

# World's first fully flexible satellite lifts-off

Eutelsat Quantum, backed by UK Space Agency funding and built in Britain by Airbus in Portsmouth and Surrey Satellite Technology (SSTL) in Guildford, is the first of a new generation of fully reconfigurable satellites that can respond while in orbit to changing demands on Earth.

Until now large satellites were configured on the ground for specific tasks that could not be changed after launch. Eutelsat Quantum's coverage, bandwidth, power and frequency can all be altered in orbit.

The satellite's beams can be redirected to switch between functions from broadcasting TV, enabling data protection and recovery, to delivering data connections to aeroplanes to improve communication for passengers. This flexibility means satellite operators can offer a wealth of new and emerging applications such as the next generation of drones supporting the NHS or connectivity in driverless cars supporting road safety, at the press of a button, without having to wait for years for bespoke equipment to be produced.

Named due to the quantum leap it brings in space telecommunications, the satellite could also support government broadband services in remote and rural areas, and help monitor critical national infrastructure such as water supply, energy and farming.

Science Minister Amanda Solloway said:

By investing in ground-breaking international projects like this one, we are helping UK businesses transform science fiction into commercial advantage, resulting in jobs, growth and innovation.

This game-changing technology will ensure the UK continues to lead the world on telecommunications satellites and further bolster our growing space sector, which already generates £16.4 billion of income annually and supports 45,000 jobs.

The UK Space Agency has invested £65 million in Eutelsat Quantum, through the European Space Agency, in addition to an expected £170 million from UK industry. Users are expected to include governments, communications on the move and data networks. It will offer extensive coverage of the Middle East and North Africa region, stretching into Europe, Africa and Central Asia.

In the future all satellites are expected to be reconfigurable, enabling the next generation of space applications, and supporting existing applications – such as telecommunications and Earth observation – which require the movement of large data sets. This will make space more accessible, sustainable and help grow the sector.

Elodie Viau, ESA's Director of Telecommunications and Integrated Applications, said:

I am proud to witness the successful launch of Eutelsat Quantum, which is the result of an ESA Partnership Project. ESA fosters innovation in the space industry in the UK and across Europe, enabling it to succeed in the highly competitive global telecommunications markets. Investing in space creates jobs and prosperity on Earth.

The launch, which was delayed in part due to the Covid-19 pandemic, took place last night (30 July 2021) on an Ariane 5 launcher. Eutelsat Quantum's final geostationary position is some 22,000 miles above the Earth and it will come into service in October.

The 3.5-tonne telecommunications satellite, which is the size of a delivery van, was developed under an ESA Partnership Project with French operator Eutelsat, satellite manufacturers Airbus and Surrey Satellite Technology Ltd.

The satellite consists of three main components. The payload was built in Portsmouth, the platform was built in Guildford and the active receive antenna was built in Madrid. These three components came together in the Airbus satellite test facility in Toulouse prior to shipment to launch site.

Richard Franklin, Managing Director of Airbus Defence and Space in the UK said:

The revolutionary technology we designed and manufactured here in the UK for Eutelsat Quantum confirms our position as a global leader in state-of-the-art satellite payloads. Last year Airbus secured 40% of the geo telecoms market, up from an average 25% share, and Eutelsat Quantum is one brick in that success story – which has directly led to the development of our latest reprogrammable satellite OneSat.

Eutelsat Quantum demonstrates the value of partnering with space agencies to bring the latest technologies to the market faster to deliver improved services for customers and users across the world.

Ben Stocker, SSTL's Project Director said:

The Eutelsat Quantum programme presented many challenges for SSTL to overcome during the development of the satellite system design, mechanical design, propulsion system and key subsystems within the satellite platform.

The skills and knowledge gained through successfully overcoming these challenges has enabled us to refine our engineering approach,

especially for markets and applications where system reliability and availability are key requirements, and, with the continued support of the UK Space Agency and ESA, has put us in a very strong position to deliver our exciting upcoming pathfinder missions.

Pascal Homsy, Eutelsat's Chief Technical Officer, said:

Our congratulations to Arianespace and the Guiana Space Center teams for successfully launching the Eutelsat Quantum satellite. The collaboration between Eutelsat, ESA, the UK Space Agency and Airbus Defence and Space on this ambitious satellite program has resulted in a world-first.

Eutelsat Quantum will supply services with unprecedented in-orbit reconfigurability in coverage, frequency and power, allowing complete mission rehaul, at any orbital position. It is a testimony to the innovative spirit and expertise of the European space industry.

About 1,000 people worked on the project across Europe including more than 500 Airbus staff in Portsmouth and Stevenage including payload design engineers, software engineers, spacecraft assembly teams, design office teams, payload manufacturing teams, and supply chain specialists.

Future sales of the technologies developed under the programme are expected to create more jobs.

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## [Thousands more students to learn ancient and modern languages](#)

More students across the country will have the opportunity to learn Latin through a new £4 million programme, announced by the Education Secretary today (Saturday 31 July).

The Latin Excellence Programme will aim to level up opportunities for state secondary school pupils, as well as helping them with other subjects like English, French, Spanish and even maths. According to a [British Council survey](#) Latin is only taught at key stage 3 in 2.7% of state schools compared to 49% of independent schools.

The Government is also announcing the next phase of the £16.4m Mandarin Excellence Programme, and the fourth year of the £4.8 million modern foreign languages pilot, which supports schools to teach French, German and Spanish up to GCSE.

In addition to learning Latin, the new programme announced today will include activities such as visits to Roman heritage sites to give pupils a deeper understanding of Classics, and life in the ancient world.

An expert group will be appointed to work with schools providing the best Latin teaching in the country, to create high-quality resources to rollout to schools in disadvantaged areas with low take-up of the subject at GCSE.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

We know Latin has a reputation as an elitist subject which is only reserved for the privileged few. But the subject can bring so many benefits to young people, so I want to put an end to that divide.

There should be no difference in what pupils learn at state schools and independent schools, which is why we have a relentless focus on raising school standards and ensuring all pupils study a broad, ambitious curriculum.

Latin can help pupils with learning modern foreign languages, and bring broader benefits to other subjects, including maths and English.

The initiative aims to boost GCSE Latin entries and will be modelled on the success of the Mandarin Excellence Programme, launched in 2016 in response to the growing importance of Mandarin as a global language. The programme now involves 75 schools across the country with more than 6,000 pupils learning Mandarin towards fluency.

To continue the success of the programme and reiterate the importance of learning new languages, the Mandarin programme is expected to be extended for a further three years from this September, run by University College London Institute of Education and the British Council.

Similarly to the Mandarin programme, the Latin Excellence Programme will be led by a centre of excellence, which will work with up to 40 schools to develop teacher training resources and lesson materials for 11-16 year-olds. Once developed, the programme will support schools over four years from 2022 to 2026, which will be evaluated for future years.

The Modern Foreign Language Pedagogy Pilot supports 45 schools, training and providing French, German and Spanish teaching resources to teachers for free. The scheme, launched in December 2018 and managed by the National Centre for Excellence for Language Pedagogy, currently covers key stage 3 and will expand to key stage 4, including the new GCSEs, for over 1,350 teachers nationally.

Professor Mary Beard, classicist, said:

I am absolutely delighted that the DfE will be supporting Latin in

schools and helping more pupils to have the challenge and fun of learning about the ancient world.

Latin is an extraordinarily enriching subject. It gives you direct access to some of the most inspirational literature in the western world (from Virgil's great epic Aeneid to the historian Tacitus' critique of the corruption of power and the subversive counter culture of the poet Ovid).

Studying Classics opens up history to us – from early dramas, that 2000 years on are still part of the theatrical repertoire, to some foundational philosophy, from democracy to empire, from powerful rulers to the enslaved.

But it's not just about the past. Studying the ancient world helps us look at ourselves, and our own problems, afresh and with clearer eyes.

Jimmy Mulville, chairman of Classics for All and Managing Director of Hat Trick Productions, said:

Any move by government to re-establish the teaching of any of the classical subjects in state schools is most welcome so this initiative focusing on Latin is a good start to that ultimate goal.

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## **Biffa fined £1.5 million for 'reckless' export breach**

A familiar name on the country's bin collections has been fined £1.5 million for breaking export law, in what the judge called "reckless, bordering on deliberate."

Biffa Waste Services Ltd has been at the centre of the second legal action of its kind in as many years, as the company found itself outside the law on which materials can be exported to developing countries.

Judge Shane Collery QC told Wood Green crown court Biffa had shown no contrition. He found the company's previous comments about being picked on by the Environment Agency and no public interest served in being prosecuted a second time as "aggravating and unattractive."

Biffa's latest breaches of export law uncovered by the Environment Agency involved rolling contracts to send vast amounts of waste to India and Indonesia. Material exported illegally included 50,000 tins; 40,000 plastic

bags; 25,000 items of clothing; 3,000 nappies – and even a frying pan, condoms and a souvenir New York t-shirt. Inspecting the waste, investigators recorded “a strong putrid” smell and an “acidic aroma.”

Malcolm Lythgo, head of waste regulation at the Environment Agency, said:

Biffa shipped banned materials to developing countries, without having systems in place to prevent the offences.

As the 2 convictions in 2019 and this year show, the Environment Agency will pursue those who blight the lives of overseas communities through illegal exports.

This guilty verdict underlines that anyone producing or handling waste must only export material legally and safely for recycling.

The Environment Agency stopped the illegal export of almost 23,000 tonnes of unsuitable waste in 2019/20. We have stepped up increased monitoring of international waste shipments.

A jury last week convicted Biffa guilty of 4 offences of exporting poorly-sorted household waste from its recycling facility at Edmonton in north London to Asia in 2018 and 2019. Investigators held 16 25-tonne containers at Southampton, but 26 more had already left the port.

During the most recent trial, jurors were told of Biffa’s rolling monthly contracts worth a combined £39,500 to move the household waste to India or Indonesia.

In addition to the £1.5 million fine, Biffa was ordered to pay costs of £153,827.99, and a proceeds of crime order of £38,388.

Biffa, of Coronation Road, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, was convicted of 4 breaches of regulation 23 of the Transfrontier Shipment of Waste Regulations 2007 between October 2018 and April 2019.

In September 2019, Biffa was fined £350,000, with costs of £240,000 and a proceeds of crime order of £9,912, for sending contaminated household waste, described as waste paper, to China between May and June 2015.

The Environment Agency has introduced a number of additional measures to tackle illegal exports, including working closely with Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs reviewing inconsistencies between customs information and packaging data, and creating an investigations team to target serious offenders.

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## New Government survey results underline community spirit generated during pandemic

Community spirit and support for neighbours, friends and family remained as strong as ever during the height of the coronavirus pandemic, despite its negative impact across the country, new figures from a major Government annual survey have suggested today.

The latest Community Life Survey, surveyed more than 10,900 adults across England during different periods of lockdown measures between April 2020 to March 2021.

During a year where so many sacrifices were made in order to prevent the spread of the virus, it found that 95% of adults surveyed felt that they had people who were there for them if they needed help, matching the result from last year's survey. 93% also felt that if they wanted company or to socialise there were people they could call.

Despite the inevitable decrease in the proportion of people formally volunteering, dropping down to an all-time low of 17% doing it at least once a month, there was an increase in the proportion of people informally volunteering with acts of kindness to support their community.

33% of respondents had volunteered informally at least once a month, which is the highest percentage on record, as people have helped one another across communities from getting a neighbour's shopping and prescriptions, to looking after a friend's children.

Minister for Civil Society Baroness Barran said:

The past 18 months have been extraordinarily difficult for everyone, and have impacted our lives in so many ways.

However these findings also show how difficult times truly bring out the best in us as a nation, which I strongly believe has helped to pull us through. The fact that 95% of adults agree that they have people who are there for them if they need help speaks volumes for the strength of our country.

I'm delighted to see the highest percentage on record of people informally volunteering, and throughout the pandemic, formal and informal volunteers have been there for those who needed help. I recommend everyone considers volunteering in some way whether big

or small, not only to help their community, but also to experience the huge benefits of forming new relationships and improving mental wellbeing.

We've stayed connected, helped out, and been there for each other. I absolutely feel that whilst it's been a difficult time, we will emerge from the pandemic with a stronger, more connected society than ever before.

Other results from the Community Life Survey show that 65% of people feel that people in their neighbourhood pull together to improve the local area, showing the strength of local communities.

The full report including figures on loneliness, charity donations and civic participation can be found [here](#).

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Notes to editors:

- The Community Life Survey is a nationally representative annual survey of adults aged 16 and over in England that provides statistics on behaviours and attitudes that inform policy and action.
- The annual self-completed survey, conducted either online or using paper questionnaires, is commissioned by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).
- This survey was carried out over the period of April 2020 to March 2021, and recorded respondents' answers consistently over the year during different periods of lockdown measures.
- The total sample size for the 2020/21 period was 10,917.

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## **[Jodie Kidd urges families across the UK to give fishing a try this summer](#)**

Jodie Kidd, the model and racing driver is urging all families to 'give fishing a try' as part of National Fishing Month to beat the boredom of the school holidays and learn a new skill.

National Fishing Month has released more than [250 free angling events across the country](#). Steps have been taken to improve inclusivity, with a calendar that features family-friendly, women-only and wheelchair-accessible events.

Fishing has surged in popularity since the pandemic, and has seen increased interest from women, a recent campaign by the Environment Agency profiled women anglers and the benefits fishing can bring to all.

### **Freedom to fish**

With many holidays cancelled this year, families are looking for things to do closer to home. A recent OnePoll survey for the Angling Trust revealed that a quarter of people (26%) have enjoyed spending more time outdoors since the pandemic because it gives them 'a sense of freedom' and allows them to entertain the kids (17%). Of those keen to give fishing a try, (33%) say it provides an opportunity to spend quality time with family and friends.

As part of National Fishing Month, Jodie Kidd enjoyed a fishing lesson with her son and Angling Fishing Coach Kevin Holborne.

### **Jodie said:**

It's been fantastic to spend time in the great outdoors with my son as part of National Fishing Month. It's a free activity during the school holidays which is fun for all the family, we loved learning a new skill and challenging each other too.

You'll soon be hooked, and the beauty of fishing is that it's not just about catching a fish. I can bond with my son, talk about his day and we both feel like we've spent quality time in nature, which is very tranquil and rewarding. It's taught me to slow down and get maximum enjoyment from the outdoors, what better sense of freedom is there?

### **Heidi Stone, Environment Agency Fisheries Partnerships Manager:**

We're thrilled that Jodie is taking part in National Fishing Month this summer. Fishing is a fantastic way to spend time with loved ones and connect with the natural environment around us.

All income from rod licence sales goes into improving the environment for our fisheries to make fishing a great experience for all. We hope that National Fishing Month will show anglers the clear wellbeing benefits of fishing and that they'll return to the banks regularly.

### **Andrew Race, Chairman at the Angling Trades Association said:**

We created National Fishing Month to inform the general public

about angling and the social, psychological and environmental benefits of angling. The aim of NFM is to increase participation and diversity amongst anglers and to engage people with decisions surrounding access, environmental policy and wildlife management. NFM offers an unrivalled opportunity for people to engage with the outdoors and get a taste for fishing at the same time.

As the country takes angling to its heart this year, I still remember the first time I went fishing with my grandfather at an early age – by creating opportunities to experience these moments throughout the month, we hope to support angling in going from strength to strength.

**Clive Copeland, Head of Participation at the Angling Trust said:**

This year we're making it easier than ever for families to go fishing for the first time. Our 'Get Fishing' events are the perfect day-out for all, no matter age or ability.

Anglers who currently own a rod licence can also take a friend on a free fishing trip as part of our 'Take a Friend Fishing' initiative this summer. This is a great opportunity to learn more about the sport alongside someone more experienced.

**John Ellis, National Fisheries and Angling Manager at the Canal & River Trust said:**

We're passionate about families getting the most out of the waterways and CRT are hosting a series of events on our canals to celebrate National Fishing Month through our 'Let's Fish' programme of events.

Experience fishing for the first time with one of our qualified coaches and get set to make the most of staycation summer.

Last year, the Environment Agency sold 1,019,723 individual freshwater rod licences to adults living in England, compared to 882,989 in the previous year 2019/20, an increase of 16%. This boom in sales has allowed the Environment Agency to fund even more vital restoration work to protect fish stocks, increase biodiversity, create and restore over 3,000 hectares of fisheries habitat, and sustain a healthier water environment. Thanks to rod licence income, the Environment Agency and its partners improved over 1,700km of rivers between in 2019/20.

For more information about National Fishing Month or to find a local free event near you, visit [www.nationalfishingmonth.com](http://www.nationalfishingmonth.com)