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## Queen's Speech 2022

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## Summary

The State Opening of Parliament is scheduled to take place on 10 May 2022.

The State Opening marks the beginning of the parliamentary session. Its main purpose is for the monarch to formally open Parliament and, in the Queen's Speech, outline the Government's proposed policies and legislation for the coming parliamentary session.

This briefing identifies issues and bills that may appear in the Queen's Speech.

Section 2 reviews legislation that has already been introduced the House of Commons and carried over, or was published in draft, in the current session. Section 3 covers plans for legislation, announced in the May 2021 Queen's Speech, that have not progressed and might still form part of the Government's plans.

Section 4 looks at statements or press speculation indicating particular issues are likely to be the subject of future legislation.

General information on the State Opening ceremony is provided in Section 5.

Section 6 is a summary of the progress of bills announced in the Queen's Speech at the beginning of the 2021-22 Session. Details of all Government bills introduced in this Session can be found on the [Find a Bill](#) webpages.

## Which bills are in progress?

For a bill to be 'carried over' into the next session, a motion must be agreed by the Commons. After the second reading of the [Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Bill 2021-22](#) a carry-over motion was agreed.

Motions to allow the following bills to be carried over have been tabled in the Commons:

- [Online Safety Bill 2021-22](#) (scheduled to be considered on 19 April 2022);
- [Animal Welfare \(Kept Animals\) Bill 2021-22](#) (scheduled to be considered on 25 April 2022);
- [Higher Education \(Freedom of Speech\) Bill 2021-22](#) (scheduled to be considered on 25 April 2022); and

- [High Speed Rail \(Crewe - Manchester\) Bill 2021-22](#), a hybrid bill, (scheduled to be considered on 25 April 2022);

Two draft bills were published in 2021-22, one has been formally introduced:

- Draft Downstream Oil Resilience Bill
- Draft Online Safety Bill (introduced and to be carried-over).

Some bills that were announced in the May 2021 Queen's Speech were not taken forward but may appear in the coming session. These are:

- Animals Abroad Bill
- Counter-State Threats Bill
- Legacy Bill
- Planning Bill
- Procurement Bill

Some topics that were mentioned in the briefing that accompanied the 2021 Queen's Speech but have not been taken forward included:

- Renters' Reform Bill
- Victims Bill
- Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions Bill.

## Potential subjects of legislation

The following areas may become subjects of legislation in the 2022-23 Session:

- Social Housing Regulation
- Prison and probation scrutiny bodies
- Leasehold and commonhold reform
- Review of retained EU law
- Schools policy:
  - Home education
  - School funding

- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) reforms
- Lifelong Loan Entitlement
- Reform of the Mental Health Act
- Economic crime
- Digital markets reform
- Financial services
- Access to cash
- Audit reform
- Insolvency reform
- Parole Board reform
- Levelling up
- Local government
- Bill of Rights (Human Rights)
- Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation
- Counter-terrorism strategy: 'Protect duty'
- Conversion therapy
- Modern slavery
- Gene editing
- National minimum wage for ferry crews
- Channel 4 ownership
- Consolidation of immigration legislation
- Trade agreements with Australia and New Zealand

## Other information

Nikki da Costa, a former Director of Legislative Affairs, now a specialist partner at Flint, has published a blog post outlining her expectation of [bills likely to be included in the Queen's Speech](#).



The BBC has also published information on [what news laws could be announced in the Queen's Speech](#).

The Library briefing, [State opening of Parliament – history and ceremonial](#), reviews how the ceremonial and practical arrangements of the State opening of Parliament have changed over time.

# 1 Background

The Queen's Speech to open the next session of Parliament is scheduled to take place on 10 May 2022.<sup>1</sup>

## Recent Queen's Speeches

Following the passing of the Fixed-term Parliaments Act 2011, parliamentary sessions generally ran from spring to spring.<sup>2</sup>

However, following the 2017 General Election and the process of legislating for Brexit, 2017-19 was an unusually long session. The table below notes the dates of the Queen's Speech at the beginning of all sessions from 2012-13:

Session	Date of Queen's Speech
2012-13	Wednesday 9 May 2012 <sup>3</sup>
2013-14	Wednesday 8 May 2013 <sup>4</sup>
2014-15	Wednesday 4 June 2014 <sup>5</sup>
2015-16	Wednesday 27 May 2015 (after the general election) <sup>6</sup>
2016-17	Wednesday 18 May 2016 <sup>7</sup>
2017-19	Wednesday 21 June 2017 (after the early general election) <sup>8</sup>
2019	Monday 14 October 2019 <sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [HCWS712](#), 24 March 2022

<sup>2</sup> [HC Deb 13 September 2010 cc33WS-34WS](#)

<sup>3</sup> [HC Deb 9 May 2012 cc3-5](#); the first Wednesday after the local government elections held on 3 May 2012

<sup>4</sup> [HC Deb 8 May 2013 cc3-4](#); the first Wednesday after the local government elections held on 2 May 2013

<sup>5</sup> [HC Deb 4 June 2014 cc4-6](#); after combined local and European elections on 22 May 2014

<sup>6</sup> [HC Deb 27 May 2015 cc31-33](#)

<sup>7</sup> [HC Deb 18 May 2016 cc3-5](#)

<sup>8</sup> [HC Deb 21 June 2017 cc34-36](#). Before the 2017 Queen's Speech, the Government announced the session it heralded would last for two years [Office of the Leader of the House of Commons news, [Government to confirm two-year Parliament to deliver Brexit and beyond](#), 17 June 2017]

<sup>9</sup> [HC Deb 14 October 2019 cc3-6](#)

<b>Session</b>	<b>Date of Queen's Speech</b>
2019-21	Thursday 19 December 2019 (after the early general election) <sup>10</sup>
2021-22	Tuesday 11 May 2021 <sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> [HC Deb 19 December 2019 cc31-33](#)

<sup>11</sup> [HC Deb 11 May 2021 cc3-6](#)

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## 2 Bills continuing from the 2021-22 Session

### 2.1 Carry-over bills

Generally, bills that have not completed their passage through both Houses of Parliament are lost at the end of a session. However, since the beginning of the 2004-05 Session, House of Commons Standing Orders have allowed ministers to carry-over a bill from one session to the next by putting motions to the Commons. The Commons can only agree to carry-over government bills that were introduced in the Commons and have not been sent to the Lords. Each bill resumes from the point it reached at prorogation.<sup>12</sup>

Under the Standing Order, proceedings on any bill subject to a carry-over motion have to be completed within 12 months as they lapse one year after the Bill's first reading in the House of Commons.

Ad hoc arrangements are made to carry-over public bills in the House of Lords. And different arrangements allow hybrid bills to be carried over.

### Which bills have been carried over to the 2022-23 session?

#### Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Bill

A carry-over motion for the Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Bill 2021-22 was agreed on 26 January 2022.<sup>13</sup>

#### Online Safety Bill

A carry-over motion for the Online Safety Bill 2021-22 was agreed on 19 April 2022.<sup>14</sup>

#### Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill

The Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill 2021-22 was introduced on 8 June 2021.

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<sup>12</sup> For information on prorogation, see the Library briefing, [Prorogation of Parliament](#)

<sup>13</sup> [HC Deb 26 January 2022 c1056](#)

<sup>14</sup> [HC Deb 19 April 2022 c137](#)

If carried over under normal arrangements, proceedings on the Bill would lapse on 7 June 2022.

A motion to extend the period in which proceedings can continue for two years, instead of one, was agreed on 25 April 2022.<sup>15</sup>

### Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill

The [Higher Education \(Freedom of Speech\) Bill](#) was presented in the House of Commons on 12 May 2021, following proposals set out in a [Department for Education policy paper](#) published in February 2021.<sup>16</sup>

The Bill would extend and strengthen existing legislation intended to uphold freedom of speech and academic freedom in registered higher education providers and students' unions. The Bill had its [second reading](#) in the Commons on 12 July 2021, and its [committee stage concluded on 22 September 2021](#) (PDF).

The Bill did not complete its passage through Parliament in the 2021-22 Session. During Education Questions on 14 March 2022, the Minister for Higher and Further Education, Michelle Donelan, said the Bill's passage would resume "in due course". She said:

I can inform the House that the Bill will be back in due course, and we can guarantee this Government's commitment to honour our manifesto pledge to strengthen free speech in our universities, because of how important we believe it to be.<sup>17</sup>

For more information about the Bill, see the Library briefings:

- [Higher Education \(Freedom of Speech\) Bill: Progress of the Bill](#)
- [Higher Education \(Freedom of Speech\) Bill 2021](#)

### Carry-over

If the Bill were carried over under normal arrangements, proceedings on the Bill would lapse on 11 May 2022.

A motion to extend the period in which proceedings can continue for two years, instead of one, was agreed on 25 April 2022.<sup>18</sup>

### High Speed Rail (Crewe - Manchester) Bill

The High Speed Rail (Crewe - Manchester) Bill 2021-22 is a hybrid bill. Different arrangements apply to the carry-over of hybrid bills because, for

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<sup>15</sup> [HC Deb 25 April 2022 c550](#)

<sup>16</sup> Department for Education, [Higher education: free speech and academic freedom](#), February 2021, CP 394

<sup>17</sup> [HC Deb 14 March 2022 \[Education\] c598](#).

<sup>18</sup> [HC Deb 25 April 2022 cc949-950](#)

some parts of their passage through Parliament, private bill procedure is followed.

A motion to carry-over the Bill into the 2022-23 Session was agreed to on 25 April 2022.<sup>19</sup>

## 2.2

## Draft bills published in the 2021-22 Session

### Draft Downstream Oil Resilience Bill

The Draft Downstream Oil Resilience Bill was published by the Government on 7 June 2021.<sup>20</sup>

The draft bill was scrutinised by the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee which produced the report: [Pre-legislative scrutiny: draft Downstream Oil Resilience Bill](#) (PDF) 12 November 2021, HC 820

The Government's response was published by the Committee on 7 March 2022. The Government said that it would consider "how to take on board the thrust of the Committee's recommendations" before introducing the Bill.<sup>21</sup>

### Draft Online Safety Bill

The draft Online Safety Bill was published by the Government on 12 May 2021.

The draft bill was scrutinised by the Joint Committee on the Draft Online Safety Bill and by a sub-committee of the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee. Their reports were published in December 2021 and January 2022:

- Joint Committee on the Draft Online Safety Bill, [Draft Online Safety Bill](#) (PDF), 14 December 2021, HC 609 2021-22
- Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) Committee, [The Draft Online Safety Bill and the legal but harmful debate](#) (PDF), 24 January 2022, HC 1039 2021-22

The Government introduced the Online Safety Bill 2021-22 on 17 March 2022, and it has been carried over (see above). The Government's response to the

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<sup>19</sup> [HC Deb 25 April 2022 cc551-554](#)

<sup>20</sup> Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, [Downstream Oil Resilience Draft Bill](#) (PDF), June 2021, CP 435

<sup>21</sup> Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee, [Pre-legislative scrutiny: draft Downstream Oil Resilience Bill: Government Response to the Committee's Fifth Report](#) (PDF), 7 March 2022, HC 1177 2021-22, para 18

Joint Committee was published when the Bill was introduced.<sup>22</sup> A separate response to the DCMS Committee was published on 24 March 2022.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, [Government Response to the Joint Committee on the draft Online Safety Bill](#), 17 March 2022, CP 640

<sup>23</sup> Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee, [The Draft Online Safety Bill and the legal but harmful debate: Government Response to Committee's Eighth Report](#) (PDF) 24 March 2022, HC 1221 2021-22

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## 3 Bills announced but not yet introduced

### 3.1 Bills in the May 2021 Queen's Speech that have not been introduced

The five bills identified in this section were included in the then Leader of the House's written statement of 12 May 2021, in which he listed the Bills that were announced in the Queen's Speech the previous day.<sup>24</sup>

#### Animals Abroad Bill

On 17 March 2022, Pauline Latham asked the Leader of the House to confirm when the Bill would be brought forward and to "reaffirm the Government's commitment to ending trophy hunting imports". The Leader of the House replied:

We have committed to a ban on importing hunting trophies from nearly 7,000 species. That is one of the toughest bans in the world and will go well beyond our manifesto commitments. She will understand that parliamentary time is finite and there has been huge pressure on it, not least because of emergency legislation brought forward in response to covid and to Ukraine, but we will bring forward legislation as soon as parliamentary time allows and business will be announced in the usual way.<sup>25</sup>

#### Counter-State Threats Bill

The counter state threats legislation, mentioned in the last Queen's Speech has not yet been introduced, but the Government says it still intends to do so.<sup>26</sup>

For further information, see the House of Commons Library briefing, [Counter state threats legislation](#).

#### Legacy Bill

Legislation to address the legacy of Northern Ireland's past was not brought forward in the current session.

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<sup>24</sup> [HCWS6](#), 12 May 2021

<sup>25</sup> [HC Deb 17 March 2022 c1048](#)

<sup>26</sup> [PQ116029](#), 4 February 2022



In July 2021, the Government presented fresh proposals to Parliament.<sup>27</sup> On 26 January 2022, the Secretary of state for Northern Ireland, Brandon Lewis, told the House that “we remain committed to addressing the issue through legislation”.<sup>28</sup>

For further information, see section 8.3 of the House of Commons Library briefing, [Northern Ireland: Key issues](#).

## Planning Bill

A Planning Bill was announced in the Queen's Speech 2021. The [background briefing notes to the Planning Bill](#) (PDF) outlined its likely content (which reflected the proposals in the white paper [Planning for the Future](#)), but no Planning Bill has been presented.<sup>29</sup>

When he appeared before the Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee in November 2021, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, [Michael Gove, was asked how long he was going to pause the planning reforms and whether they might be abandoned](#) (PDF). He said that they would not be.<sup>30</sup>

In February 2022, the Telegraph reported that Michael Gove had told Conservative backbenchers that plans for a standalone Planning Bill had been abandoned, with more limited planning reforms to be taken forward through a Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.<sup>31</sup>

In an interview with the Financial Times in March 2022, the Head of the Levelling Up Taskforce, Andy Haldane, said [levelling up legislation would be introduced by June 2022](#).<sup>32</sup> Discussing that interview on Twitter, Sebastian Payne of the Financial Times reported that levelling up goals “[will be tied in with planning reform](#)”.<sup>33</sup>

Some proposals on some aspects of planning policy were published in February 2022 in the [Levelling Up white paper](#) (PDF).<sup>34</sup>

The Library briefing, [Planning for the Future: planning policy changes in England in 2020 and future reforms](#) examines the planning reforms proposed

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<sup>27</sup> HM Government, [Addressing the legacy of Northern Ireland's past](#), CP 498, July 2021

<sup>28</sup> [HC Deb 26 January 2022 c984](#)

<sup>29</sup> [Background briefing notes to the Queen's Speech 2021](#) (PDF), p61

<sup>30</sup> Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee, [Oral evidence: Work of the Department 2021](#), HC 818, 8 November 2021, Q79

<sup>31</sup> “Gove abandons reforms that give developers free rein”, Telegraph online, 26 February 2022

<sup>32</sup> “[Levelling up chief warns inflation will make tackling UK inequalities harder](#)”, Financial Times online, 23 March 2022 (accessed via the Commons Library's subscription to Nexis News)

<sup>33</sup> Sebastian Payne (@SebastianEPayne), [Twitter thread, 23 March 2022 10:19GMT](#) [accessed 8 April 2022]

<sup>34</sup> HM Government, [Levelling Up the United Kingdom: White paper](#) (PDF), CP 604, February 2022

in the Planning for the Future white paper; section 5 examines the planning proposals in the Levelling Up white paper.<sup>35</sup>

## Procurement Bill

As was first announced in the [Queen's Speech 2021](#) on 11 May 2021, a Public Procurement Bill would be brought forward during the 2021-22 Session when Parliamentary time allows. That has not happened; however the Government has responded to its earlier consultation, and is expected to bring a Procurement Bill forward in the next session.<sup>36</sup>

Procurement rules set out how public authorities buy or commission supplies, services and public works. Current UK procurement rules largely mirror EU procurement law, with a few UK-specific rules. From 1 January 2021, changes to EU procurement law no longer apply to the UK. So far, the Government has largely maintained the status quo, but its view is that leaving the EU has presented an opportunity for substantial reform – to create a procurement regime that is tailored to the UK's needs, is more modern, innovative, and less bureaucratic.<sup>37</sup>

On 15 December 2020, the Government published a [green paper on transforming public procurement](#). It said that the goal of the reform was to speed up and simplify procurement processes, focus on value for money in public procurement, create opportunities for small businesses and support innovation in public service delivery. The new Bill would:

- Put procurement principles – value for money, the public good, transparency, integrity, efficiency, fair treatment of suppliers and non-discrimination – on a statutory basis.
- Simplify the current legislation as far as possible into a single, streamlined regulatory framework.
- Diversify supplier base by establishing a single digital platform for registration and a new Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS+).<sup>38</sup>
- Embed transparency throughout the commercial lifecycle from planning of procurement to completion of a contract.
- Besides seeking value for money, public authorities would be encouraged to have regard for wider economic, social and environmental outcomes of procurement throughout the procurement process – developing

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<sup>35</sup> Commons Library briefing, [Planning for the Future: planning policy changes in England in 2020 and future reforms, CBP 8981](#)

<sup>36</sup> Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee, [Oral Evidence: Common Frameworks](#), HC 1138, 22 March 2022, Q10

<sup>37</sup> Cabinet Office, [Green Paper: Transforming public procurement](#), CP 353, December 2020, p5

<sup>38</sup> A [Dynamic Purchasing System](#) is an electronic procurement tool, where new suppliers can join at any time.

procurement strategy, drafting the contract terms and evaluating tenders.

- Raise the standard of suppliers by considering their past performance and preventing unacceptable behaviour such as fraud.
- Make challenging procurement decisions faster and more accessible.<sup>39</sup>

A consultation on these proposals closed on 10 March 2021.<sup>40</sup> On 6 December 2021, the Government published its [response to the consultation](#).<sup>41</sup>

## 3.2 Other legislation

### Renters' Reform Bill

This Bill was announced during the 2019 Queen's Speech on 19 December 2019.<sup>42</sup> There is still a commitment to bring a Bill forward to abolish no fault evictions in the private rented sector, but it will be preceded by a white paper which is expected in spring 2022.<sup>43</sup>

### Victims Bill

The [2021 Queen's Speech](#) indicated that "Proposals will be brought forward to...support victims" in reference to a draft Victim's Bill. The Government said, in its [briefing notes on the Queen's Speech](#), that this Bill would "put into law the simplified and stronger rights that were set out in the new Victims' Code and improve victims of crime experience of the criminal justice system".<sup>44</sup> The Bill seemed then to be designed to give victims of crime legal rights modelled on the 12 rights that make up [the current Victim's Code](#).

Since then, on 9 December 2021, the [Ministry of Justice opened a consultation](#) on 'Delivering Justice for Victims' which was heralded as "the first significant step towards a landmark 'Victims' Law' - a Bill which will build on the foundations provided by the Victims' Code".<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Cabinet Office, [Green Paper: Transforming public procurement \(PDF\)](#), CP 353, December 2020, pp 7-10

<sup>40</sup> Cabinet Office, Consultation [Green Paper: Transforming public procurement \(PDF\)](#), December 2020

<sup>41</sup> Cabinet Office, [Transforming Public Procurement: Government response to consultation \(PDF\)](#), CP 556, December 2021

<sup>42</sup> [Background briefing notes to the Queen's Speech 2019 \(PDF\)](#), 19 December 2019

<sup>43</sup> Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, [Levelling Up the United Kingdom](#), February 2022, p226

<sup>44</sup> [Background briefing notes to the Queen's Speech 2021 \(PDF\)](#), 11 May 2021, p89

<sup>45</sup> Ministry of Justice, [Delivering justice for victims: A consultation on improving victims' experiences of the justice system](#), December 2021, CP 574, p5

This consultation was welcomed by both the [Crown Prosecution Service \(CPS\)](#) and the [Victim's Commissioner](#). The Ministry consulted on five issues related to support for victims in the criminal justice system, including:

- What victims should expect
- Performance and accountability
- The Victim Surcharge
- Community-based support services
- Improved advocacy support

This consultation closed on 3 February 2022 and the Ministry is analysing the feedback it received. It is currently unclear what measures will appear in any draft bill, should it be taken forward.

## **Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions Bill**

A bill on Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions was announced in last year's Queen's Speech briefing, but has not yet been introduced.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> [Background briefing notes to the Queen's Speech 2021](#) (PDF), 11 May 2021, p133

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## 4 Bills foreshadowed

This section reports statements, government publications and press speculation which suggest areas that could be the subject of future legislation. These topics might be mentioned in the Queen's Speech or be the subject of draft bills in the next session.

### 4.1 Social Housing Regulation Bill

The Government's social housing white paper – [The Charter for Social Housing](#) – published on 17 November 2020, is intended to deliver “transformational change” for social housing residents in England. It sets out measures to:

- Ensure social housing is safe.
- Make it easier to know how social landlords are performing, to increase transparency and accountability.
- Ensure swift and effective complaint resolution.
- Strengthen the consumer standards social landlords must meet and create a strong, proactive regime to enforce them.
- Empower residents to support them in engaging with and holding their landlords to account.
- Ensure good quality, decent homes and neighbourhoods.
- Support tenants to buy a home of their own.<sup>47</sup>

The roles of the Regulator of Social Housing and the Housing Ombudsman are being strengthened to help deliver these measures.

Some reforms will require primary legislation before they can be implemented. The Government's [levelling up white paper](#) included a commitment to bring forward a Social Housing Regulation Bill.<sup>48</sup> The Secretary of State for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), Michael Gove, confirmed to the LUHC Select

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<sup>47</sup> MHCLG, [The Charter for Social Housing Residents: Social housing white paper](#), 17 November 2020

<sup>48</sup> DLUHC, [Levelling Up the United Kingdom](#), 2 February 2022, p226

Committee that the Government hoped to introduce the Bill in May or June 2022.<sup>49</sup>

The Library briefing [Social Housing Reform in England: What Next?](#) provides further information.

## 4.2 Prison and probation scrutiny bodies legislation

The [Prisons Strategy White Paper](#) published in December 2021, said the Government would legislate to strengthen the bodies that scrutinise prisons, probation and prisoner escort and custody services.

The Government said it would bring forward legislation to:

- Recognise the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMI Prisons), and their respective remits, as intended in the Prisons and Courts Bill 2017;<sup>50</sup>
- Confirm the existing powers (to access people, places and documents) of the PPO, HMI Prisons and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMI Probation);
- Recognise HMI Probation's responsibility for inspecting Youth Offender Teams in legislation; and
- Combine the Independent Monitoring Boards' Management Board and Lay Observers' National Council into a single Board under a single Chair.<sup>51</sup>

These proposals follow those made in the 2016 white paper [Prison Safety and Reform](#) and a 2020 consultation [Strengthening the Independent Scrutiny Bodies through Legislation](#).<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee, [Oral evidence: Building Safety: Remediation and Funding](#), HC 1063, 21 February 2022, Q218

<sup>50</sup> For background see the Library briefing produced for the Bill, [Commons Library Analysis: The Prisons and Courts Bill](#), 16 March 2017

<sup>51</sup> Ministry of Justice, [Prison Strategy](#), CP 581, December 2021, Para 208

<sup>52</sup> Ministry of Justice, [Prison Safety and Reform](#), Cm 9350, November 2016  
Ministry of Justice, [Strengthening the Independent Scrutiny Bodies through Legislation](#), August 2020

## 4.3 Leasehold and commonhold reform

The 2019 Queen's Speech referred to "a comprehensive programme of reform to end unfair practices in the leasehold market."<sup>53</sup> There was also a commitment to "ensure that if a new home can be sold as freehold, then it will be." Homeowners were to get new rights to challenge "unfair charges."<sup>54</sup>

Legislation to limit ground rents on new leases entered into was introduced in 2021 and gained Royal Assent on 8 February 2022.<sup>55</sup> The Government has referred to the introduction of wider legislation in respect of leasehold reform in the third session of this Parliament.<sup>56</sup>

## 4.4 Review of retained EU law

In September 2021, [Lord Frost announced a review of retained EU law](#) by the Brexit Opportunities Unit in the Cabinet Office.<sup>57</sup> The intention was to "remove the special status" of retained EU law, which is currently conferred by the EU (Withdrawal) Act 2018 (as amended).

In a December 2021 written statement, Lord Frost gave more detail about the Government's intentions, identifying [seven areas where retained EU law's special status had a particularly pronounced effect on domestic law](#).<sup>58</sup> This statement indicated that several changes were being contemplated, and that some of these would involve further primary legislation.

For example, the statement indicated that the supremacy of EU law (a legal principle that continues to apply for legacy purposes under the EU (Withdrawal) Act) is "clearly no longer appropriate" and "never sat well with our long-established democratic and parliamentary traditions".

A bill to amend the EU (Withdrawal) Act and the architecture of retained EU law is therefore anticipated in the 2022-23 session.

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<sup>53</sup> [Background briefing notes to the Queen's Speech 2019](#) (PDF), 19 December 2019

<sup>54</sup> As above.

<sup>55</sup> Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Act 2022

<sup>56</sup> [HL Deb 9 June 2021 c282GC](#)

<sup>57</sup> [HL Deb 16 September 2021 cc1532-1534](#)

<sup>58</sup> [HLWS445 9 December 2021](#)

## 4.5

## Schools policy

### Home education

The Department for Education (DfE) published its [response to a consultation on education for children not in school](#) in February 2022, which made proposals relating to home education in England.

The response confirmed the Government was “committed to a registration system for children not in school” and would be engaging with local authorities and the home educating sector as well as undertaking further work on the “practical aspects of delivery.”<sup>59</sup>

Legislation will be required to establish a register, but the Government has not yet indicated when this will be brought forward.

### School funding

The DfE published its [response to a consultation on school funding](#) in March 2022.

Since the 2018/19 financial year, a reformed National Funding Formula (NFF) has been used in England to determine how much mainstream schools attract in core revenue funding. Currently, the NFF is only being used to work out notional allocations for individual schools. These are then aggregated, adjusted, and passed to local authorities, who then draw up local funding formulas for distribution. This is known as a soft NFF.

The Government has said it remains committed to introducing a hard NFF, ie, one with a reduced role for local authorities in deciding allocations. The March 2022 consultation response confirmed the Government’s intention to proceed with this change. The response stated that the Government would bring forward legislation “at the earliest opportunity.”<sup>60</sup>

The DfE will publish a second stage consultation with more detailed proposals on implementing the hard NFF in spring 2022.<sup>61</sup>

### Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) reforms

In September 2019, five years after the introduction of the current system of SEND support, [the Government announced a review of the SEND system’s](#)

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<sup>59</sup> Department for Education, [Children not in school: Government consultation response](#), February 2022, p27

<sup>60</sup> Department for Education, [Completing the reforms to the National Funding Formula: Government consultation response](#), March 2022, p3

<sup>61</sup> [HC Deb 28 Mar 2022 c27WS](#)



[effectiveness](#). As a result of the review, a [green paper consulting on reforms](#) was published in March 2022.

The green paper includes the Government's plans to create new national SEND standards, to create consistency in provision across England. The paper stated the Government plans to bring forward legislation to place the standards on a statutory footing for the early years and education sectors, covering ages 0-25.<sup>62</sup>

The consultation on the green paper is open until 1 July 2022, with a national SEND delivery plan expected later in the year.

## 4.6 Lifelong Loan Entitlement

On 29 September 2020, Prime Minister Boris Johnson gave a speech [announcing a new lifetime skills guarantee and loan](#), to allow people to undertake education and training throughout their life. He said:

We'll give everyone a flexible lifelong loan entitlement to four years of post-18 education — so adults will be able to retrain with high level technical courses, instead of being trapped in unemployment.<sup>63</sup>

The Government's ambition is for the lifelong loan entitlement (LLE) to replace the two existing systems of publicly funded higher education loans. The intention is for the LLE to be used flexibly across an adult's lifetime, for full-time or part-time study of modules or full qualifications at [levels 4 to 6](#), in colleges or universities, from 2025.

Provisions for the introduction of the LLE were included in the [Skills and Post-16 Education \[HL\] Bill](#). However, during this Bill's progress in the House of Lords, Baroness Barran said [the Government intended to consult on the "ambition, objectives and coverage" of the LLE](#), before bringing further primary legislation at a later date, setting out how it will work in practice.<sup>64</sup>

A [consultation on the LLE](#) was launched on 24 February 2022.<sup>65</sup>

## 4.7 Reform of the Mental Health Act

On 13 January 2021, the Department of Health and Social Care published a white paper on [Reforming the Mental Health Act](#).<sup>66</sup> The paper set out reforms which build on recommendations made by an independent review in

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<sup>62</sup> Department for Education, [SEND review: right support, right place, right time](#), March 2022, p28

<sup>63</sup> Prime Minister, [PM's skills speech](#), 29 September 2020.

<sup>64</sup> [HL Deb 21 October 2021 \[Skills and Post-16 Education Bill \[HL\] c311\]](#).

<sup>65</sup> Department for Education, [Lifelong loan entitlement consultation](#), 24 February 2022.

<sup>66</sup> Department of Health and Social Care, [Reforming the Mental Health Act](#), 13 January 2021

December 2018: [Modernising the Mental Health Act: Increasing choice, reducing compulsion](#).<sup>67</sup>

The Government consulted on the white paper's proposals from January to April 2021 and [published a consultation response](#) in July 2021.<sup>68</sup> The Government said it will continue to work with stakeholders to refine the proposals and will share a draft Mental Health Bill for pre-legislative scrutiny "when parliamentary time allows".<sup>69</sup>

Further information is available in the Library briefings on [The White Paper on Reforming the Mental Health Act](#) and [Mental Health Policy in England](#).

## 4.8 Economic Crime Bill

During the passage of the fast-tracked [Economic Crime \(Transparency and Enforcement\) Act 2022](#) in March 2022, the Government committed to introduce a further economic crime bill in the upcoming (2022-23) parliamentary session. Home Secretary Priti Patel said it would be a "very substantial piece of legislation", including reform of Companies House and limited partnerships, powers to seize crypto-assets from criminals, and information sharing on money laundering.<sup>70</sup>

Business Minister Paul Scully confirmed it would be introduced "early" in the session.<sup>71</sup> At Lords second reading, Business Minister Lord Callanan said the upcoming Economic Crime Bill would be subject to full scrutiny (rather than also being fast-tracked), and would run to "something like 150 pages".<sup>72</sup>

On 28 February 2022, the Government published a white paper setting out 58 proposed reforms of Companies House, which are expected to be implemented in this legislation.<sup>73</sup>

## 4.9 Digital markets reform

In April 2021, a Digital Markets Unit (DMU) was set up within the Competition and Markets Authority, the UK's competition regulator. The DMU monitors and regulates the behaviour of platforms with significant market power.

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<sup>67</sup> Department of Health and Social Care, [Modernising the Mental Health Act: Increasing choice, reducing compulsion](#), 6 December 2018

<sup>68</sup> Department of Health and Social Care, [Reforming the Mental Health Act: government response](#), 15 July 2021

<sup>69</sup> [PQ 101659 \[on Mental Health Bill\], 11 January 2022](#)

<sup>70</sup> [HC Deb 7 March 2022, vol 710 col 32](#)

<sup>71</sup> As above, col 140

<sup>72</sup> [HL Deb 9 March 2022, vol 819 col 1533](#)

<sup>73</sup> Department for BEIS, [Policy paper: Corporate transparency and register reform](#), 28 February 2022

A Government consultation on digital markets and the DMU's role closed in October 2021.<sup>74</sup> On 21 March, Business Minister Paul Scully said the Government will be responding to that consultation “in the coming weeks” and passing legislation on it “when parliamentary time allows”.<sup>75</sup>

For background see the Library briefing [The UK Competition Regime](#).

## 4.10 Financial Services Bill

The Financial Times reported in February 2022 that a Financial Services Bill is expected in the upcoming Queen's Speech, which would “set out a regulatory framework for the City, with changes to the Solvency II rules implemented through detailed secondary legislation”.<sup>76</sup>

The Government believes reforms to Solvency II<sup>77</sup> would “allow insurance companies to invest billions of pounds more in infrastructure and green energy projects” the Financial Times said.<sup>78</sup>

Section 6.1 of the Library briefing, [Financial services: contribution to the UK economy](#) sets out more information on the Government's financial services regulatory reform agenda.

## 4.11 Access to cash

In the 2020 Budget, the Government announced it would legislate “to protect access to cash and ensure that the UK's cash infrastructure is sustainable in the long-term.”<sup>79</sup>

The Treasury published a consultation document on access to cash on 1 July 2021, setting out its proposals.<sup>80</sup>

The consultation proposed ensuring there would be “reasonable access” for withdrawal and deposit facilities for personal customers, and deposit facilities for small business customers. It would set and amend geographic access requirements to achieve this. These might, for instance, set targets to

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<sup>74</sup> See BEIS and DCMS consultation, [A new pro-competition regime for digital markets](#), last updated 9 August 2021

<sup>75</sup> [Question UIN 137970, tabled 10 March 2022](#)

<sup>76</sup> Financial Times, [UK rewrite of insurance rules to 'free up billions for investment'](#), 21 February 2022

<sup>77</sup> See Library briefing [Solvency II \(CBP 6339\)](#) for background

<sup>78</sup> Financial Times, [Rees-Mogg urges rewrite of UK insurance rules in race with EU](#), 21 February 2022

<sup>79</sup> HM Treasury, [Budget 2020](#), 11 March 2020

<sup>80</sup> HM Treasury, [Access to Cash Consultation](#), 1 July 2021

ensure that a certain percentage of the population was within a specified distance of a service point.<sup>81</sup>

The Government proposed giving HM Treasury powers to designate certain firms on which cash access requirements could be imposed. This would initially cover large retail banking providers like banks and building societies.<sup>82</sup>

The Financial Conduct Authority would be given “overarching regulatory oversight of the retail cash system” and so would monitor and enforce powers on designated firms.<sup>83</sup> This would formalise and strengthen its oversight of proposals for closing bank branches and ATMs.

Further background is available in the Library briefing [The future of local banking services and access to cash](#).

It's most likely that any such legislation would be part of a wider Financial Services Bill, as discussed above.

## 4.12

### Audit reform

The Financial Times reported in February 2022 that plans to “overhaul the regulation of UK auditors” had been “circulated to government departments for final sign-off”. The changes would replace the Financial Reporting Council, the UK audit regulator, with a new regulator (the Audit Reporting and Governance Authority) with “greater powers”.<sup>84</sup>

Reforms are expected to introduce “managed shared audits”, requiring FTSE 350 companies audited by one of the Big Four accounting firms to hand part of the work to smaller accounting firms to improve competition. They are also expected to extend the definition of “public interest entities”, imposing extra governance requirements on more companies.<sup>85</sup>

According to the Financial Times, the reforms could form part of the next Queen's Speech, but could also be put forward as draft legislation, which would delay its implementation until 2024.<sup>86</sup>

For background see the Library briefing [Company audits: problems and solutions](#).

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<sup>81</sup> [As above](#)

<sup>82</sup> [As above](#)

<sup>83</sup> [As above](#)

<sup>84</sup> Financial Times, [Ministers to set out long-awaited shake-up of UK audit regulations](#), 14 February 2022

<sup>85</sup> As above

<sup>86</sup> As above

## 4.13 Insolvency reform

In December 2021, the Government published a consultation on proposals to end “decades of self-regulation” in the insolvency sector. The Financial Times describes the proposals as “one of the biggest upheavals in insolvency regulation in 35 years”.<sup>87</sup>

The Insolvency Service said the reforms comprise: “the creation of a single regulator of Insolvency Practitioners, the introduction of firm regulation for insolvency practices, a public register of Insolvency Practitioners and firms that offer insolvency services, and a compensation scheme”.<sup>88</sup>

If implemented, the proposals would require primary regulation to be brought forward “when parliamentary time allows”.<sup>89</sup>

## 4.14 Parole Board reform

The [2019 Conservative Manifesto](#) committed to conduct a review of the parole system in England and Wales.<sup>90</sup> [A Root and Branch Review of the Parole System: The Future of the Parole System](#) was published in March 2022.<sup>91</sup> It included plans to legislate to:

- Make changes to the statutory test for release used by the Parole Board to make it more prescriptive and set out criteria the Board must consider;
- Create a new power for ministers to review and refuse release decisions where the Parole Board directs the release of a person who is serving a sentence for a ‘top tier’ offence;<sup>92</sup>
- Require the Parole Board to either refuse release or refer the case to the Secretary of State where it cannot confidently say the release test has been met for a prisoner in a ‘top-tier’ case;
- Provide that the Parole Board must include people with law enforcement backgrounds in its membership, and introduce a new power to allow the

<sup>87</sup> Financial Times, [Independent watchdog to oversee UK insolvency sector](#), 21 December 2021

<sup>88</sup> The Insolvency Service, [Closed consultation: The future of insolvency regulation](#), updated 21 March 2022, Executive Summary

<sup>89</sup> As above, Chapter 1

<sup>90</sup> The Conservative and Unionist Party Manifesto, p10

<sup>91</sup> Ministry of Justice, [A Root and Branch Review of the Parole System: The Future of the Parole System](#), CP 654, 30 March 2022

<sup>92</sup> These offences would be murder, rape, certain terrorism offences and causing or allowing the death of a child

Secretary of State to direct the composition of panels to require there are members with certain experience.

The Secretary of State for Justice told the House of Commons the Government would legislate for these changes “as soon as possible”.<sup>93</sup>

## 4.15

### Levelling up

Described by the Prime Minister as the “defining mission of this government”,<sup>94</sup> the levelling up agenda seeks to reduce economic and social disparities across the UK.

In February 2022, the Government published a white paper setting out its plans to address and narrow geographic inequalities.<sup>95</sup> For a summary, see the Library briefing, [Levelling up: What are the Government's proposals?](#).

The levelling up white paper states the Government will introduce legislation to put into statute some aspects of the agenda:

- The Government committed to introducing a “statutory obligation to report annually on progress towards meeting the Levelling Up missions”.<sup>96</sup> The levelling up “missions”, or targets, are set out in the white paper and have a 2030 end date. The missions include improving living standards, raising educational attainment, reducing health disparities, restoring a sense of local pride, and empowering local leadership.
- The white paper states the Government is exploring legislation to expand, deepen and improve devolution in England. Further information on possible new legislation on local devolution is covered in section 4.16.
- The white paper states that “wider planning measures” would be introduced alongside levelling up legislation. For more on legalisation related to planning see section 3.1.

In March, the Financial Times reported that the Government's Head of the Levelling Up Taskforce, Andy Haldane, said levelling up legislation will be introduced by June 2022.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> [Parole System: Public Protection](#), HC Deb 30 March 2022 c831

<sup>94</sup> Boris Johnson (@BorisJohnson), [Thread](#) on levelling up, 2 February 2022 [accessed 8 April 2022]

<sup>95</sup> HM Government, [Levelling Up the United Kingdom](#), CP604, 2 February 2022

<sup>96</sup> HM Government, [Levelling Up the United Kingdom](#), CP604, 2 February 2022, p156 and p247

<sup>97</sup> Financial Times, [Levelling up chief warns inflation will make tackling UK inequalities harder](#), 23 March 2022

## 4.16 Local government

The levelling up white paper states the Government will explore using legislation to “expand devolution to more places, deepen current devolution deals and enable the devolution process to be simpler and more transparent”.<sup>98</sup>

The white paper includes two specific commitments to legislate in the area of local government. These include:

- enabling combined authorities to be created that consist solely of upper-tier authorities, omitting district councils from full membership;
- Adjusting the Empty Homes Premium, allowing council tax to be doubled after one year instead of two on properties that are “unoccupied and substantially unfurnished.”<sup>99</sup>

Legislative commitments related to local government from other sources include:

- Legislation to move from a five-yearly to a three-yearly cycle for **business rates revaluations**. The Government is also consulting on some technical adjustments to the business rates system, including adjusting the definition of ‘material changes of circumstance’; using the Consumer Price Index instead of the Retail Price Index to set the small business multiplier; and altering the mechanism for updating the central rating list.<sup>100</sup>
- The Audit, Reporting and Governance Authority (ARGA) is to be established, following a Government consultation that was originally published in March 2021.<sup>101</sup> A further consultation published in 2021 stated the Government plans to make ARGA the lead authority for local audit.<sup>102</sup> (See section 4.12 for more discussion on ARGA.)

Further legislation could arise from the following commitments in the levelling up white paper, but this seems unlikely to form part of a Bill in 2022:

- A commitment to “explore further flexibilities” with combined authorities for them to “raise their own funding through the business rates system to fund local priorities, whilst also considering the impacts on business”;<sup>103</sup>

<sup>98</sup> DLUHC, [Levelling Up the United Kingdom](#), 2022, p247

<sup>99</sup> DLUHC, [Levelling Up the United Kingdom](#), 2022, p225

<sup>100</sup> DLUHC, [Business rates review: technical consultation](#), 2021. For more information on these technical proposals, see the Library briefing [Business rates](#)

<sup>101</sup> BEIS, [Restoring trust in corporate audit and governance](#), 2021

<sup>102</sup> DLUHC, [Local audit framework: technical consultation](#), 2021

<sup>103</sup> DLUHC, [Levelling Up the United Kingdom](#), 2022, p141

- The review of neighbourhood governance which will include looking at “the role and functions of parish councils in England and how to make them quicker and easier to establish”;<sup>104</sup>
- Consultation on enabling metro-mayors to take on responsibility for fire and rescue services. The white paper states this will appear in another forthcoming white paper entitled “Reforming Our Fire Service”.<sup>105</sup>

## 4.17 Bill of Rights (Human Rights)

In December 2021, the Government published [a consultation on its proposals to replace the Human Rights Act with a Bill of Rights](#) (PDF).<sup>106</sup> The consultation ran for three months, closing on 8 March 2022. It follows the publication of the [Independent Human Rights Act Review findings](#) (PDF), which were submitted to the Government last autumn.<sup>107</sup>

The proposals fulfil a Conservative [manifesto commitment](#) to “update the Human Rights Act and administrative law to ensure that there is a proper balance between the rights of individuals, our vital national security and effective government”.

For further information, see the Library briefing, [Reform of the Human Rights Acts 1998](#).

## 4.18 Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation

In March 2022, the Government published a [call for evidence on SLAPPs](#) – Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation.<sup>108</sup> It described these as an abuse of the legal process intended to intimidate and financially and psychologically exhaust an opponent using improper means.

The issue has arisen recently in the context of individuals with links to the Russian state seeking to prevent publication of investigations into their financial affairs.<sup>109</sup>

The call for evidence sets out proposals for possible reforms, several of which would require legislation.

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<sup>104</sup> DLUHC, [Levelling Up the United Kingdom](#), 2022, p215

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, p142

<sup>106</sup> Ministry of Justice, [Human Rights Act Reform: A Modern Bill of Rights – A consultation to reform the Human Rights Act 1998](#) (PDF), December 2021, CP 588

<sup>107</sup> [The Independent Human Rights Act Review](#) (PDF), December 2021, CP 586

<sup>108</sup> Ministry of Justice, [Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation \(SLAPPs\)](#), March 2022

<sup>109</sup> Foreign Affairs Committee, [Oral evidence: Use of strategic lawsuits against public participation](#), 15 March 2022, HC 1196 2021-22



## 4.19 Counter-terrorism strategy: 'Protect duty'

In 2021, the Government consulted on introducing a 'Protect duty' as part of its counter-terrorism strategy, which would require legislation to implement. In a written statement following that consultation, the Home Secretary, Priti Patel, confirmed legislation will follow:

The Government is carefully considering policy proposals in light of the views raised in the consultation, in particular, how a legislative requirement could further improve public security, whilst not placing an undue burden on organisations which are smaller in size or staffed by volunteers, such as places of worship. Legislative proposals will be taken forward when Parliamentary time allows.<sup>110</sup>

There is also an ongoing independent review of the Prevent programme which could potentially result in legislative changes.<sup>111</sup>

## 4.20 Conversion therapy

On 30 March 2022, at Women and Equalities Questions, the Minister for Equalities, Mike Freer, stated:

We remain wholly committed to bringing forward proposals to ban conversion therapy practices. We recently concluded a consultation period on the proposals being analysed, based on which we will be developing legislation to be brought forward later this spring.<sup>112</sup>

Details of the consultation exercise are available on the Government Equalities Office webpages: [Banning conversion therapy](#).

On 31 March 2022, ITV reported the Government had abandoned plans to legislate on conversion therapy. However, as a result of a "furious backlash" to this announcement, the Government has said it will legislate to ban conversion therapy in certain situations. ITV reported "the new plans will only apply to gay - and not trans - conversion therapy".<sup>113</sup>

## 4.21 Modern slavery

Legislation will be needed to implement some of the recommendations of the independent review of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.<sup>114</sup>

<sup>110</sup> [HCWS526](#), 11 January 2022

<sup>111</sup> Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent](#)

<sup>112</sup> [HC Deb 30 March 2022 c795](#)

<sup>113</sup> ITV News, [Gay conversion therapy will be scrapped in U-turn after ITV new report](#), 1 April 2022

<sup>114</sup> [PQ133957](#), 8 March 2022

## 4.22

## Gene Editing Regulation

The Sunday Times reported on 3 April 2022 [that a Bill may be included in the Queen's Speech on gene editing](#).

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has already put in place new measures on the regulation of gene edited plants used in research. This was through secondary legislation introduced earlier in 2022.

Defra plans a wider reform of the rules on the use of this technology in agriculture. It has promised to bring forward primary legislation at a “suitable opportunity” to amend the regulatory definitions of a genetically modified organism (GMO) to exclude organisms that have genetic changes that could have been achieved through traditional breeding or which could occur naturally. It will also consider regulatory measures to enable gene edited crops that are equivalent to those produced through traditional breeding to be brought to market.

The Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology's [POSTnote on genome edited food crops](#) provides details on the technology and its regulation.<sup>115</sup>

### Recent regulatory reform

In September 2021, the [Government published its response to a consultation on gene editing](#). Defra Secretary of State, George Eustice said the response set out new plans to “unlock the power of gene editing to help our farmers grow more resistant, more nutritious and more productive crops”. These would also help to “better protect the environment”. He said research could lead to plant varieties, such as sugar beet, which are more resistant to viruses and need less pesticides.

[Defra's consultation response](#) set out that the Government would “seek to bring forward primary legislation at a suitable opportunity” on the wider issues of regulatory definitions of GMOs and the regime for marketing such crops. It said the legislation would:

amend the regulatory definitions of a GMO to exclude organisms that have genetic changes that could have been achieved through traditional breeding or which could occur naturally. We will also consider the appropriate regulatory measures needed to enable gene edited crops that are equivalent to those produced through traditional breeding to be brought to market.<sup>116</sup>

The Government response noted that regulations relating to GMOs are a devolved matter and that Defra would work closely with the devolved

<sup>115</sup> Parliamentary Office for Science and Technology, POSTnote, [Genome edited food crops](#), 24 January 2022

<sup>116</sup> Defra, [Response to Genetic Technologies Regulation consultation](#), 29 September 2022, para 5.2

administrations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland “to understand the impacts of future policy changes on their territories”.<sup>117</sup>

## 4.23 National minimum wage for ferry crews

On 30 March 2022, the Secretary of State for Transport, Grant Shapps, announced the Government intended to give British ports new powers to refuse access to regular ferry services that do not pay their crew the national minimum wage. He said that “We will achieve that through primary legislation to amend the Harbours Act 1964”.<sup>118</sup>

He confirmed the Government wanted to bring the legislation forward “as quickly as possible” but because the Government needed to get the legislation right and had a statutory duty to consult the sector on changes, it would “not be possible overnight”.<sup>119</sup>

## 4.24 Channel 4 ownership

Channel 4 is a publicly owned, non-profit organisation that invests its income back into commissioning content. It receives no public money and is funded entirely through its commercial activity.

In July 2021, [the Government published a consultation on the future of Channel 4](#).<sup>120</sup> The Government’s view, to be tested through the consultation, was for a change to private ownership. According to the Government, this would give Channel 4 “greater access to new strategic and investment opportunities”.

On 4 April 2022, Nadine Dorries, the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, [tweeted that Channel 4’s current ownership model was holding it back from competing against companies such as Netflix and Amazon](#). According to press reports on 4 April 2022, legislation would be included in the Queen’s Speech.<sup>121</sup>

The Government’s [Broadcasting White Paper](#) (PDF), published on 28 April 2022, confirmed plans to seek private ownership for Channel 4.<sup>122</sup> The Government’s [response to the consultation on Channel 4](#) (PDF) and a [decision](#)

<sup>117</sup> Defra, [Response to Genetic Technologies Regulation consultation](#), 29 September 2022, para 5.2

<sup>118</sup> [HC Deb 30 March 2022 cc841-842](#)

<sup>119</sup> As above

<sup>120</sup> Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, [Consultation on a change of ownership of Channel 4 Television Corporation](#), July 2021

<sup>121</sup> BBC News, [Channel 4 privatisation to go ahead](#), 4 April 2022

<sup>122</sup> Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, [Up Next – the government’s vision for the broadcasting sector](#), 28 April 2022, CP 671

[rationale and sale impact analysis for a change of ownership](#) were published on the same date.<sup>123</sup> For further background, see the Library briefing, [Channel 4: a change of ownership?](#)

The White Paper also includes proposals on:

- reviewing the licence fee model for BBC funding
- updating the remit of the UK's public service broadcasters
- introducing a new prominence regime for on-demand television to ensure that public service content is both available and easy to find on designated TV platforms
- protecting audiences from harmful content on video-on-demand services.

## 4.25 Consolidation of immigration legislation

The Law Commission has started a project to consolidate immigration legislation. It is expected to complete the work in 2023.<sup>124</sup>

## 4.26 Trade agreements with Australia and New Zealand

On 27 April 2022, Anne-Marie Trevelyan, Secretary of State for International Trade, told the International Trade Committee that the Government would introduce primary legislation to bring free trade treaties with Australia and New Zealand into force. She expected the legislation to be announced in the Queen's Speech.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, [Consultation on a change of ownership of Channel 4 Television Corporation](#)

<sup>124</sup> [HL Deb 10 February 2022 c1947-8](#)

<sup>125</sup> International Trade Committee, [Oral Evidence: The work of the Department for International Trade](#) (PDF), 27 April 2022, HC 128 2021-22, Qq203-205

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## 5 What happens during the State Opening and the Queen's Speech?

The State Opening of Parliament marks the beginning of the parliamentary session. Its main purpose is for the monarch to formally open Parliament and, in the Queen's Speech, deliver an outline of the Government's proposed policies and legislation for the coming session of Parliament.

### The State Opening

State Opening is the main ceremonial event of the parliamentary calendar. In normal times it attracts large crowds, both in person and watching on television and the internet. The Queen's procession from Buckingham Palace to Westminster is escorted by the Household Cavalry.

The Queen arrives at the Sovereign's Entrance at about 11.15am, and proceeds to the Robing Room, where she puts on the Imperial State Crown and parliamentary robe. A procession then leads through the Royal Gallery to the Chamber of the House of Lords, where the Queen takes the Throne.

The House of Lords official known as 'Black Rod' is sent to summon the Commons. In a symbol of the Commons' independence, the door to their chamber is slammed in Black Rod's face and not opened until they have knocked on the door with their staff of office. The Members of the House of Commons follow Black Rod and the Commons Speaker to the Lords Chamber and stand behind the Bar of the House of Lords (at the opposite end of the Chamber from the Throne) to hear the Queen's Speech.

In May 2021, due to the pandemic, the State Opening was adapted, with reduced ceremonial elements and attendees.<sup>126</sup>

### The Speech

The Queen's Speech is delivered by the Queen from the Throne in the House of Lords, in the presence of Members of both Houses.

Although the Queen reads the Speech, the content is entirely drawn up by the Government and approved by the Cabinet. It contains an outline of the

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<sup>126</sup> Prime Minister's Office news, [Queen's Speech to be held on 11 May](#), 23 March 2021. House of Lords Library, [May 2021 state opening of Parliament: precedents for reduced ceremonies](#), 22 April 2021; House of Lords Library, [State Openings of Parliament: Reduced Ceremonial](#), 6 January 2020

Government's policies and proposed new legislation for the new parliamentary session.

## Debate on the Queen's Speech

Following the State Opening, a motion to send a 'Humble Address' to the Queen thanking her for the Speech is introduced in both Houses. The Government's programme, as presented in the Queen's Speech, is then debated by both Houses for four or five days.

In the House of Commons, the debate on the first day is a general one, with the following day's debates on particular subjects (such as health or foreign affairs). The Queen's Speech is voted on by the Commons, but no vote is taken in the Lords.

## History of the State Opening

Traditions surrounding the State Opening and delivery of a speech by the monarch can be traced back at least to the 16th century. The current ceremony dates from the opening of the rebuilt Palace of Westminster in 1852 after the fire of 1834.<sup>127</sup>

A similar description of the State Opening of Parliament used to appear on the Royal website. It noted that the ceremony "brings together the three elements of the legislature (the House of Commons, the House of Lords and The Queen)," and then described the traditions associated with the ceremony:

As Head of State, it is the duty of The Queen formally to open each new session of Parliament.

[...]

Her Majesty has only missed two during her reign. The first time was in 1959 when she was pregnant with Prince Andrew and the second in 1963 when she was expecting Prince Edward.

[...]

Before The Queen travels to Parliament from Buckingham Palace, certain traditional precautions are observed.

A detachment of The Queen's Body Guard of the Yeomen of the Guard searches the cellars of the Houses of Parliament.

This tradition dates back to the Gunpowder Plot of 1605, when Guy Fawkes was arrested whilst preparing to blow up Parliament. Today, the Yeomen of the Guard continue this historic search, in addition to the security checks by police.

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<sup>127</sup> Houses of Parliament, [State Opening of Parliament](#)

Another tradition is the 'hostage' MP, a Government whip who is held at Buckingham Palace to guarantee the safe return of the monarch.

The custom dates back to centuries when the monarch and Parliament were on less cordial terms.

Once these precautions have been taken, The Queen travels from Buckingham Palace in a State coach to the Palace of Westminster.

The Imperial State Crown travels in its own carriage, ahead of The Queen, escorted by Members of the Royal Household.

On arrival, The Queen puts on the Imperial State Crown and her parliamentary robe ready for the ceremony itself. This takes place in the House of Lords.

Some 250 representatives of the House of Commons are summoned by Black Rod, who acts as The Queen's Messenger.

By tradition, the door of the House of Commons is slammed in Black Rod's face. It is then reopened to enable Black Rod to convey the Sovereign's summons to the Speaker.

This tradition is a reminder of the right of the Commons to exclude everyone but the Sovereign's messengers.

No monarch has set foot in the Commons since Charles I entered the Commons and tried to arrest five Members of Parliament in 1642.<sup>128</sup>

The Library briefing, [State opening of Parliament – history and ceremonial](#), reviews how the ceremonial and practical arrangements of the State opening of Parliament have changed over time.

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<sup>128</sup> The Royal Website, [State Opening of Parliament](#) (altered) [last accessed 13 March 2013]

## 6

## Progress of Bills announced in the Queen's Speech, May 2021

The last Queen's Speech was held on 11 May 2021.<sup>129</sup> The next day, Jacob Rees-Mogg, then Leader of the House of Commons, issued a written statement in which he listed the Bills that were announced the previous day.<sup>130</sup>

His list is repeated below along with an indication of whether each Bill was introduced. The measures that have been enacted are noted (**in bold**). Any carry-over motions relating to Queen's Speech bills in the 2021-22 Session are noted (see also section 2.1).

Bill	Summary of progress
Animals Abroad Bill	
Animal Welfare (Sentience) Bill	<b>Animal Welfare (Sentience) Act 2022</b>
Advanced Research and Invention Agency Bill*	<b>Advanced Research and Invention Agency Act 2022</b>
Armed Forces Bill*	<b>Armed Forces Act 2021</b>
Borders Bill	<b>Nationality and Borders Act 2022</b>
Building Safety Bill	<b>Building Safety Act 2022</b>
Counter-State Threats Bill	
Dissolution and Calling of Parliaments Bill	<b>Dissolution and Calling of Parliaments Act 2022</b>
Dormant Assets Bill	<b>Dormant Assets Act 2022</b>
Electoral Integrity Bill	<b>Elections Act 2022</b>
Environment Bill*	<b>Environment Act 2021</b>
Health and Care Bill	<b>Health and Care Act 2022</b>
Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill	Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill (carried over)

<sup>129</sup> [HC Deb 11 May 2021 cc3-6](#)

<sup>130</sup> [HCWS6](#), 12 May 2021



<b>Bill</b>	<b>Summary of progress</b>
High Speed Rail (Crewe-Manchester) Bill	High Speed Rail (Crewe-Manchester) Bill [hybrid] (carried over)
Judicial Review Bill	<b>Judicial Review and Courts Act 2022</b>
Kept Animals Bill	Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill (carried over)
Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Bill	<b>Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Act 2022</b>
Legacy Bill	
National Insurance Contributions Bill	<b>National Insurance Contributions Act 2022</b>
Northern Ireland (Ministers, Elections and Petitions of Concern) Bill	<b>Northern Ireland (Ministers, Elections and Petitions of Concern) Act 2022</b>
Planning Bill	
Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill*	<b>Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022</b>
Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Bill	Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Bill (carried over)
Professional Qualifications Bill	<b>Professional Qualifications Act 2022</b>
Procurement Bill	
Public Service Pensions and Judicial Offices Bill	<b>Public Service Pensions and Judicial Offices Act 2022</b>
Skills and Post-16 Education Bill	<b>Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022</b>
Subsidy Control Bill	<b>Subsidy Control Act 2022</b>
Telecommunications (Security) Bill*	<b>Telecommunications (Security) Act 2021</b>

\* carried over from 2019-21 Session

The Government introduced other Bills during the 2021-22 Session.

A full list of Government Bills introduced in 2021-22, and details of their progress can be found by using the drop-down menus on the [Find a Bill](#) webpage on the parliamentary website.

Not all Government Bills were enacted. A list of Government Bills that have been carried over is given in section 2.1.

## Appendix: List of contributors

The following list of topics covered in the briefing is presented in the order in which they appear in the briefing. Library specialists listed provided the information on each topic.

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Contributor</b>
Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill	Joe Lewis
Counter-State Threats Bill	Joanna Dawson
Planning Bill	Gabrielle Garton Grimwood
Procurement Bill	Ilze Jozepa
Renters' Reform Bill	Wendy Wilson
Victims Bill	Joe Ryan
Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions Bill	Anna Dickson
Social Housing Regulation Bill	Hannah Cromarty
Prison and probation scrutiny bodies legislation	Jacqui Beard
Leasehold and commonhold reform	Wendy Wilson
Review of retained EU law	Graeme Cowie
Schools Policy	Robert Long
Lifelong Loan Entitlement	Joe Lewis
Reform of the Mental Health Act	Katherine Garratt
Economic Crime Bill	Ali Shalchi
Digital markets reform	Ali Shalchi
Financial Services Bill	Ali Shalchi
Access to cash	Steve Browning
Audit Reform	Ali Shalchi
Insolvency Reform	Ali Shalchi

Parole Board reform	Jacqui Beard
Levelling up	Daniel Harari
Local government	Mark Sandford
Bill of Rights (Human Rights)	Joanna Dawson
Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation	Joanna Dawson
Counter-terrorism strategy: 'Protect duty'	Joanna Dawson
Gene Editing Regulation	Sarah Coe
National minimum wage for ferry crews	Roger Tyers and Patrick Brione
Channel 4 ownership	John Woodhouse
Immigration legislation	Melanie Gower
Trade agreements with Australia and New Zealand	Dominic Webb

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