

# What legislation should we change once we are free to make our own laws?

One of the attempted trick questions in the referendum campaign from Remain to Leave was about deregulation. Which regulations would you repeal, they asked of the Leave campaign. Presumably they hoped either that the Leave campaigner would be lost for a specific example, or would offer up a popular regulation which the public would not wish to see removed. They underestimated their opponents in this as in other matters.

The truth is there are many laws and regulations that the EU has imposed on us that are either suitable for repeal or for substantial improvement. The UK could start by repealing the damaging fishing regulations which have allowed considerable environmental damage to our fishing grounds whilst also undermining some of our fishing businesses. We could move on to removing items from VAT or choosing lower rates for others. There is no great support for 5% and 20% VAT rates on a whole range of green products, nor for the 5% VAT levy on domestic heating fuel. The interventions in our corporate tax code that have lowered our revenues could be reversed. We could do a better job on animal welfare with our own rules.

It is a strange phenomenon that many people will stand for election to the UK Parliament with a wish to become lawmakers, only to decide once they arrive that want many of our laws to be settled in Brussels so they can claim they have no ability to amend or repeal them. The UK Parliament over our years in the EU has been craven in meekly accepting every EU law and regulation, and in avoiding proper debate about it. This has damaged our democracy and widened the gulf between Parliament and people.

The continuing EC court case over VAT on commodity derivatives is a reminder of how the EU wishes to rewrite our rules against the interests of our businesses. The UK Parliament should decide our VAT law and it should not be subject to reversal by a European court.

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## Managing our borders

Mr Cameron and Mrs May both kept telling us the UK needed to cut the numbers of migrants coming to the UK. They chose to highlight a net figure, subtracting those who moved abroad from those who arrived. They wanted to get this new figure down to under 100,000. They got nowhere achieving this target.

Some objected to the idea of a net target. Every new migrant arriving needs a home and other support from public services. They often need benefit top up

of their incomes. This needs to be done well and generously, and becomes difficult to do to a decent standard when the numbers become very large. The country did not have a sufficient supply of affordable housing, and was short of health and education capacity in the fast growing parts of the UK where many migrants arrived. An elderly couple with their own means moving to Spain for a few years did not compensate for the costs of the new migrant arriving and needing social housing and other support. Indeed, the absence of the richer UK resident reduced the tax take.

Some said that Mr Cameron and Mrs May were unable to hit their target owing to a sudden surge in inward migration to the UK from the rest of the EU. It is true there were big movements of people during this period. Many EU citizens were attracted to the UK by the jobs and relatively high wages compared to their home countries. It was also true that the government did not even hit the target for non EU migration which also continued at high levels.

Once out of the EU the government will lose the argument that it cannot hit its target owing to EU membership and freedom of movement. The government will need to set a fair migration policy for the whole world, removing preference for people coming from the continent. The system should mainly be based around an assessment of how many people with what skills levels we need to grant work permits. If people want to come and live here and have the means to support themselves that is no problem. We should also have a humane and proportionate policy towards asylum seekers. Current levels of gross and net migration are too high, damaging our ability to provide good homes and public services for all.

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## [How should the UK change its foreign policy once out of the EU?](#)

Once we are out of the EU the UK regains its vote and voice in world bodies. The UK is ready to take a global perspective and will be able to pursue our national interests and our global values more successfully once we no longer have to broker an agreed line with 27 other EU states.

Some fear the UK will be isolated or is in some way too small to survive in the turbulent waters of world diplomacy once independent. This is an absurd notion. The UK will proceed with shifting coalitions of interests issue by issue, based on long term alliances and community of interests with various friendly countries. The US/Canada/New Zealand/UK/Australia Intelligence group will remain important to our intelligence and security. NATO will continue to be our central defence alliance. In the WTO we will emerge as one of the leaders of the free trade group pushing for fewer barriers and lower tariffs worldwide. We can form our own view on environmental issues and form

alliances as needed. There will be times when we do wish to make a common front with France and Germany as we do today.

One of the dangers of being in the EU is the way the UK is drawn into rows and conflicts in Eastern Europe where EU intervention may not be helpful and where UK interests may diverge from apparent EU interests. The UK increasingly has split loyalties with the divergence in approach to the Middle East and elsewhere between the USA and the EU. Where these two fall out the UK needs to be able to make its own judgement about which side to belong to, or to offer a third way which could reconstruct a wider alliance between the democracies on the two sides of the Atlantic. The EU has not been helpful to the UK over Gibraltar, and has also been negative over aspects of the Channel islands independence.

The pull of the world is towards the east with the rise of China and India. The UK will need to look increasingly to Asia for growth in trade. Japan is keen to encourage stronger links with the UK, two island nations that value their independence, both offshore from large power blocs. The USA is increasingly pulled towards China as it seeks to manage a complex relationship with an emerging super power. The UK needs its independence and flexibility to handle its own interests as this development advances. The UK is rightly seen as a crucial financial marketplace and services innovator. China wishes to develop more joint working in these areas, where EU regulation and approaches might impede progress.

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## [A more prosperous UK outside the EU](#)

Over the next few days I will publish pieces setting out how we can use our new found freedoms and spend our own money after 31 October when we are scheduled to leave the EU.

One of the important wins will be to resume our full voting membership of the World Trade Organisation. Once out we will decide our own tariffs for imports into the UK. We can exercise this freedom to take all tariffs off products we do not make or grow for ourselves, providing cheaper food and clothes for UK consumers.

The EU imposes average tariffs of 5%, with an average 11.8% tariff on food. Dairy products are charged at a high 38.1%, fruit and vegetables at 11.5% and sugar and confectionery at 23%. Why shouldn't we enjoy cheaper oranges and lemons from countries like South Africa, and cheaper wines from Australia and New Zealand?

The UK government has already set out a provisional tariff schedule, and has decided to abolish all tariffs on imported components, providing a welcome boost to UK manufacturing.

The EU will decide whether the UK must pay the external tariffs it charges the USA, China and others on their exports to the EU, or whether to negotiate a free trade agreement to avoid tariffs both ways.

Either way there are plenty of UK trade opportunities. EU tariffs in certain areas are too high. They are an unwelcome tax on the consumer, designed to protect continental farmers and producers at the expense of growers and makers elsewhere in the world. We should bring those down as we leave.

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## **Wokingham Borough Council response to the recent Environment Lobby**

Following a recent Environment Lobby in Parliament, I wrote on behalf of constituents to Wokingham Borough Council to ask what they are doing to improve waste management locally. I have now received the enclosed response from them:

Date: 22 July 2019



**WOKINGHAM  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

The Rt Hon Sir John Redwood MP  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

Customer & Localities  
Place Based Services  
P.O. Box 157  
Shute End, Wokingham  
Berkshire RG40 1WR  
Tel: (0118) 974 6000

Dear Mr Redwood,

**LETTER FROM THE RT HON SIR JOHN REDWOOD MP RE. ENVIRONMENTAL LOBBY**

Thank you for your letter dated 28th June to the Chief Executive who has asked me to respond as the appropriate Officer. We are very mindful of the impact that badly managed waste has on the wider environment, and especially in relation to plastics, and are committed to address this. We have been working with our Waste re3 partners; Bracknell Forest and Reading Councils and our Contractor FCC to ensure that we reduce waste and increase recycling with the following as some of our more recent projects:

2010 – Within the re3 partnership we started to send approx. 25,000 tonnes per annum to energy from waste – This has seen us reduce landfill from 48% of our waste with a potential of 1% – 2% in 2019/20.

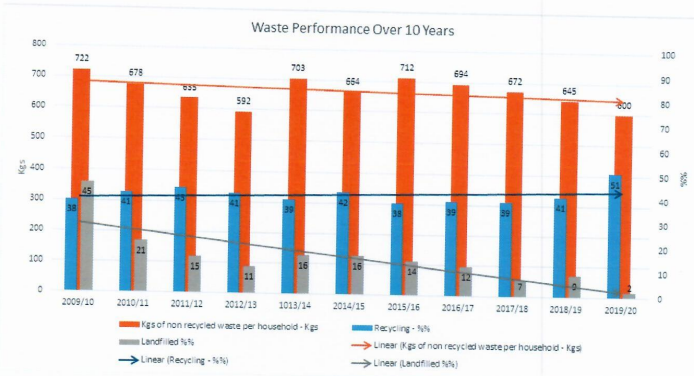
2012 – Waste containment (blue bags) introduced delivering a 20% reduction in collected residual waste

2017 – The addition of pots, tubs, trays, foil and tetrapak from the kerbside taking more single use plastics from the waste stream.

2019 – The introduction of food waste recycling started in April which is expected to raise our overall recycling rate by 7% and with other initiatives like wood recycling from the household waste recycling centres, we increased our overall recycling rate to 54% on the first two months of the year.

On top of this, the Council has declared a “Climate Change” emergency and are now planning a strategy to be carbon neutral by 2030.

See below our recycling performance over the past 10 years:



I hope that the above addresses your concerns and we are proud to announce that this year to date, our waste to landfill has been even lower than last year at around 0% of total waste.

Yours sincerely,

CLARE LAWRENCE  
Assistant Director Place Based Services