

## **Plan for Growth: Implementation Update (March 2012)**

The Government has set out its plan to put the UK on a path to sustainable, long term economic growth. As part of this, the [Plan for Growth](#) published in March 2011, and [Autumn Statement 2011](#) and the [National Infrastructure Plan](#) published in November 2011, announced a wide-ranging programme of economic reforms and investment in infrastructure to help build a stronger and more balanced economy in the medium term, and to achieve the Government's four ambitions for growth:

- Encouraging investment and exports as a route to a more balanced economy;
- Making the UK the best place in Europe to start, finance and grow a business;
- Creating a more educated workforce that is the most flexible in Europe; and
- Creating the most competitive tax system in the G20.

This document provides an update on the implementation of the measures to support economic growth announced in the *Plan for Growth* and Autumn Statement 2011, and developed through the Government's Growth Review led jointly by HM Treasury and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. It builds on the previous update published on 29 November 2011.<sup>1</sup> Tax measures are contained in the Budget document, and infrastructure measures announced in the *National Infrastructure Plan* and Autumn Statement 2011 are updated in a separate Infrastructure Delivery Update.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See [www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/ukecon\\_growth\\_index.htm](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/ukecon_growth_index.htm)

<sup>2</sup> See [www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/national\\_infrastructure\\_plan2011.htm](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/national_infrastructure_plan2011.htm)

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## 1. Access to finance

The *Plan for Growth* announced measures to help small businesses raise finance. These measures are in addition to the Government's £20 billion National Loan Guarantee Scheme and £1 billion Business Finance Partnership, further details of which are set out in Budget 2012.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
1.	To encourage greater investment in SMEs with high growth potential, the Government announces significant reform to Enterprise Investment Scheme (EIS) and Venture Capital Trusts, subject to State Aid Approval.	Progress made	State aid approval has been granted for changes to the EIS including a rate change to 30 per cent from April 2011 and a doubling of investor limits from April 2012. Work is ongoing to secure approval for the remaining reforms to EIS and Venture Capital Trusts. Final legislation will be published in the Finance Bill. The Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme will be launched in April 2012.
2.	The Government will increase to £10 million the lifetime limit on capital gains qualifying for entrepreneurs relief.	Complete	The increase came into effect in April 2011.
3.	The Government will re-notify Community Investment Tax Relief to the EU Commission.	Progress made	The outcome of an informal consultation to improve the operation of Community Investment Tax Relief was announced in Budget 2012, ahead of re-notifying the Commission.
4.	The Government announces the interim launch of the Big Society Capital.	Complete	The Big Society Capital Group was launched in July 2011.
5.	The Government announces reforms to the delivery of European Regional Development Funds (ERDF).	Progress made	The Government has aligned the ERDF and Regional Growth Fund Round 2, and all English ERDF programmes met their 2011 spend targets with a healthy pipeline of projects currently under approval.
6.	The Government announces a review of the UK's regulatory framework of covered bonds.	Complete	The review was conducted in early 2011 and final proposals published alongside the <i>Autumn Statement 2011</i> . The reforms, which increase the visibility of regulation, make it easier to understand the strengths of the UK regime, and facilitate comparability between the UK and other regimes, will come into effect from January 2013.

## 2. Competition

Thriving, competitive markets promote growth by creating strong incentives for firms to increase their efficiency and to innovate. The UK has a well respected and stable competition regime, and the *Plan for Growth* announced measures to further improve competition in the UK.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
7.	The Government wants to reform and further invigorate the UK's competition framework. It will establish the Competition and Markets Authority and fold in the Competition Commission and Office of Fair Trading.	Progress made	The Government's response to an extensive consultation was <a href="#">published</a> on 15 March. Legislative proposals are now being finalised.
8.	To help create a level playing field for businesses bidding for public tenders, Government will promote greater transparency in Transfer of Undertaking (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) related liabilities.	Progress made	See measure 99.
9.	The Government is publishing <i>Shaping Competitive Markets</i> in April 2011 to support procurement choices that encourage competition.	Complete	The reforms announced at <i>Autumn Statement 2011</i> (see public sector procurement section, below) supersedes this measure. Training in the Government's lean procurement techniques is being rolled out to procurers.
10.	The Government is stripping back regulation and increasing transparency to make it easier for small businesses and voluntary organisations to compete for local government contracts.	Complete	The Government published new statutory guidance on <a href="#">Best Value Duty</a> , and a <a href="#">Transparency code for Council behaviour</a> in September 2011. Together with reforms such as Community Right to Challenge, these reduce the barriers that often prevent voluntary organisations and small and medium sized enterprises competing for local authority contracts.
11.	The Government will publish in April 2011 a binding set of principles of economic regulation to provide greater certainty for long-term investors in UK infrastructure.	Complete	The Government published the <a href="#">Principles for Economic Regulation</a> in April 2011. Application of the principles will be set out publicly by the Government as regulatory frameworks are reviewed.
12.	The Government will set out in April 2011 its vision for consumer empowerment to explain how it will help to support consumers in making better choices.	Complete	The Government's consumer empowerment strategy was <a href="#">published</a> in 2011.

### 3. Corporate governance

The *Plan for Growth* announced measures to reduce the burdens and costs of financial reporting and audit requirements on businesses.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
13.	The Government will reduce the number of UK SMEs and subsidiaries required to undertake an audit.	Progress made	The Government published a summary of responses in March 2012 on changing audit exemptions to remove gold plating by changing the exemptions for small companies and qualifying subsidiaries.
14.	The Government will change the law in 2012 to exempt many subsidiaries from producing audited accounts; and push the EU to exempt the smallest companies from reporting requirements.	Progress made	The European Council is currently considering a new draft accounting Directive. The UK is making representations on increasing the audit threshold so as to exempt medium sized companies. For the smallest companies the Directive is due to be adopted by the Council of Ministers shortly.
15.	The Government is calling on the Office of Fair Trading to investigate whether clauses in lending agreements made by the banks are unfairly restricting competition in the audit market.	Complete	In October 2011, the Office of Fair Trading announced that it would refer the market for the supply of Statutory Audit services for large companies to the Competition Commission. Preliminary findings will be published in November 2012.
16.	The Government will materially simplify narrative reporting for quoted companies.	Progress made	The Government will publish a response to its consultation shortly.
17.	The Government will modernise the legislative framework governing mutuals.	Complete	The Legislative Reform (Industrial and Provident Societies and Credit Unions) Order 2011 came into effect in January 2012. This now allows credit unions to function more efficiently and compete more effectively with other financial service providers.
18.	The Government will improve the guidance on <a href="http://businesslink.gov.uk">businesslink.gov.uk</a> to support business and social enterprise start-ups.	Complete	Guidance has been published to help those starting up businesses, including social enterprises, to decide which legal structure and ownership model is most appropriate.

## 4. Education and skills

Autumn Statement last year set out measures to make the education and skills system more responsive to employer needs.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
19.	The Government will improve the quality of the apprenticeship programme.	Progress made	An employer-led review into the quality and standards of apprenticeships is due to launch shortly. From September 2012, funding for all Apprenticeships requires providers to support training in English and maths up to A*-C GCSE standard. The bidding exercise for the second round of the Higher Apprenticeships fund closes in late March 2012. Incentive payments of £1,500 for SMEs that hire a new apprentice aged 16 to 24 were launched in February 2012.
20.	The Government will ensure that every employer is able to advertise a vacancy within one month of deciding to take on an apprentice, and have them ready to start work within three months, provided that employers play an active role. The Government will remove all unnecessary health and safety requirements for apprenticeships.	Progress made	All unnecessary health and safety requirements for apprenticeship training providers have been removed. The National Apprenticeship Service is working with the Skills Funding Agency to agree changes to provider contracts that will be signed by the summer. A review is underway to identify further ways to improve the process of recruiting and employing an apprentice for SMEs.
21.	The Government has welcomed a proposal from Ofqual, the independent regulator of qualifications, to work with the Office of Fair Trading and other bodies to review how well qualifications markets are operating.	Progress made	Ofqual is developing proposals to assess the qualification markets and where as a consequence the Government may need to intervene to secure robust, fit for purpose qualifications.
22.	The Government will route public investment in skills directly to employers to allow them to purchase the vocational training they need through a new pilot fund of up to £250 million. In early 2012, employers will be invited to bid for a share of the fund.	Progress made	A <a href="#">Prospectus</a> was launched in February 2012. Bidding for the first round of the pilot fund will formally close at the end of April, and the winners will be announced in summer 2012.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
23.	The Government will publish destination information at ages 16 and 18 from spring 2013 to encourage schools' focus on young people's future beyond school as well as attainment.	Progress made	The Government will publish two destination measures: one at Key Stage 4 showing the destination of the young person the year after leaving compulsory education, to be published as experimental statistics in May 2012; and a 16-18 measure showing the destination after leaving by post-16 providers, to be published in 2013.
24.	The Government will invest £4.5 million over the next two years to support work experience as part of post-16 learning; work with the Federation of Small Businesses and other employer groups to review regulation impacting on work experience by the end of December 2011; and publish a guide to address common misconceptions about work experience.	Progress made	25 participating colleges in areas with the highest concentration of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) received additional Government funding to begin work experience trials in February 2012. Approximately 4,000 students will benefit. The Government also published a short myth-busting <a href="#">guide</a> on work experience in December 2011, and is working with employer groups.
25.	A group of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)-focused sector skills councils will lead an industry group to kite-mark courses, helping students understand better which courses are valued by employers.	Progress made	The measure will affect STEM courses in the 2013 Key Information Sets. However students will be able to access initial information on employer endorsement as part of the 2012 Key Information Sets, to be published in September 2012.
26.	The Government will create an improved careers information portal as part of the National Careers Service from April 2012. As part of the Youth Contract, an additional £4.2 million over three years will be provided so that the service can provide careers interviews for 18–24 year olds within the first three months of being on Jobseeker's Allowance.	Progress made	The Government will launch the new National Careers Service in April 2012. Measures to launch the Youth Contract careers interviews from April 2012 are on track.
27.	The Government will launch 'HE Global', an online portal providing information and advice to higher education institutions on expanding abroad.	Complete	The Government launched <a href="#">HE Global</a> in January 2012.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
28.	The Government will invest £10 million over five years from 2013-14 in Project Enthuse, matched by investment from the Wellcome Trust, to improve the quality of science teaching in schools.	Work started	Work on Project Enthuse is ongoing, with the Government and the Wellcome Trust on track to have the new funding structure in place from April 2013.
29.	The Government will offer undergraduates access to mentoring support drawn from the existing network of STEM Ambassadors to give undergraduates insight into STEM occupations and raise the profile of the STEM sector.	Progress made	Piloting will start in September 2012.
30.	The Government will reform adult basic literacy and numeracy provision by piloting a new funding method for the providers of courses.	Progress made	Piloting will take place with providers from September 2012 on how skills gain in english and maths (distance travelled) can be assessed and measured as a basis for funding.



## 5. Infrastructure

High quality infrastructure is essential if the UK is to remain competitive. To make the UK's infrastructure fit for the 21st century, Autumn Statement 2011 announced a significant package of measures to facilitate investment in the UK's infrastructure.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
31.	40 key infrastructure projects which will be prioritised by Government.	Progress made	See separate Infrastructure Delivery update <sup>3</sup> .
32.	The Government will publish a consultation on an aviation strategy in March 2012, which will explore all the options for maintaining the UK's aviation hub status with the exception of a third runway at Heathrow.	Progress made	The Aviation Policy Framework will be published in the spring and will set out the Government's strategy to ensure aviation contributes to economic growth within environmental constraints – particularly noise and carbon. The Government will also publish a call for evidence on maintaining the UK's aviation hub status.
33.	The Government will pilot reviews during the design and engineering phase to consider what opportunities for interdependencies may exist in major infrastructure projects.	Progress made	The Government is working with major infrastructure project teams to pilot reviews in the following projects: High Speed 2, the A14 upgrade, Lower Thames Crossing and Northern Line Battersea extension.
34.	The Government will clear planning cases in the infrastructure planning backlog within 3 months once they are ready for a decision.	Progress made	Since November 2011, development consent decisions have been made for the Pollington Generating Station (53 megawatts) and Royal Portbury Dock (150 megawatts) biomass plants, in line with this commitment.
35.	The Government will invest £25 million to help bus companies and local authorities in England buy new low carbon buses.	Progress made	Available funding has been increased to £31 million. Bids have been received and funding will be made available to the winning bus operators and local authorities by the end of this month.
36.	£10 million will be made available to fit pollution reduction technology to London buses. £5 million will be provided by Government and £5 million from Transport for London.	Progress made	The first retro-fitted buses are expected to be in service by the end of this summer, with up to 1,000 buses retrofitted by March 2014.

<sup>3</sup> See [hm-treasury.gov.uk/national\\_infrastructure\\_plan2011.htm](http://hm-treasury.gov.uk/national_infrastructure_plan2011.htm)

	Measure	Progress	Notes
37.	The Government is making enhancing alternative dispute resolution mechanisms an additional priority in pushing the EU for a digital single market, in order to overcome barriers to e-commerce and the electronic distribution of goods to Europe.	Progress made	The European Commission has proposed an online platform to direct consumers to alternative dispute resolution schemes to resolve consumer disputes about online purchases in another EU country. The European Parliament and the EU Council have committed to adopting the package by the end of 2012 as a priority action in the Single Market Act. The Government is working to ensure that the final package realises the potential digital single market benefits.
38.	The Government will write-down £150 million of debt on the Humber Bridge, allowing tolls to fall from £3.00 to £1.50 for cars.	Complete	The Government will write down £150 million of the Humber Bridge debt on 31 March 2012, and the Humber Bridge Board will reduce the toll for cars from £3 to £1.50 on 1 April 2012.
39.	The Government will invest £5 million to set up a nationwide taskforce to target metal thieves and scrap metal dealers who illegally trade in stolen metal.	Progress made	A taskforce has been established and will regularly report on raids. The Government announced its intention to introduce cashless payments and higher fines in January.
40.	The Devolved Administrations will receive Barnett consequential to invest in their key infrastructure priorities.	Complete	The Devolved Administrations have received significant capital Barnett consequential since the Spending Review to help support infrastructure investment: Scotland has received £487 million; Wales £248 million; and Northern Ireland £152 million.
41.	£50 million will be made available to replace the Caledonian Sleeper Service.	Complete	A programme of joint funding to refurbish the Caledonian Sleeper Service has been agreed with the Scottish Government and an additional £50 million has been drawn down by the Scottish Government in 2011-12.

## 6. Low carbon

Efficiency savings from using raw materials, energy and water more efficiently could save UK firms an estimated £23 billion a year. The *Plan for Growth* announced measures to support this work and reduce the burdens facing businesses.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
42.	To encourage investment in low-carbon power, the Government will introduce a carbon price floor for electricity generation from 1 April 2013.	Complete	Enacted in the Finance Act 2011. The Finance Bill 2012 will enable relief to be applied to carbon capture and storage and combined heat and power technologies. HM Revenue & Customs will administer the scheme.
43.	The Government will scrap the unnecessary plans for a new Carbon Capture and Storage levy.	Complete	The Carbon Capture and Storage levy has been scrapped, and average business electricity bills will be an estimated two per cent lower from 2015 and three per cent lower in 2020 than they would otherwise have been.
44.	The Government will cap the cost of policies funded through energy bills.	Complete	A new <a href="#">levy-control framework</a> , published in April 2011, will maintain tax and spending within agreed limits.
45.	The Government will support the infrastructure development needed to enable the transition to a green economy through the Green Investment Bank.	Progress made	The <a href="#">Green Investment Bank</a> was established as a private company in February 2012 and in March the Government announced its headquarters would be in Edinburgh, together with a major transaction team in London. In April the Government will make its first set of green investments under the programme, partnering with managers to finance waste infrastructure projects.
46.	The Government is promoting development of new markets in green goods and services.	Progress made	A consultation on the <a href="#">Green Deal</a> framework closed in January 2012. Engagement on quality standards, training qualifications and potential impact continues, ahead of an expected launch in late 2012. The Government published proposals for <a href="#">Feed-in Tariffs</a> in February 2012, opened the <a href="#">Renewable Heat Incentive</a> scheme for non-domestic users in December 2011 and expects to publish the framework for smart meter suppliers shortly.

## 7. Planning

The *Plan for Growth* and Autumn Statement 2011 announced measures to ensure the planning system supports growth.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
47.	The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government will make a Written Ministerial Statement in March 2011, setting clear expectations that local planning authorities and other bodies involved in granting development consents should prioritise growth and jobs.	Complete	A Written Ministerial Statement was <a href="#">published</a> in March 2011.
48.	The Government will introduce a powerful new presumption in favour of sustainable development, so that the default answer to development is 'yes.'	Complete	A strong presumption in favour of sustainable development will be introduced through the National Planning Policy Framework, to be published this month, and coming into force for plan-making and decisions from that point onwards, with appropriate implementation arrangements for local authorities with pro-growth policies in local plans. There will be support to help local authorities get plans up to date quickly.
49.	The Government wants more development in suitable and viable locations and will produce a shorter, more focused and inherently pro-growth National Planning Policy Framework to deliver this.	Complete	The NPPF will be published in March and will come into force for plan-making and decisions from that point onwards, with appropriate implementation arrangements for local authorities with pro-growth policies in local plans. There will be support to help local authorities get plans quickly.
50.	The Government will enable businesses to bring forward neighbourhood plans and neighbourhood development orders.	Progress made	The Localism Act gives local authorities powers to designate business areas for neighbourhood planning, and these will come into force from April 2012. Nine front-runner neighbourhood planning projects are business led, and will establish good practice for future schemes.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
51.	The Government will pilot a land auctions model, starting with public sector land.	Progress made	The Government is taking forward land auction pilots on public sector land with the aim of having two sites ready for market by the end of the year. The land auctions model seeks to capture a greater share of the uplift in land values created by the granting of planning permission.
52.	The Government will localise choice about the use of previously developed land, removing nationally imposed targets.	Progress made	The National Planning Policy Framework will confirm this policy (see measure 48).
53.	The Government will consult on proposals to make it easier to convert commercial premises to residential.	Complete	See measure 48. The Government consulted on proposals to relax planning rules in relation to change of use between commercial premises to residential in April 2011.
54.	The Government will introduce a number of measures to streamline the planning applications and related consents regimes removing bureaucracy from the system and speeding it up. This will include a 12 month guarantee for the processing of all planning applications, including any appeals.	Progress made	The Government will shortly consult on measures including reducing information requirements, proposals to amend the Use Class Order and associated permitted development rights, and introducing new permitted development rights for micro-renewable.
55.	The Government will ensure a fast-track planning process for major infrastructure applications through the Major Infrastructure Planning system.	Complete	The Localism Act abolishes the Infrastructure Planning Commission and returns decisions over major infrastructure projects to Ministers.
56.	The Government is legislating to introduce a duty on local authorities and public bodies to require them to co-operate on planning issues.	Progress made	The Localism Act has introduced a duty on local authorities and public bodies to require them to co-operate on planning issues. Regulations will be introduced in spring 2012.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
57.	The Government will ensure the key consenting and advisory agencies have a remit to promote sustainable development as soon as the National Planning Policy Framework is finalised. The Government will also introduce a 13-week maximum timescale for the majority of non-planning consents, to speed up the consenting process and give certainty to developers. This will take immediate effect for Government agencies.	Progress made	Government Departments and agencies have put in place processes to monitor performance. Initial monitoring suggests 13-week timescales are being met in most categories of consent. The change of remit will follow shortly.
58.	The Government will ensure that there is a more effective mechanism for applicants to obtain an award of costs, if there is an appeal against refusal of planning permission where a statutory consultee has acted unreasonably, through measures to be implemented in summer 2012. The Government will also improve the performance of the key statutory consultees in responding swiftly to applications. This will include key statutory bodies bringing forward an improvement by spring 2012.	Progress made	The Government will consult by the end of May 2012 on proposals to amend the award of costs policy. The key statutory bodies are publishing improvement plans in draft alongside the Budget, to be finalised after publication of the new National Planning Policy Framework.
59.	The Government will build more flexibility into the major infrastructure planning regime, particularly in working with developers in the pre-application phase. These improvements will be implemented by summer 2012.	Progress made	The Government will publish draft revised guidance intended to make the major infrastructure planning regime clearer and easier to use by the end of April 2011. This will cover pre-application engagement, associated development and examination procedures.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
60.	The Government will ensure that compliance with the Habitats and Wild Birds Directives does not lead to unnecessary costs and delays to development, while continuing to support the Directives' objectives.	Progress made	The Government will reduce the cost, complexity and delay to businesses that the Habitats Directive can impose by preparing streamlined guidance, setting clearer standards for evidence and improving the customer focus of the statutory bodies. The Government will also establish a Major Infrastructure and Environment Unit to engage at an early stage with nationally significant infrastructure projects to minimise potential Habitats issues. The Government will publish its review of implementation of the Directives later this month.
61.	The Government will review planning appeals procedures, seeking to make the process faster and more transparent, improve consistency and increase certainty of decision timescales. Proposals will be brought forward for implementation in summer 2012.	Progress made	The Government will publish a consultation on proposals for an improved planning appeals process by June 2012.
62.	The Government will consult on a proposal to allow the reconsideration of those planning obligations agreed prior to April 2010 where development is stalled.	Progress made	The Government will publish proposals for consultation by April 2012, alongside other proposals on how change of use is managed in the planning system.
63.	The Government will consult on proposals to allow existing agricultural buildings to be used for other business purposes such as offices and retail space, to make it easier for rural businesses to find the premises they need to expand.	Progress made	Government will consult on these measures shortly, alongside wider planning simplification measures.
64.	The Government will introduce new permitted development rights for non-domestic micro-generation of electricity. This will incentivise the take up of small scale renewable and low carbon energy technologies.	Progress made	New regulations introducing these permitted development rights will come into force in April 2012.

## 8. Public sector procurement

The *Autumn Statement 2011* announced measures to improving visibility and certainty of public sector purchases, to allow businesses to plan their investments in plant, machinery and people, and to deliver better value for taxpayers' money.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
65.	Building on the publication of forward procurement plans for construction, wider infrastructure, information and communications technology and facilities management, the Government will publish medium-term plans setting out its procurement needs for other sectors by April 2012 to give suppliers the confidence to invest for the future and compete on a level playing field.	Progress made	On track to publish in April 2012. Procurement pipelines to March 2015 for the infrastructure and construction sectors will also be updated.
66.	The Government will make better use of pre-procurement dialogue with suppliers to ensure procurement processes are well designed and quickly carried out, as well as identifying capability gaps in the supply chain that need to be addressed to meet future demand and taking action to remove barriers to growth.	Progress made	On track to publish supply chain assessments for certain sectors in spring 2012.
67.	The Government will introduce a presumption against the use of the competitive dialogue procurement process unless it can be demonstrated that it delivers value for money.	Complete	The presumption was announced in November 2011, and is being applied to new Government procurement processes.
68.	The Government will complete all but the very biggest and most complex procurement processes within 120 working days through introducing the lean sourcing process from January 2012, and training public sector procurers in application of this new approach.	Complete	This has been made effective for central Government procurement since January 2012. To support and inform public sector procurement professionals, the Government also published a lean sourcing manual and delivered familiarisation sessions to over 600 public sector procurement staff.



	Measure	Progress	Notes
69.	Terry Hill (Chair of the Arup Board of Trustees) will lead an industry standards group in the infrastructure sector to examine the simplification of procurement specifications and the removal of unnecessary technical standards, to report back to the Government on initial progress by spring 2012.	Progress made	The report on the transport sector will be published in June 2012 together with recommendations for wider roll-out into other infrastructure sectors.
70.	The Government will ensure that the bundling of contract and subcontract packages in procurement offers enhanced opportunities for SMEs.	Progress made	Detailed <a href="#">measures</a> were announced earlier this month, including new tools to increase visibility of Government needs, improve communication between buyers and SME suppliers and a commitment to disaggregate large IT contracts. In addition, nine major companies will, where appropriate, publish their subcontracting opportunities on <a href="#">Contracts Finder</a> .
71.	The Government will extend the use of Project Bank Accounts (currently being piloted on construction projects) as a means of ensuring both certainty and speed of payment to SMEs.	Progress made	On track for the pilot to be extended to cover facilities management and defence. In addition, Government will also explore the role for supply chain credit support to enable faster payments within supply chains.
72.	To reduce burdens on business, the Government will negotiate in the EU for a radical simplification of the Public Procurement Directives.	Progress made	The European Commission's proposals for the <a href="#">Public Procurement Directives</a> , published in December 2011, incorporated simplifications suggested by the UK Government, including greater freedom to use the competitive negotiated procedure, shortened minimum timescales and more flexible supplier selection. Negotiations will continue throughout 2012.

## 9. Publication of government data

Improving access to public data has the potential to boost growth by building data and analytics markets, expanding existing market opportunities, and attracting inward investment. Measures were announced in Autumn Statement 2011.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
73.	The Government will provide a service to link primary and secondary healthcare datasets from September 2012 to reinforce the UK's position as a global centre for research and analytics and boost UK life sciences.	Progress made	The Clinical Practice Research Datalink is on track for launch in April 2012 and delivery in September 2012.
74.	The Government will publish further prescribing data by September 2012 and additional health and social care datasets by September 2013 to support health and social care data-based product and analytics markets.	Progress made	See measure 166.
75.	The Government will work with the transport industry to make available by April 2012 timetable and real-time train and bus information to support the development of innovative applications to improve passenger journeys.	Progress made	Network Rail and Traveline are on target to deliver their commitments by the end of April, releasing timetable and real time train and bus data under the Open Government License.
76.	The Government will consult in early 2012, through the Fares and Ticketing Review, on providing open access to rail fares data, giving passengers and business better information and enabling them to make the most cost-effective travel choices.	Progress made	The <a href="#">consultation</a> will close in June 2012, and includes the release of fares data and existing anomalies in the fares system.
77.	The Government plans to legislate to give the Civil Aviation Authority the power to publish data on the performance of aviation service providers.	Progress made	The Civil Aviation Bill proposes to widen the Civil Aviation Authority's powers to request and publish information of benefit to users of air transport services. The Bill is expected to receive Royal Assent by the end of 2012.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
78.	The Government will release from March 2012 a range of highways and traffic data, including on road works, to help reduce congestion and enable business to make more predictable travel and logistics decisions.	Progress made	The <a href="#">Roadworks</a> website has opened up access to highways and traffic data on Open Government Licence terms. The provision of this data now covers around 65 per cent of local authorities across England. The Government is working with the remaining local authorities to complete coverage and include other road performance data.
79.	The Government will consult on the content of anonymised fit note data to be published from 2012 to drive innovation in the occupational health sector and improve management of sickness absence.	Progress made	On track. The Government expects the first supplier of electronic fit notes to start in May 2012 with other suppliers following.
80.	The Government will design the Universal Credit system so that aggregate benefits data can be published during the first year of live running of the system.	Progress made	Delivery of the system is on track to support the welfare reform timetable, following the successful passage of the Welfare Reform Act in March 2012.
81.	The Government will consider opportunities for linking welfare datasets to other government and commercial datasets to increase their value to industry.	Progress made	A new Welfare Sector Transparency Sector Board will meet for the first time this month. The Government is developing plans to roll out new software to the private sector and looking at methods to link data securely.
82.	The Government will provide up to £10 million over five years, with match-funding from industry and academia, to establish the world's first Open Data Institute to help business exploit the opportunities created by release of public data.	Progress made	The Open Data Institute (co-directors Tim Berners-Lee and Nigel Shadbolt, with support from the Technology Strategy Board and the Government) will publish a business plan in April 2012 and will open in September 2012.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
83.	The Government will establish a Data Strategy Board and a Public Data Group that will maximise the value of the data from the Met Office, Ordnance Autumn Statement Survey, the Land Registry and Companies House.	Progress made	The Data Strategy Board and Public Data Group will be established and functioning by summer 2012. The Terms of Reference have been published. Recruitment for members of the respective boards and the newly-formed Open Data User Group is now underway. Data sets to be released shortly include Land Registry monthly price paid data (March 2012); Companies House core information of companies on the register (July 2012); and Ordnance Survey national trails dataset (2013).
84.	The Government will ensure all NHS patients can access their personal GP records online by the end of this Parliament. The Government will publish a new procurement arrangement for school information and learning services in spring 2012 to improve parents' and pupils' access to education data and increase competition in provision of learning services.	Progress made	The Government has asked the Royal College of General Practitioners, working with patient groups and other professional organisations, to lead development of a plan, policy and procedures for access to patient records. The Information Strategy will be published in spring 2012. The Government is on target to deliver its Framework Agreement for school Management Information System suppliers by the end of this month.

## 10. Reducing regulatory burdens

The *Plan for Growth* and *Autumn Statement 2011* announced measures to reduce the burden of regulation facing businesses, and to make it as easy as possible for people to find work by reducing the burden of complying with employment law. Since January 2011, the Government has achieved a cumulative net reduction of regulation worth £3.3 billion to business, with 19 deregulatory measures taking effect in the first half of 2012. This is in addition to further measures announced in Budget 2012.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
85.	The Government will introduce a moratorium exempting micro and start-up businesses from new domestic regulation for three years from April 2011.	Complete	The moratorium was introduced in April 2011 and is reducing the flow of new domestic regulations on micros and start-ups. Some of the impacts of this measure include phasing in of pensions auto-enrolment so that small businesses will not need to comply until before the next Parliament; smaller tobacco retailers have been exempted from the display ban on tobacco until April 2015; and Modern Workplaces proposals will reflect the moratorium and implementation is not expected prior to April 2014.
86.	The Government will scrap proposals for specific regulations that would have cost businesses over £350 million a year to implement.	Complete	The Government will not extend the right to request time to train to businesses with fewer than 250 employees, saving businesses an estimated £350 million a year.
87.	The Government will launch an extensive public thematic review to reduce the existing stock of regulation.	Progress made	Since its launch in April 2011, around 1,500 regulations have been examined through the Red Tape Challenge, over half of which will be scrapped or improved. The Third Statement of New Regulation details 123 Red Tape Challenge measures due to be implemented before the end of June 2012, including 99 repeals and 24 improvements. A further 11 themes are currently going through the Red Tape Challenge.
88.	The Government will make further changes to employment legislation to reduce the costs to businesses of compliance.	Progress made	The Government will report to Parliament in spring 2012 on the progress on this work, and will consult on any changes to improve government enforcement of workplace rights.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
89.	The Government will implement proposals from Lord Young's Review of health and safety.	Progress made	The Government is proposing an accelerated timetable for completion of these recommendations which will scrap or improve 84 per cent of health and safety regulation.
90.	The Government plans to move registration of the main business taxes online.	Progress made	'One Click' will drive down the time a business needs to spend on tax and regulation. In November 2011, the Government launched <a href="#">'My New Business'</a> , a new service for pre-start up businesses. From April 2012, those starting or growing a business will be able to register for the main business taxes through a new Online Tax Registration Service and will be able to access their own tax details.
91.	The Government will launch a major focus on revising burdensome EU regulations and directives.	Progress made	The Government continues to engage with the European Commission review ('fitness check') of the Information and Consultation Directives, and continues to highlight the need for robust evidence before any decisions are taken on whether amendments are necessary.
92.	The Government will work with GSK, Balfour Beatty, Kingfisher and Tribeka to improve European growth opportunities for UK businesses.	Complete	A <a href="#">report</a> was published in November 2011, and recommended 16 specific cases, highlighted by businesses, for EU regulatory reform to improve UK business growth.
93.	The Government will push the European Commission to deliver a culture change that bears down on the overall impact of EU legislation.	Progress made	In November 2011, the European Commission committed to reduce the regulatory burden on SMEs and in January 2012 strengthened its analysis of new EU policy proposals for their impact on business competitiveness. The Government will continue to work with like-minded Member States to press the Commission to adopt a programme for reducing the overall regulatory burden to business.
94.	The Government will improve online Business Link guidance on regulation.	Complete	Online regulatory content has been simplified and the Business Link website has been enhanced to improve access to content.
95.	The Government will publish an Enforcement White Paper in May 2011 with plans to improve enforcement of regulations.	Complete	The Government published its consultation <a href="#">response</a> in December 2011 and gave a commitment to launch regulatory reviews; the first tranche of which were announced in Budget 2012.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
96.	The Government will increase the qualifying period for unfair dismissal from one to two years from April 2012.	Complete	A doubling of the qualifying period for unfair dismissal will take effect from April 2012.
97.	The Government will require all potential claimants to submit their employment tribunal claim to the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service so that early conciliation can take place.	Progress made	The Government will bring forward the necessary primary legislative changes and proposals are now being finalised.
98.	The Government will look at whether and how a 'Rapid Resolution' scheme to provide quicker, cheaper determinations in low-value, straightforward claims (such as holiday pay) could be introduced as an alternative to the current employment tribunal process.	Progress made	If the Government decides to proceed, it will consult on the detail of any scheme and legislative proposals are now being developed.
99.	The Government has launched a call for evidence on the effectiveness of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) regulations protecting employees' rights and smoothing the process of business restructuring.	Progress made	The Government is analysing the evidence from the recent call for evidence on TUPE to determine whether change would be beneficial, with a view to consulting on any proposed policy changes in autumn 2012.
100.	The Government has called for evidence on the collective redundancy rules, including the consequences of reducing the current 90-day consultation period for over 100 redundancies to 60, 45 or 30 days.	Progress made	The Government is analysing responses to the recent call for evidence, with a view to consulting on any proposed policy changes in autumn 2012.
101.	Mr Justice Underhill will lead a fundamental review of the employment tribunal Rules of Procedure. In the meantime, the Government will change the rules on witness statements and expenses, cost and deposit orders and judges sitting alone in unfair dismissal cases.	Progress made	Reformed employment tribunal rules on witness statements and expenses, cost and deposit orders and judges sitting alone in unfair dismissal cases will come into force from April 2012. Mr Justice Underhill will report in spring 2012.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
102.	The Government will work with industry and key stakeholders to change attitudes to mediation and embed it as an accepted part of the dispute resolution process.	Progress made	The first mediation event took place with the retail industry including companies such as Arcadia, BT, Tesco, John Lewis and Marks & Spencer. The Government is evaluating tenders for two regional mediation network projects.
103.	The Government will introduce a provision for employment tribunals to levy a financial penalty on employers found to have breached employment rights (payable to the Exchequer), but will allow judges the discretion about whether to exercise this power to ensure that employers are not penalised for inadvertent errors.	Progress made	Government will bring forward the necessary primary legislative changes and proposals are now being finalised'
104.	The Government will develop a model agreement for use by smaller businesses, consult on a legislative change to enable compromise agreements to cover all existing and future claims, and rename agreements as 'settlement agreements'.	Progress made	On track. In addition, the Government has brought forward a regulation to amend section 147 of the Equalities Act, responding to a technical issue that has concerned the Human Resources and legal communities.
105.	Subject to consultation, the Government will introduce a system of 'protected conversations' which will allow employers to have a conversation about any employment issue with their employees.	Progress made	A consultation will be launched later this year.
106.	The Government will shortly publish a consultation on the introduction of fees for anyone wishing to take a claim to an employment tribunal.	Progress made	The responses received to the recent consultation are currently being reviewed and the Government plans to respond before the summer recess.



	Measure	Progress	Notes
107.	The Government will begin a call for evidence on two proposals for radical reform of UK employment law. First, the Government will seek views on the introduction of compensated no-fault dismissal for micro-businesses with fewer than 10 employees. Second, the Government will consider how it could move to a simpler, quicker and clearer dismissal process, potentially including working with ACAS to make changes to their code or by introducing supplementary guidance for small businesses.	Progress made	<a href="#">A call for evidence</a> on dismissal processes will close in June 2012, and the Government will report shortly afterwards.
108.	The Government will consult in spring 2012 on streamlining the current regulation of the recruitment sector.	Progress made	A consultation will be launched later in 2012, including changes to simplify and improve how the recruitment sector is regulated.
109.	The Government will work to remove common misconceptions about the burdens of employing staff for sole traders considering taking on their first employee.	Progress made	The Government is planning to launch an online tool for first time employers in spring 2012.
110.	The Government will examine the paperwork obligations of the Agency Worker Regulations in 18 months' time to ensure that the practical arrangements for employers are as simple as possible.	Work started	Work is on track to launch the review in June 2013.
111.	The Government will close a loophole in the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which enables employees to blow the whistle about breaches to their own personal work contract.	Progress made	On track. The Government will bring forward the necessary primary legislative changes which are now being finalised.
112.	The Government will merge the current body of National Minimum Wage regulations into a single set of consolidated regulation to complement the work of the Low Pay Commission in considering simplification of the current regime.	Work started	A draft set of consolidated regulations will be produced by March 2013, taking account of any views from the Low Pay Commission.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
113.	The Government will deliver universal portability of Criminal Records Bureau checks with an immediate checking service for employers via an online facility available from 2013.	Work started	On track for availability in early 2013.
114.	The Government will consider the recommendations of the Frost/Black Independent Review of Sickness Absence published on 21 November 2011, and will respond in 2012.	Progress made	The Government has updated the <a href="#">Employer's Charter</a> to respond to one of the recommendations of the <a href="#">Sickness Absence Review</a> .
115.	The Government is publishing a report which includes 16 specific cases, highlighted by businesses, for EU regulatory reform to improve UK business growth. These cases reinforce UK aims to reduce the overall EU burden, foster EU innovation, complete the internal market and remove gold-plating.	Complete	The <a href="#">report</a> was published in November 2011 and presented to EU policy-makers. The Government will continue to push for reductions in EU regulatory burdens.
116.	The Government will: launch a review of regulators; extend the Primary Authority scheme; impose sunset clauses on new regulators; and move towards greater co-regulation and earned recognition.	Progress made	The first three regulatory reviews were announced in Budget 2012 and will consider whether enforcement arrangements are appropriate, proportionate, fit for purpose and risk-based. The Government will also launch a web tool to enable businesses and individuals to provide real-time feedback on their experience of being regulated. The Government will also bring forward legislation to extend the eligibility of the Primary Authority Scheme and strengthen the inspection plan element.
117.	The Government has accepted the recommendations of Professor Löfstedt's review of health and safety regulation and will take forward the recommendations.	Progress made	An accelerated timetable was announced in Budget 2012 to scrap or improve 84 per cent of health and safety regulations.

## 11. Trade and investment

The *Plan for Growth* announced measures to support UK exporters and attract and facilitate investment in the UK. This is in addition to further measures announced in Budget 2012.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
118.	Led by the Minister for Trade and Investment, UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) will develop a more entrepreneurial culture which makes better use of private sector expertise and talent with a clear focus on winning business for UK firms.	Progress made	UKTI is increasing its private sector expertise and the number of its private sector secondees. UKTI has introduced incentivised contracts for inward investment services and will do so for trade services in England by April 2012. UKTI is partnering trade associations, chambers of commerce, banks, accountants and lawyers to extend its support to 50,000 SMEs each year by 2015.
119.	The Government will provide a bespoke service to key inward investors giving them direct access to UK Ministers and speedy resolution of bureaucratic obstacles to investment. This will support a major drive to encourage investment in economically significant projects.	Progress made	UKTI is extending its <a href="#">strategic relations</a> service for the UK's top exporters and inward investors. UKTI will showcase inward investment opportunities, especially in infrastructure, science and innovation and through a sustained client marketing programme for financial and contracting/ operating investors and sovereign wealth funds. At the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics Games, UKTI will host major international business events to highlight UK opportunities to inward investors.
120.	UKTI will deliver a new package of support to help SMEs with an ambition to break into overseas markets.	Complete	In November 2011, the Government launched a <a href="#">National Export Challenge</a> to get 100,000 more SMEs exporting by 2020. UKTI has launched new support networks for SMEs and an Export for Growth prize. An export guide for partner organisations to brand and give to customers has been produced and a programme has been developed to link high-potential firms to trade finance and venture capital. Other initiatives include " <a href="#">Open to Export</a> " and <a href="#">Catalyst UK</a> networks.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
121.	The Government will use the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and UKTI to provide UK businesses with local intelligence on high value projects overseas and intensive support to win these deals.	Progress made	The Government launched its <a href="#">Charter for Business</a> in May 2011 setting out its support for UK business overseas and inward investors to the UK, including redeploying over 100 diplomats to commercial responsibilities, developing commercial training programmes and providing <a href="#">Overseas Business Risk</a> support. UKTI supported UK businesses in securing more than £800 million in <a href="#">high value projects</a> in 2011 and is pursuing 60 more around the world.
122.	In EU negotiations, the Government will press for opening of market access overseas in areas of UK strengths, in particular the service sector.	Progress made	<a href="#">Let's Choose Growth</a> sets out the need for EU action to reduce regulation, create a digital single market and improve innovation and services. The EU-South Korea Free Trade Agreement (FTA) came into force on 1 July 2011, potentially boosting UK GDP by £500 million. The Government is supporting the efforts of the <a href="#">EU-US High Level Working Group</a> to deepen economic co-operation and liberalise trade, which will report in summer 2012, and is pressing for progress on EU FTAs including India, Singapore and Canada.
123.	Working closely with business, UKTI will identify opportunities and barriers faced by UK companies operating in high-growth markets and ensure that the UK's diplomatic resources and ministerial visits focus on eliminating these barriers to trade.	Progress made	UKTI has hosted a series of export promotion events around the UK in 2012 in partnership with business, focussing on the high growth markets of Asia, Middle East and Latin America. Forthcoming events include SME missions to India and China, and, jointly with the Confederation of British Industry, a trade mission of mid-sized businesses to Turkey in April 2012.
124.	To address demand for short-term trade credit insurance, the Export Credits Guarantee Department (ECGD) has extended the eligibility of its existing short term credit insurance policy, the Export Insurance Policy.	Complete	Since March 2011, UK Export Finance (the trading name of ECGD) has issued 17 insurance policies for 16 exporters under the widened eligibility of the Export Insurance Policy, supporting exports with a related contract value of some £39 million. Offers have been accepted by 13 exporters in relation to £24 million of this support.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
125.	The Government makes permanent two facilities introduced in response to the financial crisis: the Letter of Credit Guarantee Scheme and allowing ECGD's guarantees to be used to raise long-term finance in capital markets for UK exports.	Complete	The <a href="#">Letter of Credit Guarantee Scheme</a> allowing UK Export Finance's guarantees to be used to raise long-term finance in capital markets for UK exports were made permanent in March 2011.
126.	The Government will provide further support to exporters, particularly SMEs, by working with banks to ensure a successful implementation of three new Export Credits Guarantee Department products: a bond support product, an export working capital product and a foreign exchange credit support scheme.	Complete	Since their launch in March 2011, guarantees have been offered for the benefit of eight exporters on 37 contract bonds with a related contract value in excess of £135 million. Offers have been accepted in relation to £62 million of this support by four exporters. The Export Working Capital Scheme has supported one facility for £0.5 million, facilitating £2.9 million of exports to the US.
127.	The Government is launching the Export Enterprise Finance Guarantee and promoting its use to SMEs.	Progress made	The Export Enterprise Finance Guarantee scheme is being integrated into the UK Export finance product range. This will provide a single point of contact for all Government support short-term export finance products. The process will be concluded in summer 2012
128.	UK Border Agency (UKBA) will implement a single point of contact for all traders, with lead officials at ports and airports whom they can contact in the event of delays and issues related to Government Departments.	Progress made	Lead officials at all key ports and airports have been established. UKBA has also set up a Strategic Partner Group, chaired by the head of UK Border Force, to discuss border control aims, issues and modernisation plans with industry. The <a href="#">Automatic Licensing Verification project</a> (phase 2) was announced in November 2011 to further improve procedures and reduce time delays.

## 12. Advanced manufacturing

	Measure	Progress	Notes
129.	The Government will extend the capital allowances short life asset regime for plant machinery from four years to eight years, from April 2011	Complete	Introduced through the Finance Act 2011 and effective from April 2012. It will apply to new assets acquired from April 2011.
130.	The Government will expand the University Technical Colleges (UTCs) programme, to establish at least 24 new colleges by 2014.	Progress made	19 University Technical Colleges are now open or in development. More than 130 major national and local employers are involved in developing these projects which will provide a new generation of school leavers with technical knowledge and skills demanded by industry. A second round of funding is expected in May 2012.
131.	The Government will launch a high value manufacturing Technology and Innovation Centre.	Complete	<a href="#">The High Value Manufacturing Catapult Centre</a> opened in October 2011 and will receive over £140 million over a six year period. It will support all forms of manufacturing using metals and composites, process manufacturing technologies and bio-processing.
132.	The Government will fund nine new university-based centres for Innovative Manufacturing by 2012.	Complete	Twelve university-based <a href="#">Centres for Innovative Manufacturing</a> were launched in March 2011. Funding of £61.5 million will be made available for research in manufacturing over a five year period.
133.	The Government will fund a programme of new Manufacturing Fellowships.	Progress made	Formal awards are expected this month, with a further £5 million by June 2012, to help bridge university and industrial research opportunities.
134.	The Government will launch an enhanced Manufacturing Advisory Service	Complete	The enhanced <a href="#">Manufacturing Advisory Service</a> was launched in January 2012, offering specialist advice and business support, with an additional £7 million (£59.3 million in total) to deliver its services over the next three years.
135.	The Government is launching a new £75 million programme of targeted support to help smaller employers access Advanced Level and Higher Apprenticeships.	Progress made	Winning bids worth £19 million were announced in December 2011. Funding of £6 million for Higher Apprenticeships was launched in February 2012, targeting sectors including aerospace and aviation.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
136.	The Government will support the development of a new degree-equivalent Higher Level Apprenticeship.	Progress made	The UK Commission for Employment and Skills is developing a framework for March 2012. The first candidates will be taken on from September 2012.
137.	The Government will strengthen its strategy for promoting science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) skills.	Progress made	Contracts are in place to improve STEM subject teaching in schools. The number of STEM ambassadors will be increased, and a National Careers Service will be launched in April 2012 to promote STEM occupations.
138.	The Government will launch a high profile industry showcase alongside the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and roll out of a programme of 'Made in Britain' exhibitions.	Progress made	The judging panel for proposals to exhibit at the Science Museum during the Olympic Games has been established. Thirty industry champions have been appointed through the <a href="#">Make It In Great Britain website</a> .
139.	The Government will seek to promote a new international prize in engineering, working with private sector partners to create an endowment to support such a prize	Complete	The Queen Elizabeth Prize for Engineering was launched in November 2011. The £1 million prize will now be awarded bi-annually by the <a href="#">Royal Academy of Engineering</a> . The first prize will be awarded in spring 2013.

### 13. Construction

	Measure	Progress	Notes
140.	The Government will publish the UK's long term forward view of projects and programmes as part of the National Infrastructure Plan 2011.	Complete	The <i>National Infrastructure Plan</i> was published in November 2011.
141.	The Government will publish quarterly from autumn 2011 a rolling two year forward programme of infrastructure and construction projects where public funding has been agreed.	Complete	The Government published an enhanced and improved list of projects in November 2011. The Government will continue to publish quarterly a rolling two year forward programme.
142.	The Government will reform the way in which it procures public sector construction and infrastructure to reduce costs by up to 20 per cent.	Progress made	The <a href="#">Construction Strategy</a> was published in May 2011 setting out how to procure public sector construction and infrastructure to reduce costs and a programme of work to March 2013. Government will publish the first annual cost review in April 2012.
143.	The Government will support over 10,000 first time buyers to buy a home through a FirstBuy programme.	Progress made	Since the last FirstBuy update in November 2011, housebuilders have found significant interest from first time buyers, reporting over 4,200 reservations as at end of February 2012 and the three largest house builders reporting sales of over 1,200 by December 2011. Sales figures reflecting the first year of the two-year programme will be published in June 2012.
144.	The Government will accelerate the release of public sector land to encourage new homes and jobs.	Progress made	The Government is accelerating the release of public sector land. The Budget announced that sufficient land has been identified to meet the Government's ambition to dispose of land with the capacity to build over 100,000 homes and support as many as 25,000 jobs by April 2014. A progress report setting out further details will be published before the summer.
145.	The Government will strengthen demand for residential property by reforming the stamp duty land tax rules applied to bulk purchases.	Complete	The reform of stamp duty land tax rules was introduced in Finance Act 2011.



146.	The Government is introducing a range of measures to remove barriers to entry for new Real Estate Investment Trusts.	Progress Made	The Government has consulted informally on measures that were announced at Budget 2011, and the outcome will be reflected in the draft Finance Bill 2012 where the technical elements were subject to further consultation. There will be further consultation on technical elements of the draft legislation. The measures will be legislated for in February 2012.
147.	The Government will review construction standards and codes, to take out redundancy and duplication where the costs outweigh the benefits.	Progress made	The report on technical standards in the transport sector will be published by June 2012 together with recommendations for wider roll-out into other infrastructure sectors.
148.	The Government is announcing the regulatory requirements for zero carbon homes, to apply from 2016. To ensure that it remains viable to build new houses, the Government will hold house builders accountable only for those carbon dioxide emissions that are covered by Building Regulations, and will provide cost-effective means through which they can do this.	Progress made	A consultation was launched in January 2012 on potential regulatory changes in 2013, to act as an interim step towards achieving zero carbon standards.

## 14. Digital and creative industries

	Measure	Progress	Notes
149.	The Government will deliver a package to support the UK's broadband digital infrastructure.	Progress made	The Government published advice on micro trenching and street works in November 2011. The Government is currently preparing its response to the proposals received under its consultation on <a href="#">'Relaxing the restrictions on the deployment of overhead telecommunications lines'</a> . Budget 2012 also announced £100 million to create 10 super connected cities offering access to broadband download speeds with a minimum of 80-100 Mbps and high speed wireless connectivity. The Government will also provide an additional £50 million to fund a second wave of ten smaller super-connected cities.
150.	In response to the Hargreaves recommendations, due in April 2011, the Government will consider simplifying payments for copyright materials and freeing up orphan works. The Government commits to no further broad reviews of the intellectual property rights regime during the lifetime of this parliament.	Progress made	The Government has accepted all recommendations in <a href="#">the Hargreaves Review on Intellectual Property and Growth</a> . This has an estimated benefit to business of £7.9 billion. The Intellectual Property Office (IPO) published its assessment on the case for reform of <a href="#">Design Rights system</a> in December 2011. The Government has also announced that it will introduce a small claims track into the Patents County Court, which it is estimated will benefit around 150 firms every year. The first phase of the UK Digital Copyright Exchange feasibility study is complete, with findings to be published shortly. The Government will publish a response to proposals on <a href="#">copyright reform</a> shortly.
151.	The Government's Intellectual Property Office (IPO) will improve the range of products and services available to support UK businesses, particularly SMEs, on issues relating to intellectual property. The IPO will also establish a network of attachés covering key global markets, including China, east Asia and India.	Progress made	The IPO is introducing measures including a new online business advisor training tool that will give advisors the skills and information they need to help businesses protect the value of their intellectual property. The first Intellectual Property attaché in China is in place; one in India will start shortly.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
152.	The Government will publish a guide to public sector intellectual property procurement policy.	Progress made	On track for publication in May 2012.
153.	The Government will substantially reduce the burden placed on business by the communications and media regulatory framework.	Progress made	A Green Paper will be published shortly.
154.	The Government will reduce the requirements for live music to be licensed. The Government will also bring forward proposals to reduce licensing burdens on other forms of entertainment such as theatre, cinema and indoor sport.	Progress made	The Live Music Bill received Royal Assent this month and will come into force later in the year. The Government is considering views received on its consultation proposals to relax licensing arrangements for other activities - live and recorded music, theatre, cinema, dance, film and indoor sport.
155.	The Government will reduce the proposed extension of legal deposit requirements to online publications.	Progress made	A <a href="#">consultation</a> on revised draft regulations will close in May 2012. This follows work with Legal Deposit libraries and publishers to identify costs for their proposals.
156.	The Government will re-notify film tax relief to the European Commission.	Complete	The European Commission have agreed the extension of film tax relief for three years.
157.	The Government recognises BBC Worldwide's contribution to UK creative exports and would welcome exploration by the BBC of how BBC Worldwide may act as a source of finance and distribution expertise for UK digital and creative industry firms with global ambitions.	Progress made	The BBC published a <a href="#">report</a> in September 2011, setting out its intention to help other high quality UK intellectual property reach global markets.
158.	The Government will support the establishment by industry of a Creative Industries Council, which can provide a voice for the sector with the financial community and coordinate action on barriers to growth.	Complete	The Creative Industries Council met in July 2011 and January 2012. It is comprised of members from twelve creative industries and chaired by the Secretaries of State for Business, Innovation and Skills and Culture, Media and Sport. The Council agreed for proposals on to be taken forward and is investigating issues on access to finance for the industry.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
159.	A marketing plan will be developed by UKTI to promote opportunities for investment in the UK's Digital and Creative industries.	Complete	A sector strategy has been developed which focuses on the sub-sectors where there is most opportunity for inward investment. A substantial marketing campaign has been delivered nationally and internationally to highlight the <a href="#">Tech City Initiative</a> , promoting London as the digital capital of Europe.
160.	The Government will improve the stock of skills in the digital and creative industries.	Progress made	A new strategic partnership has been developed between the Sector Skills Councils Skillset and Creative and Cultural Skills together with the National Apprenticeship Service. STEMNET are on track to achieve their interim target to increase the numbers of STEM Ambassadors from digital and creative industries by March 2013. The Government published its response to the <a href="#">Livingstone-Hope Review</a> of Skills in Video Games and the Visual Effects in November 2011. The Government is also consulting on dis-applying <a href="#">the ICT Programmes of Study, Attainment Targets and statutory assessment arrangements</a> from September 2012.

## 15. Health and life sciences

	Measure	Progress	Notes
161.	The Government will set up a new health research regulatory agency to streamline regulation and improve the cost effectiveness of clinical trials. The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) will make funding to providers of NHS services conditional on meeting benchmarks, including a 70 day benchmark to recruit first patients for trials.	Progress made	A Special Health Authority has been set up and draft legislation to establish the HRA will be published in the second session of this Parliament. The National Institute for Health Research made the 70-day benchmark to recruit first patients for trials a condition of new contracts to providers of NHS services from December 2011 and performance against this benchmark will affect funding from 2013.
162.	The Government will reduce perceived gold-plating and increase the proportionality of EU Clinical Trials Directive and its application.	Progress made	The Government is encouraging a risk based approach to management of clinical trials within the EU and globally. The European Commission expects to present their legislative proposals for the revision of the Clinical Trials Directive in autumn 2012. Since its launch, 636 members have joined the <a href="#">Good Clinical Practice Forum</a> which enables extended communication between researchers.
163.	The Government will open up information about clinical trials to enable the public to get involved.	Progress made	Since its launch, the National Institute for Health Research's (NIHR) <a href="#">UK Clinical Trials Gateway test site</a> attracted 60,000 visitors. NIHR has developed a free smartphone application to enable people to get involved. The full site will launch in spring 2012.
164.	The Government will build a consensus on using e-health record data to create a unique position for the UK in health research.	Complete	The <a href="#">Clinical Practice Research Datalink</a> will be launched by the end of this month.
165.	The Government will open up information on clinical research to promote collaboration and innovation.	Progress made	The <a href="#">National Institute for Health Research (NIHR)</a> website is opening up information on clinical research to researchers, industry and the public, promoting collaboration and innovation.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
166.	The Government will consider opening up prescribing data.	Progress made	Monthly 'Chemical' level data by GP practice was first released in December 2011. February figures show more than 1500 downloads of the data across Europe, the US and Asia. The Government is on track to release more detailed data from September 2012.
167.	The Government will form new Translational Research Partnerships from its £775 million investment in National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Biomedical Research Centres and Units.	Complete	Two NIHR Translational Research Partnerships have been set up to develop collaborative research between the NIHR Partnerships and Industry.
168.	The Government will remove any barriers that limit the further development of geographical clusters, working with industry, local government, universities, NHS and funders.	Progress made	The <a href="#">Innovation and Research Strategy</a> and the <a href="#">Life Science Strategy</a> , published in December 2011, addressed these barriers. The Government is now working closely with industry to identify and exploit which mechanisms best support SME growth.
169.	The Government will launch a competition to form a Cell Therapy Technology and Innovation Centre (now changed to 'Catapult Centre').	Progress made	The Cell Therapy Catapult Centre will be in London, and the Technology Strategy Board is currently recruiting a Chief Executive, identifying premises and developing the operational blueprint for the centre.
170.	To ensure educators provide the skilled individuals the sector needs to grow, the Government will, through Cogent, improve market signalling by bringing companies and educators together.	Progress made	Cogent launched a Life Sciences Higher Level Apprenticeship (which includes a foundation degree) in February 2012. The Society of Biology launched their undergraduate degree accreditation programme this month.
171.	The Government will ensure that the Intellectual Property system supports life sciences businesses.	Progress made	A formal consultation on amending the UK Patents Act to exempt certain activities in relation to clinical or field trials will be launched by the end of 2012.
172.	The Government will take forward a range of measures to encourage innovation in NHS procurement.	Progress made	The Government will publish a package of measures in April 2012. To encourage more innovation in healthcare the Small Businesses Research Initiative has been launched with a £10 million budget over the next two years. This has now been doubled as part of <a href="#">Innovation Health and Wealth</a> . The first phase of competitions will be launched in April 2012.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
173.	The NHS Chief Executive will provide a report by November 2011 on how the adoption and diffusion of innovations can be accelerated across the NHS.	Complete	<a href="#">Innovation Health and Wealth</a> , launched in December 2011, sets out a delivery agenda for spreading innovation to support the NHS in achieving a systematic and profound change in the way it operates.
174.	The Government will take forward a package of measures to improve the take up of assisted living technology.	Progress made	The Government <a href="#">published</a> its headline findings in December 2011. The Government is developing the <a href="#">3millionlivesinitiative</a> and published a <a href="#">concordat</a> with the four main trade associations representing telehealth and telecare in January 2012. The Technology Strategy Board has also undertaken a competitive selection process for the Delivery Assisted Living Lifestyles at Scale initiative. A decision will be made during May 2012 on the final sites. Work has started on the Telehealth code of practice by the Telecare Services Association.
175.	The Government will strip out regulations that were never meant for the social care market and are preventing market entry and flexible services.	Complete	A <a href="#">roadmap on regulations</a> was published by the National Association for Adult Placement Schemes and the Government in October 2011.
176.	The Government will establish a proactive, entrepreneurial NHS Global	Progress made	NHS Global supported by UKTI, is working with a number of countries in the Middle East and 'BRIC' economies to identify and secure commercial contracts. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is an initial priority for NHS Global and work is progressing well.

## 16. Logistics

	Measure	Progress	Notes
177.	The Government has published a Written Ministerial Statement to support the development of, and investment in, strategic rail freight interchanges. This statement is supported by a detailed guidance document.	Progress made	<a href="#">Written Ministerial Statement</a> and <a href="#">policy guidance</a> were published in November 2011. Subsequently, planning applications for a strategic rail freight interchange in Derbyshire is likely to be submitted in early autumn 2012 and in South Staffordshire in early 2013. Further applications may include East Midlands Airport.
178.	The Government has asked Network Rail to support the development of a network of strategic rail freight interchanges, working with the wider logistics industry.	Progress made	Discussions ongoing. Network Rail is also providing cost connection information over the life-span of assets to help inform developers' investment choices. It is also looking at its own freight land portfolio to identify possible opportunities for developers.
179.	The Government will support Network Rail to invest £55 million in the strategic rail freight network to help deliver schemes that remove bottlenecks and improve capability and longer-term connectivity to the UK's major ports.	Progress made	Doubling of the track between Ely and Soham has begun. Gauge clearance work between Syston and Stoke is expected to be complete by March 2014.
180.	The Government will deliver the recommendations from the Motorway Incidents Review to ensure it can reduce the frequency of long-duration incidents and delay to heavy goods vehicles (HGVs).	Progress made	Just under £2.8 million has been awarded to 27 police forces that met the criteria, providing funding for 38 laser scanners. Two police forces are already using these. Trials suggest the scanners can save an average of 39 minutes in the investigation of serious incidents.
181.	As announced on 11 October 2011, the Government will carry out a <a href="#">trial of longer semi-trailers</a> . The trial will commence in January 2012 and last up to 10 years, with the anticipated value of the trial being an estimated £33 million to operators.	Progress made	Revised allocations of high volume semi-trailers were announced in February. Four hauliers are already operating these. The Vehicle Certification Agency is processing applications for Vehicle Special Orders from other applicants, who will be able to start operating as soon as the VSOs are issued.



	Measure	Progress	Notes
182.	The Government will explore opportunities to support green technologies through changes to the operator licensing regime, to reflect the increased costs to industry from low emission technologies that increase the overall weight of the vehicles.	Progress made	The Government will shortly discuss with industry stakeholders the merits and usefulness of an exemption from operator licensing for gas-powered vehicles and the scope to better publicise existing exemptions from operator licensing.
183.	The Government is on 29 November 2011 launching an industry-led task force to promote use of fuel efficient, low emission road freight technologies.	Progress made	The Government is chairing a series of sub-group meetings to develop the task force work programmes that will assist industry and local government to support HGV low emission technology.
184.	The Government will invest £8 million to pump prime the procurement of low emission HGV technologies and their supporting infrastructure. The Government will work with the Technology Strategy Board to launch a competition for this funding in March 2012.	Progress made	The Technology Strategy Board launched a competition to award £9.5 million total funding to procure low emission HGV technologies and their supporting infrastructure, which will close in June 2012. An additional £1.5 million will help operators establish and run trial fleets of low carbon trucks and demonstrate their wider benefits such as potential fuel savings.
185.	The Government will consider the need for further guidance on quiet night time deliveries as part of a forthcoming wider review.	Progress made	Organisations including the Noise Abatement Society and the Freight Transport Association are developing a pricing and service package to enable quiet delivery trials to be agreed between site operators and local authorities. Further guidance on quiet night time deliveries is still under consideration.
186.	The Government will trial the temporary use of snow ploughs attached to certain types of heavy duty vehicles. Where necessary, the Government will consider relaxing certain weights and dimensions legislation to facilitate this.	Progress made	Agreements are in place between some operators and local authorities to allow snow clearance from public access roads between distribution sites and the strategic road network. The Government is facilitating further discussions to increase coverage of these agreements.
187.	The Government will provide £4 million to Skills for Logistics to improve training approaches to increase the competitiveness and productivity of the logistics sector.	Progress made	Skills for Logistics carried out its UK Modern Logistics Guild feasibility study in February, and will launch four projects of work to support this in April 2012.

## 17. Mid-sized businesses

	Measure	Progress	Notes
188.	UKTI will receive £10 million of additional funding to provide a tailored package of export support to an estimated additional 500 mid-sized businesses per year. UKTI and UK Export Finance will also work with businesses to promote existing trade finance support for mid-sized businesses.	Progress made	UKTI is recruiting specialist trade advisors to work with 500 businesses from a target list of over 15,000 mid-sized businesses from April 2012. Lord Green, John Cridland (Director General, Confederation of British Industry) and Nick Baird (Chief Executive, UKTI), will lead a delegation of mid-sized businesses to Turkey in April 2012, the first delegation exclusively focused on this cohort. Specialist UKTI trade advisors will be in place across the country from April 2012 to reach those mid-sized businesses with the greatest export potential.
189.	The Government is working with large businesses, including Microsoft, Centrica, and Diageo, to develop new commitments to support and strengthen their supply chains.	Progress made	<a href="#">Initiatives</a> undertaken by large businesses to support their supply chains include: Balfour Beatty's 'purchase cards' to speed payment times to suppliers; Diageo's recruitment of dedicated staff to support supplier performance; and Carillion's export finance for its UK-based suppliers.
190.	The Government will increase by up to 200 the number of mid-sized businesses benefiting from resource efficiency schemes.	Progress made	On track to support 200 mid-size businesses through the <a href="#">Waste and Resources Action Programme</a> with funding from April 2012. The Government is also running campaigns for mid-sized business efficiency improvements in <a href="#">food and drink</a> , <a href="#">supply chain</a> improvements and <a href="#">water efficiency</a> .
191.	The Government has established a task force of UK business schools to report by October 2012 on options for improving access to appropriate courses and promoting links between mid-size businesses, business schools and students.	Progress made	The Business School Task Force is on track to report in October 2012.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
192.	The Government has asked a group of eight Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) to establish a dedicated local pathfinder project to raise the profile of mid-sized businesses, strengthen business networks and encourage peer-to-peer support on issues such as exporting and succession planning.	Progress made	Leeds City Region and East Anglia LEPs will hold networking and capacity building events in April 2012 and a number of other Local Enterprise Partnerships are finalising project plans.
193.	The Government, working with business, will launch a national campaign to showcase mid-sized business and publicise the full range of Government services available.	Progress made	The campaign has been launched and activities took place at a Manufacturing Summit in February 2012, Science and Engineering Week (March 2012) and will continue at the Olympics, London Fashion Week and in partnership with the <i>Daily Telegraph's</i> Festival of Business in September 2012.

## 18. Professional and business services

	Measure	Progress	Notes
194.	The Government will shortly publish guidance to help commercial organisations understand the Bribery Act 2010 better.	Complete	<a href="#">Guidance</a> was published in March 2011.
195.	The Government wants to abolish over two dozen regulatory offences under Money Laundering Regulations and exempt businesses with very low turnovers, which will reduce compliance burdens.	Progress made	The Government is committed to ensuring the financial system is a hostile environment for illicit finance while minimising the burden on legitimate businesses. The outcome of its consultation on the changes will be announced shortly.
196.	The UK Border Agency (UKBA) will launch services for trusted business visa service users, entrepreneurs and high net worth investors, move to online visa processing, and publish application guidance in more local languages.	Progress made	The new Prospective Entrepreneur Visa was launched in 2011 to enable business start-ups and funding to be arranged before obtaining an Entrepreneur visa. Minimum thresholds on Entrepreneur Visas have been reduced from £200,000 to £50,000 from specified sources. Online visa applications were introduced in December 2011, and the Government aims to ensure that 90 per cent of visa applications will be made online by the end of 2012. Tourist and business <a href="#">visa guidance</a> is now available in Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Russian, Turkish and Thai.
197.	The Ministry of Justice and UKTI will work with the sector to promote the UK's world leading business arbitration and commercial law services.	Progress made	The Ministry of Justice published a Legal Services Action plan in May 2011, and is working with UKTI and industry to champion the UK as a global centre of legal excellence. The outcome of the Review will be published shortly. The Rolls Building opened in London in October 2011 providing a world-class centre for legal services for Dispute Resolution.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
198.	The Government will pursue improved access to new markets outside the EU.	Progress made	Last year, UK legal experts accompanied the Prime Minister's visit to Moscow, and Ministerial visits to India and Saudi Arabia. This year, the Government will take forward further measures to promote UK excellence in these sectors, help UK firms succeed abroad and bring new investment into the UK.
199.	The Government will press the European Commission and other EU member states to implement the Services Directive in full.	Complete	The Services Directive has been fully implemented, and the Government is working to improve best practice and consistency between Member States, to enable business to maximise opportunities
200.	The Government wants to encourage talented students into the professions regardless of their background. A working group of the UK Commission for Employment and Skills will look at whether a new accountancy apprenticeship programme would be effective, and propose other measures to improve access to the professions.	Progress made	<a href="#">'Building Future Skills in Accountancy'</a> was published in November 2011. The Higher Apprenticeship Fund is supporting Level 4 Higher Apprenticeships with 270 opportunities in insurance, banking and stockbroking (worth over £346,000), and a Higher Apprenticeship programme in professional services, focusing on tax, audit and consultancy management (worth over £1.5 million).
201.	The Professional and Business Services Group, chaired by Sir Michael Snyder, will launch a Log of Professional Readiness by June to promote increased employability skills among graduates.	Complete	The Log was completed in June 2011 and provides an official base for graduates and school pupils to record positions of responsibility and leadership. It will complement school and university qualifications.
202.	Initiatives being developed by a Government / business cyber security partnership will make the UK a more resilient place to do business.	Progress made	The <a href="#">cross-Whitehall Cyber Security strategy</a> launched in November 2011. To support business, the Government has developed strategic relationships with cyber security suppliers to understand their strengths and the market potential.
203.	The Government will cut down the administrative burdens of complying with business regulation.	Progress made	As part of the Employment Law Review and Red Tape Challenge, the Government announced a series of measures on 23 November 2011 to cut down the administrative burdens of complying with business regulation. Regulations in the Business Services sector will be reviewed in the Red Tape Challenge during 2012.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
204.	The Financial Reporting Council will work closely with the professions, businesses and market participants to reinforce the principle that independent regulation and enforcement should focus on risk and outcomes rather than process.	Progress made	A public consultation on Financial Reporting Council reform closed in January 2012 and the Government will this month.

## 19. Retail

	Measure	Progress	Notes
205.	The Government will extend the current small business rate relief holiday for one year from 1 October 2011.	Complete	The Government will extend the current Small Business Rate Relief holiday for a further six months from 1 October 2012 (to end 31 March 2013). Overall over half-a-million businesses will see a reduction in their business rate bill, and 330,000 businesses will get 100 per cent relief on their bill.
206.	The Government will invite the independent Low Pay Commission (LPC) in its next report to consider and implement the best way to give business clarity on future levels of the National Minimum Wage, including consideration of two-year recommendations.	Complete	The Government agrees with the LPC's recommendation that two-year recommendations would constrain it to a position based on out-of-date information that would outweigh any benefit in increased clarity. In March 2012 the Government announced the rates which will apply from October 2012.
207.	The Government will introduce a package of measures to support thriving town centres and build on the Town Centre First policy.	Progress made	The Mary Portas review made 28 recommendations. The Government will respond to all the recommendations shortly. In February 2012, the Government announced a competition for up to twelve towns to receive funding to pilot recommendations from the report.
208.	The Government will expand the Primary Authority model to apply consistent enforcement standards across a wider range of regulations and businesses.	Progress made	On track. The eligibility of the Primary Authority Scheme will be opened and the inspection plan element strengthened.
209.	The Government will amend regulations affecting retailers to make them more outcome-focused, and use a checklist approach to assist SMEs in complying with these regulations that affect the retail sector.	Progress made	A pilot is running on the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulation which will report in April 2012. From April 2012, subject to parliamentary approval, RIDDOR's injury reporting threshold will be extended to over seven days incapacitation.
210.	The Government will implement a regulatory reform package to simplify complex and inconsistent age-restricted sales regulations and licences for businesses.	Progress made	In December 2011, the Local Better Regulation Office <a href="#">published</a> an agreed set of shared responsibilities and reasonable expectations for young people, parents, businesses, employees and regulators.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
211.	The Government will work with retailers to ensure the skills system is delivering what the sector needs, including by providing pre-employment retail skills training to the unemployed and encouraging greater take-up of retail apprenticeships.	Progress made	Following a pilot with several major retailers, new approaches on apprenticeships were announced in November 2011. In addition, retail work academies offering pre-employment training are now being rolled out through several major retailers. In April 2012, the National Apprenticeship Service and Skillsmart Retail will launch a Retail Apprenticeship Training Agency to support and increase the use of apprenticeships by retail SMEs.
212.	The Government will work to remove regulatory barriers to increased cross-border online retail.	Progress made	In January 2012 the European Commission adopted a Communication on building trust in the Digital Single Market. The Government is working with the European Commission on a European Retail Action Plan, to address barriers to both traditional and online cross-border retail. The European Retail Action Plan is due to be published by December 2012.



## 20. Rural economy

	Measure	Progress	Notes
213.	The Government will support rural broadband by opening the £20 million Rural Community Broadband Fund; working closely with North Yorkshire County Council, one of the pilot areas for superfast broadband rollout; and considering new approaches to make the roadside telecommunications network available.	Progress made	The <a href="#">Fund</a> launched in November 2011 and received 39 expressions of interest in the first round. A second round will open in May 2012. The three-year Go-ON North Yorkshire <a href="#">demand stimulation pilot</a> was launched in February 2012 aiming to get more people online and increase the use of the internet for those already connected. The Highways Agency is taking forward with its network access supplier to encourage it to adopt a more proactive approach to developing new third party opportunities.
214.	The Government will provide approximately £15 million to fund up to six pilot Rural Growth Networks.	Progress made	Five Rural Growth Network pilots will be established in 2012/13 in Cumbria, Devon and Somerset, Durham and Northumberland, Warwickshire, and Swindon and Wiltshire. These will test mechanisms by which Local Enterprise Partnerships and local authorities can support sustainable economic growth in rural areas.
215.	The Government accepts a number of recommendations of the Farming Task Force and will consult on exempting organic farmers from regulations controlling the use of nitrate-based fertilisers; and recognise third-party certification schemes such as the Red Tractor in its inspection regime	Progress made	The Government expects to report on its consultation on revising nitrates regulations in May 2012. The Government published its <a href="#">response</a> to the Task Force recommendations in February 2012, including introducing earned recognition into inspection regimes and cross-compliance inspections by 2013.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
216.	The Government will invest £100 million from the Rural Development Programme for England to help small businesses improve their skills, facilities and competitiveness.	Progress made	The £60 million <a href="#">Rural Economy Grant</a> was launched in February 2012, to enable transformational business growth in rural areas, including rural tourism. The recently launched <a href="#">Farming and Forestry Improvement Scheme</a> is processing over 1,000 applications, and a second round is expected to open in late April. The Government expects the £20 million work-based training for rural businesses to be available from autumn 2012. The £20 million Rural Community Broadband Fund is also funded through this programme.
217.	The Government will commit £25 million to promote rural tourism, including a new £10 million fund within the Rural Development Programme for England to develop rural tourism destinations.	Progress made	The Government's £10 million <a href="#">rural tourism fund</a> is open for applications. Other elements of the package where progress has already been made include VisitEngland's new <a href="#">Holidays at Home are GREAT campaign</a> , which is promoting tourism in rural England; and the <a href="#">Paths for Communities</a> scheme that Natural England will open in April 2012.
218.	The Government will launch a food and drink export action plan in January 2012. In addition a summit will be held in March 2012 to boost innovation in small agri-food businesses.	Complete	The Government published an <a href="#">action plan</a> and held an Innovation Summit to raise awareness of the potential in the food and drink sector from innovation and to highlight the support available to businesses. Two innovation competitions have been <a href="#">launched</a> and regional events will be held to engage smaller businesses in the competition. The winners are expected to be announced in summer 2012.
219.	The Government will launch a £15 million Rural Community Renewable Energy Fund to help communities meet the upfront cost of developing renewable projects.	Progress made	Good progress is being made on scoping the fund, its design and preparations to tender for programme management.
220.	The Forestry Commission England, working with private companies, will offer 45 training opportunities for new forestry apprentices.	Progress made	The Forestry Commission England along with forestry colleges is currently supporting two recruitment events to identify apprentices and explain the Work-Based Diploma (the academic portion of the apprenticeship).

## 21. Space sector

	Measure	Progress	Notes
221.	The Government will reform the Outer Space Act 1986 by introducing an upper limit on liability for UK operators.	Progress made	The Government announced its intention to reduce minimum third-party insurance cover to €60 million as a licence condition in July 2011. The UK Space Agency will shortly consult on capping operator liability under the Outer Space Act. The Government plans to amend the Act by end 2012.
222.	The Government will work with the international regulatory authorities to define regulations for novel space vehicles that offer low cost access to space.	Progress made	The UK Space Agency is investigating the regulatory issues for space planes in Europe and the UK and the options to enable space planes to operate in the UK within a European regulatory environment provided by the European Aviation Safety Agency.
223.	The Government will provide UK industry with clearer guidance on the regulation of security aspects in export deals.	Complete	<a href="#">Guidelines to clarify space industry exports</a> have been published.
224.	The Government will work with Ofcom to ensure that British industry has full and fair access to the limited supply of satellite orbit slots.	Progress made	The <a href="#">World Radio Conference 2012</a> introduced measures to improve radio spectrum use and clarified rules, including that 90 days of continuous operation in a geo-stationary orbit is required to demonstrate that a slot has been “brought into use”. The measure will come into force in January 2013, and will not be retrospective.
225.	The Government announces £10 million of funding to accelerate the development of the International Space Innovation Centre.	Progress made	<a href="#">28 ‘fast track’ R&amp;D projects</a> will be funded by the UK Space Agency and Technology Strategy Board to research and demonstrate commercial products and services in the UK using space technology or space-derived data. The UK Space Agency also announced <a href="#">‘pathfinder’ early-stage research projects</a> in February 2012 and expects to award four further flagship R&D projects in April 2012. A significant number of these projects will be undertaken at, or directly benefit, the International Space Innovation Centre.

## 22. Tourism

	Measure	Progress	Notes
226.	The Government is co-funding with the private sector a £100 million campaign aiming to attract visitors to the UK in the years following 2012.	Progress made	VisitBritain's <a href="#">GREAT</a> international marketing campaign will run until March 2013, promoting the UK internationally as a place to study, work, invest and do business. The <a href="#">Special offer for a special year</a> domestic tourism initiative also launched in March 2012.
227.	The Government is reducing regulation for businesses in the tourism industry by creating a task force of senior industry figures from across the UK, to identify opportunities to cut red tape.	Progress made	In January 2012, the Tourism Regulation Task Force made 80 recommendations to amend or cull regulations. Sixty regulations in hospitality, food and drink are being scrapped or revised following work through the <a href="#">Red Tape Challenge</a> .
228.	The Government is making it easier for tourists to visit the UK. To do this the UK Border Agency (UKBA) will increase the number of visa biometric ID centres around the world, move to online visa processing, and publish application guidance in more languages.	Progress made	Visa application guidance was published by the UK Border Agency in six languages in April 2011. A new online visa application was introduced from December 2011.
229.	The Government is working with People 1st, the National Skills Academy for Hospitality, and the industry, to increase the number of apprenticeships and other courses teaching hospitality skills so that consistently higher standards are delivered.	Progress made	The Government has made available £1.7 million funding to People 1st to broker 500 new apprenticeships places and to help 15,000 unemployed people find work. Following consultation with the industry, VisitEngland will publish the Strategic Framework Action Plans on Skills in March 2012.
230.	The Government is modifying Tourist Boards to become smaller, highly focused, industry-led partnerships between tourism firms and government.	Progress made	VisitEngland is working with local tourism bodies and businesses to develop stronger private sector leadership and better links with Local Enterprise Partnerships.
231.	The Government is helping the industry prepare for changes in technology, so tourism information can be provided through smartphone apps, as well as through traditional leaflets and websites.	Progress made	VisitEngland, working with industry, launched a <a href="#">plan</a> for modernising visitor information in June 2011, including the <a href="#">Swipe, Tap and Enjoy England</a> smartphone app.

	Measure	Progress	Notes
232.	The Government is giving the industry and consumers responsibility for hotel 'star rating' quality schemes.	Progress made	VisitEngland's response to the consultation on quality within the industry is due shortly. VisitEngland has also awarded an industry-led licence scheme to undertake assessments and award star ratings, starting April 2012.
233.	The Government is helping create tourist destinations that match London and maximise the potential of other parts of Britain.	Progress made	The <a href="#">GREAT</a> campaign and ' <a href="#">Special offer for a special year</a> ' marketing initiative are promoting tourism in all parts of the Britain.
234.	The Government is consulting on whether to move the first bank holiday in May.	Progress made	The Government conducted a pre-consultation exercise in May and June 2011. Further decisions will be made in due course.
235.	The Government is delivering its pledge to maintain and reform Furnished Holiday Lettings reliefs.	Complete	Introduced in the Finance Act 2011.