

# Independent expert appointed to tackle Islamophobia

- Independent adviser appointed to lead work to propose a definition of Islamophobia
- Government to consider advisers' recommendations on an effective definition
- Appointment underlines the government's commitment to stamping out all forms of religious and racial hatred

An independent adviser has today (23 July 2019) been appointed to provide expert advice on a definition of Islamophobia to the government.

Imam Qari Asim MBE, Deputy Chair of the Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group will lead a process for establishing a definition of Islamophobia. He will be joined by a second adviser to be confirmed in due course.

This new work will build on the definitions of Islamophobia currently being considered, including the APPG definition. It will also draw on a wide range of opinions and work in close collaboration with the cross-government Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group, to ensure that it commands broad support within Muslim communities and wider society.

Communities Secretary, Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said:

The government is wholeheartedly committed to ensuring that Muslims are not targeted for hatred, persecution or discrimination.

Imam Asim's appointment marks a further step in helping us to achieve that goal and ensures that we develop an effective definition of Islamophobia which commands widespread support.

Imam Qari Asim MBE said:

To tackle the alarming rise in anti-Muslim sentiment, it is imperative that Islamophobia is defined.

I am deeply committed to working across Muslim communities and with relevant stakeholders to formulate a legally robust, comprehensive and workable definition of Islamophobia.

I am honoured to be entrusted with this role, which will have a far reaching impact in protecting British Muslims and tackling anti-Muslim hatred.

The government agrees there needs to be a formal definition of Islamophobia

to help strengthen our efforts against anti-Muslim hatred. But there are questions around the APPG definition, as concerns have been raised that the APPG definition could unintentionally undermine freedom of speech, and prevent legitimate criticism of Islamist extremism, or of unacceptable cultural practices. This is a matter that needs careful consideration.

The Communities Secretary announced earlier this year that we would instead be appointing two advisers to drive the process of establishing a definition on Islamophobia forward and lead work on making recommendations for the government to consider. The advisers will work with the Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group which will continue to engage with Muslims and address hate and discrimination.

Imam Qari Asim MBE was appointed for his experience working with a broad range of communities to tackle Islamophobia, including in his role as the Deputy Chair of the cross-government Working Group to Tackle Anti-Muslim Hatred.

## **Imam Qari Asim biography**

-Qari Asim, MBE, is senior Imam at Makkah Mosque in Leeds, which has won the award of being UK's model mosque and Legal Director at a global law firm.

He is Deputy Chair of government's Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group and was an advisor to the Independent Review into the Application of Sharia Law in England and Wales.

Alongside this, he is Chair of Mosques and Imams National Advisory Board, and Senior Editor of ImamsOnline. Qari Asim is passionate about fostering relations between communities and is a trustee of Christian Muslim Forum, an executive board member of National Council of Imams & Rabbis, a director of Forum for Promoting Peace (London) and one of the faith advisors to the Near Neighbours programme.

## **Further information**

The definition will not be legally binding and the appointment of a legal expert will be to ensure that the definition does not conflict with current equalities legislation.

The government has done more in recent years to tackle anti-Muslim hatred. This includes:

- Funding of Tell Mama, a dedicated third-party reporting organisation that offers victim support. Between 2016 and 2020 we will have provided the organisation with £2.5 million to raise awareness on anti-Muslim hatred and to increase reporting of hate crimes.
- Supporting and refreshing the cross-government working group on anti-Muslim hatred, which includes a broad range of representation of eminent community representatives, academics, and hate crime practitioners to advise and challenge the government on tackling Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hate crime.

- Ensuring for the first time, that police forces, are required to disaggregate religious hate crime data to allow us to better identify Islamophobia.
  - Doubling the Places of Worship Fund to £1.6 million – to physically protect mosques and other places of worship and reassure our communities – and making it easier for people to apply for this funding from July 2019.
  - A new £5 million fund to provide security training and a consultation on what more can be done to protect faith communities.
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## Great British High Street Awards 2019 judges revealed

Judges of this year's Great British High Streets Awards have been announced today (23rd July 2019).

A panel of 47 judges have been chosen to represent those who use and care about the high street, from teenagers, to older people, commercial customers and families. The panel combines public and private sector expertise, including proud partner Visa and sponsor Elavon.

The Great British High Street Awards celebrate the UK's best and most ambitious high streets, with winners receiving up to £15,000 in prize money.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, in partnership with Visa, runs the awards. Winners showcase the best examples of how high streets can rise to the challenges of changing consumer behaviour in a changing retail environment.

Shortlisted high streets will be announced on 7 August and the public will then be able to cast their vote along with the independent judging panel.

The winners will be announced at an awards ceremony in November.

The Great British High Street judges:

Tony Armstrong- CEO of Locality

Martin Austin- Managing Director, Nimbus Disability

Caroline Baker-Head of Manchester Office, Cushman and Wakefield

Joe Barratt- Co Founder, The Teenage Market

Emily Berwyn – Director, Meanwhile Space

Giulia Bunting – Director, Tulley Bunting

Emma Cariaga – Head of Operations, Canada Water, British Land

David Chapman- Executive Director in Wales, Hospitality Cymru

Harvin Chohan- Chair of BPF Futures (CBRE)

Katie Christie- Merchant, Victoriana Florist

Dean Christy- Managing Director, Corn Exchange Crickhowell  
Will Colthorpe- Partner, Argent  
Aodhan Connolly- Director, Retail Consortium NI  
Edward Cooke- CEO, Revo  
Sophia de Sousa – Chief Executive, The Glass-House Community Led Design  
Martyn Evans- Creative Director, U+I  
Elizabeth Faulkner-Bid Manager, Altrincham Unlimited  
Pete Gladwell-Public Sector Partnerships, L&G  
Joe Harrison- CEO, National Market Traders' Federation  
Surinder Josan- President, British Independent Retailers Association  
Woordrow Kernohan – Director, John Hansard Gallery  
Mark Lloyd- CEO, Local Government Association  
James Lowman- CEO, Association of Convenience Stores  
Suzanne Lutton- Regeneration Manager, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council  
Amanda Mackenzie OBE-CEO, Business in the Community  
Willie McLeod- Executive Director, UK Hospitality  
John Martin – Pitshanger Village Traders' Association  
Andrew McRae- Policy Chair, Federation of Small Businesses (Scotland)  
Charlotte Mitchell- Member of National Infrastructure Commission's Young Professionals Panel, Quod  
Catherine Mitton- CEO, The Bid Foundation  
Becky Myles- Chairperson, Newport-on-Tay Traders' Association  
Colin Neil – CEO, Hospitality Ulster  
John Parmiter- Director, Future High Streets  
Liz Peace- Non Executive Director, Various  
Phil Prentice- CO, Scotland's Town Partnership  
Simon Quin- Director, Institute of Place Management  
Glyn Roberts- CEO, Retail Northern Ireland  
Mark Robinson- Elandi  
Jackie Sadek- COO, UK Regeneration  
Brigid Simmonds OBE- British Beer and Pub Association  
Hannah Sloggett- Co-Director, Nudge Community Builders  
Sally Themans- Founder, Love Bridgnorth  
Kate Thomas- Cowbridge Chamber of Trade  
Alan Thornburrow- Scotland Director, BITC Scotland  
Sally Ann Watkiss- Non Executive Director, Various  
Mark Williams- Director, Hart Group  
Graham Wilson OBE- CEO, National Association of British Markets

How the government is backing the Great British high street:

A £675 million Future High Streets Fund. This will support local areas in England to renew and reshape town centres and high streets in a way that improves experience, drives growth and ensures future sustainability. More than 300 local authorities bid for a share of the funding in Round 1 of the competitive application process. The government welcomes this positive response as evidence of the appetite to reimagine and reinvent our towns and high streets. Over 50 places have been successful in progressing to the business case development phase. These will each receive a small amount of revenue funding and support from officials.

The Future High Streets Fund will also support the regeneration of heritage high streets (up to £55 million of the overall Fund). This was launched by Historic England on 18 May and closed on 12 July.

Providing one third off retailers' business rate bills for two years from April 2019, for properties with a rateable value below £51,000. The support is available to a range of retail properties such as shops, restaurants, cafes and pubs, subject to State Aid and eligibility.

Supporting local leadership with a High Streets Task Force, giving high streets and town centres expert advice to adapt and thrive. This will provide hands-on support to local areas to develop data-driven innovative strategies and connect local areas to relevant experts. The Task Force will also provide training and help to improve coordination between different groups working to improve their high streets. We ran a competitive procurement process for an organisation to run the Task Force and have appointed the Institute of Place Management (IPM) to run the Task Force. Over the summer we will be working with them to agree a plan of work for the Task Force.

The planning consultation to help support change on the high street, making it easier for high streets to adapt for the future, with a wider range of retail, residential and other uses. As a result of this, new permitted development rights came into force on 25 May allowing more change of use between premises to enable businesses to adapt and diversify to respond to emerging consumer demands and avoid premises lying empty. We will also launch a new £1 million 'High Streets CPO Support Fund' in the Autumn this year, with a prospectus published over the summer in order to help address the structural challenges facing high streets.

Piloting a register of empty commercial properties to support wider regeneration of our high streets and town centres.

Launching an 'Open Doors' pilot in 5 town centres to bring empty properties back into use by matching landlords of vacant premises with local community groups looking for space. The confirmed locations that will be part of the pilot are Stoke-on-Trent, Bradford, Rochford, Kettering and Slough. During 'High Streets Week' (2 July 2019) community groups moved into sites in Stoke-on-Trent, Kettering and Bradford. Sites in Slough and Rochford will follow shortly.

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## [CNC commended for commitment to employer workplace health](#)

The [Society of Occupational Medicine \(SOM\)](#) has recognised the CNC with a special commendation for an Outstanding Contribution by an Employer to Workplace Health and Wellbeing in their inaugural Occupational Health and

Wellbeing annual awards.

The awards, which took place in Bristol, recognise organisations and individuals who have made workplace health a priority in their day to day operations and the CNC was one of only six organisations and people recognised by the society.

Richard Saunders, Director of People and Organisational Development said: "This special commendation is testament to the importance that the CNC places on employee health and wellbeing, and the investment that it has made in developing the holistic internal occupational health and wellbeing service that is available to all our employees.

"Our aim now is to build on this award and ensure that employee health and wellbeing is recognised as the 'golden thread' that runs throughout all that we do in the CNC."

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## [Stronger protections for the environment move closer as landmark Bill takes shape](#)

New measures to enhance wildlife, transform our waste system and improve the resilience of water supplies have been set out today by Environment Secretary Michael Gove (Tuesday 23 July).

In an update on progress towards the introduction of the landmark [Environment Bill](#) – the first for 20 years – the government has published firm positions, following a range of consultations, on issues ranging from trees to water to recycling, to boost our natural environment.

Mr Gove has set out the government's ambitions for the full Environment Bill in an [updated summer policy statement](#), including commitments to legislate on environmental governance, air, biodiversity, water, and waste and resource efficiency.

As well as this, the government has published a [report on the feasibility of achieving the World Health Organisation \(WHO\) guideline level of 10 micrograms per cubic metre for fine particulate matter \(PM2.5\)](#). This report concludes that, whilst challenging, it would be technically feasible to meet the WHO guideline level across the UK. Further analysis is needed to understand what would be an appropriate timescale and means, and we will work with a broad range of experts, factoring in full economic, social and technological feasibility to do this.

Environment Secretary Michael Gove said:

We know we must do all we can to protect our precious natural environment. There is a clear need to act to ensure we do not leave this planet to the next generation more polluted, more dangerous and denuded of its natural riches.

The measures in our Environment Bill will position the UK as a world leader, ensuring that after EU Exit environmental ambition and accountability are placed more clearly than ever before at the heart of government.

As we have set out today, our plans will improve air quality so that our children live longer, restore habitats and increase biodiversity, strive towards a more circular economy and ensure we can manage our precious water resources in a changing climate.

Announced by the Prime Minister last year, the landmark Environment Bill will be an essential step to put the [25 Year Environment Plan](#) on statutory footing, placing environmental ambition and accountability at the heart of government. It will be introduced early in the second session of this Parliament.

HM Treasury has also published a summary of responses to its consultation on a world-leading new plastic packaging tax that will encourage greater use of recycled plastic and help to tackle plastic waste.

The great amount of interest shown from both the public, environmental groups and industry, highlights how important an issue this is to many. The government will set out next steps related to the tax at the Budget.

## **Government responses to consultations**

Today's publications include responses to six public consultations and set out next steps for:

- [A deposit return scheme \(DRS\) for drinks containers](#) – More than 200,000 people responded to this consultation, demonstrating strong support for a DRS scheme. The Bill will introduce powers that will enable a deposit return scheme to be implemented in England, Wales and Northern Ireland from 2023.
- [Consistency in household and business recycling](#) – The government aims to make it easier for people to recycle by implementing a consistent and simplified approach across local authorities. The government will legislate to introduce a core set of consistent recyclable materials (including food waste) to be collected from all households and businesses, supporting frequent and comprehensive rubbish and recycling collections. It will also require manufacturers to put clearer labelling on packaging so consumers know what they can recycle.

- [Extended producer responsibility \(EPR\)](#) – The Environment Secretary has been clear he wants to drive a shift in the market towards durable, repairable and recyclable products. New powers to enact EPR schemes that will ensure producers pay the full costs of managing the disposal of their products will be sought, as well as powers to enable government to set resource efficient product requirements.
- [Biodiversity net gain](#) – A mandatory approach to biodiversity net gain will be introduced in the Bill that will legally require developers to ensure habitats for wildlife are enhanced, with a 10% increase in habitat for wildlife compared with the pre-development baseline.
- [Conservation covenants](#) – The government plans to legislate on conservation covenants, a voluntary agreement between a landowner and others (for example, a conservation charity) to help guarantee positive local conservation for the long term.
- [Improving our management of water in the environment](#) – The Environment Secretary has been clear that water companies need to do more to help improve the environment and better prepare for future demand for water. There was strong support in response to a consultation on proposals to improve long-term planning of water resources and drainage. The Bill will introduce powers to direct water companies to work together to address these issues, such as transferring supplies between catchments during drought conditions, and instructing them to have robust plans in place to maintain supplies.

## Report on air quality target

The government is committed to tackling air pollution, and has already published its Clean Air Strategy which the World Health Organisation praised as an example for the rest of the world to follow. Alongside the consultation responses, the government has also published a [report on air quality](#), assessing progress towards WHO guideline levels for fine particulate matter (PM2.5) of 10 micrograms per cubic metre.

On the basis of scientific modelling, which has not considered economic viability and practical deliverability, we believe that, whilst challenging, it would be technically feasible to meet the World Health Organization guideline level for PM2.5 – the most damaging air pollutant – across the UK. The government will continue to work with experts on further analysis to understand potential timescales for achieving this guideline level.

This will be underpinned by legislation on key measures in the Clean Air Strategy, giving legal force to our plans. The government will also enable greater local action on air pollution by, for example, ensuring responsibility for tackling air pollution is shared (across local government structures and with relevant public bodies) and by better enabling local



government to tackle emissions from burning coal and wood.

## Background

A [policy statement](#) has also been published today, summarising progress so far and updating on the direction and vision of the Bill.

The headline announcements set out are:

### Governance

1. The Office for Environmental Protection will offer a free-to-use complaints system, and crucially have the power to undertake its own investigations at its own instigation.
2. The Office for Environmental Protection will be able to take central Government and public bodies to court for any failure to abide by environmental law, if necessary.

### Air Quality

1. Air quality has been steadily improving thanks to our £3.5 billion plan to clean up vehicle emissions and our Clean Air Strategy, which the WHO praised as an example for the rest of the world to follow.
2. On the basis of scientific modelling, which has not considered economic viability and practical deliverability, we believe that, whilst challenging, it would be technically feasible to meet the World Health Organization guideline level for PM2.5 – the most damaging air pollutant – across the UK.
3. We will ensure that all local bodies with powers to control emissions act together in a coordinated way.
4. We will be giving Local Authorities stronger powers in the Environment Bill to reduce emissions from polluting domestic burning.

### Nature

1. In the Environment Bill, we will legislate to mandate biodiversity ‘net gain’ in future developments.
2. We will ensure that the environmental impacts of new commercial and residential developments are more than made up for, either on-site or by ensuring money is invested in improving existing habitats and restoring nature depleted environments to health.
3. We believe mandating biodiversity net gain will secure tens of millions of pounds a year in additional revenue for nature. That money will be invested in habitats such as new woodlands, grasslands and wetlands.
4. By legislating for conservation covenants, we can ensure that land owners have the opportunity legally to lock in the benefits generated by policies like net gain and our farming reform.
5. We will include a new system of environmental spatial mapping in the Environment Bill.
6. We will legislate for a new framework for Local Nature Recovery Strategies in the Environment Bill, to help support the Nature Recovery Network and better direct investment in the environment and green

infrastructure, for example through biodiversity net gain – creating places that are richer in wildlife and provide wider benefits for local communities.

7. We will fulfill our manifesto commitment with a clear legal duty to consult before any street trees are felled, learning lessons from the Forestry Commission's investigation into the Sheffield Council's felling programme. Waste and Resource Efficiency
8. Our new legal powers will allow us to set resource- efficiency product standards, driving a shift in the market towards more durable, repairable and recyclable products. We will also set information requirements so that manufacturers can communicate the resource efficiency of their products more effectively, allowing consumers to make more environmentally friendly purchasing decisions.
9. We will ensure packaging producers pay the full net costs of disposing of their packaging at end of life. At the moment, producers pay only around 10% of the cost of household packaging waste. We will make them responsible for 100% of the net cost incurred in dealing with their packaging once it becomes waste.
10. Where waste cannot be avoided, we will introduce a consistent and simplified approach to recycling across local authorities, making it simpler for everyone to recycle, with a consistent set of materials to be collected from all households and businesses (including food waste), and clearer labelling on packaging so we all know what we can recycle.
11. We will take powers in the Environment Bill to introduce deposit return schemes, and powers to introduce an electronic system of waste tracking to enable better use of waste as a resource and make it easier to identify and stop illegal activity.
12. We want to introduce a DRS from 2023, subject to further consultation and analysis of the costs and benefits.

## **Water**

1. The government's priorities for the water sector, in line with the 25 Year Plan, are clear: they should be securing long-term, resilient water and wastewater services, protecting customers from potentially unaffordable bills and also making sure that we have a cleaner, greener country for the next generation.
2. Through the Environment Bill, we will support regulators in ensuring that customers and the environment are protected. We will legislate to strengthen Ofwat's powers to update water companies' licences, in order to make sure that they can do their job.

## **FURTHER BACKGROUND**

### **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)**

- The government consulted on plans which will see the costs of recycling borne by those that produce packaging waste and place it on the market.
- Currently, packaging producers pay only around 10 per cent of the cost of dealing with packaging waste. By increasing that to cover the full net amount, government will incentivise producers to think carefully

about using less packaging, and to switch to using packaging that is easier to recycle.

- Following the overhaul of the packaging regulations, the government will explore extended producer responsibility schemes for items that can be harder or costly to recycle, as set out in our Resources and Waste Strategy. As well as reviewing existing schemes for cars, electrical goods and batteries, this could include things such as textiles, fishing gear, vehicle tyres, certain materials from construction and demolition, and bulky waste such as mattresses, furniture and carpets.

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## **New outbreaks of Koi herpesvirus (KHV) disease in 2019**

KHV is a serious viral disease of fish, and is notifiable in the United Kingdom. It affects all varieties of common and ornamental carp (*Cyprinus carpio*), and can result in large scale mortalities.

Fish with KHV disease may show the following signs, especially when water temperatures are between 16 to 28 degree centigrade:

- necrotic (white or brown) patches on the gills
- rough patches on the skin and sloughing mucous
- sunken eyes

You must [contact the FHI](#) if you suspect an outbreak of KHV. This includes fish with the above signs, or deaths of carp or carp hybrids.

There is no risk to public health.

### **New outbreaks**

When laboratory testing confirms KHV disease at a site, the FHI place statutory controls to limit the spread of the disease. These controls restrict movement of animals and ensure equipment is disinfected.

Disease controls have been applied at:

### **Finished outbreaks**

Sites with KHV disease must undergo a monitoring programme. The FHI visit these sites to look for evidence of disease and to inspect compliance with the conditions of the statutory controls in place. The controls are removed if the disease doesn't reoccur during this period.

Some sites choose to cull and disinfect their stocks, rather than undergo a monitoring programme.

## Further information

You can:

### Background

Koi herpesvirus (KHV) is a notifiable disease under [The Aquatic Animal Health \(England and Wales\) Regulations 2009](#). KHV outbreaks have been subject to statutory control in Great Britain since 2007. The UK maintains a surveillance programme for this disease.

When the FHI confirm an outbreak, they take steps to control and, wherever possible, remove the disease. This may involve movement controls on susceptible species in the area, enhanced biosecurity, culling of fish, and cleaning and disinfecting of the premises.

Site operators must write to the FHI to get permission to move live fish into, out of, or within the designated area, and to make material changes to the site or site activities. This also applies to fish eggs and gametes.