

Business evictions ban extended until March

- Business eviction ban extended until the end of March 2021
- Review of commercial landlord and tenant legislation to be launched
- Builds on the extra £280 billion government support for businesses during the pandemic

Business owners affected by the pandemic will be protected from eviction until the end of March 2021, Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick announced today (9 December 2020).

The majority of commercial landlords have shown flexibility, understanding and commitment to protect businesses during an exceptionally challenging time.

This final extension to protections from the threat of eviction will give landlords and tenants 3 months to come to an agreement on unpaid rent. The government is clear that where businesses can pay any or all of their rent, they should do so.

Further guidance to support negotiations between landlords and tenants will also be published shortly.

The move will also support businesses worst affected by the pandemic, such as bars and restaurants, helping them to rebuild over the winter period. This is in addition to putting in place one of the world's most comprehensive economic responses to protect jobs, incomes, and business throughout and beyond this pandemic.

Alongside this, Mr Jenrick has also announced a review of the outdated commercial landlord and tenant legislation, to address concerns that the current framework does not reflect the current economic conditions.

This review will consider how to enable better collaboration between commercial landlords and tenants and also how to improve the leasing process to ensure our high streets and town centres thrive as we recover from the pandemic and beyond.

Today's announcement builds on the extra government support for businesses, including targeted VAT cuts, extension of government-backed loan schemes, grants of up to £3,000 for premises that must close, and £1.1 billion for councils to enable them to support businesses in their area.

Overall the government has committed a package of over £280 billion of support for businesses and employees this year and the Chancellor has confirmed an additional £55 billion for next year.

Secretary of State for Housing Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

I am extending protections from the threat of eviction for businesses unable to pay their rent until March 2021, taking the length of these measures to one year. This will help them recover from the impact of the pandemic and plan for the future.

This support is for the businesses struggling the most during the pandemic, such as those in hospitality – however, those that are able to pay their rent should do so.

We are witnessing a profound adjustment in commercial property. It is critical that landlords and tenants across the country use the coming months to reach agreements on rent wherever possible and enable viable businesses to continue to operate.

Business Secretary Alok Sharma said:

We have stood by businesses across the country throughout this pandemic, and as we head into the New Year we will make sure they continue to have the support they need to keep their finances stable, protect jobs and build back better.

There is still some uncertainty ahead, but knowing that they won't be evicted by their landlord will give thousands of business owners some breathing space and the additional confidence they need to plan for their futures.

Further guidance to support tenants and landlords to continue to work together to agree rent payment options where businesses are struggling will be published shortly.

Additional guidance published early next year will sit alongside the government's Code of Practice, published in June, to encourage all parties to work together to protect viable businesses and ensure a swift economic recovery.

The government will also extend insolvency measures on restricting statutory demands and winding up petitions until the end of March.

The restriction on landlords using Commercial Rent Arrears Recovery (CRAR) to recover unpaid rent will also automatically extend to the end of March, in line with the moratorium's expiry date. This allows businesses sufficient breathing space to pay rent owed.

In addition to the measures extended today, the government has also committed a package of over £280 billion of support for businesses and employees, including loans, rates relief and grants for businesses:

The review of review of commercial landlord and tenant legislation will be launched early next year and will consider a broad range of issues including the Landlord & Tenant Act 1954 Part II, different models of rent payment, and

the impact of Coronavirus on the market.

A temporary measure introduced by the Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act restricting the use of statutory demands and winding-up petitions, which was due to expire on 31 December 2020, has been extended to the 31 March 2021.

This will continue to help protect companies from aggressive creditor enforcement action as a result of coronavirus related debts and give breathing space to companies to negotiate or restructure.

[Consultation launches on A46 Newark bypass](#)

Highways England has shared plans to transform the last remaining section of single carriageway on the A46, which is part of the nationally significant 'Trans-Midlands Trade Corridor', connecting the M5 with Humber Ports.

The proposed road upgrade will tackle congestion on the outskirts of Newark by removing bottlenecks, making journeys safer and more reliable than ever before.

For the 17,000 drivers who travel along the busy A46 every day, this increase in road capacity will put a welcome end to frustrating stop-start journeys.

Two scheme options have been progressed by Highways England, both of which promise to give an economic boost to communities across the region.

From 9 December to February 2021, everyone who lives near or regularly uses the route is encouraged to review the proposals and have their say on which solution they prefer.

Highways England project manager, Karen Green, said:

This major upgrade to the A46 will help drivers by better linking two key midlands cities – Leicester and Lincoln.

Cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders are set to benefit from our plans too as we'll provide a safer route for them to cross the A46.

We'd prefer to share information about both scheme options at a public information event where we can meet people face-to-face. As that's not possible right now, we're making everything available online.

It's vital that the new bypass works for the whole community. So, I'd encourage everyone to have their say on the road's future.

Thousands of leaflets advertising the public consultation have been delivered to homes and businesses around Newark.

For more information about the scheme options and to take part in the consultation, visit the [A46 Newark bypass scheme webpage](#).

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

[Adults to gain new skills on 400 free courses](#)

Tens of thousands of adults will be able to benefit from almost 400 free courses next year, in the first major development in the Lifetime Skills Guarantee [announced by the Prime Minister](#) in September.

The fully-funded courses, ranging from engineering to healthcare to conservation, will be available to adults without a full qualification at Level 3 (A-level equivalent) from April 2021 to help them gain in-demand skills and open up further job opportunities.

Designed to help our country build back better after the pandemic, the qualifications in this offer have been carefully chosen to help adults improve their career prospects and meet the needs of the economy. They will be reviewed regularly so the courses offered can be updated as the economy changes.

The announcement marks an important step in the development of the government's landmark Lifetime Skills Guarantee, which will transform the skills system to ensure more people, no matter their age or background, can get the skills they need to progress in employment.

The offer is backed by £95 million from the £2.5 billion National Skills Fund, which is financing programmes that both support the immediate economic recovery and help meet future skills needs.

This funding will not only enable thousands of adults to gain new qualifications and access better job opportunities; a proportion will also be used to support education and training providers to scale up their provision

to deliver the courses and meet the needs of learners.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

Despite all our efforts, coronavirus is damaging the economy and putting people out of work. But I am determined to help everyone who has lost their job to retrain, develop new skills and find new opportunities.

The Lifetime Skills Guarantee will give thousands of adults across the country the chance to do exactly that – as we build back better after the pandemic.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

As we recover from the pandemic, we are focussed on making sure that individuals and businesses can build back better than before.

Throughout our lives we may all need to boost our skills, or gain new ones. These free qualifications will help open doors to better employment opportunities for thousands of adults and support businesses to access the workforce they need to grow.

Our new Lifetime Skills Guarantee promises to help you get the skills you need at every stage of your life. I'd urge all those eligible to see what course they can take from spring next year and start thinking about their next steps.

Stephen Phipson CBE, Chief Executive, Make UK, the manufacturers organisation:

Industry will be pleased to see manufacturing and engineering related level 3 qualifications as part of this new offer. Protecting existing vital skills and providing people with an opportunity to learn much needed new skills is crucial.

It is also an important first step in supporting individuals on the pathway towards higher-level qualifications as we transition to a digital economy. These new opportunities will be critical in the months ahead for the manufacturing sector as we build a workforce fit for the future.

Chief Executive of Association of Colleges, David Hughes said:

I'm pleased to see progress in the roll-out of the new Level 3 entitlement as part of the Lifetime Skills Guarantee. The qualifications will help people to get the skills they need in the

labour market emerging from the pandemic so it is great to see that essential services like child and social care have been included alongside engineering, agriculture, construction and many others. Colleges are eager to start work and begin planning ahead of delivery in the spring of 2021.

This breadth of courses is vital in supporting rural and urban economies to build back better. The impact Covid-19 is having on people's livelihoods requires urgent action so we look forward to working closely with the Department to support the delivery of this new offer.

The government's plan to support people to upskill and retrain was also bolstered earlier this month by the announcement of £43 million from the National Skills Fund to expand the pioneering 'Skills Bootcamps' to other areas of England in 2021.

The Bootcamps – which were launched in the West Midlands, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and the Liverpool City Region this autumn, offer free, flexible courses of 12-16 weeks to give people the opportunity to build up sector-specific skills and fast-track to an interview with a local employer.

Registrations have now opened for courses in the Leeds City Region, Heart of the South West, and Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire which will cover digital skills like software development, digital marketing, and data analytics but also technical skills training in such areas as welding, engineering, and construction.

Alongside the new Level 3 offer, the Lifetime Skill Guarantee will also include a Lifelong Loan Entitlement which will allow adults and young people to space out their study across their lifetimes and take high-quality courses in both further education colleges and universities.

[England Coast Path proposals published for Suffolk](#)

[Natural England](#) has today (Wednesday 9 December 2020), published its proposals to improve public access to a 25-mile (41-km) stretch of coast between Felixstowe Ferry and Bawdsey, which extends around the Deben Estuary in Suffolk.

There is now a period of eight weeks for legal interests and members of the public to make objections or representations that the Secretary of State must take into account when considering whether to approve the proposals.

Internationally important location

The Deben Estuary is renowned for its tranquillity and wildlife. It is one of the five estuaries in southern Suffolk which together define the character of the coast there. It sits largely within the [Suffolk Coasts and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty](#) and is an internationally important wetland site valued for its overwintering water birds and waders, as well as its diverse saltmarshes.

This stretch of the [England Coast Path](#) starts at the small fishing hamlet of Felixstowe Ferry with its golf course, boatyard and sailing club. Then, at the head of the estuary, is the historic maritime town of Woodbridge, which still has a thriving boat-building industry. Here visitors can enjoy [Woodbridge Tide Mill](#) and the nearby [Sutton Hoo Anglo-Saxon burial site](#). At the end of the stretch lies the village of Bawdsey, the birthplace of radar and home to two Martello towers.

The estuary has a number of boatyards and marinas with a wide variety of sailing activity, from yachts to traditional vessels, which gives the Deben a strong maritime feel. While largely fringed by saltmarsh and mudflats, visitors can enjoy beaches at Bawdsey and Felixstowe Ferry. It is a great place for an exhilarating walk or quiet reflection while watching the passing sailing boats.

Part of England's newest national trail

If approved, this route will become part of the [England Coast Path](#) – a 2,700-mile long-distance walking route and England's newest National Trail, currently being developed by Natural England.

This is the [fourth stretch](#) of the England Coast Path to be developed in Suffolk. Other stretches cover Harwich to Shotley Gate, Shotley Gate to Felixstowe Ferry, and Aldeburgh to Hopton on Sea.

Hannah Thacker, Natural England's area manager for Suffolk, said:

We have had discussions with landowners and key organisations along the proposed route. Their input has been essential and helped shape the proposals; we thank everyone for their time and input so far.

Over the next eight weeks, we are inviting all organisations, farmers, local residents, visitors and businesses to have their say. It's important that all responses are taken into account and we look forward to hearing people's views.

Councillor Andrew Reid, [Suffolk County Council's](#) cabinet member for Highways, Transport and Rural Affairs, said:

I am very pleased that Natural England is publishing the fourth of the reports which reveal the route that the England Coastal Path

will take in Suffolk.

This is a very exciting time for all those who love the Suffolk coastline and enjoy the peace and solitude it provides. We very much look forward to continuing to work with Natural England on the other stretches and launching Suffolk's first fully fledged National Trail.

Anyone may make representations to Natural England about the reports during the eight-week period. Owners and occupiers of affected land may make objections about the reports on specified grounds, which will be considered by a planning inspector before the Secretary of State makes a final decision.

All representations and objections must be received by Natural England no later than midnight on 3 February 2021. The full reports, and all the forms and guidance on how to make a representation or objection within the next eight weeks, are available on the [GOV.UK website](#).

Background

- The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 places a duty on the Secretary of State and Natural England to secure a long-distance walking trail around the open coast of England, together with public access rights to a wider area of land along the way for people to enjoy.
 - Natural England is working on the entire coastal route, with new sections also opened in Cumbria, Norfolk, Dorset, Kent, Somerset, Yorkshire, Northumberland, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, the Tees Valley and Lincolnshire.
 - A map showing a timetable for the work is available on [GOV.UK](#).
 - The England Coast Path will be the longest, newest and most challenging National Trail, passing through some of the nation's finest countryside and coastal locations. It will secure legal rights of public access for the first time to typical coastal land including foreshore, beaches, dunes and cliffs.
 - As well as recommending new sections of route, the proposals outline improvements to existing access to the coastline, including identifying a clear and continuous way-marked walking route along this part of the coast, bringing some sections of the existing coastal footpath closer to the sea and linking some places together for the first time; and allowing the route to 'roll back' if the coastline erodes or slips, solving the long-standing difficulties of maintaining a continuous route along the coast.
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UK announces new approach on US tariffs

The UK is today announcing an independent approach to the longstanding trade conflicts between the EU and US around steel and aluminium and aerospace tariffs.

To defend the UK steel industry, International Trade Secretary Liz Truss is rolling over tariffs in response to the unjustified 'Section 232' tariffs imposed by the US on aluminium and steel imports. These tariffs will continue from January 1st when the UK becomes an independent trading nation once again.

The Department for International Trade will launch a consultation to ensure these tariffs are shaped to UK interests and tailored to the UK economy, based on evidence and input from key stakeholders. Details of the scope and timing of the consultation will be confirmed in due course.

In parallel, the UK government is suspending retaliatory tariffs resulting from the Boeing dispute in an effort to bring the US towards a reasonable settlement and show that the UK is serious about reaching a negotiated outcome. The government reserves the right to impose tariffs at any point if satisfactory progress towards an agreeable settlement is not made.

The twin announcements are part of the government's strategy to de-escalate trade tensions so the US and UK can move forward to the next phase of their trading relationship, and ultimately draw a line under a dispute that harms industry on both sides of the Atlantic.

International Trade Secretary Liz Truss said:

As an independent trading nation once again, we finally have the ability to shape these tariffs to our interests and our economy, and to stand up for UK business.

Ultimately, we want to de-escalate the conflict and come to a negotiated settlement so we can deepen our trading relationship with the US and draw a line under all this. We are protecting our steel industry against illegal and unfair tariffs – and will continue to do so – but are also showing the US we are serious about ending a dispute that benefits neither country.

Background

S232 steel and aluminium measures

In 2018 the United States Government announced that under Section 232 of the US Trade Expansion Act of 1962 it would place tariffs on EU imports of steel and aluminium.

The ongoing tariffs are unjustified under WTO rules and unfairly target UK steel and aluminium manufacturers and should be removed. Any claim that UK steel and aluminium imports harm US national security is false and without foundation.

In response, the EU imposed counter-balancing measures on US products. A full list of products targeted is available online.

Airbus and Boeing disputes

In 2019 the WTO Appellate Body, the final court of appeal at the WTO definitively ruled that the US has continued to unlawfully subsidise aircraft manufacturer Boeing, causing significant harm to Airbus.

The WTO's ruling in this 16 year-long dispute confirms that the United States has not complied with obligations to withdraw subsidies previously declared illegal by the WTO Appellate Body in 2012, adversely affecting the UK and EU aerospace industry.

Following the findings, last month the EU was authorised in a WTO arbitration and has gone on to place retaliatory tariffs on \$4 billion worth of US products in the Boeing dispute.