

[News story: Air Quality Information Bulletin](#)

The following site has exceeded the EU ozone public information threshold of 180 µg/m³:

- Bournemouth: µg/m³ – 16:00 BST

Public Health England advises that some people are more sensitive to ozone than others and may begin to notice an effect on their breathing. People with asthma are not necessarily more sensitive but, if affected, can use their 'reliever' inhaler to alleviate symptoms.

If affected, people are urged to take sensible precautions. In particular, avoiding exercise outdoors in the afternoon can reduce individual exposure to ozone.

If the legal threshold for ozone is again breached, further alerts will be issued on our website.

Forecasts, latest measurements and health advice are available on UK Air and via Defra's freephone helpline (0800 556677). Updates on current and forecast levels of air pollution can also be found on Twitter (@DefraUKAir).

Further information:

- Ground level ozone is not emitted from any man-made sources in any significant quantities. It is formed when sunlight acts on nitrogen dioxide and other atmospheric substances close to the ground. The pollutants that cause ground level ozone come from a range of sources, including petrol and other fuels
- This alert has been triggered by a forecast of a HIGH level of ozone where significant health effects may be noticed by sensitive individuals, and action to avoid or reduce these effects may be needed. The EU Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC) requires member states to provide information to the public when this level is reached
- [Details](#) of the Air Quality Index which classifies pollution as Low, Moderate, High, or Very High and gives health advice
- [Information](#) on the health effects of air pollution from the Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants (COMEAP)

[Speech: Renewing Citizens' Trust in](#)

Government- UK's Transparency Agenda

The UK and Nigeria have a flagship partnership. Just last month, President Buhari joined our Prime Minister and nearly 50 other leaders representing 2.4 billion people for the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting (CHOGM) in London.

The focus of the meeting was to discuss global development challenges and find new ways to work together building a common future based on prosperity, fairness, security and sustainability. It was acknowledged that as globally agreed under Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda, promoting peace, providing access to justice for all, and building effective, accountable, and inclusive national institutions, at all levels, are essential for development to flourish.

Transparency matters for sustainable development. When people can see how their governments spend public funds and what it achieves, and have a say in how their country is run, then trust and confidence can be built in political leadership. With open, accountable and responsive governments, citizens are more likely to pay taxes, vote, and get involved in decision-making. By shining a light on financial flows and decision-making, transparency also reduces opportunities for corruption.

Today I will cover the following themes: – Why the transparency agenda is important; – The British Government's commitment to global transparency; and – UK's partnership with Nigeria on the OGP.

Why is the Transparency Agenda so Important?

Open government is the simple but powerful idea that governments and institutions work better for citizens when they are transparent, engaging and accountable. It is not a set of lofty principles, but the building block for a more democratic, equal, sustainable and prosperous society. These issues are relevant to all societies and always work in progress.

The consequences of an opaque and unaccountable government are clear to see. Secrecy enables corruption, injustice, and negligence to go unchecked. The release of the Panama Papers revealed the scale of global resources hidden in secretive tax havens. Lobbying scandals have revealed how vested interests seek to influence public decision-making.

Citizens today have access to technology and data that would have been unimaginable a decade ago; providing new tools and data sources to monitor what a government promises and delivers. Citizens are expecting and demanding more from their leaders. In Nigeria alone, it has been reported that over 90 million people use the internet.

Through support for Sustainable Development Goal 16, political leaders across the world have committed to building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions. Countries have pledged to leave no-one behind in this pursuit; ensuring that the most vulnerable particularly women, youth, those with

disabilities and elderly are included in the development of open societies.

But there are formidable challenges. In many countries of the world, governments lack the capacity to implement transparency reforms and respond to citizens' demands. Poor public financial management increases the risk of leakage of public funds, meaning that in many places delivery of critical services such as health and education are weak.

This results in a lack of trust from citizens in their governments. People often do not pay taxes because they do not believe the money will be used properly. Instead, services are accessed through bribes, because citizens cannot see any other way to get even basic healthcare or education. People suffer in poverty, and citizens become disengaged. In some contexts this can feed grievances, based on lack of opportunity and marginalisation, which lead to support for violence and extremist groups.

The cycle can be broken. When governments show openness and willingness to listen to citizens' concerns, and when they respond to those concerns, trust grows. Women and men are more likely to engage in political processes. Citizens begin to pay taxes because they see that they are getting something for their money; and with more taxes collected, service delivery improves.

In the long run transparency helps drive growth and development. Evidence shows that more transparent countries have higher foreign direct investment inflows and lower borrowing costs.

Transparency on its own is not enough. To be useful, the evidence provided needs to be meaningful to ordinary people. Too often, data is not presented in an understandable way that enables citizens to find, interpret and use it. The more information is put into the public domain and used in this way, the more accountable and responsive institutions become.

Countries with a strong civil society tend to have less corruption, higher integrity, and more equitable allocation of funds for the public good. Development is most likely to happen when diverse groups of people come together to rally around specific reform issues and make demands on their governments.

This is why the Open Government Partnership platform with partnership at its core is very important. It is not a partnership of governments but, a partnership between governments and civil society, in the interest of citizens.

It is fairly easy to be skeptical about the OGP, to see it as a talking shop and duplicating things that could be happening in other transnational bodies, like the UN. In many cases, it's difficult to see how what is happening equates to a genuine partnership of any kind, but this is an area where the UK has made significant progress and seen its usefulness.

The UK's Global Transparency Agenda

The UK prides itself on being a global leader on transparency and the OGP is

an important part of that agenda.

As a founding member of the OGP, we have strongly championed the OGP as part of our role in driving forward a global movement on transparency, watching it grow from 8 to over 70 countries since 2011. Nigeria is now an important member of this movement.

At the London Anti-Corruption Summit in London on 12 May 2016, where global leaders underlined their shared commitment to tackle corruption, we made strong commitments on increased transparency and availability of government data and stepping up our support to countries like Nigeria on their anti-corruption and transparency efforts.

The UK has kept this promise. Last year, UK launched its first ever Anti-Corruption Strategy that provides an ambitious framework for tackling corruption at home and overseas with a strong focus on transparency. We have established a public database of who actually owns and therefore benefits from companies. And having adopted the open contracting standard, we will help more countries to do the same. We have introduced strong measures to tackle asset recovery and money laundering in the UK with Unexplained Wealth Orders. The UK is working hard at home and overseas to close down the international opportunities that allow unscrupulous individuals to get away with corruption.

All these measures and more are reflected in the UK's third Open Government Partnership National Action Plan that has pledges on: – unprecedented visibility on how government spends money – world-leading commitments to tackle corruption – increased investment in our national information infrastructure, opening up better quality data to strengthen accountability, drive reform and spur innovation

But, the content of the plan is just one part of the story of our OGP National Action Plan. What matters just as much is how it was developed. The commitments reflect many months of close collaboration between government officials and civil society reformers.

How we spend our own aid is important. Both UK taxpayers and the people our aid helps want to know how we are making a difference. 'What are you going to do with my money? How do I know you will spend it well'? Where are the results? I am proud of DFID's leadership on aid transparency, but there is always more to do. We are holding our development partners to high standards and many more organisations are publishing aid data.

It is staggering to think how far we have already come in the UK. Until the late 18th century it was illegal to report on parliamentary proceedings. The lobby correspondents of the day – including a young Samuel Johnson – had to hide in a corner, furtively jotting down notes, then style their accounts as reports from the senate of a fictional country. Speeches were often misremembered, or heavily embellished. If you were too accurate you could go to prison. So the public only had a vague and shadowy sense of what was being said in their name.

Parliament's decision in 1771 to stop prosecuting political publishers was an early exercise in open government. The date is no accident. The big idea of the Enlightenment was that no idea was above scrutiny. In politics and science truth was no longer an appeal to authority, but to evidence. Fast forward to today and we live in a world transformed by science and technology, and most recently by the digital revolution. That revolution is fundamentally changing how power is distributed and the scale and speed of human connection. These changes do not just make it possible to open-up as never before – they demand it.

UK's Partnership with Nigeria on Open Government

We recognise that transparency does not however stop at national borders. A transparency revolution on this scale requires a global effort. The fairness of international systems affects us all.

Nigeria's joining the OGP sends a signal that it sees an inherent value in openness and in civil society and government working together. This is also a strong national and global message on your commitment to tackling corruption.

Nigeria's progress has been commendable. The first OGP Self-Assessment Report indicates that reforms in Nigeria's first National Action Plan are on track. Citizen's engagement in the federal budget process has been strengthened by timely release of budget information and the various consultations with the civil society organisations that were held. A number of states have also commendably signed up to the initiative, deepening sub-national transparency. All this has been done with civil society participation. The UK has been side by side with Nigeria in this process from the beginning. Our Partnership to Engage Reform and Learn (PERL) and Facility for Oil Sector Transparency (FOSTER11) programmes have been supporting Nigeria's effort to open up its institutions and enable those who scrutinise the work of government – legislature, supreme audit institution, civil society, and the media – to hold those in power accountable to citizens. Like in the UK more needs to be done.

Opening up government effectively is a learning process for all sides. As a public servant myself, I have learned that I have to be accountable for how I spend public money. The public has a legitimate right to know what I am doing and how I am doing it. Answering questions on the work of the High Commission in Nigeria can be time-consuming, but it is necessary and important. It builds understanding and trust. We do our work better by involving our stakeholders in civil society and working with them. Sometimes we get criticised – and this can be uncomfortable – but it is useful feedback we can use to ensure we provide a high quality service.

It is important too for civil society to learn how to engage with government. When government is not responsive and not providing a good service, it is important that civil society highlights this. When government is seeking to reform and to open up, civil society should ensure it develops a constructive relationship that supports reform. When government consults and seeks comments from the public, civil society needs to get down working and engaging seriously. That can require new and different skills. I am pleased

that through our PERL and FOSTER programmes we have been able to help civil society in Nigeria develop new skills to support a constructive relationship with government. When citizen groups build a positive relationship with INEC that opens up the process for all to see, voters are more likely to have confidence in the process and the outcomes. We are pleased to have been facilitating some of that conversation and awareness through our continued support for credible elections in 2019. While I am on the topic of elections, let me be clear that while INEC has a job to do, and citizens also have a part to play, it will take responsible leadership and behaviour by all involved to ensure that the transparency around the process is matched by peaceful polls. But I digress...

I am very happy to announce that our Ministers have just approved £12m new funding for priority countries like Nigeria to deepen and implement open government reform commitments.

Taking Transparency Agenda to the next level – Looking Forward

The UK will continue to lead by example on this agenda. We will continue to improve the quality and value of our own evidence and data, increasing transparency of our delivery chain, and demonstrating the value of aid data as we use it ourselves. We will continue to demand high standards and encourage similar leadership from our partners. As we move towards to the 2019 elections, we want to encourage transparency around the process, so Nigerians will be confident that the results are credible and that they reflect the will of citizens. We will continue to offer assistance and support, but Nigeria has to lead the way.

We will continue to support existing global transparency initiatives to deliver value, increasing the use of the data and evidence made available. We want to see more implementation of standards like the Extractive Industries and Construction Sector Transparency Initiatives.

All this would be in partnership with countries like Nigeria.

Let me round up with the popular saying that “sunshine is the best disinfectant.” An open government is a better government.

Governments in the UK and in Nigeria are not exempt from this, and we must ensure that openness and accountability are embedded across institutions. Civil society must seize the opportunity and hold government to account for its progress. OGP is a shared process where leadership has to come from both sides.

The UK remains committed to leading the global transparency agenda. We recognise that we cannot do it alone. We will continue to support Nigeria in its efforts for an open government. It may take some time to reach the destination desired, but the journey has begun.

Speech: The Ambassador's speech at the 2018 Queen's Birthday Party in Argentina

Good evening, everyone. It is a pleasure to welcome you at our Residence. The presence of so many leading figures from Argentina's political, economic, social and cultural life reflects the enormous progress achieved in bilateral relations lately.

We would like to give special thanks to all the companies who are with us tonight as sponsors, making this celebration possible. This is a very important day for us. It is the day when we celebrate Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth's birthday. And it is the equivalent of our National Day.

By the way, in just over three weeks the Royal family will celebrate the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle. So those of you who are interested may go to into one of the rooms where you can have your photo taken with Windsor Castle in the background, to feel like you are part of the Royal Wedding in some way.

This past year has been very busy for us. In some of the screens at the Residence, you will be able to see the wide variety of projects, activities and visits that have kept us busy over these past few months.

But rather than go over the figures in our relationship, the events, the agreements we have signed, I would like to focus on three stories. Three stories that bring us together. Three success stories. Three stories with individual names and human faces, because this is what, ultimately, relations between countries are all about.

And if we talk about the things that Argentine and British people have in common, the first thing that comes to mind is our love for football. In only two months, the Argentine and English will take part in the World Cup, together with other 30 nations.

Driven by the football fever that is already gripping us all, we have included in this celebration two of best players in the Premier League – Argentina's Kun Agüero and England's Harry Kane. You will have the opportunity to have your photo taken next to them as if you were wearing the shirt of two World Cup winning squads: England 66 and Argentina 86.

But, as I was saying, the important thing is to give these stories a human face, and that is why we are lucky to have Jorge Burruchaga with us tonight, a World Cup winner in 1986. As you know, he was not only a part of the winning team in Mexico, but also the man who scored the last goal in the World Cup, as we can see in the video.

That was pretty good, Jorge, pretty good. The best thing is that, as we can clearly see, you played the ball with your foot, with no help from the hand

of God...

As well as our love for football, Jorge and I have other things in common. He has a daughter living in London, so he has a particular interest in visiting my country. And he started his career as a footballer in Arsenal, a team that shares the name with "my" Arsenal, the Holloway club.

Today Jorge is the manager of the Argentine football squad, and that is why we would like him to have the England shirt as a gift from the British Embassy.

Of course, during this World Cup I am going to be cheering for my team, hoping that they perform as well as in 1966. However, if they don't, you will see me rooting for Messi and Argentina. But please don't ask me to chant "el que no salta es un inglés" (he who doesn't jump is an Englishman), because I won't. So we wish Jorge and his team the best of luck. Let us give them a big round of applause.

The second story I wanted to tell you has to do with the world of business, technology, innovation and particularly, with the fascinating world of entrepreneurs.

This is the story of a group of Argentine friends who started researching on artificial intelligence at university, designed a project, which in the beginning was merely an academic project, and soon realised that it contained the seed of something bigger.

Tonight Nicolás, Adrián, Juan Pablo, Alexis, Alejandra and Federico are here with us. They are the founders of Eye Capital, the company that created an innovative technology, a sort of robot who makes automated decisions to operate in stock markets around the world. All six of them formed a multi-disciplinary team that managed to combine research, academia, technology and business acumen.

Only six years after taking that first step at university, combining coffee with experimental algorithms, they set up a company with an international expansion plan, which was legally incorporated in the UK a month ago. They decided to take the leap because they know that London is the Fintech capital of the world and that they will be able to find partners, customers, investors and resources to provide a global platform to this idea that came up as part of an academic project at an Argentine university.

This may be one of the most notable stories, but it is certainly not the only one. More and more companies, yes, Argentine companies, both large and small, are seeing the benefits of investing in the UK. After gathering information, they realise that it is much easier and accessible than they thought. We look forward to seeing many more projects like Eye Capital in the future.

The third story is the most profound and moving one, the one that gave rise to the touching images we saw exactly a month ago. Ninety families were finally able to see the place where their loved ones lie at Darwin's Argentine Cemetery.

A historic agreement signed towards the end of 2016 between the governments of Argentina and the UK and the Red Cross enabled the process of identification through DNA. The Red Cross put together a very professional team that included the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team and other organisations and, with the support of the Human Rights Department headed by Claudio Avruj, they worked for several months last year to achieve the results that the families had long been waiting for. Finally, in March this year, we were able to carry out the visit the families had dreamed about for so long.

It was a very moving visit, which required six weeks of intensive planning. I would like to highlight in particular the role played by two people who, through a very thorough logistic job, made sure that the families were taken to the Cemetery with the respect and care they deserved.

They were our Defence Attaché, Group Captain Robin Smith, and Roberto Curilovic, who works for Corporación América, the business group that, thanks to Mr Eurnekian's generosity, made the families' trip possible. It was highly motivating to see a Royal Air Force officer like Robin and a former Argentine Air Force pilot and veteran of the 1982 conflict like Roberto working shoulder to shoulder.

All of this shows that when goodwill exists, when we put humanitarian values ahead of individual interests, great things are achieved.

To conclude, I would like to show you a photo that summarises this spirit, the idea of giving priority to our sense of humanity, which is in the nature of Argentines and Britons alike.

The photo was taken in March during a ceremony held at the Argentine Embassy in London to present the Two Roses for Peace, an excellent initiative by Juan Carlos Pallarols. The two people embracing each other are María Fernanda Araujo, Head of the Families Commission, and Geoffrey Cardozo, the British Army Colonel whose mission it was to bury the Argentine soldiers.

The image cannot lie. María Fernanda is embracing the man who gave her brother a decent burial. Gratitude, compassion, genuine empathy between two human beings.

I propose that when we raise our glasses in a few minutes, we toast these sentiments too.

We are now going to listen to the national anthems of Argentina and the UK, played by the Argentine Air Force Band whom we thank for being here tonight. After the anthems, we will offer a toast to the Heads of State and the people of our two countries. On this occasion, I have chosen to toast the Argentine President and people with a glass of Malbec and the Queen with a genuine single malt scotch.

ARGENTINE NATIONAL ANTHEM

Toast to the President and the people of Argentina

Toast to Her Majesty the Queen

Thank you very much. Enjoy the party!

HMA Mark Kent during his speech at the Queen's Birthday party.

[News story: Minister for Asia Mark Field visits India](#)

UK Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific, the Rt Hon Mark Field MP, will arrive in India today (7 May) for two days of high-level talks on technology, cyber security, energy and girls' education.

Speaking ahead of his visit to India, UK Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific, the Rt Hon Mark Field MP said:

I am looking forward to visiting India once more to discuss a range of bilateral issues and build on the tremendous success of the recent visit to the UK by Prime Minister Modi.

I shall be meeting Minister MJ Akbar and Mr Amitabh Kant, CEO of Niti Aayog to follow up on the ambitious set of deliverables that were agreed last month during Prime Minister Modi's visit and specifically on the India-UK Tech Partnership.

As two countries with a global outlook, the UK is committed to working with India to unlock the full potential of our trade and investment relationship.

While in New Delhi on 7 May, Minister Field will meet Minister of State for External Affairs MJ Akbar and CEO of NITI Aayog Amitabh Kant and visit ASHA, a civil society organisation working for women's empowerment and the environment.

On Tuesday 8 May, the Minister will travel to Hyderabad to attend a roundtable on 'Corporate Green Leadership' and also visit T-Hub, India's largest incubator housing more than 200 start-ups, before interacting with rural female students at Voice Camp, an event organised by civil society organisation Voice4Girls in collaboration with BDHC Hyderabad.

Further information

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[News story: Foreign Office Minister completes successful visit to Nepal](#)

The Rt Hon Mark Field MP, Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, arrived in Nepal on Sunday 6 May for a two day visit. This was Mr Field's first visit to Nepal.

Mr Field visited Nepal to further strengthen the more than 200-year long bilateral relationship.

While in Nepal he met senior leaders from government, including Prime Minister KP Oli and Foreign Minister Gyawali, and business as well as those working to improve the lives of the most vulnerable. He discussed what more can be done to grow bilateral trade and boost inward investment, and how the UK can help support Nepal's transition to federalism.

Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific Mark Field said:

I am delighted to be the first British Minister to visit Nepal since the formation of Nepal's current government. The UK is Nepal's oldest diplomatic partner and I look forward to my meetings with Prime Minister Oli and Foreign Minister Gyawali to strengthen our relationship even further.

I will also be visiting the Red Cross Emergency Prepositioning Site in Bhaktapur to see first-hand how UK assistance is making a real difference to the lives of the people of Nepal in their post-earthquake reconstruction effort.

The UK is committed to supporting prosperity and stability in Nepal and my visit will also be an opportunity to discuss how our countries can work together on our shared priorities.

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