

## SPRING NEWSLETTER 2017

### Welcome to the Spring edition of the LSCB newsletter.

On the next page you will find a summary of the issues the Board discussed at its most recent meeting, on 25 April. It is impossible to convey in a brief summary the depth and detail of the work that goes on at and behind the scenes at the Board. A recurring theme in several items, for example, was the central importance of the work schools do in safeguarding children – not just those children who are already identified as at risk or in need, but with all children. Schools are the leading agencies in raising children's awareness of the risks that they may be exposed to and equipping them with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to protect themselves against those risks. Many of the contributors also stressed how important it is to recognise the early age at which these risks arise – whether in relation to esafety, cyber bullying and sexting, or the risks of gang involvement. In this latter context, the transition from primary to secondary school can be a particularly vulnerable time.

The Board also considered a number of reports summarising the learning from audits and learning reviews of individual cases. I'm really pleased that after struggling for some time to get some real 'teeth' into our audit activity, we are now getting audits which generate some really focused learning about both the positives of multi-agency practice and some significant areas where we need to see improvement. The [audit programme for 2017/18](#) includes audits of the effectiveness of child protection planning with children experiencing neglect, and multi-agency practice with children who go missing, on safety and peer on peer sexual abuse, with children with mental health problems, and with children at risk of female genital

mutilation. If you would like to know more about the LSCB's audit work, get in touch with Andrea Barrell, Quality Assurance Manager, at [andrea.barrell@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:andrea.barrell@redbridge.gov.uk).

What we now need to crack is the issue of how to disseminate and embed the learning from this work in practice. The audit of work with children in families with adults with additional needs (in particular, problems of adult mental ill health, domestic violence, or substance misuse) brought forward a richness of learning which it is not possible to capture in a summary of a few sentences. This learning will be shared at a [multi-agency briefing session](#) on 13 June – details are in the recently published [LSCB Training Programme for 2017/18](#) and I really would strongly encourage you to make time to attend this event. Similarly, a briefing session on learning from another recent audit of work with children at risk of sexual exploitation is taking place on 23 May – details again in the [Training Programme](#).

The Training Programme is very comprehensive and includes courses, briefings and workshops on a very wide range of topics, aimed at professionals working with children across all agencies – teachers, police officers, health staff, social workers, voluntary sector staff, and many others. Again I would urge you to have a really good look at the programme, and to think about and discuss with your manager the areas of safeguarding practice in which you could benefit from more training, up to date knowledge, or professional development. Then get yourself booked on! There is a small charge to your agency for full day (£40) and half day (£20) training courses, but the programme also includes many workshops and briefings which are free of charge.

Can I finish with an advanced plug for Private Fostering Week, which



this year runs from 3 to 7 July? We know that there are many more children who are privately fostered than are notified to Children's Services and these children and their carers are missing out on the protection and support that they are entitled to receive under the [Private Fostering Regulations](#). The development and delivery of a multi-agency plan to change this situation is one of the LSCB's priorities for 2017/18, and we will shortly be publishing an Information Pack for everybody working with children to support this work. In the meantime, there is a good deal of useful information on private fostering on our [website](#).

Best wishes

**John**

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# Board Report

## Feedback from the LSCB Meeting – 25 April 2017

### Among other items, the Board:

- Received and discussed the regular multi-agency performance scorecard, which contained data up to the end of Quarter 3 2016 – 2017 (December 2016). We noted that the trend of falling numbers of referrals to children's social care is continuing. The number of referrals received up to 31 December 2016 was 17% down on the same period the previous year. The evidence suggests though that while the number of referrals is falling, levels of complexity, need and risk in the cases that are referred are increasing, with a continuing increase in the number of S47 investigations undertaken (where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child may be suffering significant harm) and the number of children on child protection plans continuing to rise.
- Undertook its end of year review of progress against the [2016/17 Business Plan](#). Five actions out of 29 were rated as 'red' at the end of the year. These related to lack of progress in accessing Metropolitan Police data on CSE to enrich our local understanding and 'problem profile'; our inability to find a mechanism for linking health and social care databases on adult mental ill health, domestic violence and substance abuse in families with children; lack of progress on establishing an integrated pathway into early help for children in families with adults with identified additional needs, which requires additional development work on the children's social care Protocol system; and lack of progress in rolling out use of the Neglect Toolkit as an assessment tool across partner agencies.
- Agreed the [Business Plan for 2017/18](#).
- Received a report on safeguarding audits at Whipps Cross, and very positive reports of the findings on safeguarding practice at recent CQC inspections at both Whipps Cross and BHRUT Hospitals. BHRUT is now out of 'special measures'!
- Received and discussed a summary report on the learning from a recent multi agency audit on work with families with multiple needs. While much positive work was identified, key areas for continuing improvement included the need to maintain a rigorous focus on the child when working with parents with very considerable needs of their own. This was particularly important and difficult when there were many children in the family. Auditors found that while risks were often identified in relation to the most significant presenting needs, the more subtle needs of other children could be missed and left unassessed.
- Agreed an ambitious [Multi-Agency Audit Programme for 2017/18](#).
- Received and discussed a report on a recent review of gang activity in Redbridge. While there is much more work needed on this, it does appear that gang activity in Redbridge is a more significant issue in the borough than has previously been recognised, including a concern about 'County Lines', where young people are travelling outside the borough working for gangs active in illegal drugs markets
- Received the draft Annual Report of the Child Death Overview Panel, which is being presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board on 15 May.
- Discussed two reports summarising the learning from reviews of two recent cases involving children with severe disabilities. In both cases issues of non-compliance or disguised compliance on the part of parents had created a dynamic which led to significant difficulties in multi-agency working. The Chair undertook to bring forward proposals, in conjunction with the Chair of the Board's Learning and Improvement sub group, on how this learning can most effectively be disseminated and embedded in practice.

## Priority 1

### To improve services for young people experiencing mental ill-health

We are currently working with partners across the Local Authority and Health on drafting a new Suicide Prevention Strategy for Redbridge. We will ensure that children and young people are considered appropriately within the Strategy and that signposting to specialist agencies for support, such as [Young Minds](#) and the [Samaritans](#) is provided. The Samaritans, in partnership with Facebook, have recently produced a guide for young people who are concerned about a friend on Facebook – [Help a Friend in Need](#). We shall also be focusing on the need for early intervention in the Strategy, so that young people experiencing anxiety, depression or other forms of mental ill-health are identified and provided with support at an early stage.



## Priority 2

### To strengthen the protection and support of children and young people exposed to exploitation and harmful practices

A Task and Finish Group is leading on the development of a local policy, referral pathway and identification of Single Points of Contact (SPOCs) as a response to the statutory reporting requirements relating to cases of human trafficking.

An important part of this work will be enabling those working with children, young people and families across all areas to identify those that have been trafficked or are at risk of being so.

The Group, led by the Borough's Community Safety Service, will also be identifying resources and support to enable signposting for victims.

To find out more about human trafficking, sometimes referred to as modern slavery, why not come on an [LSCB course](#) or view the information on our [website](#). ECPAT, the UK specialist agency working with victims of trafficking, provide a free elearning module '[In Your Hands – Safeguarding Child Victims of Trafficking](#)'.

## Priority 3

### To strengthen quality and impact of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)/Child Protection (CP) Chair role, particularly with reference to cases of neglect

Independent Review Officers (IROs) and Child Protection Conference Chairs have a unique role to play in safeguarding children and young people. The [Ofsted Inspection of Redbridge Children's Services](#) last year identified that some development work was needed to strengthen their leadership of improving outcomes for children and young people through ensuring SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time bound) care planning, building relationships with children and young people to ensure they are understood and their voices are heard, and challenging practice.

The post-Ofsted Inspection Action Plan details the different pieces of work that are being undertaken to gain the necessary improvements – one of which is to re-train on the Strengthening Families methodology for Child Protection Conferences. The LSCB will be monitoring progress and looking specifically through audit at Care Planning for children subject to a Child Protection Plan on the basis of neglect.

# Priorities cont ...

## Priority 4

### To develop and implement a robust multi-agency action plan to substantially increase private fostering notifications

A standalone information pack designed to raise awareness of Private Fostering will be published shortly which can be used within agencies such as early years settings, schools, colleges, GP surgeries etc. The pack will include a quick guide, leaflets and a poster, plus a short PowerPoint presentation that can be shown to staff during meetings. To find out more about Private Fostering, see our feature on [page 7](#).

## Priority 5

### To strengthen and improve support to children and young people on e-safety and peer-on-peer sexual harassment

Young people have told us that one of the main causes of concern for them around safeguarding is peer-on-peer sexual harassment and abuse. We are responding to this by raising awareness through training for professionals, particularly in schools, and provision of support and guidance to children and young people.

## Priority 6

### Further develop and improve safeguarding arrangements for children and young people that go missing from home or care

Developmental work on responding to children and young people going missing will include more effective use of data, improved information sharing between agencies and awareness raising across the workforce through training and briefings by the Practice Lead in LB Redbridge for Missing Children. If your Team, Service or Agency would like to find out more, or have a visit from the Practice Lead, complete a LSCB [Contact Form](#).

## Priority 7

### Monitoring and ensuring the effectiveness of the arrangements for safeguarding children and young people in Redbridge in the new Metropolitan Police structure

The Met Police have implemented a Basic Command Unit (BCU) model across Redbridge, Havering, and Barking & Dagenham. The LSCB will be looking to ensure that the new Safeguarding Command continues to provide a robust response to children and young people at risk through close monitoring and engagement with senior Police Officers.



## Priority 8

### To further strengthen the LSCB's monitoring and oversight of practice

The new [Multi-Agency Audit Programme 2017 – 2018](#) has been published and work on the first audit, Care Plans of children and young people subject to CP Plan under the category of 'Neglect', has commenced.

The Section 11 Audit 2016 – 2018 is currently in the agency action planning stage. An amalgamated Action Plan will be presented to the Board in July.

Last month, the LSCB Chair wrote to our local sports clubs and coaches to provide guidance on safeguarding in sport. The letter can be viewed on the [LSCB website](#).

# Service Highlight: Safer London



**Safer London** is the leading London charity working to prevent and address gangs, exploitation, crime and vulnerability among young people. Last year we worked with around 7500 young people. We believe every young person should be given the opportunity to live, free from exposure to gangs, exploitation and crime. We provide needs led, intensive support, early intervention and mentoring through our extensive pan London services. Safer London's expertise comes from providing intensive support to young people in crisis. The information gleaned from this work has helped build a clearer picture of the challenges, and has enabled Safer London to co-design services with young Londoners giving them exactly what they say they want and need.

Our services include:

- the Empower programme which provides support to young people and their families affected by child sexual exploitation (CSE);
- missing services;
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) work with young men,;
- mentoring for young people;
- the London Gang Exit scheme for gang involved/affiliated young people to support them to exit; and
- Pan London Housing Reciprocal and Training & Consultancy.

Specifically in Redbridge, our Empower Programme addresses young people's experiences of sexual violence and exploitation. Empower is our longest-running programme: we've been pioneering services for young people who have experienced sexual exploitation since 2011. Empower places vulnerable young people aged 11 -18 at the core of its support network. This is a multi-stranded programme that not only provides both 1:1 and group based support for young people, but also provides professionals with specialist advice and case consultation, along with training.

The aim of our direct support is to offer both practical and emotional support to young people. We give them a safe and confidential space to talk about their experiences and relationships. We provide young people with the skills and awareness to make informed decisions and to give them practical tools to help keep them safe. There is a focus on safety planning, building a positive support network and developing coping strategies. Central to our model is to embed our specialist Young People's Advocates (YPA's) within Local Authority, multi-agency teams to ensure that referral and progression pathways for young people at serious risk of experiencing sexual violence are clear and robust. As such, in Redbridge we are co-located within the **Child Protection and Assessment Team (CPAT)**. In 2016, we joined the LSCB as one of a number of voluntary and community representatives on the Board.

For more information about Empower, contact the team on [empower@saferlondon.org.uk](mailto:empower@saferlondon.org.uk) or 020 7021 0301.

**Safer London supporting Redbridge LSCB awareness raising events for National CSE Awareness Day in March 2017.**



# LSCB Events Calendar

To keep fully informed about LSCB events, do follow us on



## Safer Internet Day (SID) 2017



On SID – a group of enthusiastic professionals and volunteers from across our partner agencies, including RCYPN, Community Safety, Schools Police, Health and FiND, took turns to promote the important messages from this day along the theme of ‘Be the change: Unite for a better Internet’. We engaged with over 170 children,

young people and their families and carers, sharing leaflets and guidance on staying safe on-line. Thank you to all that came to visit our stand.

## National Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Awareness Day 2017



We were out again for CSE Awareness Day in March, talking to families about the signs of exploitation, staying safe, getting support and making a referral. Our Youth Bus was in the Town Centre providing opportunities for young people to talk to experienced professionals. In recognition of the importance of safeguarding children and young people from CSE, the Redbridge Enforcement Team



chose CSE as the theme for their Redbridge Action Day (RAD) that week and went out to over 50 Redbridge businesses including mini cab offices, hotels, and care homes.

## Training

The new [LSCB Training Programme 2017 – 2018](#) has been published and includes some new and exciting learning events including:

- [Child and Adolescent Mental Health;](#)
- [Harmful Sexual Behaviours;](#) and
- [Safer Recruitment](#)

## Department for Education (DfE) Public Awareness Campaign

The LSCB has been leading locally on the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the DfE “Together, we can tackle child abuse”. This has included promoting messages to raise awareness using our social media feeds. The campaign is focusing on the signs and symptoms of child abuse; how to make a referral and what happens to your referral. If you want to join in with the Campaign, materials are free to [download](#). One of the highlights to date is the Special Report week held with LBC Radio in March where experts including Edward Timpson MP, Emily Cherry from the NSPCC and Lucy Ivankovich, Barnardo’s shared their views. If you missed these interviews, they are still available to [download](#).



## Review of Safeguarding Children and Young People from Radicalisation and Extremism Training

A multi-agency two day training programme took place on 10 and 13 March, delivered by the Inter-Diversity Ltd. Attendees included professionals from Community Safety, Schools, Children’s Social Care, Youth Service, Health and the Police. The training was well received and the specialism of the provider greatly appreciated. Attendees felt that they were now more equipped to recognise risk and assess, provide credible evidence in court, and work more confidently in this area in order to protect children and young people. The importance of this area of safeguarding was poignantly highlighted by the Westminster attack which took place just over a week later.

# Feature: Private Fostering

## What is Private Fostering?

Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (or 18 if disabled) is cared for by someone who is not their parent or a close relative. Close relatives are defined as step-parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts (whether related by blood or marriage) as defined in the [Children Act 1989](#). This is a private arrangement made between a parent and carer, for 28 days or more and there is a legal requirement to report this to the Local Authority.

## When might it happen?

Common examples of when private fostering happens are:

- children sent from abroad to live with other families, or extended family members, in the UK;
- children who have to live away from home as a result of parental separation or arguments in the family;
- children whose parents have paid someone to care for them whilst they are away working or studying;
- teenagers living with the family of a girlfriend or boyfriend; or
- children attending residential school who stay with a host family during holidays.

## What does the law require?

The law says that all private fostering arrangements have to be registered with the local authority where the private foster carer lives and there is a duty on the carer, parents and professionals to make a notification.

The Council has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their Borough, and to ensure that those in private fostering arrangements are safe and secure.

To fulfil this duty, the Council will:

- Act on information given by parents, carers and anyone else about a private fostering arrangement and visit to assess the suitability of the arrangements. This includes making checks on the carer and their home, speaking to the child alone.
- Make regular visits in line with the law to ensure that the child remains safe and is well cared for, offering advice, support and guidance. The first visit should be within one

week of the notification and then every six weeks for the first year, moving to at least every 12 weeks in subsequent years.

Full information about this process can be viewed on the Council's policy and procedures [portal](#).

## Why is notification important?

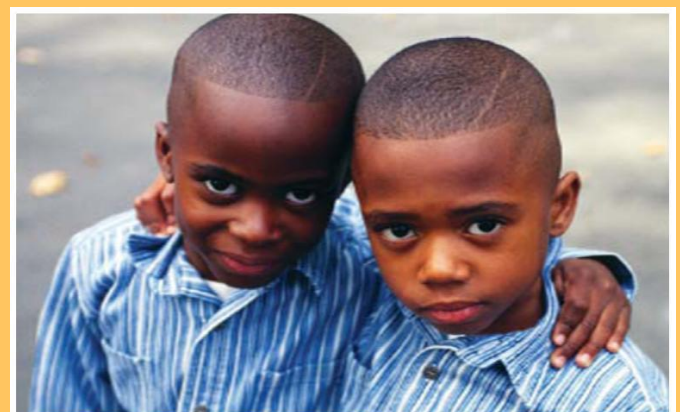
Apart from being a legal requirement, children living away from their birth family can be more vulnerable and it is important for safeguarding to ensure that they are living with people that care for them, they are happy and that the accommodation provides a positive environment for them.

## How do I make a notification?

As a professional, or a parent or carer involved in a private fostering arrangement in Redbridge, you should contact the Child Protection and Assessment Team (CPAT) on 020 8708 3885 (09:00 to 17:00 weekdays) or 020 8708 5897 (evenings and weekends) or e-mail [CPAT.Referrals@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:CPAT.Referrals@redbridge.gov.uk).

## How can I find out more?

- Look out for our soon to be published information pack relating to Private Fostering.
- Attend a [Private Fostering Briefing](#) as part of the [LSCB Training Programme 2017 – 2018](#).
- Read more on the [LSCB website](#) and download the different resources available, including a [leaflet for professionals](#), one for [parents and carers](#), and another for [children and young people](#).
- View the short film – [Somebody Else's Child](#).



# Safety News – Family Safety Week 2017

## Family Safety Week 2 – 5 May 2017

Accidents are the biggest killer of children and young people. Statistics from RoSPA – the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents – reveal that every week at least one child under five is killed as the result of an accident, with disadvantaged children most at risk.

As a response to this, RoSPA hold an annual **Family Safety Week**, which runs this year from 2 – 5 May. This week is used as a launch pad for highlighting what we can all do to protect and save young lives through taking very practical steps.



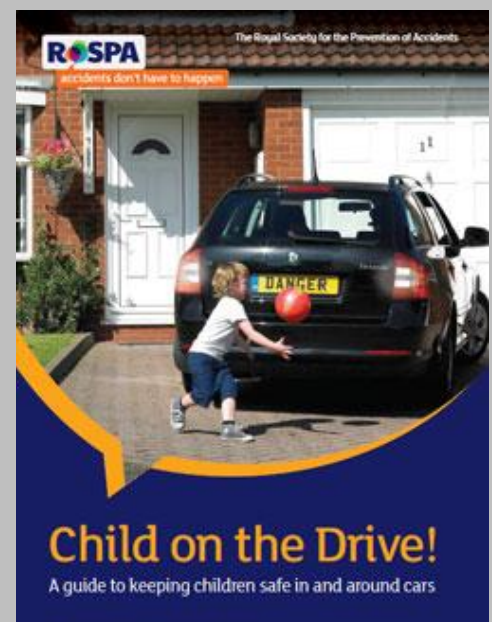
## Further Information

For additional information on Family Safety Week, contact RoSPA via [campaigns@rospa.com](mailto:campaigns@rospa.com) or by completing a **Contact Form**. Follow RoSPA on Twitter [@RoSPA](https://twitter.com/RoSPA) and use the hashtag #FSW for Family Safety Week.

## Free resources!

Whether you are a parent, carer or professional working with families, there is information and [resources](#) available for you free of charge from RoSPA. These include:

- safety posters with top tips for safer bath times, bed times, car seats, play times and meal times;
- helpline posters providing signposting to RoSPA for specific advice on equipment, care etc.
- activity sheets to use with young children to help raise their awareness of safety;
- videos highlighting danger which have led to children dying – including garden ponds, blind cords, and driveways; and
- safety leaflets that can be downloaded and given out to parents and carers.





# Safety Warning – Nitrous Oxide – ‘Balloons’



## What is it?

Nitrous oxide (N<sup>2</sup>O) is a colourless gas used as a depressant-type drug, which means it slows down brain and body responses. In the last few years it has become increasingly used as a social drug amongst young people, particularly at parties and music festivals where it is usually referred to as ‘balloons’, ‘whippets’ or ‘hippy crack’. [Home Office figures](#) show that 7.6% of 16 – 24 year olds said that they had used this form of drug in the year 2013 - 2014. The effects vary depending on how much has been inhaled but usually include a feeling of euphoria, relaxation, calm, dizziness, difficulty in thinking coherently and fits of giggles or laughter. Worryingly, it can also induce hallucinations and severe headaches in some people. It is normally bought in pressured canisters, relatively cheaply. The gas is commonly transferred to a container, e.g. a balloon, from which the gas is inhaled. Discarded canisters are appearing more and more in public areas such as on the streets, in parks etc. which indicates the growing issue and the ease of purchase.

## What are the risks?

Immediate risks are that inhaling nitrous oxide can cause dizziness or affect your judgement, which might make you act carelessly or dangerously and put you at risk of hurting yourself, or others, particularly in an unsafe environment. Other risks include:

- Unconsciousness or death from lack of oxygen. This occurs when the available oxygen for breathing is effectively pushed out by the nitrous oxide. The risk is greater if the gas is consumed in an enclosed space or if a plastic bag is used that covers both nose and mouth.
- Heavy regular use of nitrous oxide can lead to deficiency of vitamin B12 and to a form of anaemia and nerve damage. Regular use may also depress formation of white blood cells.
- It can be hard for the user to judge the amount to take safely. Too much can easily end up in an episode of fainting, an accident or much worse.
- Mixing nitrous oxide with alcohol is especially dangerous as it can increase the risks associated with both substances and can lead to an increased risk of accidents or death.

Young people in Redbridge have been hospitalised due to poisoning from inhaling nitrous oxide.

## Can you get addicted to nitrous oxide?

It may be possible to become psychologically dependent on nitrous oxide, meaning that users develop an increased desire to keep using it despite any harms, but the evidence on this is limited to date. In anecdotal reports, some people have reported developing cravings or feelings that they want to continue using nitrous oxide.

## Is nitrous oxide illegal?

Although nitrous oxide has been legal in the past, since the [Psychoactive Substances Act](#) came into effect on 26 May 2016, it is now illegal to supply or import nitrous oxide for human consumption. Like drinking and driving, it's illegal to drive if your driving has been impaired by taking drugs.

## I'm worried about a child or young person – how can I find out more?

Check out the [Think!](#) website for more details. Alert the young person to the dangers signpost them to information on the [Frank](#) website. In Redbridge, young people can self-refer to [Fusion](#) for support by calling 020 8708 7801 or e-mailing [fusion@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:fusion@redbridge.gov.uk) or be referred by their GP, school nurse, social worker, teacher, or parent/carer.

# Contact Information

## Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)

[LSCB@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:LSCB@redbridge.gov.uk)

Tel: 020 8708 5282

Website: [www.redbridgelscb.org.uk](http://www.redbridgelscb.org.uk)

@RedbridgeLSCB

LSCB Training

[LSCB.Training@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:LSCB.Training@redbridge.gov.uk)

Requests, enquiries and feedback can be made using the on-line [Contact Form](#).

## Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

[DO@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:DO@redbridge.gov.uk)

Tel: 020 8708 5350

Mobile: 07584 127461

## Child Protection Referrals

Tel: 020 8708 3885 (Office Hours)

Tel: 020 8708 5897 (Evenings and weekends)

[CPAT.Referrals@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:CPAT.Referrals@redbridge.gov.uk)

## Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) Notifications

[Nem-tr.CDOP@nhs.net](mailto:Nem-tr.CDOP@nhs.net)

Tel: 020 8708 5961

Mobile: 07966599555



## Your views count!

We want your views on safeguarding issues that are important to YOU. Articles should be 200 – 300 words in length. We also welcome feedback, comments and suggestions for future content. Please contact Lesley Perry, LSCB Business Manager, via [LSCB@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:LSCB@redbridge.gov.uk) or on 020 8708 5282 or 07814 883194. Our next edition – Summer 2017 – will be published in mid-July 2017.