

The Queen's Speech took place on Tuesday 10 May. The below grid provides an overview of the key Bills announced for the reference of the Accredited Chamber of Commerce Network. Whilst much more detail will come into the public domain over time, the Government's briefing note is [here](#).

Bill	Territorial Extent and Application	What the Bill will legislate for	BCC high-level position
<b>Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill</b>	The Bill mainly extends to England & Wales. Mainly applies to England only. Some provisions apply to the whole of the UK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Placing a duty on the Government to set Levelling Up missions and produce an annual report updating the country on delivery of these missions.</li> <li>Creating a new model of combined authority: the 'County Deal' which will provide local leaders with powers to enhance local accountability, join up services and provide transparent decision making to rejuvenate their communities, increase their ability to reflect local preferences in arrangements including directly elected leaders' titles.</li> <li>Unlocking new powers for local authorities to bring empty premises back into use and instigate rental auctions of vacant commercial properties in town centres and on high streets.</li> <li>Giving residents more of a say over changing street names and ensuring everyone can continue to benefit from al fresco dining.</li> <li>Strengthening neighbourhood planning and digitalising the system to make local plans easier to find, understand and engage with; by making it easier for local authorities to get local plans in place, we will limit speculative development.</li> </ul>	<p>Businesses are keen to ensure levelling up ambitions are quickly turned into delivery against the missions in the near future, improving prosperity around the country.</p> <p>Local business communities will welcome plans to drive regeneration and growth.</p> <p>But the planning system needs wider reform to speed up the process, reduce complexity and ensure the right balance of land is available for homes and jobs.</p> <p>Businesses are being squeezed out of communities as good quality employment land is given over to residential uses, limiting scope for firms to invest, grow, expand and boost productivity.</p>
<b>Energy Security Bill</b>	The Bill mainly extends and applies to England, Wales & Scotland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introducing state-of-the-art business models for Carbon Capture Usage and Storage transport and storage, low carbon hydrogen and industrial carbon</li> </ul>	This legislation must implement reforms that bring stability of pricing and security of supply for both business and consumers.

	<p>Some provisions apply to the whole of the UK.</p>	<p>capture which will fire the starting gun on new, low-carbon technologies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing the risk of fuel supply disruption by giving Government the power to give directions to, require information from, and provide financial assistance to core fuel sector businesses to ensure resilience and continuity of fuel supply.</li> <li>• Supporting industry to step up investment in growing the consumer market for electric heat pumps by providing for a new market standard and trading scheme. This will support innovation and help to lower the costs of heat pumps over time.</li> <li>• Appointing Ofgem as the new regulator for heat networks, ensuring consumers get a fair price and a reliable supply of heat.</li> <li>• Extending the energy price cap, preventing suppliers from overcharging consumers.</li> <li>• Enabling the first ever large-scale hydrogen heating trial, allowing us to inform the role of hydrogen in heat decarbonisation in 2026.</li> <li>• Introducing competition in Britain's onshore electricity networks, encouraging investment and innovation, and enabling savings.</li> <li>• Creating a new pro-innovation regulatory environment for fusion energy.</li> <li>• Establishing a new Future System Operator, providing strategic oversight across electricity and gas systems. It will drive progress towards net zero, energy security and minimising consumer costs.</li> </ul>	
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<b>Trade (Australia and New Zealand) Bill</b>	The Bill will extend and apply across the UK.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The legislation will ensure the UK can comply with the obligations set out in the free trade deals struck with Australia and New Zealand. Will amend rules in relation to domestic procurement.</li> <li>Will be accompanied by delegated legislation amending the tariffs and quotas on imports from Australia and New Zealand in line with the FTA commitments.</li> </ul>	We welcome the progress being made in ratifying negotiated FTAs. Business expertise must be at the heart of the debate around international trade, which is vital for the UK's economic prosperity. Is key that UK SMEs secure the maximum value from these FTAs.
<b>Brexit Freedoms Bill</b>	The Bill will extend and apply across the UK.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating new powers to strengthen the ability to amend, repeal or replace the large amounts of retained EU law by reducing the need to always use primary legislation to do so.</li> <li>Removing the supremacy of retained EU law as it still applies in the UK.</li> <li>Clarifying the status of retained EU law in UK domestic law to reflect the fact that much of it became law without going through full democratic scrutiny in the UK Parliament.</li> </ul>	<p>This is an enabling Bill. No details on which precise regulations the Government intends to repeal or amend as yet. Government say up to 1,400 rules will be scrapped saving businesses around £1bn. Will examine proposals carefully to see what they would mean for business domestically and also for our trade links and exports with the EU. Certainty and consistency are key principles in how we believe regulatory policy should be implemented by Govt.</p> <p>What we don't want to see is deregulation for its own sake which complicates our trading relationship with the EU by diverging so far it makes UK goods and services unsellable in that market or an entirely separate product has to be made.</p>

<p><b>Higher Education Bill</b></p>	<p>The Bill will extend and apply in the main to England and Wales, with some provisions extending across the UK.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that appropriate fee limits can be applied more flexibly to higher education study within the Lifelong Loan Entitlement and that they can be effectively regulated.</li> <li>• Subject to the conclusion of the higher education reform consultation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- setting minimum qualification requirements for a person living in England to be eligible to get student finance support to enter higher education, helping to ensure students can pursue the best post-18 education and training options for them by taking pathways through which they can excel; and</li> <li>- fulfilling the manifesto commitment to tackle uncontrolled growth of low-quality courses by taking specific powers to control numbers of students entering higher education at specific providers in England.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>We welcome the Government's commitment to create a lifelong loan entitlement that allows adults to upskill and reskill for the changing workplace. The focus on funding flexible and modular learning for higher technical skills is crucial to help people advance in their careers and ensure employers can access a highly skilled workforce.</p>
<p><b>High Speed Rail (Crewe – Manchester) Bill</b></p>	<p>The Bill will extend across the whole of the UK but apply to England &amp; Scotland only</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing the powers to compulsorily acquire the land needed for the railway, construct the railway, and operate it.</li> <li>• Seeking outline planning permission to deliver the scheme.</li> <li>• Setting out how existing railway regulation will apply to HS2.</li> <li>• Modifying, or disapplying, existing legislation that would apply to the construction of the scheme, reflecting that the scheme will have been approved by Parliament.</li> </ul>	<p>Whilst local communities were disappointed by the amendments to the Eastern Leg of HS2 announced within the Integrated Rail Plan, the passage of this Bill is an important step towards delivery of the remaining route, and the realisation of many transformative regeneration and investment projects planned dependent on the route.</p>

<p><b>Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Bill</b></p>	<p>The Bill will, in the main, extend and apply across the UK.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requiring manufacturers, importers and distributors of smart devices to comply with minimum security standards. The legislation also imposes duties on these businesses to investigate and take action in cases of non-compliance.</li> <li>• Providing a robust regulatory framework that can adapt and keep pace with rapid technological advances, techniques used by cyber criminals, hostile states and broader global regulation.</li> <li>• Reforming the Electronic Communications Code to support faster, fairer and more collaborative negotiations for the use of private and public land to enable deployment of telecommunications networks</li> </ul>	<p>Business communities across the country rely on fast and reliable mobile and broadband coverage to run their businesses and to connect with customers, suppliers and employees both here and across the world.</p> <p>With more staff and firms working flexibly, extending 5G mobile coverage and gigabit broadband is key to facilitating these connections.</p> <p>This extension must ensure the elimination of mobile not spots, particularly in rural areas and on major road and rail corridors.</p>
<p><b>Transport Bill</b></p>	<p>The Bill will extend and apply across the UK.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing a new body, Great British Railways, with the powers it needs to act as the single national leader of the railways, with clear lines of accountability for decision-making and joined-up leadership to deliver a customer-focused railway, including by improving accessibility and promoting open data. Great British Railways will work within a clear mandate, goals and budgets set by the Government, who will reserve powers of direction.</li> <li>• Transferring contracting powers for passenger services to Great British Railways, and ensuring we retain the best of the private sector by expanding its role under the new model, introducing new passenger service contracts focussed on getting the trains running punctually and reliably</li> <li>• Introducing new laws that safely enable self-driving and remotely operated vehicles and vessels,</li> </ul>	<p>BCC supported calls to create a single overarching organisation to unite track and train, improve communication, prevent delays and cancelled services, and to generally be more customer focussed.</p> <p>BCC has called for more flexible fares and ticketing to support commuters working flexibly and employers who need to access skills. GBRTT will be responsible for these reforms.</p>

		support the roll-out of electric vehicle charge points and enabling the licensing of London pedicabs	
<b>Procurement Bill</b>	<p>The Bill will extend and apply to England, Wales and Northern Ireland, with some provisions extending and applying across the UK.</p> <p>The Scottish Government has decided not to implement these reforms for devolved bodies in Scotland.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enshrining in law the objectives of public procurement including: delivering value for money, maximising public benefit, treating suppliers equally and without discrimination, and acting, and being seen to act, with integrity.</li> <li>• Requiring buyers to have regard to the Government's strategic priorities for public procurement as set out in the National Procurement Policy Statement.</li> <li>• Introducing new, clearer arrangements for how contracting authorities can buy at pace if necessary to protect life or health, public order or safety, with strengthened safeguards for transparency.</li> <li>• Tackling unacceptable behaviour and poor performance through new exclusion rules and giving buyers the tools they need to properly take account of a bidder's past performance.</li> <li>• Providing a number of sector-specific features where necessary, including tailored rules to better suit defence and security procurement in order to protect our national interests.</li> <li>• Reforming the Single Source Contract Regulations to ensure we continue to pay fair prices on single source defence contracts while providing value for money.</li> </ul>	<p>Complexity of current public procurement can shut businesses out of the process, particularly smaller firms.</p> <p>Enshrining in law the principles of public procurement and overhauling the system is key to engaging small and medium sized firms in the process and unlocking innovation.</p> <p>The new system must be clear and simple, with opportunities communicated openly, and proportionate requirements for smaller businesses looking to engage with the process.</p>

<p><b>Electronic Trade Documents Bill</b></p>	<p>The Bill will extend and apply across the UK.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bringing about much needed modernisation to long-standing statutes such as the Bills of Exchange Act 1882 and the Carriage of Goods by Sea Act 1992.</li> <li>• Removing the legal obstacle to the use of trade documents in digital form and ensuring that such documents have the same effects as paper counterparts.</li> <li>• Allowing the adoption of new digital solutions which bypass the need for paper and wet ink signatures. Ensuring that trade documents in electronic form meet certain criteria designed to replicate the key features of paper trade documents. These criteria include ensuring that an electronic document is subject to exclusive control (only one person, or persons acting jointly, can exercise control over it at any one time) and once transferred the previous holder should no longer be able to exercise control over the document.</li> </ul>	<p>BCC welcomes ending of need for wet signatures and stamps for legal and financial entities engaging in trade.</p> <p>Network and Chamber Customs already have key electronic products developed to facilitate trade in the ways envisaged by the Bill, such as electronic Certificates of Origin.</p>
<p><b>Data Reform Bill</b></p>	<p>The Bill will, in the main, extend and apply across the UK, with some measures extending and applying to England and Wales only.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that UK citizens' personal data is protected to a gold standard while enabling public bodies to share data to improve the delivery of services.</li> <li>• Using data and reforming regulations to improve the everyday lives of people in the UK, for example, by enabling data to be shared more efficiently between public bodies, so that delivery of services can be improved for people.</li> <li>• Designing a more flexible, outcomes-focused approach to data protection that helps create a</li> </ul>	<p>Simplifications welcome, particularly for SMEs – so long as the Bill's provisions do not harm EU-UK data flows under the data adequacy arrangements in place.</p>

		<p>culture of data protection, rather than “tick box” exercises.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
<b>Infrastructure Bank Bill</b>	The Bill will extend and apply across the UK.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enshrining the Bank’s objectives and functions in legislation to ensure that it will be a long-lasting institution with a clear policy mandate to support economic growth, including at a regional and local level, and the delivery of net zero.</li> <li>• Protecting the Bank’s operational independence by setting out clear accountability for how it is to be run, including reporting and board requirements.</li> <li>• Providing the Bank with the necessary powers to lend directly to local authorities and the Northern Ireland Executive, enabling the Bank to play a key role in delivering public sector infrastructure projects.</li> </ul>	<p>The UK infrastructure bank may significantly aid the transition to net zero if it has the necessary capital base to leverage the private sector finance needed to deliver transformational levels of infrastructure investment. Business communities because they can see the tangible business, economic and reputational benefits that will come from these investments.</p> <p>We’ve spent long enough discussing about infrastructure projects - it’s now time to focus on delivery.</p>
<b>Financial Services and Markets Bill</b>	The Bill will extend and apply across the UK.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revoking retained EU law on financial services and replacing it with an approach to regulation that is designed for the UK.</li> <li>• Updating the objectives of the financial services regulators to ensure a greater focus on growth and international competitiveness.</li> <li>• Reforming the rules that regulate the UK’s capital markets to promote investment.</li> <li>• Ensuring that people across the UK continue to be able to access their own cash with ease.</li> <li>• Introducing additional protections for those investing or using financial products, to make it safer and support the victims of scams.</li> </ul>	<p>While Financial Service Bill provides the opportunity to better tailor the UK’s regulatory framework, the acid test for any changes will be whether they help to increase the flow of credit and provision of services to those who really need it, including our most promising start-ups and small businesses.</p>



<p><b>Non-domestic Rating Bill</b></p>	<p>The Bill will extend to England and Wales, and with the exception of some minor provisions, apply to England only.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shortening the business rates revaluation cycle from five to three years from 2023.</li> <li>• Improving the valuation accuracy and timeliness in a shorter revaluation cycle through new duties on ratepayers, with measures to support compliance. Creating a power for the Valuation Office Agency to provide ratepayers with information on the calculation of their rateable value.</li> <li>• Tightening appeals against rates based on changing circumstances – building on our recent legislation and £1.5 billion pandemic support fund by future-proofing business rates against further shocks.</li> <li>• Introducing new 12-month rates relief on increases to rateable value arising from improvements made to a property, and a new 100 per cent rates relief for low carbon heat networks that are assessed as separate entities for business rates.</li> </ul>	<p>While the announcements made at 2021 Autumn Budget are a positive step, the changes fall some way short of the fundamental reform that businesses were promised. These changes must be the start, rather than the end point of the reforms to this broken system.</p> <p>We are pleased that the chancellor has listened to our call to deliver more frequent revaluations. Moving to a three-year-cycle will help to reduce the huge changes in rates bills that clobber firms and enable them to plan their growth strategies with greater confidence.</p> <p>However, a system that responds more frequently to changing economic conditions must be made easier for firms to navigate. The current system already generates a significant number of appeals, and if it is not made simpler, more frequent valuations would exacerbate this problem.</p> <p>The new business rates relief to support investment in property improvements is a longstanding BCC call and will help provide ratepayers with much needed time to recoup any capital investments they have made before their higher rates bill applies. This will give firms more confidence to push ahead with investments in key priorities, including the transition to net zero.</p>
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<p><b>Draft Protect Duty Bill</b></p>	<p>The draft Bill will extend and apply across the UK.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follows Martyn's Law and the terrorist attack at Manchester Arena. Business must be prepared.</li> <li>• Establishing a new requirements framework which requires those in control of certain public locations and venues to consider the threat from terrorism and implement appropriate and proportionate mitigation measures.</li> <li>• Delivering an inspection and enforcement regime, which will seek to educate, advise, and ensure compliance with the Duty.</li> </ul>	<p>Terrorism has a major impact on lives and on local economies. Businesses have a role to play in being aware of the threat, protecting employees and customers and boosting the firm's planning, resilience and business continuity.</p> <p>BCC responded to this consultation, stressing the need for the requirements to be proportionate and cost-effective for smaller firms.</p>
<p><b>Draft Audit Reform Bill</b></p>	<p>The draft Bill will extend and apply across the UK.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing a new statutory regulator, the Audit, Reporting and Governance Authority, that will protect and promote the interests of investors, other users of corporate reporting and the wider public interest.</li> <li>• Providing new measures to open up the market, including a new approach of managed shared audit in which challenger firms undertake a share of the work on large-scale audits. This will improve the quality and usefulness of audit; and boost resilience, competition, and choice in the audit market.</li> <li>• Bringing the largest private companies in scope of regulation in the definition of 'public interest entities', recognising the public interest in companies of this size.</li> <li>• Giving the new regulator effective powers to enforce directors' financial reporting duties, to supervise corporate reporting, and to oversee and regulate the accountancy and actuarial professions.</li> </ul>	<p>The focus on making improvements to the audit industry has the potential to address many of the shortcomings been revealed in high profile collapses and enhance the UK's global reputation as great place to do business. However, government and regulators must tread carefully to avoid unintended consequences, including adding to the already onerous cost burden on firms.</p> <p>The nature of the enforcement of the proposed changes will be crucial to minimising the cost burden on businesses. Although the white paper states that it is not trying to add new duties, it is saying that existing duties will become under much greater scrutiny by the new Audit, Reporting and Governance Authority (ARGA) with much more active enforcement involved.</p> <p>Greater clarity on the practical implications of any step change in the level of scrutiny is needed. For</p>

		<p>50 Reforming the regulation of Insolvency  Practitioners to give greater confidence to creditors and strengthening corporate governance of firms in or approaching insolvency so that 'asset stripping' can be more effectively tackled.</p>	<p>example, will the proposed reforms create more personal liability for a director because there a greater chance of the individual being pursued for failing in their duties compared to the current position? Or because of greater liability, will businesses need to commit resources to tighten internal controls compliance systems in place, at greater cost?</p> <p>A lot will hinge on how ARGA perceives its role going forward. We are broadly supportive of ARGAs in principle with businesses generally understanding the need for statutory regulator to toughen on enforcement. However, our members hope that the new regulator sees its role as enforcing regulation in proportional way with a degree of flexibility and collaboration with company directors and businesses then that it would be a positive step. However, If ARGAs adopt a more punitive approach risks addition cost and administrative burden for firms.</p>
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