

New Board of Trade holds first meeting to agree principles and future programme of work

Today (19 October) International Trade Secretary Liz Truss will convene the first meeting of the revamped Board of Trade. The Board will advise the government and DIT on its trade strategy, provide intellectual leadership on trade policy, and help Britain make the case for free and fair trade across the world.

The Board is meeting to agree and discuss the principles underpinning its work – which include a commitment to free enterprise, the rule of law and high-standards trade – and agree its future programme of activity.

It will produce a series of reports looking at the vital issues facing international trade and Britain at the moment. These will include:

- The role of trade in levelling-up Britain
- Combatting digital and data protectionism
- How trade can deliver an industrial revival
- Reform of the WTO and the global trading system
- Commonwealth trade
- How trade can help deliver the government's green objectives

The reports will be published quarterly from 2021 on key trade issues and interests for the UK.

Domestically, the Board will advise how trade policy can help deliver on the government's commitment to level-up the country and 'build back better' from coronavirus. Internationally, it will look at Britain's role in reshaping the rules-based global trading system and how the government could work with like-minded allies to dismantle long-standing barriers to trade.

It will also work with businesses and communities across the United Kingdom to help them identify and seize new opportunities internationally as we make the case for the importance of international trade in delivering increased prosperity and opportunity. At a time of heightened protectionism, it will sell the benefits of trade across the UK, including the north of England and devolved administrations.

The revitalised Board will become an intellectual lodestar for the department, generating advice and providing expertise to influence government trade policy.

Secretary of State for International Trade, Liz Truss, said:

This is a critical moment for the UK and our trading relationships with the rest of the world. Our re-emergence as an independent

trading nation is an enormous opportunity, but it also comes at a time of rising protectionism amidst the challenges posed by coronavirus.

The revamped Board of Trade will play a critical role in helping us navigate and shape the new global trading environment. Just as great British reformers helped drive trade and prosperity in the nineteenth century, we want the new Board of Trade to become the Cobden, Peel and Bright of the twenty first century and push new frontiers in areas like digital trade and the green economy, and ultimately help Britain unleash its full potential post-Brexit.

Dr Linda Yueh, economist at Oxford University, London Business School and LSE IDEAS, said:

As the Board of Trade meets for the first time, I look forward to contributing to trade policy at a critical time.

The 21st century global economy offers both opportunities and challenges. It will be important to position the UK optimally amidst these changes and to craft policies that will generate benefits across the UK.

Notes to editors

- The President of the Board of trade is the Secretary of State for Department of International Trade.

The advisers are:

Time is running out for businesses to prepare

- Government to urge business leaders to step up preparations for an Australia-style exit
- 'Time is running out' campaign will encourage businesses to 'act now' for guaranteed changes at the end of the year
- EU Exit Operations (X0) Cabinet committee moves to daily rhythm

Business leaders will be urged not to get caught out by new rules at the end

of the transition period by the Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (CDL) Michael Gove this week.

In a call with business leaders the Prime Minister and Michael Gove will discuss preparations and ask businesses to step up their efforts to get ready for the changes and opportunities in just over 8 weeks.

The call to action comes as the government launches the latest phase of its public information campaign emphasising the increased urgency to prepare for the end of the UK transition period with the strapline "Time is running out".

HMRC are today also writing to 200,000 traders who trade with the EU to set out the new customs and tax rules coming into place and how to deal with them.

This follows a clear direction from the Prime Minister that the whole UK must prepare to leave the EU on Australia-style terms based on simple principles of global free trade, after the European Council conclusions last week left us without a basis to continue trade negotiations if there was no fundamental change in the EU's negotiating position.

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster Michael Gove said:

At the end of this year we are leaving the EU Single Market and Customs Union and this means there are both new challenges and new opportunities for businesses. Make no mistake, there are changes coming in just 75 days and time is running out for businesses to act.

It is on all of us to put in the work now so that we can embrace the new opportunities available to an independent trading nation with control of its own borders, territorial waters and laws.

The government is also redoubling its own efforts to get ready for the end of the year with Michael Gove ordering the X0 Cabinet Committee to convene five times per week as of today. He will chair the 150th meeting of the operations committee in COBR next week.

The government has already published the Border Operating Model which gives traders the clarity they need to prepare for new rules, announced £705m of investment in jobs, infrastructure and technology at the border, and provided £84m in grants to grow the customs intermediary sector.

Recognising the impact of coronavirus on businesses' ability to prepare the UK has also taken the decision to introduce new border controls in three stages up until 1 July 2021. However, the focus of the X0 committee is now firmly on making sure businesses are ready for the changes and opportunities ahead.

Business Secretary Alok Sharma said:

With just 75 days until the end of the transition period, businesses must act now to ensure they are ready for the UK's new start as an independent trading nation once more. There will be no extension to the transition period, so there is no time to waste.

There will be a guaranteed set of changes for which businesses need to prepare for, so I urge all businesses across the country to check [gov.uk/transition](https://www.gov.uk/transition) to see what action they need to take.

Businesses have a crucial role to play in ensuring a smooth transition, and the Government will be there to support them through this change every step of the way.

The UK is leaving the EU's Single Market and Customs Union at the end of the year and there are some definite actions businesses need to take now. These actions are required whether we end up with Australian or Canadian-style trading arrangements.

- If you sell goods to the EU you must prepare for new customs procedures. Visit GOV.UK to check duties and customs procedures for exporting your goods worldwide from 1 January 2021.
- If you travel to the EU for work purposes you will need to check if you need a visa or work permit and apply if necessary.
- If you employ overseas nationals you will need to prepare your business for the implementation of the new immigration system. From 1 January 2021, if you want to hire anyone from outside the UK, including from the EU, you must be a Home Office licenced sponsor.
- If you are a UK business or organisation that receives personal data from contacts in the EEA, you may need to take extra steps to ensure that the data can continue to flow legally at the end of the transition period.
- If you provide services in the EU, you must ensure that your qualifications are now recognised by EU regulations to be able to practice or service clients in the EU.

Businesses can get a personalised summary of the actions they need to take by using the simple tool on [gov.uk/transition](https://www.gov.uk/transition).

[New UK Government Covid testing site opens in West Edinburgh](#)

The UK Government opened a new walk-through coronavirus testing centre in West Edinburgh on Saturday 17 September. Located in the Gate 55 community hub in Sighthill, the site is easily accessible for people without a car.

The new facility is being provided by the UK Government as part of a UK-wide drive to continue to improve the accessibility of coronavirus testing for local communities. It is operated by Mitie on behalf of the UK Government.

The test centre is part of the largest network of diagnostic testing facilities created in British history. In Scotland, this comprises of six drive-through sites, nine walk-through sites, 20 mobile units, plus the Glasgow Lighthouse Lab which is working round the clock to process samples.

In Scotland, the UK Government is providing all COVID testing and test processing outside of the NHS. Around two-thirds of all daily tests are provided by the UK Government, in support of Scotland's health services.

Tests must be booked in advance at www.nhsinform.scot/test-and-protect or by calling 0800 028 2816. People should only book a test if they have coronavirus symptoms (a high temperature, a new and continuous cough, or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste).

Health Minister Lord Bethell said:

We continue to expand UK Government testing to make sure that everyone with symptoms can get a test, with our new walk-in sites making it even easier no matter where you live.

This new site forms part of our UK testing network, which has the capacity to test more than a million people a week and is growing all the time.

If you have symptoms of coronavirus, I urge you to book a test today, and follow the advice of contact tracers if you are contacted to protect others around you and stop the spread of the virus.

This is a UK-wide effort and we are proud to be working with a number of partners to turn this ambition into a reality and roll out additional capacity to where it is needed.

Baroness Dido Harding, Interim Executive Chair of the National Institute for Health Protection, said:

The UK Government's new walk-through sites offer communities better access to coronavirus testing, so everyone with symptoms can get a test. This new site is part of our ongoing work to expand testing across the UK to deliver 500,000 tests a day by the end of October.

Please book a test if you have coronavirus symptoms: a new continuous cough, a high temperature and a loss or change in sense of smell or taste.

Everybody should continue to think hands, face, space, and follow

the advice of contact tracers if you are contacted – this is the only way we can return to a more normal way of life.

UK Government Minister for Scotland, Iain Stewart, said:

The UK Government is helping all parts of the UK fight the coronavirus pandemic.

Testing is vital, helping to manage local outbreaks and protecting people's livelihoods. The UK Government is providing the bulk of Covid testing in Scotland, and this new walk-through centre, is just the latest in our extensive testing network.

We are pleased to be working with local and commercial partners. These sites are not possible without the hard work of many people. I would like to thank everyone involved for their incredible efforts for the good of the country at this difficult time.

Simon Venn, Mitie Chief Government & Strategy Officer, said:

Our priority during the pandemic is to support the nation's efforts to fight COVID-19 and help keep the country running. Testing is a critical part of the UK's strategy to combat coronavirus and we're proud to support the UK Government with this vital task.

A big thank you to all the NHS staff, Mitie employees and other frontline heroes in Edinburgh, who are working tirelessly to keep us all safe.

£10 million lifeline from the National Lottery for National League football announced by Culture Secretary

- Will help much-loved local teams play this season and allow clubs to continue vital work in their communities
- UK Government now working with the National Lottery to ensure similar initiative with Welsh, Scottish and Northern Ireland FAs

- Government work continues to expedite the safe return of fans in England

Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden has today announced that National League football clubs will receive £10 million funding as part of a unique partnership with The National Lottery.

The support will benefit the 66 clubs in the fifth and six tiers of English football, so that they can continue to play behind closed doors after the return of fans was paused due to rising infection rates.

Alongside the support for clubs, National Lottery players will also get a range of benefits – including free tickets once stadia are safe to reopen, grassroots football opportunities, and VIP experiences at Wembley Stadium.

It comes after the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport assured the National League that emergency financial support would be forthcoming so that it was able to start the season earlier this month. All 66 clubs are playing football this season as a result.

The £10 million emergency support package, which will reach clubs quickly via the Football Association (FA), is in recognition of the important role National League clubs play in their local areas – being a source of pride to their towns, giving children opportunities to get active, and being at the heart of their communities.

Many clubs and their supporters have also been very active in their areas throughout the pandemic, rallying round to help the elderly and isolated, and raising money for front-line charities.

Oliver Dowden, Culture Secretary, said:

I know from a brilliant club in my area that National League football clubs are the beating heart of their communities and too precious to lose. This £10 million fund will provide a bridge to help clubs survive this immediate crisis whilst we work together on the safe return of fans.

I'm very grateful to National Lottery players for getting help to these community clubs so quickly.

Nigel Railton, Chief Executive of National Lottery operator Camelot, said:

The National Lottery has been making a huge difference to communities across the country for the past 26 years, so we're delighted to be working with the National League and FA to protect these essential clubs and help them to continue the vital work they carry out in their local communities.

Millions of National Lottery players love football, so our

partnership will also see them receive a range of great benefits. It's our way of saying thank you to our players, who make a difference every time they buy a ticket.

Mark Bullingham, FA Chief Executive, said:

This financial support is crucial as these clubs are the heartbeat of their communities and it would be a travesty if they were not able to survive. We have worked hard with the National League, Government and The National Lottery to make this happen and would like to thank everyone involved.

The return of fans to stadiums remains a priority for us and we will continue to work with the Government and stakeholders across the game to reintroduce spectators in a safe way as soon as possible.

This initiative is with the FA and National League, and the UK Government is now working with the National Lottery to ensure similar initiatives with the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Ireland FAs.

Funding will be distributed to each of the 66 National League clubs to help cover their lost gate revenue from the delay to fans being permitted to return, that was originally scheduled for 1 October. The decision was taken to pause this relaxation of the rules on 22 September, in order to stem rising coronavirus infection rates across the country.

Work continues to ensure fans can return to sporting events as soon as the public health picture allows. This includes the [Sports Technology Innovation Group \(STIG\)](#) – made up of medical experts including Deputy Chief Medical Officer Jonathan Van-Tam, sports authorities, and representatives from the tech sector – which is looking at innovative solutions to enable the return of spectators without the need for a coronavirus vaccine. The STIG will make recommendations to the government.

Today's announcement builds on support the government has already given the sport sector to help it stay afloat during this difficult time. Sport England announced a £210 million emergency fund, largely enabled by National Lottery funding, for grassroots clubs, and [earlier this year the Government stepped in to protect rugby league with £16 million in emergency loans](#).

These interventions were on top of the multi-billion pound package of business support from the Treasury that enabled many sports clubs to survive, including the furlough scheme and business interruption loan scheme. From 1 November, businesses can claim under the new Job Support Scheme, which has been extended to help those required to close due to coronavirus restrictions, including sports venues.

The Government is also working at pace with sports governing bodies and clubs across the country to fully assess what support is needed as a result of the

decision to postpone the return of spectators from 1 October.

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

The money for the initiative is coming from a National Lottery promotional fund. It is not being funded by money allocated for National Lottery Good Causes or by Camelot.

[Space company takes to the skies alongside the NHS](#)

The pandemic has seen the country pulling together, with organisations across the space sector stepping forward to help.

Apian, part of the NHS Clinical Entrepreneur Programme, aims to establish a network of secure air corridors for electric drones to navigate via satellite-enabled GPS. Each drone will be able to carry COVID-19 samples, test-kits and PPE. This will avoid courier call-out waiting times, free-up NHS staff, reduce unnecessary physical contact and minimise the risk of secondary transmission of the virus.

The project will be based at Broomfield Hospital, part of Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust and will be supported by the local Anglia Ruskin University as the academic partner. Befittingly, the hospital stands on a WW1 Royal Flying Corps Airfield.

Science Minister Amanda Solloway said:

The efforts of the UK's space sector to support our incredible NHS during the COVID-19 pandemic have been truly inspirational.

The projects we are backing today are fantastic examples of how our leading space scientists are supporting those directly on the frontline to help prevent the spread of coronavirus.

Christopher Law, from Apian said:

COVID-19 has highlighted challenges in NHS supply chain logistics. There has never been a better time to create a faster, more dependable and environmentally friendly method of transporting medical supplies. We are confident that by setting up a medical drone delivery service, we'll be able to fly samples to labs more

regularly, reliably and quickly, improving patient health outcomes.

Apian founders Hammad Jeilani (right) and Christopher Law. ©2020 Annalisa Russell-Smith

The healthcare drone company is one of three new projects using space-enabled technologies and services to support the NHS in the ongoing battle against COVID-19.

The UK Space Agency is also backing DriverNet – a mobile app that will use satellite technology to provide access to more affordable community transport for people wishing to go to and from COVID care providers, and those looking to participate in community sport.

By using artificial intelligence to batch patients by their ‘geolocation’ – their mobile phone location triangulated by satellites – and encouraging transport sharing, costs and miles could be cut by half. This could also help reduce the 15 million missed NHS appointments each year.

NHS workers and patients will get a notification through text or on their app when shuttle services are available in their area.

Professor Tony Young, the NHS national clinical lead for innovation, said:

At the same time as the NHS came together to fight a pandemic and treat over 110,000 severely ill people for COVID-19, staff have also gone above and beyond to create innovative ways for patients to get the care and kit they need alongside the UK Space Agency. This study which will create droneways in the sky for vital NHS supplies is the latest in a longline of projects founded by the NHS Clinical Entrepreneur Programme to provide innovative solutions to the challenges facing the NHS for the benefit of patients and staff.

Also being backed today is the delivery of a remote platform for Earth Observation learning.

The collaboration, led by the University of Edinburgh, builds on the Earth Blox (Quosient Ltd.) cloud-based software for harnessing planetary-scale satellite-intelligence.

The collaboration will provide distance learning support to students who would have been studying Earth Observation science. Earth Observation students will be our next generation of climate change specialists, weather forecasters and digital pioneers.

Earth Observation courses involve frequently being in a laboratory and

completing practical exercises, and this funding will help make this possible from home – providing students at four participating universities with remote access to vast quantities of satellite data.

The projects – set to receive £1.3m of funding – have been selected as part of a joint initiative between the UK Space Agency and the European Space Agency (ESA) which has already provided one round of funding in July, worth £1.1 million, to companies developing space based solutions for issues created by COVID-19.

Initial funding went to three initiatives, including a drones company delivering test kits in Scotland and another project that used space data to support vulnerable people through a mobile application.

Emily Gravestock, Head of Applications Strategy at the UK Space Agency, said:

Once again, the UK space industry has risen to the challenge. The variety of innovative solutions continues to impress me and I look forward to seeing how satellite applications built by UK industry can improve healthcare services, reduce carbon emissions and enhance education.

The UK Space Agency and ESA are still looking to fund further bids with the call for ideas remaining open until 15 January 2021.

The UK continues to be a leading member of ESA, which is independent of the EU, having committed a record investment of £374 million per year in November 2019. This funding to support the coronavirus response comes from ESA's Business Applications Space Solutions fund, in which the UK is the leading investor.

Nick Appleyard, Head of Downstream Business Applications at ESA's European Centre for Space Applications and Telecommunications in Oxfordshire, said:

In 2020 we all saw the critical importance of rapid and efficient healthcare operations so, at ESA and the UK Space Agency, we asked the space applications industry to think how they could help.

Much space-enabled technology removes the need to move people, whether this is patients, healthcare practitioners or couriers. Instead, we can use drones to move samples and equipment, or satellites to move information to reach even the most isolated communities at a speed that was impossible until now. Even when patients do need to attend hospital appointments, moving information using satellites enables them to do so in a cheaper and more environmentally friendly manner.

Space technology will allow our health services to save more lives.

Space is already playing an important role in supporting healthcare initiatives. Last year the UK Space Agency provided £5 million for new health technologies inspired by working in space to support NHS England.

These included providing real-time diagnosis of bowel cancer, developing more compact 3D X-ray machines and a mobile app that provided exercise plans free from air pollution for those with medical conditions such as asthma.

The UK Space Agency and UKspace trade body continue to work closely together to help the space sector respond to and recover from the coronavirus pandemic.

Project Dreadnought led by Apian, based in London

Partners Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust, SYNLAB and Pathology First, Skylift UAV, Flyby Technologies and Electric Aviation.

Apian was founded by Hammad Jeilani and Christopher Law, trainee doctors at the Barts and The London as well as Mid and South Essex NHS Innovation Fellows. Apian is installing 'dronepad' infrastructure so its aircrafts can take-off from and land onto hospitals, laboratories and warehouses. In doing so, the startup is creating new standards and best practice guidelines; written by the NHS, for the NHS.

Apian will scale the work from their drone trials by creating the UK's NHS Air Grid (NAG), a network of secure air corridors designed to safely, rapidly and effectively enable drone delivery across the NHS. Apian is creating these corridors by working closely with the Civil Aviation Authority, UK Space Agency and the emergency services.

Apian provides the interface between the healthcare and drone industries creating a more demand driven, just-in-time system for delivering smarter, faster, cleaner healthcare. Its goal is to use evidence-based research to show how drones can improve care pathways and level-up health outcomes.

While Apian's current task to rapidly deliver COVID-19 samples and PPE is in line with both Government and NHS priorities, NHS England anticipates that the recovery-phase of this pandemic can significantly benefit from drones delivering other medical payloads including equipment, medications, blood packs and more. Therefore, investing in their solution will continue to provide the NHS with an enhanced logistics system even after the pandemic is behind us.

DriverNet Go led by ProNetixLtd, based in St Helens, Merseyside

Partners Liverpool, Blackpool & St Helens Councils, Merseyside and Cheshire NHS Trusts, Lancaster University, Daresbury, Chorley and Esoterix

This tool will, in a COVID safe way, book hospital appointments for patients who need transport from the same location at the same time to help reduce the

backlog of hospital appointments post-COVID, increase appointment attendance and lower costs to the NHS. The transport will also support employees and visitors in a shuttle system, supporting the reduction of NHS traffic on the road.

This supports 2 of the priorities in this call 1. Recovering health system function and handling backlogs after the crisis and 2. Logistics within the health system

Earth Blox for Education, led by The University of Edinburgh

Partners: Quosient Ltd, Universities of, Leeds, Glasgow, and The Open University, EDINA, STEM Learning Ltd

To solve the disruption to lab-based learning from COVID-19, Earth Blox will be applied to an e-learning solution allowing students, wherever they are located, to learn the practical elements of Earth Observation (EO), through distance learning as well as self-directed dissertation and project work. It uses the cloud to allow students to conduct large-scale data analysis and learn basic coding skills for EO.

There will be one “free and open” “introduction to EO” course to run on FutureLearn, and one 10-credit online distance learning module on ‘the use of EO for SDG monitoring’, both built around Earth Blox for students to perform data analysis. Earth Blox will then be available more widely.

In essence, this will continue to train the next group of Remote Sensing Specialists during the COVID crisis while Universities cannot run computing classes in person, and will also then be an exportable product, increasing the uptake of EO and remote sensing in other parts of the world.

Earth Blox is a tool that allows EO analysis without having to write code – this project will make it a mainstream tool for education and roll it out further, and be ready as an exportable product.