

[News story: The AAIB is sending a team to Turks and Caicos](#)

[unable to retrieve full-text content]The AAIB is sending a team to Turks and Caicos to investigate a light aircraft accident.

[Press release: New guidance on the use of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014](#)

New guidance on the use of anti-social behaviour powers will help police and councils continue to take appropriate action against nuisance behaviours while ensuring the most vulnerable, including the homeless, are not disproportionately targeted.

The guidance will:

- make sure powers are used as intended – to tackle behaviour which is genuinely anti-social
- help to prevent instances of rough sleepers, buskers or small groups gathering to chat in town centres – without causing a nuisance – being unfairly targeted

Published today (Sunday 24 December), the [revised statutory guidance](#) on the use of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 will give police, local authorities and other front-line workers greater clarity on how best to use powers such as Public Spaces Protection Orders.

It follows feedback from charities and other groups who raised concerns that the orders were being used to disproportionately target certain groups in some areas rather than focusing on behaviour that is genuinely anti-social and causing others distress or alarm.

Particular concerns were raised around the use of the orders against the homeless, buskers, dog walkers and, in some cases, people simply gathering together in small groups in town centres who were not engaged in anti-social behaviour.

Minister for Crime, Safeguarding and Vulnerability Victoria Atkins said:

Anti-social behaviour harms communities and can severely impact

people's way of life, which is why this government introduced powers to make it quicker and easier to take action against the perpetrators of anti-social behaviour.

We know that these powers are being used to very good effect by the police and local councils across England and Wales, and we are very keen to encourage their continued use. But we are also clear that the powers should be used proportionately to tackle anti-social behaviour, and not to target specific groups or the most vulnerable in our communities.

The revised guidance published today will empower local agencies by providing even greater clarity on where and when these powers should be applied, helping them to keep our public spaces, communities and families safe.

The guidance puts greater emphasis on the need to ensure the powers are used to target specific nuisance behaviours and are not applied in a blanket way against specific groups or behaviour that is not in itself anti-social. It reminds councils that powers should not, for example, target normal everyday behaviour that is not having a detrimental effect on the community's quality of life, such as standing in groups in a town centre.

The government wants to ensure that there is transparency and accountability in the use of the powers and has actively worked with a number of organisations including charities working to help the homeless in developing the refreshed guidance.

Elements of the guidance include:

- focusing on specific and actual problems rather than blanket bans of behaviour that are not in themselves anti-social – such as rough sleeping
- reiterating that before making a Public Spaces Protection Order councils must consult the police and community representatives to ensure specific groups have the opportunity to comment, including:
 - the local residents association
 - regular park users
 - those involved in activities such as busking
- highlighting how the Civil Injunction and the Criminal Behaviour Order can be used to tackle gang activity
- underlining the importance of local consultation, accountability and transparency in decision making

This latest action builds on the work government is already doing to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping including:

- spending over £1 billion until 2020 to address the issue
- implementing the Homelessness Reduction Act which will make sure more people get the help they need to prevent them from becoming homeless in the first place

- £28 million of funding to pilot the Housing First approach for entrenched rough sleepers in the West Midlands Combined Authority, Greater Manchester, and the Liverpool City Region
- investing £9 billion by March 2021 to build new affordable homes
- a £20 million scheme to support homeless people and those at risk of homelessness to secure homes in the private rented sector

The government has also confirmed today the membership of the Rough Sleeping and Homelessness Reduction Taskforce lead by Communities Secretary Sajid Javid, which brings together ministers from key departments to provide a cross-government approach to preventing rough sleeping and homelessness.

[News story: Prime Minister Theresa May's Christmas message 2017](#)

As we gather with our friends and family, I want to say thank you to all those whose service to others means they will be spending time away from their loved ones this Christmas.

Men and women in our armed forces whose humbling bravery and daily sacrifices help to ensure the security of our nation and our allies around the world.

The heroes in our emergency services whose courage and dedication so inspired the nation in response to tragedy at Grenfell Tower and the abhorrent terrorist attacks in Manchester and London. But whose service saves lives in our communities every day, including Christmas Day.

And the thousands of volunteers in our country who will give up their time to make someone else's Christmas that little bit better: from faith inspired projects like the Churches Together initiative in my own constituency – to aid workers helping those in war-torn parts of the world.

As we celebrate the birth of Christ, let us celebrate all those selfless acts – and countless others – that epitomise the values we share: Christian values of love, service and compassion that are lived out every day in our country by people all faiths and none.

Let us take pride in our Christian heritage and the confidence it gives us to ensure that in Britain you can practice your faith free from question or fear.

Let us remember those around the world today who have been denied those freedoms – from Christians in some parts of the Middle East to the sickening persecution of the Rohingya Muslims.

And let us reaffirm our determination to stand up for the freedom of people

of all religions to speak about and practice their beliefs in peace and safety.

So this Christmas, whatever our faith, let us come together confident and united in the values we share. And wherever you are at this special time of year, let me wish you all a very Happy Christmas.

[Press release: How thousands of people spend Christmas Day](#)

Figures from popular public information site GOV.UK give an insight into what people were thinking about on Christmas Day last year, from taxing their cars to searching for a new job.

Top 10 pages viewed on Christmas Day 2016 were:

1. [Bank Holidays](#) – 41k pageviews
2. [Check UK visa](#) – 34k pageviews
3. [Dartford Crossing charge](#) – 28k pageviews
4. [Vehicle tax \(taxing your vehicle\)](#) – 22k pageviews
5. [Check vehicle tax \(checking if a vehicle has tax\)](#) – 22k pageviews
6. [Check state pension age](#) – 18k pageviews
7. [Job search](#) – 15k pageviews
8. [Check MOT history](#) – 14k pageviews
9. [Check child maintenance](#) – 13k pageviews
10. [Get vehicle information from DVLA](#) – 13k pageviews

Bin collection – Other popular information over the festive period included details on bin collection day, which hit a peak of over 20,000 visits on 27th December 2016 (compared to only an average of 3,000 visits per day during the rest of the year). For this sought after information, visit <https://www.gov.uk/rubbish-collection-day>.

Caroline Nokes – Minister for Government Resilience and Efficiency said:

“People turn to GOV.UK to check information at the click of a button. From taxing your vehicle, to checking local bin collections and renewing your passport – there are many services now available online, replacing laborious paperwork.

“And we intend to continue adding to the services available, and improving how we set them out clearly and simply – making it even easier for people to access what they need.”

[News story: More help for vulnerable children to attend top boarding schools](#)

The Department for Education is launching a new service designed to give more vulnerable children the chance to attend some of the country's highest quality independent and state boarding schools.

The Boarding School Partnerships Information Service – which is being launched in collaboration with the Boarding Schools' Association – will link local authorities up with a host of children's charities and boarding schools so they can work together to identify more young people on the edge of care who can be put forward for bursaries and scholarships, helping them attend some of the country's best schools.

The government is committed to enabling all children – regardless of their background – to reach their full potential, and this announcement builds on wider programmes to support vulnerable children in all schools. This includes named headteachers who are responsible for supporting their education and almost £2.5 billion funding this year for state schools to support them through the Pupil Premium.

It follows the recent launch of the [Unlocking Talent, Fulfilling Potential](#) plan by the Education Secretary, designed to create opportunities on every young person's doorstep and boost social mobility.

Launching the new partnership, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the School System Lord Agnew said:

Children who have previously been in care or are at risk of care have often gone through difficult, challenging experiences that can have a lasting impact throughout their lives. These placements won't be right for every child, but the pastoral care and educational support provided by our top boarding schools can have profound benefits for some young people.

I'm delighted that so many organisations are working with us to help create more of these opportunities for these children, helping them to get the best start in life and to go on to reach their full potential, no matter what their background.

Latest figures show the attainment gap between disadvantaged children and their more affluent peers is narrowing – by more than 10% at Key Stage 2 and 7% at GCSE since 2011. However, vulnerable children – including who have

previously been in care, have left the care system or are at risk of care – still often have poorer educational outcomes. Research shows a correlation between the boarding environment and improved educational outcomes for vulnerable children.

A boarding school placement can offer these children the possibility of term-time respite that also helps them to develop relationships with the adults working at those schools, alongside a home environment they can return to during the weekends or holidays. These types of arrangements can be particularly beneficial where children are living with parents experiencing mental health difficulties, or with extended families who are unable to cope full-time with a child.

The partnership will aim to create more opportunities for children on the edge of care in addition to the 1,000 young people who are already supported by charities and boarding schools. The service is in collaboration with the Boarding Schools' Association, Buttle UK, Reedham Children's Trust, Royal National Children's Springboard Foundation and King Edward's School in Witley.

King Edward's School is one school already involved in the partnership. It already provides boarding places to several pupils in, or on the edge of, care.

John Attwater, King Edward's Witley Headmaster said:

We know from long experience that boarding can provide a life-transforming opportunity for vulnerable children and their families, and it is core to our founding mission as a school. I am delighted that this service will give local authorities and others the information they need to consider boarding as an option for children who need it, and put them in touch with schools such as King Edward's and charities that can make it happen.

Robin Fletcher, Chief Executive of the Boarding Schools' Association said:

Britain's boarding schools provide an unrivalled education and the kind of individual attention, security and structure that can especially help young people who have had a difficult start to their lives. The involvement of charities and local authorities in boarding school placements shows just what can be achieved and we look forward to doing even more.

Chief Executive of Reedham Children's Trust, Sarah Smart said:

Reedham Children's Trust seeks to help disadvantaged and vulnerable children living in desperately difficult circumstances, whose families are struggling to care for them. Very special care is

taken to find the right boarding school to meet the needs of the individual child. In such cases, boarding school is a second home for the child or young person, providing a nurturing, supportive and stimulating environment.

The service is being overseen by an expert voluntary board, comprising of children's services professionals, head teachers, charity executives and government officials. Together they will support local authorities, charities and schools to create these opportunities for young people.