

Today's Queen's Speech sets out the Government's proposed legislative agenda. Much of this featured in the Queen's Speech on 16 October 2019 but there are additional measures. This briefing, which is informed by the detailed briefing issued by the Prime Minister's office this morning, highlights proposals of most direct relevance to the South East of England and to public services in England.

Delivering Brexit and Seizing the Opportunities It Brings

More than a third of the planned new laws relate to new arrangements following departure from the EU. The Queen stressed that the "Government's priority is to deliver the United Kingdom's departure from the European Union on 31 January" adding that the Government will bring forward legislation to make the most of the opportunities that Brexit brings for all the people of the United Kingdom.

The **EU (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill** will implement in UK law the Withdrawal Agreement agreed between the UK and the EU. The aims would be to: ensure that the UK leaves the EU with a deal on 31 January; give businesses and people time to prepare before the implementation period ends on 31 December, 2020; protect the rights of EU, EEA and Swiss citizens; and start to implement the new protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland following the removal of the backstop.

An Immigration and Social Security Co-ordination Bill will end free movement and lay the foundation for a points-based immigration system from 2021. UK-resident European citizens will have the right to remain. The Bill will:

- end free movement in UK law, to ensure that the Government can deliver a single points-based immigration system based on people's skills from 2021;
- make EU citizens arriving after January 2021 subject to the same UK immigration controls as non-EU citizens;
- protect the long-standing immigration status of Irish citizens when free movement ends; and
- enable the Government to better coordinate social security policy.

Special arrangements will be made for health care professionals (see below).

An **Agriculture Bill** will reform agriculture policy to put the interests of farmers and land managers, the environment and taxpayers at its core. It will replace the current subsidies with rewards for the work by farmers to enhance the environment and produce high quality food in a more sustainable way. It will also set out a framework for an Environmental Land Management scheme, underpinned by the payment of public money for public goods.

A Fisheries Bill will deliver more sustainable fisheries and safeguard marine resources and ecosystems. It will enshrine the powers to control access to UK waters, develop plans to restore stocks to sustainable levels, and provide Devolved Administrations with powers to manage their fisheries.

A Trade Bill will seek to make the most of opportunities from having an independent trade policy after Brexit. It will: create powers so that the UK can continue business through trade agreements it is currently party to through EU membership; establish a new independent body to protect UK firms against unfair trade practices and unforeseen surges in imports; ensure access to procurement opportunities under the Government Procurement Agreement.

A Financial Services Bill will enhance competitiveness and maintain standards in financial services. The Bill will aim to ensure that the UK maintains its world-leading regulatory standards and remains open to international markets after Brexit.

A Private International Law Bill will maintain and strengthen the UK's role as a world leader in delivering justice across borders on civil and family justice issues. It will also make it easier for UK individuals and families who become involved in international legal disputes to access justice.

Supporting our Public Services

The NHS published, in September 2019, recommendations for legislative changes to enable the NHS to go faster and further in realising the ambitions of the 10-year Long Term Plan to improve integration, reduce bureaucracy and promote collaboration. The Government is considering those recommendations and will bring forward detailed proposals shortly.

The **NHS Funding Bill and NHS Long Term Plan** will enshrine in law the multi-year funding settlement, agreed earlier this year, that will see a £33.9bn increase in cash terms by 2023-24. Wider reform will be supported through transforming hospitals and investing in staff. This includes delivering 50,000 more nurses, with nonrepayable maintenance payments of at least £5,000 per year for nursing, midwifery and some allied health professional students, 6,000 more doctors and 6,000 more primary care professionals in general practice. The NHS People Plan will ensure that qualified doctors, nurses and allied health professionals with a job offer from the NHS, and who have been trained to a recognised standard, will be offered fast-track entry, reduced visa fees and dedicated support to come to the UK. 40 new hospitals will be funded and built over the next ten years; this is on top of the 20 hospital upgrades announced in the summer.

The Government plans to provide free car parking at hospitals for those in greatest need. Priorities and definitions will be defined through a detailed assessment of financial impacts and the existing NHS Car Parking Principles.

A Health Service Safety Investigations Bill will bring forward legislation to establish an independent body to investigate serious healthcare incidents. The aim is to establish the world's first independent body to investigate patient safety concerns and share recommendations to prevent incidents occurring. The intention is to amend the Coroners and Justice Act 2009, to give English NHS bodies the power to appoint medical examiners.

A Medicines and Medical Devices Bill will seek to ensure that the UK remains at the forefront of the global life sciences industry after Brexit, giving patients faster access to innovative medicines and supporting the growth of the domestic sector. It will also allow the UK to take a lead role in global research to find cures for rare diseases and improve treatments for patients around the world. This would have implications for pharma research and development activities in the wider South East.

Social Care. The Government has a three-point plan:

- providing councils with an additional £1bn for adults and children's social care in every year of this Parliament. In addition, it will consult on a 2% precept that will enable councils to access a further £500m for adult social care for 2020-21 to help authorities meet rising demand and continue to stabilise the social care system;
- urgently seeking a cross-party consensus in order to bring forward proposals and legislation for long-term social care reform in England; and
- ensuring that nobody needing care will be forced to sell their home to pay for it.

Mental Health Reform. The Government will continue work to reform the Mental Health Act. This will build on the findings of the independent review of the Act. A White Paper will be published in the new year, followed by legislation when Parliamentary time allows.

Education the Government will: invest £14bn more in schools over three years; level-up minimum per-pupil funding for primary schools to £3,750 next year and £4,000 the year after and secondary schools to £5,000; move towards delivering this funding directly to schools, through a single national formula; raise teacher starting pay to £30,000 nationally by September, 2022; and continue to expand the free schools programme. The Government will also ensure post-16 education system is well funded/organised, including an extra £400m for 16-19 year old education next year; and additional investment in T Levels with delivery from September 2020. The Government will also: invest an additional £3bn over the course of this Parliament to support the creation of a 'National Skills Fund'; invest £1.8bn over five years in a rebuilding programme to upgrade the entire further education college estate; and establish 20 Institutes of Technology across England as collaborations between further education colleges, universities, and employers.

Supporting Workers and Families

The **Employment Bill** will: protect and enhance workers' rights as the UK leaves the EU; promote fairness in the workplace, striking a balance between the flexibility that the economy needs and security for workers; strengthen workers' ability to get redress for poor treatment by creating a single new enforcement body; prioritising fairness in the workplace to offer greater protection for workers; introducing better support for working families (including a new £1bn fund to help create more childcare); protecting those in low-paid work and the gig economy; and ensuring that tips left for workers go to them in full

The **Renters' Reform Bill** will introduce reforms to deliver a fair and more effective rental market. The intended benefits would include: improved security for tenants; stronger rights for landlords to gain possession of their property when they have a valid reason; improving the experience of those living in the private rental properties; a new lifetime deposit; improved standards; driving out rogue landlords; and all tenants having a right to redress if their rented properties are not safe and healthy.

Housing. In seeking to provide more housing the Government will consult on First Homes - providing homes for local people and key workers at a discount of at least 30% secured through covenants so that the homes will remain discounted in perpetuity. The Government will renew the Affordable Homes Programme, building hundreds of thousands of new homes for a range of people in different places. It will introduce a new reformed Shared Ownership model, making buying a share of a home fairer and more transparent. The Government is committed to building at least a 1m homes over this Parliament and will set out further steps to achieve this, including a Planning White Paper and funding for critical infrastructure. The new £10bn Single Housing Infrastructure fund will provide the roads, schools and GP surgeries needed to support new homes. The Government will take forward reforms to end unfair practices in the leasehold and ground rent markets. It will also bring forward a Social Housing White Paper setting out measures to empower tenants and support the continued supply of social homes.

Homelessness. The Government has committed to end rough sleeping by the end of this Parliament. It will continue to invest in key rough sleeping interventions and continue to support those at risk of homelessness and rough sleeping through the continued enforcement of the Homelessness Reduction Act.

The **Building Safety Bill** will put in place new and enhanced regulations for building safety and construction products, and ensure residents have a stronger voice in the system. The Fire Safety Bill will seek to ensure that a tragedy like that at Grenfell Tower can never happen again.

A **Pension Schemes Bill** will provide simpler oversight of pensions savings and protect people's savings for later life including new laws to tackle irresponsible management of private pension schemes. It will also provide more options for employers to support employees, including saving collectively and sharing investment and mortality risk. The Bill will enhance the Pensions Regulator's powers to respond sooner when employers do not take their pension responsibilities seriously.

To prevent and tackle **online harms** the Government will publish draft legislation for pre-legislative scrutiny to progress the April 2019 Online Harms White Paper.

On meeting the **Cost of Living**, the **National Living Wage** will increase to reach two-thirds of median earnings within five years (projected to be around £10.50 an hour in 2024), provided economic conditions allow. The Government plans to expand the reach of the National Living Wage which currently applies to people over the ages of 25, to those aged 21 and over within five years. The Government is committed to raising the National Insurance threshold to £9,500 next year.

The Government will publish a **National Strategy for Disabled People** in 2020 to ensure disabled people can lead a life of opportunity and fulfilment. The Strategy will set out practical proposals on the issues that matter most to disabled people. It will be developed with disabled people, disability organisations and charities, and will include housing, education and transport.

Strengthening the Justice System

The **Counter Terrorism (Sentencing and Release) Bill** will ensure that the most serious terrorist offenders stay in prison for longer, giving the public greater confidence that sentences reflect the severity of the

offences. Similarly, the **Sentencing Bill** will seek to ensure that the most serious violent and sexual offenders spend time in prison that matches the severity of their crimes, protecting victims and giving the public confidence.

The **Serious Violence Bill** will create new duties on a range of specified agencies across different sectors, such as local government, youth offending, and health and probation, to work collaboratively, share data and information, and put in place plans to prevent and reduce serious violence within their communities. It will amend the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to ensure that serious violence is an explicit priority for Community Safety Partnerships which include local police, fire and probation services, as well as local authorities and wider public services.

The **Sentencing (Pre-consolidation Amendments) Bill** will make technical changes to the law which pave the way for the Law Commission's Sentencing Code, which will consolidate the law on sentencing procedure in England and Wales. A **Serious Violence Bill** will place a duty on public bodies to work together to identify and tackle early factors that can lead to crime and ensure the police can more easily stop and search habitual knife carriers. A **Police Powers and Protection Bill** will establish a Police Covenant and ensure the police are able to fully conduct their duties by providing them with additional support and protection.

A **Prisoners (Disclosure of Information about Victims) Bill** will require Parole Boards to take into account the pain felt by victims and their families when offenders refuse to disclose certain information about their crimes - a version of "Helen's Law". The Government will consult on a **Victims' Law** that guarantees victims' rights and the level of support they can expect. A revised Victims' Code, to clearly set out the minimum level of service victims can expect from criminal justice agencies will be published in early 2020.

The **Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Bill** will remove unnecessary conflict during the divorce process, in which children are so often caught up, while ensuring that divorce remains a carefully considered decision. The Government will re-introduce the **Domestic Abuse Bill**, strengthening protections for victims and providing new enforcement mechanisms.

The **Extradition (Provisional Arrest) Bill** will empower police officers to immediately arrest someone wanted for a serious crime committed in a trusted country, without having to first apply for a warrant. The Government will consider proposals to deal more effectively with foreign national offenders, including increasing the maximum penalty for those who return to the UK in breach of a deportation order. The Government will set up a **Royal Commission** to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the criminal justice process.

The Government will develop **espionage legislation** to provide the security services and law enforcement agencies with the tools they need to disrupt Hostile State Activity.

Infrastructure, Investment and Devolution

National Infrastructure Strategy. A strategy will be published alongside the first Budget. It will set out details of the Government's plan to invest £100 billion to transform the UK's infrastructure including transport, local growth, decarbonisation, digital infrastructure, infrastructure finance and delivery. The Strategy will seek to level up and connect every part of the country with prosperity shared across all of the UK. The Government will introduce any legislation required to deliver plans set out in the infrastructure strategy in due course.

Broadband. Legislation to roll out gigabit capable broadband across the UK to achieve nationwide coverage as soon as possible, make it easier for telecoms companies to install broadband infrastructure in blocks of flats, and ensure that all new homes are built with reliable and fast internet speeds.

Air Traffic Management and Unmanned Aircraft Bill. To maintain the UK's position as a world-leader in aviation, ensuring that regulations keep pace with new technology to support sustainable growth; and ensure that the police are able to tackle effectively the unlawful use of unmanned aircraft.

Airline insolvency legislation. To protect passengers by reforming the insolvency process, balancing strong consumer protection with the interests of the taxpayer.

Railways minimum service levels. Legislation to make any strike against a rail employer unlawful unless a Minimum Service Agreement is in place beforehand which sets the minimum number and nature of staff, and the minimum service pattern to be provided during rail strikes

Railway reform. Government will publish a White Paper informed by the Williams Review. Government will end the complicated franchising model to create a simpler, more effective system. The Government is committed to invest in the Midlands Rail Hub, Northern Powerhouse Rail and significant upgrades to urban commuter and regional services outside London. A number of the lines and stations closed under the Beeching cuts will be reopened. The detail of the latter two will be critical for the South East even if the Government's stated priority areas are further north.

High Speed Rail 2. Without prejudice to the Oakervee Review of High-Speed Rail 2, it is expected that the High-Speed Rail (West Midlands – Crewe) Bill will be revived in this Parliament.

National Security and Investment. A Bill to strengthen the Government's powers to scrutinise and intervene in business transactions, takeovers and mergers to protect national security. Government powers to scrutinise investments and consider the risks that can arise from hostile parties acquiring ownership of, or control over, businesses or other entities and assets that have national security implications will be upgraded.

Science, space and research. Government will increase tax credits for research & development and significantly boost public R&D funding, backing a new approach to funding high-risk, high-payoff research in emerging fields of research and technology. There will be a new fast-track immigration scheme for the best and brightest scientists and researchers. A new National Space Council will be established, and a UK Space Strategy launched.

English Devolution. Government is committed to levelling up powers and investment in the regions across England and allowing each part of the country to decide its own destiny. A White Paper will be published which will include plans for spending and local growth funding and set out plans for full devolution across England, increasing the number of mayors and doing more devolution deals. Powers between Mayoral Combined Authorities will be levelled up.

Business rates. Government will conduct a fundamental review of business rates. In the meantime, the next business rates revaluation will be brought forward by one year from 2022 to 2021 and business rates revaluations will be moved from a five-yearly cycle to a three-yearly cycle. The retail discount will be increased from one-third to 50 per cent, extending that discount to cinemas and music venues, extending the duration of the local newspapers discount, and introducing an additional discount for pubs.

Protecting the Environment and Improving Animal Welfare

Environment Bill. Environmental principles will be enshrined in law. There will be new legally binding environmental improvement targets. Measures will be introduced to improve air and water quality including increasing local powers to tackle sources of air pollution. There will be measures to extend producer responsibility, ensure a consistent approach to recycling, introduce deposit return schemes, and introduce charges for specified single use plastic items. A new independent regulator (the Office for Environmental Protection) will be established in statute to scrutinise environmental policy and law, investigate complaints and take enforcement action. This will clearly have an impact on the role of the Environment Agency. Biodiversity will be improved working with developers. There will be powers to direct water companies to work together to meet current and future demand.

Climate Change. The Government will continue to take steps to meet the target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 whilst still growing the economy. The first Budget will prioritise the environment including investing £9.2bn in the energy efficiency of homes, schools and hospitals, and £4 billion in flood defences. There will be a new £640m Nature for Climate fund.

Animal Welfare. Legislation to increase protection and increase sentences, and ensure that animals are recognised in domestic law as sentient beings and that this is taken into consideration in relevant Government policymaking. There will be consultation on banning imports from trophy hunting.

Strengthening the Union and Constitution

The Union. Ministers will work urgently to facilitate talks to restore devolved government in Northern Ireland. The return of powers from the EU will lead to a significant increase in the decision-making powers for the Devolved Administrations. The Government will introduce a new UK Shared Prosperity Fund to tackle inequality and deprivation in each of the four nations.

Constitution and democracy. A Constitution, Democracy & Rights Commission will be set up to examine the broader aspects of the constitution in depth and develop proposals to restore trust in institutions and in how democracy operates. The Fixed-term Parliaments Act 2011 will be repealed.

Electoral Integrity. A range of measures including requiring voters to show an approved form of photographic ID in order to vote at a polling station in a UK parliamentary election in Great Britain and local election in England. People will have to re-register every three years for a postal vote. Campaigners will be banned from handling postal votes and there will be a limit on the number of people an individual may act as a proxy for or hand in papers for. There will be measures to make it easier for disabled people to vote at polling stations. UK citizens living overseas will be able to vote for life. Consultation will take place on implementing an imprints regime for digital election material and strengthening elections from foreign interference.

Other Measures

Armed Forces. The Armed Forces Covenant will be further incorporated into law, and the Government will honour the NATO commitment to spend at least two per cent of national income on defence. It will bring forward proposals to tackle vexatious claims and find better ways of dealing with legacy issues that provide better outcomes for victims and survivors.

Public finances. The Government will invest in the country's public services and infrastructure whilst keeping borrowing and debt under control and maintaining the sustainability of the public finances through a responsible fiscal strategy. The Government has set out a set of fiscal rules which are to have the current budget in balance no later than the third year of the forecast period, to limit public sector net investment to an average of 3 per cent of GDP and to reassess plans in the event of a pronounced rise in interest rates. The Government will increase the National Insurance Threshold to £9,500 and increase the National Minimum Wage. The Government will set out further proposals to tackle tax evasion and avoidance, including doubling the maximum prison term to 14 years for individuals convicted of the most serious tax fraud.

Boycotts by public institutions. The Government will stop public institutions from imposing their own approach or views about international relations through preventing boycotts, divestment or sanctions campaigns against foreign countries and those who trade with them. This builds on guidance published by the Cabinet Office and the then Department for Communities and Local Government regarding procurement boycotts and pension investment.

Windrush Compensation Scheme (Expenditure) Bill. To ensure the Scheme is underpinned by the necessary parliamentary authority.

Thomas Cook Compensation Bill. To enable the Government to administer a capped compensation scheme to support customers of Thomas Cook facing the most serious hardship as a result of life-changing injuries, illness or loss of life for which UK-based Thomas Cook companies would have been liable.

Birmingham Commonwealth Games Bill. To manage public spending so that financial assistance given to the Birmingham 2022 Organising Committee continues to comply with spending rules set out by the Treasury. Other measures ensuring that Games tickets are accessible and affordable by prohibiting the unauthorised resale of tickets.

Integrated Security, Defence and Foreign Policy Review. Government will undertake the deepest review of Britain's security, defence, and foreign policy since the end of the Cold War. The Review, led by Number 10, will include the Armed Forces, intelligence services, and Counterterrorism. It will also develop Global Britain's foreign policy with a focus on its alliances and diplomacy, trends in shifts of power and wealth, and how the UK can best use its international development resource.

Foreign affairs. The Government will work closely with international partners to help solve the most complex international security issues and promote peace and security globally. It will stand firm against those who threaten the values of the United Kingdom, including by developing a sanctions regime to directly address human rights abuse, and working to ensure that all girls have access to twelve years of quality education.