

Increasing ambition towards a climate-resilient, zero-carbon economy

Thank you so much Selwin for that introduction.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we look forward to COP26 next November, our aim is to increase ambitions towards a climate-resilient, zero-carbon economy.

Now we know that to limit warming to 1.5 degrees, we need to halve global emissions over the next decade.

The current commitments made under the Paris Agreement fall far short of what is required.

And that is why we are asking every country to submit enhanced Nationally Determined Contributions as well as an ambitious Long-Term Strategy, committing to further cuts in carbon emissions by 2030 and to reaching net zero as soon as possible.

The UK will of course come forward with our own more ambitious NDC as soon as possible.

And through programmes such as the NDC Partnership and the UK Green Recovery Challenge Fund, we continue to support other nations as they develop their plans and remain committed to fulfilling the \$100 billion climate finance goal.

The UNFCCC Secretariat's NDC synthesis report will show us how far countries' collective commitments take us towards the Paris goal, and the work left to do in Glasgow.

In addition to the negotiations, the UK's COP Presidency will focus efforts on five areas which need particular attention to achieve our goals.

These are clean energy, clean transport, nature-based solutions, adaptation and resilience, and underpinning everything, finance.

In energy, we can make the most of the low costs of renewables to boost growth and create jobs;

By investing in zero-emission transport in a coordinated way, we can accelerate the transition to cleaner air;

By incorporating adaptation and resilience into our recovery plans, we can better prepare for the next crisis while supporting the global economy;

And by protecting and restoring nature, we can improve the resilience, sustainability and also the economics of agriculture;

In all sectors, we must align our public and private finance with the Paris Agreement.

Through these campaigns, we can not only 'do no harm', but also rebuild our economies better than ever before.

Last week, Prime Minister Boris Johnson unveiled an ambitious economic strategy for the UK.

A 'New Deal' to help build our economy back to health.

To build back better.

And to build back greener.

Of course, this opportunity applies to every country in the world, not just the United Kingdom.

We must collectively use the time ahead of COP26 to unite behind a fairer, greener and more resilient global economy.

And we must come together to unleash the full potential of the Paris Agreement.

Thank you.

Transformative Agriculture Bill moves forward with return to Lords

Legislation that will transform British farming is back in the House of Lords for the next stage in its journey to becoming law today (7 July).

Defra Lords Minister Lord Gardiner will be leading several sittings of the whole house as part of the Bill's Committee stage, expected to take place over the next two weeks.

Last week, the government also announced it will establish a Trade and Agriculture Commission, which will ensure that the UK's trade policy fully considers our agricultural industry and our commitment to maintain the UK's high environmental protection, animal welfare and food safety standards.

The Bill was first introduced to the House of Commons on 16 January to deliver on the government's manifesto commitments to ensure a smooth and gradual transition away from the EU's flawed Common Agriculture Policy, which simply pays farmers based on the total amount of land farmed, and replace it with a system where farming efficiently and improving the environment go hand in hand.

The Bill sets out our ambitious plans for a new land management system, where farmers are rewarded with public money for public goods, such as improving air and water quality and providing habitats for wildlife. At the same time, it will help to boost productivity and maximise the potential of land for producing high quality food in a more sustainable way.

Defra Minister Lord Gardiner of Kimble said:

The Agriculture Bill is just the beginning of our journey to deliver a once-in-a generation transformation in the way that we farm our land and produce the food that we eat.

We will put our farmers and land managers at the heart of that journey. This Bill will allow us to support them by rewarding protection and enhancement of the environment, while enabling their businesses to prosper by continuing to produce outstanding British food and drink to be enjoyed in the UK and abroad.

I am delighted to move this Bill forward and I look forward to working with parliamentary colleagues to move ever closer to writing it into law.

During the Committee stage of the Bill, peers will have the opportunity scrutinise this landmark piece of legislation line-by-line, as well as consider any amendments tabled by peers following the Second Reading earlier this month.

The government remains confident that the Agriculture Bill will reach Royal Assent in time to begin our transition towards a new, fairer agricultural system in England as planned in 2021.

[Further detail on the Bill is available on GOV.UK](#) .

Over a million bounce back loans approved for small businesses

On the eve of the Chancellor's summer economic update in Parliament, new figures reveal today that the number of Bounce Back loans approved for small firms to help them survive the Coronavirus pandemic has passed the one million milestone.

The Bounce Back Loan Scheme has been a success in providing firms with vital government-backed loans at a low, affordable rate and with no interest or repayments due in the first year. Today's update shows that loans worth £30.93 billion have now been approved to date.

Small companies across the country have accessed loans of up to £50,000 to help them through the pandemic, reaching businesses within days- providing immediate support to those that need it as easily as possible.

Welcoming the milestone, Chancellor Rishi Sunak said:

Our small businesses are the powerhouse of our economy and will help drive our recovery as we bounce back from this global crisis.

We've worked hard to give small businesses the help they need- from loans and grants to paying the wages of their staff.

I'm delighted that more than a million loans have been approved – and we will continue to do all we can to support small business as they reopen their doors in the weeks ahead.

Business Secretary Alok Sharma said:

We promised to stand behind small businesses to get through this crisis – and we've done just that.

As we get Britain's economic engines firing again, we will not only support businesses to get back on their feet, but also do all we can to level up the economy across every part of our country.

Among the million businesses who have benefitted so far are Birmingham-based biscuit maker The Shortbread Company and Willow Bridal Boutique in Cheshire.

Diana Reid, Founder of The Shortbread Company, and a beneficiary of the loans scheme, said:

Applying for a Bounce Back Loan was a quick and simple process taking less than 10 minutes and funds were in my account within 48 hours. The Bounce Back Loan will allow us to scale and grow The Shortbread Company's online store, purchase necessary materials and equipment, and hire a relevant team to help with various aspects of the business, for example, social media marketing.

Without the support of a Government Loan, growing the company would have been a long and tedious process and perhaps never growing to where we want to be.

Helen Williams, Owner of Willow Bridal Boutique, said:

The loan has been vital in assuring that we have been able to pay some of our supplier invoices. This has covered both our own stock items, but more importantly to us it has paid for some of our

brides' own wedding gowns which were due for delivery. We have always, and will always put our brides first in any situation, and the fact that we have been able receive their gowns has provided each bride with much needed happiness and joy, especially given many have had their wedding day plans put in jeopardy.

The Bounce Back Loan scheme is one part of the government's package of business support that includes: £27.4 billion to pay the wages of furloughed staff at 1.1 million firms, over 860,000 business properties benefiting from £10.5 billion of business grants, generous VAT deferrals and scrapping businesses rates.

[Today's figures](#) also reveal that businesses have benefitted from 53,536 loans worth over £11.4 billion through the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loans Scheme, 394 large businesses have benefitted from £2.58 billion via the Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme, and over £379 million has been invested in 376 companies through the Future Fund.

[It's key for jobcentres to help people back to their feet](#)

This weekend, as we can finally enjoy the long-overdue haircut, go to the pub or pop out for a meal we are finding our new normal.

Wherever you go though, the necessary safety measures and restrictions remind us that things are not the same – and we all know there will be difficult times ahead.

Through the rapidly designed and expertly delivered furlough scheme, we have prevented thousands of businesses from going to the wall and protected millions of jobs. But we have always said we cannot save every one.

And for those who have already lost or do lose their jobs because of this pandemic, we must make sure we are able to support them back into work as swiftly as we can.

My Department knows what it takes to get Britain working, having supported record high employment in this country just a few months ago. And we have a plan for recovery and revival.

Today I can reveal a central pillar of that plan: ramping up our jobcentre Work Coach capability. We are doubling their number to 27,000 by March, with 4,500 of them due to be in post by October.

We know how important and effective it is to have a service that is tailored

to skills, circumstances and the local jobs market to help people find work. Later this week the Chancellor will reveal further details of our comprehensive package setting Britain on a path back to work.

Bringing in 13,500 new work coaches dedicated to helping people find work will have a huge impact.

We will be transforming our service – something my Department has become very good at.

We have done it once when the outbreak began, redeploying 10,000 staff to process claims so that millions of people plunged into urgent need by this pervasive virus could access financial support quickly.

Now, we are transforming again – switching our focus from processing claims to supporting people back to work with this new brigade of work coaches.

They are the people who can see from a CV that someone can pivot from one struggling sector into another thriving one, who can tease out the great skills people have and can be used in a new role or career direction.

They are the people who can find jobseekers the right training opportunity so they can take the next step.

And they are the people who will know what makes a good fit so that when someone gets a job, it is one they can stay in and which allows them to carry on the other important things in their life, like caring for children or older family members.

Thérèse Coffey, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, at Marylebone Jobcentre.

I know first-hand just what it feels like to walk through the doors of a jobcentre, receiving support while looking for work. In fact, this week I returned to Marylebone JCP where I had signed on over 20 years ago, to see staff hard at work ready and fully reopening as a Covid-safe site.

Of course, our support for people looking for work has already begun with work coaches speaking to tens of thousands of claimants by phone, and helping even more online with their job search and to plan their next steps. Those phone calls have sometimes been the first time a customer has spoken to anyone for a while.

These are difficult, uncertain times for many and we want to do everything we can to help people find work or increase hours, where that is possible for them.

On Wednesday, the Chancellor will set out his wider plan to secure Britain's economic recovery, building on the PM's 'New Deal' speech it will include measures to protect jobs and give people the tools they need to get better jobs.

Work coaches, who were integral to those record employment figures I mentioned, will be at the heart of our renewal. They know what they are doing, they will bring our new recruits up to speed, fast, and I trust them to deliver.

Doubling their numbers reinforces our frontline as we help Britain get back on its feet and back into work.

This article was previously featured in The Telegraph on Sunday 5th July 2020.

[Campervan people smuggler jailed for 4 years](#)

A man who attempted to smuggle 12 Albanian nationals into the UK hidden in a campervan was jailed for over 4 years this week.

On the afternoon of 30 September 2018, a Fiat campervan was stopped by Border Force officers at the UK controls at the entrance to the Channel Tunnel in Coquelles, France.

Hayley Cole was a passenger in the vehicle, which was being driven by his partner, Christopher McEneaney.

The couple's 2 children were sat behind them in the living area of the campervan.

Cole told officers that they had travelled out to France and had stayed at a campsite near the Eurotunnel.

When officers searched the vehicle, they found 9 males in the rear locker of the campervan, officers then entered the interior of the van, finding one woman in the shower cubicle, and a woman and child in the toilet. All 12 individuals were in possession of Albanian passports.

McEneaney, 31, and Cole, 26, were arrested on suspicion of assisting illegal entry into the UK and the investigation was passed to officers from Immigration Enforcement's Criminal and Financial Investigation (CFI) team.

Chris Philp, Minister for Immigration Compliance and the Courts said:

Working with law enforcement and international partners we will do everything we can to stop people smugglers who evade our laws and take advantage of vulnerable people.

This should serve as a warning to people smugglers that we will bring them to justice.

McEneaney appeared at Canterbury Crown Court on 6 July 2020, charged with assisting unlawful immigration. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 52 months imprisonment.

The Albanians found in the vehicle were passed to the Police Aux Frontieres.

Anyone with information about suspected immigration abuse can contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 anonymously or visit the [Crimestoppers website](#).