

National Security Bill reaches last stage in the House of Commons

This is an important stage in the progress of this vital bill, which will keep the people of this nation safe by introducing a full suite of new measures to tackle the full range of modern-day state threats, from sabotage and spying to foreign interference and economic espionage.

For the first time, the bill will make it illegal to be an undeclared spy in the UK.

It will be an offence to improperly interfere with the UK's democracy and civil society through disinformation or by attacking our electoral processes. Attempting to sabotage our critical national infrastructure – either by damaging a government or military building or by directing a ransomware attack – will also be illegal under the new offences.

Since the bill was introduced to the House of Commons, the government has added a new Foreign Influence Registration scheme (FIRS), which will compel those acting for a foreign power or entity to declare any political influencing activity that they are carrying out – and criminalise those who do not. This will strengthen the resilience of the UK political system against covert foreign influence.

The scheme will also enable the government to specify foreign powers, or entities they control, if they attempt to undermine the UK, its democracy and values. This will mean individuals or companies acting at their behest will be required to register any arrangements or activities with them – and face prosecution if they do not.

Tom Tugendhat, Security Minister, said:

The threat of hostile activity against the UK's interests from foreign powers is growing. Malign actors are emboldened and their modes are becoming more sophisticated.

Our laws must be updated to give our agencies the tools they need to keep us safe.

Our National Security Bill will enhance our ability to protect our national security, updating our tools, powers and protections to counter those who seek to do us harm.

The bill will ensure our world class security and intelligence agencies and police have the modern tools, powers and protections they need to counter those who threaten our country.

It will also introduce additional powers and measures to tackle the threat

from terrorism. For instance, allowing the courts to withhold payment of civil damages if there is a real risk that money will be used for the purposes of terrorism.

The National Security Bill is vital to deter actions which often take place in the shadows. We must be able to deter, detect and disrupt those state actors who seek to harm the UK by covertly targeting our national interests, sensitive information, trade secrets and democratic way of life.

The bill will progress through further stages as Parliamentary time allows.

1,200 new UK jobs pledged as naval shipbuilding anticipates return to Belfast

- Team Resolute selected as Preferred Bidder to deliver naval support ships
- Highly capable team includes BMT, Harland & Wolff and Navantia UK
- Plans to bolster UK shipbuilding and deliver on National Shipbuilding Strategy Refresh

The contract intends to create 1,200 UK shipyard jobs, hundreds of graduate and apprentice opportunities, and an expected 800 further jobs across the UK supply chain.

British-led Team Resolute, comprising BMT, Harland & Wolff and Navantia UK, has been appointed as the preferred bidder to deliver three crucial support ships to the Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA). The £1.6 billion contract (before inflation) to manufacture the vessels providing munitions, stores and provisions to the Royal Navy's aircraft carriers, destroyers and frigates deployed at sea, is subject to HM Treasury and Ministerial approval.

Pledging to invest £77 million in shipyard infrastructure to support the British shipbuilding sector, they aim to create one of the most advanced yards in the UK, significant for future export and domestic shipbuilding and offshore opportunities.

The proposal pledges that the entire final assembly for all three ships will be completed at Harland & Wolff's shipyard in Belfast, with the three 216-metre-long vessels – each the length of two Premier League football pitches – to be built to Bath-based BMT's entirely British design.

Under the contract, the majority of the blocks and modules for the ships would be constructed at Harland & Wolff's facilities in Belfast and Appledore, with components to be manufactured in their other delivery centres

in Methil and Arnish. This programme, which would also support a significant British-based supply chain, would be undertaken in collaboration with internationally renowned shipbuilder, Navantia.

Build work would also take place at Navantia's shipyard in Cadiz in Spain, in a collaboration that allows for key skills and technology transfer from a world-leading auxiliary shipbuilder.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

This news will be a significant boost to the UK shipbuilding industry. By selecting Team Resolute, the Ministry of Defence has chosen a proposal which includes £77 million of investment into the UK shipyards, creating around 2,000 UK jobs, and showcasing cutting-edge British design.

Building on ambitions laid out in the National Shipbuilding Strategy, this contract will bolster technology transfer and key skills from a world-renowned shipbuilder, crucial in the modernisation of British shipyards.

The contract aims to deliver 200 further education opportunities on graduate placements and apprentice programmes, as well as supporting thousands more supply chain jobs. Harland & Wolff's welding academy is set to train 300 new UK welders during the contract. The contract would also support 120 high-skilled jobs at BMT.

Delivering on ambitions to bolster UK shipbuilding as laid out in the [National Shipbuilding Strategy Refresh](#), the contract aims to deliver significant capital investment in the UK while providing ships which are essential to the Carrier-led Maritime Strike Group.

On behalf of Team Resolute, Group CEO of Harland & Wolff, John Wood, said:

Team Resolute is proud to have been selected as preferred bidder to provide the Royal Fleet Auxiliary with three state-of-the-art, adaptable ships which will fulfil the Royal Navy's needs while strengthening UK sovereign design and shipbuilding capability, as well as generating around £1.4 billion in national social and economic value.

Team Resolute will be making a significant investment into the UK and help to level up UK Government defence spend across the whole Union. We will create high quality UK jobs, apprenticeships and four facilities across the UK which will have shipbuilding capabilities fit for the 21st century.

The ships will be the second longest UK military vessels behind the two Queen

Elizabeth-class aircraft carriers. They will have commonality with the RFA's Tide class fleet tankers, also built to a British BMT design.

In the proposal, the majority of the three ships' build would take place in the UK, and the contract will increase industrial productivity, develop the domestic supply chain and workforce while improving the industry's environmental sustainability.

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Chris Heaton-Harris said:

Congratulations to Team Resolute, which includes the historic Belfast shipbuilding firm Harland and Wolff, for being selected as preferred bidders.

This announcement is a fantastic testimony to Belfast's shipbuilding heritage and reputation for innovation and expertise.

The jobs and investment which this will deliver to Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK will create life-changing opportunities, while the training of hundreds of new UK welders will ensure a bright future for local industry.

Designed to support Net Carbon Zero by the end of their 30-year service lives, the RFA vessels will be equipped with energy efficient technologies to reduce power demand and will have the capability to reduce their carbon intensity by adopting low-carbon, non-fossil fuels and future energy sources.

Vice Admiral Paul Marshall, DE&S Director General Ships, said:

FSS will deliver worldwide logistic and operational support to the Royal Navy, including the Maritime Strike Group on deployment.

Significant investment in emerging shipyards across the UK will also strengthen and diversify our industrial base. Alongside our investment in the Type 26 and Type 31 frigate programmes, this breadth will be vital to grow and support a highly capable and modern Navy.

Production is due to start in 2025 and all three support ships are expected to be operational by 2032. The manufacture contract is due to be awarded by DE&S by the first quarter of 2023, subject to completion of a successful preferred bidder stage and final approvals.

Suspended prison sentence for Bounce Back Loan fraudster

Ben Hamilton, 34, from Middlesbrough, has been sentenced to 15 months imprisonment, suspended for 18 months, after being convicted under the Companies Act following abuse of the Bounce Back Loan financial support scheme in 2020.

Hamilton was director of Netelco Ltd, a telecommunications design and installation business based in Bishop Auckland.

The company had been incorporated in 2018 and in May 2020 Hamilton applied for a £25,000 Bounce Back Loan from his bank on behalf of his business. Under the Bounce Back Loan scheme, genuine businesses impacted by the pandemic could take out interest-free taxpayer-backed loans of up to £50,000.

The loan was paid into the company bank account on 14 May 2020 and the following day Hamilton filed paperwork with Companies House to have the business dissolved.

The striking-off application to dissolve the company was explicit that interested parties and creditors, such as a bank with an outstanding loan, must be notified within seven days of making an application to dissolve a company. The form also highlighted that failure to notify interested parties is a criminal offence, however Hamilton did not follow these rules.

The company was dissolved in December 2020, and was subsequently identified as likely Bounce Back Loan fraud as part of the government's forensic counter-fraud work.

Hamilton did not co-operate with the Insolvency Service criminal investigation team, nor attend an interview when given the opportunity. Only when the Insolvency Service obtained a Proceeds of Crime Act restraining order on his bank accounts did he engage with the investigation, at which point he repaid the Bounce Back Loan in full.

He pleaded guilty to charges under the Companies Act 2006 at Teeside Magistrate's Court on 14 October. He was sentenced on 15 November at Teeside Magistrate's Court.

In addition to the suspended sentence, Hamilton was ordered to pay £2,500 in costs.

Julie Barnes, Chief Investigator at the Insolvency Service said:

This was a clear case of attempted fraud by a company director who thought he could abuse the Covid-19 financial support schemes and get away with it.

Even though Ben Hamilton has now repaid the loan, this sentence sends a clear warning to others that attempting to defraud taxpayers is not acceptable, and when prosecuting the Insolvency Service will use all of the tools in its armoury, including the Proceeds of Crime Act, to prevent criminals from retaining their benefit from crime”.

Notes to editors

Ben Hamilton is of Middlesbrough and his date of birth is August 1988.

Netelco Ltd (company reg no. 11266825).

The sentence result was announced at Teeside Magistrate’s Court by judge Recorder Anthony Hawks.

[Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct.](#)

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

UK House Price Index for September 2022

The September data shows:

- on average, house prices have not changed since August 2022
- there has been an annual price rise of 9.5% which makes the average property in the UK valued at £294,559

England

In England, the September data shows on average, house prices have not changed since August 2022. The annual price rise of 9.6% takes the average property value to £314,278.

The regional data for England indicates that:

- the North West experienced the greatest monthly rise with an increase of 0.6%
- the North East saw the lowest annual price growth, with a movement of 5.8%
- the South West experienced the greatest annual price rise, up by 11.9%
- London saw the lowest annual price decrease, with a fall of -0.6%

Price change by region for England

Region	Average price September 2022	Annual change % since September 2021	Monthly change % since August 2022
East Midlands	£252,982	11.3	0
East of England	£362,197	10.4	0.1
London	£544,113	6.9	-0.6
North East	£163,768	5.8	0.3
North West	£219,005	9.1	0.6
South East	£403,515	10.3	-0.2
South West	£336,583	11.9	0.3
West Midlands	£253,864	10.1	-0.3
Yorkshire and the Humber	£212,593	8.5	0

Repossession sales by volume for England

The lowest number of repossession sales in May 2022 was in the East of England.

The highest number of repossession sales in May 2022 was in the North West.

Repossession sales	May 2022
East Midlands	4
East of England	2
London	15
North East	11
North West	23
South East	6
South West	8
West Midlands	7
Yorkshire and the Humber	14
England	90

Average price by property type for England

Property type	September 2022	September 2021	Difference %
Detached	£493,722	£443,154	11.4
Semi-detached	£302,715	£272,744	11
Terraced	£258,044	£236,426	9.1
Flat/maisonette	£253,862	£242,010	4.9
All	£314,278	£286,832	9.6

Funding and buyer status for England

Transaction type	Average price September 2022	Annual price change % since September 2021	Monthly price change % since August 2022
Cash	£293,434	8.6	-0.2
Mortgage	£324,583	9.9	0.1
First-time buyer	£260,759	9	0.1
Former owner occupier	£360,605	10.2	-0.1

Building status for England

Building status	Average price September 2022	Annual price change % since September 2021	Monthly price change % since August 2022
New build	£408,157	19.3	1.9
Existing resold property	£303,106	15.4	2

London

London shows, on average, house prices have fallen by 0.6% since August 2022. An annual price rise of 6.9% takes the average property value to £544,113.

Average price by property type for London

Property type	September 2022	September 2021	Difference %
Detached	£1,110,089	£1,025,398	8.3
Semi-detached	£711,663	£651,780	9.2
Terraced	£602,256	£554,727	8.6
Flat/maisonette	£446,475	£426,704	4.6
All	£544,113	£509,148	6.9

Funding and buyer status for London

Transaction type	Average price September 2022	Annual price change % since September 2021	Monthly price change % since August 2022
Cash	£558,368	6.3	-0.9
Mortgage	£538,631	7	-0.5
First-time buyer	£467,887	6.2	-0.5
Former owner occupier	£627,873	7.6	-0.7

Building status for London

Building status	Average price September 2022	Annual price change % since September 2021	Monthly price change % since August 2022
New build	£571,060	10.7	0.8
Existing resold property	£541,088	8.8	1.6

Wales

Wales shows, on average, house prices have risen by 2% since August 2022. An annual price rise of 12.9% takes the average property value to £223,798.

There were 6 repossession sales for Wales in May 2022.

Average price by property type for Wales

Property type	September 2022	September 2021	Difference %
Detached	£342,603	£302,103	13.4
Semi-detached	£217,876	£191,235	13.9
Terraced	£175,077	£154,975	13
Flat/maisonette	£138,134	£129,138	7
All	£223,798	£198,146	12.9

Funding and buyer status for Wales

Transaction type	Average price September 2022	Annual price change % since September 2021	Monthly price change % since August 2022
Cash	£216,481	12.2	1.9
Mortgage	£228,057	13.3	1
First-time buyer	£192,833	12.9	2.1
Former owner occupier	£260,241	13.1	1.9

Building status for Wales

Building status	Average price September 2022	Annual price change % since September 2021	Monthly price change % since August 2022
New build	£311,152	21.5	2.2
Existing resold property	£213,290	16.5	2.2

UK house prices

UK house prices increased by 9.5% in the year to September 2022, down from % in August 2022. On a non-seasonally adjusted basis, average house prices in the UK had no change between August and September 2022, down from an increase of 3.0% during the same period a year earlier (August and September 2021).

The [UK Property Transactions Statistics](#) showed that in September 2022, on a seasonally adjusted basis, the estimated number of transactions of residential properties with a value of £40,000 or greater was 104,980. This is 7.6% higher than a year ago (September 2021). Between August and September 2022, UK transactions increased by 1.1% on a seasonally adjusted basis.

House price growth was strongest in the South West where prices increased by

17% in the year to September 2022. The lowest annual growth was in London, where prices increased by 8.3% in the year to September 2022.

See the [economic statement](#).

The UK HPI is based on completed housing transactions. Typically, a house purchase can take 6 to 8 weeks to reach completion. The price data feeding into the September 2022 UK HPI will mainly reflect those agreements that occurred after the government measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 took hold.

[Access the full UK HPI](#)

Background

1. We publish the UK House Price Index (HPI) on the second or third Wednesday of each month with Northern Ireland figures updated quarterly. We will publish the October 2022 UK HPI at 9:30am on Wednesday 14 December 2022. See [calendar of release dates](#).
2. We have made some changes to improve the accuracy of the UK HPI. We are not publishing average price and percentage change for new builds and existing resold property as done previously because there are not currently enough new build transactions to provide a reliable result. This means that in this month's UK HPI reports, new builds and existing resold property are reported in line with the sales volumes currently available.
3. The UK HPI revision period has been extended to 13 months, following a review of the revision policy ([see calculating the UK HPI section 4.4](#)). This ensures the data used is more comprehensive.
4. Sales volume data is available by property status (new build and existing property) and funding status (cash and mortgage) in our [downloadable data tables](#). Transactions that require us to create a new register, such as new builds, are more complex and require more time to process. Read [revisions to the UK HPI data](#).
5. Revision tables are available for England and Wales within the downloadable data in CSV format. See [about the UK HPI](#) for more information.
6. HM Land Registry, Registers of Scotland, Land & Property Services/Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency and the Valuation Office Agency supply data for the UK HPI.

7. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) and [Land & Property Services/Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency](#) calculate the UK HPI. It applies a hedonic regression model that uses the various sources of data on property price, including HM Land Registry's Price Paid Dataset, and attributes to produce estimates of the change in house prices each month. Find out more about the methodology used from the [ONS](#) and [Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency](#).
8. We take the [UK Property Transaction statistics](#) from the HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) monthly estimates of the number of residential and non-residential property transactions in the UK and its constituent countries. The number of property transactions in the UK is highly seasonal, with more activity in the summer months and less in the winter. This regular annual pattern can sometimes mask the underlying movements and trends in the data series. HMRC presents the UK aggregate transaction figures on a seasonally adjusted basis. We make adjustments for both the time of year and the construction of the calendar, including corrections for the position of Easter and the number of trading days in a particular month.
9. UK HPI seasonally adjusted series are calculated at regional and national levels only. See [data tables](#).
10. The first estimate for new build average price (April 2016 report) was based on a small sample which can cause volatility. A three-month moving average has been applied to the latest estimate to remove some of this volatility.
11. The UK HPI reflects the final transaction price for sales of residential property. Using the geometric mean, it covers purchases at market value for owner-occupation and buy-to-let, excluding those purchases not at market value (such as re-mortgages), where the 'price' represents a valuation.
12. HM Land Registry provides information on residential property transactions for England and Wales, collected as part of the official registration process for properties that are sold for full market value.
13. The HM Land Registry dataset contains the sale price of the property, the date when the sale was completed, full address details, the type of property (detached, semi-detached, terraced or flat), if it is a newly built property or an established residential building and a variable to indicate if the property has been purchased as a financed transaction (using a mortgage) or as a non-financed transaction (cash purchase).
14. Repossession sales data is based on the number of transactions lodged

with HM Land Registry by lenders exercising their power of sale.

15. For England, we show repossession sales volume recorded by government office region. For Wales, we provide repossession sales volume for the number of repossession sales.
16. Repossession sales data is available from April 2016 in CSV format. Find out more information about [repossession sales](#).
17. We publish CSV files of the raw and cleansed aggregated data every month for England, Scotland and Wales. We publish Northern Ireland data on a quarterly basis. They are available for free use and re-use under the Open Government Licence.
18. HM Land Registry's mission is to guarantee and protect property rights in England and Wales.
19. HM Land Registry is a government department created in 1862. Its ambition is to become the world's leading land registry for speed, simplicity and an open approach to data.
20. HM Land Registry safeguards land and property ownership worth in excess of £7 trillion, including over £1 trillion of mortgages. The Land Register contains more than 26 million titles showing evidence of ownership for some 87% of the land mass of England and Wales.
21. For further information about HM Land Registry visit www.gov.uk/land-registry.
22. Follow us on [Twitter](#), our [blog](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#).

[Moon rocket's first flight heralds exciting future](#)

The UK Space Agency has welcomed the successful launch of NASA's Artemis I rocket to the Moon.

The Artemis 1 Space Launch System (SLS) took off from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida at 6.47am on 16 November, sending the uncrewed Orion

capsule, powered by the European service module that includes Orion's engines, towards the Moon.

The event was postponed from the original planned date on 29 August and a second attempt on 3 September due to technical issues. The rocket was then rolled back from the launchpad to avoid Hurricane Ian.

The successful launch marks the beginning of the NASA-led Artemis programme, which the UK is part of through the European Space Agency (ESA) Human and Robotic Exploration Programme, and which will eventually see humans return to the Moon.

ESA is a key partner in the Artemis programme, delivering Orion's European Service Module, as well as elements of the Moon-orbiting Lunar Gateway.

Libby Jackson, Head of Space Exploration at the UK Space Agency, said:

The launch of the Artemis 1 mission is a hugely significant moment for the global space community, paving the way for humanity to return to the Moon in the coming years.

We are proud to be a part of ESA, which is contributing to this mission with the Orion service module, and we look forward to seeing direct UK involvement in the Lunar Gateway, currently in development through ESA's exploration programme.

It's also exciting to see this mission being tracked in the UK from Goonhilly Earth Station in Cornwall, marking a major step for our capacity to offer commercial lunar communications from the UK.

The Artemis programme marks the next chapter of human space exploration, and we look forward to continued involvement as it comes to life.

National Space Champion David Morris MP said:

Gene Cernan, who was the last man to walk on the Moon, told me that one day we will return, and I'm proud to say the UK will have a part to play in that return by contributing to the Artemis programme nearly half a century after Gene left the surface of the Moon.

The UK will play a key role in developing the Lunar Gateway. Businesses all across the UK will be involved in building the service module and habitation module of a new space station to orbit the Moon, generating economic benefits and high-skilled jobs demonstrating the UK's prominence and prestige in the international space programme.

NASA's Artemis programme is currently on schedule to land the first

woman and the next man on the Moon by 2025 and international partners will collaborate to achieve a sustainable presence on the lunar surface as an envisaged steppingstone to the first human mission to Mars.

During the Artemis 1 test flight, experts at Goonhilly Earth Station in Cornwall will provide operational support, helping to track the spacecraft and up to six of its 10 satellite payloads once in orbit.

Matt Cosby, Chief Engineering Officer at Goonhilly Earth Station, said:

We look forward to contributing to this iconic mission from here in the UK.

Goonhilly played a role in distributing the Apollo Moon landing footage back in 1969; we're now taking one step further and contributing to humanity's return to the Moon.

Supporting Artemis is a fantastic way to further demonstrate our capabilities as we continue to expand our deep space commercial services.

The Artemis 1 mission will test all SLS systems in preparation for the crewed Artemis 2 mission to the Moon. It will demonstrate Orion's heatshield in lunar entry conditions, operate systems in the flight environment, and retrieve spacecraft, among other objectives.

The mission is expected to last 25 days, including outbound transit, the journey around the Moon and deployment of satellites, followed by a return transit before splashdown in the Pacific Ocean in December.

NASA plans to send the first crewed Artemis mission into space in 2024 and expects the first Artemis astronauts to land on the lunar surface in 2025.

Named after the Greek goddess of the Moon and sister to the god Apollo, namesake of NASA's first Moon missions, the Artemis programme will see the construction of the Lunar Gateway: a new space station where astronauts will be able to live and work.

The build of the Lunar Gateway will include crucial contributions from Thales Alenia Space UK (TAS-UK) and Imperial College London, provided with backing from the UK Space Agency.

The team at Imperial College London is building the magnetometer sensor that will monitor cosmic and solar rays as part of ESA's European radiation sensors array that will assist experiments on-board the Gateway to assess how deep space conditions could affect astronauts and equipment.

Meanwhile, TAS-UK is developing the ESPRIT refuelling module, which will enable the spacecraft to safely refuel while in orbit.