

Using our new freedoms

The government should now turn its attention to the many opportunities our departure from the bureaucratic and restrictive single market and customs union will bring.

Today I invite you to send in your ideas of laws and rules which could be improved, amended or repealed as we take back control.

Let me begin with a few ideas for a better maritime strategy. The U.K. is a global trading nation with a proud history of maritime success. The EU Ports Regulations have cramped the expansion of our harbours and docks. The Common Fishing Policy led to a big decline in our fishing fleet and fish processing. A combination of EU and U.K. rules led to a big decline in international marine owners using our flag for their merchant ships. During the EEC/EU years we witnessed a major decline in shipbuilding.

We could now set about rebuilding:

1 Repeal Ports Directive. Offer planning permissions and other support for dock and harbour expansion.

2 Offer Freeport status to many coastal towns, with simplified planning and tax breaks for new investment in those areas. Allow non payment of VAT on items for re export.

3. Add an Enterprise Zone to such ports, with additional tax breaks from Business rates and from Corporation Tax on investment

4. Government to offer grants and cheap loans to U.K. citizens and businesses wishing to buy a new trawler made in a U.K. yard, to expand fishing capacity.

5. U.K. to order all public sector vessels from U.K. yards assuming there were at least 2 compliant U.K. tenders for the work. UK to strengthen Customs and naval fleets of coastal patrol vessels.

6. U.K. to review rules over sailing under our flag, to encourage more to use our flag and related marine service, without lax employee standards. We should also look at requiring ships trading in our waters to comply with high standards for employees and safety.

7. Government to assist coastal towns and cities wanting growth to attract more fish processing, meal preparation and frozen and chilled foods business. Good quality new housing investment to go alongside new industrial and marine activities.

8 Private sector will bring ship repair, chandlery and support services as these policies are implemented.