

The Sunday Telegraph

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News

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Sunday Telegraph
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Concerns over new NHS mental health service for military veterans

By Olivia Rudgard
SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

THE NHS is to launch a nationwide scheme to treat military veterans suffering from mental health issues.

The Veterans' Mental Health Com-

plex Treatment Service was designed after former military personnel and their families were asked by the NHS how services could be improved.

However, some veterans have raised concerns that the money will take funds away from existing charity

schemes. Veterans told the *Portsmouth News* that an intensive treatment programme for people with PTSD provided by the charity Combat Stress would be cut and that some veterans were reluctant to go to the NHS.

Sue Freeth, the charity's chief execu-

tive, told the newspaper that intensive treatment plans would need to be funded by donations, but reassured veterans that it would continue to provide residential intensive treatment.

A spokesman for NHS England confirmed that placements at the Combat

Stress facility were being "tapered off as is usual when a provider reaches the end of a contract".

The new service, backed by £3.2 million of funding, will help those who have the most complex needs, including substance misuse and trauma.

May to make it easier to extend homes upwards

By Edward Malnick
WHITEHALL EDITOR

DEVELOPERS and home owners in built-up areas will be allowed to extend the height of properties without planning permission under plans expected to be announced by Theresa May.

The Prime Minister is expected to use a speech on housing tomorrow to announce proposals to give local authorities the power to grant a general approval to build upwards by up to two additional floors, to match the height of neighbouring buildings. Mrs May is also likely to step up the pressure on councils to release more land for the construction of homes, and urge developers to deliver on existing plans to build.

Last night Sajid Javid, the Housing Secretary, told *The Sunday Times* that the Government will impose higher targets on councils for building homes, with those that fail to meet them facing being stripped of their planning powers. He also pledged new rules to help accommodate "key workers", as well as the construction of new "garden cities".

The announcement on upward extensions will be welcomed by senior Conservatives who privately suggested the plan last year only to see a heavily scaled-back version announced by the Government last month.

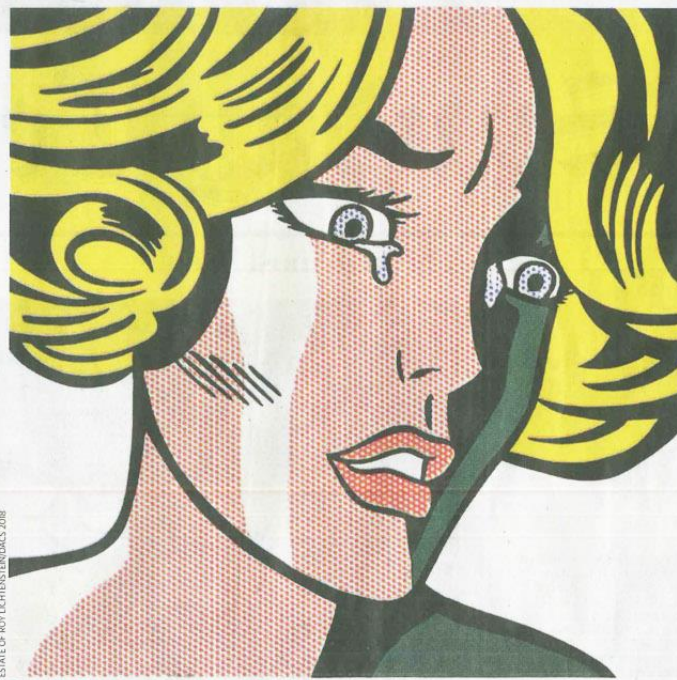
An MP involved in discussions about the policy said they expected the

towards changing permitted development" - the scheme under which parliament grants a general planning permission for certain types of work.

Last month Mr Javid announced plans to amend planning guidance to encourage councils to look favourably on upward development in densely populated areas. But *The Sunday Telegraph* disclosed that several former ministers were concerned that the plan was not "bold" enough. John Penrose, a former architecture minister, Nick Boles, a former planning minister, and Mark Prisk, a former housing minister, wrote to Mr Javid urging the Government to go further.

The plan initially put forward by Mr Penrose would have meant that a home owner could extend the height of a building to match that of the tallest building in its block or the height of mature local trees, without planning permission. Under the plans announced last month, home owners would have to follow the usual process, but the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) will be updated to encourage councils to look favourably on applications for upward extensions.

A new NPPF due to be unveiled tomorrow is expected to include a new provision on upward extensions, but Mrs May is expected to announce a separate consultation on introducing permitted development for building



Out of hiding Roy Lichtenstein's pop art classic *Frightened Girl* (1964) goes on public show for the first time in 25 years at London's Lévy Gorvy gallery from Tuesday until April 21. The painting has been held in a private collection since its last outing in New York in 1993.

NEWS BULLETIN

Three charged over blast that killed five

Three men have been charged with manslaughter and arson over an explosion in Leicester which left five people dead and five injured.

All three men have been charged with five counts of manslaughter and with arson with intent to endanger life. They are in custody and will appear before magistrates in Leicester tomorrow.

The men are Aram Kurd, 33, Hawkar Hassan, 32 and Arkan Ali, 37.

Shane Ragoobar, 18, his brother Sean, 17, Shane's girlfriend Leah Beth Reek, 18, and Viktorija Ijevleva, 22, were killed by the blast in a Polish supermarket with a flat above it. The fifth victim is yet to be formally identified.

£1.5m fund will help carers return to work

Carers will benefit from a £1.5 million fund that will help them return to work in the private sector after time out looking after those who need help, the Home Secretary has announced.

Amber Rudd, who also has responsibility for women and equalities, said it was "truly striking" that nearly nine out of 10 people out of paid work because they are caring for the home or family are women.

The fund, to launch tomorrow, will offer grants to projects which help people return to work in the private sector. It prioritises projects that focus on small and medium enterprises and returners at all skill levels, as well as employers outside London.

Cannabis treatment boy back in British hospital

A boy whose parents want him to be given cannabis to treat a rare form of epilepsy has been rushed back into hospital. Alfie Dingley, aged six, of Kenilworth, Warwick, was admitted after suffering from a cluster of seizures and is being given intravenous steroids.

It is the second time he has been taken to hospital since returning from Holland last month, where he was being treated with cannabis oil.