

## [Press release: Real progress on Brexit talks says First Secretary](#)

First Secretary of State Damian Green MP said today that real progress is now being made in the Brexit talks between the UK and Scottish governments.

He was speaking after the latest bilateral talks in Edinburgh with the Scottish Secretary David Mundell MP and Scottish Government Ministers John Swinney MSP and Michael Russell MSP. The discussions are to ensure that the necessary arrangements are in place under the EU (Withdrawal) Bill for distributing powers returned from the European Union and identifying where common frameworks will be required.

Damian Green said:

We have come a long way in a few months. The two governments are now making real progress in ensuring that all parts of the UK are ready for the extra powers that are coming back from the EU to the UK.

We all accept that UK frameworks will be required in certain areas to protect the vital advantages of the UK domestic market. Ministers and civil servants on both sides are now getting into the deep detail of how we put in place the best arrangements for the day we leave the EU. I am confident we can keep up this momentum and have a successful Joint Ministerial Committee (JMC) with all the devolved administrations in London next month.

The UK and Scottish Government ministers met in Edinburgh in August, then again in London on 25 September, where they discussed a set of principles to guide the discussions. These principles were agreed at a meeting of JMC (EN) on 16 October, and the Prime Minister and First Minister held a constructive meeting on 14 November.

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## [Press release: Minister Steve Baker continues regional engagement on EU exit](#)

The Minister began with a tour of Pasta Foods Ltd – a successful dried pasta

and healthy snack manufacturer in Norfolk – where he was pleased to hear the company’s optimism for the opportunities created by our exit from the EU.

He later co-hosted an EU-exit roundtable in Great Yarmouth alongside the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Sajid Javid, attended by stakeholders and prominent businesses including Norfolk County Council, Peel Ports, Proserv, and Bernard Matthews.

The Minister heard about the opportunities and challenges that the UK’s exit from the EU could pose to the region and how stakeholders and businesses are preparing.

**Minister for Exiting the EU, Steve Baker said:**

We remain absolutely committed to achieving an ambitious Brexit deal that works, not only for Norfolk, and the East of England, but for every region in the UK.

Hearing from businesses and stakeholders across a region that voted decisively to leave the EU, was not only informative but also hugely valuable, and I was struck by their optimism for the future.

As we proceed through the negotiations we will go on hearing from stakeholders, to ensure that our discussions are informed by the views of every region of the UK, and each sector of our economy.

**Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Sajid Javid said:**

Today’s visit is an important part of my ongoing discussions with local authorities and their partners as the UK prepares to leave the EU.

I was delighted to see first-hand the excellent work local authorities, LEAs and businesses are doing to promote growth and skills in Great Yarmouth and the East of England.

It was great to see the enthusiasm from local leaders who want to make our exit from the EU a success for the communities they serve.

I want to understand the challenges and opportunities they may face in the coming months and years and I am committed to doing everything possible to support them.

In recent months the Government has stepped up its engagement with businesses across the UK to ensure the voices of British businesses are heard and reflected throughout the exit process.

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## [News story: Home Office announces extension to deadline for Grenfell Tower survivors to access leave to remain](#)

Foreign nationals affected by the Grenfell Tower tragedy have been given an extra two months to come forward to access leave to remain in the UK, the Home Office announced today.

A policy on leave to remain outside the Immigration Rules for eligible residents of Grenfell Tower and Grenfell Walk was introduced in July to ensure victims of the tragedy get the access they need to vital services, irrespective of immigration status.

In October, it was announced that those who qualify under this policy and are granted an initial 12 months' leave outside the rules will be eligible to have their leave extended and qualify for permanent residence after five years' leave under the policy subject to meeting security, criminality and fraud checks.

### **Extension**

The time period for people to come forward had been due to expire today (30 November) but the Home Office confirmed it will be extended until 31 January 2018.

Immigration Minister Brandon Lewis said:

The welfare of survivors of the Grenfell Tower fire is a top priority for this government. The policy we have introduced will enable those who are eligible to regularise their stay in the UK, ensure there is a firm legal basis for providing support, and enable these victims to assist with the Inquiry in the knowledge that their immigration status is secure.

Pushing back the deadline will give survivors an additional opportunity to come forward if they have not done so already.

In addition, the Immigration Minister has also announced today a widening of the switching policy so that any survivor of the Grenfell Tower fire with leave to remain in the UK through a different immigration route can come forward if they wish to switch into the dedicated Grenfell Tower immigration route before 31 January 2018.

They will no longer be required to demonstrate that their leave is due to expire in the next 12 months or that they can not qualify under another immigration route in order to be eligible.

## **Independent advice**

Anyone considering taking this course of action is advised to seek independent legal advice as to whether switching or remaining in their existing immigration route is the best option for them.

Finally, it has been confirmed that anyone who has leave to remain in the UK through another category, such as family or work, who comes forward by 31 January 2018 and qualifies under the Grenfell immigration policy to access public funds and permission to work will continue to have recourse to these in any further periods of leave granted under the Immigration Rules.

Anyone who has not yet come forward can find out how to do so by calling the Home Office Grenfell Team on 0208 196 4531 (open 24 hours a day).

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## **[News story: Showcasing the successes and achievements of government scientists and engineers](#)**

The Government Science and Engineering (GSE) has released 'The GSE Strategy: one year on' report.

The report reflects on the successes and achievements of the profession over the last 12 months. It also highlights areas where more work is needed and where the GSE profession will be focusing its efforts in the upcoming year. This includes a continued drive to improve diversity across GSE, and meet its commitment to be a diverse and inclusive profession.

The report brings together case studies from departments and demonstrates how the [GSE Profession Board](#) has taken ownership of the strategy to ensure it is being embedded and implemented in departments.

Professor Chris Whitty, Interim Government Chief Scientific Adviser (GCSA) and Head of GSE Profession, said:

I congratulate the profession on its impressive achievements over the past year. I am confident that we are on an upwards trajectory, and certain that if we continue to work together, we will achieve our shared vision for a 'high profile, proud and effective GSE

profession.'

To find out more about the report, read [Chris Whitty's introductory blog post](#).

To register to become a member of the GSE profession, please [fill out this short survey](#).

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## [News story: £45m boost for young people with SEND](#)

The Government today announced a package of support worth nearly £45 million to provide additional help for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Minister for Children and Families Robert Goodwill confirmed the additional funding for councils and organisations to continue transforming SEN provision and put families at the heart of the system.

The reforms which began in 2014 introduced Education, Health and Care plans which are tailored to the individual needs of the child or young person.

In addition to the funding to bolster the roll out of these reforms, a new £9.7million fund has been set up to create new supported internships, helping to bridge the gap for some of the most vulnerable young people between education and employment. The announcement has been welcomed by the National Children's Bureau

Minister for Children and Families Robert Goodwill said:

We have taken action to fundamentally reform support for children with special educational needs, making sure that families are at the heart of the process and care plans are tailored to individuals – and our survey of parents tells us that this has made a difference to so many of these families.

Councils are making encouraging progress, but there is still work to be done to fully embed this improved system across education, health and care sectors.

That's why I am pleased to announce this additional investment for councils and other groups who have been instrumental in getting us to this positive stage. Their hard work is raising the aspirations of these young people and giving them access to the same opportunities as their peers, helping them fulfill their full

potential as adults.

The package of funding announced today includes:

- £29 million to support councils and their local partners to continue pressing ahead with implementation of the reforms to the SEND system;
- £9.7 million to establish local supported internship forums, which will create work placements for young people with SEND to provide them with the skills and confidence they need to move into paid work. The funding could also be used to train job coaches, who are vital to the success of supporting those with learning difficulties into paid work; and
- £4.6 million for Parent Carer Forums, which bring parents together with local decision makers and help to provide them with a voice in the process.

Annamarie Hassall MBE, Director of Practice and Programmes at the National Children's Bureau, said:

The funding announced today will help more children with disabilities and special educational needs get the support they need to live normal lives in their home communities. In particular, we welcome funding for internships, which will provide young people with valuable work experience as they make the transition to adulthood.

The Minister also confirmed that further funding would be available to build capacity in the system and support the ongoing delivery of the SEND reforms over the next two years. Invitations to bid for these contracts, which will include providing families with access to information, advice and support, continuing support for the SEND workforce, and expert support to local areas, will be published online shortly.