

# Press release: James Brokenshire announces overhaul of broken housing complaints system

- Communities Secretary announces plans for new housing complaints service for entire housing market – ensuring both homeowners and tenants know where to go when things go wrong
- For first time ever, private landlords will be legally required to join a housing redress scheme – boosting protection for millions of renters across the country
- Move builds on government reforms to create a housing market that works for everyone – no matter what type of home they live in

Dissatisfied homeowners and tenants will have simple and quick access to help when things go wrong, thanks to new plans announced today (24 January 2019) by Communities Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP.

From broken boilers to cracks in the wall, the new Housing Complaints Resolution Service will potentially help millions by providing a straight-forward way of getting help when faced with unresolved disputes about problems with their home – such as repairs and maintenance.

Unlike other sectors, such as financial services, the housing market has several different complaints bodies, with homeowners and tenants having to navigate their way through a complicated and bureaucratic system just to work out where to register a grievance.

Establishing a single housing complaints service for all residents – no matter whether they rent or own their home – will prevent people from battling with their landlord or builder to resolve issues on their own and make it easier to claim compensation where it's owed.

Communities Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, said:

Creating a housing market that works for everyone isn't just about building homes – it's about ensuring people can get the help they need when something goes wrong.

But all too often the process can be confusing and overly bureaucratic, leaving many homeowners and tenants feeling like there is nowhere to go in the event of problems with their home.

The proposals I have announced today will help ensure all residents are able to access help when they need it, so disputes can be resolved faster, and people can get compensation where it's owed.

Currently, the housing complaints system is confusing – there are multiple complaint bodies covering the housing market, and membership of redress schemes is compulsory for some tenures but not others.

For example, in the private rented sector, there is currently no obligation for landlords to register with a complaints system – leaving thousands of renters without any course for redress.

To combat this, the Communities Secretary has today announced that private landlords will be legally required to become members of a redress scheme – with a fine of up to £5,000 if they fail to do so.

And to protect the interests of home-owners who buy new build homes, government has also reiterated its commitment to establishing a New Homes Ombudsman which will champion home buyers, protect their interests and hold developers to account.

Legislation will be brought forward at the earliest possible opportunity to require all new developers to belong to the Ombudsman – giving homebuyers the confidence that when they get the keys to a new home they are getting the quality of build they expect.

Developers will also have to belong to the new body by 2021 if they wish to participate in the government's landmark Help to Buy scheme.

The Housing Complaints Resolution Service will be developed with a new Redress Reform Working Group made up of representatives from across the sector, working with industry and consumers.

This is part of on-going work by the government to make the property market fairer and more transparent for everyone.

These measures form part of the government response to the consultation [Strengthening consumer redress in the housing market](#), which ran from 18 February to 16 April 2018, and received over 1,200 responses.

The consultation looked at a range of issues including:

- how the current complaints and redress landscape works
- whether streamlining redress in housing could help improve delivery of services
- how the 'in-house' complaints process and other practices and processes in redress could be improved
- how any gaps in housing redress could be filled, with a particular focus on purchasers of new build homes and private rented sector tenants

The policy proposals in this document primarily relate to England. Where proposed legislation has scope outside England with regard to devolved matters, we will continue to engage and consult the devolved administrations to seek agreement.

Redress for social housing residents is being considered separately. The response to the [social housing green paper](#) and the [call for evidence for the](#)

[review of social housing regulation](#) are due to be published in spring 2019.

The government announced the proposal to create a New Homes Ombudsman service in [October 2018](#). This response indicates how that service will sit in the wider redress landscape and the next steps of its implementation.

The Housing Complaints Resolution Service will provide a single point of access to resolve complaints for housing consumers, when 'in-house' complaint processes have been exhausted, through the current schemes providing alternative dispute resolution, while preserving the expertise of existing providers.

---

## [News story: Education generates billions for UK economy](#)

Britain's education sector remains one of its most lucrative international assets with new figures revealing today that its exports overseas generate almost £20bn for the UK economy (24 January).

The [figures](#), which include income from international students and English language training overseas, are growing year-on-year to an estimated £19.9bn in 2016 and an increase of 26% since 2010 – generating significant revenue for the UK, alongside other well-known exports such as automobiles, advertising and insurance.

International exports adding a significant contribution to the economy include:

- Higher education – £13.4bn
- Transnational education (TNE) – £1.9bn
- Education products and services – £1.9bn
- English Language Training Courses – £1.6bn
- Independent schools – £0.9bn

The figures are a welcome reminder of the strength of the sector and the UK's exports as it prepares to leave the EU, and plans are being put in place to strengthen post-Brexit Britain's international exports even further through a new International Education Strategy, which will be launched in 2019. After leaving the EU, the UK will also be able to use its newly independent trade policy to further our trading ties with key overseas markets.

This follows the Education Secretary's speech at the Education World Forum on Monday (21 January), welcoming education ministers from across the globe to work with the UK as a world-leader in the education sector.

The statistics out today show an increase in education-related equipment,

including digital technology, building on the Education Secretary's call yesterday (23 January) for the tech industry and education sector to make smarter use of technology to reduce teachers' workload at the Bett Show in London.

Education has long been one of the UK's most attractive offers for export, with English being the language of business and a central global language. The most recent data shows the UK is the most popular destination for English Language Training making up around 45% of the total market.

Education Secretary Damian Hinds said:

The UK has always provided world class education and these figures underline the importance of it to our economy – cementing our status as a global leader in this sector.

International university students constitute an important earnings source for our universities but they are also an important part of Britain's cultural influence in the world. As well as this, there are big growth opportunities in areas like education technology, services and satellite or partner campuses.

Education is a fundamental part of our offer to the world, and we will work to maintain and grow this in the years to come.

Minister for Investment Graham Stuart said:

This is another record year for education exports. More and more students are coming to the UK to study and our immigration changes will make the UK even friendlier as a place to study and work. From education technology to British curricula and assessment we have what the world is looking for in education.

DIT is there to support British companies from giants to start ups – to gain market share, and help the world learn. We look forward to producing a refreshed International Education Strategy this year and working with the sector to grow even faster in global markets.

The figures for education-related exports include tuition fees and living expenditure of EU and non-EU students, research and other contracts, as well as products and services such as through qualification awarding bodies and education-related equipment including educational technology.

International higher education students make a significant contribution to the UK and our world-class HE sector, both economically and culturally. The latest figures from the Higher Education Statistics Agency show the number of international students starting courses at UK higher education institutions in 2017/18 are the highest on record, with a 5% from the previous year.

These students, both EU and non-EU, contributed an estimated £11.9bn to the UK economy in tuition fees and living expenditure in 2016.

As well as this, our universities are at the forefront of global research and teaching, with four in the top 10 universities in the world. These high standards, found right across the board, have led to around 460,000 international HE students studying here in 2017/18.

---

## [Press release: New Charity Inquiry: GTC](#)

The Charity Commission, the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales, has opened a statutory inquiry into GTC ([registered charity number 1160421](#)) due to concerns over the administration of the charity. The inquiry was opened on 12 December 2018.

The charity's objects are for the relief of poverty of people in the UK, mainly in the Aylesbury area of Buckinghamshire.

The Commission has concerns about the charity's governance and administration as there appears to be only one trustee which means that conflicts of interest cannot be adequately managed. In addition the charity's accounting and reporting submissions lack clarity.

The Commission also has regulatory concerns about the charity's activities and whether the charity is applying its resources in furtherance of its charitable purposes.

Despite the declared objects, analysis of the charity's accounts and annual reports indicate that the charity directs funding to Greece, Turkey, Syria and Pakistan for purposes outside of its remit.

As a result of these regulatory concerns the Commission has opened a statutory inquiry to examine the charity's governance (including leadership), its management and its policies and practices, in the context of applicable law, good practice and its obligations as a charity, both generally and particularly in relation to:

- the extent to which the trustee has complied with the charity's governing document in respect of the appointment of a full trustee body
- the charity's accounting and reporting arrangements and the extent to which the trustee has complied with his duty to provide timely and accurate accounts to the Commission

- the extent to which potential conflicts of interest have been adequately managed
- whether charity funds have been misapplied

Ends

## Notes to Editors

1. The Charity Commission is the regulator of charities in England and Wales. To find out more about our work see the [about us](#) page on GOV.UK.
2. Search for charities on our [check charity tool](#).
3. Section 46 of the Charities Act 2011 gives the Commission the power to institute inquiries. The opening of an inquiry gives the Commission access to a range of investigative, protective and remedial legal powers.

---

## [News story: Standards continue to rise in England's schools](#)

Standards in England's schools are continuing to rise, with more pupils achieving strong results in English and maths, and more pupils performing well in the EBacc, following [new secondary school data published today](#) (24 January).

Today's data also shows converter academies performing well above the national average and disadvantaged pupils in multi-academy trusts (MATs) making more progress than the equivalent national average.

Today's release has also revealed record EBacc entry and achievement among disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), helping pupils keep their options open as they enter further and higher education.

With progress scores in academies and free schools higher than the national average, today's results provide yet more evidence of what can be achieved as an academy. This follows research published yesterday that showed standards have risen more quickly in sponsored academies than similar council-run schools in many cases, and that over half of pupils in state-funded schools are now taught in academies.

School Standards Minister Nick Gibb said:

Making sure that all pupils, regardless of their background, are

able to fulfil their potential is one of this Government's key priorities and these results show that more pupils across the country are doing just that.

It's been clear for some time that standards are rising in our schools and today's data underlines the role academies and free schools are playing in that improvement, with progress above the national average and impressive outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

Also vital to rising standards is the increasing number of pupils entering the EBacc. With a record number of disadvantaged pupils achieving good grades in the EBacc, more pupils will go on to further and higher education with a wider range of options and opportunities.

Statistics released today show:

- The proportion of pupils achieving a grade 5 or above at GCSE in both English and maths has increased, from 42.6% last year to 43.3% this;
- Progress by 16-18-year-olds retaking English and maths has improved in both subjects
- 95.5% of pupils are now entering EBacc science at GCSE, up from 63.2% in 2010, and the number of pupils taking maths and science at A Level has increased, including a rise of around 7% in the number of girls taking at least one of these subjects.

Today's multi academy trust measures highlight four high performing trusts across all three performance measures – Progress 8, EBacc entry and EBacc Average Points Score. STAR Academies, a multi-academy trust consisting largely of Muslim schools in London, the Midlands and the North of England, tops all three measures, while Dixons, Diocese of London and Diocese of Westminster trusts also perform strongly in all three.

The department has also published information relating to languages and the EBacc. This includes a list of secondary schools showing the proportion of pupils in each school entered for the languages pillar of the EBacc, and new research on the destinations of pupils who took the EBacc. The research shows over nine in 10 Oxbridge students entered a GCSE in EBacc languages, with more than three quarters entering both languages and humanities. These pupils studied a broad and balanced curriculum – that includes languages – before going on to highly selective universities.

The data is part of a number of publications from the Department today that show how our secondary schools are performing. It includes the performance tables, which help parents make informed choices about schools in their areas, and see how multi academy trusts are performing.

---

# Statement to parliament: Future maritime strategy

I am today announcing the publication of [Maritime 2050: Navigating the Future](#), the government's landmark strategy setting out our vision and ambitions for the future of the British maritime sector.

Our nation depends on the wide range of benefits the maritime sector delivers. It contributes over £14 billion a year to the UK economy and directly supports an estimated 186,000 jobs. Around 95% of British imports and exports are moved by sea. The leisure and marine sectors are vital to our enjoyment of the seas. Our maritime clusters around the UK showcase the diversity of our regional economies, from professional services in London to ship management and educational excellence in Scotland.

We rightly take pride in our maritime past. Maritime 2050 is about looking forward; anticipating the challenges and opportunities ahead and recognising the UK's strengths so we are well placed to capitalise on them. Maritime 2050 looks at these across 7 themes and under each makes short, medium and long-term recommendations:

- UK competitive advantage
- people
- environment
- technology
- infrastructure
- trade
- security and resilience

It highlights multi-billion pound commercial investment in maritime infrastructure at ports and beyond. Our unwavering commitment to safety and security. Our reputation for innovation, paving the way on regulatory frameworks and technology to facilitate smart shipping and autonomy; leading the way in clean maritime growth. But no matter how far advances in ships and technology take us, it sets out how the people graduating from our maritime training and academic institutions will reflect the world around us and continue to be sought after across the globe for their skills.

As the global maritime sector adapts to challenges such as climate change, rapid technological advances and security concerns, Maritime 2050 sets a series of strategic ambitions around which government and the sector will focus its efforts, and core values which we will be guided by.

The partnership between government and the maritime sector has been vital to the development of this strategy. It began in March 2018 with a call for evidence, seeking to reach all branches of the sector, complemented by workshops around the UK to capture the views from across our maritime clusters, and interviews with leaders in industry and academia. Maritime 2050 has also benefited from the advice and scrutiny of an independent panel of 13

internationally respected academics, industry leaders, maritime business services providers and promotional bodies. As a result, Maritime 2050 reflects the depth and breadth of the UK's rich maritime sector.

A copy of Maritime 2050 has been placed in the library of both Houses and is [available on GOV.UK](#), together with the trade and technology route maps setting out in greater detail the steps needed to achieve the UK's strategic maritime ambitions.