

# THE KING'S SPEECH 2026

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## AN INTRODUCTION FROM THE PRIME MINISTER

Our country stands at a pivotal moment. The world today is more volatile and dangerous than at any point in our lifetimes. A war on two fronts – in the Middle East and in Ukraine – threatens our living standards. And this is not a new feeling for the British people. For two decades our country has been buffeted by crisis after crisis: the 2008 financial crash, the Tory austerity that followed it, Brexit, Covid and the Ukraine War. The response in each case was always a desperate attempt to get back to a status quo. Even though that same status quo had repeatedly made working people pay the price.

This time must be different. And this King's Speech shows it *will* be different with a plan to make this country stronger and fairer. Stronger, because it gives us the power to act and stops us being blown off course by events far beyond our borders. Fairer, because it is essential to unite the country and unlock our full potential.

Of course, we build on the strong legislative achievements in the last session of Parliament: the Employment Rights Act, the Great British Energy Act, the Renters' Rights Act and more. And it will continue our work to stabilise the economy and support people with the cost of living. The fundamentals of our economy remain sound and this will help us emerge from the Iran conflict stronger and fairer.

But in the light of that conflict, we now need to move with greater urgency. And so in this King's Speech, we will strengthen our economic security, energy security, our defence and national security. We will unblock the barriers to growth and prepare our country for a world where external shocks like this are ever more frequent. And we will fight for every child to have the chance to go as far as their talent and effort will take them.

The immediate challenge is to keep removing barriers to growth. That means developing an industrial strategy to create more highly paid jobs, with an apprenticeships plan to match. It means encouraging a new era of British nuclear energy. And it means setting a new direction for Britain at the next EU summit: putting Britain at the heart of Europe.

Landmark public service reforms in the NHS, police and special education needs will also strengthen our country. We will bring forward a public duty of candour with a Hillsborough Law. We will take control of our energy security with an Energy Independence Bill, boosting clean British energy across Britain. We will protect sovereign British industries, such as British steel, making them strong for the future. We will reform the leasehold system to ensure that this unfair feudal system, which has trapped millions of homeowners, is brought to an end. And through our

Immigration and Asylum Bill we will deliver a firm but fair immigration system that restores control and earns public trust.

Our defence and national security relies on rebuilding European alliances as well as strengthening our defence and armed forces. We will end defence 'austerity' with the biggest sustained increase in investment since the end of the Cold War. We will stand strong with NATO, the most successful defence alliance in history and push forward with our Defence Investment Plan. But we also know that our enemies seek to exploit division in our communities. That is why we will take on extremism wherever it appears, including where it is sponsored by foreign powers that are hostile to the UK, such as Iran.

At moments like these, we face a choice. We can choose to sink into the politics of grievance and division. Or we can choose to see it as an opportunity to deliver on the change we promised the British people. The King's Speech sets our course. And we choose to build a stronger, fairer Britain.

## HIS MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH TO BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

MY LORDS AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

An increasingly dangerous and volatile world threatens the United Kingdom, with the conflict in the Middle East only the most recent example. Every element of the nation's energy, defence and economic security will be tested.

My Government will respond to this world with strength and aim to create a country that is fair for all. My Ministers will take decisions that protect the energy, defence and economic security of the United Kingdom for the long-term. They will defend the British values of decency, tolerance and respect for difference under our common flag, and they will harness the potential of the pride felt across this country for its communities. My Government will take urgent action to tackle antisemitism and ensure all communities feel safe.

My Government believes that the United Kingdom's economic security depends on raising living standards in every part of the United Kingdom. My Ministers will support measures that maintain stability and control the cost of living. They will use public investment to shape markets and attract further private investment. They will deploy the power of an active State in partnership with business and enable reforms that support higher growth and a fair deal for working people.

My Government believes that improved trading relations are vital for the United Kingdom's economic security, for significantly raising economic growth, and for lowering prices for working people. My Ministers will introduce legislation to take advantage of new trading opportunities, including a Bill to strengthen ties with the European Union [**European Partnership Bill**]. My Government will also support the economic security of British businesses. Legislation will be introduced to tackle late payments [**Small Business Protections (Late Payments) Bill**] and to reduce the burden of unnecessary regulation through innovation [**Regulating for Growth Bill**].

The United Kingdom's economic security depends upon world class infrastructure. Legislation will be introduced to unlock the benefits of airport expansion [**Civil Aviation Bill**]; enable roads to be built at pace including the Lower Thames Crossing [**Highways (Financing) Bill**]; and deliver a fair deal for the North of England through Northern Powerhouse Rail [**Northern Powerhouse Rail Bill**]. My Ministers will continue to take all action necessary to safeguard the domestic production of steel [**Steel Industry (Nationalisation) Bill**].

My Government will also improve the United Kingdom's security by continuing to invest in the renewal of public services. My Ministers will push forward with significant reforms to the police [**Police Reform Bill**], the National Health Service [**NHS Modernisation Bill**], and to the criminal justice system [**Courts Modernisation Bill**] to help them deliver services the British people expect. Legislation will be introduced to increase confidence in the security of the immigration and asylum systems [**Immigration and Asylum Bill**]. My Government will improve critical infrastructure with legislation to clean-up the water industry [**Clean Water Bill**] and establish Great British Railways [**Railways and Passenger Benefits Bill**].

My Government believes that the United Kingdom should be a country fair for all and a place where every child is included in the nation's highest aspirations. My Ministers believe that every child deserves the chance to succeed to the best of his or her ability and not be held back due to poverty, special educational needs, or a lack of respect for vocational education. My Ministers will continue to invest in apprenticeships and measures that tackle youth unemployment. They will respond to the Milburn Review and the Timms Review and continue to reform the welfare system to support both young and disabled people to flourish in work as the basis for long-term economic security. A Bill will be brought forward to raise standards in schools and introduce generational reforms of the special educational needs system [**Education for All Bill**]. My Ministers will also proceed with the introduction of Digital ID that will modernise how citizens interact with public services [**Digital Access to Services Bill**].

Alongside strong public services and a strong economy, the highest standards of trust in public office are essential for the social contract and the United Kingdom's collective security. My Government will introduce the Hillsborough Law to bring forward a duty of candour for public servants [**Public Office (Accountability) Bill**]. My Ministers will also introduce legislation to enable peerages to be removed [**Removal of Peerages Bill**]. My Government will bring forward proposals that strengthen the delivery, accountability, innovation and productivity of the Civil Service. These proposals will also seek to safeguard its impartiality and core values, to enhance trust and confidence in the institutions of government.

My Government will bring forward a Bill to speed up remediation for people living in homes with unsafe cladding [**Remediation Bill**] and a draft Bill to ban abusive conversion practices [**Draft Conversion Practices Bill**].

In this volatile world, my Government will continue to pursue foreign policy based on a calm assessment of the national interest. It will continue its unflinching support for the brave people of Ukraine, who fight on the frontline of freedom. My Ministers will seek to improve relations with European partners as a vital step in strengthening European security. It will continue to promote long term peace in the Middle East and the Two-State solution in Israel and Palestine.

My Government will also uphold the United Kingdom's unbreakable commitment to NATO and our NATO allies, including through a sustained increase in defence spending.

My Government will seek to reinforce the long-term energy, defence and economic security of the United Kingdom as an essential component of strength on the world stage. This will include housing, which can be a source of insecurity for many people. My Ministers will bring forward legislation to increase long-term investment in social housing [**Social Housing Renewal Bill**] and to reform the leasehold system, including the capping of ground rents [**Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Bill**].

My Government will introduce legislation to tackle the growing threat from foreign state entities and their proxies [**Tackling State Threats Bill**]. They will respond to the horrific attack in Southport with measures to protect the British people from extreme violence, and honour the victims, the injured and their families [**National Security Bill**]. My Ministers will also introduce legislation to improve the country's defences against cyber-security threats [**Cyber Security and Resilience Bill**].

My Government will support our gallant Armed Forces and their families who make considerable personal sacrifices for the collective security and freedom of everyone in the United Kingdom. My Ministers will recognise this service with an Armed Forces Bill that improves the service justice system and establishes the Armed Forces covenant in statute [**Armed Forces Bill**].

My Ministers believe that energy independence must be a long-term goal of national security and that the nation's energy security requires long-term investment and reform, as demonstrated by recent events in the Middle East. Increased production of clean British energy will help to ensure that enemies of the United Kingdom cannot attack the economic security of the British people. My Ministers will therefore introduce an Energy Independence Bill to scale-up homegrown renewable energy and protect living standards for the long-term [**Energy Independence Bill**].

My Ministers will also take forward recommendations of the Nuclear Regulatory Review and encourage a new era of British nuclear energy generation [**Nuclear Regulation Bill**].

My Government will remain a leading advocate for tackling climate change and achieving a world free from poverty. The United Kingdom will also take action to reduce humanitarian need and conflict around the world.

My Ministers will champion the rights of women and girls to live in a world free from violence. This will include promoting women's full economic and political participation within their societies, with agency over the decisions that impact their lives.

Next year, the United Kingdom will take on the G20 Presidency and host the G20 Summit to drive global growth and reinforce global stability, which is essential for the prosperity of working people across the country.

My Government is committed to the strength and integrity of the Union of the United Kingdom and will continue to work closely with the devolved governments to deliver for citizens across the whole of the nation.

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Estimates for the public services will be laid before you.

MY LORDS AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Other measures will be laid before you.

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

## STRENGTHENING OUR ECONOMIC SECURITY

### Steel Industry (Nationalisation) Bill

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- The UK steel industry is key to this country's economic growth. It supports around 37,000 direct jobs and over 60,000 in supply chains. But challenges of global overcapacity compounded by high operating costs have made it harder for UK-based steel companies to compete.
  - Safeguarding the long-term future of Britain's steel capability and capacity is in our national interest. That requires us to take this urgent and extraordinary action to introduce the Steel Industry (Nationalisation) Bill now. This legislation provides a route for the Government to nationalise steel companies or their operations, such as British Steel, provided the public interest test in the legislation is met.
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#### What does the Bill do?

- The Government has set out a Steel Strategy - a long-term plan to fight to revitalise the UK steel sector, restore domestic production to sustainable levels and secure the industry's role in supporting critical sectors such as national infrastructure, defence, clean energy and supporting the economy of the UK.
- The Government intervened in April 2025 by introducing the Steel Industry (Special Measures) Act 2025 to avoid a sudden and disorderly halt of steel making at British Steel Ltd. (BSL), following actions by BSL's owner which put steelmaking at the company in serious jeopardy. This would have been unacceptable given the importance of this plant for the UK economy and critical national infrastructure.
- The Government wants to see BSL play a major role in a revitalised steel sector, but this will not be possible under its current ownership. Bringing BSL under national ownership would allow the Government to explore what future opportunities there may be for BSL, including a transition to decarbonised steelmaking and to provide stability for BSL's workers, suppliers and customers.
- The Government has engaged in negotiations with the current owner of BSL on a commercial sale, but it has not been possible to agree acceptable terms which would represent a responsible use of public money. As a result, the

Government believes it is in the public interest to bring forward primary legislation which will give the Government the powers to nationalise BSL. This is a measure of last resort. Any nationalisation of BSL would be subject to the public interest test being met before using the powers under the Bill.

- The Bill will:

**Safeguard the future of the UK steel industry by providing the Secretary of State powers to transfer ownership of steel undertakings (either by a share or property transfer) to public ownership.**

- The Government has been clear in its objective to revitalise the UK steel sector, restore domestic production to sustainable levels and secure the industry's role in supporting critical sectors and supporting the economy of the UK.
- The powers in the Bill will allow the Government to do this by taking steel undertakings into public ownership where it is in the public interest to do so.

**Establish a public interest test that must be met for the Government to exercise transfer powers in respect of a steel undertaking.**

- An indicative list of public interest factors is provided in the Bill which includes national security, support for the economy and critical national infrastructure.
- This Government is committed to ensuring that the UK remains an attractive place to invest and do business, and we would not use these powers lightly.
- The public interest test provides a key safeguard and framework for the use of the powers by the Government.

**Introduce compensation provisions for steel undertakings in respect of which SoS's transfer powers have been used.**

- Where the Government does exercise the transfer powers in the Bill, regulations would follow to set out a compensation scheme.
- This would allow those affected to obtain independently assessed compensation.
- The valuer will look at circumstances and determine what compensation, if any, is required.

## Territorial extent and application

- The Bill will extend and apply to the whole of the UK.

## Key facts

- **Global competition, high costs and underinvestment in the steel sector have led to plant closures and job losses** – the UK steel industry supports 37,000 direct jobs and a further 60,000 in the supply chain, however employment in the industry was at 323,000 in 1971, a decline of nearly 90 per cent.
- **Steel output has fallen sharply in recent years.** UK production has dropped below 4 million tonnes in 2024 – the lowest in decades.
- **The UK now produces less than 0.3 per cent of global steel.** It is a net importer, with imports covering about 60 per cent of demand.
- **The steel sector underpins other critical sectors such as construction, defence, and clean energy** – the UK steel industry contributed £1.7 billion to the economy in 2024.
- **Excess steel from subsidies produced in world markets drives down prices and makes it harder for UK firms to compete and invest.**
- **The sector is transitioning to greener production.** The Government has committed up to £2.5 billion to support modernisation and decarbonisation.
- **Director General of UK Steel, Gareth Stace**, said *“We strongly welcome the prime minister’s announcement to legislate for the nationalisation of British Steel. This provides vital certainty for the workforce, the company’s customers and the wider supply chain at a critical moment. Steel is a foundation industry and a recognised strategic national asset. Maintaining domestic production capability for British Steel’s products is essential not only for economic growth but also for our national security and resilience.”*

## Northern Powerhouse Rail Bill

*“Legislation will be introduced to...deliver a fair deal for the North of England through Northern Powerhouse Rail”*

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- The Bill (formally titled the High Speed Rail (Crewe - Manchester) Bill) is foundational to Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR), unlocking the delivery of rail capacity into Manchester Piccadilly via Manchester Airport so that people can benefit from better transport links across the region.
  - NPR will deliver faster, more reliable and more frequent services between the North of England’s key cities. This enhanced transport network will lead to more housing, improve access to jobs, make it easier for people to travel between towns and cities across the North and provide opportunities for businesses to expand.
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### What does the Bill do?

- **The Government is investing up to £45 billion (2025 prices)** to deliver Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) turn-up-and-go railway services between Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, Bradford, Sheffield and York, with regular services onward to Newcastle via Darlington and Durham, Hull, and Chester for North Wales connections.
- **This will transform intercity rail in the North, make travel more convenient for people across the region and drive economic growth.** NPR will also support thousands of new homes and commercial developments in places like Leeds South Bank, Bradford’s Southern Gateway, York Central, Manchester city centre and around Manchester Airport.
- NPR will be delivered in three phases:
  - **The first phase will include upgrades to lines east of the Pennines for delivery in the 2030s**, focusing on electrification and upgrades in the Leeds-Bradford, Leeds-Sheffield and Leeds-York corridors, including the stations.
  - **In the second phase, the Government will take forward a new route between Liverpool and Manchester via Warrington and Manchester Airport.** The adapted High Speed Rail (Crewe - Manchester) Bill will provide the necessary powers to construct and

operate the connection into Manchester Piccadilly via Manchester Airport.

- **In the third phase, the Government will deliver better cross-Pennine links** over and above the Transpennine Route Upgrade already underway.
- The Bill will outline the proposed route from Manchester to Millington, via Manchester Airport, and will provide the necessary powers to take forward delivery when the design has been completed. By adapting the High Speed Rail (Crewe to Manchester) Bill, the Government is making use of the significant progress already made.

### Territorial extent and application

- The Bill will extend to the whole of the UK but most of the provisions will apply in England only.

### Key facts

- **In 2023, the productivity of northern England was 10 per cent lower than the UK average and 25 per cent lower than London and the South East.** This pattern is particularly apparent in the largest northern cities and their surrounding regions.
- **The largest northern Mayoral Strategic Authorities have recently seen their productivity grow 2.2 per cent per year,** which is higher than the UK average productivity growth rate of 0.7 per cent. However, despite this growth, average productivity in these areas is still 11 per cent lower than the UK average.
- **Growing the productivity of the five most populous northern Mayoral Strategic Authority areas to the national average could add around £40 billion per year in Gross Value Added,** alongside around £15 billion per year in fiscal revenues.
- **Northern city centres are far less accessible within reasonable commuting times compared to international comparators,** and have lower residential population densities, meaning there is a smaller pool of workers for firms to access and fewer job opportunities available to workers. Only 38 per cent of residents can access the city centre of Leeds within 30 minutes by public transport compared to 87 per cent in Marseille, a similar sized city.

- **Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham**, said *“Finally, we have a Government with an ambitious vision for the North, firm commitment to Northern Powerhouse Rail and an openness to an underground station in Manchester city centre. A modernised Manchester Piccadilly could become the King’s Cross of the North, acting as a catalyst for major growth in our city region and beyond. Over the past decade, we have become the UK’s fastest growing city region, but underinvestment in rail infrastructure has long acted as a brake on further growth. Today marks a significant step forward for Greater Manchester.”*
- **The Chief Executive Officer of Manchester Airport Group, Ken O’Toole**, said that: *“By placing Manchester Airport at the heart of a full Northern Powerhouse Rail Network, people and businesses across the region will have the direct access they deserve to the world. That will help high-value industries to thrive and attract investors and visitors to all parts of the North - maximising the region’s contribution to national growth.”*
- **The Chief Executive of the Northern Powerhouse Partnership, Henri Murison**, said *“Northern Powerhouse Rail will enable a single labour market more like that of London and the South East so a young person in Bradford could aspire to work in Sheffield or Manchester, or a business there attract talent from further afield than they can today. The potential of the North will be unlocked, giving us better paid jobs and new homes. The need for improved global connectivity across the North is huge, and this will be achieved by connecting Manchester Airport directly to Liverpool and across to cities like Leeds.”*

## European Partnership Bill

*“My Ministers will introduce legislation to take advantage of new trading opportunities, including a Bill to strengthen ties with the European Union.”*

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- UK citizens back a closer relationship with the European Union (EU) where it benefits the national interest. Businesses across the UK tell us they are being held back by red tape when trading with Europe.
  - The European Partnership Bill will help deliver the manifesto commitment to improve the UK’s trade and investment relationship with the EU by facilitating the implementation of new deals agreed with the EU now and in the future. This includes deals on electricity, emissions trading, and food and drink. Through tearing down unnecessary barriers to trade we will drive economic prosperity, including growth and jobs, and ease cost pressures for UK families. The Bill will support trade with both the EU, the UK’s largest trading partner, and within the UK Internal Market.
  - For example, the food and drink deal alone could add up to £5.1 billion a year to the economy (and up to £9 billion when combined with the emissions trading agreement), increase agricultural exports to the EU by 16 per cent and cut queue times for lorries at the border. The agreement will also significantly simplify the movement of food and plants between Great Britain and Northern Ireland, while retaining Northern Ireland’s access to the EU’s single market.
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### What does the Bill do?

- Following the first UK-EU summit in May 2025, the UK-EU Common Understanding set the stage for new agreements on food and drink, emissions trading, and electricity. These agreements will reduce barriers to trade, cut costs for businesses, and drive growth and investment. Since the Summit, the UK and EU have been negotiating the detailed legal texts on the new agreements, including UK decision shaping rights in areas where we will be aligning.
- The Bill will provide a framework of powers to ensure agreements with the EU can be implemented now and in the future, including:
  - **Powers to fulfil treaty obligations in the agreements with the EU where it serves the national interest.** This will enable the domestic implementation of relevant commitments so that the benefits of the

agreements can be unlocked. These powers will mean that Parliament has its say before EU law is applied in the UK.

- **A power to extend the application of the Bill to new treaties with the EU in the future.** As highlighted by the Prime Minister, the Minister for European Union Relations, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Government believes further alignment could support even more prosperity. The Bill will set out how these powers can be used for future treaties and ensure there is Parliamentary approval for any new treaties before those powers can be used.

### Territorial extent and application

- The Bill will extend and apply to the whole of the UK.

### Key facts

- **The EU is the UK's largest trading market.** In 2024, 46 per cent of the UK's total trade was with the EU, valued at £830 billion and almost 95,000 UK businesses exported goods to the EU while around 158,000 businesses imported goods. Nine of the UK's top 20 export destinations for goods and services are EU Member States, and 10 of the UK's top 20 import sources are EU Member States.
- **There is a growing body of evidence showing that the trading arrangements under the Trade and Cooperation Agreement have weakened the UK's trade and economic performance.** 2020 estimates predicted a four per cent reduction in the productivity of the UK economy in the long run. More recent independent studies indicate the impact on Gross Domestic Product could be as much as eight per cent.
- **The emissions trading agreement, which will link the UK and EU emission trading schemes, will establish a larger and more stable carbon market.** This will support industry confidence to invest in new technologies and jobs, and to decarbonise more quickly and efficiently. It will also create the conditions for mutual exemptions from respective Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanisms (CBAM), saving £7 billion of UK exports from being exposed to the EU CBAM.
- **The food and drink deal (the Sanitary and Phytosanitary agreement) will fulfil the manifesto commitment to deliver a veterinary agreement with the EU.** It will remove significant administrative costs for businesses, including Export Health Certificates costing up to £200 for agri-food goods, Phytosanitary Certificates costing approximately £25, and inspection fees which can cost hundreds of pounds. It will also remove a broad and

wide-ranging set of requirements for goods and plants moving from Great Britain to Northern Ireland, because the same regulations will be followed across the UK.

- **Combined, the food and drink deal and emissions trading agreement could deliver up to £9 billion to the UK economy a year over the longer term**, as well as easing pressure on consumer food price inflation.
- Negotiating an **electricity agreement** with the EU will make electricity trade with European partners more efficient, reduce average electricity prices, increase exports, strengthen energy security, drive investment in the North Sea, and help to achieve the Government's aim of Clean Power by 2030.
- **The Chief Executive Officer of Morrisons, Rami Baitiéh**, said *“Sweeping away trade barriers with the EU will remove cost, complexity and delay in food imports from the continent. This promises to ease a source of pressure on food prices and is therefore good news for shoppers. As a fresh food manufacturer we also welcome the prospect of key export markets for our excellent meat and fish becoming more accessible.”*
- **The Chief Executive Officer of the Association for Financial Markets in Europe (AFME), Adam Farkas**, said *“AFME welcomes the UK Chancellor's focus on growth and her pragmatic approach to the EU–UK relationship [...] A stronger framework for deeper EU–UK financial services cooperation is essential to support growth, enhance regulatory certainty and unlock investment across Europe.”*
- **The Head of Trade Policy at the British Chambers of Commerce, William Bain**, said *“A permanent deal with the EU can't come soon enough for UK firms. In the talks ahead ministers must deliver a deal that truly unburdens business and cuts costs. Consumers will then reap the benefits in their shopping baskets. Making trade with the EU quicker, cheaper and simpler is crucial to boosting economic growth in the years ahead.”*

## Small Business Protections (Late Payments) Bill

*“Legislation will be introduced to tackle late payments”*

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- The scourge of late payments costs the UK economy £11 billion each year and leads to the closure of 38 UK businesses every day. Delivering on a key manifesto commitment, this Bill will be the most significant legislation to tackle late payments in over 25 years and will give the UK the strongest legal framework on late payments in the G7.
  - These measures are at the centre of the Government’s ambition to make the UK the best place in world to start, run, and grow a business – a place where businesses and the millions of self-employed people are paid on time for the goods and services they deliver, a place where money flows quickly through supply chains, and a place where small companies and the self-employed spend their time and resources running their businesses effectively instead of chasing unpaid invoices.
  - The vast majority of large companies already do the right thing by their suppliers, and these reforms are deliberately targeted at firms that persistently engage in poor payment practices. This will help deliver a more productive economy and support small businesses to survive, thrive and grow.
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### What does the Bill do?

- There are three main ways that businesses delay payments to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), including: late payments after the agreed payment date; long payment terms, where businesses are pushed to accept long payment agreements; and frivolous disputes, where purchasers raise disputes without foundation in order to delay payment. This Bill tackles these late payments between businesses and improves the flow of cash through supply chains, facilitating a more productive economy.
- The Bill will:
  - **Impose maximum payment terms of 60 days**, with strictly limited exemptions (when both parties are large companies, when the purchaser is the smaller party, or when the goods or services are being imported or exported).

- **Enforce mandatory interest for late payments** at eight per cent above the Bank of England base rate.
  - **Introduce a time limit for raising invoice disputes**, before payment is due.
  - **Require boards or audit committees of persistently late-paying large companies to publish commentary on poor payment performance** and intended actions to address it.
  - **Give the Small Business Commissioner new powers to:** investigate businesses suspected of conducting poor payment practices; adjudicate disputes between businesses outside of the court process; and fine businesses that persistently pay their suppliers late or fail to comply with the legislation.
  - **Take targeted action on the construction sector** to ban the practice of deducting and withholding retention payments under construction contracts.
- The measures apply **only to UK-to-UK business transactions** and do not affect global supply chains or international trade.

### Territorial extent and application

- The Bill will extend and apply to the whole of the UK.

### Key facts

- **Late payments have a significant impact on the UK economy**, leading to the closure of 14,000 businesses per year, equivalent to 38 businesses every day, according to research by the Department for Business and Trade published in July 2025.
- **An average business spends 86 hours per year chasing late payments.** According to the same research, businesses are owed £26 billion in late payments at any given time, which is an average of £17,000 per business affected by late payment.
- The Bill will complement other initiatives from the Small Business Commissioner to promote a better payment culture, including the highly successful Fair Payment Code, which as of April 2026 has over 580 awardees including numerous large businesses.
- The Small Business Commissioner recovered over £1.55 million in late payments for small businesses in the 2025-26 financial year. This is more than was recovered in the previous four years combined, and four times the

previous year. Since the Small Business Commissioner was established, the office has recovered over £10 million for small businesses.

- **Chair of Policy and Advocacy at the Federation of Small Businesses, Tina McKenzie MBE** said *“Late payments are a blight on our economy, so FSB is pleased to have worked in partnership with the Government to deliver the toughest legislation in the G7. The new laws will finally bring a stop to big businesses using their small suppliers as sources of free credit.”*

## Clean Water Bill

*“My Government will improve critical infrastructure with legislation to clean-up the water industry”*

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- The Government was elected with a clear mandate to clean up the rivers, lakes, and seas, having inherited record levels of pollution incidents from water companies. In under two years, it has taken swift, decisive action: introducing the Water (Special Measures) Act to raise standards, enforce accountability, and make pollution cover-ups a criminal offence; banning more than £4 million in bonuses for polluting water bosses; unlocking £104 billion of private investment to rebuild vital infrastructure; and commissioning Sir Jon Cunliffe to lead the most comprehensive independent review of the sector since privatisation.
  - The situation demands further bold action to deliver fundamental, long-term reform. This once-in-a-generation Bill will shift the sector away from a system where water companies mark their own homework by putting in place stronger, active supervision and oversight through a powerful new regulator capable of integrated management of the water system. Alongside the Bill, the Government is also taking forward non-legislative reforms to end the era of Operator Self-Monitoring. Together, these changes will deliver cleaner water, strong protections for customers and the environment, more reliable services, and a stable, long-term framework to support sustained investment.
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### What does the Bill do?

- The Bill will strengthen confidence in the water sector – restoring the public’s trust, giving investors the stability to back long-term upgrades, and providing the clarity needed to support economic growth. It will ensure the sector plays its full part in delivering clean water and a healthy environment.
- The Bill will:
  - **Put consumers firmly first** with a new Water Ombudsman to ensure complaints are taken seriously and resolved quickly, strengthening consumer advocacy, and providing stronger customer protections – helping households understand, manage, and get better value from their water bills. In delivering reform, the Government will ensure that higher ambitions for the water sector and better, lasting outcomes for customers are delivered in the most effective and efficient way, keeping customer bills affordable and as predictable as possible.

- **Create a new, independent and integrated water regulator** by bringing together the relevant functions of Ofwat, the Drinking Water Inspectorate, the Environment Agency and Natural England. This will end today's fragmented oversight and ensure the regulator has a complete view of company performance. With clearer accountability, stronger teeth, and the right tools to identify problems earlier and act decisively, the new regulator will help restore the public's confidence that the sector is properly overseen and drive the long-term investment the system needs. This directly supports the Chancellor's Regulation Action Plan by ensuring the water regulator helps unlock growth rather than hold it back.
- **Deliver cleaner rivers, lakes, and seas** by providing the legislative tools to ensure targets are ambitious, enabling pre-pipe solutions like sustainable drainage systems to reduce spills and consolidating and strengthening agricultural pollution rules. Outdated frameworks will be updated so pollution is tackled at source and environmental standards keep pace with new pressures. This will be supported by attracting and securing the long-term investment needed to bring the waterways back to good health.
- **Unlock economic growth and housing delivery** through reforms to the New Appointments and Variations framework, which enables new water and wastewater companies to be appointed for new developments. This will support the delivery of ambitious housing targets, alongside strengthened planning powers, and measures to promote competition in infrastructure delivery. These changes will help unblock major growth corridors such as Oxford-Cambridge and support the Northern Growth Strategy. This will help get critical water infrastructure built faster, support new homes, and lower long-term costs for consumers.
- **Strengthen the financial resilience and long-term stability of the sector** through a modernised economic regulation regime including the new regulator taking a supervisory approach to improve oversight and establishing a Performance Improvement Regime to ensure earlier intervention for poorly performing water companies. Reforms to the dispute process will align water regulation with other sectors, enabling faster, more targeted decisions. These reforms will restore confidence, reduce risk, and create a stable, long-term investment environment needed to fund the upgrades the water system depends on.

- **Build long-term resilience into the water system** through statutory resilience standards and better asset mapping. These reforms will be underpinned by clearer long-term planning and strengthened strategic guidance, giving the sector the stability needed to invest in resilient assets for the future. This will be backed by stronger powers for the regulator to enforce security, including no-notice inspections to ensure realistic testing of security measures.
- **Strengthen drinking water protection and public health** by giving the new regulator stronger enforcement powers and responsibility for convening expert advisory groups to keep drinking water standards world-leading.
- **Boost water efficiency and secure future supplies** by accelerating the use of smart metering to enable customers to identify leaks, reduce water wastage, and realise bill savings; all while encouraging the uptake of water-efficient appliances through the forthcoming water efficiency labelling scheme. This will support fairer and more transparent charging as bills reflect actual water use. This will be complemented by the digital communication of drought and temporary-use restrictions, as well as by driving water reuse infrastructure across homes and businesses, cutting leakage, reducing bills, and easing pressures on supplies.
- **Create a stable, long-term planning framework** by consolidating existing water industry planning into two core planning frameworks and exploring establishing national water targets. This would give companies, investors, and regulators clear five, 10, and 25 year direction and the potential to reduce duplication and unnecessary administrative burden where planning and reporting are streamlined.

### Territorial extent and application

- The Bill will extend and apply to England and Wales, with some measures expected to apply to Scotland.

### Key facts

- **The water industry in England and Wales was privatised in 1989**, water supply and sewerage are delivered by 16 private companies. However, unlike most markets, water companies are regional monopolies with limited competition. England and Wales are unusual in having a fully privatised water system, whereby companies own the assets, infrastructure, and operation of

water services.

- **The water system, regulation and the regulators have failed customers and the environment.** In the 37 years since privatisation the population has grown by 11 million, climate change and aging infrastructure has created unprecedented demands on the water system and reform is now needed. This has been compounded by a failure of regulation, with a system that relied too heavily on water companies marking their own homework.
- **The legislative and regulatory framework developed by successive Governments has left a complex and fragmented regime.** Within this context, water companies are not delivering what is expected of them, both by regulators and the public. This poor performance is evident in Ofwat requiring companies to return £157.6 million to customers in 2025–26 due to underperformance, and Ofwat’s 2024–25 performance-related pay assessment confirmed more than £4 million of unfair bonuses were blocked using new powers in the Water (Special Measures) Act.
- **Pollution pressures have also come from agriculture,** affecting around 41 per cent of water bodies (more than wastewater at 36 per cent). Between 2020-25, 49 per cent of farms inspected by the Environment Agency were not fully compliant with agricultural water regulations.
- **To address these challenges, the Government commissioned the largest review of the water sector since privatisation.** The Independent Water Commission revealed the scale and severity of the problems in the water sector. Gearing (levels of debt) at some companies has gone above 80 per cent, making them vulnerable to financial shocks. The lack of strategic direction is clear through the four different types of investment plans required of companies, the 46 statutory obligations on companies set out in the Water Industry Strategy Environmental Requirements, and the over 26 pieces of legislation covering the sector.
- **There is limited evidence of improvements without intervention.** In England, serious pollution incidents were up 60 per cent in 2024 compared to 2023. Data from Event Duration Monitors installed at storm overflows nationwide shows that discharges into rivers, lakes and seas occur for millions of hours each year - 3.61 million hours in 2024 and 1.8 million hours in 2025, largely depending on rainfall. The National Infrastructure Commission has stated that we will face a five billion litres a day shortfall for public water supplies by 2055 if action is not taken.
- **Around 19 per cent of water entering distribution in England is still lost to leakage.** This means almost one-fifth of treated drinking water never

reaches a tap.

- **Transformative change is therefore needed to secure a system that will work for the long-term.** This Bill delivers that change. The majority of measures in this Bill are underpinned by the extensive engagement, research, and recommendations made by Sir Jon Cunliffe in his final report and set out in the Water White Paper.

## Competition Reform Bill

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- The Government is committed to promoting competition and ensuring markets work well for consumers and businesses. Strong competition is a check on excessive market power. It helps keep prices low, improves choice for consumers, and supports higher productivity and living standards.
  - Clear, predictable competition enforcement underpins growth by giving businesses confidence to invest and innovate. The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has already made changes to improve how it works, focusing on taking decisions more quickly, using its powers proportionately, being clearer and more predictable in its approach, and improving how it engages with businesses.
  - This Bill will deliver further reforms to support the CMA's operational transformation, to make competition investigations faster and more predictable, reduce unnecessary burdens on businesses, and ensure consumers benefit sooner, while protecting the CMA's independence.
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### What does the Bill do?

- Over the past 18 months, the CMA has made significant changes to how it operates and has reshaped its approach across its competition and consumer tools to focus on pace, predictability, proportionality and process. This has included moving more quickly to reach decisions, engaging earlier and more clearly with businesses, and using its powers in a more targeted and proportionate way. These reforms have improved transparency for businesses and investors, reduced uncertainty, and strengthened confidence in the system.
- Earlier this year, the Government launched a consultation on how to go further to improve the UK's competition system, so it continues to work well for consumers, businesses and the wider economy. The final details of the legislation will be shaped by this consultation and build on the CMA's ongoing improvements.
- Together, these changes will help ensure the UK remains one of the best places in the world to do business, while maintaining strong protections against excessive market power for the benefit of consumers.

- The Bill will:
  - **Improve decision-making at the CMA.** It will deliver a new and more consistent decision-making model, making the chain of accountability clearer. Under the current system, some of the most significant CMA decisions are led by an independent CMA Panel, and members of the CMA Board are legally prevented from engaging in these decisions. This can make it harder to ensure consistency and predictability in decision-making, and clear accountability at the most senior level. The Panel model is unique to the UK and difficult to explain to international businesses and the wider UK public when describing who is accountable for CMA Phase 2 merger and market investigation decisions. The Bill will give the CMA Board a role in decisions on mergers and market investigations, improving accountability to Parliament, businesses and the public. We will ensure appropriate governance and procedural safeguards to maintain expert decision-making that is independent of government.
  - **Make market reviews quicker and more focused.** Market reviews can currently take over three years. The Bill will speed these up so that where markets are not working properly - such as when consumers face high prices or businesses face barriers to entry - competition problems are identified and addressed more quickly. In most cases, reviews will take no longer than 18 to 24 months, with some completed even sooner. This means competition problems in markets can be fixed faster, so consumers and businesses can feel the benefit sooner. Any remedies placed on businesses will be regularly reviewed, so they remain necessary and proportionate. Where appropriate, regulators for specific sectors will be able to take responsibility for ongoing remedies, reducing the number of regulators that businesses need to deal with.
  - **Providing more clarity and flexibility in merger reviews.** The Bill will give businesses greater certainty about whether a merger is likely to be reviewed in the UK. This will help businesses plan transactions with greater confidence, while ensuring the CMA can continue to intervene where a deal could harm competition and risk higher prices or reduced choice for UK consumers. This will be delivered by clarifying the tests the CMA uses to assess whether it has jurisdiction to investigate a merger. The Bill will also give businesses and the CMA more time at the early stages of an investigation to engage and, where appropriate, agree solutions quickly, thereby increasing the chances of resolving concerns without the need for longer, more costly in-depth investigations.

## Territorial extent and application

- The Bill will extend and apply across the UK.

## Key facts

- The CMA is the UK's primary consumer and competition authority. In the three years to 2024-25, the annual average direct consumer saving resulting from the CMA's work was £3 billion (CMA Annual Report 2024-25).
- For every £1 spent on the CMA by UK taxpayers, the CMA has returned over £24 in savings to consumers over the last 3 years (CMA Annual Report 2024-25).
- **Multinational technology company International Business Machines Corporation (IBM)** said *"These changes have the potential to make the UK regime clearer and easier to navigate for businesses while retaining the CMA's ability to intervene where intervention is justified."*
- **The Association for Competitive Technology (ACT)** said *"We welcome the government's focus on pace, predictability, proportionality, and process. These objectives matter greatly to SMEs. For smaller firms, uncertainty itself can operate as a significant cost and barrier to growth."*

## Regulating for Growth Bill

*“Legislation will be introduced to... reduce the burden of unnecessary regulation through innovation”*

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- Regulation is vital to the UK economy, but too often it fails to keep pace with a world of accelerating change. While effective regulation rightly protects people, workers and consumers, the current system is frequently complex, risk averse, slow to adapt and poorly suited to modern technologies and business models. The Bill builds on the 2025 Regulation Action Plan to modernise regulation so it supports growth and innovation while maintaining essential safeguards.
  - To compete on the world stage we must ensure regulation keeps pace with the unprecedented speed of technological innovation. That means enabling rapid but controlled testing of new approaches through regulatory sandboxes, followed by the swift rollout of reforms. This approach will allow the UK to safely seize opportunities, from artificial intelligence (AI) and other emerging technologies to breakthrough medical advances – to the benefit of UK businesses, citizens and national security.
  - Regulators also have a crucial role to play. They must prioritise growth more clearly than they do today, while continuing to balance this with their core responsibilities to protect consumers and citizens. As part of a suite of measures including the strengthened growth duty, regulators will actively support innovation, reinforced by clearer strategic steers from government to individual regulators.
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### What does the Bill do?

- The current lack of agility and responsiveness to innovation and change in our regulatory system is already undermining the UK’s competitive edge, while other countries like the USA, China, Singapore and Canada are accelerating market pilots, regulatory innovation and capital mobilisation. Without greater agility, the UK risks falling behind and ceding technological leadership, harming both innovation and growth.
- The Regulating for Growth Bill will make the UK’s regulatory system fit for the future so that it plays a full role in delivering growth and supporting innovation.

- The Bill will:
  - **Strengthen the Growth Duty**, elevating consideration of growth in regulatory decision-making without undermining regulators' core objectives (e.g. on safety or the environment). It will give a list of leading regulators such as Natural England, the Environment Agency, and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), a clear, statutory mandate to prioritise growth without undermining their important core functions, reducing unnecessary risk aversion and ensuring regulatory decisions support investment, infrastructure and market creation. This will be supported by a new statutory power for ministers to issue strategic steers, enabling them to define what growth means in different regulatory contexts, including through regulators enabling innovation. The new strengthened Growth Duty also has additional legal measures such as reporting requirements, to ensure that it has real measurable impact.
  - **Create sandbox powers**. As announced by the Chancellor in her 2026 Mais Lecture, the Bill will create cross-economy "sandboxing powers" so that businesses can test cutting-edge new products and technologies safely, prove what works and then scale up delivery of these changes more quickly. These sandboxing powers will be legal powers to allow existing rules to be temporarily relaxed, under strict controls, to test new products and technologies in real-world settings. This will support the UK to unlock growth from emerging technologies where current regulatory frameworks create barriers, with a focus on the Industrial Strategy's growth-driving sectors, but also enable citizens to benefit (for example from accelerated access to medical treatments) and support the UK's national security (for example by testing next generation defence technology).
- The intention is to enable controlled, live-market trials where existing laws can be modified or suspended to allow experimentation in relation to technologies such as medicines, autonomous maritime and defence technology, AI and other fast-growing technologies. This enables ideas that are proven in testing to be deployed at pace and scale, driving productivity and economic growth but also unlocking wider benefits for society. In practice, these powers could be used in a range of growth-critical sectors, for example:
  - Enabling controlled testing of innovative medicines or medical devices including AI, improving patient access to new lifesaving treatment and technologies;
  - Exploring the establishment of an ambitious regulatory sandbox for Maritime Autonomous Surface Shipping (MASS), to trial safely

breaking down regulatory barriers and increasing UK competitiveness on the global stage for commercial vessels. This in turn, could enable controlled testing of next generation defence technology in closely supervised environments, supporting national security while accelerating innovation, productivity and growth across the UK defence industrial base; and

- Exploring cross-cutting AI sandboxes, enabling responsible testing and adoption of AI-enabled products and services across multiple sectors where existing regulatory frameworks currently slow innovation.
- These trials would operate under strict safeguards, including protections for consumers, workers and human rights, with clear accountability and regulatory oversight throughout. If a trial proves successful, the Bill will allow these changes to quickly be embedded permanently into law.
- International examples show the power of agile frameworks. Singapore's Pro-Enterprise Sandbox and Canada's experimentation frameworks have boosted investor confidence and reduced time-to-market, while the UK's own Financial Conduct Authority 'Innovate' initiative helped firms launch faster and raise more capital. These successes highlight how structured regulatory flexibility drives competitiveness.
- This legislation is not about deregulation. The Bill will strengthen regulatory agility without undermining consumer protections, workers' rights or regulators' operational independence. The strengthened Growth Duty will make clear that regulators must continue to prioritise their core duties, but doing so with an approach that actively supports growth; the sandboxing powers will provide safeguards so regulatory protections are not undermined. The Bill will modernise regulation so that protections remain robust while the system becomes far more responsive to change, meaning we can keep pace with other countries.

### **Territorial extent and application**

- The Bill will extend and apply to the whole of the UK.

### **Key facts**

- The UK's regulatory system is increasingly misaligned with the speed and nature of modern innovation. Businesses describe growing pressure from global competitors who are benefiting from faster, more coordinated and more digitally enabled regulatory systems, while UK processes remain slow, fragmented and administratively heavy.

- Only around one in five businesses say regulators support innovation or understand their business well enough to provide tailored advice - limiting the adoption of new products, technologies, and business models.
- In medicines regulation, existing innovation pathways for streamlining the development of new medical treatments (Innovative Licensing and Access Pathway and the Innovative Devices Access Pathway) operate within current legislation. This limits the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency's ability to support novel products and regulatory approaches, even when statutory flexibilities, including Emergency Use Authorisation, are maximised.
- In healthcare, nearly 750,000 patient imaging cases were not reported within four weeks over the past year, a 31 per cent increase year-on-year, driven by a mismatch between demand and workforce growth. Imaging demand is rising by approximately seven per cent annually, while the radiology workforce is projected to grow by only approximately 3.9 per cent per year over the next five years. Evidence shows that every four week delay in starting cancer treatment increases mortality risks by around ten per cent. Research indicates that AI could materially improve capacity and productivity, with AI performing better than 78-90 per cent of radiologists on certain prediction tasks.
- In maritime, the global market for autonomous technologies was valued at \$89.3 billion in 2023 and is projected to grow to \$217.6 billion by 2033. With effective and proportionate regulation, analysis suggests the UK could capture around ten per cent of this global market, supporting growth, inward investment, UK intellectual property exports and high-value jobs across the maritime and defence industrial base.
- Existing UK shipping legislation was conceived on the assumption that ships would be navigated by a master and seafarers onboard, creating complexity and uncertainty for businesses developing Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS). Streamlining regulatory pathways through clearer and more consistent certification and approval routes could significantly reduce administrative burdens, with preliminary estimates suggesting savings of around £1.3 million per year for industry, while maintaining high safety and environmental standards and supporting rapid development of innovative technologies.
- AI alone contributed an estimated £11.8 billion to UK GDP in 2025, with over £1 billion in venture funding raised in just the first quarter — and it is only one part of a wider technological wave.
- Nearly one third of UK AI startup leaders are considering relocating overseas due to regulatory complexity and capital constraints.

## Enhancing Financial Services Bill

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- The financial services sector plays a vital role in the UK's economy – it is one of the most successful export sectors, a key enabler of growth in other sectors, and a provider of payments, credit, insurance and investment services to households and businesses all across the UK, including through credit unions supporting communities nationwide.
  - The Enhancing Financial Services Bill will deliver key parts of the Leeds Reforms set out by the Chancellor in 2025. It will modernise how the sector is regulated, enable it to grow and to lend more to businesses, and make consumer protections fit for the digital age – all while maintaining high standards of regulation and oversight, supporting the UK's position as a leading global financial centre.
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### What does the Bill do?

- **The financial services sector is one of the UK's greatest economic success stories** – playing a vital role in the economy, responsible for around 20 per cent of UK exports and underpinning the provision of payments, credit, insurance and investment services to households and businesses. The UK is the world's largest net exporter of financial services and a leading global financial centre, serving people and businesses across the world. It supports jobs across the country in places like Leeds, Manchester, Edinburgh and London.
- The UK financial services sector has continually been at the forefront of innovation. However global competition has intensified and the UK needs to keep up the pace. This has meant that in recent years, the sector has experienced slower growth and productivity gains, and higher costs. We want Britain to be more competitive globally, and to harness the UK's global leadership in financial services, so it is better able to support UK businesses and consumers.
- The Bill will:
  - **Modernise consumer protections and redress arrangements to reflect today's markets and maintain confidence.** It will ensure consumers are appropriately protected when something goes wrong, making sure protections are fit for the digital age. Reforms to the Financial Ombudsman Service will increase consistency and clarity of

decision-making, helping people resolve disputes more quickly and with greater certainty.

- **Consolidate the regulatory framework to enable stronger coordination and clearer responsibilities, reduce fragmentation of the regulators and support innovation.** By streamlining the regulatory architecture and consolidating the Payment Systems Regulator within the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), firms will deal with fewer overlapping regulators, providing clearer accountability and faster decision-making.
- **Ensure that the administrative burden on firms is proportionate without compromising on core consumer, prudential and market protections.** This includes reducing the overall burden of the Senior Managers and Certification Regime - the framework that holds senior leaders in financial firms personally accountable - by 50 per cent with a focus on accountability of the most senior figures in financial services; freeing up firms to focus on serving customers and invest in growth, rather than dealing with overly burdensome compliance processes.
- **Enable credit unions to expand** by improving the rules on who can become a member. This will allow credit unions to serve more people and communities, widening access to affordable finance and supporting the Government's aim to double the size of the mutual and co-operative sector.
- **Support lending and investment** including by updating the statutory framework underpinning the ring-fencing regime, which requires major banks to separate their UK retail banking services from investment banking activities. The reforms will unlock more finance for UK businesses. Improved competition in Small and Medium-Sized enterprises' (SME) lending will help small businesses access finance.

### Territorial extent and application

- The majority of measures will extend and apply to the whole of the UK.

### Key facts

- **The financial services sector accounts for around 8 per cent of UK output and employs more than 1.1 million people across the country.** It is one of the UK's most globally competitive sectors, with London ranked second only to New York in the 2025 Global Financial Centres Index.

- **The sector also makes a very significant tax contribution.** According to TheCityUK figures, in 2023 the sector contributed £79.3 billion, or around 9 per cent of total UK tax receipts.
- **The UK is the largest global net exporter of financial services** totalling £102.2 billion in 2025, representing half of the UK's services export surplus. ONS figures show that excluding the US, UK financial services exports in 2025 were greater than the rest of the G7 combined.
- **Despite its strengths, the sector has not grown in real terms since 2010, in contrast to several international financial centres that have recovered more strongly since the Global Financial Crisis.** Slower growth can harm productivity, innovation and jobs, and risks losing jobs and investment overseas.
- **The financial services regulatory framework has grown significantly over time.** Responses to the Government's 'Financial Services Growth and Competitiveness Strategy: Call for Evidence' indicated that the complexity of the UK regulatory environment is detracting from the UK's overall attractiveness, with many respondents indicating that it was more complex and burdensome to be regulated as a financial services firm in the UK than in other countries.
- **Credit unions are financial co-operatives currently serving over 1.5 million people across Great Britain,** according to Bank of England data. These reforms will make it easier for the 220 credit unions in Great Britain to attract more members, allowing millions more people to potentially benefit from the expansion of affordable, community-based financial services. This supports the Government's ambition to double the size of the mutual sector and, as credit unions are deeply embedded in their communities, promote growth across all regions of Great Britain.
- The Chief Executive Officer of Santander UK, Mike Reigner, said *"We welcome the announcement of the Leeds Reforms... which set out a positive vision for UK financial services. The changes outlined within the package are important steps to modernising the UK's regulatory architecture, and will enable banks like ours to support our customers better and drive growth within the wider economy."*

## Highways (Financing) Bill

*“Legislation will be introduced to... enable roads to be built at pace, including the Lower Thames Crossing;”*

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- A strong transport network is essential for economic growth. It allows freight to run smoothly, helps businesses run more easily, and gives people better access to jobs, education, and wider opportunities. Improving vital road infrastructure is an important part of strengthening the country’s economy, as well as delivering safer and more reliable journeys for people.
  - The Highways (Financing) Bill will enable a new financing approach to fund large-scale road schemes, supporting the Government’s commitment to deliver a modern transport network that helps people get to where they need to more easily and safely. The Bill enables the delivery of schemes through private investment, reducing the financial burden on taxpayers while ensuring strong regulatory oversight to protect the interests of users.
  - The Government is already delivering on improving the road network through investing £27 billion to make everyday journeys on motorways and major A roads safer, smoother, and more reliable for the people and businesses that depend on them. A record £8.4 billion of this will be invested in renewing ageing assets across the network, strengthening the performance and resilience of the network through better road surfaces, clearer signs and modernised roadside technology. The Government is also investing a record £7.3 billion over the next four years to repair and renew local roads and fix potholes.
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### What does the Bill do?

- **The Highways (Financing) Bill will introduce a new Regulated Asset Base (RAB) funding model to unlock greater levels of private capital investment in road infrastructure.** This will supplement the work already done by National Highways in England to maintain and increase road capacity and improve the road network to help people travel around more easily.
- The Bill will:
  - **Introduce a licence regime** to allow private companies, as licence holders, to deliver key road schemes to improve the road network. The

Bill will set out the powers and responsibilities of the licence holders.

- **Name an independent regulator to provide strong oversight** of licence holders, to ensure that the infrastructure built under this model remains well maintained, efficiently managed, and provided at a fair and proportionate cost to users.
- **Introduce backstop measures to protect vital publicly used assets** managed under the model, helping ensure that the roads remain open even if the private company fails.
- The RAB funding model will support the delivery of vital road infrastructure projects across England in future. The Government expects that the Lower Thames Crossing will be the first road scheme to use this model.

### Territorial extent and application

- The Bill will extend to England and Wales, and apply to England only.

### Key facts

- **Delivering road schemes effectively and affordably is essential for the UK's future economic prospects and to help people get around more easily.** Over 85 per cent of passenger journey kilometres are made on roads, as well as around 80 per cent of freight journeys.
- **The RAB model that the Bill will deliver offers a long-established way of financing major infrastructure in England.** It has been successfully used in sectors like energy and aviation. Most recently, it has been used on projects such as the Thames Tideway Tunnel and the Sizewell C nuclear project. Applying the lessons learned from those projects will enable the model to work even better in the roads sector.
- **By establishing an independent regulator as part of the RAB model, the Government can ensure transparency in operations, clear performance standards, and protection for users.** If the regulated company does not meet the standards required, the regulator can take enforcement actions – for example by issuing the company with penalties or ultimately by revoking its licence to operate the road.
- **The Chief Executive of Logistics UK, Ben Fletcher,** said that “...*A reliable road network is critical for the UK's logistics sector and the nation's economic prosperity, with delays and costs caused by poor infrastructure felt by businesses and consumers alike. It is estimated that every £1 invested in the*

*Strategic Road Network returns over £2 to society, and a reliable road network is also critical for increasing the resilience of the UK's supply chain by enabling better connectivity with all other modes of freight transport."*

- **The multinational energy company, Iberdrola**, states that *"The RAB model offers stability and predictability: investors know they will be able to recover their investment over time, while consumers benefit from tariffs controlled by the regulator. This balance makes the RAB an effective tool for attracting private capital to long-term strategic projects, reducing perceived risk and therefore the cost of financing."*

## Overnight Visitor Levy Bill

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- The Overnight Visitor Levy Bill will deliver on the manifesto commitment to transfer power out of Westminster by devolving new revenue raising powers.
  - This is the first step in a new era of fiscal devolution in England, giving mayors and potentially other local leaders of Foundation Strategic Authorities the power to introduce a levy to raise and invest money into projects that improve their areas, raise living standards and drive growth.
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### What does the Bill do?

- **In the 2025 Budget, the Government committed to a new overnight visitor levy and launched a consultation on its design.** This Bill delivers on that commitment. The Government will shortly publish a response to the consultation, setting out stakeholder views and providing further detail on the design and implementation of the levy, including a position on extending this power to Foundation Strategic Authorities.
- **The levy will enable places to reinvest revenue in local priorities, support economic growth, strengthen public services, and improve the visitor experience** – helping destinations remain attractive to visitors while ensuring tourism contributes to thriving local communities. The Overnight Visitor Levy will enable mayors and potentially other local leaders to raise revenue and reinvest it back into their local economies.
- **This Bill will bring England in line with Scotland and Wales, as well as international peers.** Scotland and Wales have already introduced powers for local authorities to raise a visitor levy. Visitor levies are common in Europe and the rest of the world, and all other G7 countries already maintain some form of tourism or accommodation levy.
- **This Bill will provide a legislative framework to enable mayors and potentially other local leaders to introduce a levy.** It is anticipated that the Bill will address the broad conditions under which a levy may be introduced, as well as the structure of the tax.

### Territorial extent and application

- This Bill will extend to England and Wales and apply to England only.

## Key facts

- **Mayors and local leaders in the UK are left far behind their international equivalents in their ability to raise revenue locally.** According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the share of national taxes collected at the sub-national level in the UK is 5.8 per cent: just a fifth of the European Union average, and the lowest of the G7 by far. In France, the share is 20.4 per cent; in Japan, 36.0 per cent, and in the USA, 45.7 per cent.
- **Extending the power to introduce an Overnight Visitor Levy will bring England in line with leaders in similar destinations.** All other G7 countries already have some form of tourism or overnight accommodation levy in place. Some of these are well established – France has had an equivalent levy in place since 1910. Others are more recent: Norway, for example, is introducing their visitor contribution from summer 2026. Cities such as New York, Amsterdam, and Rome apply overnight charges to fund local services.
- **Similar powers are used worldwide to support communities and the visitor economy.** Visitor levies have supported projects from large scale infrastructure works, such as expanding the capacity of public transport networks, to attracting and supporting major cultural and sporting events, to smaller public realm improvements like street cleaning around tourist sites. The exact amount raised by local areas to support such projects in England will be dependent on decisions by mayors with their constituent authorities.
- **Mayor of West Yorkshire, Tracy Brabin,** said *"Mayors have made a strong case for the introduction of this levy as the first step toward fiscal devolution, and we're delighted the government has listened. By asking visitors to pay a small fee on overnight stays, we'll be able to invest more into making our regions even better places to visit - driving tourism and growth, unlocking opportunities, and helping our businesses thrive. This is a further vote of confidence in devolution and shows the government is backing mayors to deliver our ambitions."*
- **Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan,** said *"Giving mayors the powers to raise a tourist levy is great news for London. The extra funding will directly support London's economy, and help cement our reputation as a global tourism and business destination."*
- **Mayor of the Liverpool City Region, Steve Rotheram,** said *"Our visitor economy is worth more than £6 billion a year and supports over 55,000 local jobs. A modest levy is money that would stay local and be reinvested in the things that make our region stand out."*

# ENDING THE OPPORTUNITY CRISIS - A BRITAIN BUILT FOR ALL

## Social Housing Renewal Bill

*“My Ministers will bring forward legislation to increase long-term investment in social housing”*

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- Everyone deserves to live in a decent, safe, secure and affordable home. Yet far too many families in need of a social rented home are languishing on local authority waiting lists, forced to struggle in the private rented sector or in expensive temporary accommodation, driving up rents and housing benefit costs in the process. At the same time, the ability and willingness of social housing providers to invest in the building of new social rented homes is undermined by the steady and significant loss of existing stock through the Right to Buy scheme.
  - The Bill will protect much needed social housing stock, give affordable housing providers the clarity and confidence they need to build more social homes, and better protect tenants who are victims of domestic abuse by providing them with greater security and stability. The Bill delivers on the manifesto commitments to prioritise the building of new social rented homes and better protect our existing stock. It builds on the funding and regulatory certainty that the Government has provided to the sector and supports the five-step plan published in July 2025 to deliver a decade of renewal for social and affordable housing.
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### What does the Bill do?

- The Bill has three core objectives. First, to protect much-needed social housing stock and thereby incentivise the building of more social rented homes. Second, to create a fairer system with greater protections for tenants in instances of domestic abuse. Third, to reduce unnecessary bureaucracy and give providers greater regulatory certainty so that they can invest in new social and affordable homes with confidence.
- The Bill will:
  - Protect existing social housing stock and incentivising the building of more social homes.**
    - The Right to Buy scheme provides an important route for social housing tenants to own their own homes. However, many of the homes sold under the Right to Buy scheme have not been replaced. Not only

has this depleted much-needed stock, but it has also reduced the motivation and confidence of councils to build, and restricted broader investment in council housing. Measures in the Bill will increase the eligibility requirement to 10 years, amend percentage discounts to better align with new maximum cash discounts and exempt newly built social housing for 35 years. The Bill will also ensure that councils and other potential buyers are notified before social homes are sold to maximise opportunities to retain stock.

**Protect tenants who are victims of domestic abuse by providing them with greater security and stability.**

- All social housing tenants deserve to live in decent homes, to be treated with fairness and respect, and to have their problems resolved quickly. Measures in the Bill will increase protections for victims of domestic abuse to remain in their property away from their abuser or move to suitable alternative accommodation.

**Clarify the statute book and reduce unnecessary bureaucracy, so providers can invest in new social and affordable homes with confidence.**

- The Bill will repeal unimplemented provisions from previous legislation that would not have worked in the interests of tenants or providers. These include requirements for local authorities to sell high-value homes, grant flexible (fixed-term) tenancies, and to charge higher income tenants higher rents. It will also reduce bureaucracy for councils by streamlining housing consents.

### **Territorial extent and application**

- The Bill will extend to England and Wales, but apply to England only.

### **Key facts**

- **The social housing sector plays a critical role in our housing system, making up approximately 16 per cent of all households in England.** It is home to a large proportion of vulnerable groups, with 61 per cent of households having at least one member with a long-term illness or disability, and 50 per cent of households in the lowest income quintile (English Housing Survey 2024-25).
- **This country has not built enough social and affordable housing for decades.** Over 175,000 children are living in temporary accommodation, and more than 1.3 million households are on local authority waiting lists for social

housing. Between 2015 and 2025, the number of households on local authority housing registers increased by approximately 6.7 per cent (equating to around 84,000 households) (Local Authority Housing Statistics open data: 2024-25).

- **Social and affordable housing is critical to boosting housing supply overall.** Almost one in three of all new homes built in recent years are social or affordable - in 2024-25, there were nearly 60,000 social and affordable new build completions (Affordable Housing Supply in England: 2024-25). However, the path to 1.5 million homes requires further growth in this sector and social house building remains far below its peak in the 1950s and 1960s.
- **Over two million tenants have bought their homes under the Right to Buy scheme since its introduction in 1980, though much of this stock has never been replaced and the threat of losing homes through the scheme reduces the motivation and confidence of councils to build.** Between April 2012 and March 2025, there have been around 133,000 council Right to Buy sales with over 51,000 homes replaced over the same period (Right to Buy sales and replacements, England: April 2024 to March 2025).
- In 2024-25, 39,410 households were considered homeless, or threatened with homelessness, where the reason for the loss of their last settled home was domestic abuse (Statutory Homelessness in England: Financial year 2024-25). The Bill will look to provide additional protections to those individuals in the social housing sector.
- **The Chief Executive of the National Housing Federation, Kate Henderson,** said *“At a time when 4.2 million people are in need of social housing in England, we strongly support the Government’s aim to protect the country’s social housing and welcome confirmation that Right to Buy will not be extended to housing associations... The outcome from the various measures the Government is taking should mean that the Right to Buy is a much more sustainable scheme than it has been since 2012.”*

## Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Bill

*“My Ministers will bring forward legislation to... reform the leasehold system, including the capping of ground rents”*

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- For far too many leaseholders, the reality of home ownership has fallen woefully short of the dream – their lives marked by a recurring struggle with unregulated and unaffordable ground rents; unjustified permissions and administration fees; unreasonable or extortionate charges; and onerous conditions imposed with little or no consultation. This is not what home ownership should entail.
  - The Bill will modernise property law, deliver a fair and efficient modern housing market and transform the experience of home ownership for millions of leaseholders across the country. Alongside the ongoing implementation of those reforms to the leasehold system already in statute, the Bill progresses key reforms necessary to honour the manifesto commitment to finally bring the feudal leasehold system to an end in this Parliament.
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### What does the Bill do?

- The Bill marks the beginning of the end for the feudal leasehold system that has tainted the dream of home ownership for so many. It will transform the experience of home ownership for millions of leaseholders across the country and support them with the cost of living by giving them greater control over how their homes are managed and the bills they pay.
- The current leasehold system in England and Wales has a number of fundamental, structural flaws that mean it is weighted against the interests of leasehold homeowners:
  - Third-party landlords exercise control over the management, shared facilities and related costs of buildings rather than the leaseholders who live in them and who have a direct stake in their upkeep.
  - Leaseholders do not own their homes forever and their value tends to fall over time as the years remaining on leases reduce.
  - Leaseholders and residents on freehold estates can be viewed by freeholders and managing agents not as homeowners or customers, but as a source of steady profit, whether that be through unregulated and unaffordable ground rents, unjustified fees, or rentcharges.

- Leaseholders and residents on freehold estates are vulnerable to disproportionate enforcement mechanisms such as forfeiture.
- The Bill will:
  - **Create a new legal framework for commonhold**, providing full freehold ownership for flats and a bespoke approach to communal living without control by third-party landlords; ensuring this radical improvement on leasehold will be available for as many as possible by making it workable for more types of buildings.
  - **Introduce a ban on the use of leasehold for new flats** to ensure that in future commonhold is the default tenure for flatted development.
  - **Implement a new process for converting to commonhold** to make conversion easier for existing leaseholders.
  - **Cap ground rents** at £250 per year, falling to a peppercorn after 40 years.
  - **Abolish the disproportionate leasehold enforcement regime of forfeiture**, and replace it with a fairer system that strengthens protections for leaseholders, removes the automatic risk of home loss and protects leaseholders' equity.
  - **Repeal the draconian powers relating to enforcement of maintenance charges (estate rentcharges)** and require notice before pursuing ordinary enforcement on freehold estates to protect homeowners.
  - **Amend enfranchisement provisions in the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024** that make it cheaper and easier for leaseholders to extend their lease or buy their freehold.
  - Create a new right for leaseholders in flats to request improvements, such as a **gigabit capable broadband connection**.
- The draft Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Bill, published in January 2026, included all of the above measures apart from the necessary 'fixes' to the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024 and provisions relating to gigabit capable broadband connections. The Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee are currently undertaking pre-legislative scrutiny on the draft Bill. The Government will consider any recommendations made by the Committee before introducing the Bill.

## Territorial extent and application

- The Bill will extend and apply to England and Wales.

## Key facts

- **Each year an estimated 30,000 - 40,000 new flats are delivered across England and Wales** (HM Land Registry: Price Paid Data) **and over 99 per cent of flats for sale are sold as leasehold** (Leasehold housing in England Statistics, House of Commons Library). Commonhold offers a better alternative to leasehold for flat ownership. Ownership is on a freehold basis from the outset and owners are part of a commonhold association, which gives them more control over their homes and greater opportunity to have a say over key decisions affecting how their building is used, managed and financed.
- **The existing model of commonhold has not worked - there are fewer than 20 commonholds despite the tenure being available for over 20 years** (The Law Commission on Commonhold, July 2020). Without reform to make commonhold workable for modern developments, including mixed-use and mixed tenure blocks, that number is unlikely to increase.
- **The Bill will ensure that existing leaseholders can take advantage of the reinvigorated commonhold model.** Although commonhold has been available since the regulations came into force in 2004, we are aware of only one conversion having taken place. The Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002 requires 100 per cent leaseholder consent, freeholder consent and lender consent, meaning a single hold-out can derail the entire process. This makes conversion virtually impossible except in the smallest and simplest of blocks.
- Although actual forfeiture cases are thought to be relatively rare, **the threat of forfeiture is routinely leveraged by landlords to ensure compliance.** In 2024, the Property Tribunal recorded 786 breach determinations, providing a partial indication of how regularly in a given year landlords are taking formal litigation steps towards forfeiting a residential lease. Stakeholder estimates suggest 80 to 90 per cent of forfeiture cases are triggered by a financial breach of a lease, which can be initiated for unpaid amounts of as little as £350 (Draft Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Bill: Impact Assessment, Annex 3).
- **Approximately 3.8 million residential leaseholders in England and Wales have a ground rent obligation.** Of these, around 770,000 to 900,000 pay over £250 a year in ground rent of which 490,000 to 590,000 are in London

and the South. In total, leaseholders pay over £600 million per year in ground rent (The ground rents cap, House of Commons Library).

- **There are up to 1.75 million homes on private estates in England, where estate rentcharges could apply**, although we do not know how many of these are privately managed (English Housing Survey 2020-21). Competition and Markets Authority analysis shows over 80 per cent of new freehold homes built by the 11 largest housebuilders have estate management charges (Housebuilding market study).
- **Rentcharge owners can currently take enforcement action without prior notice once arrears reach 40 days**, including taking possession of the property, granting long leases (sometimes 99 years) to third parties that can continue even after arrears are paid, or appointing a receiver with mortgagee-like powers. These powers are widely regarded as disproportionate and can create significant difficulties for homeowners, lenders and prospective buyers.
- **The Chair of the Leasehold Advisory Service, Martin Boyd**, said *“This is a significant milestone for leaseholders and marks the beginning of the end for the leasehold system as we know it. The draft Bill tackles some of the most damaging features of leasehold ... the Bill signals a decisive shift away from leasehold as the default form of home ownership. Moving towards commonhold and making it easier for existing buildings to convert where leaseholders choose to do so, has the potential to give homeowners genuine control, security and long-term certainty over their homes.”*

## Education for All Bill

*“A Bill will be brought forward to raise standards in schools and introduce generational reforms of the special educational needs system”*

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- Every child deserves the chance to achieve and thrive, whatever their background and whatever their need. That means raising standards and raising expectations for all, because when we get things right for children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), every child benefits.
  - This Bill will transform support for children and young people with SEND by providing early access to support close to home and ensuring all schools, nurseries and colleges deliver the stretching, rewarding education that all children and young people deserve. The Government will build a truly inclusive education system that works for every family.
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### What does the Bill do?

- The Government is consulting on SEND proposals and will carefully consider the responses. Subject to this, and ongoing engagement with families, the sector and experts, the Government will meet the reform principles by providing support that is:
  - **Early:** Children and families should receive the support they need as soon as possible, with a quick response to changing needs.
  - **Local:** Children and young people with SEND should be able to learn at an education setting close to their home, alongside their peers, rather than travelling long distances from their family and community.
  - **Fair:** Every education setting should be resourced and able to meet common and predictable needs, including as they change over time, without parents having to fight to get support for their children.
  - **Effective:** Reforms should be grounded in evidence, ensuring all education settings know where to go to find effective practice that has excellent long-term outcomes for children and young people.
  - **Shared:** Education, health and care services should work in partnership with one another, Best Start Family Hubs, local

government, families, teachers, educators, experts, the voluntary sector and representative bodies to deliver better experiences and outcomes for all children and young people.

- The Bill will:
  - **Provide early support to Children with SEND** by legislating to require settings to produce an individual support plan for every child and young person with SEND. It will equip early years providers, schools, and colleges to intervene early and effectively by creating National Inclusion Standards to support settings to identify and implement best practice.
  - **Enable local support by making mainstream settings more inclusive.** The Bill will ensure more children and young people receive the right support early on, by delivering more training on SEND and inclusion than ever before. This will be underpinned by a new requirement set out in the SEND Code of Practice, to ensure staff in every nursery, school, and college receive training on SEND and inclusion. **This will be backed by over £200 million in investment** which will cover children with SEND in their earliest years through to age 25, with all teachers, leaders, and teaching assistants and support staff benefiting from new training.
  - **Improve fairness across the system** by funding schools on a fair and consistent basis, wherever they are in the country, and requiring schools to pool a portion of their funding for SEND. It will ensure children and young people with the most complex needs receive high quality, consistent support, through new Specialist Provision Packages. It will end the postcode lottery for children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) by introducing a new national template, and moving from a system of annual reviews to reviews at the end of every key stage for school-age children, with parents able to request an earlier review. The role of the SEND tribunal will also be reformed.
  - **Ensure a smooth transition from the current to the new system via a triple lock of transitional protections** that will mean no child loses effective support already in place. Every child with a specialist setting place in September 2029 will be able to stay in a specialist setting until they finish education.
  - **Ensure that support is effective and grounded in best practice** by embedding inclusive practices and enabling leaders to determine their

overall approach to identifying and meeting the needs effectively by requiring settings to publish an Inclusion Strategy to encourage strategic, cohort-level planning to remove barriers to education, and hold settings to account on strengthening inclusive practice. Inclusion strategies would need to be based on new National Inclusion Standards, developed by a panel of independent experts.

- **Utilise partnerships and ensure that support is shared across settings.** The Government will ensure that specialist services are available for mainstream settings to support children and young people with SEND. This will mean that early years, school, and college settings can quickly access specialist services such as speech and language therapists. It will establish smoother transitions between school and post-16 education by ensuring that schools and post-16 providers work together and transition planning for SEND learners starts 12 months in advance. Targeted support will also be provided for those identified as being at risk of becoming Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).
- **The Government has announced over £4 billion investment in SEND reform** over the next three years. **Early Years settings, schools and colleges will benefit from £3.7 billion of capital investment** from this year to 2030 to create tens of thousands of new places in Inclusion Bases in mainstream settings, make buildings accessible, and create new special school places. The Government will also **invest £1.8 billion over the next three years to create a new national offer called “Experts at Hand”**, wrapping professionals such as educational psychologists, speech and language therapists, and occupational therapists around mainstream settings.

### Territorial extent and application

- The Bill will extend to England and Wales and apply to England only.

### Key facts

- **The current system is not delivering for children and young people with SEND.** Government research shows the gap between the GCSE results of children with SEN compared to their peers without SEN has not meaningfully narrowed over the last six years (2018-19 and 2024-25). 86.1 per cent of 16-17 year olds with SEN support were in education and training in March 2025, compared to 93 per cent of those without SEN.
- **Many have to travel long distances to attend school and they are disproportionately likely to be suspended, excluded, or persistently**

**absent.** In 2023-24 the suspension rate for pupils with SEN support was 29.4 per cent - nearly four times higher than pupils with no identified SEN, according to government research.

- **Families are having to fight an ineffective system despite significant increases in funding.** Whilst “high needs” funding for local authorities increased by 87 per cent between 2019-20 and 2025-26, outcomes have not meaningfully improved. In January 2026, the number of children and young people on a waiting list for speech and language therapy was 65,540, alongside 17,353 for occupational therapy, 17,195 for physiotherapy, and 1,528 for vision screening (NHSE, Community health services waiting lists). Less than half of EHCPs are produced within the statutory 20-week period.
- **Pupils with SEN in mainstream schools can achieve better outcomes compared to similar pupils in special schools, according to government research.** Pupils with SEN in mainstream schools achieve around half a grade higher in GCSE English and Maths compared to similar pupils in special schools. International evidence highlights that young people educated in inclusive settings are almost twice as likely to have secured economic independence by the age of 23 to 25 than similar pupils who were in special classes.
- **Families have been pushed towards securing EHCPs because of a lack of reliable high-quality support in mainstream settings.** Since 2014, the number of children and young people receiving an EHCP has doubled – comparisons with Wales suggest that around half of that rise is likely specific to the English system and context.
- **EHCPs are increasingly used for a broader range of commonly occurring needs.** EHCPs were designed for the most complex needs. However, many pupils whose needs were met by mainstream schools are now being met via EHCPs.
- **The number of appeals to the SEND Tribunal has risen rapidly in recent years,** leading to longer delays before children and young people receive support and increasing the pressure on the courts. In the academic year 2024-25 there were 25,002 registered appeals recorded in relation to SEND, an increase of 18 per cent compared to 2023-24, and an increase of 694 per cent from 2014-15.
- **The Director of the Council for Disabled Children, Amanda Allard,** said *“Today’s publication of the White Paper “Every Child Achieving and Thriving” is a milestone on a long journey, one which provides a vision and hope for much-needed improvement in the support for disabled children and young*

*people and those with special educational needs. This publication is not the end of this journey, but a critically important landmark. We are pleased to see the scale of its vision and commitment of resources for transforming our education system and ensuring it values children and young people with additional needs and their families.”*

- **The Chief Executive of Mencap, Jon Sparkes OBE**, said *“We’re pleased the Government is committed to reforming the SEND system, which is currently failing children with a learning disability.” “Right now, too many families are left waiting, fighting and worn down. No child’s future should depend on parents battling for support. That isn’t fair, and it isn’t sustainable. “The move to make mainstream schools more inclusive is welcome news. Families must have their children’s needs identified early and for them to be given the right help straight away, backed by services fully funded to do the job, and rights underpinned by law.”*
- **The Chief Executive of the Confederation of School Trusts, Leora Cruddas**, said *“The current ‘deficit model’ approach too often focuses on what children can’t do. Encouraging inclusive support within mainstream schools while recognising the crucial work of the specialist sector offers a more positive approach, with quicker and more local support to help all children succeed.”*

## Representation of the People Bill

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- The Representation of the People Bill renews and protects democracy. The Bill is focused on bringing British democratic traditions into the modern era, ensuring that they are stronger, safer and more inclusive, while protecting our democracy from external threats. Most notably it extends the right to vote to 16 and 17 year olds, the most significant expansion of the franchise in over half a century.
  - The Bill also protects the integrity of elections by tightening political finance rules, strengthening enforcement by the Electoral Commission, improving transparency around digital campaign material, and introducing tougher measures to tackle harassment and intimidation of candidates, campaigners, and electoral staff.
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### What does the Bill do?

- The Bill is designed to secure UK elections against those who threaten them; to protect those who participate; to ensure democracy remains open and accessible to legitimate voters; and to strengthen and preserve democracy for the next generation.
- The Bill will:
  - **Give 16 and 17 year olds the right to vote in all UK elections**, increasing the engagement of young people in our vibrant democracy, as committed to in the manifesto. Early engagement by younger voters will build the foundations for their lifetime participation in the electoral processes.
  - **Broaden the range of ID that can be used at a polling station in Great Britain to allow the use of UK-authorized bank cards.** Legitimate electors should not be prevented from voting, and we are committed to ensuring everyone eligible to vote is able and encouraged to do so. While the existing requirement to show ID is valuable to protect electors from the risk of personation, the current rules are too restrictive. This change will allow a greater proportion of legitimate electors to more easily meet the voter identification requirements.
  - **Work to test new automated registration systems.** Automated registration could remove a key barrier to eligible citizens participating

in democracy. The Bill will provide a legal power to run pilots on electoral registration. This is intended to provide a route to test novel approaches to registration now and in the future.

- **Introduce tougher rules on political donations to protect UK elections**, safeguarding against foreign interference, improving political transparency, adding tougher checks for donations and closing loopholes by reinforcing electoral legislation against foreign interference. These changes will meet an evolving and sophisticated threat, while making sure legitimate donors can continue to fund electoral campaigns.
- **Strengthen the role and powers of the Electoral Commission to maximise the impact of reforms to political finance rules.** As the independent regulator, the role of the Electoral Commission is invaluable in upholding trust in democracy. Through addressing historical enforcement gaps, expanding the Electoral Commission's civil sanctioning powers, and improving operational effectiveness, these reforms will ensure that enforcement provides a clear deterrent against breaking the law whilst remaining proportionate.
- **Tackle harassment and intimidation of voters, electoral staff and campaigners, both online and in person.** This conduct is totally unacceptable and has a profoundly detrimental impact on the democratic process, deterring people from campaigning and standing for public office. The Bill expands the law so those who are convicted of intimidating or abusing electoral staff can be disqualified from standing for or holding elected office. It also empowers courts to give tougher sentences to those who abuse candidates, campaigners, elected representatives and electoral staff, and removes the requirement for candidates who are acting as their own election agents to have their home address published on the notice of election agents.
- **Introduce measures to improve the transparency of digital imprint rules, and placing enforcement on a clearer and more proportionate footing.** Transparency around who is promoting political advertising is a key part of equipping people with the tools to scrutinise political messages and make informed decisions in elections and referendums. Digital imprints are designed to make it clear to the public which person or organisation is responsible for promoting an advert. Under existing rules, third party campaigners who spend under a certain threshold, are not required to include imprints on their organic digital campaigning material. To close this loophole, we will add any

person who is a third party campaigner, but is not a recognised third party or an individual, to the list of entities who are required to include digital imprints on their organic digital campaigning material.

- **Improve the resilience and capacity of the postal voting system**, by bringing forward the deadline for candidate nominations; moving the postal vote application deadline earlier; and clarifying key processes to Returning Officers to reduce risk and improve delivery. Postal voting is now a significant part of UK elections, with more than a quarter of votes at the 2024 General Election cast by post. Growing demand is placing pressure on local election teams and the supply chain – including specialist suppliers and postal services – these measures are designed to relieve such pressure.

### Territorial extent and application

- The Bill extends and applies differently across the UK. This is to take account of differences in electoral systems with local government and devolved legislature elections being devolved in Scotland and Wales, and the unique electoral system in Northern Ireland.

### Key facts

- **There are around 1.7 million eligible 16 and 17 year olds who will be able to have a say in UK Parliamentary elections for the very first time** once these reforms have passed.
- Evidence from places that have lowered the voting age shows that doing so can increase turnout when implemented in a supportive environment, according to a 2023 Electoral Commission report.
- Young people have told us that they not only want their voices to be heard but for action to be taken as a result. They want the power and agency to take control of their lives, make their own choices and be part of decisions that affect them.
- **At the 2024 UK General Election, a small but significant number (0.25 per cent, approximately 50,000) of electors were initially turned away from polling stations because they did not have an accepted form of photographic identification.** Of these, approximately 16,000 (0.08 per cent of electors) did not return to vote, according to the Electoral Commission's report into Voter ID at the 2024 UK general election, July 2024.

- **At least two per cent of people in Great Britain do not hold a form of ID on the current list**, according to research by Ipsos on Electoral Integrity, published February 2025. Around four percent of non-voters in the General Election cited voter ID as a factor in their not turning out to vote (Electoral Commission report “Voter ID at the 2024 UK general election”, July 2024).
- Research by MHCLG shows that allowing the use of bank cards will reduce the proportion of electors without an accepted form of ID to under one per cent - making it far easier for legitimate electors to meet the voter ID requirements and vote at the polling station (Electoral Resilience and Democratic Engagement Programme: Voter identification research, November 2025).
- **In its 2023 report “Electoral Registers in the UK”, the Electoral Commission estimates that between seven and eight million eligible people are either incorrectly registered or not registered to vote at all.** Certain groups including young people, renters, some ethnic minorities, and those from lower-socio economic groups are less likely to be registered to vote.
- **The maximum fine the Electoral Commission can currently impose for breaches of the political finance framework is £20,000 per offence.** Given party spending limits during UK Parliamentary General Election campaigns stand at £35 million, key stakeholders, including the Electoral Commission, the Ethics and Integrity Commission (formerly Committee on Standards in Public Life), and the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee have described the current maximum fine as an inadequate deterrent.
- **In 2024, the police investigated 445 cases under the Representation of the People Act 1983 and currently have only issued a single police caution** (Electoral Commission’s 2024 electoral fraud data, March 2025). This included 17 cases relating to expense returns, none of which have resulted in convictions or police cautions. There is currently an ‘enforcement gap’ in relation to candidate, local third party and recall petition campaign finance where breaches of the rules can only be investigated by the police and referred for criminal prosecution which is often considered to be disproportionate to the offence and not in the public interest.
- **The Electoral Commission’s submission of evidence to the Speaker’s Conference found that 55 per cent of respondents had experienced some form of harassment, intimidation or abuse, with ethnic minority and female candidates being more likely to report having experienced serious abuse.** 52 per cent of MPs reported they did not feel safe doing their

job. 49 per cent said they had experienced anxiety or depression due to the abuse and intimidation. One in three MPs had considered not standing for re-election due to the scale of threats and abuse. One in six MPs had considered resigning from public office altogether.

- **At the 2024 General Election, just over one in four of the votes cast were cast by post.** 89 per cent of postal voters reported satisfaction with the process of voting at the 2024 UK Parliamentary general election 95 per cent in Northern Ireland, 91 per cent in Wales, 89 per cent in England and 85 per cent in Scotland. This is according to the Electoral Commission's report into the May 2024 elections.
- **The Electoral Reform Society's** view is that *"This Representation of the People Bill is a major step forward for our democracy. It will give more young people a say, modernise our outdated registration system, and strengthen rules around campaign finance."*

## Remediation Bill

*“My Government will bring forward a Bill to speed up remediation for people living in homes with unsafe cladding”*

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- Nearly nine years on from the Grenfell Tower Fire tragedy, there are still too many buildings with unsafe cladding. The cladding safety crisis continues to endanger lives, and leave people stuck in unsuitable homes they're unable to sell.
  - The Remediation Bill delivers on the manifesto commitments to fix the cladding crisis and make those responsible pay towards fixing the problem they caused.
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### What does the Bill do?

- The Government is committed to driving forward remediation, that is, the removal of unsafe cladding which is putting lives at risk. This Bill will tackle those who are blocking remediation, restore confidence in the housing market, and make sure no building, and no resident, is left behind.
- The Bill will:
  - **Make construction product manufacturers pay towards fixing the problem they caused**, by fixing long-standing gaps in the law and ending years of inaction. For the first time developers, contractors and others who have paid to make buildings safe will be able to properly pursue manufacturers, rather than being blocked by technical legal barriers.
  - **Equip regulators with the powers they need to compel action, and bring the cladding safety crisis to an end.** It is unacceptable that the current regime lacks the severe sanctions needed to punish those who continuously and egregiously block remediation.
  - **Introduce a new legal duty to remediate**, compelling those responsible for the safety of their buildings, such as freeholders, to identify, assess, and fix their buildings without delay. Those responsible must act, or face the consequences, including criminal prosecution, in the most egregious and severe cases.
  - **Mandate how external wall assessments are carried out**, to ensure a nationally consistent approach to remediation work, and introduce an

11-18 metre register to identify all remaining buildings requiring remediation work. For the first time, the Government will have a complete record of all medium-rise buildings in England – putting an end to the information gap and improving system readiness if new risks affect homes.

- **Implement a remediation backstop** to allow a third party, such as Homes England, to step in and carry out remediation work themselves, ensuring that residents have a route to remediation even where the responsible party is determined to ignore their duty to keep residents safe. This will be backed by tough sanctions so they cannot benefit, including cost recovery and potential sale of their interest.
- **Fix gaps in previous legislation to protect residents and guarantee a route to remediation** – even where ownership is absent, unclear, or negligent.
- Every building made safe allows those who are stuck in unsuitable housing, through no fault of their own, to sell their flats and move on with their lives.

#### Territorial extent and application

- The Bill will extend to England and Wales. The majority of measures will apply in England only.

#### Key facts

- **Of the 4,310 buildings that are 11 metres and above in England that have been identified with unsafe cladding, work has been completed on only 35 per cent.** Too many of those responsible are not complying with their obligations to make their buildings safe. Regulators have had to take enforcement action at over 800 buildings with suspected unsafe cladding.
- **The Government, and some members of the construction industry, are funding the cost of remediating external wall defects.** The Government has committed £5.15 billion to remediate buildings in England, and the cost to the 53 developers who have signed the Developer Remediation Contract is estimated at £4.2 billion for buildings they are responsible for. Construction product manufacturers have yet to contribute towards the cost of fixing the problem they caused. As yet, no claim against a manufacturer has been brought to court. The Remediation Bill takes important steps to address this position, and the Government will continue work to ensure manufacturers play their part, including financially.

- **Too many buildings still lack clear, robust assessments of their external walls, delaying remediation and leaving residents exposed to unacceptable risk.** The Bill will put into law the standards and assurance practices already proven across government remediation programmes. It will legally require Fire Risk Appraisal of External Walls (FRAEWs) surveys to follow the PAS 9980 framework, providing a clear, proportionate and evidence-based methodology for assessing external wall risks. The Building Standards Institute is also working to finalise its review of PAS 9980 in summer 2026.
- **The ongoing cladding safety crisis is blighting lives across the country.** Those stuck in unremediated buildings are unable to feel safe in their homes, and unable to sell up and move on. They also face higher costs. The Financial Conduct Authority has found there was an 187 per cent increase in insurance premiums for buildings with identified flammable cladding from 2016 to 2021. The continued presence of unsafe cladding undermines confidence in the safety, value, and viability of living in, and owning, flats.
- **The Chair of the Building Safety Regulator Board, Lord Andrew Roe KFSM,** said *“The Remediation Bill will give us additional tools we need to compel reluctant landlords to take action to remediate their buildings and remove unsafe cladding, or face severe sanctions.” “Everyone deserves to feel safe and be safe in their homes. The Bill will help us achieve that goal.”*
- **The London Fire Brigade Commissioner, Jonathan Smith,** said *“We welcome this announcement and the continued progress toward legislation that will help address fire safety risks in high-rise residential buildings.” “Nearly nine years on from the Grenfell Tower Fire, there remain far too many buildings with serious fire safety issues. Ensuring that remediation progresses more effectively is critically important to restoring the confidence of residents in the safety of their homes.”*

## Draft Conversion Practices Bill

*“My Government will bring forward... a draft Bill to ban abusive conversion practices”*

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- Conversion practices are abuse, and the Government will deliver the manifesto commitment to bring forward a trans-inclusive ban on conversion practices.
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### What does the Bill do?

- The Conversion Practices Bill, which will be published in draft for pre-legislative scrutiny, will seek to fill the gaps in criminal law to target conversion practices.
- The Government wants to ensure that the criminal law offers protection from these practices, while also preserving the freedom for people, and those supporting them, to explore their sexual orientation and gender identity.
- The Government is clear that the ban must be balanced and targeted, so as not to impinge on legitimate healthcare and the range of broader support that those exploring their sexual orientation or gender identity might seek or receive. It is also not intended to interfere with people’s right to religious belief and expression.
- There is cross-party and cross-society consensus to see these practices banned. However, we need to ensure that the ban is effective in the long-term. The draft Bill will therefore be put forward for pre-legislative scrutiny, which will allow us to seek expert views from a range of stakeholders, and inform the subsequent legislative approach.
- Reports and case studies highlight that individuals are being subjected to conversion practices today - this is not just an historical issue. These practices are often damaging and have long-term impacts. The Government will act to protect all individuals from harmful and abusive attempts to change their sexual orientation or transgender identity.

### Territorial extent and application

- The draft Bill will extend and apply to England and Wales.

## Key facts

- Conversion practices are often hidden, covert, and associated with shame, which results in a reluctance of victims to come forward and therefore makes it difficult to ascertain the true extent of the problem. However, current evidence consistently shows that conversion practices still happen today.
- A nationally representative survey of 2,000 LGBT+ individuals in Great Britain, conducted by Opinium on behalf of Stonewall in 2024, found that **around one in ten (11 per cent) had experienced a form of conversion practice in the previous year.**
- A survey of LGBT+ individuals in the UK carried out by Galop in 2022 found that:
  - **Nearly one in five (18 per cent) of LGBT+ people in the UK have been subjected to someone trying to change, ‘cure’, or suppress their sexual orientation or gender identity.**
  - **Transgender respondents were much more likely to report having been subjected to conversion practices (43 per cent).**
- In 2017, the Government at the time conducted the National LGBT+ Survey. The open access survey received around 108,000 valid responses from across the UK. Of these:
  - **Two per cent of respondents reported having “undergone conversion or reparative therapy in an attempt to ‘cure’ them of being LGBT,” and a further five per cent reported having been offered it.**
  - **Transgender respondents were much more likely to report having undergone or been offered conversion therapy than non-transgender respondents (13 per cent vs seven per cent).**

## Draft Ticket Tout Ban Bill

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- For far too long, fans have been ripped off by touts buying large volumes of tickets online and reselling them for vastly inflated prices. The Government wants to help fans keep more of their hard-earned cash with action to make it illegal for tickets to live events to be resold for more than their original cost, eliminating the scourge of industrial scale ticket touting.
  - These measures will support our creative industries, one of the Government's eight Industrial Strategy growth sectors, by diverting profits away from unscrupulous touts and back into our world-famous live events sector – as well as putting money back into the pockets of hard-working people.
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### What does the Bill do?

- The Bill, which will be published in draft for pre-legislative scrutiny, will seek to destroy the operating model of ticket touts, improve access for genuine fans when tickets originally go on sale, and end rip-off resale prices once and for all.
- The Bill will:
  - **Make it illegal to resell a ticket for a live event at more than its original cost**, reducing the average price of a resale ticket by £37 and saving fans £112 million collectively each year.
  - **Cap the service fees charged by resale platforms**, preventing them from inflating their fees to profit share with touts.
  - **Make it illegal for someone to resell more tickets than they were originally entitled to buy** on the primary market.
  - **Place strict obligations on ticket resale platforms** to make sure they are truly accountable for ensuring the new rules are adhered to on their sites.
  - **Empower the Competition and Markets Authority to impose tough fines** of up to ten per cent of global turnover upon those found to be breaching the new laws.

- Taken together, this will mean that ticket touting will no longer be a profitable business in the UK, whilst still allowing genuine fans the ability to resell tickets for events they can no longer attend in a safe and secure way. Tackling touts will also help support the cost of living crisis by making it easier for genuine fans to buy tickets from primary sellers when they first go on sale, enabling more affordable prices on resale platforms, and creating a fairer system where hard-working people get the access they deserve.

### Territorial extent and application

- The Bill will extend and apply to the whole of the UK.

### Key facts

- Ticket touts, enabled by advances in digital technology, are using bots to buy up large numbers of tickets for live events on the primary market and resell them at vastly inflated prices on resale platforms.
- **Typical mark-ups on secondary market tickets exceed 50 per cent**, whilst investigations by Trading Standards have found evidence of tickets being resold at six times their original cost.
- These issues have been subject to intense media reporting around the release of tickets for popular events, most notably the Oasis Live '25 Tour announced in 2024.
- **The secondary ticketing market is dominated by a relatively small number of touts operating at scale.** It is estimated that the 200 largest resellers accounted for around 50 per cent of the ticket sales (by value) being sold on secondary ticketing platforms.
- Government analysis suggests that these measures could save fans around £112 million annually, with 900,000 more tickets bought directly from primary sellers each year. Inclusive of all fees paid, the average ticket price paid by fans on the resale market could be reduced by £37.

## Sporting Events Bill

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- Sport brings people together like nothing else. Hosting major sporting events brings significant economic benefits, inspires the next generation and drives pride in our communities.
  - The Sporting Events Bill will support and enhance the UK's status as a world-leading host of major sporting events. It will ensure these events – including EURO 2028 - can be delivered as efficiently as possible and enhance our competitive advantage when bidding for future global tournaments. It builds on our world-class reputation for delivering major sporting events and shows the world we are 'event ready', in line with the manifesto commitment.
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### What does the Bill do?

- The UK is a world-class host of major sporting events. To further strengthen our reputation and capability, and deliver the manifesto commitment, this Bill establishes a common legislative framework that can be applied to major sporting events in the UK to ensure we can meet commitments to international sporting event owners confidently, without the delay or uncertainty caused by having to legislate for each one.
- The Bill will:
  - **Enable Ministers to determine what specific measures are appropriate for each future event** and apply those provisions accordingly via secondary legislation.
  - **Deter touts by creating a UK-wide offence for the resale of tickets** for major sporting events. This will also ensure greater access to tickets for fans.
  - **Protect commercial rights** by introducing a UK-wide prohibition on unauthorised association with a sporting event and measures to restrict advertising and trading around event locations.
  - **Coordinate transport planning for major sporting events.** These measures, covering the requirement for a designated body to prepare, consult on, and publish a statutory transport plan and enhanced road regulation powers, ensure that appropriate traffic management

measures can be put in place for major sporting events and minimise the risk of relying on voluntary arrangements.

- This Bill will be used to support the delivery of the 2028 UEFA Men's European Football Championships (EURO 2028). The regulatory framework created by the Bill will go further, providing confidence in the UK's ability to host the world's biggest sporting events in the future, such as the FIFA Women's World Cup which the UK is seeking to host in 2035.

### Territorial extent and application

- The Bill will extend and apply to the whole of the UK.

### Key facts

- **Sport is estimated to be worth over £53.6 billion a year in Gross Value Added to the UK's economy**, as referenced in the Sport Satellite account for the UK 2024, and major sporting events play a significant role in delivering continued growth across many of our key sectors.
- **Major sporting events drive significant spending in a number of areas, particularly tourism and hospitality, creating jobs and boosting growth across the country.** On its own, the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games generated approximately £1.2 billion Gross Value Added of UK economic output and nearly £80 million of social value, as set out in the 'One year post Games evaluation' report.
- Alongside generating jobs and driving economic growth, **major sporting events bring significant non-monetised benefits**, including social cohesion, national pride, showcasing the UK internationally, strengthening soft power and trade, and creating a legacy which improves health, wellbeing and participation.
- **The Chairwoman of the Football Association (FA) and UK & Ireland 2028, Debbie Hewitt MBE**, said *"We welcome the UK Government's announcement today that reaffirms the nation's commitment to being a world-leading host of major sporting events, including UEFA EURO 2028. UK & Ireland 2028 and UEFA are working together to ensure the tournament offers a world-class fan experience and this legislation, including measures to tackle ticket touting, will help protect supporters and keep the event accessible."* *"With the UK currently bidding for FIFA Women's World Cup 2035, the Bill also strengthens our ability to secure future global events, creating opportunities to develop grassroots sport and ensure our communities feel long-lasting benefits."*

## STRENGTHENING PUBLIC SERVICES AND REFORMING THE STATE

### Police Reform Bill

*“My Ministers will push forward with significant reforms to the police”*

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- The Government is determined to restore the public’s trust in policing by driving down waste, cutting bureaucracy and empowering officers to focus on issues that matter most to their communities, turning around years of decline in neighbourhood policing.
  - The Bill will deliver the biggest reform to policing in decades, strengthening local policing, improving standards, and equipping the police with the technology and skills to keep pace with criminals and tackle rapidly changing threats.
  - It will create a police service that is more rooted in local communities and focused on their needs, more coherent in the way it is organised, more consistent in achieving high standards, and more capable in terms of its workforce, technology, and use of data.
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#### What does the Bill do?

- The Bill will:
  - **Ensure responsive and accountable local policing**, by making sure that in every force there are Local Policing Areas headed by a senior officer and responsible to the public for delivering the policing their community needs. The Government will deploy more officers into local neighbourhoods, tackling everyday crime and antisocial behaviour impacting local communities. Local Policing Areas will form the foundation of fewer, larger police forces, which will have the resilience to manage complex investigations and deliver specialist services that protect the public.
  - **Create a new national police force, the National Police Service**, that will deliver a unified response to the most serious crime, set stronger national standards, and ensure a more consistent service is received by the public regardless of where they live. The National Police Service will bring together the National Crime Agency, Counter Terrorism Policing, regional organised crime capabilities, the College of

Policing and other national operational functions and specialist capabilities.

- **Abolish Police and Crime Commissioners** and put in place successor arrangements. This will bring better outcomes for the public and policing, promoting collaboration across services and driving a whole-system approach to crime prevention.
- **Establish clear national priorities**, from a more active Home Office. Establishing a single set of 'National Strategic Policing Priorities' will give policing clarity on core priorities, align policing towards a single vision, and enable the Government to drive progress in halving violence against women and girls and knife crime.
- **Set and enforce standards for policing** to ensure that all police forces across England and Wales are delivering high quality and consistent services for their local communities. The new policing performance system will provide greater grip and oversight of policing, driving improvements to ensure the public get the service they deserve.
- **Establish a new legal framework to underpin law enforcement use of facial recognition** and similar technologies, making it clear when use of these technologies can be justified, including creation of a single, expert regulatory body to provide independent advice and oversight. This will be world-leading and is essential for boosting public and policing confidence in the use of these innovative technologies, which has the potential to transform crime outcomes while also generating major efficiencies.

### Territorial extent and application

- The majority of measures in the Bill will extend and apply to England and Wales.

### Key facts

- **The Government is already delivering for communities.** Knife crime is down, homicides are at their lowest levels in almost 50 years, and tens of thousands of dangerous weapons have been taken off our streets.
- **The Government will deliver 13,000 additional neighbourhood policing personnel** into roles across England and Wales by the end of this Parliament.

By February 2026, more than 3,100 additional police officers and police community support officers had been delivered into neighbourhood roles.

- **Neighbourhood policing has been deprioritised, leaving communities exposed to crime, disorder and a declining sense of public safety**, with officers too frequently covering shortfalls elsewhere. The percentage of people reporting that they never see the police or police community support officers on foot patrol in their local area has risen from 25 per cent in 2010-11, to 54 per cent in 2023-24.
- **Overall confidence in local police in 2024-25 is 67 per cent**, up two percentage points from 65 per cent in 2023-24 and down 12 percentage points from 79 per cent in 2015-16.
- **Trust in police in 2024-25 is 71 per cent**, up two percentage points from 69 per cent in 2023-24 and down nine percentage points from 80 per cent in 2015-16.
- **The Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) model has not achieved the connection to local communities that was intended**. 41 per cent of the public are not aware their PCC even exists.
- **Police performance has declined and is inconsistent across the country**. In 2024-25 the proportion of people who thought their local police force was doing a good or excellent job ranged from 39 per cent to 62 per cent across England and Wales.
- **The National Police Chiefs' Council** said *"This is the most significant change in policing in the last half a century, to get policing ready to fight crime and protect the public over the next half a century. The current policing model was designed in the 1960s. The postcode lottery of 43 police forces doing things 43 different ways, alongside a complicated mesh of regional collaborations, national agencies and funding streams, is both inefficient and ineffective. The need for significant police reform has been there for more than a decade and is now urgent, in a world where 90 per cent of crime has a digital element. We are grateful to ministers for clearly listening to the views of policing and putting together a package of ambitious and far-reaching measures which reflect the voice of our service."*

## NHS Modernisation Bill

*“My Ministers will push forward with significant reforms to... the National Health Service”*

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- The NHS Modernisation Bill is integral to the Government’s plans to improve care for patients through investment and modernisation. It will enhance patient safety and experience through a new Single Patient Record, enabling joined-up, proactive care and empowering patients. The Bill puts power and resources in the hands of frontline NHS organisations by abolishing NHS England and stripping back national bureaucracy.
  - These are necessary steps to reduce inefficiency, drive innovation, and support early intervention to help people stay well for longer. This will help put the NHS back on its feet so it’s there for patients when they need it, a better place for staff to work and better value for taxpayers.
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### What does the Bill do?

- Lord Darzi’s 2024 Review of the NHS in England found the NHS in a critical condition. A system too rigid and complex, over-centralised and with unclear accountability, using fragmented and outdated information systems resulting in poor patient care and experience.
- The 10 Year Health Plan for England sets out the Government’s vision to deliver high-quality healthcare for the public. An NHS that harnesses digital technologies, unlocks the value of health data, empowers patients and clinicians, embeds patient voice in decision-making, and gives greater power to local leaders, supported by a streamlined and accountable national centre.
- The Bill will:
  - **Build the Single Patient Record** - by enabling the NHS to bring together patients health and social care records into one place to improve patient safety and experience. It will enable people to see their own health records securely on the NHS App, empowering them to make informed decisions about their own health. This will apply to those receiving maternity and frailty care by 2028, with learning from this applied to the wider rollout.

- **Abolish NHS England** - by transferring NHS England's functions into the Department of Health and Social Care or the wider system, it will reduce bureaucracy, freeing up resources to be reinvested in the frontline – and in doing so will restore democratic ministerial accountability for national decision-making.
- **Strengthen local democratic accountability in health systems** - by placing new requirements for mayoral nominees to be on Integrated Care Boards (ICBs).
- **Streamline the patient safety landscape** and ensure better outcomes for patients and staff by transferring the Health Services Safety and Investigations Body functions to the Care Quality Commission. It will also help bring confidence that the Government has learnt from previous experiences by extending the time limit for the Care Quality Commission to bring legal action against a provider.
- **Embed patient voice in national decision-making** by transferring the functions of Healthwatch England to the Department of Health and Social Care, and developing a new Patient Experience Directorate in the department to make the public's voice more directly involved in the formulation of policy.
- **Support ICBs to become strategic commissioners** by transferring responsibilities for all but the most specialised commissioning functions to ICBs, including primary care, dentistry, ophthalmology and pharmacy.
- **Give ICBs the flexibility in how to manage their local systems** by refining the membership of their boards. The Bill will also streamline the planning process to ensure there are ICB plans at neighbourhood and strategic level, eliminating the requirement on a local area to have an Integrated Care Partnership and allowing for greater flexibility.
- **Empower providers through Foundation Trust reform**, giving them more flexibility to design and deliver healthcare around local needs by removing the requirement for a Council of Governors. The power to deauthorise Foundation Trusts as a last resort option will also return to Ministers.
- **Ensure the voices of patients, service users and local people feed directly into the services they receive**, by transferring the functions of Local Healthwatch to where local decisions are made. The functions relating to healthcare will transfer into ICBs, while the functions relating to social care move to local authorities. Putting patients at the heart of

care means devolving decisions to a local level, so those who truly understand the needs of their communities are trusted to shape and integrate services more effectively.

### Territorial extent and application

- The majority of the Bill will extend to England and Wales, with some provisions extending to the whole of the UK. The majority of provisions will apply to England only.

### Key facts

- **Accountability has been lost in layers of bureaucracy.** Since NHS England's creation in 2013, the number of staff working in NHS England (including previously independent digital, workforce and trust regulator bodies) and the Department of Health and Social Care has risen by 50 per cent. Local leaders have complained of "two centres", creating confusion and inertia, and diluting democratic accountability for the NHS. The public rightly expects to hold politicians to account directly for the quality of the services they are paying for.
- The reintegration of NHS England and the restructuring of ICBs is expected to **save £1 billion a year by the end of this Parliament.**
- **The wider national health and care landscape includes 23 arm's length bodies**, some of which have overlapping responsibilities, creating confusion and slowing decision-making. This Bill will clarify the role of local health bodies, giving them real flexibility to design and deliver health services to best meet the needs of their local populations.
- The Hewitt Review of integrated care systems, published April 2023, highlighted challenges to the system from competing requests for information from both NHS England and the Department of Health and Social Care. For example: "... in December 2022, in one instance one integrated care system received 97 ad-hoc requests from DHSC and NHSE, in addition to the 6 key monthly, 11 weekly and 3 daily data returns."
- **There are more than 70 different channels or organisations that offer a place for patients or users to share feedback.** The Dash Review of patient safety across the health and care landscape, published July 2025, concluded that even though there are multiple organisations representing the voice of the user (including local Healthwatch), patient experience has not been given the attention that it deserves.

- **A cluttered patient safety landscape has resulted in an overwhelming number of recommendations, varying in quality and value with recommendations overlapping or contradicting others.** The Thirlwall Inquiry found that there have been over 1,400 recommendations from 30 inquiries that have taken place in England and Wales in the last 30 years, related to its Terms of Reference alone. The various inquiries and reviews into maternity care over the last five years resulted in over 450 recommendations.
- **Information silos across hospitals, GPs and community care force patients to repeat their stories and clinicians to work with incomplete data.** This is not just an inconvenience: it puts patient safety at risk. When clinicians do not have all the relevant facts available, they cannot make the best decisions, and patients lose out. A lack of joined up care records also means that the NHS misses opportunities to diagnose and treat people early.
- According to Healthwatch England's May 2025 Report, **nearly one in four adults have noticed inaccuracies or missing details in their medical records**, such as incorrect personal details, inaccurate records of medication, diagnoses, treatments, and conditions. Over one in four of those who have noticed inaccuracies say they have had to repeat their patient history.
- **Independent public deliberations showed support for the Single Patient Record was strong and wide.** It was described as a "long overdue fix to fragmented care" and 76 per cent were in support of a single patient record.
- **A survey of 1,888 English adults (aged 18-75), by the King's Fund in February 2025, found that nearly two in three patients and carers have experienced at least one problem over the last year with their care**, such as having to chase for test results, attending an appointment but the right information was not available, or inability to change or cancel appointments. The survey concluded that this is leading to patient frustration, with four in 10 who faced administration problems less likely to seek care in the future.
- **In the year up to April 2018, there were over 11 million occasions of a patient presenting to a hospital using a different Electronic Patient Record system to their previous attendance** (Warren et al, 'Measuring the Scale of Hospital Health Record System Fragmentation in England', August 2020).
- **In the year up to April 2018, nearly 4 million patients accessed care at two or more NHS hospitals trusts**, highlighting the demand for effective inter-hospital data sharing. **65 per cent** of maternity complaints to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman between 2020 to 2022 related to communication failures.

## Railways and Passenger Benefits Bill

*“My Government will improve critical infrastructure with legislation to... establish Great British Railways”*

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- Our railways are essential for ensuring reliable, affordable and accessible transport. They offer a crucial route for people to get to work and education, they connect friends and families, and they support businesses and the wider economy. The rail sector and its supply chains support more than 220,000 jobs and generate wide economic benefits by connecting people and places.
  - However, the railways have suffered neglect. Services have fallen below expectation, customers deserve more and taxpayers have been getting poor value for their hard-earned money. The Bill will finally address this, delivering on the manifesto commitment to establish Great British Railways and provide new leadership, accountability, and passenger focus to a sector that has been in desperate need of it.
  - The Bill ensures the railway delivers for those who rely on it most. It establishes a strong Passenger Watchdog to ensure passengers’ voices are championed at every turn, simplifies the current confusing and fragmented ticketing system, and includes duties to protect and grow the freight industry – unlocking the economic growth opportunities the Government is committed to delivering.
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### What does the Bill do?

- Low public trust and pride in today’s railway are symptoms of a system which has lost sight of the very people and customers it is meant to serve. **The Government is delivering Britain a railway fit for its future.**
- The Bill will:
  - **Establish Great British Railways (GBR)**, a new publicly owned company that will be at the core of the reformed rail industry. GBR will unite track and train under a single body for the first time in a generation. GBR will be unambiguously accountable for making the railway work for passengers, customers, and taxpayers. Whether reuniting family and friends, transporting critical goods across the country, or connecting Britain’s business, GBR will ensure that the railways deliver for all those that rely on it.

- **Set up a powerful Passenger Watchdog** that will set consumer standards for the railways, investigate poor service, and provide an independent rail ombudsman service to resolve disputes between passengers and operators. This means passengers will have an independent voice fighting their corner and holding GBR to account.
- **Simplify fares and tickets.** Buying a ticket is frequently confusing and opaque for passengers, with no less than 55 million different fare types available. GBR will consolidate the 14 existing operator websites into a single online platform, and reform the outdated fares structure making it easy for passengers to find the most affordable fare. For each journey there will be one transparent price available to everyone.
- **Realise the benefits of rail freight** and ensure freight is properly considered within GBR's planning and decision-making, through two new statutory duties. This means that there will be a single strategic body empowered to deliver the ambitions for freight and with the levers to drive progress towards set targets.
- **Provide long-term confidence.** GBR will be steered via a new Long-Term Rail Strategy. This is the first time in railway history the sector will have a strategy of this kind, providing confidence and certainty for the industry. The Strategy will inform GBR about the Government's priorities for the railway, helping it to make long-term choices which align with key priorities on housing, the economy, and the environment.
- **Make best use of the railway.** The Bill makes GBR the single accountable body for deciding access to its rail network. This will rid the sector of the current complexity and fragmentation which has led to disagreements on which services to run, delays in producing timetables and an inability to cope with growing capacity constraints. The only way to solve this is to put one body in charge of it all, to consider the whole network holistically and fairly, and to make the best use of it in the public interest.
- **Empower devolved leaders.** The Bill puts power back where it belongs – closer to passengers and communities. Mayors in Mayoral Strategic Authorities will have a statutory role, ensuring they have a powerful voice and are empowered to work in partnership with GBR. Devolved governments will have bespoke agreements giving them a clear role in the management of GBR. This is a genuine step-change and will ensure local interests across Great Britain are considered in every aspect of GBR's decision-making.

## Territorial extent and application

- The Bill will extend to the whole of the UK, with most measures applying to England, Wales and Scotland.

## Key facts

- Once all currently franchised services have transferred, public ownership will **save the taxpayer up to £150 million a year** in fees that would otherwise have been paid to private operators.
- Reforms will simplify the industry and **unlock £1 billion in efficiencies**, which will greatly outweigh the investment required to deliver a once in a generation improvement in the way train services are planned and delivered.
- Passengers will save **£600 million** as part of the Government's regulated fares freeze, with passengers on some routes saving more than **£300** a year, as part of plans to put passengers back at the heart of the railway.
- The railway faces a significant affordability challenge. **Government funding for the operational rail industry was around £12 billion in 2024-25**. This covers nearly half of total industry costs and equates to around £400 per household in Great Britain. It is vital that taxpayers are getting value for money and a rail service they can rely on and have confidence in.
- Overall levels of government support for operational costs remain **nearly £4 billion higher than pre-pandemic**. GBR will be incentivised to drive up revenue, reduce subsidy, and deliver for taxpayers.
- There were around **1.7 billion journeys made by rail passengers in Great Britain in 2024-25**, a 7 per cent increase from the year prior. However, rail passenger usage has not quite yet recovered to pre-pandemic levels. Integrating track and train through GBR will support more efficient service planning and improved performance of the railways.
- **Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham**, said *"This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to overhaul how the railways are run – creating a service that puts passengers first, with more reliable trains and simpler fares and tickets."*
- **Mayor of the North East, Kim McGuinness**, said *"Passengers are crying out for a rail service that works for them. We need our train services to be joined up and much more reliable – helping more people get to where they need to be for the right price."*

- **The Chief Executive Officer for the Campaign for Better Transport, Ben Plowden**, said *“An accessible, affordable and reliable rail network integrated with the wider transport system is key to delivering sustainable economic growth and improving regional productivity. [This] marks another important step on the road to realising this vision and delivering a railway that works for passengers, freight operators and the country as a whole.”*

## Digital Access to Services Bill

*“My Ministers will also proceed with the introduction of Digital ID that will modernise how citizens interact with public services”*

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- The Government is renewing Britain with accessible public services that work for citizens, and come together on the GOV.UK app. The app will become the front door to accessing public services - as with online banking or shopping apps - with the Digital ID system at its foundation.
  - Digital ID will be free to access for anyone who wishes to use it, providing people with a trusted, useful, and secure proof of identity for use across public services and the wider economy, without needing to carry around physical documents that can be lost, forged or stolen. Whether picking up a parcel or accessing public services like free childcare, or proving your right to work, it will give people greater control over their data, with a safe and simple way to decide who gets to see their details when using their Digital ID.
  - With inclusion at the core of its design and delivery, the national Digital ID will be a necessary foundation for tackling the exclusion of those who cannot access traditional forms of ID like a passport or driving license. By providing a free to access, trusted proof of identity, this is an opportunity to empower those who often lack the time, connections, and resources to navigate confusing and time-consuming checks, forms, rooms, and front-desks.
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### What does the Bill do?

- Too often, accessing public services and proving identity in the UK can be frustrating, inefficient, and insecure. Digital ID moves away from the annoyance of endless telephone calls, complicated printed forms, and the need to tell your story multiple times to different parts of the Government, with hours on hold and not knowing where you are in the process. Modern, digital public services will make everyday interactions easier, free up traditional routes for those who need them, and save the taxpayer money.
- Digital ID aims to tackle these problems head-on. It will:
  - **Be a convenient way for people to prove who they are.** The public will have the option to use Digital ID to prove who they are quickly and easily across public sector services and the wider economy. Existing

routes will remain available for those who prefer to access services that way.

- **Use the latest security technology and put people more in control of their data.** Unlike physical documents that expose name, address, and date of birth all at once, Digital ID will share only the specific information required.
- **Reduce bureaucracy and help the Government to build the intuitive, efficient, and responsive public services the UK deserves.** A national Digital ID system is key to enabling streamlined, digital, public service provision. It will support the join-up of public services, saving time and taxpayers' money.
- The Bill will:
  - Establish the legal framework for the Government to create, issue and use Digital ID.
  - Set out the information the Digital ID credential will contain, and provide for how it can be issued, maintained, stored, and verified, as well as eligibility requirements.
  - Include provisions to create and maintain the Digital ID credential, enable its use, and aid public sector join-up, alongside appropriate safeguards.
  - Include provisions to enable the use of Digital ID in priority areas across the public and wider economy, as well as establishing an audit function for Digital Right to Work checks.
- One of the first use cases for the Digital ID will be for Digital Right to Work Checks by the end of this Parliament, creating a more secure, efficient and reliable system, while acting as a deterrent to illegal working. Digital ID will be one way to verify your right to work digitally, along with other forms such as a digital check of documents like your passport or eVisa. Digital checking services will be supplied by a private provider that meets Government standards.

### **Territorial extent and application**

- The majority of the measures will extend and apply to the whole of the UK.

## Key facts

- **Around 15 per cent of households with income under £5,000 a year had no photo identification in 2024.** Providing a free to access Digital ID will help ensure that for all households, affordability of ID is not a barrier to accessing public services.
- **Digital IDs increase efficiency in public services, delivering better value for money for the taxpayer.** The DVLA currently processes 45,000 letters a day, and HMRC handles 100,000 phone calls a day. Digital ID is about reducing this bureaucracy, which will deliver savings across public services in the UK.
- **Identity fraud is estimated to cost households £1.8 billion per annum.** The Digital ID will help tackle this by making it harder for criminals to misuse identities that do not belong to them.
- **11 per cent of employers said their employees find it difficult to supply the right documents for right to work checks.** We expect that the introduction of the Digital ID will support easier compliance with the existing right to work scheme.
- **In Estonia, digital signatures - which are enabled by the Digital ID system - are estimated to save the nation 2 per cent of its entire economic output annually.** In Australia, people can use their Digital ID to access over 246 government services.
- **In 2024, an organised criminal gang was convicted of falsely claiming £54 million of Universal Credit through using stolen identities and faked documents.** The Digital ID will make it harder for criminals to claim benefits using stolen identities.
- **A mature infrastructure for the trusted creation and use of digital identities already exists, rooted in the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, and the UK digital verification services (DVS) framework.** The Government will build on the strong foundations this infrastructure has put in place to accelerate adoption of the national Digital ID and support the acceptance of digital identities across the economy.
- **The private DVS Sector generated £2.1 billion in annual revenue in 2023-24.** The Government expects that the existing market of trusted DVS providers will play an important role in supporting consumer choice and sharing information from the Digital ID into the wider economy.

## Public Office (Accountability) Bill

*“My Government will introduce the Hillsborough Law to bring forward a duty of candour for public servants”*

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- This Bill will deliver on the manifesto commitment to bring forward a Hillsborough Law.
  - The measures in this Bill will end the culture of cover-ups and institutional defensiveness by bringing forward measures that create duties of candour; individual accountability; honesty and frankness when things go wrong; and ‘parity of arms’ at inquests.
- 

### What does the Bill do?

- The Bill will:
  - **Create powerful new obligations on public bodies and officials to help investigations to find the truth;** providing information and evidence with candour, proactively, and without favouring their own position. This includes a new criminal offence for non-compliance.
  - **Place public officials under new duties of candour relating to their day-to-day work.** These “professional duties of candour” will be set out in mandatory ethical codes - with potential consequences up to and including gross misconduct for those who do not comply.
  - **Establish clear individual accountability for creating and spreading false narratives** – through the creation of the offence of misleading the public.
  - **Reform the offence of “misconduct in public office”** - including a new offence of serious impropriety, and another of breaching a duty to prevent death or serious harm. Both of these offences come with serious custodial sentences.

- **Tackle the disparity in power between the state and bereaved families at inquests** by providing bereaved families with access to non-means tested legal aid for all inquests where a public authority is an interested person, and placing a duty on public authorities to only use legal representation when necessary and proportionate.

### Territorial extent and application

- The Bill will extend to the whole of the UK. The duty of candour provisions will apply to the whole of the UK. The other measures in the Bill currently apply to England and Wales but the Government continues to work with the devolved governments to consider whether these should be extended to Scotland and/or Northern Ireland.

### Key facts

- The legal aid reforms will increase the number of legally aided inquests from approximately 200-400 to up to approximately 11,400 per year. This expansion of legal aid will cost up to approximately £185 million per year, plus operational costs.
- **The former Bishop for Liverpool, The Right Reverend Bishop James Jones KBE**, said *"The voices of the families and survivors have triumphed after 36 years. I salute their dignified tenacity. This groundbreaking bill will make the whole country a more truthful and just nation."*

## Removal of Peerages Bill

*“My Ministers will also introduce legislation to enable peerages to be removed”*

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- It is unacceptable that disgraced peers are able to retain their peerages, regardless of the circumstances. The Bill will create a mechanism for removing peerages from disgraced peers.
  - This will serve to protect the integrity of the peerage system and uphold standards in public life.
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### What does the Bill do?

- The Bill will create a mechanism for removing peerages from disgraced peers, without the need to introduce bespoke legislation for every individual case. It will introduce a strengthened system of accountability for peers that applies to both current and retired members of the House of Lords.
- The public rightly expects that peers who are, or have been, members of the House of Lords, exercising public functions as legislators, should uphold the highest standards in public life. Where they fall well below those standards, they should not expect to continue to be afforded the honour of holding a peerage.
- At the moment, disgraced peers can still benefit from their title, in terms of their status and reputation, even if they are expelled from the House of Lords or choose to resign.
- The Government was elected on the promise of increasing accountability and ensuring that all serving peers meet the high standards the public expects. Having passed the House of Lords (Hereditary Peers) Act 2026, which removes the right of hereditary peers to sit and vote in the House of Lords, the Government secured agreement with the Lords to establish a dedicated select committee to look at how best to implement the manifesto commitments on a retirement age and participation requirement.

### Territorial extent and application

- The Bill will extend and apply to the whole of the UK.

## Key facts

- A peerage is a dignity conferred by the Crown. In contrast to other types of styles, titles, and honours that can be removed under the Royal Prerogative, there is currently no mechanism by which a peerage can be removed, and to do so in any individual case would require an Act of Parliament.
- The Titles Deprivation Act 1917, which authorised enemies of the UK to be deprived of their peerages during the First World War, is the most recent example of Parliament legislating in this way. The most recent example of an Act of Parliament specifically removing an individual's peerage is over five centuries old (from 1478).
- The revocation of peerages from individuals is separate to the rules related to suspension and expulsion of members from the House of Lords. Members can be removed from the House of Lords for various reasons, including being sentenced to a year or more of imprisonment, for example. But expulsion from the House of Lords does not change their title or status as a peer. This means that a peer may be guilty of serious misconduct, including a criminal offence, and expelled from the House, but would still hold their peerage.
- A peer may be removed from the Roll of the Peerage (an officially compiled and maintained list, intended to contain the names of all living peers). This means the peerage may no longer be recognised officially, but does not affect an individual's right to that peerage (which can only be removed by legislation).
- The manifesto committed to ensuring "all peers meet the high standards the public expect of them" and to "introduce a new participation requirement as well as strengthening the circumstances in which disgraced members can be removed."
- **The Chief Executive Officer of the Institute for Government, Hannah White**, said "*The Mandelson case demonstrates why – for the good of public trust in parliament – it is important for the House of Lords to have a mechanism to remove peerages.*"

## Courts Modernisation Bill

*“My Ministers will push forward with significant reforms to... the criminal justice system”*

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- The justice system is in crisis. Despite the Government’s record investment into criminal court capacity there is a record high and rising caseload. We cannot leave victims – and those seeking to clear their name – waiting. Justice delayed is justice denied. Without action, the situation will continue to spiral far beyond the point of recovery.
  - Sir Brian Leveson’s report set out a blueprint for much-needed reform of the criminal courts. This Bill (formally titled the Courts and Tribunals Bill) is the first step to putting that blueprint into law and will bring a neglected service into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, ensuring timely and fair justice for all.
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### What does the Bill do?

- The Government is working hard to make the courts more efficient, including investing record sums in the Crown Courts to empower them to take on as much work and see as many cases as possible. But these steps alone are not enough. Without reform, the Crown Court backlogs will continue to rise.
- The Bill will:
  - **Remove the right of defendants to elect for a Crown Court trial in cases which can be heard in either a Magistrates’ or a Crown Court (triable either-way cases).** This will streamline the criminal courts allocation process by ensuring that decisions about jurisdiction are made solely by the courts, so cases are heard in the most appropriate venue according to their severity and complexity.
  - **Extend magistrates’ court sentencing powers** up to 18 months for single and multiple triable-either-way offences, with the potential to increase this to 24 months if necessary. This will mean more cases are heard in the magistrates’ courts, freeing up Crown Court capacity.
  - **Replace the automatic right to appeal against a conviction or sentence in magistrates’ courts with a permission stage,** supporting victims in ensuring they do not have to experience the trauma of a second trial at appeal. The Bill also introduces audio

recording in magistrates' courts, saving time and reducing the impact of appeals on victims and witnesses.

- **Introduce new modes of trial by judge alone in defined circumstances.** Introducing a new tier of the Crown Court – the 'Bench Division' – to hear triable either-way cases likely to receive a custodial sentence of three years or less, and suitably complex and lengthy fraud and other financial cases by judge alone. This will enable cases to be considered appropriately and ensure more serious cases can be tried by jury.
- **Bring forward measures to prevent victims of sexual offences being unfairly undermined in the court room.** This includes clearer statutory thresholds governing the admissibility of sexual behaviour evidence and previous allegations of assault.
- **Introduce measures to strengthen and clarify the special measures available to vulnerable and intimidated victims and witnesses,** to help them give their best evidence to the court.
- **Repeal the presumption of parental involvement** to ensure courts prioritise the child's best interests and adopt an open-minded approach, rather than starting from a presumption that parental involvement will further the child's welfare.
- **Reform the office of the Senior President of Tribunals,** bringing structural alignment with the courts under the unified leadership of the Lady Chief Justice. This promotes flexibility, cross-deployment and effective judicial leadership which can better support career development, morale and recruitment.

### Territorial extent and application

- The Bill will extend to the whole of the UK, with the majority of measures applying to England and Wales only.

### Key facts

- The Government's modelling (as set out in the Bill's Impact Assessment), which has been independently verified, shows that **the full package of measures in this Bill will deliver time savings nearing 20 per cent - the equivalent of around 27,000 sitting days** – in 2028-29.

- **Over 80,000 criminal cases are currently waiting to be heard in the Crown Court.** That is more than double the volume pre-Covid. Without action, the caseload could reach over 200,000 by 2035. Some victims are waiting years for justice – **over 21,000 open cases have already been waiting for more than a year.**
- **For the current financial year (2025-26), the Government is funding unlimited sitting days so that the Crown Court can hear as many cases as possible.** In the last financial year (2024-25), the Government funded a record 111,250 sitting days in the Crown Court, 5,000 more days than funded in 2024 by the previous government.
- **Current estimates are that there would need to be around 139,000 sitting days to keep up with demand.** That level of system capacity simply does not exist.
- **Cases are open at the Crown Court for 82 per cent longer than in 2019** - 160 days between October and December 2019 compared to 290 days over the same period in 2025.
- **In 2024, cases relating to ‘triable either way’ offences that were heard in in magistrates’ courts were completed more than four times faster than those heard in the Crown Court.**
- **Over 90 per cent of criminal cases are currently heard by magistrates’ courts,** without a jury.
- Following these reforms, **the Government expects that around three-quarters of trials that proceed to the Crown Court will continue to be heard by a jury.** This means a change to less than 1.5 per cent of all criminal trial cases.
- **Sir Brian Leveson’s findings show that jury trials take twice as long now as they did in 2000.** He estimates that trials without a jury will reduce hearing time by at least 20 per cent, which he considers to be a ‘conservative’ estimate. **This assumption is consistent with international evidence.** Data from New South Wales, Australia, shows an average 16 per cent reduction in trial length for judge-only trials, rising to around 29 per cent for complex cases. Taken together, the 20 per cent figure is cautious, evidence-based, and firmly mid-range.
- **The amount of work the criminal courts have to process is increasing.** The number of arrests has risen by 10 per cent, and the number of cases arriving at the Crown Court is up 18 per cent since 2019. This is due to

increased police officer recruitment leading to a higher number of charges for criminal offences.

- **Criminal cases are becoming increasingly complex.** For example, while relatively recent forms of evidence (mobile phones, computers and DNA analysis) have improved justice and fairness, they have also increased the time that criminal trials take.
- **The former Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales, The Rt Hon Lord Burnett of Maldon, KG, PC, DL** said *“Only radical change stands any prospect of bringing the backlog within bounds. It is not fair on defendants, complainants or witnesses for trials to come on years after the case entered the courts. Delay of the sort we are now seeing undermines the rule of law.”*
- **The Victims’ Commissioner for England and Wales, Claire Waxman OBE,** said *“A system that is crippled by endless delays and forces a rape survivor to wait five or more years for their chance at justice is indefensible. We are at a tipping point. If we do nothing, or not enough, victims will give up.”*

## Northern Ireland Troubles Bill

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- The legacy of the Troubles continues to be deeply felt by victims, those who served in Northern Ireland and wider society. This Bill is needed because the previous Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023 (the 'Legacy Act') was flawed and left our veterans without any lawful protection and exposed to a legal Wild West.
  - The Government will address the unfinished business from the Good Friday Agreement. Too many families – including hundreds of Armed Forces families – are still looking for answers about what happened to their loved ones during the Troubles.
  - The Bill will provide effective protections for veterans and enable bereaved families, including of service personnel, to get answers about what happened to their loved ones. This will be supported by the fullest possible disclosure by the Irish authorities for investigations conducted by the Commission. It will ensure that nobody receives immunity for terrorist crimes; and puts in place the strongest safeguards for veterans and all who served to bring about peace.
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### What does the Bill do?

- The Northern Ireland Troubles Bill will enable victims and bereaved families across the UK to seek information and accountability through a reformed Legacy Commission. As we approach three decades since the Good Friday Agreement, this Bill delivers on one of its final aims.
- The previous government's Legacy Act was widely opposed across communities in Northern Ireland and was rejected by domestic courts. Its 'immunity scheme' was ruled against and was never commenced, causing legal uncertainty and therefore not providing protection for veterans. It sought to offer immunity to terrorists as well as veterans, and so was seen by many as an affront to the rule of law that our security forces sought to protect. All of this undermined trust and confidence in the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery (ICRIR).
- The Bill will:
  - **Establish a reformed Legacy Commission (reconstituted from the ICRIR)** that all victims and families can have confidence in. It will have powers to investigate and fact-find for families affected by the Troubles,

right across the UK. This means that many more families, including bereaved families of service personnel, will have the opportunity to obtain information they have long sought. The Commission will have new governance arrangements, a statutory victims and survivors advisory group and new conflict of interest duties.

- **Create new lawful protections for our veterans.** These will apply to security forces personnel who served in Northern Ireland during the Troubles and who are asked to give information, ensuring they are treated with dignity and respect. For instance, there will be an end to cold-calling, and veterans being asked to travel to Northern Ireland to give evidence, and there will be no needless duplication of previous investigations.
- **Deliver a fair disclosure regime,** ensuring that the Commission has all it needs to find answers for families and to make public the maximum possible information without risking life or national security. Parallel Irish legislation will also provide for the fullest possible information sharing by the Irish authorities with the Legacy Commission.
- **Restore a limited number of inquests** which had started but were stopped by the Legacy Act and put in place practical and deliverable safeguards for those who are required to engage. Inquests that had not started will be referred to the Solicitor General to independently consider whether, in each case, they are most appropriately dealt with by the Legacy Commission or in the coronial system.
- **Create a new process within the Commission to handle cases that transfer from the coronial system.** Consistent with the approach in the Inquiries Act, but benefitting from economies of scale and specific legacy expertise, the Commission will have provision for public hearings, the ability to consider sensitive information in closed hearings and will provide effective next of kin participation, including through legal representation.
- **Establish an Independent Commission on Information Retrieval (ICIR),** jointly with the Irish Government, and consistent with the Stormont House Agreement. This will, initially on a pilot basis, provide families with an additional means to retrieve information. Any information disclosed by individuals to the ICIR will be inadmissible in criminal and civil proceedings.

- **Leave in place Part 4 of the Legacy Act** which will ensure that the provisions regarding oral history, academic research and the memorialisation of the Troubles remain intact.
- **The Bill delivers on the Joint Framework agreed with the Irish Government in September 2025.** As part of this, the Irish Government committed to: establishing a dedicated unit within An Garda Síochána (AGS) for Troubles-related cases as a central point of contact for families; AGS investigating all unresolved Troubles-related incidents within its jurisdiction; ensuring that any potential investigative opportunities are proactively pursued; and facilitating the fullest possible information sharing between the Irish authorities and the Legacy Commission.
- **The dedicated unit within AGS has now been established,** and the Irish Government will shortly publish its legislative proposal on cross-border co-operation between the Irish authorities and the reformed Legacy Commission, as well as the establishment of the Independent Commission for Information Retrieval.

### Territorial extent and application

- The majority of the Bill will extend and apply to the whole of the UK, with some small elements, such as Inquests, extending and applying to Northern Ireland only.

### Key facts

- All 966 ongoing civil claims are against the state, not individuals. This includes 123 cases halted by the Legacy Act, which the courts found to be incompatible with our legal obligations. Even cases made against alleged agents are made against the state, not individuals. The Government estimates that for cases since 2020 in which the Ministry of Defence is the defendant, only five veterans have attended court. It is highly unusual for claims to be issued against personally named defendants – in rare instances where this happened, the Ministry of Defence has succeeded in having the individual defendant struck out.
- Over 3,500 people were killed during the Troubles, although the exact number of Troubles related deaths is disputed and differs between sources. Paramilitaries are responsible for over 3,000 of these deaths, including over 1,700 attributed to the IRA.
- Of the more than 3,500 deaths, over 1,000 were UK security forces personnel, with many more seriously injured. A third of the killings, among

them some of the most heinous terrorist attacks in our history, remain unsolved.

- During the Troubles, an estimated 25,000 - 35,000 republicans and loyalists were imprisoned for a range of offences, including murder. During the same period, four members of the British Army were convicted of murder and one of those convictions was overturned on appeal.
- **The Law Society for Northern Ireland** *“welcomes the revised framework and that the Bill will amend the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023. The Society considers that the new framework and draft Bill represent an important opportunity for the UK and Ireland to deliver a bilateral, victims-centred and human rights compliant approach to addressing the legacy of the past in Northern Ireland, with the aim of delivering truth and justice to victims and survivors of the Troubles.”*
- **The Royal British Legion** *‘are pleased the Government will be introducing safeguards to protect veterans from repeated investigations, and measures to consider the health and wellbeing of those involved in investigations, while ensuring bereaved Armed Forces families can continue to pursue answers to their longstanding questions’.*

## Draft Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Bill

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- Taxi and private hire vehicle (PHV) laws are outdated. The Government will make everyday journeys safer, fairer and easier. It will strengthen public safety, remove barriers for disabled passengers, and reflect how people travel today, including the use of booking apps. By supporting a growing, innovative sector while making streets safer, especially for women and girls, the Bill will deliver taxi and private hire services people can trust.
  - This growing, nationally operating sector is regulated through an outdated and fragmented framework, leading to inconsistent standards, safeguarding risks, and ineffective enforcement. National standards will help, but further legislative measures are needed to align licensing with journeys, enable information sharing, and ensure resources are matched to risk and activity. The draft Bill provides the necessary framework to address these systemic issues.
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### What does the Bill do?

- These reforms will look to modernise taxi and PHV laws. The draft Bill will be put forward for pre-legislative scrutiny, which will allow the Government to seek expert views from a range of stakeholders and create the strongest legislation possible.
- The Bill will:
  - **Modernise taxi and private hire law for the way people travel today**, replacing a patchwork of outdated, Victorian-era rules with a single, consistent framework across England that passengers and drivers can trust.
  - **Be the final step to delivering on the commitment to legislate in response to Baroness Casey's National Audit on Group-based Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse**. It will: fix a fragmented system that has not always protected passengers as it should; strengthen public safety and accountability by setting clear requirements for obtaining and holding licenses; and improve the efficiency of licensing and the use of strong, consistent enforcement powers, with funding for enforcement matched to where services are delivered. Baroness Casey was clear that inconsistent taxi and PHV licensing creates vulnerabilities that can be exploited by grooming gangs. Reforming the

system is essential to strengthen the safeguarding response and disrupt any potential exploitation.

- **Give regulators stronger enforcement powers** so swift and effective action can be taken when drivers or operators breach their licence conditions, helping to drive up standards and tackle poor or unsafe practice.
  - **Improve transparency and information-sharing nationwide** by mandating use of a national database of all licensed vehicles, drivers and PHV operators, so licensing authorities can better protect the public and passengers can have greater confidence in the system.
  - **Deliver more accessible services for disabled passengers**, by strengthening existing protections and removing barriers to travel helping ensure people who rely most on taxis and PHV are not left behind.
  - **Provide a consistent customer experience wherever people travel**, so passengers can expect safe, reliable and properly regulated services whether they're travelling locally or long distances across local authority boundaries.
  - **Support a thriving, professional sector** by creating clearer rules to enable fair competition, while supporting the wider economy – from the night-time economy to shift workers and local businesses.
- These measures will create a modern, joined-up taxi and PHV system where people are confident in their safety and experience wherever they travel, and where the powers, data and accountability sit in the right place to act when standards fall short.

### Territorial extent and application

- The draft Bill will extend to England and Wales and apply to England only.

### Key facts

- **The taxi and PHV sector is large and growing.** As of 1 April 2024, there were 313,000 licensed vehicles and 381,100 licensed drivers in England, continuing a long-term upward trend, according to Government statistics published in 2024.
- **Regulation outside London remains rooted in legislation dating back to the Town Police Clauses Act 1847, designed for locally operating, horse-drawn vehicles.** Incremental reform has produced a complex system underpinned by case law and different regimes across Plymouth, London and

the rest of England, which is poorly suited to a market characterised by digital technology and cross-border working.

- **Licensing standards and practices vary widely between authorities**, including in decision-making, fees, conditions, and enforcement activity. While National standards are expected to improve baseline consistency and reduce incentives for drivers and operators to license away from where they intend to work, taken alone they are unlikely to resolve the full problem. Without a closer match between where licences are issued and where journeys take place, enforcement activity and resources remain misaligned, limiting effectiveness and undermining public confidence.
- **Weaknesses in regulation disproportionately affect groups with fewer transport alternatives**, increasing equality and safety risks. According to the same Government statistics, this includes children travelling from home to school, with 8 per cent of journeys by taxi and PHV in 2024 being for education, with many used for SEND provision.
- **Taxis and PHVs are disproportionately used by disabled people, women, lower-income households and those without access to a car**. People with mobility difficulties make almost 70 per cent more taxi or PHV trips per year compared to those without; women make around 25 per cent more taxi or PHV trips than men. People without a car make almost four times as many taxi or PHV trips, and households in the lowest income quintile make around 50 per cent more taxi or PHV trips than higher-income households.
- **Major safeguarding reviews, including those led by Baroness Casey, have identified taxi and PHV licensing as vulnerable to exploitation** where oversight is inconsistent and information is not effectively shared. While enhanced criminal record checks and guidance have improved individual vetting, they do not address wider structural issues, such as effective cross-border enforcement, where more powers might be needed and barriers to intelligence sharing.
- **52 per cent of all taxi and public hire vehicle journeys support economic activity, education or essential services**, underscoring the importance of effective regulation. When licensing, enforcement powers and resources sit with authorities that are not hosting the majority of activity, enforcement capacity is diluted and intervention is harder.
- **Safeguarding reviews consistently show that information silos reduce the ability to identify and respond to risk**. Current legislation does not mandate information sharing. Work is underway to expand existing databases, but for it to be effective its use needs to be mandatory to support proportionate, lawful information sharing across authorities, operators and the public.

- **The Law Commission** said *“The outdated legislative framework has become too extensive in some respects, imposing unnecessary burdens on business and artificially restricting the range of services available to consumers; and insufficiently comprehensive in other ways, undermining the fundamental goal of protecting the travelling public.”*
- **The Local Government Association** *“has long called for the urgent introduction of a comprehensive Taxi and PHV Licensing Reform Bill to replace the current outdated legislation and make the licensing system for taxis and PHVs fit for the 21st century.”*

## Civil Aviation Bill

*“Legislation will be introduced to unlock the benefits of airport expansion”*

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- Civil aviation is vital for the UK: it provides jobs across the country, attracts investment, and connects British people to the rest of the world. The sector as a whole is a key enabler of economic growth.
  - The Bill will strengthen consumer rights and protections, promote economic growth and infrastructure provision, and enhance aviation safety, ensuring that the UK retains its appeal as a competitive aviation hub. It will support the UK’s world-leading aviation sector to continue thriving for decades to come.
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### What does the Bill do?

- The Bill will support consumers, and the aviation sector, by:
  - **Strengthening consumer rights and protections** – ensuring fair treatment and boosting consumer confidence.
  - **Promoting economic growth and infrastructure** – keeping the UK competitive in global aviation, which will unlock the benefits of airport expansion, including attracting investment, enabling innovation, and improving capacity for business, trade, and tourism.
  - **Enhancing aviation safety** – streamlining regulations to meet vital standards and strengthen the safety of the UK aviation sector.
- The Bill will deliver:
  - **Additional consumer enforcement powers for the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA)** to reduce consumer harm, ensure compliance, and allow for timely regulatory intervention. It will enable the CAA to ensure airlines and airports are meeting their legal obligations for passengers more promptly. This will ensure the people of the UK feel their rights are protected when they fly and have more confidence in the sector.
  - **Aviation consumer rights reform** with powers to ensure that the Government can update the law on air passenger rights, providing flexibility to ensure passengers have the best protections possible. This could include, for example, strengthening alternative dispute resolution

or changes to compensation for damaged or lost mobility aids. This will reassure passengers that they will be treated properly and receive the support and compensation they are entitled to.

- **Reform to airport slots regulation**, including updating the allocation of take-off and landing permissions at certain airports, which will support airport expansion, infrastructure development, and economic growth. This will also provide flexibility for the Government to respond to emergency situations that require changes to scheduling – such as during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- **Airspace modernisation and stronger direction powers**, to support the operation of the UK Airspace Design Service (UKADS). The UKADS has been created to streamline airspace change and drive forward the modernisation of the UK’s airspace. The UKADS will help plan better routes for aircraft so they use less fuel, cause less pollution, and are less likely to be delayed. It also gives the CAA more flexible licensing powers, so the cost of providing better air services can continue to be recovered fairly.
- **Aviation safety regulatory reform** to consolidate and streamline safety legislation, delegating technical rulemaking to the CAA for a more agile regulatory system.
- **Aviation safety criminal sanctions** to empower the Government to amend safety-related criminal sanctions in assimilated law, allowing the UK to adapt regulations quickly where necessary.

### **Territorial extent and application**

- The Bill will extend and apply to the whole of the UK.

### **Key facts**

- **In 2025, UK airports handled 2.1 million commercial flights and nearly 300 million terminal passengers (up from 251 million in 2015).** Furthermore, in 2025, over 2.5 million flights were handled in UK airspace.
- **CAA Aviation Consumer survey results (February 2026 [wave 14]) show that overall passenger satisfaction is back to pre-pandemic levels, reaching 88 per cent,** having dropped significantly from 84 per cent in 2019 to a low of 79 per

cent in 2023, before beginning to recover through 2024.

- **However, satisfaction remains lower among more vulnerable passengers**, including disabled passengers (82 per cent), those facing digital barriers (80 per cent), and those with financial constraints (80 per cent). Passengers who remain dissatisfied most commonly cite flight disruption, overcrowding, accessibility issues, and high prices for some services.
- **Whilst satisfaction with complaint handling has improved, it remains the element of the travel experience with the lowest level of satisfaction** (72 per cent satisfied with their last flight), highlighting the continued importance of effective enforcement to ensure consistent outcomes for all passengers.
- **Unlike other regulators, the CAA cannot issue direct penalties**. Instead, it must rely on court action or formal agreements, which can be slow and resource intensive, delaying compensation for passengers. **The CAA has only taken court action in one case relating to air passenger rights**. This took nearly four years to reach a final judgment, leaving passengers out of pocket and without recourse throughout that period.
- **Airport slots regulation has remained virtually unchanged since its inception in the early 1990s**. Updating slot rules will help ensure the system can respond more effectively to shocks and rapid changes in demand.
- **The UK has some of the world's most complex airspace, but its basic design has not changed since the 1950s. This is despite a tenfold increase in commercial flights since then**. Modernisation is essential to keep flying safe, reliable and efficient, and to enable safe integration of new technologies. If UK airspace is not modernised, it has been estimated that by 2040, one in five flights could experience disruption and delays. That is why the Government has established the UKADs to lead the most strategically important airspace changes, helping to create a modern, resilient, and flexible system capable of meeting future demand.

## Sovereign Grant Bill

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- The Sovereign Grant Bill will deliver the Government's commitment to reset the Sovereign Grant (the Grant), once the current work to reservice Buckingham Palace comes to an end.
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### What does the Bill do?

- Since 1760, every Monarch has surrendered profits from The Crown Estate to the Government. These are paid into the Consolidated Fund and then allocated to public spending in the usual way. In return, the Sovereign receives funding from the Government in the form of the Grant.
- The Grant provides funding in support of the Monarch's official duties including official visits and investitures and maintenance of the occupied royal palaces (excluding private residences such as Sandringham House and Balmoral Castle). The Sovereign Grant does not provide an income to the King or any other member of the royal family.
- Current legislation prevents the Sovereign Grant falling from one year to the next. This Bill will change that, enabling the Grant to be reduced once the Buckingham Palace Reservicing Programme comes to an end next year.
- The Bill will set the Grant amount for 2027-28, enabling it to be lower than the £137.9 million Grant for 2026-27. The exact amount will be determined by the Royal Trustees' Review, which will be published before the legislation is introduced.
- In addition, the Bill will introduce a mechanism so that in future years, the Grant can be reduced from one year to the next, preventing inappropriately high funding without the need for further primary legislation.

### Territorial extent and application

- The Bill will extend and apply to the whole of the UK.

### Key facts

- Over the last ten years, The Crown Estate has returned more than £5 billion to the Exchequer.

- Without this Bill, the Sovereign Grant in 2027-28 would remain at £137.9 million, the same level as in 2026-27, including funding that is no longer needed once the current Buckingham Palace Reservicing Programme ends.
- It is also likely the Grant would stay excessively high for the rest of the decade. Existing legislation restricts the level of the Grant being reduced from one year to the next. That reflects the view that many of the duties of the Head of State cannot be abruptly stopped. However, it also prevents the Grant being reduced to end the temporary uplift provided for Buckingham Palace reservicing work.
- Under current legislation, the Grant amount can only be reduced once unused Sovereign Grant funding (held in the Sovereign Grant Reserve) has risen above 50 per cent of the Royal Household's annual expenditure – even if current levels of funding continued, this would likely take several years to be triggered.
- In agreeing the funding for the Reservicing Programme in 2016, the previous government recognised that legislation would be needed to reset the level of the Grant when the works are complete.
- The Royal Household is supportive, recognising the need to reset the Grant so that funding that is no longer required can be stripped out.

## STRENGTHENING OUR ENERGY SECURITY

### Energy Independence Bill

*“My Ministers will therefore introduce an Energy Independence Bill to scale-up homegrown renewable energy and protect living standards for the long term”*

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- As we face the second fossil fuel shock in half a decade, the lesson for the UK is clear: we need to get off the fossil fuel rollercoaster with clean, homegrown power we control and the electrification of our wider economy.
  - The Energy Independence Bill provides the Government the powers it needs to fight people’s corner and go further and faster to deliver clean energy.
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#### What does the Bill do?

- Over the past year and a half, the Government has secured a record-breaking number of renewable projects to power the equivalent of 23 million homes; ushered in a golden age of nuclear through a world-leading Small Modular Reactors programme and commitment to the Sizewell C nuclear project; attracted over £90 billion in private sector investment; and taken action to bring down energy bills by seven per cent in April 2026.
- The Energy Independence Bill is the next step in the Government's plan to deliver clean energy, delivering transformative measures to underpin action on three core objectives: tackling the affordability crisis and protecting consumers; accelerating the UK’s drive for energy security; and delivering a fair, managed and prosperous transition to clean energy.
- The Bill will:

#### **Tackle the affordability crisis and protect consumers**

- **Cut energy bills for families** by placing the Exchequer funding of 75 per cent of the domestic costs of the Renewables Obligation scheme for three years on an enduring legal basis, removing around £90 a year of costs on average from household bills as part of the £150 reduction in costs announced in the autumn 2025 Budget.
- **Pave the way for the Warm Homes Agency** - a dedicated public body to help deliver the £15 billion Warm Homes Plan, the biggest

programme of home electrification in British history, which will cut bills and tackle fuel poverty.

- Implement new rules to **ensure landlords invest in home upgrades** that will cut bills for renters, lifting 415,000 families out of fuel poverty by 2030.
- **Ensure Ofgem can act as a strong consumer champion** with new powers to protect families and business, including regulating energy brokers and third-party intermediaries to stop unfair practices.
- **Expand the Government's toolkit to protect low-income and vulnerable households** when needed by enabling the provision of targeted support for energy bills.

### **Accelerate the UK's drive for energy security**

- Reform market, planning and regulatory frameworks to **accelerate the deployment of clean power** including offshore wind, hydrogen and smart grid technologies.
- **Speed up the build-out of vital grid infrastructure** with a package of measures to reduce unnecessary delays, including reforms to land access rules and networks consenting.
- Introduce powers needed to take a more **strategic approach to planning and building energy infrastructure** and operate the electricity system more efficiently.
- Enable the removal of charges on electricity that consumers export to the grid and allow discounted energy at times of excess generation to give **families more control over their bills** and help **create a more flexible energy system**.

### **Deliver a fair, managed and prosperous transition and good jobs in clean energy**

- Manage existing oil and gas fields for their lifetime through legislation to introduce **Transitional Energy Certificates**, and show climate leadership by **meeting the manifesto commitment not to issue new licences to explore new fields**, including **delivering the commitment to ban fracking**.

- Ensure the North Sea Transition Authority is equipped **to support a fair, managed and prosperous transition**, including a new statutory objective to consider workers, communities and supply chains in its decisions.
- **Extend employment rights and protections for offshore workers in renewables**, bringing them in line with those working in oil and gas.
- Implement the manifesto commitment to **end new coal licenses**.

### Territorial extent and application

- The Bill will extend to the whole of the UK. The majority of measures will apply to England, Scotland and Wales, with some measures also applying to Northern Ireland.

### Key facts

- **Global instability shows the UK must move off volatile fossil fuel markets.** The conflict in the Middle East highlights the UK's exposure to international fossil fuel prices. With half of the UK's recessions since 1970 caused by fossil fuel shocks, reducing the UK's reliance on fossil fuels will protect our economy in the future.
- **Fair pricing reform will reduce household energy bills.** The Bill will unlock the clean homegrown energy we need to protect households against volatile fossil fuel markets and deliver a cost-effective energy system and consumer savings through our Reformed National Pricing plan. Initial government estimates suggest that consumers could see a gradual accumulation of savings from 2030 onwards from Reformed National Pricing, reaching £20-40 on the typical annual dual fuel household bill by 2040.
- **Clean energy deployment will cut emissions significantly.** The Bill will reinforce UK climate leadership by cutting emissions by the equivalent of taking 550,000 cars off the road based on the current fleet.
- **Clean energy investment will boost economic growth and create high-quality jobs nationwide.** The Bill will enforce delivery of the wider domestic and non-domestic private rented sector minimum energy efficiency standards programme, which the Government estimates could deliver up to 50,000 jobs per year to 2030 and investment of £14 billion.
- **The Chief Executive of the Confederation of British Industry, Rain Newton-Smith, said** *“Clear, consistent climate laws have helped make the*

*UK a global leader in clean energy investment and innovation. This transition is not only essential for tackling climate change - it's a strategic economic opportunity. Businesses remain committed because they understand this transition is the backbone of a competitive, resilient economy in an uncertain world. The science hasn't changed but the risks of inaction have. Now is the moment to turn that ambition into tangible benefits for every household and business - from lower energy bills, and cleaner air, to the creation of high-quality jobs."*

## Nuclear Regulation Bill

*“My Ministers will also take forward recommendations of the Nuclear Regulatory Review and encourage a new era of British nuclear energy generation”*

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- Nuclear power is safe, reliable, and clean. A more secure supply of homegrown power helps reduce exposure to the fossil fuel rollercoaster and is essential for stability in our electricity grid. As the Nuclear Regulatory Review showed, our system needs a radical refresh – and this Government is committed to a new era of British Nuclear.
  - This Bill delivers that refresh, modernising the way that new nuclear projects are regulated so we can deliver safe, secure and affordable nuclear power and infrastructure sooner, while maintaining strong environmental protections.
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### What does the Bill do?

- **The Government is delivering a golden age of nuclear power:** greenlighting Sizewell C in Suffolk, progressing Hinkley Point C in Somerset, backing the UK’s first small modular reactors at Wylfa in North Wales and welcoming a new era of advanced modular reactors as part of its clean energy mission.
- To speed up the delivery of new nuclear and reduce costs, the Government is overhauling planning and regulation in a boost to the UK’s energy sovereignty and the nuclear deterrent. Some of these nuclear reforms are sensible changes for all infrastructure and where this is the case, the Government is ensuring that the right lessons are learnt and applied.
- The Nuclear Regulatory Review 2025, led by John Fingleton, found an “overly complex” and “bureaucratic” nuclear regulatory system that favoured process over safe outcomes, holding back the industry and making the UK the most expensive place in the world to build new nuclear projects. The Government’s response to the review accepted this diagnosis and outlined plans to take forward all of the recommendations by the end of 2027.
- This Bill will support quicker delivery of nuclear projects in a way that produces a win-win for building critical infrastructure while protecting nature and the environment, and high standards of nuclear safety. It will reduce the cost of nuclear projects over time, helping deliver clean, secure power at lower cost and protecting households from volatile global gas prices.

- As part of the Prime Minister’s commitment to apply the lessons of the Review more widely, the Bill will include measures to support more efficient, proportionate and coordinated regulation across major infrastructure projects, where appropriate, drawing on best practice identified in the nuclear sector.
- The Bill will:
  - **Overhaul existing regulation**, giving regulators greater clarity and direction, streamlining the regulatory institutional framework and strengthening regulatory capability and capacity.
  - **Embed a proportionate, outcomes-focussed regulatory and legislative framework**, ensuring effort is focused on managing real risk rather than unnecessary process, while maintaining world-class safety and environmental standards.
  - **Improve the coordination and speed of regulatory decision-making**, reducing duplication and delay to support timely delivery alongside safety and environmental protection.

### Territorial extent and application

- The extent and application of the individual measures will vary across the Bill.

### Key facts

- **The Nuclear Regulatory Review found a single nuclear project in the UK can be subject to oversight from up to six regulators in the civil sector and as many as eight in defence**, each operating under separate statutory duties and guidance, with no single designated lead regulator responsible for resolving conflicts or driving pace.
- The Review identified **three fundamental drivers of high cost and delay**: an overly cautious approach to risk; prioritisation of process over outcomes; and weak incentives for regulators and dutyholders to minimise social cost and delay.
- **Regulatory decisions were found to take limited account of the high costs of delay to projects**, including financing costs and extended workforce retention and supply chain disruption, when applying proportionality tests such as “as low as reasonably practicable” and “best available techniques” .
- **The Review also identified a capacity risk**, warning of a potential “cliff edge” loss of regulatory capability due to retirements in specialist nuclear disciplines

at the same time as the UK pursues new civil nuclear build, defence renewal, decommissioning and waste programmes in parallel.

- **The Government accepted all 47 recommendations** of the Nuclear Regulatory Review in principle and committed to implementation by the end of 2027, subject to legislative timelines.
  
- In March 2026, the Government committed to:
  - Establishing a Commission for Nuclear Regulation for nuclear projects to provide a single forum to resolve regulatory disagreement and drive timely decision-making. An interim lead regulator approach is being implemented ahead of legislation to reduce duplication and conflicting requirements.
  
  - Moving to smarter, proportionate regulation, focused on material risk rather than exhaustive process.
  
  - Increasing use of international standards and regulatory recognition to reduce bespoke UK requirements.
  
  - Enabling standardisation and replication, particularly for small modular reactors, to reduce unit costs.
  
  - Strengthening accountability for delivery outcomes alongside safety assurance.
  
- The Review estimated that its recommendations could deliver **tens of billions of pounds in potential savings**, particularly in nuclear decommissioning and future project delivery, while maintaining the UK's high standards of nuclear safety and environmental protection.
  
- **Chair of EDF Energy UK, Sir Alex Chisholm KCB**, said *“The current volatility in global fossil fuel markets underlines the benefit of homegrown nuclear electricity to Britain. Its reputation for safe operation and construction must be underpinned by effective regulation. We welcome the opportunity to help make sure regulation is timely, predictable and proportionate. On the environment, there is no need to choose between protecting nature and the delivery of essential national infrastructure, both can be achieved. The current approach can end up delivering small benefits to local wildlife at a large cost to the country. The taskforce is right to ask if there is a better way.”*

## Electricity Generator Levy Bill

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- Instability in the Middle East has shown that Britain's reliance on international fossil fuel markets leaves families and businesses exposed to volatile gas prices, driving the cost of living crisis, even though much of the country's electricity comes from cheaper renewables and nuclear power. In the UK, over 50 per cent of electricity is generated from renewables. However, electricity prices are still largely set by the price of gas.
  - To address this, the Government will break the link between electricity and gas prices by moving older generators onto new fixed-price contracts. Alongside this, the Government is increasing the rate of the Electricity Generator Levy (EGL) to ensure a proportion of any exceptional revenue that generators receive because of spikes in gas prices, is available to the Government to support businesses and households with their cost of living.
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### What does the Bill do?

- In April 2026, the Government announced action to uncouple electricity prices from gas prices. The UK offers new low-carbon generators a long-term contract that guarantees a stable, fixed price for the electricity they produce (Contracts for Difference). The Government will encourage existing eligible generators to accept a fixed price for the electricity they generate (wholesale Contracts for Difference). This will be a voluntary offer and is subject to consultation in due course.
- To support the aim to drive eligible generators onto fixed-price contracts, the Government has announced an increase in the Electricity Generator Levy rate from 45 per cent to 55 per cent from 1 July 2026. This Bill will deliver that change.
- This increase will encourage participation at a competitive price in wholesale Contracts for Difference and ensure that a proportion of any exceptional revenue that generators may receive because of the conflict in the Middle East is available to the Government to support businesses and households with their cost of living.
- The Government also announced it will extend the Electricity Generator Levy past its scheduled conclusion in 2028. The Government will set out plans and legislate for this extension at a later date.

## Territorial extent and application

- The Bill will extend and apply to the whole of the UK.

## Key facts

- **The Electricity Generator Levy was introduced from 2023** to tax the extraordinary returns realised by some renewable electricity generators who were achieving prices set by gas-fired electricity generation without facing commensurate increased costs.
- **The increase to the rate of the Electricity Generator Levy was announced alongside a wider package of market support and reform.** Most prominent was the introduction of a wholesale Contract for Difference, which would offer existing eligible generators, who are not already contracted under a long-term fixed contract, the option to accept a fixed price for the electricity they generate. Other measures included larger grants for households on heating oil and liquefied petroleum gas to install heat pumps, as well as reforms to the planning and connection processes.
- **HMRC will publish guidance to support the change.** Receipts for accounting periods that straddle 1 July 2026 will be time-apportioned so that the higher rate applies only to revenues arising after that date.
- The End Fuel Poverty Coalition has said *“For too long, households and businesses have been paying electricity bills linked to and inflated by a gas market they have no control over. This is a structural failure in how our energy system is priced and it has cost households dearly. Raising the levy on generators that pocket windfall profits when bills soar is the right thing to do.*

## STRENGTHENING OUR NATIONAL SECURITY

### Tackling State Threats Bill

*“My Government will introduce legislation to tackle the growing threat from foreign state entities and their proxies”*

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- Protecting national security is the first duty of government. The threat to the UK from foreign powers and their proxies has grown in scale and complexity, threatening lives and undermining our democratic values. New powers are needed to keep pace. The Bill will provide a powerful new tool to disrupt and deter the activities of state-linked entities and those acting in concert with them, equivalent to proscription under the Terrorism Act 2000.
  - The Bill creates a new power for the Secretary of State to designate organisations that are engaged in threatening activity linked to a foreign power. New and existing criminal sanctions will apply to specified organisations, including proxies being used by states to carry out their hostile activities in the UK. Individuals acting to benefit those proxies will feel the full force of our National Security legislation, and the accompanying possible 14-year sentences.
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#### What does the Bill do?

- The Bill allows the Secretary of State to specify organisations, including state entities or their proxies, that are engaged in activity to threaten our national security, including espionage, sabotage and interference. This gives effect to a recommendation by Jonathan Hall KC (the Independent Reviewer of State Threats Legislation) to legislate for a power equivalent to proscription under the Terrorism Act 2000.
- The Bill will create new criminal offences to disrupt specified groups operating in the UK. These offences would capture conduct such as belonging to an organisation or raising support.
- Offences in the National Security Act 2023 will apply to the organisations, making it easier to bring prosecutions against individuals who are working for specified proxy organisations, such as front companies and organised groups.
- Collectively, these measures will help keep the UK safe by making a tougher operating environment for foreign intelligence services and their proxies.

## Territorial extent and application

- The Bill will extend and apply to the whole of the UK.

## Key facts

- **In the 2025 annual threat update, the Director General of MI5, Sir Ken McCallum**, said *‘in the last year, we’ve seen a 35 per cent increase in the number of individuals we’re investigating for involvement in state threat activity’*. Over the same period, MI5 had tracked more than twenty potentially lethal Iran-backed plots. He also described the threat from a range of state actors, including espionage against our Parliament, universities and critical infrastructure, as well as the commission of surveillance, sabotage, arson or physical violence here in the UK.
- **In Jonathan Hall KC’s 2025 report ‘Legislation to address the state-based security threats to the United Kingdom’**, he articulated the legal challenge of proscribing state entities under the Terrorism Act 2000. The Bill delivers on his formal recommendation for the Government to create a new proscription-type power specifically designed to target state entities.

## Armed Forces Bill

*“My Government will support our gallant Armed Forces and their families who make considerable personal sacrifices [...]. My Ministers will recognise this service with an Armed Forces Bill that improves the service justice system and establishes the Armed Forces covenant in statute.”*

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- Our Armed Forces – and the families who support them – make extraordinary sacrifices to keep the nation safe. But for too long, they have felt undervalued. This Government was elected on a promise to change that and renew the nation’s contract with those who serve – and through this Armed Forces Bill we are delivering on that promise.
  - The Armed Forces Bill ensures that the legal framework remains in place for the Armed Forces to be recruited and maintained as disciplined bodies. It also delivers the Government’s commitment to those who keep us safe and demonstrates that the Government is on the side of our forces, our veterans, and their families. It will extend the Armed Forces Covenant legal duty, deliver better defence housing, provide better protections for those who serve through reforms to the Service Justice System and expand the pool of Reserves.
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### What does the Bill do?

- The Bill will:
  - **Renew the Armed Forces Act 2006** to ensure that the UK continues to have a standing army. For legal and constitutional reasons, an Armed Forces Act is required every five years.
  - **Extend the Armed Forces Covenant Legal Duty** to all areas of government, including the devolved governments. This ensures public services in critical areas like social care, childcare, social security and employment support will be legally required to consider the unique disadvantages and requirements of our Armed Forces community.
  - **Establish the Defence Housing Service.** Our military personnel deserve a safe, decent home and this service is at the heart of the Government’s plan for the most significant renewal of Armed Forces housing in more than 50 years.

- **Expand the pool of Reserves** by changing the maximum length and age limit at which some personnel can be recalled, enabling the Government to call on some of the most experienced volunteer reservists, if needed. These are significant but necessary changes to boost preparedness in an era of ever-increasing threat.
- **Reform the Service Justice System, to boost protections and support for serving personnel.** Measures in the Bill will modernise and improve victim support, so that victims are able to make an informed view as to whether they would prefer their case to be tried in civilian courts or the Service Justice System. The Bill will also protect victims of the most serious offences from further harm with a suite of protections and orders to ensure swift action is taken against perpetrators. It will give the Service police increased powers for investigations, the Service courts more powers to deal with perpetrators and improve the experience of victims. These measures will play a part in the Government's aim to halve violence against women and girls in a decade.

### Territorial extent and application

- The Bill will extend, and the majority of the measures will apply, to the whole of the UK and to the Isle of Man and the British Overseas Territories (except Gibraltar), with powers to also extend it to the Channel Islands by Order in Council.

### Key facts

- **The Covenant Legal Duty Extension brings into scope 12 policy areas that directly address Armed Forces disadvantage**, including childcare, education and training, employment, health and social care, social security benefits, personal taxation, criminal justice, transport, pensions, immigration and citizenship and Armed Forces compensation.
- **The Chief Executive of the Army Families Federation, Collette Musgrave,** said *“We certainly welcome the extension. We have long argued for it, because the experience of serving personnel and their families is that much of the tension comes from the fact that they are seeking — as citizens first, while in the UK — to access statutory provision, whether that is from their local multi-academy trust, a health service or a government department”.*
- **The Defence Housing Service is backed by billions of pounds of investment to build, renew and repair nine in 10 defence family homes.** This is enabled by a landmark deal that returned 36,000 properties into public

ownership, giving the Government direct control over how homes are used.

- **The Director of the RAF Families Federation, Andrea Devlin**, said that: *“The Defence Housing Service is positive, and we are very optimistic about what it is doing”*.
- **Around 15,000 people leave the Regular and Reserve Forces every year**, of which the vast majority will be subject to recall to the Armed Forces in extremis for a period of time (18 years or aged 55, whichever comes first).
- **Around 11,000 Regulars left the Armed Forces in the year up to September 2025**. These provide an important addition to the Volunteer Reserve. Up to a third of the yearly intake of Volunteer Reserves are ex-regulars.
- **Approximately 3,000 offences are reported to the Service police each year**. Approximately 33 per cent are Service disciplinary offences, such as being absent without leave (AWOL) or disgraceful conduct, 24 per cent relate to fraud, 19 per cent are theft, 12 per cent are violent offences, and 8 per cent are sexual offences.
- Around 85-90 per cent of Service Justice matters are less serious offences dealt with at summary hearing by Commanding Officers. Around 350 Court Martial trials are held for the most serious offences each year.
- Since its establishment in March 2023, the Victim Witness Care Unit has provided enhanced victim support to approximately 1500 victims.
- **The Soldiers’, Sailors’, Airmen’s Families Association (SSAFA)** *“supports the Bill’s additional powers for Service Courts to issue protective orders in cases of bullying, sexual harm, harassment, and stalking. These enhanced powers are a critical step in ensuring that serving personnel, particularly women, receive timely and appropriate protection, and that the actions and behaviours of perpetrators are addressed robustly and fairly”*. SSAFA has also welcomed *“the Bill’s strengthened focus on tackling Violence Against Women and Girls within the Armed Forces community. Steps to address VAWG – particularly those affecting serving female personnel – are timely and sadly necessary”*.

## National Security Bill

*“[My Government] ... will respond to the horrific tragedy in Southport with measures to protect the British people from extreme violence, and honour the victims, the injured and their families”*

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- The UK faces national security threats that are evolving and escalating. Long-standing threats such as Islamist and extreme right-wing terrorism endure. Foreign powers are increasingly deploying new hostile tactics in our communities and on our streets, including using proxies to do their dirty work.
  - But we face new risks too. Violence-fixated individuals. Cyber attacks on an unprecedented scale. These threats are not atomised but inter-related, and all of them are enabled and multiplied by the online environment.
  - To give ourselves the tools to tackle them and keep this country safe, we must bolster our defences through a new National Security Bill.
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### What does the Bill do?

- The National Security Bill will make the UK a harder target for states, dangerous groups and individuals seeking to attack the UK.
- The Bill will create new offences to protect the UK from the proliferation of extreme violence online, amend existing legislation to reform the cyber landscape and close gaps within our state threats legislation, aligning it more closely with terrorism legislation.
- It will enhance our ability to counter the full range of threats waged against us by providing law enforcement and security services with new, stronger powers to keep our country safe – online and offline.
- The Bill will:
  - **Criminalise the creation and sharing of the most harmful violent material** to stop the spread of content that glorifies, trivialises, or normalises serious violence. The Bill will enable law enforcement to disrupt individuals who are encouraging violence, and reduce the circulation and supply of this material online. The Bill will take a proportionate approach that protects freedom of expression and legitimate public-interest activity while ensuring that those who create,

share, or use extreme violence content to encourage or glorify violence can be held to account.

- **Criminalise planning a mass casualty attack**, closing a clear gap in the current law by capturing cases where a lone individual undertakes preparatory steps towards a mass casualty attack without an ideological motive. This is not currently covered by existing conspiracy, attempt, or terrorism offences. By closing this gap, the Government will strengthen operational partners' ability to disrupt the most serious threats posed by violence-fixated individuals, and to intervene before such plans result in real-world harm. The offence will contain appropriate safeguards to ensure the mass casualty offence captures only those who pose a genuine risk to the public.
- **Reform the cyber landscape**, including by updating the Computer Misuse Act 1990. This will provide law enforcement with updated powers and capabilities, so they remain effective in the digital age. This will include the creation of a Cyber Crime Risk Order to place robust controls on the behaviours of cyber criminals, alongside new powers to search individuals believed to be concealing evidence on behalf of suspects. It will also unlock the power of cyber security professionals to better enable them to secure computer systems. It will also seek to tackle the pervasive threat to the UK economy and businesses, posed by ruthless cyber criminals
- **Consolidate the Government's approach to countering state threats to align more closely with the approach to countering terrorism**. This includes making the most serious state threat offences eligible for an extended determinate sentence (EDS) and adding polygraph testing as an available licence condition for state threat offenders.
- **Complement the separate Tackling State Threats Bill**, where we are introducing a new state threats proscription-like tool to combat hostile powers and their proxies.

### **Territorial extent and application**

- The majority of the Bill will extend and apply to England and Wales. The Government is considering the extension of measures to Scotland and Northern Ireland with the Scottish Government and the Northern Ireland Executive.

## Key facts

- **In a review following the Southport attack, conducted by the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation (Jonathan Hall KC), gaps were identified in current legislation in relation to lone individuals who plan mass casualty attacks without an ideological motive.** An offence of planning a mass casualty attack is needed to ensure that individuals who plan an attack can be stopped and held to account.
- **Children frequently encounter violent content online, often unintentionally; TikTok and X are common exposure points.** Ofcom research in 2025 found that children aged 13-15 may be most likely to encounter violent content online; 16-17 year olds may be at greater risk of encountering more extreme violent content and be more desensitised to such content. Independent research in 2024 found that TikTok is the social media platform where children are most likely to encounter violent content.
- **Adults as well as children express concern over viewing violent content.** Ofcom research shows that 74 per cent of adults (alongside 53 per cent of children) have expressed high levels of concern over content depicting or encouraging violence or injury existing online.
- **Gore sites (websites that host graphic and violent content such as cartel violence, beheadings or extreme animal cruelty) attract UK traffic.** The top 24 gore websites, primarily in English, collectively have an average of 1 million monthly visits from the UK, with the most popular sites drawing up to 334,000 UK visits per month, with spikes around real-world violent events; audiences skew young and male.
- **Five per cent (469) of Prevent referrals from April 2024 to March 2025 were due to concerns regarding 'fascination with extreme violence or mass casualty attacks',** where no other ideology was listed. This category recorded a large increase in referrals in the latest quarter (January to March 2025), rising by 240 per cent compared with the previous quarter (from 82 to 279).
- **Cyber crime is significant, financing hostile actors at a huge cost to the UK taxpayer and businesses.** Recent industry and DSIT research estimates significant cyber crime attacks cost UK businesses £14.7 billion in 2024. In 2025 a single cyber incident is estimated to have cost the UK economy £1.9 billion, the costliest cyber attack in our history. Frontline public services are also subjected to serious cyber attacks: three London councils were hit by an attack that led to “weeks of disruption” to services in late 2025.

- **Security partners support stronger sentencing and post-release arrangements for state threat offenders, to manage the risks they pose, better protect the public and deter attacks from states and their proxies.** This is particularly important considering the recent rise in arrests and convictions under the National Security Act 2023 , and states' increased use of entities or individuals to carry out hostile activity on their behalf. In 2025, the Director General of MI5 said that the UK had seen a 35 per cent increase in state threat activity from the previous year. Over the same period, MI5 had tracked more than twenty potentially lethal Iran-backed plots.
- In his previous role as **Interim Independent Prevent Commissioner, Lord Lord Anderson of Ipswich KBE KC**, said *“While terrorism is often presented as a uniquely serious threat, crimes falling outside its definition can bear many of its hallmarks: grievances reinforced in online echo chambers, victims chosen at random or for their shock value, extreme or mass violence, desire for notoriety or revenge...Some of the risk factors, including social isolation, mental ill-health and the widespread availability of violent and extremist content online, appear to be on a steadily worsening trajectory.”*

## Immigration and Asylum Bill

*“Legislation will be introduced to increase confidence in the security of the immigration and asylum systems”*

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- Radical reform is needed to address the scale of illegal arrivals and increase the Government’s ability to remove those with no right to be here. This legislation will bring into effect the main reforms announced in the Restoring Order and Control statement in November 2025, the most significant policy proposals on asylum in a generation.
  - The Government will build on the changes already made – making refugee status temporary and securing co-operation from a number of countries who had previously refused to take back those with no right to be in the UK. We will restore order and control to the immigration system: speeding up the removal and deportation of foreign criminals and those with no right to be here, and reducing the pull factors driving illegal migration.
  - The UK is an open, tolerant and generous country that celebrates diversity and wants those values reflected in its institutions – that has not, and will not, change. But restoring control at our borders is vital for maintaining confidence in those values.
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### What does the Bill do?

- Claiming asylum in Britain today is more attractive than elsewhere in Europe – surging by 74 per cent since 2021, compared to a 26 per cent rise across the European Union (EU). Over 400,000 people have claimed asylum in that time, with more than 100,000 currently in taxpayer-funded accommodation at a cost of £4 billion last year.
- The Government has cut £1 billion from the asylum bill, increased returns by 31 per cent in the 19 months since July 2024 compared with the 19 months previously, and pledged to open new safe and legal routes as an alternative to dangerous small boat crossings. But we must go further to restore order and control, whilst also offering sanctuary to those in need and genuinely fleeing danger.

- The Bill will:

### **Create a fair but firm asylum system**

- Introduce a new asylum model based on contribution, integration, and respect for UK laws. It will build on reforms enacted in March 2026 to ensure that whilst protection will be provided, entitlements will need to be earned.
- Replace the various forms of protection with a single 'core protection' model. This will simplify decision-making; reduce the number of legal challenges and reduce costs by incentivising refugees to work.
- Define in law when protection can be revoked – making clear it is only for those who remain at risk in their home countries, and who obey UK laws.
- Require asylum seekers receiving taxpayer-funded accommodation and other support to contribute to the cost borne by the British taxpayer once they are able to do so.

### **Scale up the removal of those with no right to be in the UK and ensure immigration rules are enforced**

- Create a new independent appeals body. This will deliver an appeals system that is fast, fair and restores public confidence. It will be staffed by professionally trained adjudicators and, while decisions will be fully independent, the new body will be integrated into the end-to-end immigration system to ensure cases flow through quickly to removal where appeals are unsuccessful.
- Enable immediate forced removal of those who have exhausted all appeals.
- Strengthen age assessment to root out false claims by those claiming to be under 18 and better safeguard genuine children.

### **Restore order and control to the immigration system and ensure it operates fairly and effectively**

- Tighten the application of Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights to prevent exploitation of the system and ensure that the public interest carries proper weight in immigration decisions.

- Define family life, to ensure that family is limited to a core family unit, such as spouses, parents, and children, to prevent dubious legal challenges on the grounds of family life.
- Reform the modern slavery legislative framework to clearly set out the Government's obligations, enabling it to address potential misuse while maintaining essential protections. This includes addressing late presentation of modern slavery experience, which can significantly increase the time taken to identify individuals and move them through the system.
- Provide law enforcement with enhanced tools to tackle exploitation, and embedding provisions to ensure children are identified and supported more effectively.

### Territorial extent and application

- The Bill will extend and apply to the whole of the UK.

### Key facts

- **UK asylum claims are up by 74 per cent since 2021**, while the EU has seen a 26 per cent increase in the same period. Between 2021-25, 450,000 asylum claims have been made, while 32,000 asylum-related returns have been carried out in the same period.
- **107,000 asylum seekers are currently receiving state support**, the vast majority of whom (103,000) are in asylum accommodation. This cost £4 billion last year.
- **In 2025, there were 48,408 grants of refugee status and 4,787 grants of Humanitarian Protection.** Introducing a single form of protection will simplify asylum decision-making and clarify the entitlements afforded to those in need of protection.
- **Article 8 rights are being used to stop removal of those who are living here illegally.** From January to September 2022, 86 per cent of people who raised rights-based applications while in detention awaiting removal were released.

## Cyber Security and Resilience Bill

*“My Ministers will also introduce legislation to improve the country’s defences against cyber-security threats”*

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- The first duty of a government is to protect its citizens. The UK’s digital economy is increasingly being attacked by cyber criminals and state actors, affecting essential services and infrastructure. The Cyber Security and Resilience Bill will increase the UK’s defences against cyber attacks and better protect the services that people rely on every day.
  - The Bill will deliver a fundamental step change in the UK’s national security – making essential digital services more secure in the face of cyber criminals and state actors who want to disrupt our way of life - ensuring the economy is better protected. This will make the UK a safer place to live, work and do business.
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### What does the Bill do?

- The Cyber Security and Resilience Bill will strengthen the UK’s defences to protect essential UK services from cyber attacks, by making crucial updates to existing legislation.
- The Bill will:

#### **Expand the remit of existing regulations to better protect more of the core services people and businesses rely on**

- Many managed IT companies will be regulated under the Bill. These organisations deliver key services such as IT helpdesks and cyber security to private and public sector organisations like the NHS. They will need to meet new security duties as they hold trusted access across government, critical national infrastructure and business networks.
- Data centres will be brought into scope as they are critical to keeping the UK running, underpinning essential and digital services from patient records and online payments to email services and AI development.
- Operators that manage the flow of electricity to smart appliances, like electric vehicle charge points and electrical heating appliances in homes, will also have to meet new security requirements. This will reduce the risk of disruption to consumers using smart-energy

appliances, and the electricity network, bolstering the UK's energy security.

- Regulators will be given new powers to designate critical suppliers to the UK's essential services such as those providing healthcare diagnostics to the NHS or chemicals to a water firm, where they meet the criteria. This will assist in closing gaps in supply chains that criminals could exploit to cause wider disruption.

### **Ensuring cyber regulators are more effective and consistent to protect essential services**

- Organisations in scope will need to report a greater range of harmful cyber incidents to their regulator and the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) within 24 hours, with a full report within 72 hours, to ensure support can be on hand more quickly to help build a stronger national picture of cyber threats.
- If a data centre or digital and managed service provider faces a significant or potentially significant cyber incident, they will have to take reasonable steps to identify and notify promptly the customers who are likely to have been impacted, so organisations can act fast to protect their business, people and services.
- Enforcement will be modernised, including tougher turnover-based penalties for serious breaches, so cutting corners is no longer cheaper than doing the right thing. Companies providing essential services to the public and businesses should ensure they have tough protections in place to keep their systems up and running.

### **Ensure the UK is resilient to new threats**

- Ministers will be given new powers to instruct regulators and the organisations they oversee, like NHS trusts and Thames Water, to take specific, proportionate steps to prevent cyber attacks where there is a threat to UK national security. This includes requiring that they bolster their monitoring or isolate high-risk systems to protect and secure essential services.
- The Government will be more agile and responsive to evolving cyber threats with powers to make changes to the regime in secondary legislation, such as bringing more services into scope, or updating security requirements.

## Territorial extent and application

- The Bill will extend and apply to the whole of the UK.

## Key facts

- **The cyber security sector makes an important economic contribution.** In 2024, the cyber security sector contributed £13.2 billion in revenue to the economy. The sector now employs 67,300 people and created 6,600 new jobs from 2024-25.
- **The UK is subject to daily cyber attacks,** as cyber criminals and state-linked actors blackmail businesses, steal data, and threaten our way of life. According to a report by IBM, the UK is the most targeted country for cyber attacks in Europe. This threat is now evolving: a new generation of AI models are becoming increasingly capable of cyber offence, finding and exploiting weaknesses in software at speed and scale. In April 2026, AI firm Anthropic announced a new model called Mythos, which testing by DSIT's AI Security Institute found to be substantially more capable at cyber offence than any model previously assessed.
- **A cyber attack on critical national infrastructure could be hugely costly to the economy.** According to a 2025 report by KPMG, a systemic cyber incident to the rail network causing one week of disruption could result in an estimated cost of £1.8 billion.
- **The National Cyber Security Centre, part of GCHQ, is world-leading in defending the UK online.** It provides free, practical advice, training and guidance at [nsc.gov.uk](https://nsc.gov.uk), for organisations of every size, as well as an Early Warning Service which can inform organisations of potential cyber attacks and give them time to act. The UK has also established the AI Security Institute which provides the Government with a world-leading capability for understanding AI cyber capabilities.
- **The Chief Executive Officer of the National Cyber Security Centre, Dr Richard Horne,** said *“The real-world impacts of cyber attacks have never been more evident than in recent months, and at the NCSC we continue to work round the clock to empower organisations in the face of rising threats. As a nation, we must act at pace to improve our digital defences and resilience, and the Cyber Security and Resilience Bill represents a crucial step in better protecting our most critical services.”*

## CONTACT DETAILS

Bill	Lead Department	Contact Details
Steel Industry (Nationalisation) Bill	Department for Business and Trade	0207 215 2000
Northern Powerhouse Rail Bill	Department for Transport	0300 777 7878
European Partnership Bill	Cabinet Office	<a href="mailto:pressoffice@cabinetoffice.gov.uk">pressoffice@cabinetoffice.gov.uk</a>
Small Business Protection (Late Payments) Bill	Department for Business and Trade	0207 215 2000
Clean Water Bill	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	0330 041 6560
Competition Reform Bill	Department for Business and Trade	0207 215 2000
Regulating for Growth Bill	Department for Business and Trade	0207 215 2000
Enhancing Financial Services Bill	His Majesty's Treasury	0207 270 5238
Highways (Financing) Bill	Department for Transport	0300 777 7878
Overnight Visitor Levy Bill	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	0303 444 1209
Social Housing Renewal Bill	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	0303 444 1209
Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Bill	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	0303 444 1209
Education for All Bill	Department for Education	0203 371 4832
Representation of the People Bill	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	0303 444 1209
Remediation Bill	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government	0303 444 1209

Bill	Lead Department	Contact Details
	Government	
Draft Conversion Practices Bill	Office for Equality and Opportunity	0207 276 3999
Draft Ticket Tout Ban Bill	Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport	0208 080 3054
Sporting Events Bill	Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport	0208 080 3054
Police Reform Bill	Home Office	0300 123 3535
NHS Modernisation Bill	Department of Health and Social Care	0207 972 3272
Railways and Passenger Benefits Bill	Department for Transport	0300 777 7878
Digital Access to Services Bill	Cabinet Office	<a href="mailto:pressoffice@cabinetoffice.gov.uk">pressoffice@cabinetoffice.gov.uk</a>
Public Office (Accountability) Bill	Ministry of Justice	0300 790 0711
Removal of Peerages Bill	Cabinet Office	<a href="mailto:pressoffice@cabinetoffice.gov.uk">pressoffice@cabinetoffice.gov.uk</a>
Courts Modernisation Bill	Ministry of Justice	0300 790 0711
Northern Ireland Troubles Bill	Northern Ireland Office	0779 947 0812
Draft Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Bill	Department for Transport	0300 777 7878
Civil Aviation Bill	Department for Transport	0300 777 7878
Sovereign Grant Bill	His Majesty's Treasury	0207 270 5238
Energy Independence Bill	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero	0207 215 1000
Nuclear Regulation Bill	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero	0207 215 1000
Electricity Generator Levy Bill	His Majesty's Treasury	0207 270 5238
Tackling State Threats Bill	Home Office	0300 123 3535

<b>Bill</b>	<b>Lead Department</b>	<b>Contact Details</b>
Armed Forces Bill	Ministry of Defence	0207 218 7907
National Security Bill	Home Office	0300 123 3535
Immigration and Asylum Bill	Home Office	0300 123 3535
Cyber Security and Resilience Bill	Department for Science, Innovation and Technology	0207 215 3000