

Surrender scheme for illegal weapons to be launched

Press release

The government will launch a surrender scheme for certain firearms and weapons after legislation has been put to parliament making them unlawful to own.



As part of the government's priority to keep people safe, the Offensive Weapons Act will make it unlawful to possess certain rapid firing rifles, specific types of knives and other offensive weapons.

New legislation, which has been put before parliament, will see a three-month surrender period for owners to hand in their weapons to the police and claim compensation.

The Offensive Weapons Act is part of wider government action to tackle serious violence and keep dangerous weapons off the streets.

The Act will make it unlawful to possess dangerous weapons in private, including knuckledusters, zombie knives and death star knives, and will make it a criminal offence to dispatch bladed products sold online without verifying the buyer is over 18.

The government is also recruiting 20,000 new police officers to keep communities safe, and is making it easier for police to use stop and search powers for those previously convicted of knife crime.

The scheme will open later this year and individuals will be able to make a claim by filling out a form, which will be published on GOV.UK by the Home Office, and then submitting it to the police at the time of surrendering the items.

The Home Office will be publishing standard levels of compensation for items covered by the scheme. In addition, claimants will be able to request compensation that exceeds the standard level by providing evidence of the value of the item surrendered, such as a receipt of the price paid or a

valuation from an auction house.

Details of the scheme, including when it will start, how to surrender items and make a claim for compensation will be published on GOV.UK ahead of the launch.

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[Ofsted wins landmark prosecution case of school that breached conditions](#)

Press release

A school, prohibited from admitting more students, was found in breach of its operating conditions and fined at Luton Magistrates' Court on 27 May.



Ofsted has successfully won a case against a school trust and its chair for breaching operating conditions imposed by the Secretary of State for Education.

Rabia Girls' and Boys' School was prohibited from admitting more students after successive Ofsted inspections revealed safeguarding and welfare failings.

In September 2019, inspectors carried out a progress monitoring inspection of the school. The inspection team found evidence that the school was still admitting pupils, despite being prohibited from doing so.

At the request of the Department for Education, Ofsted prepared a case for submission to the Crown Prosecution Service, which was heard at Luton Magistrates' Court on 27 May.

Magistrates found the school to be in breach of its operating conditions. As a result, the trust running the school was fined £8000. Zafar Iqbal Khan, the

trust's chair, was also fined £4000.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, Amanda Spielman said:

"This unprecedented conviction sends out a strong message. If schools have a restriction imposed on them because of their repeated failure to meet basic standards, they must comply with it. If not, they are liable to prosecution and significant financial penalties."

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[Cracking Ideas competition winners announced](#)

Aardman and IPO have announced the winner of the Cracking Ideas competition. The competition challenged Britain's brightest young inventors aged 5 to 11 to design to 'make life better'. More than 1,500 youngsters took part. The competition aim is to inspire the inventors of the future and realise the potential of their ideas.

The winner was Dominic Marday, 9, of Greenwich, London. The winning entry, 'Litteration', a robotic figure complete with antennae, stretchy arms and wheels. The conscientious robot roams the streets, eating, sorting and recycling litter to help clean up the environment. Dominic is in for a 'cracking' treat to reward him for his win: his invention is to feature in [Wallace & Gromit: The Big Fix Up](#).

Dominic said:

I felt very surprised when I heard that I had won. I knew there were so many pictures entered by other young inventors. I think the prize is wonderful!

Two other winning entries will see Aardman animator Jim Parkyn visit their school for a model-making workshop. They are the 3-Brie Printer invented by Cohen Stewart, 7 of Wigtown, Scotland and the Dunk n' Go, designed by Finn Alcoe, 9 of St Albans, Hertfordshire. One is a machine that prints cheese; the other is a robotic arm that dips biscuits into an automatic biscuit dunker. A dial selects the degree of sogginess.

Felix Thomas, 6, from East Midlands was a worthy runner up with his design for The Bootomatic, which automatically cleans your muddy boots.

The Big Fix Up is a new Wallace & Gromit augmented reality story. Created in partnership with Fictioneers – a team of creative technology story tellers. It will bring Wallace & Gromit alive in an entirely new way. The cutting-edge new platform for storytelling planned for later this year. Fans will can download a free app and play along at home. For the first time ever, they will be able to step directly into the world of Wallace & Gromit.

Tim Moss, CEO of the IPO, said:

The UK is great place for innovation and creativity. We know that young people have the gift of imagination without limits. The wealth of clever creations we have received from young designers across the country show how true this is. It is inventions like these that make our world a better, safer, easier and more enjoyable place in which to live.

Aardman's Merlin Crossingham, Wallace & Gromit Creative Director said:

We have loved seeing designs from young people from all over the UK. It's great how they have put on their thinking caps to design some ingenious out-of-this-world inventions that would make even Wallace and Gromit proud!

All the 'Cracking Ideas' entries are available on the [Cracking Ideas Competition gallery](#). There are also plenty of fun things to do and learning resources for young people from primary school age through to higher education.

[New support for reopening and recovery of high streets](#)

- High Streets Task Force has today launched a range of support for high streets in England
- Support includes free access to cutting-edge research and training
- Government also confirms regeneration expert Mark Robinson has been appointed Chair of the Task Force Board

A package of support to help high streets to get back on their feet has been launched today (12 June 2020), the government has announced, ahead of shops reopening from 15 June.

The High Streets Task Force will provide access to cutting-edge tools, training, information and advice for high streets across England as part of the government's efforts to get shops back in business safely from 15 June.

This support is open to local councils and all organisations involved with high streets and will include free access to online training programmes, webinars, data and intelligence on topics including recovery planning and coordination, public space and place marketing.

The support will form one part of the Task Force's 4-year programme which will focus on the long-term transformation of town and city centres and helping communities reimagine and revitalise their high streets.

The Task Force has also today confirmed Mark Robinson, co-founder of Ellandi and leading investor in regional town centres, has been appointed as the Chair of the Task Force Board.

The new Board will guide the work of the Task Force and act as a national voice for high streets, supporting them to transform town and city centres.

High Streets Minister Simon Clarke MP said:

The re-opening of our high streets will be a crucial part of kick-starting our economic recovery and restarting town life

That is why I welcome the appointment of Mark Robinson to head up the High Streets Task Force. I know that Mark will be a strong voice for ensuring that local businesses get the support they need to reopen safely in the coming weeks.

Combined with our £50 million Reopening High Streets Safely Fund, the work of the Task Force will support our high streets through this challenging time and ensure they have the tools they need to get back on their feet.

Mark Robinson, Chair of the Task Force, said:

I am delighted and honoured to be asked to lead this initiative. No-one underestimates the challenges to our town centres, but this long-term initiative, running until 2024, shows the government's commitment to our towns and the transformation required. I look forward to making change happen.

The Task Force has already provided invaluable advice to town centre stakeholders in the current crisis and we will continue to build capacity, promoting best practice, led by research and

evidenced by data. The Task Force will provide a rallying point for all of the people who care about our high streets and advocate the change that is needed.

The announcement follows the opening of the government's £50 million [Reopening High Streets Safely Fund](#) which will support local councils to safely reopen their high streets and other commercial areas.

Mark Robinson is an award-winning entrepreneur and investor who co-founded the developer Ellandi in 2008 where he raised over £1.5 billion to invest in more than 30 communities across the UK.

Gary Maddock, Town Centre Manager working to help develop St Helens, Merseyside, said:

The coronavirus crisis is forcing us to think and act differently. In St Helens, we are developing our recovery plan working alongside partners, including those from across the Liverpool City Region, using the High Streets Task Force COVID-19 Recovery Framework.

From a position of great uncertainty, the Framework and Task Force resources immediately made sense. Their help is incredibly valuable in plotting a course for the crisis recovery and longer-term transformation of our high streets.

Over the next 4 years, the Task Force will work with over 100 towns and cities to provide dedicated expert support, mentoring, guidance and access to data and intelligence.

Register your interest in support at:
<https://www.highstreetstaskforce.org.uk/>

The £50 million Fund is supported by the England European Regional Development Fund as part of the [European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme 2014-2020](#). The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is the Managing Authority for European Regional Development Fund.

The Task Force and its Sector Leaders Group and Professional Research and Data Group have already started informing government on high street trends and helping to support thinking on impact of COVID-19.

The Task Force has been conducting research and consultation with place leaders to develop a Framework for Recovery. This is already being taken forward by some local councils and partnerships around the country and is available to download from the [High Streets Task Force website](#).

Launch of the Secretary-General's Roadmap on Digital Cooperation

Many, many thanks Fabrizio, and it's great to see the publication of the Secretary-General's Roadmap on Digital Cooperation today. I know that for you and for many, this is the culmination of a huge amounts of work and we're very grateful to all those involved.

As you know, the UK has closely followed the work of this panel, and colleagues from across our government have been pleased to contribute to several of the working groups, including that on digital public goods, human rights and digital cooperation. It's a huge achievement, but it's the beginning of a journey in many ways and we're looking forward to going on it. It's been great also to see the way that the UN has taken such a multi-stakeholder approach and this has been on display again here today. It's clear that digital cooperation requires genuine and inclusive engagement with all stakeholders, and we've heard today from the private sector, we've heard from civil society. We really need to engage with these groups and doing so will make a real difference.

The other thing that's really struck me listening to contributors today has been how everyone has really focused on the impact of COVID-19 and the way that this pandemic has demonstrated that digital is not just an add on, but instead underpins so much of what we do today. Certainly from our perspective, the tracing apps, the public health advice, the research cooperation, the support for businesses and the need to assure communication and accurate communication information, all require good digital infrastructure. But we've also heard how many still do not have the benefits of these digital technologies. This crisis should refocus all of our attention on bridging the digital divide and connecting the unconnected.

It's also worth reminding everyone that the UK is a strong supporter of the Internet Governance Forum, and we welcome the widespread consensus around the IGF plus model during the working group discussions. We're really pleased to see actions in the roadmap to strengthen the IGF.

We also agree that human rights and fundamental freedoms apply fully in the digital world, and we welcome the initiatives being taken by the Human Rights Council in this regard. We should continue to raise the profile of human rights across digital cooperation efforts to encourage greater participation and engagement.

The high level panel and the roadmap have made a really valuable contribution in highlighting the critical role that digital plays in sustainable development too and the UK looks forward to continue to engage with all stakeholders in supporting the next steps in this work.

Finally, we've heard today from many of the speakers about the need to rebuild better in the wake of COVID. Digital technology needs to be at the

heart of this effort. We need to embrace the vision of making access universal and ensuring the technology is an enabler of all those things in this institution that we hold dear. Delivering the SDGs, enhancing human rights and ultimately securing peace. Many thanks Fabrizio.