

# Self-driving revolution to boost economy and improve road safety

- government unveils plan to rollout self-driving vehicles on UK roads, sparking a transport revolution to improve road safety and better connect communities
- estimated 38,000 new jobs could be created in the UK from predicted £42 billion industry
- backed by £100 million to support industry investment and fund research on safety developments

UK roads could see self-driving vehicles rolled out by 2025 thanks to new government plans – backed by £100 million – which prioritise safety through new laws and create thousands of new jobs in the industry.

Some vehicles, including cars, coaches and lorries, with self-driving features could be operating on motorways in the next year, and today's (19 August 2022) plans set out new legislation which will allow for the safe wider rollout of self-driving vehicles by 2025. This enables the UK to take full advantage of the emerging market of self-driving vehicles – which could create up to 38,000 jobs and could be worth an estimated £42 billion.

The government's vision for self-driving vehicles is backed by a total of £100 million, with £34 million confirmed today for research to support safety developments and inform more detailed legislation. This could include researching the performance of self-driving cars in poor weather conditions and how they interact with pedestrians, other vehicles, and cyclists.

The government is also today confirming £20 million, as part of the overall £100 million, to help kick-start commercial self-driving services and enable businesses to grow and create jobs in the UK, following an existing £40 million investment. Successful projects could help see, for example, groceries delivered to customers by self-driving vehicles, or shuttle pods assisting passengers when moving through airports. £6 million will also be used for further market research and to support commercialisation of the technology.

Self-driving vehicles could revolutionise public transport and passenger travel, especially for those who don't drive, better connect rural communities and reduce road collisions caused by human error. Further in the future, they could, for example, provide tailored on-demand links from rural towns and villages to existing public transport options nearby. They could also provide more direct and timely services that enable people to better access vital services such as schools and medical appointments.

Vehicles that can drive themselves on motorways could be available to purchase within the next year, which users would need a valid driving licence for, so they can drive on other roads. Other self-driving vehicles, for example used for public transport or delivery, expected on the roads by 2025,

would not need anyone onboard with a driving licence because they would be able to drive themselves for the whole journey.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

The benefits of self-driving vehicles have the potential to be huge. Not only can they improve people's access to education and other vital services, but the industry itself can create tens of thousands of job opportunities throughout the country.

Most importantly, they're expected to make our roads safer by reducing the dangers of driver error in road collisions.

We want the UK to be at the forefront of developing and using this fantastic technology, and that is why we are investing millions in vital research into safety and setting the legislation to ensure we gain the full benefits that this technology promises.

The government is today consulting on a 'safety ambition' for self-driving vehicles to be as safe as a competent and careful human driver. This ambition would inform standards that vehicles need to meet to be allowed to 'self-drive' on the roads, and organisations, such as manufacturers, could face sanctions if standards are not met.

The new laws for the safe rollout of self-driving vehicles by 2025 will be brought forward when parliamentary time allows.

The legislation will build on existing laws, and state that manufacturers are responsible for the vehicle's actions when self-driving, meaning a human driver would not be liable for incidents related to driving while the vehicle is in control of driving.

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

Self-driving vehicles have the potential to revolutionise people's lives, particularly by helping those who have mobility issues or rely on public transport to access the jobs, local shops and vital services we all depend on.

This funding will help unlock the incredible potential of this industry, attracting investment, developing the UK's growing self-driving vehicle supply chain, and supporting high-skill jobs as these new means of transport are rolled out.

AA president, Edmund King, said:

The automotive world is changing rapidly and so the government is right to embrace the positive changes offered by this new technology and back it by funding research and putting forward

legislation. Assisted driving systems, for example, autonomous emergency braking and adaptive cruise control, are already helping millions of drivers stay safe on the roads.

It is still quite a big leap from assisted driving, where the driver is still in control, to self-driving, where the car takes control. It is important that the government does study how these vehicles would interact with other road users on different roads and changing weather conditions. However the ultimate prize, in terms of saving thousands of lives and improving the mobility of the elderly and the less mobile, is well worth pursuing.

Today also sees the publication of the Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation's (CDEI) Responsible Innovation in Self-Driving Vehicles report, which sets out proposals for a trustworthy approach to the regulation and governance of self-driving vehicles.

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## [Historical UK breweries at New Zealand's biggest beer festival](#)

World news story

10 iconic and sustainable British breweries are being featured on the GREAT Britain stand at Beervana in Wellington.



The UK Government has returned to Beervana with 10 UK breweries.

The UK Government in New Zealand have hand selected the group of UK companies who are being showcased on the GREAT stand at New Zealand's premier [beer festival](#).

The 10 breweries featured on the stand are:

Greene King Brewery and Shepherd Neame are members of the UK's 'Net Zero Now' initiative launched in July 2021. This scheme is an industry protocol and certification standard which will help bars and pubs across Britain reach net-zero before the national legal deadline of 2050.

Britain's oldest brewery, Shepherd Neame, founded in 1698 has repeatedly pioneered sustainable brewing methods. They recycle 97% of the grain and hops used in the brewing process and their waste management was restructured so they could convert it into biofuel. In 2013 Shepherd Neame also invested in a £3 million water recovery plant which enabled them to reduce their water consumption by 40%.

British High Commissioner to New Zealand, [Iona Thomas](#) said:

The UK and New Zealand share so much – whether it's our common values, our passion for sport, or our shared love of beer! Beervana is a wonderful celebration of some of the best beer in the world, so I'm delighted that ten British breweries are taking part this year.

You will find them at the GREAT Britain stand where you can also learn more about how British bars, pubs and breweries are greenifying the industry and tackling climate change – another important goal we share with New Zealand. Cheers!

British Consul General and Deputy Trade Commissioner Asia Pacific (Australia and New Zealand) [Louise Cantillon](#) said:

We are delighted to be showcasing these 10 British breweries at Beervana 2022. Beer is one of the UK's top food and drink exports valued at £413 million.

There are over 3,000 breweries in the UK. An impressive 441 million kilograms of beer is exported from the UK around the world each year.

Through the UK-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement we will strengthen opportunities to export high-quality British food and drink products so they can be enjoyed by even more New Zealanders.

## **Media contact**

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## [Southampton targeted for illegal waste exports](#)

A former company director has been fined for exporting banned household waste from Southampton.

The illegal cargo bound for Indonesia in 2019 included nappies, clothing, textiles, tins and electrical items sent from a site in Worcestershire.

Tianyong Wang, of Solihull, pleaded guilty at an earlier hearing to causing his dissolved company, Berry Polymer Ltd, to export the waste. Shipping documents described the waste as plastic, which can be exported to Indonesia for recycling.

Howard McCann, prosecuting for the Environment Agency, told Kidderminster magistrates that between 27 June and 5 July 2019, Wang had caused his company to export some 382 tonnes of household waste in 22 sea containers from its site in Droitwich via Southampton and Felixstowe, including 17 from the south coast port.

The waste included 1,590 nappies and sanitary items, 1,338 electrical items and 33,639 tins and cans.

Other contaminants found in searches by investigators from the Environment Agency were items of clothing, textiles and rags, unopened plastic bags, glass, wood, golf balls, toys, a used toilet brush and food and drink cartons.

Mr McCann told the court Wang was the sole director of Berry Polymer, which has since been dissolved.

Wang had agreed to sell 500 tonnes of plastic bottle waste to a broker at £270 per tonne. A purchase order confirmed the load site of the waste as 'Berry Polymer Ltd, 20 The Furlong, Droitwich WR9 9AH'. Berry Polymer invoiced the broker £103,210.20 for 382.26 tonnes of 'plastic bottles'.

The offence was discovered on 4 July 2019 by Environment Agency officers who conducted initial inspections of some of the 22 containers sent to Southampton and Felixstowe.

The inspections recorded significant evidence of contamination, flies and, in some containers, a rotting decomposing smell.

The containers were deemed unfit for export at that stage and prevented from onward shipment to Indonesia.

Five of the containers were transported to the Environment Agency's inspection facility at Felixstowe for full examination. One of the bales was so badly contaminated, it made an officer physically sick.

All the containers were returned to the site in Droitwich for reprocessing.

Wang told the Environment Agency the material supplied was not as described because his company's usual bale-inspection had either not happened or was sub-standard.

In sentencing, district judge Ian Strongman said this was a 'blunder' by Wang that cost him his business and his reputation.

Sham Singh, a senior investigating officer for the Environment Agency, said:

This prosecution sends out a strong message we will investigate and, where necessary, prosecute anyone found to be involved in exporting waste illegally.

Waste crime can have a serious environmental impact and puts communities at risk. It undermines legitimate business and the investment and economic growth that go with it.

We support businesses operating within the law by stopping the illegal waste exports.

At Kidderminster magistrates' court on 10 August, Tianyong Wang, 43, of Welcombe Grove, Solihull, was fined £1,200 and ordered to pay costs of £10,000.

He was charged with breaching regulation 55(1) of the Transfrontier Shipment of Waste Regulations 2007, by causing Berry Polymer Ltd to transport 22 containers of waste collected from households to Indonesia illegally between 27 June and 5 July 2019. This was contrary to regulation 23 of the Transfrontier Shipment of Waste Regulations 2007.

If anyone suspects a company is doing something wrong, please contact the Environment Agency on 0800 80 70 60 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

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# COP26 Regional Ambassador O'Flaherty travels to Guatemala

World news story

UK Government's Regional Ambassador for Asia/ Pacific, Caribbean and Small Island Developing States, Ken O'Flaherty, will visit Guatemala on 19 August.



Ambassador O'Flaherty is including Guatemala in a global tour to several countries vulnerable to climate change as part of the UK's vigorous diplomatic efforts to follow up on the commitments of the Glasgow Climate Pact, achieved last year at COP26 in Scotland.

The Regional Ambassador will focus on helping meaningfully efforts to build resilience to climate change, to curb greenhouse gas emissions and to provide the necessary finance for both.

The Ambassador will stress the importance of reducing the gap between existing emission reduction plans and what is required to reduce emissions, such as Guatemala's commitments to tackle deforestation and promote the use of renewable energies. He will also discuss the importance for Guatemala to support initiatives to phase down unabated coal power and inefficient subsidies for fossil fuels.

For that purpose, the Regional Ambassador will meet with senior representatives of the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Energy and the National Council of Protected Areas. He will also learn about private sector efforts to promote sustainable development, and other active projects being implemented in Guatemala by environmental organizations.

During his trip, the Regional Ambassador will also highlight the need for nations to reaffirm their duty to comply with contributing 100 billion dollars annually from developed to developing countries. The UK has already committed US\$20 million through its [Biodiverse Landscapes Fund](#), which will help Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Belize cope with the impacts of

climate change, reduce poverty and protect biodiversity in environmentally rich areas of Mesoamerica.

The 26th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), COP26 took place November 1-12, 2021, in Glasgow, UK. The UK holds the Presidency until COP27 in Egypt later this year and will aim to ensure promises on emission reductions are fulfilled to keep 1.5C alive; commitments on adaptation and loss and damage are honoured; commitments to get finance flowing are kept and that its inclusive Presidency continues.

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## [More foreign criminals and illegal migrants removed](#)

News story

Renewed focus on removals is fulfilling the government's commitment to keep the British public safe and tackle illegal migration.



The Home Secretary has sent out an urgent warning today (Thursday 18 August) to dangerous foreign criminals and immigration offenders in the UK that the government will not rest until they are removed and our streets are made safer.

The vow comes as new statistics show the Home Office has removed 1,741 foreign national offenders (FNO) from the UK since the start of 2022, including 487 Albanian FNOs. Almost 1,000 Albanians in total (FNOs and immigration offenders) have been returned.

The renewed focus on removals, part of the New Plan for Immigration, is fulfilling the government's commitment to keep the British public safe and



tackle illegal migration.

Yesterday (Wednesday 17 August) the Home Secretary agreed a landmark deal with Pakistan, to remove Pakistani nationals with no legal right to remain in the UK, including criminals, failed asylum seekers and immigration offenders.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

This work shows we will stop at nothing to remove those with no right to be here and I am proud that we have removed almost 1,000 Albanian foreign national offenders and immigration offenders this year so far, including some who crossed the Channel illegally to come to the UK.

I want to be crystal clear though that this is just the beginning. I have tasked Home Office teams to renew their pursuit of dangerous criminals who devastate lives and communities and leave their victims and families to pick up the pieces. They must be swiftly removed so we can make our streets safer.

The British public rightly expect us to crack down hard on those abusing the system which is why our new Nationality and Borders Act will help end the cycle of last-minute claims and appeals that can delay removals.

Today, Home Office statistics show:

- the UK has removed 1,741 foreign national offenders since January 1, 2022
- 487 FNOs removed to Albania, including individuals convicted of rape, sexual offences, indecent assault of a minor, death by dangerous driving, facilitating illegal entry to the UK, trafficking, kidnap, robbery, carrying weapons, dealing Class A drugs, violence and burglary
- the 487 criminals had 606 convictions between them
- in July 2022, 243 foreign national offenders were removed from the UK on both charter and scheduled flights

Albanian foreign national offenders returned this year include:

- an individual sentenced to 18 years for Class A (cocaine) drug supply worth more than £2 million, was returned on a charter flight in June
- an individual sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment for intent to supply Class A drugs, was returned on a charter flight in July
- an individual sentenced to three years' imprisonment for attempting to engage in sexual communication with a child and to meet a child following grooming, was returned on a charter flight in June

The UK also removed immigration offenders and illegal migrants who had entered the UK clandestinely – via small boats or hidden in lorries.

Immigration offenders and illegal migrants removed this year include:

- an individual first encountered in June 2022 following his arrest on suspicion of driving with excess drugs. He claimed to have entered the UK in the back of a lorry in 2021 but did not make himself known to authorities. The individual was detained for removal to Albania and agreed voluntarily to return in July 2022.
- an individual first encountered in July 2022 after arriving via a small boat crossing the Channel. He claimed to have come to the UK for economic reasons.
- an individual who entered the UK concealed in a lorry in 2015. The person made no claims to the Home Office. He was encountered and detained on 23 April 2022. He returned voluntarily on a charter flight in May after 12 days in detention.

The individuals were removed via charter or scheduled returns.

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