

## **Press release: Appointment of a new Lord-Lieutenant for Rutland**

Sarah Furness (61) is a philosopher and ethicist who recently served the County as High Sheriff. She has worked for many years in the voluntary sector, including for Macmillan Cancer Support for Rutland (supporting those with life-limiting illnesses) and Warning Zone (introducing children to the dangers of modern life). She is a member of the steering committee for Women in Philanthropy, which supports charities across Rutland and Leicestershire; a trustee for the Sustainable Land Trust, supporting those at risk of being expelled from school; and a trustee for Rutland Grants, helping local people in need. She is a member of the Court of Leicester University.

Dr Furness lives in Whissendine with her husband, Peter, a former President of the Royal College of Pathologists. They have an adult daughter.

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## **News story: Minister launches Online CSE threat assessment**

A Global Threat Assessment, commissioned by the WePROTECT Global Alliance against child sexual exploitation, has highlighted the growing dangers posed to children by the growth of smart phone technology and an expanding online community of tech offenders.

It found that technology is allowing offender communities to organise at an unprecedented scale using the dark net and anonymous communication software.

The Threat Assessment will be presented by Minister for Crime, Safeguarding and Vulnerability, Victoria Atkins on Wednesday afternoon at the Agenda 2030 for Children: End Violence Solutions Summit ('the Solutions Summit') in Stockholm, which is co-hosted by the WePROTECT Global Alliance, the Partnership to End Violence Against Children' and the Swedish Government.

The Minister said:

Online child sexual exploitation is heinous crime which has a truly devastating impact on its victims. We cannot allow any corner of the internet to be looked upon as a safe space for these despicable predators to gather, share indecent images or prey on our children.

The NCA continues to lead operations against dark net criminals, including joint operations with international law enforcement and

industry. We have committed £20 million over the spending review period to the NCA, plus additional funding of £10 million for specialist teams. This has led to near doubling of their investigative capability which will lead to more children being protected and more offenders brought out of the shadows and to justice.

The UK continues to lead international action on online child sexual exploitation through the WePROTECT Global Alliance, in addition to committing £40million over four years to the End Violence Against Children Fund, as well as investing in new technology to find and remove more illegal imagery of children than ever before.

The report also found that the growing ownership of mobile devices, expansion of high speed internet and ubiquity of encrypted communications technology is allowing offenders from anywhere in the world to target children.

The Threat Assessment, which brought together existing research as well as data from such sources as the US Department of Justice and INTERPOL, also found that:

- Individual dark net sites are hosting up to 1million paedophiles, who regularly meet to plan and encourage online abuse and share up to 1.6m files.
- Increasingly offending is now committed entirely online, with offenders coercing and extorting children into producing indecent images of themselves via webcams.
- As our children get older, their access and competence in the use of technology increases – as do the range of threats they face.
- The presence of a video camera on every device and computer has seen peer to peer image sharing make way for the increasing threat of live streaming.

Launched by the UK Government in 2014, the WePROTECT Global Alliance is a global movement that brings together the influence, expertise and resources required to transform how online child sexual exploitation is dealt with worldwide.

[Read the report](#)

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# **Press release: First Universal Credit payment paid quicker**

Everyone is now entitled to Universal Credit from the first day they claim, removing 7 days some had to wait.

This change was announced as part of a wider £1.5 billion package of improvements to Universal Credit in the [Autumn Budget 2017](#).

Work and Pensions Secretary of State Esther McVey said:

It can be a worrying time looking for work and our priorities are to help people find employment quickly and to improve lives. Our package of support affords better help for people as soon as they make a claim to Universal Credit.

We will be removing the 7 waiting days, which means no one has to wait 6 weeks for their first Universal Credit payment and this will benefit the average household by around £160.

## **Advance payments**

The comprehensive package also includes an increase in advance payments to 100% of the expected Universal Credit payment. This means anyone who needs help before their first Universal Credit payment can receive up to their full expected Universal Credit within 5 days, or on the same day if in urgent need. The repayment period has also been extended to a year

## **Housing Benefit**

From April 2018, anyone in receipt of Housing Benefit who moves onto Universal Credit will continue to have their rent paid for 2 weeks during the wait for their first payment, and that payment is non recoverable.

## **Personalised support**

Under [Universal Credit](#), people get more personalised support that meets their individual needs and we are seeing jobseekers moving into work faster and staying in work longer than compared to the old system.

Follow DWP on:

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## News story: Penny Mordaunt calls for action on sexual abuse within aid sector

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt has called upon the international community to step up alongside the UK to drive up safeguarding standards so that we can stamp out “horrific” sexual abuse and exploitation from the aid sector.

Speaking at the first ever End Violence Solutions Summit in Stockholm, alongside Sweden’s Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and Queen Silvia of Sweden, Penny Mordaunt issued a call to action to the whole international development community to bring about an urgent culture change and exhibit the moral leadership and transparency required to protect the most vulnerable – or face losing the UK’s partnership and support.

This follows Ms Mordaunt’s announcement earlier this week that the UK is taking urgent action to review safeguarding across all of its work and with all its partners. This includes introducing tough sanctions so that she can have absolute assurance that all partners are maintaining the high standards on safeguarding and protection that the UK requires.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said:

The sexual exploitation of vulnerable people, vulnerable children, is never acceptable. But when it is perpetrated by people in positions of power, people we entrust to help and protect, it rightly sickens and disgusts. And it should compel us to take action. [...] This past week has to be a wake up call. If we don’t want the actions of a minority of individuals to tarnish and endanger all the good work that we do, then we must all respond quickly and appropriately.

We must regain the trust of the public. We must make staff aware of their moral responsibilities as well as their legal duties.

But above all else, we must strive to ensure that no child, no one, is harmed by the people who are supposed to be there to help.

At the summit, Ms Mordaunt also announced her support (£5 million) to the End Violence Against Children partnership, which will see the UK teaming up with the biggest group of stakeholders in the world to investigate and implement solutions that work to keep children safe. Over a million children across the

world face some form of violence in their everyday lives – including modern slavery, child marriage, child labour and violence in schools.

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## Speech: Penny Mordaunt speech at the End Violence Solutions Summit

I'd like to say thank you to End Violence, the Swedish government and WePROTECT Global Alliance for hosting today's important event.

One of the objectives of this summit is that we all leave today believing that we can end violence against children – and I believe we can.

And to help that I was going to talk about what DFID had done, what works, our future plans and to talk about the announcement we're making today of new funding to protect children from physical and sexual abuse.

But with apologies for my hardworking team and to you, because I know I'm preaching to the choir, I think my time here is better spent delivering another message.

The sexual exploitation of vulnerable people, vulnerable children, is never acceptable. But when it is perpetrated by people in positions of power, people we entrust to help and protect, it rightly sickens and disgusts. And it should compel us to take action.

The recent revelations about Oxfam, not solely the actions perpetrated by a number of those staff but the way the organisation responded to those events – should be a wake up call to the sector. They let perpetrators go, they did not inform donors, their regulator or prosecuting authorities. It was not just the processes and procedures of that organisation that were lacking but moral leadership.

We cannot end violence against children unless zero tolerance means something.

I will be guided in my decisions about Oxfam depending on the charity's response to requirement and questions I have raised with them, and by the Charity Commission's investigation.

But no organisation is too big or our work with them too complex for me to hesitate to remove funding from them if we cannot trust them to put the beneficiaries of aid first.

I've held meetings with charity bosses, regulators and experts over the last few days and tomorrow I will be meeting with the National Crime Agency. While investigations have to be completed and any potential criminals prosecuted

accordingly, what is clear is that the culture that allowed this to happen needs to change, and it needs to change now.

I am writing to every single charity which receives UK aid, demanding full transparency and set out assurances about their safeguarding procedures. If our standards are not met, then the British taxpayer will not continue to fund them.

Unless you safeguard everyone in your organisation that comes into contact with you, including beneficiaries, staff and volunteers – we will not fund you.

Unless you create a culture that prioritises the safety of vulnerable people and ensures victims and whistleblowers can come forward without fear – we will not work with you.

And unless you report every serious incident or allegation, no matter how damaging to your reputation – we cannot be your partners.

The same message goes out to any organisation or partner – whether they are in the public, private or third sector which receives UK aid – and this includes the component parts of the UN.

We want procedures to change. We want leaders to lead with moral authority. We want staff to be held accountable for their actions, no matter where they are.

Sexual abuse and exploitation is an issue the entire development sector needs to confront.

The UN reported that there were 300 incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse, including child rape, carried out by UN peacekeepers and civilian staff in 2016. That figure is as morally repugnant and it is unacceptable.

We will not wait for the UN and other organisations to step up. The British government will take action now.

My department has created a new unit to review safeguarding across all parts of the aid sector, both in the UK and internationally. Among other things, we will urgently look into how we can stop sexual abusers and predators from being re-employed by charities, including the possibility of setting up of a global register of development workers.

Secondly, we will step up our existing work with UN Secretary-General to stop abuses under the UN flag. There will be no immunity for rape and sexual abuse and I welcome the recent statement from the UN to that effect and note the recent work that Unicef has done. We cannot let the UN flag provide cover for despicable acts.

Thirdly, my department and the UK Charity Commission will hold within a month a safeguarding summit, where we will meet with representatives across the aid sector, and discuss new ways of vetting and recruiting staff, to ensure protecting vulnerable people is at the forefront of our minds.

We are all taking necessary actions to ensure criminals are brought to justice, organisations are held to account, and procedures to change and stop sexual exploitation, abuse and rape.

And today, I'm calling on all of us to work together to do this. It is only through working together that we can achieve our shared goal of ending violence against children. And everyone in this room has a duty to ensure change within their own organisations. We must ensure we all have the highest safeguarding standards.

This past week has to be a wake up call. If we don't want the actions of a minority of individuals to tarnish and endanger all the good work that we do, then we must all respond quickly and appropriately.

We must regain the trust of the public.

We must make staff aware of their moral responsibilities as well as their legal duties.

But above all else, we must strive to ensure that no child, no one is harmed by the people who are supposed to be there to help.

1. The speech was made at the Agenda 2030 for Children: [End Violence Solutions Summit](#)
2. The End Violence summit is the first of its kind, and will see senior representatives from the international aid community coming together to commit to tackling violence against children in all forms – including child marriage, violence in schools and modern slavery.
3. The UN reported there were more than 300 incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse, including child rape, carried out by UN peacekeepers and civilian staff in 2016.
4. Penny Mordaunt's statement following her meetings with Oxfam and the Charity Commission on Monday 12 February can be found [here](#)
5. At the summit, Ms Mordaunt also announced her support (£5 million) to the End Violence Against Children partnership, which will see the UK teaming up with the biggest group of stakeholders in the world to investigate and implement solutions which really work to keep children safe. Over a million children across the world face some form of violence in their everyday lives – including modern slavery, child marriage, child labour and violence in schools.