

Trade Secretary announces Freeports Advisory Panel will ensure UK is ready to trade post-Brexit

- Ports and airports across the UK will be invited to bid to become one of up to 10 Freeports.
- The Freeports Advisory Panel will include Ministers from the Department for International Trade and HM Treasury, as well as experts including technology advisor Daniel Korski, small business champion Emma Jones MBE, tax specialist Tom Clougherty and economist Dr Eamonn Butler.

International Trade Secretary Liz Truss will today (Friday 2 August) announce a new Freeports Advisory Panel to advise the government on the establishment of up to 10 Freeports.

Expected to transform the country's ports and airports just as freedoms transformed London's Docklands in the 1980s, up to ten Freeports will be created after the UK leaves the EU on 31 October. More details on how ports and airports across the country will be able to bid for Freeport status will be announced soon.

Freeports are hubs for business and enterprise for both manufacturing and services trade. These could be free of unnecessary checks and paperwork, and include customs and tax benefits. These zones reduce costs and bureaucracy, encouraging manufacturing businesses to set up or re-shore. The most successful Freeports globally attract businesses and create jobs for local people through liberalised planning laws.

Freeports ensure Britain's port cities and airports are ready to take full advantage of post-Brexit opportunities, including increased trade with the USA and fast-growing Asian markets as we sign our first free trade deals with global partners.

Britain's decision to leave the EU on 31st October will mean we can operate an independent trade policy for the first time in 45 years, setting our own regulations and developing our own policies to boost economies around the country.

There are already thousands of very successful free trading zones around the world, with the United States having pioneered the creation of over 250 free trade zones, employing 420,000 people, many in high-skilled manufacturing jobs. If the UK model is implemented as successfully, it could have a significant economic impact.

On Friday, the Secretary of State will see how becoming a Freeport could benefit one of the UK's major ports in the Northern Powerhouse, Teesport, alongside Tees Valley Mayor Ben Houchen. The Mayor has championed Freeports, and a report commissioned by his authority found a Freeport could provide a

significant boost to his region and the UK area's GDP. Other ports which have expressed an interest in the bidding process include the Port of Tyne, Milford Haven and London Gateway.

International Trade Secretary Liz Truss MP said:

Freedoms transformed London's Docklands in the 1980s, and Freeports will do the same for towns and cities across the UK. They will onshore enterprise and manufacturing as the gateway to our future prosperity, creating thousands of jobs.

We will have a truly independent trade policy after we leave the EU on October 31. I look forward to working with the Freeports Advisory Panel to create the world's most advanced Freeport model and launch the new ports as soon as possible.

Chief Secretary to the Treasury Rishi Sunak said:

We are exploring freeports as an innovative way to drive growth and support thousands of high-skilled jobs across the UK.

We will focus on those areas that could benefit the most, as we look to boost investment and opportunity for communities across the country.

Tees Valley Mayor Ben Houchen said:

Teesport played a crucial role in this nation's historic trading past, and is key to our great trading future.

Creating a Freeport right here would turbocharge jobs and growth, bringing investment into the region and making us a global hub of enterprise and innovation.

During her visit, the Secretary of State will also meet with PD Ports and tour Teesport to learn more about the port's operations, priorities and plans for the future and saw first-hand the size and scale of operations undertaken there.

Case study: USA

There are many Freeport models across the US, known as Foreign Trade Zones. One such port is in Miami, which sees over 7 million tons of cargo pass through its port every year. Businesses within the zone can import, warehouse and re-export products duty-free. This cuts down costs for businesses, helping them become more globally competitive. Businesses can also defer paying tax on their products while they are stored on site, adding peace of

mind for businesses looking to manage cash flow and respond more quickly to spikes in demand for their products. Freeports with less regulation doesn't just help businesses cut down on paperwork, but they offer greater flexibility on when, where, and how they trade.

Freeports Advisory Panel Members

- Tim Morris, CEO of UK Major Ports Group
- Richard Ballantyne, CEO of British Ports Association
- Dr. Meredith Crowley, Trade Economist, University of Cambridge
- Henry Overman, Professor of Economic Geography, London School of Economics
- Dan Korski, CBE, Founder, Public
- Dr Eamonn Butler, Director, Adam Smith Institute
- Tom Clougherty, Head of Tax, Centre for Policy Studies
- Emma Jones, MBE, Enterprise Nation Founder
- Ben Houchen, Tees Valley Mayor

Note to Editor:

UN Source: "Free Trade Zones as originally conceived do not exist anymore in the EU"; United Nations Economic and Social Commission, Free Trade Zone Development

Emirati interns set to embark on internship programmes in the UK

A group of seven Emirati interns from Mubadala Development Company were welcomed at the British Embassy in Abu Dhabi yesterday by Her Majesty's Ambassador to the UAE, Patrick Moody.

The special Embassy visit took place ahead of the departure to the UK by the interns who will embark upon engineering programmes with BAE Systems, one of the world's leading technology-led defence and aerospace companies.

During the Embassy visit, the Ambassador and the group spent time discussing what the interns can expect from their time living in the UK and working at BAE Systems.

The Ambassador also spoke about the active role the British Government and UK industry takes in supporting the UAE's vision to empower its youth and the enhancement of its educated and skilled workforce.

The interns were accompanied on the visit by representatives from BAE Systems' Group Business Development and Mubadala Human Capital and Emiratisation.

BAE Systems will provide two programmes for the Mubadala interns in 2019, one in its Air sector for just over four months, based in Lancashire in the north of England, and one six month placement with the Space sector based in Essex in the southeast of the country.

[Environment Secretary's speech at Countryfile Live 2019](#)

It is just over a week since the Prime Minister asked me to take on the role of Secretary of State at Defra.

And I am delighted to be making my first speech here today with our two great hosts, the National Trust and Countryfile. I am a big fan of both of them.

Both of them do so much to care for our environment, by showcasing the brilliant work of our food producers and rural businesses and to spread the word about the powerful importance of the rural economy for this country's prosperity and for our quality of life.

It is a real pleasure to be following on directly from Hilary McGrady and I want to express my gratitude to the National Trust for their stalwart custodianship of so many of our heritage properties and many of our most precious landscapes and coastlines.

I can think of no better place than Countryfile Live to get stuck into this new job surrounded by thousands of people here across the festival today who value and understand the rural way of life.

Living in my Chipping Barnet constituency gives me easy access to our great capital city, but also to the beckoning green fields and trees of Hertfordshire and beyond.

I live in a suburb, but I yield to no one in my affection for our beautiful countryside.

There is no better cure for the stresses and strains of elected office, and there have been a few in the recent years. There is no better cure than escaping for a few days to one of the UK's many stunning rural landscapes.

Whether it's the towering fells of the Lake District or the moors and beaches of Northumberland or the rolling fields of Wiltshire dotted with monuments dating back millennia. I count myself truly blessed to live in a country which contains such superb natural beauty.

I have dropped by one or two of the 700 stands here at Countryfile Live. 700 exhibitors contributing to the rural economy that generates nearly £250

billion a year for our overall GDP.

Food and drink is our biggest manufacturing industry and it has been a tremendous success story in recent years.

This is a testament to the enterprise, innovation and hard work of so many of you and others here at Countryfile Live today.

We should take huge pride in the achievements of our farmers in producing the highest quality food to some of the toughest safety and animal welfare standards anywhere in the world.

We must always acknowledge that our farmers are such a vitally important part of the stewardship of our natural environment.

And during this time of great change for our country, there is much to do to ensure that we help the rural economy thrive in the future.

And that brings me to Brexit, inevitably.

There can be no doubt of the division this has revealed.

Whatever course we take it will involve controversy, but I firmly believe we need to get on with it, to get it done and to leave by 31st October.

The Prime Minister is clear that he wants a deal agreed and will be doing everything he can to try to achieve that.

But he is equally clear that the time for delay and division is over.

So that is why he has massively stepped up preparations for leaving on 31st October whether an exit treaty is agreed or not.

And we're giving the very closest attention to the interests of food and farming businesses as we work towards exit day.

Undoubtedly there are some risks ahead but I want to highlight that these sectors, along with our fishing communities, will also have many opportunities open up to them as we regain the freedom to make our own laws as we push forward with an independent trade policy and as we create new world-leading systems to replace the CAP and CFP.

I want to see our farmers released from the appalling complexity, rigidity and bureaucracy of the Common Agricultural Policy.

So we will press ahead with a new system of support which rewards farmers for environmental stewardship and improving the health and welfare of animals and which helps them become more productive, more competitive and more successful.

That new approach based on the principle of public money for public goods will be designed for our domestic needs and underpinned by a reformed and proportionate approach to regulation and enforcement.

As well as securing vital goals in terms of our environment and animal welfare a core aim is to provide a stable platform for our producers to thrive and to seize the opportunities provided by Brexit to sell our fantastic food into new markets all around the world.

But of course my new brief covers matters which go well beyond farming.

Few people, as Hilary has ably pointed out, could be unaware that environmental issues have shot up the political agenda in recent years.

And it's heartening that so many children and young people are engaged in these matters something I've experienced many times in my constituency work on these crucial campaigns for the future of our planet.

Defra's Year of Green Action project is designed to harness and encourage all that energy and enthusiasm.

And the Government is determined to rise to the challenge that these young people are setting us.

In this regard, I'd really like to commend my predecessor, Michael Gove, for his outstanding work, in so many fields, but in particular to committing the Government to a hugely ambitious 25 Year Environment Plan.

We know the crucial importance of clean water in our rivers and lakes, and clean air to breathe.

We are driving forward a global agenda to tackle plastics pollution in the ocean.

We were one of the first countries in the world to make a commitment to net zero emissions by 2050.

And a strong focus on sustainability, on biodiversity and the natural environment is a theme running through both our Agriculture Bill and our forthcoming Environment Bill.

We want the fields around this place and the 85% of England that is classified as rural land to be rich in wildflowers, insects and birds.

And in our efforts to maintain the land, and the soil, in such a way that there is less pollution, greater fertility, more abundant biodiversity our aim is to create the conditions for economic growth which is both more sustainable and resilient.

I have heard the challenge put clearly to me this afternoon Hilary.

And as I've said, this Government is very much up for that challenge.

Our Environment Bill will be ground-breaking and the new watch-dog it will create will have the powers and independence it needs to hold this and future Governments to account so that standards are upheld, laws are respected and commitments are met.

That is because we recognise that protecting our environment is crucial to our success as a nation that is as the Prime Minister said last week the greatest place to live; the greatest place to bring up a family; the greatest place to send your children to school and the greatest place to set up a business and invest.

In conclusion, we all here know that mankind's impact on nature has been profound.

I was delighted when the Prime Minister highlighted the environment in the speech he gave on the steps of Number Ten on the day he became Prime Minister.

I would like to close by referring to a letter sent to me by Emma Howard Boyd of the Environment Agency and Tony Juniper of Natural England on my new post.

They pointed out that this country led the world in the industrial revolution and now, at this critical juncture, we can lead once again in switching to a new greener more sustainable economy.

They wrote: "If we invest in nature and climate, we know it will increase long-term stability for health, security and prosperity.

"This is the new reality and present imperative ... not an optional 'green choice' that we can only afford in good times."

I agree and I look forward to working with them in my new role and indeed with everyone who is part of our country's ever-broadening coalition determined to ensure that we are the first generation to hand on the natural environment in a better state than we found it.

Thank you.

[Education Secretary meets apprentices on his first visit](#)

Visiting the Royal Mail's Mail Centre in Leeds, Mr Williamson met and spoke with some of the company's 460 apprentices. They were joined by representatives from the ambulance service and children's charity Action for Children both of which are benefitting from a share of Royal Mail's apprenticeship levy funding.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson, who earlier this week announced he would be leading the ministerial skills brief, said:

Further education and skills will be a big priority for this

government and it's fantastic to see first-hand today how apprenticeships can help people land a great job and embark on a brilliant career.

We are reforming technical education and apprenticeships are offering excellent options for everyone while helping our country build the skilled workforce it needs for a productive economy.

That's particularly important as we prepare to leave the EU and I'm determined to do all I can to make sure more people and businesses take advantage of these excellent opportunities.

The government has transformed apprenticeships, working alongside employers like Royal Mail, to create high-quality opportunities to help people forge a rewarding career while providing industry and employers with the skilled workforce they need.

Royal Mail employs apprentices of all ages and backgrounds across the country in jobs from engineering to finance and logistics including opportunities to train at every level right up to degree.

While he was in the region, Mr Williamson also visited a scheme run by the volunteer-led charity Catch in Harehills, Leeds that offers fun activities for young people during the summer holiday followed by a nutritious lunch.

The scheme is one of a number across the country supported by a £9million government investment to provide around 50,000 of the most disadvantaged children across the country with free holiday clubs.

Mr Williamson added:

The government has quadrupled funding for free holiday clubs this year to help ensure thousands of children from disadvantaged backgrounds are supported and are active over the summer.

Mr Williamson also visited Portakabin in Huntingdon, York where off site manufacturing is being used to build school buildings. These innovative buildings mean schools can be built to a consistent high standard and quicker, meaning less disruption to students and staff. The Education Secretary also took a tour of the factory and met with some of Portakabin's 21 apprentices who are training in a range of professions including joinery, digital design and quantity surveying.

eAlert: 1 August 2019 – Oak processionary moth update and Sheffield tree felling investigation

[unable to retrieve full-text content]This eAlert also contains updates on Felling Licence Online, the Woodland Carbon Fund, the Urban Tree Challenge Fund and the new agent authority form.