

Jane Hunt MP



House of Commons

16 April 2020

Dear local residents,

Thank you to those who have contacted me about a UK-US Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

The benefits of an ambitious and comprehensive UK-US FTA are substantial. Aside from being the world's largest economy, the US is the UK's single largest trading partner. Total UK-US trade in the last year was valued at £220.9 billion, and our countries have over £700 billion invested in each other's economies.

A long-run analysis by the Government shows that a UK-US FTA could boost trade between the UK and US by around £15.3 billion in comparison to 2018 and generate a £1.8 billion rise in UK workers' wages.

A UK-US FTA would also benefit every region of the nation and almost every sector. For example: the agricultural sector would be boosted with lower input costs and a bigger export market; the 30,000 Small and Medium Sized Enterprises who export to the US from all parts of the UK would benefit from the cutting of tariffs, trade barriers and red tape; and exports of Scottish salmon and Whisky, Welsh steel and lamb, machinery and furniture built in Northern Ireland, vehicles made in the Midlands, manufactured products from the North of England and financial services from London could all be boosted.

I welcome that the Government has consulted widely on its negotiating plans. Indeed, there were 158,720 responses submitted to the [consultation](#) recently held on trade negotiations with the US. Respondents noted, for example, that further reducing US tariffs across the automotive, ceramics, chemicals, processed food and drinks and textiles sectors could all be beneficial.

I know a number of local residents have specific concerns about an FTA and I have addressed these in turn below.

Upholding UK Standards

Ministers have made a commitment not to compromise the UK's high animal welfare, environmental, food safety and food import standards in any future FTA, including one with the US. Ministers do not want to compromise the UK's domestic welfare production standards either. It is worth noting that none of the transitioned EU FTAs have exported domestic welfare production standards, and extraterritorial regulation will not form part of any trade deal the UK is party to.

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NHS

I want to be clear that the NHS will be protected in any future trade agreement, including one with the US. The price the NHS pays for drugs will not be on the table, and nor will the services the NHS provides.

Public Services

Decisions on how to run public services are made by our Government and devolved administrations, not by our trade partners. I firmly support the Government's position that any UK-US FTA must protect the right for the UK to regulate its public services.

Agriculture

UK Government modelling suggests that the UK's agricultural sector would be a beneficiary of an FTA with the US. I understand the Government wants to see tariffs come down for UK food exports on a balanced and mutually beneficial basis, and that Ministers would like restrictions on exports such as UK lamb removed. An FTA could also build on agreements such as the one recently reached between the UK and US to reopen the US market to British beef exports. I know Ministers will also push hard to secure commitments on transparent and efficient customs procedures, including for UK agriculture.

I hope that this information is reassuring. If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me again.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jane".

Jane Hunt MP