

[Bill to modernise airspace and tackle illegal use of unmanned aircraft receives Royal Assent](#)

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[Landmark Domestic Abuse Bill receives Royal Assent](#)

Today (29 April), the Domestic Abuse Bill has passed both Houses of Parliament and been signed into law.

The Domestic Abuse Act will provide further protections to the millions of people who experience domestic abuse and strengthen measures to tackle perpetrators.

For the first time in history there will be a wide-ranging legal definition of domestic abuse which incorporates a range of abuses beyond physical violence, including emotional, coercive or controlling behaviour, and economic abuse.

The measures include important new protections and support for victims ensuring that abusers will no longer be allowed to directly cross-examine their victims in the family and civil courts, and giving victims better access to special measures in the courtroom to help prevent intimidation – such as protective screens and giving evidence via video link.

Police will also be given new powers including Domestic Abuse Protection Notices providing victims with immediate protection from abusers, while courts will be able to hand out new Domestic Abuse Protection Orders to help prevent offending by forcing perpetrators to take steps to change their behaviour, including seeking mental health support or drug and alcohol rehabilitation.

In recent weeks, the government has added new measures to the bill to further strengthen the law, including creating a new offence of non-

fatal strangulation, extending an offence to cover the threat to disclose intimate images, and clarifying the law to further clamp down on claims of “rough sex gone wrong” in cases involving death or serious injury.

The Domestic Abuse Bill was originally published in draft for pre-legislative scrutiny and the Government worked closely with the Domestic Abuse Commissioner and charities to make key changes to the bill, ensuring the law is as robust as possible.

Speaking on the new law Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

Domestic abuse and violence against women and girls are utterly shameful. As Home Secretary, I am determined to work tirelessly to keep vulnerable people safe and bring crime down.

The Domestic Abuse Act is long overdue. This landmark act will transform the support we offer across society. This includes the support Government provides to victims to ensure they have the protection they rightly need, so that perpetrators of these abhorrent crimes are brought to justice.

Lord Chancellor Robert Buckland said:

This landmark piece of legislation steps up the response to domestic abuse at every level – giving victims more support than ever before while ensuring perpetrators feel the full force of the law.

Thanks to the many survivors, charities, parliamentarians and colleagues from across government who have worked tirelessly to make this possible, more vulnerable people and families will be protected from the scourge of domestic abuse.

Other measures included in the act include:

- extending the controlling or coercive behaviour offence to cover post-separation abuse
- explicitly recognise children as victims if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse
- establish in law the office of Domestic Abuse Commissioner and set out the Commissioner’s functions and powers
- placing a duty on local authorities in England to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation
- provide that all eligible homeless victims of domestic abuse automatically have ‘priority need’ for homelessness assistance
- place the guidance supporting the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (“Clare’s law”) on a statutory footing

Safeguarding Minister Victoria Atkins said:

This law will fundamentally transform our response to tackling domestic abuse by providing much greater protections from all forms of abuse.

I'm grateful for the brave victims and survivors who have inspired this strengthened action and have helped inform this legislation throughout.

The Domestic Abuse Commissioner, Nicole Jacobs, says:

Today marks an historic moment for victims and survivors of domestic abuse when change is needed the most.

The act sets out my legal powers which I will use to support all victims across England and Wales by first tackling the 'postcode lottery' of services.

So many campaigners, charities and individuals have worked incredibly hard to make the bill as robust as possible and there is no doubt that the legislation, which now includes non-fatal strangulation as a standalone offence, is much stronger as a result.

Legislation won't transform things overnight and we know there is more to do, so and I will work with partners to advocate for further changes.

National Police Chiefs' Council lead for Domestic Abuse, Assistant Commissioner Louisa Rolfe, said:

Supporting victims of this cruel crime and bringing offenders to justice remains a priority for the police and we have improved our response to domestic abuse across the country. Police attend more than one million incidents of domestic abuse each year, yet we know many victims will still not come forward.

Though policing alone cannot solve domestic abuse, and we must work with others in education, probation, health, social care and housing to ensure support is joined up and intervention is effective.

The bill provides an opportunity to do this, and we welcome the measures within it, including the new tools available to officers to better support victims and their families.

Finally, I want to reiterate our message to victims of domestic abuse. You are not alone. We will come when you ask for help and can take steps to make sure you're safe.

Farah Nazeer, Chief Executive of Women's Aid Federation of England, said:

The Domestic Abuse Bill has been long-awaited, and could not be more needed, following the impact of the pandemic on survivors and our national network of domestic abuse services.

Thanks to the bravery of survivors in campaigning for change, we now have an act that will strengthen protection in the family courts, improve housing law in cases of domestic abuse, and require councils to fund support in safe accommodation.

We continue to urge for the law to address the significant gaps it leaves and protect every survivor, ensuring that all women and children are able to access support regardless of immigration status, and for us to see guaranteed long-term funding for specialist women's domestic abuse services, including refuge services around the country that are saving lives every day.

Claire Throssell, MBE Survivor Ambassador for Women's Aid said:

As a survivor and domestic abuse campaigner, the new act is a chance to make sure survivors are safe, protected and loved. The vital changes to the family court are long overdue and everyone accessing them deserves better. It is high time the family courts are safe and supportive, protecting victims and survivors instead of shielding perpetrators.

Jo Todd, Chief Executive Officer, Respect said:

We're delighted to see a requirement for a strategic approach to domestic abuse perpetrators set into law. This is something that we and over a hundred other organisations have been campaigning for a long time.

Domestic abuse is not acceptable or inevitable. A comprehensive strategy – spanning early responses, community interventions, quality assured behaviour change programmes and risk management systems, that centre the needs of survivors – will help survivors and their families to find freedom and reduce the numbers of new victims, including children.

[New law to make school uniform costs affordable for all](#)

School uniforms will be made more affordable for families under a new law passed by Parliament today (29 April).

[The Act](#), which received Royal Assent today, will require schools to follow new statutory guidance on uniform costs, instructing them to keep prices down.

The cross-party support for the Bill recognised the costs parents face for school uniform, particularly for branded items, and the statutory guidance will tell schools to consider high street alternatives.

It will also include measures on encouraging second-hand uniform, schools' arrangements with suppliers, and ensuring parents have access to clear information about uniform policies.

School Standards Minister Nick Gibb said:

School uniforms are important in establishing the right ethos in a school. They also help to improve behaviour and a sense of belonging and identity. But we want to be sure they are affordable for parents.

This new law will help to save families money and ensure the cost of a blazer or shirt is never a barrier to accessing the best possible education.

The new law, introduced as a Private Members' Bill by Mike Amesbury MP and given Government backing, enables the Government to set statutory guidance for schools to consider about costs for uniforms.

The Department will publish the statutory guidance in the autumn this year, which will focus on ensuring costs are reasonable for families of all backgrounds and giving parents the best value for money.

It will also advise schools to make sure that when they take up contracts with uniform suppliers, they are competitive and transparent in order to keep costs down.

The Government is committed to ensuring no family is deterred from applying to a school due to the costs for its uniform. Once guidance is published, schools will be required by law to consider it when developing their uniform policies.

Matt Easter, Co-Chair of the Schoolwear Association said:

As the leading schoolwear industry body, we welcome the Bill and the help it will provide for schools looking for further guidance on their uniform policies, to ensure the process of choosing a uniform supplier is as robust, competitive and easy as possible.

In particular, we welcome the Government's recognition that the quality and longevity of garments should be considered alongside their cost. Whilst the vast majority of schools already work hard to keep their uniforms affordable, this Bill is an important step to help them continue to make the best decisions on their uniform policies and offer the best support to parents.

Mark Russell, Chief Executive of The Children's Society, said:

We are thrilled this new law has passed and we thank Minister Gibb and the Department for Education for their support. This legislation will be vital in ensuring that school uniforms become more affordable for families across the country.

Young people told us back in 2014 that high-priced school uniforms had a huge impact on their ability to make the most of their education. We hope this new law will make children feel more equal to their classmates and make life easier for struggling families.

[Call for views on new residential developer tax](#)



- consultation launched on design of new residential property developer tax
- tax was first announced in February as part of £5 billion cladding remediation package

- proposed design would mean tax only applies to residential developers' profits over £25 million

[Ministers announced the new tax in February](#) as part of a £5 billion package of remediation of unsafe cladding on high-rise residential buildings, alongside wider support.

The government believes it is right that residential property developers, who will benefit from the restoration of confidence to the housing market, should help fund the significant costs associated with the removal of unsafe cladding.

Housing Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

We're making the biggest improvements to building safety standards in a generation, investing over £5 billion helping to protect leaseholders from the cost of replacing unsafe cladding on their homes and ensuring industry is held to account for the wrongs of the past.

This tax will strike the right balance between developers making a contribution and ensuring fairness for the taxpayer.

Financial Secretary to the Treasury Jesse Norman said:

Ending the use of unsafe cladding is a priority for the government, as it builds back better from the pandemic. Given the significant costs associated with the removal of unsafe cladding, it is right to seek a fair contribution from the largest developers in the residential property development sector to help fund it.

The government wants to ensure this tax is proportionate and works as intended, which is why it is launching this consultation today.

The government is today calling for views on proposed design features of the tax including proposals that:

- it would apply to a measure of developers' profit from UK residential development
- it would only apply to in-scope profits over £25 million
- it would apply to conversion of existing buildings as well as new construction

Ministers intend to set out the rate of the tax at a future fiscal event. The time-limited tax is due to apply from 2022 and is intended to raise at least £2 billion over a decade.

The new tax will be UK-wide, reflecting the benefit that housing developers will derive from restoring confidence to the housing market across the UK.

February's announcement included the government pledging to fully fund the cost of replacing unsafe cladding for all leaseholders in residential buildings 18 metres and over in England.

To help pay for these interventions the government is introducing the residential property developer tax and a new Gateway 2 levy, which will be applied when developers seek permission to develop certain high-rise buildings in England.

Further information:

- on 10 February 2021, the government set out a five-point plan to bring an end to unsafe cladding, including: removing unsafe cladding for leaseholders in all residential buildings 18 metres and over in England; a generous finance scheme for leaseholders in lower rise, lower risk buildings to help pay for cladding removal where it is needed; and a new building safety regime to ensure a tragedy like Grenfell never happens again
- the consultation can be found [here](#)

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1. 29 April 2021

Consultation link added

2. 29 April 2021

First published.

[Historic Trade Act becomes law](#)

News story

The Trade Act has today been granted Royal Assent and officially become law.



The UK today (Thursday 29) marks a historic moment as the Trade Act, which bestows powers necessary to bring new trade deals into being, is granted Royal Assent, and formally becomes law.

The Act allows the UK to put the agreements it strikes as a newly independent 21st-century trading nation on to the statute books.

This means the 67 trade deals worth £891 billion it has already signed can become part of UK law – and that British householders' and businesses' interests can be put first in future agreements, for the first time in almost 50 years.

The Act provides certainty vital for British firms to trade successfully overseas and means they will not face additional costs when doing so.

It will provide a platform for UK businesses to access new fast-growing markets, which in turn will help create jobs, encourage investment and aid the economic recovery from Covid-19.

It also contains measures designed to ensure future deals will not impact the UK's consumer standards, workers' rights or the NHS.

The Trade Act will also:

- Help protect UK businesses from unfair trading practices by establishing an independent Trade Remedies Authority.
- Uphold high food and environmental standards by placing the Independent Trade and Agriculture Commission on a statutory footing.
- Maintain access for UK businesses to public procurement opportunities worth approximately £1.3 trillion per year globally, through the World Trade Organization's Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA).
- Enable the government to collect data on exporters, providing an accurate view of exporting activity across the UK. This will help to provide targeted support for businesses to access new export opportunities.

The International Trade Secretary, Liz Truss, said:

The passing of this Act into law is a landmark moment for the UK. For the first time in nearly half a century, we are free to pursue an independent trade policy and put the interests of the British

people first.

We will use that newfound sovereignty to push new frontiers in industries of the future like digital trade and services, champion free and fair trade across the globe, and lead reform of the global trading system. Our aim is to strengthen trading links with allies who share our belief in democracy, free enterprise and the rule of law, and to deepen ties with fast-growing economies of the future, positioning Britain where the future growth is and securing our place in a rapidly changing world.

By doing so, we will propel a jobs-led, exports-led and investment-led recovery from Covid-19 and bring prosperity to all parts of our United Kingdom.

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