

# [Press release: Plan your A303 journeys ahead of Winter Solstice event at Stonehenge](#)

Up to 3,000 people are expected to visit Stonehenge on the morning of Friday, 22 December, and with limited parking on site, English Heritage is once again urging visitors to use public transport or car share.

The Monument Field will be opened at approximately 7.45am, dependent on light levels, and will close at 10am.

To assist the flow of traffic both before and after the event, a 40mph speed limit will be in place on the A303 between the Countess roundabout and Longbarrow roundabout, with the lay-bys closed in between.

Gareth Price, Highways England emergency planning officer for the south west, said:

We are anticipating traffic volumes to increase around the event, and our aim is to keep the Highways England network running while keeping road users safe and informed.

The traffic management will be in place for safety and to keep disruption to a minimum, and we advise all road users to check our traffic and travel information channels, plan their journeys and allow plenty of time.

Drivers can obtain up-to-the-minute travel information on Twitter, by phoning the Highways England Information Line on 0300 123 5000 or by [accessing the website](#).

Find out more information on the [Winter Solstice event](#).

## **General enquiries**

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

## **Media enquiries**

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

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# Speech: “This Council has unanimously, and appropriately, decided to impose the strictest sanctions in a generation upon North Korea.”

Thank you Mr Foreign Minister for bringing us together for this important meeting under the Japanese presidency of the Security Council.

And thank you too, for the Secretary-General Guterres for your comprehensive briefing on the clear global threats and the challenges that destabilising conduct of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea present to us all.

I should like to start by discussing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. It was, it is, a great diplomatic achievement and remains the cornerstone of our international security.

As signatories, we have all benefited from its protections. It is our collective responsibility, and it is in our collective interests, to ensure that all nations stand by their commitments and obligations under the Treaty and its associated agreements.

It is also our duty as members of this Council and as responsible international actors.

We must abide by our collective rules, we must defend our values and we must work together in this Council, to safeguard a system of international security that benefits the whole of humanity.

North Korea repeatedly and wilfully rebuffs these systems and our collective values.

Earlier this week, members of the Council heard appalling and harrowing accounts of the regime’s brutal treatment of its own people. Of women forced to drown their newborn babies as the regime didn’t consider them to be racially pure. They heard multiple examples of violations of foreign citizens’ rights, including of course Mr President, of those of your own country, Japan.

Today, we meet yet again to condemn North Korea’s illegal and dangerous nuclear weapons programme.

Kim Jong-Un claims that he wants to be a responsible actor, and that he wishes to bring security and prosperity to his people. The regime’s actions, exemplified by their systematic violation of human rights and their nuclear weapons programme, demonstrate precisely the opposite intent.

North Korea’s pursuit of an intercontinental nuclear weapon is increasingly destabilising for us all. North Korea has fired some 20 ballistic missiles

this year. We have seen three intercontinental ballistic missile launches and two missiles launched across and over the territory of Northern Japan.

Now, in response to these actions this Council has unanimously, and appropriately, decided to impose the strictest sanctions in a generation upon North Korea.

Our community of nations has shown its deep condemnation of the regime by taking these sanctions seriously. This has of course started to have an impact. We all have the responsibility of ensuring these sanctions are fully and properly implemented so that they have the desired effect.

Now that North Korea's arms dealers are discovering that their usual routes to clients are closed, their diplomats are struggling to process bank transactions for contraband goods. Their exporters of manual labour are finding their contracts are not being renewed.

We must not just keep this pressure up, but we must increase it. We must share information and expertise to prevent North Korea from using front companies or illicit channels to evade sanctions.

We must all co-operate fully with the UN's highly competent and professional Panel of Experts on North Korea sanctions and we strongly commend their work and will continue actively to support them.

But we should be clear that the reason we enforce sanctions is to force Kim Jong-Un to see that he has the choice of two paths.

His current path will lead his country to greater poverty and isolation, and threatens not just North Korea's but the global security.

He can, he must, choose to change course. He can choose to comply with the UN Security Council resolutions and to join the community of law-abiding nations. He can choose to let his people express themselves through debate and commerce.

This is the real path to security and prosperity for the North Korean people. Only Kim can now make this choice and we must all work together here to persuade him to make the right choice.

Our message to Kim Jong-Un and his regime must be clear and united: for the wellbeing of your countrymen and the safety of your neighbours and the wider world, you must change course. I hope the North Korean representative here today conveys these strong messages back to Pyongyang.

Mr President, we must all work together and use all the diplomatic and economic tools at our disposal to deliver this uncompromising message.

Let us stand firm. Let us stand fast to our values.

The world looks to all of us here to defend our system of international security. For the sake of future generations of humankind, we must now rise to this challenge.

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# Statement to Parliament: PM Commons statement on European Council: 18 December 2017

With permission, Mr Speaker, I would like to make a statement on last week's European Council.

Before turning to the progress on our negotiations to leave the EU, let me briefly cover the discussions on Russia, Jerusalem, migration and education.

In each case the UK made a substantive contribution – both as a current member of the EU and in the spirit of the new, deep and special partnership we want to build with our European neighbours.

## **Russia**

Mr Speaker, Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea was the first time since the Second World War that one sovereign nation has forcibly taken territory from another in Europe.

Since then human rights have worsened; Russia has fomented conflict in the Donbas and the peace process in Ukraine has stalled.

As I said at the Lord Mayor's Banquet, the UK will do what is necessary to protect ourselves, and to work with our allies to do likewise – both now and after we have left the EU.

So we were at the forefront of the original call for EU sanctions. And at this Council we agreed to extend those sanctions for a further six months.

## **Jerusalem**

On Jerusalem, I made it clear that we disagree with the United States' decision to move its embassy and recognise Jerusalem as the Israeli capital before a final status agreement. And like our EU partners, we will not be following suit.

But it is vital that we continue to work with the United States to encourage them to bring forward proposals that will reenergise the peace process.

And this must be based around support for a two state solution – and an acknowledgement that the final status of Jerusalem must be subject to negotiations between the Israelis and Palestinians.

## **Migration**

On migration, when we leave the European Union we will be taking back control

of our own borders and laws, so we will be free to decide our own approach independently of the EU.

But as part of the new partnership we want to build, I made it clear at this Council that we will continue to play our full part in working with the EU on this shared challenge.

So we will retain our maritime presence in the Mediterranean for as long as necessary.

We will work with Libyan law enforcement to enhance their capability to tackle people smuggling networks.

And we will continue to address the root causes of the problem by investing for the long term in education, jobs and services – both in countries of origin and transit.

### **Education**

When it comes to education, Mr Speaker, our world-leading universities remain a highly attractive destination for students from across the EU, while UK students also benefit from studying overseas.

UK and EU universities will still want to work together after we leave the EU. And indeed to cooperate with other universities from around the world. We will discuss how to achieve this in the long term as part of the negotiations on our future deep and special partnership.

But in the meantime I was pleased to confirm at this Council that UK students will be able to continue to participate in the Erasmus student exchange programme for at least another three years – until the end of this budget period.

### **Brexit Negotiations**

Turning to Brexit, the European Council formally agreed on Friday that sufficient progress has been made to move on to the second stage of the negotiations.

This is an important step on the road to delivering the smooth and orderly Brexit that people voted for in June last year.

And I want to thank Jean-Claude Juncker for his personal efforts, and Donald Tusk and my fellow leaders for the constructive way they have approached this process.

With Friday's Council, we have now achieved my first priority of a reciprocal agreement on citizens' rights.

EU Citizens living in the UK will have their rights enshrined in UK law and enforced by British courts. And UK citizens living in the EU will also have their rights protected.

Mr Speaker, we needed both and that is what we have got – providing vital reassurance to all these citizens and their families in the run-up to Christmas.

On the financial settlement, I set out the principles for the House last week and the negotiations that have brought this settlement down by a substantial amount.

Based on reasonable assumptions, the settlement is estimated to stand at between £35 billion and £39 billion in current terms.

This is the equivalent of around four years of our current budget contribution, around two of which we expect will be covered by the implementation period.

And it is far removed from some of the figures that had been bandied around.

On Northern Ireland, as I set out in detail for the House last week, we have committed to maintain the Common Travel Area with Ireland; to uphold the Belfast Agreement in full; and to avoid a hard border between Northern Ireland and Ireland while upholding the constitutional and economic integrity of the whole United Kingdom.

And we will work closer than ever with all Northern Irish parties and the Irish government as we now enter the second phase of the negotiations.

Mr Speaker, the guidelines published by President Tusk on Friday point to the shared desire of the EU and the UK to make rapid progress on an implementation period, with formal talks beginning very soon.

This will help give certainty to employers and families that we are going to deliver a smooth Brexit.

As I proposed in Florence, during this strictly time-limited implementation period which we will now begin to negotiate, we would not be in the Single Market or the Customs Union, as we will have left the European Union. But we would propose that our access to one another's markets would continue as now, while we prepare and implement the new processes and new systems that will underpin our future partnership.

During this period we intend to register new arrivals from the EU as preparation for our future immigration system. And we will prepare for our future independent trade policy by negotiating – and where possible signing – trade deals with third countries, which could come into force after the conclusion of the implementation period.

Finally, the Council also confirmed on Friday that discussions will now begin on trade and the future security partnership.

I set out the framework for our approach to these discussions in my speeches at Lancaster House and in Florence.

We will now work with our European partners with ambition and creativity to

develop the details of a partnership that I firmly believe will be in the best interests of both the UK and the EU.

## **Conclusion**

Mr Speaker, since my Lancaster House speech in January we have triggered Article 50 and begun and closed negotiations on the first phase.

We have done what many said could not be done – demonstrating what can be achieved with commitment and perseverance on both sides.

And I will not be derailed from delivering the democratic will of the British people.

We are well on our way to delivering a smooth and orderly Brexit.

That is good news for those who voted leave, who were worried the negotiations were so complicated it was never going to happen.

And it is good news for those who voted remain, who were worried that we might leave without being able to reach an agreement.

We will now move on with building a bold new economic relationship – which together with the new trade deals we strike across the world – can support generations of new jobs for our people, open up new markets for our exporters and drive new growth for our economy.

We will build a new security relationship that promotes our values in the world and keeps our families safe from threats that increasingly do not recognise geographical boundaries.

And we will bring our country together – stronger, fairer, and once again back in control of our borders, our money and our laws.

Finally, Mr Speaker, let me say this.

We are dealing with questions of great significance to our country's future, so it is natural that there are many strongly held views on all sides of this Chamber.

And it is right and proper that we should debate them – and do so with all the passion and conviction that makes our democracy what it is.

But there can never be a place for the threats of violence and intimidation against some Members that we have seen in recent days.

Our politics must be better than that.

And on that note, I commend this Statement to the House.

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## News story: Tyne and Wear man fined for waste offences

Jonathan Patrick Finn of Flaxtead Grange, Sunderland Road, Newbottle, was charged with illegally storing and treating mixed waste when he appeared before South Tyneside Magistrates' Court on 12 December 2017.

He admitted the charges brought by the Environment Agency and was handed a £200 fine with £1,530 costs. The court heard how Finn leased a dead end area of land adjacent to the railway line on the north side of Sheepfolds Road, Sunderland, in January 2016.

The land had previously been fly tipped and Finn was offered six months' rent free and £3,000 in return for lawfully disposing of the waste. Instead, Finn added to it.

Between 4 and 8 January 2016, CCTV captured a red flat back lorry laden with waste approaching the site. Footage then shows the lorry, owned by Finn's father and being used by Finn at the time, leaving empty a short time later. On 4 January a fire was also photographed on the site.

When Environment Agency officers visited the site on 2 February 2016 they saw around five tonnes of waste, including construction waste, plastics and timber on the road outside. Inside they saw large amounts of mixed waste including household waste, sofas and plastics.

The court heard that Environment Agency officers visited the site twice more between 23 February and 24 March 2016, each time reporting an increase in waste.

Further photographic evidence taken during this time shows four loads of waste deposited on the back of a lorry registered in Finn's name.

In May 2016, the land owner was given four weeks to clear the waste after Environment Officers were informed that Finn had abandoned the site.

On a subsequent visit they discovered that the waste was being cleared to a site at the Pallion Industrial Estate in Sunderland owned by Finn's father, John Finn, who later confirmed that some of the waste had come from the Sheepfolds Road site.

Finn attended an interview on 17 October 2016 during which he admitted to burning waste and operating a waste recycling business without a permit.

Rachael Caldwell from the Environment Agency said:

Environmental laws are there to protect communities and the environment from pollution.

Anyone who operates outside of these laws is not only breaking them but is more likely to commit greater harm, which is why we will pursue them and, where repeated or significant breaches are found, we will prosecute.

A trial involving another defendant allegedly linked to the illegal storing and treatment of waste on the site is set to take place next year.

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## **Press release: New flood scheme in Rugeley officially opened**

Members of the Environment Agency, Cannock Chase District Council, the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), Rugeley Town Council, Staffordshire County Council and the Trent Regional Flood & Coastal Committee visited Rugeley today (Monday 18 December) to mark the completion of the project.

The newly completed Rugeley flood scheme, which was delivered by the Environment Agency, will help to reduce the risk of flooding from the Rising Brook for 114 residential and 159 commercial properties. It also forms an integral part of Cannock Chase District Council's plans to regenerate parts of the town centre.

Work on the project, which started in December 2016, saw construction of a 350m long embankment, which is 4m high at its highest point, on Hagley playing fields. This embankment has created a flood storage area which will store water from the Rising Brook during times of heavy rainfall and then slowly release it back into the watercourse when levels no longer pose a flood risk.

Mark Swain from the Environment Agency said:

This scheme is fantastic news for the people of Rugeley as it will help reduce the risk of flooding to a significant number of residential properties and businesses. Not only that but it is an important step in unlocking Rugeley's potential for future investment, regeneration and growth, something which would be challenging if the town remained at risk of serious flooding.

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire LEP chairman David Frost CBE said:

This impressive project is very good news for Rugeley, protecting town centre homes and businesses from flooding and making the town

a better place to live, work and visit.

This scheme means businesses will have a secure foundation when they make plans to expand, without the risk of their hard work literally being washed away. It is also creating an attractive green space for local people to enjoy.

Cllr John Kraujalis Corporate Improvement Portfolio Leader for Cannock Chase Council said:

This scheme is an excellent example of true partnership working in action. The improvements will provide protection and peace of mind to residents and commercial businesses alike that were at risk from flooding from the Rising Brook. The Environment Agency has also successfully procured and delivered a replacement footbridge on behalf of the Council which became unstable a number of years ago and was in desperate need of repair.

Gordon Alcott Economic Development & Planning Portfolio Leader for Cannock Chase Council said:

The works that have been carried out will unlock new development opportunities in Rugeley that have previously been constrained by the flood risk. The Council have already received a planning application for industrial units which could create approximately 60 jobs in the area that would have been affected by flooding prior to this work being carried out.

The scheme has been developed in partnership with Cannock Chase District Council and Staffordshire County Council, and funded by Government Flood Defence Grant in Aid, Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire LEP and the Trent Flood and Coastal Committee.