

Press release: Government helps dementia sufferers in fight against nuisance calls

- elderly and vulnerable – including dementia sufferers – to be given hi-tech devices which block all nuisance calls
- project is latest government move to tackle the blight of rogue traders
- PM: We want to create a fairer society by cracking down on unscrupulous practices which target the most vulnerable

Rogue traders who bombard the elderly and vulnerable with nuisance phone calls are to be stopped in their tracks by a targeted government scheme designed to protect those with dementia.

Every year, thousands of complaints are made about nuisance phone calls and in February last year, one firm alone was fined £350,000 for making more than 46 million automated calls.

To help tackle the problem, Prime Minister Theresa May, has today announced the launch of a half-a-million-pound project which will see hi-tech call blocking devices installed in the homes of some of the most vulnerable people across the UK who have been identified by doctors, Trading Standards officials and local councils as being at risk from nuisance callers.

The trueCall devices will completely block all recorded messages, silent calls and calls from numbers not already pre-identified by the home owner – offering particular protection to those with dementia.

The Prime Minister said:

We want to create a fairer society by cracking down on unscrupulous practices which target the most vulnerable.

This new, targeted scheme is the latest step in the government's fight against nuisance calls, protecting those who are most at risk, including those with dementia.

We have seen people tricked out of thousands of pounds by scam callers and this government is determined to clamp down on their activities once and for all.

The project, which is being co-ordinated by the National Trading Standards Scams Team and supported by local Trading Standards departments, is the latest of a series of government crackdowns on nuisance callers

A similar trial scheme run by the National Trading Standards Scams Team last year resulted in 93% of participants feeling safer in their homes. This

included one person who had previously paid £150,000 to a scam caller.

The chief executive of Dementia UK, Hilda Hayo, said:

We welcome this project as some people living with dementia are vulnerable to nuisance callers who offer bogus services and financial schemes.

These calls can not only have a negative financial impact but can also lead to psychological affects such as anxiety, depression and a loss of self-esteem. We frequently receive calls to our national helpline from family members who are concerned that their relative with dementia has fallen prey to rogue traders.

The special devices will screen calls and can either ask callers to enter a security code which only genuine callers will know, or direct them to instead call a friend or relative of the home owner.

Lord Toby Harris, the Chair of National Trading Standards, said:

The impact of nuisance calls – both emotional and financial – cannot be underestimated. We know that these call blockers can make a real difference to people's lives and give those in vulnerable situations, such as those with dementia, and their families a greater sense of protection and security.

Working with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), the government has already forced companies to display their caller ID when cold calling and given out a series of hefty fines – totalling almost £7 million.

The government will shortly implement plans to slap company bosses and firms with fines of up to £1 million if they are found to be in breach of Privacy and Electronics Communications Regulations.

- the funding for this scheme includes £300,000 to supply call blocking machines with the remaining budget spent on the management of the service and raising public awareness of scam and nuisance calls
- plans to make company bosses liable follows previous legislation where only businesses were liable for fines. Many of the businesses tried to escape paying nuisance call penalties by declaring bankruptcy – only to open up again under a different name
- the ICO has issued fines totalling almost £7 million since 2012
- on 2015, the ICO received almost 170,000 complaints about nuisance calls
- to report a nuisance call visit: www.ico.org.uk
- see what else government is doing to combat nuisance calls by searching for: #NoNuisance on social media

[Press release: Welsh Secretary: Aston Martin creating a lasting legacy in Wales](#)

Aston Martin's investment in St Athan will create a lasting legacy for the region, Secretary of State for Wales, Alun Cairns will say when he attends a special ceremony to mark the beginning of the redevelopment of the Ministry of Defence (MOD) site into the car brand's newest manufacturing facility.

Work has already begun on staff facilities at the site and the second phase will start in earnest when the company today (6 April) gains access to the three Ministry of Defence "super hangars" that will house the manufacturing plant.

In February 2016, Aston Martin Lagonda announced that the DBX – a 'crossover' sports utility vehicle – would be made at St Athan with the creation of 750 jobs with a likely further 1,000 across the supply chain and local businesses in Wales. The first vehicle is expected to come off the production line in 2020.

Welsh Secretary Alun Cairns will be on hand at the prestigious event in the Vale of Glamorgan which marks the start of the transition of the aircraft hangars into Wales' newest, state of the art manufacturing plant.

Secretary of State for Wales, Alun Cairns said:

Thanks to the close partnership between the UK and Welsh Governments and the prestigious Aston Martin brand, the St Athan site is springing back to life as a significant centre of employment, bringing with it valuable skills and a lasting legacy for the entire region.

As the UK exits the EU, we are determined that our country remains a great place to invest and to do business. Aston Martin's decision to invest in Wales shows that we are creating and supporting the right conditions for industry investment. The UK Government's comprehensive industrial strategy will build on that success, ensuring that we have the right infrastructure, skills and support in place for our world-leading industries as well as support for new emerging sectors to flourish.

The automotive sector is the UK's largest manufacturing export sector and is spread nationally. St Athan will be the sole production facility for the new Aston Martin crossover vehicle. With growing demand for these types of

vehicles in markets such as China and the United States, it is expected that over 90% of the production from St Athan will be exported outside of the United Kingdom.

[Press release: New powers to tackle illegal working in licensed premises](#)

Under the measures, brought in as part of the Immigration Act 2016, immigration checks will be part of the process for applying for a licence. From today, a premises or personal licence will not be issued to anyone who does not have permission to be or work in the UK. Being granted a licence and continuing to hold it will also be reliant on complying with the UK's immigration laws.

Additionally, the Home Office will be consulted in the same way as the police before a licence is granted. If a business has any immigration offences and civil penalties, these will be considered as part of the licence application, and as a ground for making a formal request to a licensing authority for a licence to be reviewed.

Immigration officers will also receive the same powers as licensing enforcement officers and the police to enter a premises being used to sell alcohol or late night refreshment, in order to investigate immigration offences. This will enable joint enforcement operations with licensing enforcement officers, and allow immigration officers to enter licensed premises without a warrant where there is intelligence of illegal working taking place.

Immigration Minister Robert Goodwill said:

"Illegal working cheats the taxpayer, has a negative impact on the wages of lawful workers and allows rogue employers to undercut legitimate businesses.

"These new measures will allow us to work more effectively with licensing authorities and the police to prevent illegal working in a high risk sector and take the action needed against businesses flouting immigration laws."

Today's licensed premises provisions form part of a wider package of measures in the Immigration Act 2016 to tackle illegal working, which is a key driver of illegal migration to the UK, and often leads to exploitation. They follow similar changes to the licensing regime for private hire vehicles and taxis which were introduced in December.

About 60% of all civil penalties for illegal working served in the UK in the year to February 2017 were issued in the retail, hotel, restaurant and leisure industry sectors, many of which hold licences.

The Home Office continues to work with the hospitality sector, amongst others, to provide support and guidance on how to carry out right to work checks and to raise awareness of the risks of illegal working.

The new measures which come into force in England and Wales today will be followed later this year in Northern Ireland and Scotland.

[Tony Nutt](#)

On behalf of the Government and the Liberal Party I thank Tony Nutt for his extraordinary service to the Party and to the nation in more than 35 years of public service.

As principal private secretary and then as chief of staff Tony was at the centre of the Howard Government, the most successful of our generation. He is the consummate political professional and the Liberal Party has no more loyal or dedicated servant.

Tony has been a dear friend and very wise counsel to me and Lucy for many years. His advice has been invaluable, always carefully considered and invariably delivered with a full historical context both modern and ancient. Tony is in every respect a scholar and a gentleman.

Tony took over the directorship of the Federal Liberal Party in late 2015 in very difficult circumstances, he then proceeded to direct the campaign which saw the government returned in the face of a ferocious fear campaign.

It is customary nowadays to deprecate politics, politicians and above all political professionals. But the truth is they, and the parties they run, make our democracy work.

Tony's service over so many years is grounded in a deep love of Australia and an abiding commitment to our democratic values. I look forward to the next chapter of his remarkable career of public service.

[News story: Gender Pay Gap Reporting Goes Live](#)

Thousands of employers will publish their gender pay gap figures for the first time from today, helping break the glass ceiling and create a more

modern workforce.

The UK is one of the first countries in the world to require gender pay gap reporting and follows the government's commitment to introduce the requirements at the last election. This is a key part of the government's work to eliminate the gender pay gap.

Voluntary, private and public sector employers with 250 or more employees will be required to publish their figures by April 2018. The regulations will cover approximately 9,000 employers with over 15 million employees, representing nearly half of the UK's workforce.

The UK gender pay gap is already at a record low of 18.1 per cent. These requirements will help employers to identify the gaps in their organisations and take action to close their gender pay gap.

Ensuring that women have the same opportunities as men to fulfil their potential in the workplace is a key part of building a country that works for everyone, as the Prime Minister made clear in her first speech outside Downing Street.

Minister for Women and Equalities Justine Greening said:

We have more women in work, more women-led businesses than ever before and the highest proportion of women on the boards of our biggest companies. This has helped us to narrow the gender pay gap to a record 18.1 per cent – but we want to eliminate it completely.

Helping women to reach their full potential isn't only the right thing to do, it makes good economic sense and is good for British business. I am proud that the UK is championing gender equality and now those employers that are leading the way will clearly stand out with these requirements.

The benefits of helping women to unlock their talents are huge – eliminating work-related gender gaps could add £150 billion to our annual GDP by 2025. That is an opportunity that neither Government nor businesses can afford to ignore.

As part of the new regulations, employers will be required to:

Publish their median gender pay gap figures

- By identifying the wage of the middle earner, the median is the best representation of the 'typical' gender difference. Employers will be asked to use data from a 'snapshot' period in April to calculate this average.

Publish their mean gender pay gap figures

- By taking into account the full earnings distribution, the mean takes into account the low and high earners in an organisation – this is particularly useful as women are often over-represented at the low earning extreme and men are over-represented at the high earning extreme.

Publish the proportion of men & women in each quartile of the pay structure.

- This data will show the spread of male and female earners across an organisation, helping to show employers where women's progress might be stalling so they can take action to support their career development.

Publish the gender pay gaps for any bonuses paid out during the year

- As there is a significant issue around bonus payments in some sectors, employers will also have to publish the proportion of male and proportion of female employees that received a bonus during the year.

Employers will also be encouraged to publish an action plan alongside their figures, demonstrating the steps they will take to close the gender pay gap within their organisation.

The Government is working with leading employers who are exploring publishing their figures early.

The Government Equalities Office has also launched its [new campaign page](#) where employers can access resources, case studies and publish their gender pay gap figures.

The new gender pay gap mandatory reporting requirements are part of wider work the Government is doing to support women in the workplace. This includes £5 million to increase returnships, offering 30 hours of free childcare, and introducing shared parental leave and new rights to request flexible working. There is also extensive cross-Government work to get more women into the top jobs at the UK's biggest companies and to get more girls taking STEM subjects at school.