

Press release: Drivers advised to plan journeys ahead of Bike4Life charity bike event

Drivers are advised to plan their journeys and allow extra time as around 5,000 motorcyclists take part in the Midlands Air Ambulance Charity's seventh annual Bike4Life event between Shrewsbury and RAF Cosford this Sunday (30 April).

Motorcyclists participating in the event will leave Meole Brace in Shrewsbury at 11.30am on Sunday and will ride to RAF Cosford via the A5, M54 and A41.

The 23-mile journey only takes around half an hour but, depending on the number of people participating, there could be delays and some congestion along this route.

The following closures will be in place during the event (approximately 11am to 1:30pm):

- A5 eastbound between Dobbies roundabout and the M54, including the three roundabout entrances (Dobbies, Preston and Emstrey)
- M54 eastbound entry slip roads at junctions 7, 6, 5, 4 and 3
- M54 westbound exit slip road at junction 3

Diversion routes will be clearly signposted.

Road users may experience some delays along these routes on Sunday morning, but these should ease fairly quickly.

Drivers are advised to plan their journeys ahead of time or to use alternative routes if possible around the middle of the day.

The event is organised by and raises funds for Midlands Air Ambulance Charity, which attends nearly 100 motorcycle-related incidents every year.

Highways England provides live traffic information via its website, local and national radio travel bulletins, electronic road signs and mobile platforms, such as Android and iPhone apps.

For more information about the event go to the [bike4lifefest website](#).

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448

and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

Labour councils show the way to tackle housing crisis – building 50% more homes than Tories

- Affordable house-building at a 24-year low under Tory Government
- Rough sleeping doubled since 2010

Labour councils show the way to tackle housing crisis – building 50% more homes than Tories

Labour councils have out-built Tory councils by an average of nearly 1000 new homes since 2010, new research released by Labour reveals.

House of Commons Library analysis, commissioned by Labour, shows that in Conservative-led local authority areas there were 1,679 new homes built on average between 2010 and 2016, while Labour councils built 2,577 on average – more than 50% more homes. Liberal Democrat-led areas have an equally poor record – building just 1,660.

The figures will come as a further blow to ministers, as they try to defend their housing record ahead of the general election.

The latest statistics from the Department of Communities and Local Government show that housebuilding is falling, with just 140,660 new homes built in 2016, compared to 142,600 the year before.

Meanwhile affordable housebuilding is at a 24 year low, there are 200,000 fewer home-owners since 2010, and rough sleeping has more than doubled.

The new figures were released alongside a new report, edited by Shadow Secretary of State for Housing John Healey MP, showcasing the innovative work that Labour councils are doing on housing around the country.

Local Housing Innovations: The Best of Labour in Power profiles 20 Labour councils at the leading edge in building new homes for first time buyers, cutting homelessness, investing in super-energy efficient homes and delivering new council housing.

Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Housing, John Healey MP, said:

“After seven years of failure the Conservatives have no plan to fix the housing crisis, in which house-building fell to its lowest peacetime rate since the 1920s. From falling home-ownership to rising homelessness, Britain has a desperate housing crisis and needs many more good homes.

"These new figures show that Labour in power means building more homes for local people.

"Tory Ministers talk about getting Britain building but their own local councils are lagging behind.

Commenting on his new Local Housing Innovations report, John Healey MP said:

"Labour doesn't just build more, we build better too. Labour councils across the country are pulling out all the stops to help people with the day-to-day housing pressures they face."

On a visit to Harlow tomorrow, **Jeremy Corbyn, Leader of the Labour Party, will say:**

"Britain faces a housing crisis, with runaway rents and unaffordable housing. The system is rigged, with housing treated as an investment for the few, not homes for the many.

Seven years of Conservative failure, with homebuilding at the lowest levels since the 1920s, shows that they will never fix the housing crisis, which is holding so many people back.

Labour councils build more homes than Conservative ones. The next Labour government will build a million homes, at least half of them council homes, so that we build a Britain for the many not the few."

After Boris Johnson's broken promise of £350m a week for the NHS, why should anyone believe a word he says – Thornberry

Emily

Thornberry MP, Labour's Shadow Foreign Secretary, commenting on Boris Johnson's speech to the Lord Mayor's Banquet at Mansion House, said:

"It seems

Boris Johnson has finally been allowed out of hiding, on the condition he only talks delusional nonsense.

"He talks

about creating a 'Global Britain', yet the Tories have overseen the greatest

diminution of British influence on the world stage in a generation.

“He talks

up a fantastical vision of Britain as a global trading nation, yet he and Theresa

May are putting at risk our trade with the EU – by far our largest trade partner – by threatening an extreme Brexit where we crash out on WTO terms.

“With his

crass and offensive remarks Boris Johnson has single-handedly damaged Britain’s

chances of getting a good deal with the EU.

“And

after his broken promise of £350m a week for the NHS, why should anyone believe

a word he says.”

Ends

[Press release: PM meeting with European Commission President: 27 April 2017](#)

The PM had a constructive meeting this evening with President Juncker of the European Commission.

Following the UK’s letter of notification under Article 50, she reiterated the UK’s commitment to achieving a deep and special partnership with the European Union.

The PM and President Juncker also discussed a range of other international issues in a useful working dinner.

[Speech: “The people of South Sudan are fed up of pledges and fed up of](#)

promises. They need action."

Thank you Madam President. And thank you David, and Gorgui, for your briefings.

And I want to start by complementing David and the whole UNMISS team for the steps that you have taken to enhance the Mission's ability to fulfil its mandate despite the hostile circumstances in which it operates.

The situation in South Sudan is dire, but I want to recall what we, the members of this Security Council, agreed to on the 23rd of March in our Presidential Statement. We called for an immediate ceasefire by all parties; we called for steps to be taken to allow life saving assistance to get to those in need. We called for the immediate removal of obstacles to UNMISS and the deployment of the Regional Protection Force. We also gave our support to joint UN, African Union and IGAD efforts to bring the parties back to the Peace Agreement. And we said we would return to these benchmarks and reassess. So let's do that.

The lack of progress since that Presidential Statement a month ago is deafening. Fighting and violence in South Sudan has never been so widespread. Events that unfolded in Wau earlier this month are a distressing indication of the apathy that parties to the conflict have towards achieving peace by political means. UN reports detail clashes between the SPLA and the opposition which resulted in the SPLA seeking violent retribution against civilians in a community they believed to be in support of the opposition.

It's always difficult, Madam President, to deliver aid in a highly insecure environment like South Sudan. But let's be clear, it's not only the presence of conflict that impedes the ability of humanitarian workers to address the ever worsening food situation. It's the way in which the conflict is conducted; namely, the fact that it contravenes International Humanitarian Law.

International Humanitarian Law was breached with the murder of three World Food Programme employees in Wau. And this is by no means an isolated incident. As Gorgui noted in his briefing, the murder of these WFP employees adds to the toll of eighty humanitarians who have been killed in South Sudan since December 2013. This must stop.

Also unacceptable is the news that the Government of South Sudan has detained without charge, a WFP employee. We call on the Government of South Sudan for his immediate and unconditional release and urge other member states to join that call.

The violence in Wau is also an example of the unacceptable and chronic obstructions placed upon UNMISS by the Government of South Sudan. Despite repeated attempts UNMISS was prevented from patrolling in Wau and thus unable to protect civilians. A continued lack of Government cooperation has also prevented meaningful progress on the deployment of the Regional Protection

Force.

Madam President, this Council has heard time and time again of the shocking impact that this conflict is having on the world's youngest nation. One example, is the fact that at least one in every four South Sudanese has now been forced from their homes since the outbreak of conflict in December 2013. What a damning statistic.

And despite multiple statements made in this Council and efforts by the UN, African Union and IGAD to bring the parties together, we have collectively failed to bring about an end to this conflict. We are further from the IGAD Peace Agreement than ever. Yes, we have all pledged to do more. Yes, the Government of South Sudan has time and again promised peace. But the people of South Sudan are fed up of pledges and fed up of promises. They need action. So we strongly encourage the AU, IGAD, and the UN to build on their commitment to work together by developing a clear, joint, plan of action to solve the ongoing crisis in South Sudan without delay.

And in conclusion, Madam President, the question we each need to ask ourselves as we walk out of this room is how much further are we prepared to let the situation deteriorate on our watch? My answer is no further at all. And with this in mind I call on regional countries to avert the suffering in their backyards. I remind fellow Council colleagues that it's incumbent on us to use every available tool to pull South Sudan back from the abyss. Dialogue is needed. But so is pressure. An Arms Embargo would prevent further devastation and rearming when the rainy season inevitably slows the fighting. Targeted sanctions would remind those in power that a return to peace is the right alternative to rape and killing of civilians.

We hear month after month the same lack of commitment to peace from all parties. We owe it to the people of South Sudan to end this horror and to secure a lasting peace.

Thank you Madam President.