

copper

The Queen's Speech 2022



At a glance

The Queen's Speech provided Boris Johnson with an opportunity to amplify his Government's vision for the UK – implementing plans from the previous manifesto and seeking to show the direction of Government as we creep closer to the next election. It also provided the Government with a platform to tackle the issues on the doorstep that people want to see fixed – after all, legislation is one of the main ways Government can affect positive change.

This year's speech took place against the backdrop of disappointing local election results for the Conservative Party, ongoing war in Ukraine, continued discontent around 'partygate' and crucially an ongoing cost of living crisis, that many fear is going to get worse before it gets better.

The Government announced a whole host of Bills, covering a variety of different issues. There were Bills on policing and protests designed to appeal to the Conservative base, to wider bills on issues such as security, finance and digital media.

To this end, the Speech began by stating the priority for this Government is "to grow and strengthen the economy and help ease the cost of living for families". Whether the content of the speech was enough to address these issues still remains to be seen.

Turning to infrastructure, the Speech included a number of significant announcements including planning reform through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. Copper's research suggests that there is support for more localised decision making but it's unlikely that the government's planned changes will be a panacea for greater engagement from the public – but there certainly is an opportunity for infrastructure to do things differently.

Improvements to transport included the establishment of a new state-run agency to regulate railways through a new Transport Bill. There was also an announcement of a new Energy Security Bill and a commitment to establish the UK Infrastructure Bank in legislation, with objectives to support economic growth and the delivery of net zero.

The majority of the Bills announced won't come as a surprise to the industry. And as often is the case with a Queen's speech, the impact and ambition of these Bills will not fully emerge until they are presented to Parliament and scrutinised in detail. This detail can be the difference between a Bill being transformative to having minimal impact.

Finally, with a total of 38 Bills announced, including Bills carried over from the previous session, the Government whips have a huge task on their hands to find the requisite parliamentary time to pass all the legislation announced, and allow for the required level of scrutiny. It would come as no surprise if some of the Bills announced today don't come to fruition during the next parliamentary session.



Transport

Transport Bill

- Bill designed to create a better and more reliable service for passengers, and support innovation in the sector.
- It will lead to the creation of Great British Railways, which will be provided with powers to act as the "single national leader of the railways".
- It also includes new laws to enable the take up of self-driving/remotely operated vehicles.
- Bill will support the roll out of EV charging points.

HS2 (Crew - Manchester) Bill

- Bill designed to provide powers to facilitate the build and operate the next stage of the High Speed Two (HS2) network between Crewe and Manchester.



Energy

Energy Security Bill

- Reacting to the war in Ukraine, and also commitments made at COP, this Bill is designed to support the transition to "cheaper, cleaner and more secure energy".
- The Bill includes measures to extend the regulation of Ofgem to cover heat networks, plans to facilitate growth in emerging technologies such as Hydrogen and Carbon Capture Usage and Storage.
- Support for the heat pump market - creating a new market standard.
- The Bill will create a regulatory regime to support fusion.



Levelling up

Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill

- The Bill is designed to drive local economic growth in line with the Government's ambitions to level up the UK.
- It includes measures to reform and improve the planning system - giving communities more of a say and making planning more accessible through digitisation.
- It will create a new model of combined authority through the "County Deal". This combined authority will "provide local leaders with powers to enhance local accountability, join up services and provide transparent decision making to rejuvenate their communities and increase their ability to reflect local preferences in arrangements, including directly elected leaders' titles."
- Places a duty that will make the Government report against levelling up commitments.



Other

UK Infrastructure Bank Bill

- The Bill will establish the UK Infrastructure Bank by establishing in law, "with clear objectives to support regional and local economic growth and deliver net zero, and ensuring it has the full range of spending and lending powers."
- The bank will be provided with operational independence.

Reaction

“This Government’s failure to grow the economy over a decade combined with its inertia in the face of spiralling bills means that we are staring down the barrel of something we haven’t seen in decades, a stagflation crisis.”

Keir Starmer
Leader of the Opposition

“When considered together as a whole, these provisions risk losing the clarity of the levelling up mission that was such a vote winner for the Government in 2019. The next twelve months may end up highlighting just how impossible it is for the Conservatives to protect their base while delivering on levelling up promises.”

Peter Hogg
Arcadis UK Cities Director

“The energy sector has undergone a huge transformation in the decade since the last Energy Bill and has the potential to go much further and faster towards a clean, modern and flexible system – with tangible benefits for customers, our economy and our environment.”

Dhara Vyas
Energy UK Director of Advocacy

“Levelling up is not just about process. Local authorities need greater powers and financial freedoms to deliver the changes they know are needed.”

Jeremy Hinds
Savills Director

“The phrase “more involvement in local development” gives communities, at worst, false hope; it gives promoters, at worst, a vague moving expectation to hit. I’m sure what’s needed here is more certainty for promoters and communities otherwise we face a period where no one is satisfied. The details in the Bill will critical.”

Martin McCrink
Copper Consultancy Managing Partner

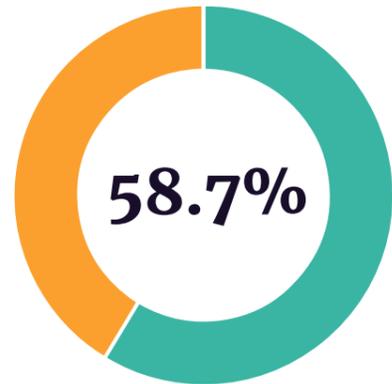
“A new Procurement Bill is designed to make it easier for smaller firms to bid for public sector contracts, a drive already taking shape through PPN06 around the delivery of Social Value on major projects, which when linked to comments from figures like Jacob Rees-Mogg implies an even greater emphasis on a high proportion of SMEs/local businesses as part of major project supply chains.

The UK Infrastructure Bank Bill will give it a full range of lending and spending powers, (to tap £22bn of Govt funds and wider ripple of £18bn) along with clear objectives to support regional/local economic growth, echoing support for localised decisions as regional leaders can lobby for well supported projects.”

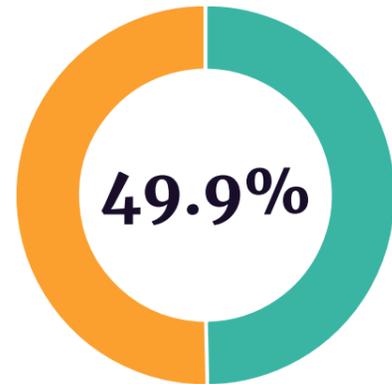
Caroline Romback
Copper Consultancy Director of Construction

Copper Insight

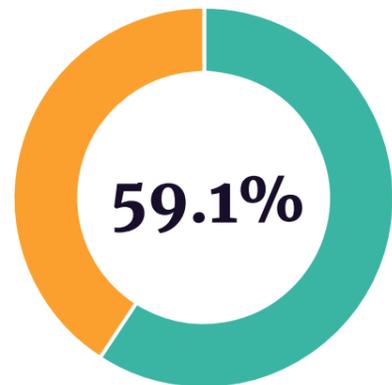
Our research suggests that there are pockets of voters, falling outside of the traditional conservative voter demographics, that are interested in taking more of a stake in the built environment. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill may go some way to address this.



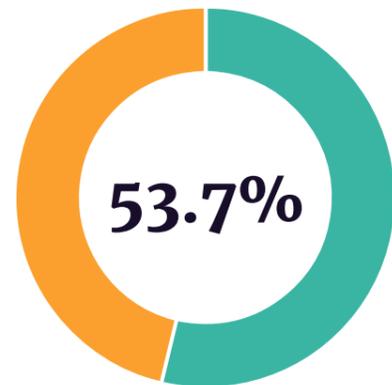
58.7% agreed (both strongly agree and agree) that “local leaders, not MPs, are best placed to deliver outcomes for local communities”



Only 1 in 2 people (49.9%) agreed that “greater devolution and empowered local leaders will create skills and employment tailored to the needs of local economies and residents”



59.1% think that “devolution and decentralisation to give more power to local communities” would be effective (very or somewhat effective)



53.7% of people think that they “have no influence over things that happen in their local area”

About Copper

A strategic consultancy partner with more than 25 years of experience providing communications and stakeholder engagement for highly complex economic and social infrastructure, and major projects across the UK.

We specialise in delivering campaigns that build acceptance and excitement around the world of infrastructure development and construction. Communicating complex concepts, often in challenging political, social and environmental situations, we enable projects to gain consensus and to take shape.

At Copper we are purely focussed on the built environment, and our practice structure echoes that of the project lifecycle. This enables us to provide support at every stage from outline development and master planning stages, to securing engagement and support at the Development Consent Order (DCO) and Town and Country Planning Act (TCPA) planning stages, to fulfilling those engagement commitments and communications best practice at the construction and commissioning phase of the project.

This seamless end to end offering gives us the ability to transfer knowledge from each stage to the benefit of the client, the contractor and the communities and stakeholders affected by the project. And we value our role as part of the wider team, coming together with clients, consultants and contractors, sharing insights, expertise and experience in great collaborations to deliver highly successful projects.

But we also appreciate the challenges of tight margins, complex and changing programmes, the need to model risk and use it to inform the commitments/KPIs made on a project, through to well informed mitigation strategies to manage those risks and avoid delivery disruption, increased costs and reputational damage.

An example range of Copper services

- Corporate and B2B communications
- Stakeholder engagement, including perception studies and reports
- Community relations
- Social Value Delivery and legacy management
- Bid support
- Messaging and narrative building
- Public affairs
- Reputation management
- Copywriting
- Media relations
- Crisis and issues management
- Social media strategy
- Event management
- Graphic and web design



For more information

Patrick Traynor

patrick.traynor@copperconsultancy.com

07739 972737

Laura Cunliffe-Hall

Laura.Cunliffe-Hall@copperconsultancy.com

07891 378 969

Join the debate and have your say

Follow [@CopperConsult](https://twitter.com/CopperConsult) on Twitter
and [@CopperConsultancy](https://www.linkedin.com/company/copperconsultancy) on LinkedIn

copperconsultancy.com