

Press release: Survivors of domestic abuse now able to vote anonymously

The changes will make it easier for an estimated 12,000 survivors of domestic abuse living in refuges to register to vote anonymously as well as those living elsewhere.

The changes will come into force in England, Wales and Northern Ireland today (7 March) and in Scotland on 1 April.

Survivors of domestic abuse will be able to register to vote without their name and address appearing on the electoral roll and without the fear of their former partners finding their address.

The changes to make it easier for survivors of domestic violence to register to vote anonymously include:

- broadening the professionals able to provide an attestation to include police inspectors, medical practitioners, nurses, midwives and refuge managers.
- expanding the list of court orders to include Domestic Violence Protection Orders and Female Genital Mutilation Orders.

This forms part of the government's commitment to tackle violence against women and girls.

Minister for the Constitution Chloe Smith said:

It's simply unacceptable that fear of revealing their address to an ex-partner has stopped victims of domestic abuse from voting.

Which is why this government took decisive action and is making it easier for those at risk to register and vote anonymously.

I'm proud of how seriously this government is tackling domestic abuse – we have pledged £100 million in dedicated funding until 2020 to tackle violence against women and girls.

Claire Bassett, Chief Executive of Electoral Commission, said:

Everyone should be able to vote safely, no matter what their circumstances, and these important changes are a vital step towards achieving this.

Nurses, midwives and refuge managers will now be able to attest to someone's request to register anonymously; we are working with organisations that support these professions to publish guidance,

to ensure they understand these changes to the law and can support their service users.

Katie Ghose, Chief Executive of Women's Aid, said:

For too long survivors of domestic abuse have been silenced because it was too dangerous for them to sign up to an electoral register, which would reveal their location, and too difficult for them to register anonymously. For them anonymity is a matter of life or death; with the very real threat of being hunted down by the perpetrator.

Following our Right to Vote campaign in partnership with survivor Mehala Osborne, we have worked with the government to bring about decisive action on this issue. We're delighted that on the 100th anniversary of the first British women securing the right to vote, the government will be making it easier for survivors to vote in safety.

Speech: Penny Mordaunt's speech on gender equality

Why are we here today? Why are you here today?

What made you get involved in your respective organisations?

What made you want to help? To change things, to make the world a better place?

Perhaps I should also ask you what made you endure? What made you expose yourself to abuse or ridicule? To overcome fear, to stand up to thugs or threats, or be sassy on social media?

What made you wake up to this cause? What makes the British people donate so generously or volunteer?

Maybe it's that they are angry, or that you are angry at injustice?

At girls being denied an education? Angry that half of the women in the world have experienced physical or sexual violence?

Or that in some conflict zones, that rises to almost all women?

Or that 12 year olds are being forced to marry? Or that young teenagers are

becoming mothers or dying in the process?

Angry because in 18 countries women still need permission from a man to have a job?

Angry that many who do work often take home less money for the same work?

And that millions of girls around the world, and 24,000 here in the UK are at risk from FGM?

Or maybe you are angry at how you have been treated in the past?

Some of you might be concerned. Concerned that as last year's news brought from the World Economic Forum on gender pay gap report. That found that the gender gap is widening for the first time in decades.

Or maybe you are concerned that the Me Too movement is just restricted to the developed world?

Or maybe you are frustrated at all that talent and potential wasted?

The McKinsey Global Institute estimates that equality in the job market would yield add an extra £20 trillion to global GDP by 2025.

But what can't be measured is the lost ideas, the dreams never realised, the businesses never built, the opportunities missed.

Maybe you are exasperated that we stand no chance of meeting any of the Global Goals unless we address gender equality.

Some of you might be hopeful, I know I am.

When we include women great things happen. When we negotiate peace treaties they are a one third more likely to work. When we serve in services or in the armed forces, these organisations become so much more effective.

Whatever your reasons for being here today, I think perhaps there is one motive which unites us all – and that is love.

Love of humanity, and our love of women around the world. A love of freedom, the freedom for every individual around the world to reach their full potential. And of faith, that every human being matters and that every human being can make a difference.

Whether they are aid workers, charity workers, trustees, governors, academics, teachers, doctors, soldiers, entrepreneurs, artists or mothers, I see love as the motivation for so many trying to make the world a better place.

And politicians too. In Parliaments, in peace councils, in village councils. And in Westminster too. Love.

Love is my lasting impression of Jo Cox. Jo and I sat on different sides of the house but we were frequent correspondents. We scribbled hand written

notes to each other very frequently.

She was an opposition back bencher and I was Minister of State for the Armed Forces. But we were trying together to build a coalition across the house on Syria.

I treasure her letters.

She was angry, she was frustrated, she was hopeful. And she burned with a love, passion and empathy for those caught up in a brutal conflict.

And that love and her determination now echo in the work of her memorial fund.

I am pleased to help that work today by announcing £10million of new funding in Jo's memory.

Jo's sister Kim will tell you more about social, economic and political empowerment work of the Jo Cox Memorial Fund.

And it is doing that by ensuring that women are leading that work, and making the decisions that impact their lives.

In addition, we will support the Jo Cox Memorial Fund in its work to strengthen civil society organisations, to prevent and protect civilians from mass atrocities.

As part of our new strategic vision, we are pledging £6million over four years to the UN Data Programme, making every woman and girl count.

Through this we will be able to accurately understand the needs of women and girls, the challenges they face and monitor how much progress we are making.

We are also today announcing new support through UK Aid Match, to tackle violence against women and girls in Kenya. And we are launching a new shared approach across the UK Government to gender in Syria.

This will bring our existing commitment from tackling violence, to empowering women, to engage in the political process together. And mean that the British government places women and girls at the heart of our efforts to bring an end to conflict and bring forth a peace which includes everyone.

We are launching a new call to action today through our new plan. This is a call to action for everyone, recognising that we all need to take action in everything we do, if gender equality is to become a lasting reality.

If we succeed, girls, women, men and boys across the globe will be equal, empowered and safe.

And countries will enjoy prosperity, peace and stability.

We need to challenge and change unequal power relations between men and women. We need to build the interlinked foundations which will have a

transformational impact for girls and women.

We need to protect and empower girls and women in conflict, protracted crises and humanitarian emergencies.

We must leave no girl or woman behind.

We need to integrate gender equality in all our work across the board, and track delivery through results on jobs, on trade, tax systems in the world economy, new technologies, modern slavery, climate change, nutrition, tackling AIDS, infrastructure and peace agreements.

We need to work across girls and women's life cycles, on multiple areas simultaneously, with particular attention of adolescents.

We need to build evidence and disaggregate data. And we need to make that information publically available.

Today, we are doing a very untypical female thing. We are going to be asking for more.

Because without more we will fail the world.

Women's empowerment, women's rights, women's talents and gifts are the entire margin of victory in the fight for prosperity, security and peace.

Without gender equality, we will never achieve any of the global goals.

A century ago, Emmeline Pankhurst said that "women have always fought for men and their children, but now they were prepared to fight for their own rights".

Today, we must recognise they are the same thing. Without women's rights, there are no human rights. Her potential is our future.

Whatever your motives, thank you for being here.

News story: UK FinTech companies named for DIT trade mission to USA

The second annual UK trade mission to Empire FinTech Week, taking place from 16-20 of April, offers UK FinTechs the opportunity to:

- showcase their expertise to the US market
- engage with US regulators
- gain valuable insight into overcoming barriers to doing business overseas

Recruitment ran across the whole of the UK in February 2018, focusing on advanced UK FinTechs actively entering the US market. A total of 134 applications were received from market-ready UK FinTech companies.

Her Majesty's Consul General in New York and Trade Commissioner for North America, Antony Phillipson, said of the mission:

After an extremely competitive application process for a trade mission to the United States, we're incredibly pleased to be showcasing such a strong representation of British innovation.

The quality of the delegation reconfirms the strength of the UK tech ecosystem and the importance of these transatlantic programmes.

The 2018 Mission to Empire FinTech Week will comprise of a pre-mission briefing in London in March, full access to the Empire Startups FinTech Conference in New York on 18 April, as well as regulatory discussions with experts and US regulators.

The week will culminate in a delegate showcase to the wider FinTech community at Barclays Rise New York on Friday, 20th April.

Founder of Empire Startups, Jon Zanoff, said of hosting the delegation:

Empire FinTech Week in New York will unite the global FinTech ecosystems and truly promote transatlantic innovation.

As the week will highlight the best and the brightest in FinTech, we couldn't be more thrilled to welcome the UK delegation.

[AccessPay](#) is on a mission to develop powerful automation and AI tools that empower treasury and finance professionals to become more efficient and more secure.

[ACORN machine](#)'s mission is to enable financial institutions to make complex loans to entrepreneurs and SMEs by leveraging Artificial Intelligence, Big Data, and Operational Excellence. In the UK, the firm operates as OakNorth – a challenger bank founded in 2015 which has lent around £1 billion to date.

[Bink](#) uses its unique technology, Payment Linked Loyalty (PLL), to link consumers' payment cards to their loyalty schemes. Payment Linked Loyalty is set to transform the loyalty experience – no need for plastic cards, membership IDs or paper coupons.

[CUBE](#) is an enterprise-scale RegTech solution that automates the entire regulatory change management process for multi-jurisdictional, multi-state financial institutions. Currently, 1.5 million staff in 180 countries are consuming regulatory intelligence, and managing regulatory change

initiatives, powered by CUBE.

[CurrencyCloud](#) is a global payment platform that serves businesses by providing technologies that makes payments frictionless. CurrencyCloud places an emphasis on integration, and ensuring their payments engine fits neatly with the way their clients want to do business – rather than the other way around.

[EValue](#) is a market leader in the provision of digital, personal finance advice products and services. These products combine expert actuarial knowledge, pioneering asset modelling and risk management.

[GoCardless Ltd](#) offers a simple way for organisations to take bank to bank recurring payments however and whenever they want to across multiple markets with a single point of access.

[LendInvest](#) provides finance to property professionals, and a platform for individuals and institutions to invest in property backed loans. With \$1 billion of lending capital, LendInvest operates Europe's leading marketplace platform for property lending and investing and is one of the UK's biggest non-bank mortgage lenders.

[NorthRow](#), a Contego Solutions business, is the only comprehensive risk scoring platform that can handle complex fraud detection and compliance checks on people, ID documents and companies at high speed, delivered in a single easily-integrated API.

[Pockit](#) aims to be the world's most inclusive digital banking product. Focusing on the unbanked and underbanked in the UK, Pockit offers a current account and enhanced functionality to upwards of 300,000 customers.

[SalaryFinance](#) is a new employee benefit out to save UK workers £4 billion per annum through lower interest repayments. SalaryFinance works with progressive employers to help their staff reduce their personal finance interest costs.

[Shieldpay](#)'s instant digital escrow facility eliminates payment fraud when transacting with somebody you don't know. Its patent-pending technology is revolutionizing payments in classified marketplaces, real estate and mergers and acquisitions globally.

[Starling Bank](#) is a technology company with a banking license that is looking to disrupt finance at its core. With its first funding round of \$70 million in January 2016, the company has launched the first mobile-only current account in the UK.

[The ID Co.](#)'s mission is to empower consumers with their bank identities and bank statement data. By leveraging banks as a strong proxy for trust and custodians of The ID Co.'s data the company opens up new opportunities to provide better experiences with reduced fraud, better compliance and more accurate decisions.

[TradingHub](#) provides state-of-the-art, metrics-based systems to identify, investigate and report market abuse and unauthorised or rogue trading

activity.

News story: New guide to improve consumer product safety recalls

- First ever government-backed Code of Practice for product safety recalls published
- new guidance will help businesses understand what they need to do if something goes wrong with their product
- the move follows recommendations from safety experts commissioned by the government

The government's new [Office for Product Safety and Standards](#) has teamed up with [BSI](#), the UK's National Standards Body, to launch the first government-backed Code of Practice (PAS 7100) for product safety recall in the UK.

The Code of Practice includes details on how a business can monitor the safety of products and plan for a recall, and how Market Surveillance Authorities such as local authority Trading Standards can support businesses in their monitoring of incidents and their implementation of corrective action.

The Code of Practice, developed by BSI, is the first major initiative for the new Office which was launched by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy in January. It follows a recommendation by the Working Group on Products Recalls and Safety to introduce such a Code to further strengthen the UK's already tough product safety regime.

This was created with the assistance of leading retailers, consumer interest groups and industry bodies, including Tesco, Samsung Electronics, British Retail Consortium, Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and the Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers.

Consumer Minister Andrew Griffiths said:

This new Code of Practice will support businesses in dealing with product safety issues swiftly and effectively, ensuring people can continue to buy secure in the knowledge there is an effective system in place if products need to be repaired or replaced.

Effective regulation is a key element of our Industrial Strategy, which is creating the conditions for businesses to succeed in the UK and to compete in the global economy.

Scott Steedman, Director of Standards at BSI said:

Public interest in product safety is higher than it has ever been and whilst consumer products generally perform without problems, there are times when products can become faulty and require a repair or recall.

The Code of Practice was created to ensure that corrective action by manufacturers is taken in a safe and systematic way. The launch of this guidance is an important step in ensuring even higher levels of product safety in the future.

The Code of Practice comes in two parts. The first part is focused on non-food consumer products and is intended for use by manufacturers, importers and distributors. It provides details on:

- how a business can plan for a recall, including establishing mechanisms to deal with any product safety issue identified
- managing a possible safety related product recall or other corrective action
- establishing mechanisms to monitor the safety of products
- investigating any potential product safety issue
- reviewing corrective action programmes to ensure that product safety responsibilities continue to be met.

The second part is aimed at regulators, specifically Market Surveillance Authorities including local authority Trading Standards. It details how they can carry out their role in ensuring businesses meet their responsibilities in respect of consumer product safety issues by:

- monitoring incidents and analysing data
- supporting businesses in the preparation of their 'product safety incident plan' (PSIP)
- supporting businesses in their monitoring of incidents and their implementation of appropriate corrective action.

PAS 7100 explains and applies existing legal requirements to be met by businesses or regulators. The following organisations were involved in the development of PAS 7100 as members of the steering group:

- Association of Manufacturers of Domestic Appliances (AMDEA)
- Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers (ACTSO)
- Baker & McKenzie LLP, British Retail Consortium (BRC)
- British Toy and Hobby Association (BTHA)
- BSI Consumer and Public Interest Network
- Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI)
- Cooley (UK) LLP
- Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)
- Electrical Safety First (ESF)
- London Fire Brigade; National Caravan Council (NCC)
- National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCO)

- Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA)
- Samsung Electronics (UK) Ltd
- techUK
- TESCO
- Wilco Retail Limited

[BSI](#) is the business improvement company that enables organizations to turn standards of best practice into habits of excellence. For over a century BSI has championed what good looks like and driven best practice in organizations around the world. Working with over 86,000 clients across 193 countries, it is a truly international business with skills and experience across a number of sectors including automotive, aerospace, built environment, food, and healthcare. Through its expertise in Standards Development and Knowledge Solutions, Assurance and Professional Services, BSI improves business performance to help clients grow sustainably, manage risk and ultimately be more resilient.

The [Office for Product Safety and Standards](#) was set up in January 2018 in the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, to enhance protections for consumers and the environment and to drive increased productivity, growth and business confidence. It will build national capacity within the UK's product safety system and develop tools that support small business growth and implement the Industrial Strategy vision of simplifying regulation. This includes taking forward the work of the Regulatory Delivery directorate on Primary Authority, the Regulators' Code and technical regulation.

News story: Women in Innovation: new support announced

2016 Women in Innovation award holder Rebecca Street.

Ahead of [International Women's Day](#) tomorrow, Innovate UK has announced that it will run a second phase of its Women in Innovation awards.

The programme, which will launch later this year, will consist of a funding competition and support package to encourage more female-led innovation.

Supporting government's Industrial Strategy

The second Women in Innovation competition will seek ideas that address the 4 grand challenges posed by government's [Industrial Strategy](#). These are:

- AI and the data economy
- clean growth

- future of mobility
- ageing society

Find out more

About the programme and its success

The first Women in Innovation programme was launched in 2016, following research that found just 1 in 7 applications for Innovate UK funding came from women.

To address this, Innovate UK ran its first women-only competition. This provided £50,000 funding each for 15 female-led businesses plus mentoring. We have also run an entrepreneurial mission to Boston for 7 women in tech.

Since the programme launched there has been a 10 per cent increase in female registrations for Innovate UK support.

Helping more women achieve their business ambitions

Commenting on the announcing, Dr Ruth McKernan CBE, Chief Executive of Innovate UK, says:

It is fantastic that more women are coming to us for innovation funding and support, but we need to go further.

Our 2018 Women in Innovation programme is designed to help many more women achieve their business ambitions, drive UK growth and productivity, and harness the full talent pool.