

Wokingham Choral Society

I had the pleasure of attending the Choral Society's carol concert on Saturday at All Saints Church. The choir was in great voice, with the audience singing along to some of the better known ones. I would like to say a big Thank you to the choir for all the work they put in to entertaining us so well throughout the year, and wish them every success for 2019.

Deals galore in place of the Withdrawal Agreement

No deal has always been a misnomer of leaving the EU without signing the Withdrawal Agreement. Proponents have called it leaving on WTO terms, or a Clean break exit with global trading or some such. More recently others have called it a managed exit, drawing attention to the various areas of collaboration and agreement there will be on a so called No Deal exit.

So let me have another go at explaining the WTO option. It is if you like the "multi deal option" or deals on wheels, as the UK and the EU agree a series of measures to smooth transport and trade across the Channel and across the Irish border.

We now know there will be the following Agreements

The Common Transit Convention

The facilitation of trade Convention

WTO trading rules

Air Services Agreement

Continued arrangements for London based derivatives to trade and settle

Phyto-sanitary arrangements

Possible continuing membership of the Government Procurement Agreement

In other words a WTO Brexit will also include a number of important agreements to ensure the planes will fly, the trucks will move and the trade will flow after March 29

There will be the added bonus that we can stop all these groundhog day debates and show how absurd so many of these scare stories are.

[Network Rail will suspend Wokingham train whistles](#)

I was pleased to hear that Network Rail has agreed to suspend the train whistles from December 23 rd following complaints from residents and myself. They need to find a better way of ensuring safety if they wish to travel faster on that section of track , or revert to the old permitted speed. The noise is unacceptable to residents.

[UK to stay in Common Transit Convention](#)

The government announced this means “simplified cross border trade for UK businesses exporting their goods”. “It will provide cashflow benefits to traders and aid trade flow at key points of entry traders will only have to make customs declarations and pay import duties when they arrive at their final destination.” How about some apologies from all those who said border friction would b e very damaging?

[The UK Treasury turns optimistic](#)

Apparently the Treasury think we are going to be creating so many new jobs in the next few years we need to ensure we can invite in a large number of new workers without restriction. That must be a revised forecast, based on a new optimism about Brexit.