

News story: Prime Minister launches 25 Year Environment Plan

Launching the 25 Year Environment Plan, the PM will set out the government's determination to leave our environment in a better state than we found it.

She will outline steps for a cleaner, greener Britain – with avoidable plastic waste eliminated by the end of 2042.

To help achieve this, the government will extend the 5p carrier bag charge to all retailers in England. To date, we have used nine billion fewer plastic bags as a direct consequence of introducing the charge.

The government will also work with supermarkets to encourage them to introduce plastic-free aisles in which all the food is loose.

This will give consumers the choice to make greener decisions and promote the use of less damaging plastic packaging.

To encourage industry to take more responsibility for the environmental impacts of their products and make them easier to recycle, the government will also look at how the tax system or charges could further reduce the amount of waste we create. A call for evidence on how to reduce the use of single-use plastics will begin next month.

In addition we will to inject new funding into plastics innovation through a bid into the government's £7 billion research and development pot.

It is estimated that 8.3 billion tonnes of plastic have been produced since the 1950s.

Research indicates that without urgent action to cut demand this is likely to be 34 billion tonnes by 2050.

In the UK alone, during its recent Great British Beach Clean Up, the Marine Conservation Society found 718 pieces of litter for every 100 metre stretch of beach surveyed, and of this rubbish from food and drink made up at least one fifth.

In a speech, Theresa May is expected to say:

We look back in horror at some of the damage done to our environment in the past and wonder how anyone could have thought that, for example, dumping toxic chemicals, untreated, into rivers was ever the right thing to do.

In years to come, I think people will be shocked at how today we allow so much plastic to be produced needlessly.

In the UK alone, the amount of single-use plastic wasted every year would fill 1,000 Royal Albert Halls.

This plastic is ingested by dozens of species of marine mammals and over 100 species of sea birds, causing immense suffering to individual creatures and degrading vital habitats. 1 million birds, and over 100,000 other sea mammals and turtles die every year from eating and getting tangled in plastic waste. One in three fish caught in the English Channel contains pieces of plastic.

This truly is one of the great environmental scourges of our time.

Today I can confirm that the UK will demonstrate global leadership. We must reduce the demand for plastic, reduce the number of plastics in circulation and improve our recycling rates. To tackle it we will take action at every stage of the production and consumption of plastic.

Demonstrating global leadership the UK will also do more to help developing nations tackle pollution and reduce plastic waste, including through UK aid.

Mrs May is expected to add:

I want the Britain of the future to be a truly Global Britain, which is a force for good in the world. Steadfast in upholding our values – not least our fierce commitment to protecting the natural environment.

When we host the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in April we will put the sustainable development of our oceans firmly on the agenda.

We will work with our partners to create a Commonwealth Blue Charter and push for strong action to reduce plastic waste in the ocean.

We will direct our development spending to help developing nations reduce plastic waste, increase our own marine protected areas at home, and establish new Blue Belt protections in our Overseas Territories.

The Prime Minister will also announce plans to help more children engage with the environment. This will be delivered through £10m for school visits and a Nature Friendly Schools programme to create school grounds which allow young people to learn more about the natural world, targeting schools in disadvantaged areas first.

Speech: “I am very pleased to be able to finish my time in New York with a session on Colombia, one of our greatest success stories”

Thank you Mr President,

And let me extend a very warm welcome to Vice President Naranjo. I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to you, Mr Vice President, and through you to President Santos for your tireless commitment to peace in Colombia.

Thank you also to Jean for your briefing and for the comprehensive report detailing the progress that has been made under the mandate of the UN Verification Mission. I commend you and your team for your continued efforts, both in support of the FARC Peace Agreement and more recently, in participating in the monitoring mechanism for the ELN ceasefire.

The courage and diligence of both parties have allowed many positive steps to take place since the Peace Agreement between the Government of Colombia and the FARC was signed. Over 11,000 FARC members have registered with the UN and are now beginning their reincorporation to civilian life. The new political party – the People’s Alternative Forces of Colombia – can participate in Colombia’s elections this year. And the FARC have handed over their final caches of weapons to the United Nations.

These are remarkable achievements. But we are now getting to the hardest part and there is much more work to do. As President Santos said in Cartagena last week, less than 10 percent of the time set out for the Peace Agreement to be delivered has passed.

We welcome the continued commitment of both parties to achieve a sustainable peace. We encourage them to continue to work together to overcome the challenges which are only to be expected following over 50 years of conflict.

As we have just heard, these challenges include increasing levels of violence in some areas affected by the conflict, and the killings of Human Rights Defenders and former FARC members. I share the concerns set out by the Secretary-General in his report.

And so I welcome the important steps taken by the Colombian Government to tackle these concerns. These include the establishment of a more permanent and visible presence by the Police and Security Forces, a strengthened early warning system and a renewed focus on investigations by the Attorney General’s office. Security must be established in these areas to allow communities to realise the full benefits of the Peace Agreement. I welcome also the Government’s commitment to addressing the issue of access to land

for former FARC combatants. All these steps taken together are a clear signal of the Government's commitment to implementation.

Looking ahead, I encourage the Government of Colombia to maintain their focus on passing the remaining peace legislation through Congress. An early ruling by the Constitutional Court on amendments made to some key laws will be important to maintaining momentum. This includes a ruling on amendments to the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, which are vital to make progress in the Transitional Justice system.

I had hoped that today we would be discussing the announcement of a renewed ceasefire between the Government and the ELN. Instead I am concerned and disappointed by the news just in that the ELN have broken the ceasefire and squandered this chance for sustained peace.

I urge both sides to work together to find a way of avoiding further civilian suffering.

Mr President,

President Santos, along with Colombia's leaders, took a bold step in coming to the Security Council for help in 2016. Our support for a sustained peace in Colombia will not waiver. And as Colombia holds elections later this year and goes through political change as all democracies do, it is important to remember that this Peace Agreement belongs to all Colombians, not to any specific government. The United Kingdom will continue to encourage focus and commitment to the peace process to bring about real, lasting change. This process is unique and will continue to inspire us for years to come, as it has inspired me on all of my time in the Security Council.

Mr President,

This is my final scheduled public statement in the Security Council. I am very pleased to be able to finish my time in New York with a session on Colombia, one of our greatest success stories. I wish all the conflicts that we work on could achieve the peace that has been achieved in Colombia. And it is essential that we learn the lessons of this success and apply them to the countless other issues on our agenda, which frankly could do with a little bit of that success.

As I leave this role I want to thank all Members of the countries on the Security Council, all of you who have shared this horseshoe table in this famous chamber and all of your predecessors. Thank you for your co-operation, for your insights and for all the support over the past nearly three years.

I'd also like to thank everyone who works for the United Nations. Whether here in New York or around the world I have been continually impressed by your expertise and fortitude. You really are the unsung heroes of this organisation.

And finally I'd like to thank my own team at the UK Mission to the United Nations who have supported me with skill, with expertise and dedication. And I wish all of them the very best for the future.

For the last time,

Thank you Mr President.

[News story: HM Treasury welcomes new ministerial team](#)

The new team at the Treasury is:

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond, said:

Ensuring we have an economy fit for the future is vital to families up and down the country, so I'm delighted to be leading a team of ministers committed to creating a prosperous and inclusive economy where talent and hard work are rewarded and where everybody has the opportunity to shine.

I'd like to welcome Robert and John, and welcome back Liz and Mel. Together we will work tirelessly to deliver a truly global Britain.

Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Elizabeth Truss, said:

It's fantastic to be reappointed at this vital time for our country. I'm looking forward to working with my Treasury and government colleagues. We will continue our focus on improving lives across the UK and backing the great businesses and people that drive Britain's economy.

Financial Secretary to the Treasury and Paymaster General, Mel Stride, said:

A fair tax system is key to building a fairer society and I look forward to continuing our vital work to support families and businesses, crack down on avoidance and evasion, and ensure that our customs system works effectively when we leave the European Union.

Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury, Robert Jenrick, said:

As Exchequer Secretary, I am delighted to carry on this

government's fantastic work to boost productivity, deliver better infrastructure and maximise the potential for our country.

Britain is a world leader in infrastructure delivering two of Europe's largest projects, and our record investment will help ensure Britain is fit for the future.

Economic Secretary to the Treasury and City Minister, John Glen, said:

Britain is the financial services centre of the world and I am determined to maintain this leading position at what is a crucial period for the industry. The sector employs over a million people across the nation and its tax take is essential for helping to pay for our hospitals, roads, parks and schools.

I'm incredibly proud to be appointed City Minister and I'm looking forward to working with the industry to plot a course for a prosperous future.

Press release: New Shared Services Strategy to deliver millions of pounds of savings to the taxpayer

By improving civil servants' interactions with government back office services, the strategy will support a Civil Service, where civil servants can seamlessly move between departments and roles, allowing the Civil Service to deploy what we need to meet the challenges of the day.

The [strategy](#) primarily focuses on driving value and efficiency for the taxpayer by moving to the latest cloud technology, promoting simpler back office processes across departments supported by automation, and meeting the needs of end users across the Civil Service, police, and the armed forces. Doing these things will enable a smarter and more flexible back office for the Civil Service.

Once it has been implemented successfully, the new strategy will promote competition between shared services providers in the market, driving both performance for users, and value for the taxpayer by making service providers constantly improve their technology. By making the most of the latest

automation, and robotics, we can make sure that civil servants are supported while they deliver public services.

This strategy will be delivered by the newly formed Government Shared Services unit, from within the Cabinet Office, in collaboration with all government departments.

Matthew Coats, Interim Head of Government Shared Services, and Chief Operating Officer of the Ministry of Justice said:

The shared services strategy for government sets clear direction, and I am pleased to have been part of its development. This will be step change in shared services across the government, directly supporting civil servants in their roles, while also contributing significant savings to the public purse.

By allowing civil servants to spend less time doing administration, they can spend more time delivering vital services to the public.

[News story: Civil/crime news: more dates for HMCTS roadshows](#)

Providers can attend more HMCTS Roadshow Reform events with dates being announced in Birmingham, Winchester and Leeds.

The £1 billion reform programme will affect courts and tribunals, and is due to be completed in 2022. Where will the events be held?

The roadshow event series began last year and will continue into 2018. Dates will always be announced on the HMCTS website and twitter account.

The latest venues to be announced are:

- 9 January 5:30pm-7pm – IET Centre, Birmingham
- 5 February, time TBC – Winchester Combined Court
- 9 February, 5:00pm-6:30pm – Leeds Magistrates' Court

How will the events work?

There will be a general introduction to the reform programme and a round-

table discussion. Issues will include:

- scheduling and listing
- virtual hearings
- flexible operating hours

How do I register?

Register your interest on the HMCTS website link.

Further information

[HMCTS website](#) and [#HMCTS](#) – to check for future Reform Roadshow announcements