

## News story: GCSE results day 2017

Today, hundreds of thousands of 16-year-olds find out the results of 2 years or more of hard work and study. They will now move onto the next phase of their education well equipped for what lies ahead and I would like to thank their teachers whose dedication and hard work has helped them achieve success.

The government's new gold-standard GCSEs in English and maths have been benchmarked against the best in the world, raising academic standards for pupils. These reforms represent another step in our drive to raise standards, so that pupils have the knowledge and skills they need to compete in a global workplace.

The fruits of these reforms will be seen in the years to come, but already pupils and teachers are rising to the challenge with more than 50,000 top 9 grades awarded across the new GCSEs and more than two thirds of entries sitting the tougher English and maths exams securing a grade 4 or C and above – a standard pass.

As we saw with last week's new A-levels, we are beginning to see our reforms translating into higher standards, improving opportunities and the life chances of millions of young people and helping to fulfil the voracious demand for knowledgeable and skilled young people from Britain's dynamic and growing economy.

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## Press release: Environment Agency to tackle decline in salmon population

The Environment Agency is calling on anglers and netsmen to have their say on potential salmon rod and net limitations through an initial consultation launched today (Thursday 24 August 2017).

The consultation aims to understand how the Environment Agency can better manage salmon fishing in England and the Border Esk in order to reduce the impact on salmon stocks, which are currently among the lowest on record.

It will also look at the impact that any restrictions could have on those whose livelihoods and interests depend on salmon. The initial consultation runs until Monday 9 October 2017 and invites anglers, netsmen, fishery managers and the public to give their views and to help shape the future of salmon stocks in England and the Border Esk. The results will then be used to issue a formal consultation later this year.

Salmon stocks across the Atlantic are challenged by a number of factors including marine survival and barriers to migration. The Environment Agency is working with partners on a programme of action to restore salmon stocks throughout England.

Heidi Stone, the Environment Agency's Salmon Programme Manager said:

We are working hard to improve salmon stocks and are seeking views on measures to further protect this important species.

The issues facing salmon and the reasons for their decline are complex and there is no simple solution to increasing salmon numbers. Evidence indicates that the marine phase of their lifecycle is the most likely reason for their decline and that fishermen taking salmon is not the primary cause.

But if we do not act now, we risk seeing further declines in salmon in many of our rivers. We are asking for views on a range of options and your responses will truly help to form our approach to managing salmon stocks in the future.

The Environment Agency, Government, Angling Trust, Rivers Trust, Atlantic Salmon Trust, Salmon and Trout Conservation UK, Wild Trout Trust and Institute of Fisheries Management have formed a working partnership in order to address this issue. This programme is called the Salmon Five Point Approach, and has been jointly developed and committed to by all partners. It sets out the actions to address the key pressures that affect the different life stages of salmon.

The priorities are:

- Improve marine survival
- Further reduce exploitation by nets and rods
- Remove barriers to migration and enhance habitat
- Safeguard sufficient flows
- Maximise spawning success by improving water quality.

Find out more about the [Salmon Five Point Approach](#).

Take part in the [e-consultation](#).

Press enquiries: please call 0203 025 5623, or email [newsdesk@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:newsdesk@environment-agency.gov.uk).

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# Press release: 6 million adults do not do a monthly brisk 10 minute walk

Over 6.3 million adults aged 40 to 60 do not achieve 10 minutes of continuous brisk walking over the course of a month and are missing out on important health benefits, according to [evidence reviewed by Public Health England \(PHE\)](#).

The findings also reveal how lifestyles have changed over time, showing that people in the UK are 20% less active now than they were in the 1960s and on average walk 15 miles less a year than 2 decades ago. The sedentary nature of modern, busy lives makes it difficult for many to find the time for enough exercise to benefit their health.

PHE's new One You physical activity campaign is encouraging adults to build 10 minutes continuous brisk walking into their day as a simple way to improve their health. This is particularly aimed at those who have an inactive or low activity lifestyle and may find incorporating activity into their day challenging. The 'Active 10' app has been developed to show how much brisk walking a person is doing each day and how to incorporate more of it into their lifestyles.

Taking at least 1 brisk 10 minute walk a day has been shown to reduce the risk of early death by 15%. A 10 minute walk can contribute to meeting the CMO's physical activity guidance of 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise each week. This can lead to health benefits including a lowered risk of type 2 diabetes (by 40%), cardiovascular disease (by 35%), dementia (by 30%) and some cancers (by 20%).

The severity of the current physical inactivity epidemic amongst adults contributes to 1 in 6 deaths in the UK and is costing the NHS over £0.9 billion per year.

Dr Jenny Harries, Deputy Medical Director at PHE, said:

I know first hand that juggling the priorities of everyday life often means exercise takes a back seat.

Walking to the shops instead of driving or going for a brisk 10 minute walk on your lunch break each day can add many healthy years to your life. The Active 10 app is a free and easy way to help anyone build more brisk walking into their daily routine.

The free app combines walking intensity and time, rather than just distance or steps and is the first of its kind. It helps people gradually introduce more activity into their daily routine, with goal setting advice and motivational tips. It has already helped 50,000 adults get more active.

Professor Sir Muir Gray, Clinical Adviser for the Active 10 app and the One You campaign, said:

We all know physical activity is good for your health, but for the first time we're seeing the effects that easily achievable changes can make. By walking just 10 continuous minutes at a brisk pace every day, an individual can reduce their risk of early death by 15%. They can also prevent or delay the onset of disability and further reduce their risk of serious health conditions, such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, dementia and some cancers.

The Active 10 app has been endorsed by the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP). GPs across the country are recommending it to their own patients as a tool to help them manage existing conditions and prevent the negative health impact of inactivity.

Dr Zoe Williams, GP and Clinical Champion for Physical Activity and Lifestyle at the RCGP, said:

As GPs, we're best placed to talk to people about how their lifestyles affect their health. Every GP should talk to their patients about the benefits of brisk walking and recommend the Active 10 app. It's the first free app of its kind and an easy, accessible way to make brisk walking a daily habit.

The Active 10 app was developed by PHE in collaboration with The University of Sheffield, Sheffield Hallam University and the National Centre for Sport and Exercise Medicine.

Search 'Active 10' to download the free app which shows how much brisk walking you are currently doing and provides tips and encouragement on how to fit ten minute bursts of brisk walking into your daily routine.

For further information about the One You Physical Activity campaign, please contact:

[Public Health England](#) exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities. It does this through world-class science, knowledge and intelligence, advocacy, partnerships and the delivery of specialist public health services. PHE is an operationally autonomous executive agency of the Department of Health. Follow us on Twitter: [@PHE\\_uk](#) and Facebook: [www.facebook.com/PublicHealthEngland](https://www.facebook.com/PublicHealthEngland).

Professor Sir Muir Gray, Clinical Adviser for the Active 10 app and the One You campaign, said:

Many digital products tell us to aim for 10,000 steps a day, which is a good recommendation but may seem unachievable to many people

tied to the desk, screen or steering wheel for eight hours a day.

It's important to consider both distance and intensity of walking to get the heart pumping in order to improve health. Walking briskly for 10 minutes each day benefits inactive adults the most, which is why the Active 10 app fits millions of people's needs so well.

## About One You

The One You Physical Activity campaign will launch with television, digital and, updated web content from today (24 August 2017) across England.

People are encouraged to download the free Active 10 app which shows how much brisk walking they are currently doing and which provides tips and encouragement on how people can fit 10 minute bursts of brisk walking into their day. People can also find further hints and tips on the One You website: [www.nhs.uk/oneyou](http://www.nhs.uk/oneyou).

People can download the Active 10 app from the iTunes app store (for iOS), Google Play store (for Android).

The Active 10 app was developed by PHE in collaboration with The University of Sheffield, Sheffield Hallam University, the National Centre for Sports and Exercise Medicine.

Active 10 is part of One You. Launched in March 2016, One You from PHE is the first nationwide programme to support adults in making simple changes that can have a huge influence on their health, could help prevent diseases such as type 2 diabetes, cancer and heart disease and reduce risk of suffering a stroke or living with dementia, disability and frailty in later life. It aims to inform, energise and engage millions of adults, especially those in the 40 to 60 'middle aged' group, to make changes to improve their own health by eating well, moving more, drinking less and quitting smoking.

One You also provides information on free health checks and how people can reduce their stress levels and sleep better.

## Calculation of population figure

% not walking briskly\* Population estimates mid-2016 (million)\*\*

Persons 41.3%	6.32
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## Source

\*10 minutes brisk walking each day in mid-life for health benefits and achievement of recommended activity levels evidence paper.

\*\*[ONS mid year population estimates, mid-2016](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/physicalactivity/bulletins/activepopulationinengland/2016).

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## News story: Action plan to improve accessibility in transport unveiled by the government

Work aimed at improving accessible toilets on the railways, ensuring better use of Blue Badges and trials in autonomous vehicles are among measures to improve transport for people with disabilities, announced today (24 August 2017).

The [draft accessibility action plan](#), published today, is the next step in the government's commitment to removing barriers for millions of disabled people to be able to travel independently and confidently.

The Department for Transport is now consulting on the plan to seek views and ideas on how to best improve accessibility on roads, rail, water and in the air.

Transport Minister Paul Maynard, who launched the plan in Leeds, said:

I take the issue of accessibility across all modes of transport very seriously.

This draft accessibility action plan is the next step in a much needed dialogue with disabled people, carers, transport providers and local authorities to identify new ways to improve travel.

It sets out the government's strategy to address gaps in our transport services which serve as a barrier to people with disabilities.

I secured commitments from the rail industry earlier this year to help make things better for disabled people. It is absolutely vital that all people are able use transport.

From October, a pilot study will explore opportunities to increase the availability of accessible toilets on trains and improve their reliability through better tanking facilities.

The department is also working with the Rail Delivery Group to provide 'alternative journey options' – for example, if the only accessible toilet is out of use.

A competition will be launched jointly with the Rail Safety and Standards Board, to find solutions to reducing the cost of accessibility improvements at stations, including the availability of accessible toilets. It will also

focus on supporting people with less visible disabilities.

The action plan also commits to reviewing [Blue Badge](#) eligibility for those with non-physical disabilities.

Improvements could be made so that the criteria is more consistently applied across the country.

In addition, the [Bus Services Act 2017](#) includes powers to require bus operators to provide audio-visual route and next stop announcements on board their services, of particular benefit to people with impaired vision or hearing.

Keith Richards, Chair of the [Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee](#), said:

DPTAC welcomes the launch of this accessibility action plan consultation. It supports our vision that disabled people must have the same access to transport as everybody else, to be able to go where everyone else goes and to do so easily, confidently and without extra cost.

A focus on the future and a commitment to clear actions are key drivers for change and improvement in access to transport and the built environment in which it operates – for all disabled people. We will continue to hold the department to account after publication of the plan.

The government is also working in other sectors to improve accessibility.

As part of our ambitious [aviation strategy](#), for example, we are consulting on how to improve the experience of disabled passengers both in airports and on flights.

For autonomous vehicles, the government's centre for [Connected and Autonomous Vehicles](#) (CCAV) is working to secure the safety, socioeconomic, and industrial benefits for the UK – and this includes improving access to mobility for all.

For example, CCAV is joint funding a number of exciting real-world trials of connected and autonomous technologies in cars, shuttles, and pods, which are actively exploring how people with mobility impairment can benefit.

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## [News story: Derailment at Ely West](#)

# Junction, 14 August 2017

Investigation into a derailment of a freight train at Ely West Junction, 14 August 2017.

At around 14:20 hrs on 14 August 2017, a freight train derailed at Ely West Junction, near the town of Ely in Cambridgeshire. The train was travelling from the port of Felixstowe to a terminal at Doncaster and consisted of a diesel locomotive hauling 30 container-carrying wagons. The rear 12 wagons became derailed as the train traversed a set of points which formed part of the junction.

As a result of the derailment, there was extensive damage to the railway infrastructure. The derailed wagons were also damaged. There were no injuries. The railway was closed to all trains until 03:00 hrs on 21 August 2017.

Our investigation will seek to identify the sequence of events that led to the accident and how the wagons derailed. It will also consider:

- the condition of the track and its geometry in the area of the derailment
- the condition of the wagons and their maintenance
- how the weight was distributed on the first wagon to derail, and the likely effect that this had on its derailment resistance
- similar UK derailments of container flat wagons in recent years and the industry's response to subsequent safety recommendations
- any relevant underlying management factors

Our investigation is independent of any investigation by the railway industry or by the industry's regulator, the [Office of Rail and Road](#).

We will publish our findings, including any recommendations to improve safety, at the conclusion of our investigation. This report will be available on our website.

You can [subscribe](#) to automated emails notifying you when we publish our reports.