

A major milestone for the Oxford flood alleviation scheme

The Environment Agency has submitted the planning application to build the Oxford flood alleviation scheme.

This is a significant step towards reducing flood risk to homes, businesses and transport links in Oxford.

A major project led by the Environment Agency in partnership with 9 other organisations, the Oxford flood alleviation scheme is one of the biggest flood schemes currently planned in England.

Oxford has a long history of flooding, with significant floods in recent decades damaging homes and businesses and closing the railway and major roads into the city.

Working with the natural floodplain to the west of Oxford, the proposed scheme will create a new stream meandering through a gently sloping floodplain of grazing meadow with wildflowers and wetland. People will be able to enjoy walking and cycling alongside the new stream, and looking out for wildlife in the wetland and meadows.

Route of the Oxford Flood Scheme showing area of lowered flood plain

When water levels in the River Thames are high, the stream will start to fill its floodplain, reducing flood risk to built-up areas of the city.

Oxfordshire County Council will decide whether to approve the application following its online public consultation. People can submit comments on the planning application via [the council's ePlanning system](#).

Joanne Emberson Wines, Flood Risk Manager at the Environment Agency, said:

The Oxford flood alleviation scheme will reduce flood risk to all properties in Oxford currently at risk of flooding from the River Thames. It's a long-term solution that will help the city adapt to our changing climate and make it more resilient to future floods.

The scheme has also been designed to bring environmental and community improvements to the area, creating a new wetland landscape that will benefit wildlife and local people for generations to come. Submitting this planning application is a huge step in making this a reality for communities in and around Oxford.

Councillor Emily Smith, Leader of Vale of White Horse District Council, said:

With climate change, flood risk is increasing, and therefore the need to protect our communities has never been more pressing. The Oxford flood alleviation scheme will provide much needed reassurance to the Vale communities of South Hinksey, Kennington and North Hinksey, which are at regular risk of flooding.

The Oxford Flood Alliance, made up of local residents affected by flooding, has worked closely with the Environment Agency over many years on the development of the Oxford flood alleviation scheme. A representative said:

We're proud to have helped get the scheme to this point; it has been a huge effort across multiple partners bringing their expertise to the table.

We believe the Oxford flood alleviation scheme is the best option for Oxford, its communities, its economy and biodiversity. Risk of severe flooding is increasing all the time and we need to ensure we are in a position to manage this.

- The project team considered more than 100 combinations of options to reduce flood risk from the River Thames in Oxford, working with the community every step of the way.
- The Oxford flood alleviation scheme will be effective against the scale of the largest Oxford flood in living memory – 1947.
- The new stream will be approximately 5 kilometres long, running from just north of Botley Road down to south of the A423 near Kennington, where it rejoins the River Thames. Most of this area is farmland and flood meadow.
- The scheme will see improved footpaths, and a new permissive walking and cycling path alongside the stream between Osney Mead and the Devil's Backbone in South Hinksey.
- The scheme will create over 20 hectares of new wetland habitat and around 16 hectares of floodplain meadow. It will be maintained largely through traditional land management techniques such as grazing.
- We are working with environmental charity Earth Trust on our plan for the long-term environmental benefits of the scheme. This will help make the most of the unique opportunity to improve the local environment and further enhance the new landscape and habitats of the scheme over time.
- Hard engineering will be kept to a minimum, but there will be new structures where needed, such as bridges for footpaths to cross the new stream, culverts (tunnels) for floodwater to pass under main roads, and earth embankments and flood walls.
- The scheme partners are: Environment Agency, Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford City Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, Thames Water, Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee, Oxford Flood Alliance, Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, University of Oxford and Highways England.
- The scheme is projected to cost £150 million to build, and will save £1.4 billion in avoided damages, by reducing flood damage and impacts on

the city over the next 100 years. It is part of the record £5.2 billion investment in new flood and coastal defences to better protect hundreds of thousands of properties across the country.

- For more information see the [Oxford Flood Scheme web page](#).

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[Government to provide shot in the arm for West Midlands vaccine manufacturing facility](#)

- Government grant of £15.9 million awarded to chemical producer Croda to increase the UK's capacity to manufacture key vaccine ingredients
- expanded Staffordshire facility will produce lipids for around 3 billion vaccine doses from 2023
- lipids are an essential component in COVID vaccines as well as other gene therapies

A grant of £15.9 million has been awarded to chemical producer Croda International Plc ('Croda') to increase the UK's manufacturing capacity of specialty lipids, an essential ingredient in mRNA vaccines, the government has announced today.

This investment will enable Croda, a global market leader in the field, to significantly increase production capacity at its facility in Leek, Staffordshire.

This will also allow them to increase both the range and volume of lipids it is able to produce in the UK, – particularly the mRNA lipid used in a number of Covid vaccines – as well as creating a number of jobs at the site.

mRNA has played a crucial role in our current COVID-19 vaccine programme – notably the Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna vaccines – and has the potential to play a transformational role beyond this in future, for products such as flu vaccines as well as other emerging technologies including gene therapies for cancer and heart disease.

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

The development of mRNA technology has been one of the greatest scientific leaps forward since the start of the pandemic and the potential for its use in future therapies – potentially treating cancer and heart disease – is remarkable.

I am therefore extremely pleased to announce this support for Croda, a market leader in the manufacture of essential mRNA components, and the only manufacturer of lipids currently operating in the UK.

Not only will this funding provide a significant boost to Britain's life sciences industry, enabling the production of an extra 3 billion vaccine doses domestically, but it also represents an important investment into the West Midlands' economy as we work to onshore manufacturing to the UK.

From 2023, the expanded facility will be able to produce a sufficient volume of lipids for around 3 billion vaccine doses – an estimate based on the volume of lipids required to produce existing COVID-19 vaccines – a significant contribution to global lipid supply and future vaccine production. This will increase both UK and global resilience not only to COVID-19, but also for future health emergencies.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

The mRNA technology produced at this site has the potential to unlock the next generation of cutting-edge treatments for existing and new health threats.

This significant investment further cements the UK as a world leader of exciting scientific innovations which are improving health outcomes at home and across the world.

During the pandemic, the government's Vaccine Taskforce invested over £380 million to secure and scale up the UK's vaccine manufacturing capabilities to ensure a robust response to COVID-19 and potential future health emergencies, and this investment builds on this already significant commitment.

Today's funding award also marks the launch of the £1.4 billion Global Britain Investment Fund. Announced in last Autumn's Budget, the fund provides grant support to encourage internationally mobile companies to invest in the UK's critical and most innovative industries, covering life sciences, automotive and offshore wind.

This includes an additional £354 million for UK life sciences, including funding for the Vaccine Taskforce to further increase the UK's responsiveness and capability in vaccine production. The government continues to explore further options to strengthen the UK's resilience, including building on the recent success of mRNA vaccine development and manufacturing.

The Global Britain Investment Fund will drive investment in industries where the UK has both natural strengths and geographic spread and represents the government's commitment to deliver on its big priorities. This includes delivering on the levelling up agenda by ensuring high paying jobs are created across all regions of the UK, investing in clean, home-grown renewable energy, and ensuring the UK becomes a science superpower.

Investment Minister Gerry Grimstone said:

The Global Britain Investment Fund will ensure the UK remains at the forefront of cutting-edge innovation, helping secure investments in key sectors that present the greatest economic opportunities.

Today's investment is a perfect example of how the Global Britain Investment Fund will harness the best of the UK life sciences manufacturing sector to tackle the major challenges we face and level up every corner of the UK.

The funding supports the Vaccine Taskforce's work to secure innovations and opportunities that have emerged during the pandemic as outlined in the 'Living with COVID-19' plan, as well as delivering on the government's Levelling Up agenda, bringing a number of new jobs to the West Midlands, one of the key areas identified as an Innovation Accelerator in this year's Levelling Up White Paper.

[Tax it, don't risk it – DVLA hits the road to highlight the risks of vehicle tax evasion](#)

The law is clear – you must [tax your vehicle](#) if you're using it or keeping it on a public road. If you're keeping the vehicle off the road, it must either be taxed or have a [Statutory Off Road Notification \(SORN\)](#). You must tax your vehicle, even if you [do not have to pay anything](#).

Motorists who do not tax their vehicle can face financial penalties, court action and the risk of having their vehicles clamped or impounded. While more than 98% of vehicles are correctly taxed, it's right that DVLA takes action against those who continue to break the law and evade taxing their vehicle.

As National Wheelclamping and Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) Manager, I manage a strategic DVLA contract that aims to reduce evasion through wheelclamping and ANPR activity. Our enforcement teams travel around

the UK as part of our day-to-day activities and work closely with local authorities and police forces, who can be given [devolved powers to remove untaxed vehicles from our roads](#).



Paul Davies, National Wheelclamping and ANPR Manager.

Earlier this year, as part of the agency's long-term strategy to keep vehicle tax evasion low, DVLA's Communications team [launched a campaign](#) with a clear message to evaders – untaxed vehicles are 'hard to hide, easy to tax'. To support the campaign, I travelled with our wheelclamping partners and press team to some of the areas in the UK with the highest evasion levels. Here's what we got up to...

Hitting the road

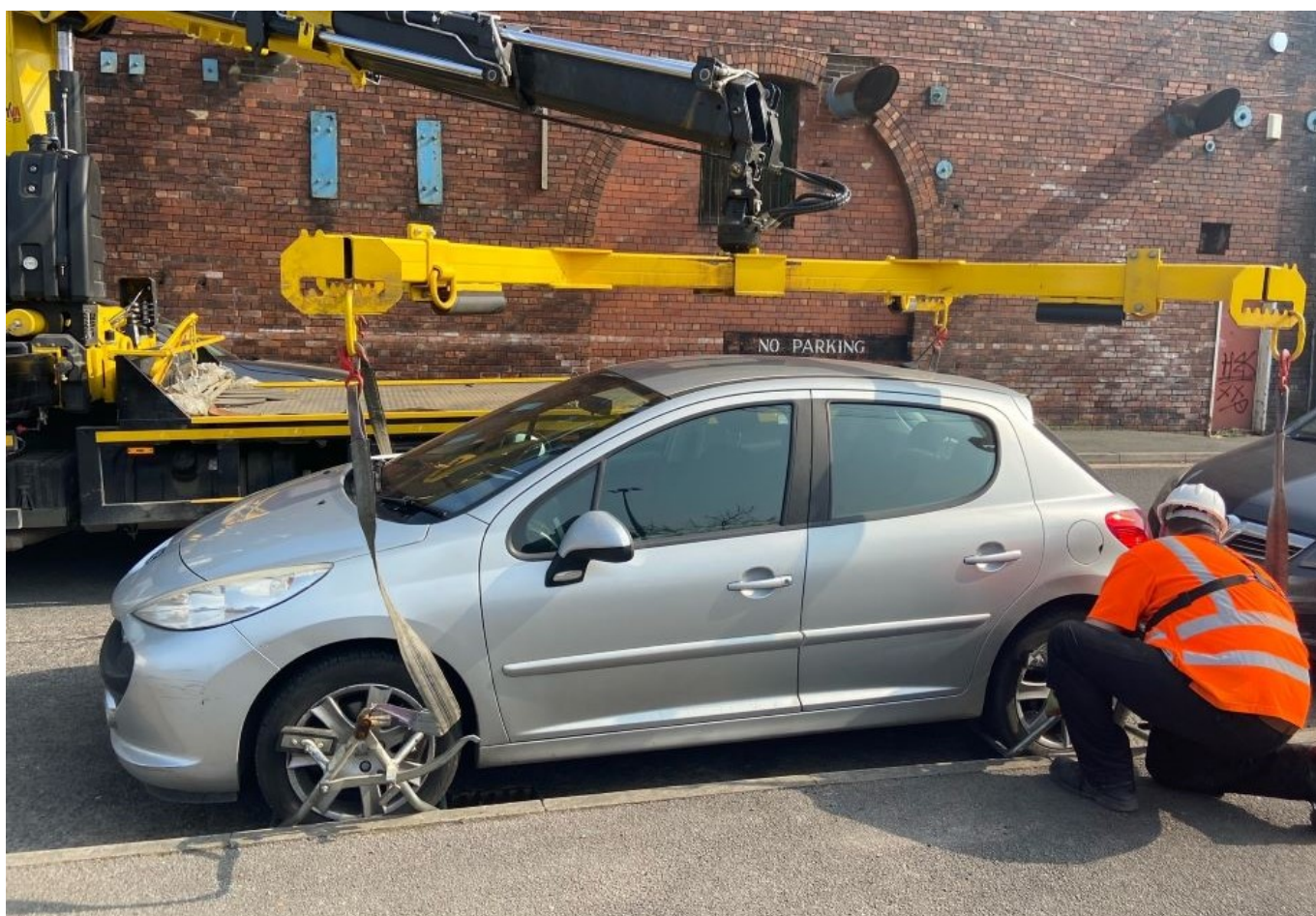
We recently visited Birmingham, Reading, Leeds and Swansea this month, where there were a combined 99,796 enforcement actions taken last year. These included fines, penalties and clamping.

As part of the campaign, we organised media opportunities around our usual wheelclamping operations undertaken by NSL on behalf of DVLA. These wheelclamping operations were an opportunity to highlight the risks for motorists in their local area and remind motorists of the real risk if their vehicles are untaxed.

This is the first campaign I've been involved with, so I undertook media training to prepare for questions from journalists. It was certainly an intense but enjoyable experience, thanks to the support of the agency's press team.

Each wheelclamping operation involved journalists and photographers attending the wheelclamping pound, managed by the press team. I showed them around the facility and answered questions about how our operations are undertaken. They got to see untaxed vehicles returning following an impoundment, before heading out to find an untaxed vehicle to observe a clamping in action.

So, what did we find?



One of several untaxed vehicles we took enforcement action against.

We took enforcement action against several vehicles, in all 4 areas we visited. A car was clamped on a neighbourhood street, while another was towed away and impounded. In another case, we identified an untaxed vehicle in a car park using our ANPR data. The vehicle was clamped, and a warning of impoundment was issued to the driver.

This is a typical day for our enforcement teams and wheelclamping partners who, last year, took [360,655 enforcement actions](#) across 12 of the highest evading areas in the UK. It only reinforces our message of 'hard to hide, easy to tax'. So why risk it?

Looking forward, we will continue to take action against untaxed vehicles by

carrying out computerised and roadside checks. Part of my role is also to manage our Devolved Partners Power Scheme, which will continue to support a range of local authorities to deliver enforcement activities on our behalf.

Tax it, don't risk it

Taxing your vehicle is always the easiest and cheapest option. It's never been easier to tax your vehicle, so use GOV.UK to [check if your vehicle is taxed](#). If you need to tax your vehicle, you can do so [quickly and securely online](#) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can even [pay by Direct Debit](#) to spread the cost of your vehicle tax.

So help spread the word to your family and friends – tax it, don't risk it!

[Adblock test \(Why?\)](#)

UK proposes anti-dumping measures on Cold Rolled Flat Steel from China and Russia be kept

- UK TRA proposes anti-dumping measures on Cold Rolled Flat Steel from China and Russia be kept for a further five years
- 40-50% of UK market for Cold Rolled Flat Steel is made up of domestic production
- Downstream businesses have a combined turnover of £685m per year

In its initial findings, the UK's Trade Remedies Authority (TRA) has today (31 March 2022) proposed that [existing measures on imports of Cold Rolled Flat Steel from China and Russia be maintained](#).

The TRA's provisional findings, contained in the [Statements of Essential Facts \(SEF\)](#), would mean that this UK industry, predominantly based in South Wales, continues to be protected from dumped products from China and Russia. A 30-day period for comments is now open.

Following a transition review, the TRA has recommended that anti-dumping measures be kept on certain Cold Rolled Flat Steel products from China and Russia.

Cold Rolled Flat Steel is used in the manufacture of parts for the automotive industry and domestic appliances, as well as other goods. It can be found in such consumer products as radiators, steel drums, domestic appliances, racking, shelving and metal furniture.

The UK market for Cold Rolled Flat Steel includes 40-50% made domestically.

The remainder of UK demand is met by imports.

A large proportion of sales are made through steel service centres that carry out processing to meet customer requirements. The remaining sales are direct to generally large customers in the automotive, construction and engineering sectors.

The TRA identified between 50 to 100 downstream Cold Rolled Flat Steel customers, across a wide range of businesses. During 2019, these selected downstream businesses employed at least 1,652 people and had a combined turnover of £685 million.

However, the industry is currently vulnerable, due in part to raw material prices, the COVID-19 pandemic, long-term economic trends and energy costs. The TRA received submissions arguing that if dumping were to occur again, imports would be likely to cause further significant injury.

The TRA has therefore recommended that the measures on Cold Rolled Flat Steel be maintained at their current levels until 5 August 2026 – that is five years subsequent to the date when the measure would have expired (5 August 2021) had no transition review been initiated.

Following today's publication, there will be a 30-day period in which interested parties can comment on the report. Comments can be submitted by Interested Parties to the TRA via the [Trade Remedies Service website](#).

The TRA will then consider and produce a Final Recommendation, which will be sent to the Secretary of State for International Trade who will make the final decision on whether to uphold the TRA's recommendation.

The findings set out in this SEF do not include consideration of how the Russian invasion of Ukraine and associated sanctions could affect future imports as the situation is still unfolding and the overall impact upon this product is unclear. Interested parties are invited to make contributions before the final recommendation including in relation to the Russian invasion of Ukraine and associated sanctions.

Notes to Editors

- The Trade Remedies Authority (TRA) is the independent UK body, established in June 2021, as the first non-departmental public body of the Department for International Trade, that investigates whether trade remedy measures are needed to counter unfair import practices and unforeseen surges of imports.
- Read more about the TRA's mission in its [Business Plan](#).
- Anti-dumping duties allow a country or union to take action against goods sold at less than their normal value, which is defined as the price for 'like goods' sold in the exporter's home market.
- Trade remedy investigations were carried out by the EU Commission on the UK's behalf until the UK left the EU. Forty-four EU trade remedy measures of interest to UK producers were carried across into UK law when the UK left the EU and the TRA is currently reviewing each one to

assess whether it is suitable for UK needs.