**ADEPT: Parliamentary monitoring**

**March 2019**

This document is tailored to provide a monthly overview of key activity, debates, questions, reports, PMQs, speeches and bills relevant to the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport.

**Key dates**

4 – 23 April 2019: Easter recess

12 April: Brexit date for a no-deal

22 May: Brexit date for is PMs deal is accepted

23-26 May: European Parliament Elections

No further recess dates announced

**Planning – Housing**

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| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
| 12/03/19 | Press Release | West Midlands Combined Authority | West Midlands unveils £10bn investment prospectus at MIPIM.[**Read here.**](https://www.wmca.org.uk/news/west-midlands-unveils-10bn-investment-prospectus-at-mipim/) |
| 14/03/19 | Press Release | MHCLG | Brokenshire announces £570 million to deliver London housing near transport links. [Read here](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/brokenshire-announces-570-million-to-deliver-london-housing-near-transport-links). |

**Industrial Strategy & Local Industrial Strategies**

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| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
| 04/03/19 | Press release | Prime Minister’s Office | **£1.6 billion Stronger Towns Fund launched**  The Stronger Towns Fund will be targeted at places that have not shared in the proceeds of growth in the same way as more prosperous parts of the country. [Read here](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/16-billion-stronger-towns-fund-launched). |
| 07/03/19 | Press release | BEIS | **Offshore wind energy revolution to provide a third of all UK electricity by 2030**  Energy and Clean Growth Minister Claire Perry announced today the launch of the new joint government-industry Offshore Wind Sector Deal. [Read here](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/offshore-wind-energy-revolution-to-provide-a-third-of-all-uk-electricity-by-2030). |
| 07/03/19 | Press Release | BEIS | Offshore wind energy revolution to provide a third of all UK electricity by 2030. [**Read here.**](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/offshore-wind-energy-revolution-to-provide-a-third-of-all-uk-electricity-by-2030) |
| 11/03/19 | Written Q&A | Treasury | Nuclear Reactors:Written question - [228713](https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-05/228713)  Asked by **Drew Hendry**  To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to his oral contribution of 5 March 2018, Official Report, column 788 whether it his policy to provide as much fiscal support for renewable energy as is given to any potential industrial strategy for small modular reactors.  Answered by: [**Robert Jenrick**](https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/commons/robert-jenrick/4320)  The government recognises the potential for the UK to become a leader in developing the next generations of nuclear technologies, provided there is demonstrable value for money for consumers and taxpayers. The Nuclear Sector Deal published last year outlines the government’s ongoing commitment to nuclear innovation, including a new framework to support the deployment of small modular reactors. Up to £56m is available to support the development of advanced modular reactors, including up to £44m for a Feasibility and Development Project and £12m for the Office of Nuclear Regulation and Environment Agency to build the necessary capability.  The government provides extensive support for renewable energy, with around £10bn of annual of low carbon levies supporting the sector and up to £557 million (2011/12 prices) of further support available, starting with the next Contract for Difference allocation round, which will open by May 2019. These auctions are expected to secure 1-2GW of low carbon generation each year in the 2020s.  The government has implemented a number of measures to support the oil and gas sector, including £2.3bn of fiscal changes since 2015, £45m to support exploration, and the introduction of Transferable Tax History to aid investment in late-life assets. As outlined in the Industrial Strategy White Paper, no new government funding is available for sector deals. However, we welcome the way industry has come together under the leadership of Trevor Garlick to enable elements of the proposed sector deal to take shape. The government will continue its close engagement with the sector to consider what we can best do together to strengthen our partnership. |
| 104/03/19 | Written Ministerial Statement | BEIS | BEIS: Energy Update. [Read here.](https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2019-03-14/HLWS1384/%5D) |
| 19/03/19 | Oral Answer | BEIS | Energy Mix. [Read here.](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-03-19/debates/DC473872-31E0-4670-AD5F-3C8268E145C4/EnergyMix) |
| 22/03/19 | Press Release | TfL | Transport for London completes ‘sale and leaseback’ of Elizabeth line trains to 345 Rail Leasing Consortium. [Read here.](https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/media/press-releases/2019/march/tfl-completes-sale-and-leaseback-of-elizabeth-line-trains-to-345-rail-leasing-consortium) |
| 22/03/19 | Press Release | Rail Delivery Group | Every second counts as rail firms use new punctuality measures to help improve performance. [Read here.](https://www.raildeliverygroup.com/media-centre/press-releases/2019/469775562-2019-03-22.html) |
| 25/03/19 | Press Release | West of England Combined Authority | Local Industrial Strategy Workshop. [Read here.](https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/local-industrial-strategy-workshop/) |

**NPPF – Land value capture**

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| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
|  |  |  | No updates |

**Energy – Local authority projects**

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| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
| 12/03/19 | Debate | HoC | Offshore Wind Substations: East of England. [Read here.](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2019-03-11/debates/5BDCC552-95AE-45C3-BFEF-8B07DA2C6B38/OffshoreWindSubstationsEastOfEngland) |
| 15/03/19 | Written Answer | BEIS | Renewable Energy:Written question - [229729](https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-07/229729)  Asked by [**Helen Hayes**](https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/commons/helen-hayes/4510)  To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans he has in place to ensure that the proportion of renewable resources in the UK's energy mix continues to increase year on year.  Answered by: [**Claire Perry**](https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/commons/claire-perry/3974)  The UK Government has an excellent record of supporting renewables and around a third of UK electricity generation now comes from renewable projects. We announced up to £557 million of annual support for further Contracts for Difference (CfD) in the Clean Growth Strategy, published in October 2017. The next CfD allocation round for less established technologies, including offshore wind, is planned for May this year, and is expected to support the delivery of around 4GW of new renewable electricity capacity. The Government has announced it intends to hold subsequent CfD auctions every two years from 2021, which are expected to deliver 1-2GW of additional offshore wind each year in the 2020s. We are also investing £177 million to further reduce the cost of renewables, including innovation in offshore wind turbine blade technology and foundations.  The BEIS £505 million Energy Innovation Programme aims to accelerate the commercialisation of innovative clean energy technologies and processes into the 2020s and 2030s.  Full details about BEIS Energy Innovation Programme investments are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/energy-innovation>.  We have also consulted on a Smart Export Guarantee (SEG) to follow on from the Feed-in Tariffs (FIT) scheme, which will close from 1 April 2019, and has contributed to driving down the cost of renewable electricity, including small-scale solar PV. The SEG will ensure that small-scale renewable generators do not export their electricity to the grid for free. The SEG consultation closed on the 5 March 2019 and we are currently considering the responses submitted. Government will respond in due course.  The consultation is available at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/the-future-for-small-scale-low-carbon-generation](https://emea01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fconsultations%2Fthe-future-for-small-scale-low-carbon-generation&data=02%7C01%7CMax.Dowland%40beis.gov.uk%7C5fb9a6f408044fc2bb4f08d6a86432e1%7Ccbac700502c143ebb497e6492d1b2dd8%7C0%7C0%7C636881546686515265&sdata=SoaXha%2B1JmzpN9TBN2%2BLsMWptQXLPkr3mMTaWnW1wpE%3D&reserved=0). |
| 19/03/19 | Oral Answer | BEIS | Feed-in Tariffs and Power Generation[. Read here.](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-03-19/debates/2D8912DD-0270-4814-850C-BC9810E43FC2/Feed-InTariffsAndPowerGeneration) |

**Digital – Broadband & mobile**

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| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
| 14/03/19 | Debates | HoL | Draft Mobile Roaming (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. [Read here.](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-02-26/debates/6afebbf3-72ee-4bc2-95c6-b807a73d7b65/DraftMobileRoaming(EUExit)Regulations2019) |
| 15/03/19 | Written answers | DCMS | Broadband: Rural Areas:Written question - 229767  Asked by [**Jim Shannon**](https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/commons/jim-shannon/4131)  To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is taking to improve access to high speed broadband for small rural businesses.  Answered by: [**Margot James**](https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/commons/margot-james/4115)  We are working closely with the Department for Economy team in Northern Ireland on the £165m Project Stratum who are finalising Invitation to Tender documents in relation to issuing the OJEU Procurement by the end of April. This will extend Superfast coverage in Northern Ireland to approximately 98% of premises and include many small rural businesses.  Recently, the Full-Fibre Northern Ireland Consortium of 10 local councils were successful in the award of £15m under the DCMS Wave 3 of the Local Full Fibre Networks (LFFN) programme. This is in addition to the DCMS LFFN Wave 2 Belfast City Council £11.5m and the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon £2.4m projects. These projects will all help to provide more full-fibre to public buildings in urban and rural areas and this should encourage commercial suppliers more cost-effectively to reach more premises. These projects form part of the investment of almost £300m, to stimulate commercial full fibre investment in both urban and rural areas across the UK, by 2021. This includes the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme, which can be used by small businesses to contribute to the installation cost of faster connections over gigabit-capable infrastructure.  The £200m Rural Gigabit Connectivity programme, due to launch in Spring, will also benefit rural businesses. The programme will trial a model for full fibre to public buildings - starting with primary schools - which will act as hubs in rural areas, alongside vouchers for funding gigabit-capable connectivity to homes and businesses across the UK.  These programmes address hard to reach areas and meet the needs of the challenging connectivity issues experienced by small rural businesses.  To ensure no-one is left behind, we are introducing a broadband Universal Service Obligation to give everyone a clear, enforceable right to request high-speed broadband by 2020. |
| 18/03/19 | Papers | HoC | Full-fibre networks in the UK. [Read here](https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-8392). |
| 20/03/19 | Press Release | Ofcom | Revisions to BT’s regulatory financial reporting requirements. Ofcom has today published revisions to BT 's regulatory financial reporting requirements:  <https://bit.ly/2TRx5lV> |
| 25/03/19 | Press Release | Which? | Broadbad – Largest providers still failing to connect with customers. [Read here.](https://press.which.co.uk/whichpressreleases/broadbad-largest-providers-still-failing-to-connect-with-customers/) |
| 25/03/19 | Press Release | Ofcom | Ofcom publishes 2019/20 annual plan.  Ofcom  Office of Communications  has today published its 2019/20 Annual Plan, which confirms our areas of work for the next financial year.  Ofcom aims to make communications markets work for everyone. To help achieve this, our priorities for the next year include:  • Better broadband and mobile – wherever you are;  • Fairness for customers;  • Supporting UK broadcasting ; and  • Raising awareness of online harms.  The Annual Plan follows consultation with a wide range of stakeholders and consumers. We have also confirmed our budget and programme of work for 2019/20.  More information can be accessed here: <https://bit.ly/2Hain4m> |

**Economy – Fair funding review**

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| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
| 14/03/19 | Oral Answers | HoL | Local Authorities: Fair Funding Review. [Read here](https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2019-03-14/debates/1F4588F8-7DBA-423A-8C00-79AE1EB355E9/LocalAuthoritiesFairFundingReview). |
| 15/03/19 | Papers | HoC | Reviewing and reforming local government finance. <https://bit.ly/2CocpYu> |

**Transport – Investment strategy**

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| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
| 01/03/19 | Press release | Labour party | **Labour calculates ‘Failing Grayling’ has cost the taxpayer and the economy £2.7 billion**  A new analysis by the Labour Party has revealed that after the Eurotunnel settlement fiasco, in his time as a government minister the Transport Secretary Chris Grayling has cost the taxpayer and the economy a total of £2.7 billion in political gaffes. [Read here](https://labour.org.uk/press/labour-calculates-failing-grayling-cost-taxpayer-economy-2-7-billion/). |
| 20/03/19 | Press Release | West Midlands Combined Authority | Drivers could receive ‘credits’ to ditch their cars under £20m Future Mobility plans. [Read here.](https://www.wmca.org.uk/news/drivers-could-receive-credits-to-ditch-their-cars-under-20m-future-mobility-plans/) |

**Transport – Major road network**

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| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
| 05/03/19 | Q&A | Commons Chamber | **Road Infrastructure Funding**  [909577](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-03-05/debates/92B57702-6356-4872-91C4-0449CD64A25C/RoadInfrastructureFunding)  Questions asked by: [Gordon Henderson](https://hansard.parliament.uk/search/MemberContributions?house=Commons&memberId=4050)  What steps he is taking to increase the level of funding for road infrastructure?  Answered by [Philip Hammond](https://hansard.parliament.uk/search/MemberContributions?house=Commons&memberId=105)  Full [answer here.](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-03-05/debates/92B57702-6356-4872-91C4-0449CD64A25C/RoadInfrastructureFunding) |
| 22/03/19 | Press Release | Highways England | New trans-Pennine roads study announced. [Read here.](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-trans-pennine-roads-study-announced) |

**Transport – Sub-national Transport Boards (STBs) – (TfN, TfSE)**

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| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
| 22/03/19 | Press Release | Liverpool City Region | Business And Rail Leaders Mark Five Years Of Rail Advancement In The Liverpool City Region. [Read here.](https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/business-and-rail-leaders-mark-five-years-of-rail-advancement-in-the-liverpool-city-region/) |
| 05/03/19 | Deabte | HoC | Regional Transport Infrastructure. [Read here.](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-03-05/debates/EFBC11E2-499C-4E00-B364-1FCF23074278/RegionalTransportInfrastructure) |

**Transport – Automated electric vehicle bill**

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| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
|  |  |  | No updates |

**Transport – rail**

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| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
| 04/03/19 | Press release | Govia | **UK’s largest rail company launches recruitment campaign to increase diversity on the railways**  Govia Thameslink Railway, which runs Southern, Thameslink, Great Northern and Gatwick Express, has launched the UK's biggest rail recruitment campaign to attract more women and young people to consider a rewarding career in rail. [Read here](http://www.mynewsdesk.com/uk/govia-thameslink-railway/pressreleases/calling-at-all-stations-to-equality-uks-largest-rail-company-launches-recruitment-campaign-to-increase-diversity-on-the-railways-2842886). |
| 06/03/19 | Committees Summary | Public Accounts Committee | **Crossrail: progress review inquiry.** [Read here](https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/public-accounts-committee/inquiries/parliament-2017/inquiry3/). |
| 07/03/19 | Press release | Network Rail | **Red tape slashed for investors and builders as Britain’s railways open for business**  To encourage investment from the  private sector and other organisations,  Network Rail has implemented new initiatives to make it easier and more commercially attractive. [Read here](https://www.networkrailmediacentre.co.uk/news/red-tape-slashed-for-investors-and-builders-as-britains-railways-open-for-business). |
| 07/03/19 | Press release | Network Rail | **Red tape slashed for investors and builders as Britain’s railways open for business**. [Read here.](https://www.networkrailmediacentre.co.uk/news/red-tape-slashed-for-investors-and-builders-as-britains-railways-open-for-business) |
| 11/03/19 | Press Release | HS2 | **Euston works step up a gear as HS2 Ltd signs Construction Partner contract.** [Read here.](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/euston-works-step-up-a-gear-as-hs2-ltd-signs-construction-partner-contract) |
| 12/03/19 | Press Release | DfT | **'Delay Repay 15' secured for GWR passengers**. [Read here.](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/delay-repay-15-secured-for-gwr-passengers) |
| 13/03/19 | Committee summary | Transport Committee | HS2: Update with Allan Cook. [Read here.](https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/transport-committee/inquiries/parliament-2017/hs2-update-allan-cook-inquiry-17-19/) |
| 18/03/19 | Press Release | Transport Salaried Staff | Future of Network Rail. [Read here](https://www.tssa.org.uk/en/whats-new/news/index.cfm/future-of-network-rail). |
| 19/03/19 | Speech | DfT | DfT: Speech by Rail Review Chair Keith Williams at Accelerate Rail 2019 (19 March 2019). [Read here](https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/keith-williams-at-accelerate-rail-2019) |
| 19/03/19 | Press Release | DfT | Keith Williams: a railway with today's and tomorrow's passengers at its heart is the future. [Read here.](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/keith-williams-a-railway-with-todays-and-tomorrows-passengers-at-its-heart-is-the-future) |
| 19/03/19 | Written Q&A | DfT | Railways: Passengers:Written question - [230842](https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-11/230842)  Asked by [**Andy McDonald**](https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/commons/andy-mcdonald/4269)  To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 7 March 2019 to Question 226656 on Railways: Passengers, what corresponding increases in capacity in the form of (a) new rolling stock and (b) infrastructure enhancements have been provided by the rail industry in each of the last 30 years.  Answered by: [**Andrew Jones**](https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/commons/andrew-jones/3996)  According to the Rail Delivery Group, there were 10,400 vehicles in passenger use in 1996/97 compared to 14,025 as at March 2018, an increase of over 3,500 vehicles.  This additional fleet capacity is helping to lengthen trains and contribute towards the thousands of extra rail services each week. In addition, the rail industry reports a major increase in the efficient utilisation of the rolling stock fleet since 1995, in particular through much improved use of spare capacity at off-peak times. Further,, changes to trains types and their internal layouts has led to the average capacity of trains increasing substantially. For example through the replacement of slam-door carriages, introduction of trains with metro-style interiors and changes to seating configurations.  Various infrastructure enhancements have also been made across the country, with around £15billion being spent in CP5 between 2014 and 2019 on rail infrastructure upgrades. This includes various capacity enhancement projects such as additional platforms, for example at Liverpool Lime Street and Manchester airport stations; platform lengthening, for example at London Waterloo and some other stations across the South East; and rail line capacity upgrades, such as four-tracking between Huyton and Roby on the Liverpool to Manchester route, track and signalling improvements on the Calder Valley route between Manchester and Bradford via Halifax, re-signalling between Plymouth and Penzance, and four-tracking on the Filton Bank in Bristol. |
| 20/03/19 | Press Release | TfL | TfL Press Release - TfL’s budget shows operating deficit almost halved as Mayor calls for Government investment in transport. [Read here.](https://tfl-newsroom.prgloo.com/news/tfl-press-release-tfls-budget-shows-operating-deficit-almost-halved-as-mayor-calls-for-government-investment-in-transport) |
| 20/03/19 | Press Release | ORR | Consultation outcome: Network Rail network licence review: draft revised licence. The outcome can be read here: <https://bit.ly/2uhepNJ> |
| 21/03/19 | Press Release | ORR | Consultation Outcome: Rail network enhancements: roles and responsibilities in Control Period 6. The full outcome can be read here: <https://bit.ly/2Wddp9u> |
| 21/03/19 | Oral Answer | DfT | Train Operating Companies: Sanctions. [Read here](file:///C:\Train%20Operating%20Companies\%20Sanctions). |
| 28/03/19 | Debate Summary | HoC | Railway Stations: Accessibility. [Read here.](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-03-27/debates/C74DFBF4-95B1-4061-B3F1-B874B7F33F9E/RailwayStationsAccessibility) |
| 28/03/19 | Press Release | Network Rail | Passengers at the heart of new plans to spend a record £4.3 billion on the railway in south London, Kent and Sussex. [Read here.](https://www.networkrailmediacentre.co.uk/news/passengers-at-the-heart-of-new-plans-to-spend-a-record-gbp-4-3-billion-on-the-railway-in-south-london-kent-and-sussex) |
| 28/03/19 | Press Release | Rail Industry Association | Parliamentarians come together to support a rolling programme of cost-effective electrification. [Read here.](https://www.nsar.co.uk/2019/03/parliamentarians-come-together-to-support-a-rolling-programme-of-cost-effective-electrification/) |

**Devolution deals**

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| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
| 04/03/19 | Q&A | Defra | **Flood Control: Finance**  [225422](https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-02-25/225422)  Question asked by: [Nigel Dodds](https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/commons/nigel-dodds/1388)  To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with the devolved administrations on the new £70 million flood defences scheme.  Answered by: [Dr Thérèse Coffey](https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/commons/dr-thérèse-coffey/4098)  Flood defence spending is a devolved matter, so questions about flood management spending and policy should be directed to the devolved administration as Defra does not have information on devolved administration spending. The Barnett formula is applied in the normal way to any new funding provided to UK Government Departments, when the funding is allocated to those Departments’ budgets. ‘Barnetted’ funding to devolved administrations is not ring fenced. |
| 18/03/19 | Written Answers | MHCLG | Local Government: Devolution:Written uestion - [**HL14271**](https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-03-05/HL14271)  Asked by [**Lord Porter of Spalding**](https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/lords/lord-porter-of-spalding/4555)  To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to extend devolution to areas outside of established mayoral combined authorities; and to what extent their devolution framework will provide local government in all areas with the opportunity to secure devolution.  Answered by: [**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth**](https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/lords/lord-bourne-of-aberystwyth/4282)  Across Government we are making huge strides towards rebalancing the economy and empowering local government. Devolution deals have supported this work by enabling the Government to strengthen local leadership and institutions, and devolving powers and funding away from Whitehall, so that they are exercised at the right spatial geography.  The Government’s manifesto committed to "providing clarity across England on what devolution means for different administrations so all authorities operate in a common framework". We aim to be able to provide local areas with this clarity on how best to take forward their devolution and local growth ambitions as soon as practicable. |
| 25/03/19 | Oral Answers | HoL | Devolved Administrations. [Read here.](https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2019-03-25/debates/FD2F1D31-CB81-4CAF-A5FE-0F6D5D59E802/DevolvedAdministrations) |
| 26/03/19 | Written Q&A | MHCLG | Devolution: Yorkshire and the Humber:Written question - [235281](https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-21/235281)  Asked by [**John Grogan**](https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/commons/john-grogan/382)  To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will publish his Department's analysis of the case presented to Ministers for One Yorkshire devolution by local authority leaders.  Answered by: [**Jake Berry**](https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/commons/jake-berry/4060)  Answered on: 26 March 2019  In reaching his decision on the One Yorkshire proposal the Secretary of State had regard to the evidence and analysis supplied by the Yorkshire leaders, which are available at <https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/economy/devolution/> . It was on this basis that the Secretary of State concluded that the One Yorkshire proposal met neither the criterion on functional economic area nor on there being strong and accountable governance. The proposal focuses on an area that is far greater than any of today’s functional economic city regions, and does not show how a single accountable mayor would be empowered to take tough decisions across a single area. |
| 26/03/19 | Written Q&A | MCHLG | Devolution: Yorkshire and the Humber:Written question - [235279](https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-21/235279)  Asked by [**John Grogan**](https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/commons/john-grogan/382)  To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what criteria the proposals for One Yorkshire devolution failed to meet.  Answered by: [**Jake Berry**](https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/commons/jake-berry/4060)  I refer the Hon Member to my answers of 19 February 2019 and 20 February 2019 in response to Question UIN 221735 and Question UIN 222008 from the Hon Member for Barnsley Central, which set out our criteria for devolution and how the One Yorkshire proposal did not meet these. |
| 28/03/19 | Press Release | MHCLG | Devolution annual report 2017 to 2018. [Read here.](https://bit.ly/2CHomsy) |

**Environment – 25 year environment plan**

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| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
| 04/03/19 | Q&A | Defra | **Palm Oil:**  [226536](https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-02-27/226536)  Questions asked by: [Vernon Coaker](https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/commons/vernon-coaker/360)  To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to reduce domestic demand for palm oil in the biofuel and food industries; and if he will make a statement.  Answered by: [Dr Thérèse Coffey](https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/commons/dr-thérèse-coffey/4098)  The Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan sets out our ambition to support and protect the world’s forests, supporting sustainable agriculture and zero-deforestation supply  chains, including for palm oil. The plan led to the establishment of a Global Resource Initiative aimed at reducing deforestation caused by UK demand for commodities, including palm oil.  The Government also helped convene the UK Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil and is working with the signatories of the Amsterdam Declaration on increasing the uptake of sustainable palm oil. The latest report from the UK Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil indicates that the UK achieved 75% certified sustainable palm oil in 2017. Biofuels made from palm oil have not been reported for supply under the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation (RTFO) in the last three years and the use of non-waste oils in biofuel is minimal. The Government has agreed to focus on utilising waste derived biofuels, which generally have higher greenhouse gas savings. The most recent changes to the RTFO, which set out the UK biofuel policy to 2032, include a cap on the contribution of crop based biofuels in the UK, decreasing from 4% in 2020 to 2% in 2032. |
| 04/03/19 | Written Q&A | DEFRA | Food: Packaging:Written question - [225469](https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-02-25/225469)  Asked by [**David Simpson**](https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/commons/david-simpson/1597)  To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to encourage food manufacturers to reduce the use of plastic.  Answered by: [**Dr Thérèse Coffey**](https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/commons/dr-th%c3%a9r%c3%a8se-coffey/4098)  The Resources and Waste Strategy sets out the Government’s ambition to maximise the value we get from resources and to minimise waste. We are committed to being the first generation to leave the environment in a better state than we found it, and to eliminating avoidable plastic waste over the lifetime of the 25 Year Environment Plan.  The Government is currently consulting on reforming existing packaging waste regulations to financially incentivise packaging producers, including those who package food products, to take greater responsibility for the environmental impacts of their products. Our plans for Extended Producer Responsibility include requiring producers to pay the full cost of recycling and disposing of their packaging waste and making producers pay more if their products are not easily recyclable. Current packaging waste regulations operate on a UK-wide basis. The benefits of continuing with a UK-wide approach are recognised and our consultation on reforming the regulations is being undertaken jointly by the UK, Scottish and Welsh Governments. As the Northern Ireland Assembly is not sitting, the UK Government has agreed to consult on behalf of Northern Ireland.  Industry is already taking action. Last year, the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation published their Plastics Pact with support from the Government and more than 80 businesses, including major food manufacturers such as Birds Eye, Quorn, and McCain Foods GB. The Pact brings these organisations together to aim to meet four key ambitions by 2025, including making 100% of plastic packaging reusable, recyclable or compostable. The Government welcomes voluntary initiatives aimed at tackling plastic pollution and will continue to seek opportunities to support such work through policy solutions.  Plastic packaging can have a role to play in reducing product damage, increasing shelf life and reducing food waste. However, there are opportunities where offering food loose may help to reduce plastic waste while not impacting on shelf life. The Government is working with retailers and WRAP to encourage their efforts to reduce waste and to explore the introduction of plastic free supermarket initiatives in which fresh food is sold loose, giving consumers more choice. WRAP has published a technical report on the evidence for providing fresh produce loose. This report will inform future published guidance. |
| 01/03/19 | Papers | HoC | The Fisheries Bill 2017-19. The report can be accessed here: <https://bit.ly/2OQ5Hy0> |
| 12/03/19 | Press Release | DEFRA | Tony Juniper CBE appointed as Natural England chair. [Read here](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/tony-juniper-cbe-appointed-as-natural-england-chair) |
| 20/03/19 | Committee Summary | EAC | Evidence Session: Draft Environment (Principles and Governance) Bill. [Read here.](https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/environmental-audit-committee/inquiries/parliament-2017/copy-this-page-inquiry-name-17-191//) |

**Environment – Waste**

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| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
| 18/03/19 | Press Release | MHCLG | **£9.75 million to clean our high streets**. Councils across England will receive an immediate cash boost from a £9.75 million fund to back their efforts in cleaning up high streets and town centres [Read here.](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/975-million-to-clean-our-high-streets) |

**Environment – Air Quality**

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| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
| 21/03/19 | Press Release | West Midlands Combined Authority | Government boost of £5.5m for West Midlands Mayor’s drive to clean up bus emissions. [Read here.](https://www.wmca.org.uk/news/government-boost-of-55m-for-west-midlands-mayor-s-drive-to-clean-up-bus-emissions/) |
| 21/03/19 | Oral Answers | DfT | Transport Emissions. [Read here.](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-03-21/debates/4435A80F-B003-4F8F-97E9-78054426F31D/TransportEmissions) |
| 26/03/19 | Written Q&A | BEIS | Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme:Written question - [234226](https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-03-19/234226)  Asked by [**Stephen Kerr**](https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/commons/stephen-kerr/4604)  To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Committee on Climate Change’s Biomass in a Low Carbon Economy Report published in November 2018 and the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs’ Clean Air Strategy published in January 2019, what plans he has for the future of the renewable heat incentive.  Answered by: [**Claire Perry**](https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/commons/claire-perry/3974)  In the Clean Air Strategy, the Government committed to consult on removing Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme support for new biomass installations in urban areas which are on the gas grid. The Government published the consultation [Renewable Heat Incentive: Biomass Combustion in Urban Areas](https://beisgovuk.citizenspace.com/heat/rhi-biomass-combustion-in-urban-areas/), seeking views on a number of proposals including the removal of RHI support for some or all or some new biomass boilers in urban areas, imposing geographical restrictions on biogas combustion and introducing regular maintenance checks on existing biomass boilers under the RHI. We will be publishing a government response to this consultation shortly. |

**Brexit – BEIS, Defra, HCLG, DExEU & committees**

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| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
| 08/03/19 | Debate | Delegated Legislation Committee | **Draft Waste (Miscellaneous Amendments) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.** [Read here.](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-03-07/debates/9107119f-ea08-41b9-bcd1-4dbd886b6678/DraftWaste(MiscellaneousAmendments)(EUExit)Regulations2019) |
| 11/03/19 | Debate | DExEU | Exiting the European Union. [Read here](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2019-03-11/debates/60E78630-3FE3-4145-80B6-9F841E5608ED/ExitingTheEuropeanUnion). |
| 12/03/19 | Debate |  | Leaving the European Union. [Read here](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2019-03-11/debates/4B98720A-8618-4312-84AE-E994485AC99F/LeavingTheEuropeanUnion). |
| 20/03/19 | Debate | Delegated Legislation Committee | Draft Railway (Licensing of Railway Undertakings) (Amendment Etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. [Read here.](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-03-19/debates/369e5b10-b967-4e4c-b7b3-dab53babeea7/DraftRailway(LicensingOfRailwayUndertakings)(AmendmentEtc)(EUExit)Regulations2019DraftTrainDrivingLicencesAndCertificates(Amendment)(EUExit)Regulation) |