

Queen's Speech 2019

My Lords and Members of the House of Commons.

My Government's priority has always been to secure the United Kingdom's departure from the European Union on 31 October. My Government intends to work towards a new partnership with the European Union, based on free trade and friendly cooperation [European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill].

My Ministers will work to implement new regimes for fisheries, agriculture and trade, seizing the opportunities that arise from leaving the European Union [Fisheries Bill, Agriculture Bill and Trade Bill]. An immigration bill, ending free movement, will lay the foundation for a fair, modern and global immigration system. My Government remains committed to ensuring that resident European citizens, who have built their lives in, and contributed so much to, the United Kingdom, have the right to remain. The bill will include measures that reinforce this commitment [Immigration and Social Security Co-ordination (EU Withdrawal) Bill]. Steps will be taken to provide certainty, stability and new opportunities for the financial services and legal sectors [Financial Services Bill and Private International Law (Implementation of Agreements) Bill].

My Government's new economic plan will be underpinned by a responsible fiscal strategy, investing in economic growth while maintaining the sustainability of the public finances.

Measures will be brought forward to support and strengthen the National Health Service, its workforce and resources, enabling it to deliver the highest quality care. New laws will be taken forward to help implement the National Health Service's Long Term Plan in England, and to establish an independent body to investigate serious healthcare incidents [Health Service Safety Investigations Bill].

My Government will bring forward proposals to reform adult social care in England to ensure dignity in old age. My Ministers will continue work to reform the Mental Health Act to improve respect for, and care of, those receiving treatment.

My Government is committed to addressing violent crime, and to strengthening public confidence in the criminal justice system. New sentencing laws will see that the most serious offenders spend longer in custody to reflect better the severity of their crimes [Sentencing Bill]. Measures will be introduced to improve the justice system's response to foreign national offenders [Foreign National Offenders Bill]. My Government will work to improve safety and security in prisons and to strengthen the rehabilitation of offenders. Proposals will be brought forward to ensure that victims receive the support they need and the justice they deserve. Laws will be introduced to ensure that the parole system recognises the pain to victims and their families caused by offenders refusing to disclose information relating to their crimes [Prisoners (Disclosure of Information About Victims) Bill].

A new duty will be placed on public sector bodies, ensuring they work together to address serious violence [Serious Violence Bill]. Police officers will be provided with the protections they need to keep the population safe [Police Protections Bill]. They will also be awarded the power to arrest individuals who are wanted by trusted international partners [Extradition (Provisional Arrest) Bill].

My Government will bring forward measures to protect individuals, families and their homes. Legislation will transform the approach of the justice system and other agencies to victims of domestic abuse [Domestic Abuse Bill], and minimise the impact of divorce, particularly on children [Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Bill]. My Ministers will continue to develop proposals to improve internet safety, and will bring forward laws to implement new building safety standards.

My Ministers will ensure that all young people have access to an excellent education, unlocking their full potential and preparing them for the world of work. My Government will take steps to make work fairer, introducing measures that will support those working hard [Employment (Allocation of Tips) Bill]. To help people plan for the future, measures will be brought forward to provide simpler oversight of pensions savings. To protect people's savings for later life, new laws will provide greater powers to tackle irresponsible management of private pension schemes [Pension Schemes Bill].

To ensure that the benefits of a prospering economy reach every corner of the United Kingdom, my Ministers will bring forward a National Infrastructure Strategy. This will set out a long-term vision to improve the nation's digital, transport and energy infrastructure. New legislation will help accelerate the delivery of fast, reliable and secure broadband networks to millions of homes [Telecommunications Infrastructure (Leasehold Property) Bill]. An aviation bill will provide for the effective and efficient management of the United Kingdom's airspace Air Traffic Management and Unmanned Aircraft Bill. Proposals on railway reform will be brought forward.

A white paper will be published to set out my Government's ambitions for unleashing regional potential in England, and to enable decisions that affect local people to be made at a local level.

My Government is committed to establishing the United Kingdom as a world-leader in scientific capability and space technology. Increased investment in science will be complemented by the development of a new funding agency, a more open visa system, and an ambitious national space strategy.

My Ministers remain committed to protecting and improving the environment for future generations. For the first time, environmental principles will be enshrined in law. Measures will be introduced to improve air and water quality, tackle plastic pollution and restore habitats so plants and wildlife can thrive. Legislation will also create new legally-binding environmental improvement targets. A new, world-leading independent regulator will be established in statute to scrutinise environmental policy and law, investigate complaints and take enforcement action [Environment Bill].

Proposals will also be brought forward to promote and protect the welfare of animals [Animal Welfare (Sentencing) Bill], including banning imports from trophy hunting.

The integrity and prosperity of the union that binds the four nations of the United Kingdom is of the utmost importance to my Government. My Ministers will bring forward measures to support citizens across all the nations of the United Kingdom.

My Government remains committed to working with all parties in Northern Ireland to support the return of devolved government and to address the legacy of the past.

My Government will take steps to protect the integrity of democracy and the electoral system in the United Kingdom.

My Government will continue to invest in our gallant Armed Forces. My Ministers will honour the Armed Forces Covenant and the NATO commitment to spend at least two per cent of national income on defence.

As the United Kingdom leaves the European Union, my Government will ensure that it continues to play a leading role in global affairs, defending its interests and promoting its values.

My Government will be at the forefront of efforts to solve the most complex international security issues. It will champion global free trade and work alongside international partners to solve the most pressing global challenges. It will prioritise tackling climate change and ensuring that all girls have access to twelve years of quality education.

Members of the House of Commons.

Estimates for the public services will be laid before you.

My Lords and Members of the House of Commons.

Other measures will be laid before you.

I pray that the blessing of Almighty God may rest upon your counsels.

Eight in 10 farmers benefit from working with government pollution advice service

Eight in 10 farmers receiving advice from the government's Catchment Sensitive Farming service have seen improvements in water quality on their

land or benefited financially, a new report published today (14 October) shows.

Nearly 20,000 farms – equivalent to 34 per cent of England's total farmland – have received advice from CSF officers since the partnership between Defra, the Environment Agency and Natural England began in 2006 in a drive to tackle water pollution from agriculture.

The [report published today](#) evaluates the first 12 years of the advice service, showing that participating areas have seen reductions in a number of agricultural pollutants – with nitrogen levels down by 4%, phosphorus levels down by 8%, and a 12.3% reduction in sediment.

Alongside improving water quality, farmers also reported seeing other benefits on their farm, such as an improved reputation after taking steps to become more environmentally friendly, or making savings on fertiliser costs by only applying the nutrients their soil actually needs.

For more than a decade the network of trained CSF advisers have helped farmers across the country implement more than 75,000 actions to reduce water pollution on their land – from changing the way they apply pesticides to building new infrastructure to preventing pollutants from reaching waterways.

Visiting South Acre Farm in York today, Environment Agency chair Emma Howard Boyd and Natural England chair Tony Juniper will see first-hand the measures being taken by dairy farmers Rachael and Paul Tompkins, who have worked with CSF advisers since 2017 and taken action to reduce the amount of slurry reaching the water on their land – including the construction of a new concrete yard and roofing for their farm's slurry separation system.

Environment Agency chair Emma Howard Boyd said:

The public are rightly appalled by water pollution incidents. Protecting our rivers, lakes and streams is a top priority for the Environment Agency.

It does not come as a surprise that farmers working to enhance and restore river catchments have also reported financial and reputational benefits.

Natural England chair Tony Juniper said:

If we are to conserve and improve the many beautiful rivers that are so iconic of England's wonderful landscapes, then farmers must play essential roles in making it happen.

Agriculture remains one of the main sources of poor water quality and that's why it is so important that we see positive change toward better farming practices.

The progress being made through the Catchment Sensitive Farming programme reveals how tangible improvements to the quality of our waterways can be achieved, bringing wider benefits to farmers, local communities and the wider public.

[Farmers and land managers can check out the available guidance to find out if their land is in a high priority area](#) or [get in touch with a local CSF officer](#) to access free training and advice on how to improve water quality.

[Smart ticketing investment for rail customers](#)

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[Kent roads ready for Brexit as hauliers gear up for 31 October](#)

- vital work will ensure Kent traffic management system, Operation Brock, is ready to go ahead of Brexit
- new powers will help protect local roads and ensure hauliers comply with the Operation Brock system
- government urges hauliers to check they have the right documents before travelling on 31 October

The final preparations to keep Britain moving after Brexit are taking place as traffic management preparations in Kent are stepped up, government has announced today (14 October 2019).

[Operation Brock](#) will go live on 28 October to manage any traffic disruption and help keep trade moving in and out of the UK.

The government has worked closely with the Kent Resilience Forum to implement the scheme, which will manage any delays to Europe-bound freight while protecting local roads from disruption.

It will keep the M20 open in both directions for all other traffic, minimising any impacts on local residents, businesses and public services.

This comes as the Department for Transport launches a targeted information campaign to ensure hauliers know what to expect if they are travelling to the Port of Dover or Eurotunnel in a no-deal Brexit scenario.

Transport Minister Chris Heaton-Harris, said:

We want residents in Kent and hauliers travelling from across the EU to be reassured that there are robust plans in place to deal with any disruption in the event of a no-deal Brexit.

We now need everyone to do their bit – whether you are travelling to see family, heading to work or transporting vital goods around the country, please check before you travel to ensure you know what to expect and have the right documents when heading to the border.

Hauliers driving during Operation Brock and heading to Europe via the Port of Dover or Eurotunnel will need to be on the Operation Brock routes and follow all diversions, instructions and speed restrictions rather than relying on satellite navigation systems.

They will also need to be ready to show that they have the [right paperwork](#) before reaching the border to avoid being turned back – or else risk facing fines and further delays.

[Operation Brock](#)

New legislation will help keep them on main routes through Kent and away from local roads – reducing the impact of any disruption on local communities.

Traffic officers in Kent will have new and enhanced powers from 31 October to help ensure hauliers are complying with the Operation Brock system.

Final works in the coming weeks will ensure that the holding areas are ready to be activated on October 28 as Operation Brock goes live.

This means that from 26-27 October there will be overnight closures on the M20 between junctions 7 and 9, so that final preparations can be carried out safely.

Policy Manager for South East England at Freight Transport Association Heidi Skinner said:

Any move which keeps traffic flowing to and from the coast, and through and around Kent, is to be welcomed in order to keep Britain trading.

Our members have been asking for clarity on the arrangements for some time, so this news will help them to prepare for a potential no deal Brexit and any resulting traffic disruption which may occur.

Once Operation Brock goes live on Monday 28 October, lorries heading for mainland Europe will need to use the coastbound carriageway of the M20 between junctions 8 and 9, with a 30mph speed limit in place.

All other traffic will run on the London-bound carriageway between these junctions, with two lanes in each direction operating at 50mph.

In addition, Highways England is fast-tracking work to ensure that key slip roads at a new junction being created on the M20 near Ashford will be open to traffic by the 31 October.

[Work with China to transform food production: apply for funding](#)

World demand for food is expected to grow by 60% to feed a rising and more prosperous global population.

Food producers in the UK and China need to supply what we eat in a more sustainable and efficient way, reducing pollution, minimising waste and improving soil conditions.

The UK is a global leader in the technologies that will help to achieve this including in:

- environmental management
- earth observation
- sensors
- big data
- artificial intelligence
- robotics

The UK Government's Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund Transforming Food Production Challenge has up to £90 million to help businesses invest in new data-driven precision-agriculture technologies that could transform food production.

Innovate UK, as part of UK Research and Innovation, has up to £5 million from

the fund to invest in UK businesses undertaking joint projects with Chinese partners to develop new integrated precision farming technology that helps towards achieving a sustainable position of net-zero emissions.

The Ministry of Science and Technology of the People's Republic of China is investing a similar amount to support the work of Chinese partners.

Projects must drive UK growth and exports

Projects must be in line with the aims of the Transforming Food Production Challenge to improve agricultural productivity and reduce emissions, to drive growth in UK precision agriculture companies, and to develop export opportunities.

They could cover:

- remote sensing of crop growth and nutrients, soil health, weather, crop yields, water stress and pests through satellites, drones and sensors
- smart pasture production including animal feeding systems, analysis of herds and individual animals, environmental control systems, methane reduction and improved animal welfare
- precision technologies for indoor farming such as for planting, transplanting, harvesting, watering or applying fertiliser
- exploitation of big data to improve productivity
- robotic systems for agriculture including for detecting pests and diseases, making precision applications of agrochemicals and planting and transplanting

Projects must show equal effort on the UK and Chinese side and must work with commercial end users, which could be demonstration sites, farms, laboratories or other research and development facilities in one or both countries.

Competition information