Port have prevented an attempt to smuggle approximately 54 kilos of cocaine into the UK.



On Thursday (30 April), officers at the port stopped an Irish-registered lorry carrying a load of frozen food which had just arrived on a ferry from the Hook of Holland. They noticed anomalies in the trailer doors and conducted a search. Inside the trailer they found 47 wrapped packages concealed in metal lined containers.

The contents of some of the packages were tested and proved positive for cocaine. The drugs had a potential street value in excess of £4.86 million.

Chris Philp, Minister for Immigration Compliance said:

This was a fantastic bit of work from the team. They have succeeded in taking a large amount of cocaine off our streets, where it can cause significant harm to both individuals and communities.

Every year Border Force officers seize Class A drugs worth hundreds of millions of pounds. Working with law enforcement colleagues like the National Crime Agency we will do all we can to stop drug traffickers and bring them to justice.

A British man was arrested and the investigation passed to the NCA. He was interviewed and released under investigation.

Jacque Beer, NCA Branch Commander said:

This seizure shows that organised criminal networks involved in international drug trafficking continue to pose a threat to the UK,

even with the restrictions brought about by the coronavirus pandemic.

Working with partners like Border Force we will continue to use all the tools at our disposal to disrupt and dismantle crime groups involved in drug distribution.

Border Force officers use hi-tech search equipment to combat immigration crime and detect banned and restricted goods that smugglers attempt to bring into the country.

They use an array of search techniques including sniffer dogs, carbon dioxide detectors, heartbeat monitors and scanners – as well as visual searches – to find well-hidden stowaways, illegal drugs, firearms and tobacco which would otherwise end up causing harm to local people, businesses and communities.

Anyone with information about activity they suspect may be linked to smuggling should call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or [online](#).

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## **£5.4 million to support legal advice sector during the COVID-19 pandemic**

The money will be distributed to those most in need through not for profit organisations and Law Centres across England and Wales.

We are already seeing an increase in people seeking advice for social welfare cases during the coronavirus outbreak and this is expected to further increase demand from the legal support sector.

This funding will therefore help organisations to continue to provide vital legal advice throughout the pandemic, increase capacity, and deliver services remotely.

Justice Minister, Alex Chalk said:

Law Centres and charities in the advice sector play a vital role in helping people access justice and resolve their legal problems. That is why they should be supported to continue to operate safely and effectively during the Covid-19 pandemic

This additional £5.4 million support fund will help do just that – giving providers the support they need to boost remote capability and help as many people as possible during these challenging times.

Funding allocated to the Community Justice Fund will be administered by the Access to Justice Foundation and the Law Centres Network will oversee funding earmarked for law centres.

This is in addition to a recently signed grant agreement to provide more than £3.1m in funding to organisations that support unrepresented defendants in the courts, known as Litigants in Person.

Specialist legal advice providers focuses mainly on areas of social welfare law, for example housing, debt, employment, discrimination and special educational needs.

Chief Executive, The Access to Justice Foundation, Ruth Daniel said:

We are delighted with this support for specialist social welfare legal advice agencies who are providing essential help to people and communities at this difficult time. The Community Justice Fund will work in partnership with the sector to support organisations with their response to the current challenges they are facing and aims to help the sector to emerge from it stronger and more resilient than it was before the crisis.

The Law Centres Network, Chair, Helen Rogers said:

We thank the government for this vital support, which will allow Law Centres to continue to defend people's homes, lives and livelihoods. The pandemic's uneven impact is a grim reminder of the deep inequality in our society that affects every aspect of life. This support recognises the key role of legal assistance in reducing inequality and bringing justice for all.

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## [Parole Board Chief Executive's blog – May 2020](#)

This week, the Parole Board has shared its 2020 to 2022 business plan which includes our strategic aims and priorities. It is worth noting, given the current climate, that while the current situation with Covid-19 will have a significant impact on the timings of the delivery of this plan, the aims and

objectives still remain relevant, perhaps even more relevant, and the Parole Board continues to work towards the aims shared in the plan.

Firstly, I would like to reiterate that our top priority, as always, is to keep the public safe by only releasing someone when we are satisfied that imprisonment is no longer necessary for the protection of the public; and in undertaking fair and independent reviews ensure that continued detention is lawful.

We have 3 strategic aims that help us to achieve this:

1. We make independent, impartial and quality decisions
2. We work efficiently and effectively and provide value for money
3. We seek to be as open and transparent as possible

The Board makes independent, impartial and quality decisions by ensuring they are fair, respect the rights of the prisoner but always put public safety first. We operate like a court by making difficult, impartial decisions by considering evidence without fear or favour.

To help us make the best decisions we plan to:

- Increasingly use research to inform our understanding of, and approach to, risk;
- Provide members with a revised framework for decision making about risk;
- Provide more legal training and support
- Launch a rigorous and open recruitment processes to recruit new Parole Board members that represents the public that we serve.

To improve our efficiency and effectiveness we will:

- Ensure that all 26,000 cases heard per year are processed in a timely manner
- Ensure decisions are fully informed and based on all evidence available
- Improve the forecasting of our workload;
- Ensure we have better dossiers on prisoners and better case management and deployment of our resources.

Openness and transparency is also a huge part of what we do and we have made major strides in this area in recent times, which we are determined to build on. We already:

- Provide a service to produce around 100 summaries per month to explain our decisions to victims, the public and the media.
- Publish an accessible annual report each year and regularly publish performance data so that we are accountable for our decisions and open about our performance.
- Publish a full listing of our members.
- Publish our reconsideration decisions.

Unfortunately the Parole Board is often misunderstood by victims, the public and sometimes in Parliament, because there is a lack of understanding of the work it does. I am therefore determined and committed to ensuring we raise

greater awareness of the work we do. We strive to improve this so that all those affected by our decisions understand how we make them.

By April 2021 we will look to provide better information about Parole Board decision-making to prisoners, their families, victims and the public; and implement a robust system for providing information about individual cases; make parole hearings more open and provide better access to data.

As previously mentioned, the timescales above may vary due to the current public health situation but I would like to assure everyone that the Parole Board continues to process a huge number of cases despite the restrictions in place and everyone is and will work to achieve the goals set out in the business plan.

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## [West Midlands Interchange granted development consent](#)

Press release

Today, Monday 4 May 2020, the application for the West Midlands Strategic Rail Freight Interchange has been given development consent by the Secretary of State for Transport.



Development consent has been given for the development of a new Strategic Rail Freight Interchange and other supporting infrastructure works near Junction 12 of the M6 motorway in South Staffordshire District.

The application was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration by Four Ashes Limited on the 03 August 2018 and accepted for examination on 24 August 2018. Following an examination during which the public, statutory consultees and interested parties were given the opportunity to give evidence to the Examining Authority, a recommendation was made to the Secretary of State on 27 November 2019.

The Planning Inspectorate's Chief Executive, Sarah Richards said:

"This is the 84th nationally significant infrastructure project to have been examined and decided within the timescales laid down in the Planning Act 2008. The Planning Inspectorate is committed to giving local communities the opportunity of being involved in the examination of projects that may affect them. Local people, the local authority and other interested parties were able to participate in a 6-month long examination. The Examining Authority listened and gave full consideration to local views before making their recommendation."

The decision, the recommendation made by the Examining Authority to the Secretary of State and the evidence considered by the Examining Authority in reaching its recommendation is publicly available on the [National Infrastructure Planning website](#).

## ENDS

Journalists wanting further information should contact the Planning Inspectorate Press Office, on: 0303 444 5004 or 0303 444 5005 or email: [Press.office@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:Press.office@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)

## Notes to editors:

The Planning Inspectorate, [National Infrastructure Programme of Projects](#) details the proposals which are anticipated to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate as applications in the coming months.

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## [Vacancy: Investigation Support Officer, Southampton](#)

News story

We are seeking a new member of the team to help provide support to MAIB inspectors while they are carrying out investigations.



Your responsibilities will include:

- Receiving and processing accident reports accurately and quickly so that they may be assessed by the Principal Inspector of Marine Accidents. This task also involves proactive monitoring of the HM Coastguard live online system allowing you to keep up with the progress of search and rescue activities.
- Database entry – information about the accidents reported needs to be recorded accurately and efficiently.
- Conducting follow-up enquiries with those involved in accidents and subsequent activities.
- Fulfilling general administrative tasks including monitoring the MAIB email box and responding accordingly, answering the 'phone, and dealing with post.
- Logistical support to a team of inspectors including making travel and accommodation bookings, and helping to establish contact with key stakeholders at the early stages of an investigation.

For further information about this position and how to apply see [Civil Service Jobs, Investigation Support Officer, Ref: 48174](#).

Closing date: Monday 18 May 2020

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