

Crowning glory: Crown symbol pint glasses making a comeback as nation celebrates the Queen's Platinum Jubilee

- Businesses helped to display the Crown symbol on pint glasses
- Consultation launched on scrapping the EU ban on imperial measurements, benefitting businesses with greater choice when serving shoppers
- Plans will restore “common sense” to the statute book and ditch overbearing EU rules

Post-Brexit plans to return the Crown symbol to pint glasses and to remove the EU ban on imperial measures have been set out today (Friday 3 June).

In a tribute to Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee, new government guidance published today will help businesses apply the Crown symbol to pint glasses.

As long ago as 1698, British pint glasses intended for measuring and serving beer were marked with a crown stamp as a declaration that the glass, when filled to the brim or to a line measure, accurately measured a pint of beer. The Crown stamp gave customers confidence that they were not being sold a short measure of beer. But the symbol was replaced by the EU-wide 'CE' marking' in 2006 in order to conform with EU rules in the UK.

Alongside the Crown symbol guidance, a consultation has been published today on how to implement a change to the law on weights and measures, so that shoppers and business have greater choice over the way they buy and sell products.

The consultation will help the government consider, for example, allowing vegetables to be sold in pounds only, or in pounds with a less prominent metric equivalent, should businesses wish to do so. This will help inform the Government's plans to legislate to give businesses greater choice in the units they use. There is no intention to require businesses to change their existing practices and so this will not place greater costs on businesses.

Today's announcement is not just about pounds and ounces, but about where the UK's laws are made. The 'metric martyrs' was a totemic case in establishing the supremacy of EU law. Now we have left the EU, the UK can take decisions in the best interests of British businesses and consumers.

Business Minister Paul Scully said:

This Platinum Jubilee weekend we're raising a toast to Her Majesty The Queen's health and service to this country. It's a fitting tribute that we're now helping businesses to restore the Crown symbol to pint glasses.

While we think of our fruit and veg by the pound, the legacy of EU rules means we legally have to sell them by the kilo. Our consultation today will help shops to serve customers in the way their customers want.

UK law currently requires metric units to be used, as the primary indication, for all trade purposes with only limited exceptions, reflecting rules from our time in the EU. Currently, imperial units are only authorised for use on their own in a small number of cases such sales of draught beer and cider. Now we have left the EU, the UK can act in the best interests of its businesses and consumers.

- UK law currently requires metric units to be used for all trade purposes with only limited exceptions. Our legal framework reflects the requirements placed upon the UK as part of its membership of the EU by the requirements set out in EU Directive 80/181/EC (as amended) which concerns units of measurement.
- The Government announced its intention to review the ban on the use of imperial units for sales and marking on 16 September 2021, as part of a wider announcement of a range of regulatory reforms taking advantage of Brexit. It also follows on from a recommendation made by the independent Taskforce on Innovation, Growth and Regulatory Reform. The Taskforce's Report to Government published on 16 June 2021, recommended that the Government should amend the Weights and Measures Act 1985 to allow traders to use imperial measures without metric equivalents.
- The measurements consultation will run for 12 weeks, and a range of stakeholders are being invited to contribute, including businesses, trade associations, enforcement bodies and consumer organisations.
- For centuries, British pint glasses intended for measuring and serving beer were marked with a crown stamp as a declaration that the glass accurately measured a pint. In 2006 the crown stamp was replaced by the CE mark, which was a new conformity marking required by EU legislation, and the crown stamp was no longer required as a conformity marking for pint glasses in the UK. The crown symbol is fondly remembered by many people as a symbol that they associate with traditional pint measures. In recognition of the heritage of the crown stamp, the Government is providing this guidance on how manufacturers can apply a crown symbol to

beer glasses as a decorative mark on a voluntary basis. Pint glasses used to measure and sell drinks will still be required to continue to display the legally required conformity markings to show they are accurate, in addition to any voluntary decorative markings.

- In England, Scotland, and Wales capacity serving measures, such as the pint, are required to carry the UKCA marking to indicate conformity with the legal requirements, along with the M marking. CE-marked pint glasses will continue to be accepted on the GB market until 1 January 2023. In Northern Ireland they must carry the CE mark (or CE + UKNI mark if conformity assessment was carried out by a UK approved body), along with the M marking. The crown symbol can be added as an additional decorative image. It is for businesses to decide whether to apply the crown symbol.