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Welcome to the September edition of our bi-monthly update. The aim of this regular update is to keep partners informed on key developments.

In this edition, we tell you about our Immigration Minister, Damian Green's first major speech, 'The Real Immigration Question' given at the Royal Commonwealth Society on 6 September. In this speech, he set out the future of immigration policy, particularly focusing on how Britain could benefit most from immigration. The government is determined to make decisions based on evidence, which is why it has just released a new research report called 'The migrant journey' which analyses the behaviour of immigrants who came to the UK in 2004 through all managed routes except visitor routes ([page 2](#)).

On 9 September we announced proposed changes to immigration fees which we will implement in two phases. The first set of increases will take effect from 1 October and the second from mid-November 2010. The Chancellor's Emergency Budget set out the state of the nation's finances and demonstrated the very difficult choices that must be made as a result. The Home Office was planning £367 million of savings before any new efficiencies. Fee increases takes place against this difficult financial context for the UK Border Agency and the Government as a whole. We believe the proposals strike the right balance between maintaining a secure border and ensuring that the UK continues to attract the 'brightest

and best' migrants from around the world, and those that make a valued contribution to British society ([page 3](#)).

I am pleased to report the first group of Bhutanese refugees from Nepal have arrived in the UK under the Gateway Protection programme, which resettles some of the world's most vulnerable refugees. This follows activity in May, to interview and select Bhutanese refugees to start their new lives in the north west of England ([page 14](#)).

Finally, I would like to inform you of some changes within my senior management team. Emma Churchill is now our Director of Asylum, Glyn Williams our Director of Immigration Policy and Jonathan Nancekivell-Smith has taken up the role as Director Visa Services. I am sure you will join me in wishing them well in their new roles.

We hope you find this edition both informative and accessible, and we welcome any further comments you might have. For general enquiries please write to the [Partnerships & Engagement Team](#). For specific enquiries please see the contact details under the relevant article.



Lin Homer
Chief Executive
UK Border Agency

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Damian Green sets out evidence for immigration policy change

On 6 September Immigration Minister, Damian Green, made his first major speech on the future of immigration policy at the Royal Commonwealth Society. The speech entitled ‘The Real Immigration Question’ focused on how Britain could benefit most from immigration and new research which analyses the path migrants take through the immigration system to eventually be granted long term settlement in the UK. The speech was followed by a question and answer session giving partners the opportunity to ask the Minister about his plans for immigration policy.



During his speech he acknowledged the UK had always benefited from immigration, but would only continue to do so if it was properly controlled and unsustainable levels of net migration seen in recent years is brought down. He recognised planned changes to the immigration system (including an annual limit on workers from outside the European Union) may be ‘controversial’ but necessary and was one of the most challenging tasks for the new government

To read more about this story please and for the full text of his speech please visit:
[UK Border Agency | Minister sets out evidence for immigration policy change](#)

Chief Inspector reports on complaints and Wales and South West

The UK Border Agency has responded to two reports produced by the independent Chief Inspector to the agency, John Vine. The reports looked at the agency’s performance in complaint handling and its immigration and border operations in the Wales and South–West region. To read the reports, and the full responses to both, please visit: [UK Border Agency | Chief Inspector of the UK Border Agency](#)

Agency unveils Europe’s largest immigration removal centre

On 2 August, Immigration Minister Damian Green announced the opening of two new wings at Harmondsworth immigration removal centre (IRC), making it Europe’s largest.

The unveiling of additional detention space comes as the agency is intensifying enforcement activity across the country to crackdown on illegal working, sham marriages, bogus colleges and organised immigration crime.

The new high security accommodation is ready for use, and at full capacity can house 364 detainees, significantly enhancing the agency’s ability to remove foreign criminals from the UK. To read more about this story, go to our [website](#).

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Refugee Migrant Justice and finding a legal representative

Refugee and Migrant Justice went into administration in June 2010. People who were represented by Refugee and Migrant Justice and wish to find new representation can read our information on finding **legal advice**.

The Legal Services Commission has published a list of legal aid providers who operate in the same areas of the country as Refugee and Migrant Justice. The list can be found on the **Legal Services Commission website**. You can also contact **Community Legal Advice** via 0845 345 4345 or use their website to obtain details of other legal aid representatives in your area.

New UK Passport Design

On 5 October, the Identity and Passport Service (IPS) will be unveiling their new UK passport design. The new UK passport will feature improved physical and electronic security features to ensure that it remains one of the most trusted and secure documents in the world. The new design will incorporate 3 main changes:

- The personal details page will be at the front rather than the back
- The electronic chip will be placed in the back cover
- The internal pages will feature new designs.

The design features pages made from composite images have been created specifically to represent iconic landscapes. The design is being updated to comply with International Aviation Authority (ICAO) standards. The new security features will help to fight identity fraud.

Previously issued passports will remain valid until their expiry. It is usual to have several issues of a country's passport in circulation at one time. For more information on current passport designs, please see IPS Basic Checks Document at www.ips.gov.uk. IPS has also produced a leaflet called 'Changes to the Passport'. It can be downloaded at www.ips.gov.uk

Charging for Immigration, Nationality & Visa Services 2010–11

On 9 September we announced that we are proposing changes to immigration fees. We have laid Regulations to amend at/below cost fees for immigration and nationality applications for 2010/11 from 1 October 2010. We will lay further Regulations to amend our above cost fees as soon as Parliament sits in October. These fees will be implemented in November if approved by Parliament. A copy of the proposed fees table is available through the following link www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk

We are happy to arrange specific meetings to discuss any areas of interest with you. If you feel this would be helpful please contact us at this email address Charging.Consultation@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk



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Beware of bogus websites

We have recently been made aware of websites using similar names to websites operated by the UK Border Agency which make inappropriate claims about processing UK visa applications. The UK Border Agency is the official UK government authority providing information and guidance for visa applicants and for making decisions on visa applications for the United Kingdom. We operate through the following official websites:

- UK Border Agency corporate website: www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk
- UK Border Agency Visa Services website: www.ukvisas.gov.uk
- UK Border Agency Online Application Service (Visa4UK): www.visa4uk.fco.gov.uk
- **Local websites** operated by our commercial partners, CSC Worldbridge and VFS Global, and British Embassies, High Commissions and Consulates around the world.

We would advise you to avoid all other websites claiming to be in partnership with the UK Border Agency as they may be operating on a purely commercial basis and have no authorised affiliation with either the Home Office or the UK Border Agency. Please let us know if you come across such websites. To avoid confusion and save costs we are embarking on a web rationalisation programme.

UK Border Agency publishes its response to the Independent Chief Inspector's report – An Inspection of the UK Visa Section

The UK Border Agency has published its response to the Independent Chief Inspector's Report – An Inspection of the UK Visa Section: Pakistan Settlement Applications. Our response and the Chief Inspector's report can be found at: [UK Border Agency | Chief Inspector of the UK Border Agency](#)

Business Express Programme in Kuwait

Introduced in November 2009, the Business Express Programme (BEP) is for third country nationals working for established companies who wish to travel to the UK as business visitors.

Around 30 companies are currently signed up to the programme. Head of UKTI in Kuwait, Duncan Hoyland, said: "BEP means that companies can get the right people to the right meetings at the right time. In today's fast moving business environment it's great to know that companies understand that we are here to help them by removing barriers to trade. BEP clearly gives the UK an advantage over other markets where the visa process is very much slower."



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Gurkha ties reinforced

In May, the Brigade of Gurkhas presented International Group with an award recognising their work on last year's policy changes around the settlement of ex-Gurkhas. Building on this and reinforcing the strong partnership between the Brigade and International Group, a serving Gurkha recently completed a two week secondment in Marsham Street.

Probably the first Gurkha to work in the Home Office, he was usually based at the Headquarters Brigade of Gurkhas. During his secondment, he analysed settlement patterns for former soldiers in the Brigade to inform future armed forces settlement policy. He said, "This was a great experience for me and I am really grateful for the opportunity." Following his secondment, he will be posted to an infantry battalion, and expects to be deployed for his second tour to Afghanistan next year.

Protecting small ports in East Anglia

The agency has appealed to the public to report suspicious goings on at small ports, airfields or remote coastal areas in East Anglia.

Anyone who has seen suspicious activity along the coast or unusual light aircraft behaviour can reach us by:

- calling our 24 hours-hotline – 0800 595000
- writing to us at Custom House, View Point Road, Felixstowe, Suffolk, IP11 3RF, or
- emailing us at teamindia@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk

All information is treated as confidential. For more information please visit: [UK Border Agency | Protecting small ports in East Anglia](#)

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Cannabis seized after lorry search at Portsmouth

UK Border Agency officers have seized 100kgs of cannabis resin after finding it aboard a lorry in Portsmouth ferry port. The cannabis is currently being tested to determine its street value, but is believed to be worth approximately £300,000. We also recently seized at Tibury cocaine worth £8.25 million. The UK Border Agency is at the forefront of the fight to stop illegal drugs entering the UK and we are determined to protect society from activity which can have such a destructive impact on local communities as well as individuals. To read more about this story please visit: [UK Border Agency | Cannabis seized after lorry search at Portsmouth](#)

Anyone with information about suspected smuggling should contact our hotline on 0800 59 5000.



Operation Garnet

Launched in November 2008, Operation Garnet aims to stop Chinese nationals using low cost air carriers to illegally enter the UK from Italy.

The joint Italian police, UK Border Agency, SOCA, Europol initiative has been responsible for a reduction of 75% in the number of Chinese nationals arriving in the UK illegally from Italy without valid travel documents. It has also seen the arrest of over 100 individuals who were trying to leave Italy to enter Ireland and the UK illegally. Smugglers were charging up to 17,000 Euros for a passage from China to the UK, using counterfeit identity documents.

In January 2010, four Chinese nationals and two Malaysians were arrested and charged in Italy. These were the six key figures responsible for arranging passage to Italy from China, and from Italy to Ireland and the UK. Europol have been able to produce a detailed picture of a complex smuggling group who are able to change tactics, routes and personnel as and when required.

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Security deal signed with Kuwait

The UK and Kuwait are to work together on international security after an agreement was signed on 9 August. Security Minister Baroness Pauline Neville-Jones signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Gulf state guaranteeing close work between the two countries. As well as sharing expertise on international security and counter terrorism, the deal will mean close co-operation in a range of areas, including human trafficking, drug smuggling and cyber crime. To read more about this story visit: [UK Border Agency | Security deal signed with Kuwait](#)

National Crime Agency

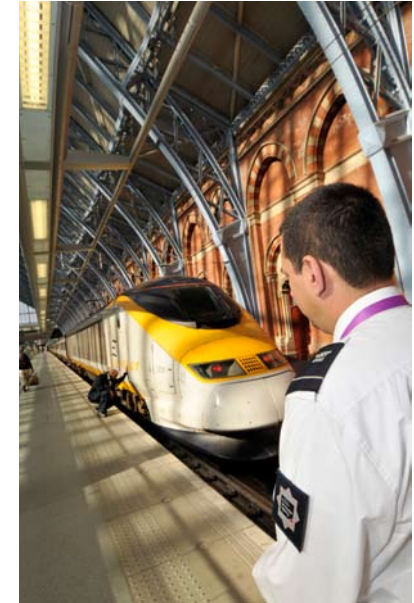
In July the Home Secretary announced a radical shake up of policing, including the establishment of a National Crime Agency. Part of the role of the new agency will be to enhance the policing of the border to crack down on the trafficking of people, weapons, drugs and wildlife.

The National Crime Agency, UK Border Agency and police forces will work to strengthen arrangements to deal with serious crime and other cross-boundary policing challenges, and extend collaboration between forces to modernise and strengthen the border and to deliver better value for money. [Radical reforms for police announced | Home Office](#)

Cash seized after brief encounter at St Pancras

Approximately 55,000 Euros have been seized from a German man who arrived at St Pancras International station with the cash stuffed inside his pants.

Officers from the agency made the discovery after the man got off a train from Brussels on 18 August. He claimed he had the cash, which was largely in 500-euro notes, for business.



Officers seized the money under the Proceeds of Crime Act and the cash will only be returned if the man can prove to a court that it came from a legitimate source and was for a legitimate purpose. To read more about this story please visit: [UK Border Agency | Cash seized after brief encounter at St Pancras](#)

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Tier 2 (General) interim limit – new guidance for employers

On 19 July we published guidance for the interim limit on Tier 2 (General), certificates of sponsorship. All sponsors affected by the introduction of the interim limit have received a letter detailing the allocation of certificates they can issue to migrant workers under Tier 2 (General) and how it has been calculated. The guidance can be found as an addendum to the **Tier 2 and Tier 5 sponsor guidance**.

Our recent consultation on limiting numbers of non-EEA economic migrants coming to live and work in the UK has now closed and the interim limit will be replaced by a permanent limit in April 2011. Further updates will be published on our [website](#).

Changes to Tier 4 policy guidance

A series of important changes have been made to the following areas of the student tier (Tier 4) of the points-based system (for further information go to our **Changes to Tier 4 of the points-based system story**). These include:

- the level of English language study
- students applying to change to a different education provider
- US student loans
- students with International Baccalaureate qualifications

Also, from 11 August, under Tier 4 secure English language testing became mandatory for adult students studying below degree level (excluding those on foundation degrees or English language courses).

This test must be taken with a **UK Border Agency-approved provider** before the applicant applies for a confirmation of acceptance for studies (CAS) from the education sponsor.

Full details of these changes and a list of UK Border Agency approved providers can be found in the **secure English language news story**.

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New application forms and guidance for points-based system applicants

On 30 July, the agency published new versions of application forms for the points-based system. These forms, which refer to biometric residence permits instead of identity cards for foreign nationals are for applications made on or after 31 July 2010.

However, in line with paragraph 34(l) of the Immigration Rules, we continued to accept applications made on the previous version of each form up to and including 21 August 2010. We will consider any application submitted up to 21 August under the new Immigration Rules, regardless of which version of the application form sent.

Also on 30 July, we published new versions of our policy guidance for the following points-based system categories:

- Tier 2
- Tier 5 (Temporary Worker)
- dependants of points-based system applicants

To read more about this story, go to our [website](#)

New English language testing for partners

On 29 November, English language tests for all non-European migrants applying to come to the UK to join or marry their settled partner became compulsory.

The new rules will apply to anyone applying as the husband, wife, civil partner, unmarried partner, same-sex partner, fiancé(e) or prospective civil partner of a UK citizen or a person settled in this country. These tests will be compulsory for people applying from within the UK as well as visa applicants from overseas.

A **list of approved English language tests providers** for people applying from within the UK, and for visa applicants from overseas was published on 16 August. For further information about these changes please refer to the **written ministerial statement**.

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Case Resolution Directorate update

On 19 July, Lin Homer updated the Home Affairs Select Committee on the progress being made by the Case Resolution Directorate (CRD) to clear the backlog of older asylum cases. She informed the Committee that up until the end of May, CRD had cleared 277,000 cases, which represented an improvement of 68% since her last update in February. This breaks down as 38% grants of leave, 12% removals and 50% of cases that were data errors. The Directorate has also taken a further 24,500 people off asylum support.

CRD's new director, Jackie Luetchford, held her first sub-forum of the National Asylum Stakeholder Forum on 7 July. The forum is held quarterly to discuss CRD specific issues and is attended by a wide range of our corporate partners. The group was given operational and policy updates and discussed plans for concluding the remaining cohort by next summer.

If you would like a copy of the minutes please contact caseresolution@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk. The next sub-group will be on 9 December.

For further information please contact Evelyn Tilly on 020 8760 4507.

Legal representatives' same-day service extended

From Monday 16 August, legal representatives were able to use the same-day service at Croydon public enquiry office to make applications under Tier 4 of the points-based system and applications using application form FLR(M). This is in addition to the types of application that can already be made using the same-day service.

To find out which application types can be made using the same-day service at our other public enquiry offices, please contact the office that you want to visit.

The [Legal representatives' same-day service page](#) contains more information about the service, explains how to book an appointment, and lists the contact details for each public enquiry office.

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Refugees route to settlement

From August new indefinite leave to remain arrangements will apply to those whose limited leave as a refugee or on humanitarian protection grounds expires. The first affected refugees reached the end of their leave from the end of August onwards; if individuals have a continuing need for protection and wish to remain in the UK, they will need to apply for indefinite leave to remain.

Those individuals granted a limited period of five years' refugee status or humanitarian protection since August 2005 will be able to apply for indefinite leave to remain from August 2010. There will not have to pay a fee when submitting their application for indefinite leave to remain on the settlement protection route.

It is in the interest of refugees and those with humanitarian protection to apply in time (i.e. before the expiry date of their leave) to ensure the speedy resolution of their case and the continuation of their leave. The application form should be submitted in the month before the individual's current leave expires.

The application form, details of how and when to apply and the documentary evidence required can be found on the agency's [website](#). Queries about the settlement protection route can be e-mailed to:
settlement.protection@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Assisted Voluntary Returns (AVR)

The article about AVR in Issue 2 of UK Border Agency News contained some errors in the first paragraph and in the contact details.

The AVR Families and Children programme (AVRFC) is available to families comprising of one or two parents or legal guardians, and at least one child under 18, regardless of whether they are asylum applicants or irregular migrants. The scheme also applies to unaccompanied children under 18, and the relocation grant of £500 and reintegration assistance to the value of £1500 applies to each individual.

The Voluntary Assisted Returns and Reintegration Programme (VARRP) is for individuals who have sought asylum, whether at the application, refusal, appeal or post-appeal stage, and includes £500 relocation and £1000 reintegration assistance. The AVR for Irregular Migrants programme (AVRIM) is on hold from 1 September for the rest of the financial year but will still be open to vulnerable individuals considered on a case-by-case basis.

For further information, please contact
Steve.Hall@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk



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New pilot check and send service for settlement applications

From October customers applying for settlement on application form SET (M) as a spouse, civil partner, unmarried partner or same-sex partner of a British citizen or person settled in the UK will now have the option of submitting their application via the Settlement Checking Service (SCS) being provided in 12 Local Authorities.

Since 2005, people applying for British citizenship have been able to submit their applications via local authority partners using the Nationality Checking Service (NCS). Currently, over 100 local authorities provide this service.

The Settlement Checking Service pilot builds on the success of the Nationality Checking Service by extending the check and send function to applications for settlement (Indefinite Leave to Remain). The pilot service will process SET (M) applications from spouses, civil partners, unmarried partners or same-sex partners of British citizens or persons settled in the UK.

The pilot will be gradually rolled-out from early October until the end of the year. 12 local authorities experienced in Nationality Checking Service provision have been selected to take part. As each local authority goes live customers will be informed of the new service via the UK Border Agency website (settlement pages).

The Settlement Checking Service pilot will provide assurance to customers of a complete and valid application, while expanding the service remit of local authorities and creating efficiency and productivity benefits for the agency.

There will be a review and evaluation of the pilot after 6 and 12 months. Depending on the conclusions and recommendations, the Settlement Checking Service will continue with a view to extending it to other Local Authorities throughout the UK and to other types of settlement application applications.

Information about the roll out of SCS will be published on the UK Border Agency website at the end of September. We will provide an update on the progress of the pilot in the next UK Border Agency bi-monthly update. For further information please contact Anne Roberts on 0151 237 5531.

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Changes to the certificate of approval scheme

We announced on 26 July that we intend to abolish the ‘certificate of approval’ scheme. A Remedial Order under the Human Rights Act 1998 has been laid in Parliament to achieve this aim. At present, any migrant who is already in the UK and is subject to immigration control must apply for a certificate of approval before they can get married or register a civil partnership in this country (unless they are getting married within the Anglican Church).

The government is now seeking to remedy the declaration through the UK courts that the scheme is incompatible with Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights (read with Article 12). Additionally, changes made following rulings from the courts have weakened the scheme, and it is no longer an effective method of preventing sham marriage. To read more about this story, go to our [website](#).

Supreme Court judgement on failed asylum seekers

On 28 July, the Supreme Court ruled that Article 11 of the EU Reception Conditions Directive should apply in some circumstances to failed asylum seekers who have exhausted their appeal rights. Specifically, this means that failed asylum seekers who have made further submissions asserting they have a fresh claim for asylum which have been outstanding for 12 months or more will now be entitled to apply for permission to work.

The government is currently considering the detail of the judgment and an announcement setting out how the government intends to change current rules will be made as soon as possible. To read more about this story, go to our [website](#).

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UK welcomes the first group of Bhutanese refugees from Nepal

The first group of Bhutanese refugees from Nepal have arrived in the UK under the Gateway Protection programme. The programme, which resettles some of the world's most vulnerable refugees, is operated by the UK Border Agency in partnership with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), International Organisation for Migration (IOM) local authorities and UK partners, including Refugee Action and Refugee Council and is match-funded by the European Refugee Fund.

The UK agreed to take 750 refugees in 2010/11. Since the start of the programme in 2004, the UK has resettled over 2,700 refugees including Liberians from Sierra Leone, Congolese from Tanzania, Zambia and Uganda and Iraqis from Jordan.

In May, the UK Border Agency sent a resettlement mission team to Nepal to interview Bhutanese refugees. The refugees have lived in camps for almost 20 years after being forced out by the Bhutanese authorities in the early 1990s. Over 34,500 have been resettled to western countries in one of UNHCR's biggest resettlement programmes. This is the first time the UK has taken Bhutanese refugees under the Gateway Programme.

100 refugees were selected and in August, 37 Bhutanese refugees from eastern Nepal arrived in the UK ready to start their new lives in the north west of England. The remaining 63 will arrive within the next few months.

Auffea Woodhall, mission team leader, said "This was our first mission to Nepal and we are so pleased that so soon after our mission we are able to resettle the first group of Bhutanese refugees in the UK with the next groups coming within a couple of months. It was a great team effort with our team working closely with UNHCR, IOM, Refugee Action and local authorities." For further information on the Gateway Protection Programme, please go to our [website](#).

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Tackling immigration Crime

We are committed to disrupting all forms of immigration crime, from illegal entry, fraudulent marriages and colleges, illegal working to those who organise immigration crime. Our Immigration Crime Teams are working with the police, local councils and organisations to investigate and prosecute those who commit immigration related crime in our communities.

Immigration crime is not a victimless crime; it affects everyone from businesses, local communities to people themselves. Legitimate businesses are put under unfair pressure by dishonest competitors who employ people who have no right to work in the UK. Employees are often paid below the national minimum wage and have no health or leave entitlements.

In one month alone, July to August this year, our Immigration Crime Teams across the UK have arrested over 380 people suspected of illegal working in hotels, restaurants and manufacturing industries. In the same month, our officers also prevented over 42 sham weddings from taking place. We are working closely with the church and registrars to identify suspect marriages. Where there is evidence to suggest that a wedding may be fake we will investigate and, where necessary, intervene to stop it happening.

Further details of our work in this area can be found at: [UK Border Agency | News and updates](#)



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The Scottish Refugee Council Guardianship Pilot

The Scottish Refugee Council guardianship pilot, the first of its kind in the UK, commenced on 2 August. Its aim is to provide independent support to separated children who claim asylum and to guide them through the immigration, social, legal and welfare systems.

The project seeks to allocate a guardian to all newly arrived separated children in areas within two hours travel of Glasgow. It is expected that separated children involved in the pilot will have an improved experience of the immigration and child welfare processes. The intention is also to develop a child-centred model of practice that promotes interagency working and provides better information on which to base immigration decisions.

Key partner organisations have been invited to form part of the project board and these include: the UK Border Agency, the Scottish Government and Glasgow City Council. The UNHCR have agreed to sit on the group to observe proceedings.

The project has been funded by the Big Lottery Fund, the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and the Scottish Government and will last for 30 months. For further information refer to the [Scottish Refugee Council Press Release on the pilot](#).

Children in Detention

The Coalition Agreement set out a commitment to end the detention of children for immigration purposes. An initial period of consultation and discussion was held with partners over the summer to seek views on the way forward. We received over 340 written responses for which we were very grateful.

Significant progress has been made in working towards this commitment and we are currently piloting some proposed changes to our approach in the North West and London. We have also announced that the family unit at Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre will close.

A communications event is being held on 8 October to share current thinking on working with families in more detail and to report back on early progress on the pilots.

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Advice for employers

The UK Border Agency works with employers to help them establish individuals right to work in the UK and takes robust action to tackle illegal working. Updated guidance published soon will help employers understand the law on illegal working and their role in this. It includes details of the document checks they should do to establish a statutory excuse from paying a civil penalty, and provides images of a selection of the documents and stamps/endorsements that migrant workers may present as evidence of their right to work in the UK. The guidance also contains important information on applying recent policy updates. It will also provide new information on employing students, and on employing asylum seekers and refugees and those with humanitarian protection status.

The new guidance along with other booklets for employers will be found on the UK Border Agency website at:

www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/employersandsponsors/preventingillegalworking/

We will take robust action against employers who employ illegal migrant workers. Since the start of the illegal working civil penalty regime, over 4800 penalties have been issued to employers for employing illegal migrant workers. The maximum penalty per worker is £10,000. Employers are increasingly aware of their responsibility to undertake right to work checks, working together we can continue to combat illegal working.

Points of contact are listed at www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/employers/preventingillegalworking/support/

For general enquiries on preventing illegal working and carrying out the required document checks, call the Sponsorship and Employers' Helpline on 0300 123 4699.



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National Asylum Stakeholder Forum (NASF)

The last NASF took place on 29 July and was attended by Damian Green, Minister of State for Immigration. He updated the group on ending detention of children for immigration purposes.

The Minister also discussed the Asylum Improvement Project, which is exploring new ways to improve the asylum system to speed up the processing of applications, improve the quality and speed of removals and to look at the overall and unit cost of the system.

John Wilkes, Scottish Refugee Council presented on the launch of the guardianship pilot, an approach to safeguarding the rights and interests of separated children (see full story on [page 16](#)). A further discussion also took place on access to legal advice.

For further information please email [Adam Whisker](#) or [Sheelagh Warde](#).

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Upcoming partner meetings

Partner Group	Date of Next Meeting	Contact
Gateway Steering Group	6 October 2010	Helen.Gray@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk
Corporate Partner Group	14 October 2010	Carl.Padgett@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk
Safeguarding Children Advisory Group	19 October 2010	Lauren.Ashton@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk Loraine.Thrower@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk
National Migration Group (NMG)	8 December 2010	Adam.Whisker@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk
Case Resolution Sub-group	9 December 2010	Caseresolution@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk
Detention User Group (DUG)	25 October 2010	Carolyn.Seaman@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk
Scottish Asylum Stakeholder Forum (SASF)	11 November 2010	Miles.Matthews@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk
Voluntary Returns Steering Group (VRSG)	TBC	Helen.Cordingley@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk
National Asylum Stakeholder Operational Forum (NASOF)	11 October 2010	Adam.Whisker@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk
National Asylum Stakeholder Forum (NASF)	18 November 2010	Adam.Whisker@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

For further information about any of the groups listed above please email the relevant contact. There is information about other stakeholder groups at: [UK Border Agency | Stakeholder groups](#).

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