

[Guidance: COVID-19: guidance on protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable](#)

Information for protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable from coronavirus (COVID-19).

[John Booth appointed and David Marks reappointed as Trustees of the National Gallery](#)

John Booth has been appointed by the Prime Minister as a Trustee of the National Gallery for a term of four years from 20 August 2021 to 19 August 2025.

John chairs a number of public and private companies including Maintel plc and the London Theatre Company. He also serves as a non-executive director of several investment management businesses and has venture capital interests in e-commerce, media and telecommunications. He chairs The Prince's Trust and Pallant House Gallery, and is a trustee of the Chatsworth Settlement and the Arts Foundation. He is also a Fellow of Merton College, Oxford, and ambassador for the homelessness charity Depaul International.

John joined the Board of the National Gallery earlier this year having been appointed as link Trustee by the Tate Gallery Board. This appointment standardises his membership of the Board of Trustees of the National Gallery, directly appointed by the Prime Minister, and ends the association with the Tate Gallery.

As a result of his appointment, the National Gallery trustees have elected John as their new Chair with immediate effect.

David Marks has been reappointed by the Prime Minister as a Trustee of the National Gallery for a term of four years from 13 June 2021 to 12 June 2025.

David Marks co-founded Brockton Capital in 2005; the firm has raised £2.0bn of equity across four separate real estate vehicles since 2006, which invested into a £5.0bn UK portfolio spanning over 20 million sq ft. In 2018, David co-founded Brockton Everlast as the fourth Brockton entity; Brockton Everlast now owns a growing Office and Life Science portfolio of over 1.0m sq ft. in London and Cambridge.

Prior to co-founding Brockton Everlast, David worked at The Blackstone Group (2001-2005, in London) and JLL (1989-1999, in London and New York).

David holds a Master's degree in Real Estate Development from MIT, Boston. David was a member of the Bank of England's Commercial Property Forum from 2007 until 2017, has been on the British Property Federation Policy Committee from 2011 to-date and is a Trustee of both The National Gallery and the Architecture Foundation.

These roles are not remunerated. This appointment and reappointment have been made in accordance with the Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments. The appointments process is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. Under the Code, any significant political activity undertaken by an appointee in the last five years must be declared. This is defined as including holding office, public speaking, making a recordable donation, or candidature for election. John Booth has declared a recordable donation to a political party. David Marks has not declared any activity.

Notes to editors:

The National Gallery Board consists at any one time of 12 to 14 Trustees, all of whom are appointed by the Prime Minister through open competition under the public appointments process, save for one, who is appointed by the Board of Tate.

The Trustees are required by The Museums and Galleries Act 1992 to appoint one of their number to be Chair.

UK National Screening Committee: 25 years of recommendations

News story

The UK NSC has been making evidence-based recommendations about health screening for 25 years. Find out about its work and achievements since 1996.



The UK National Screening Committee (UK NSC) is celebrating 25 years of making evidence-based recommendations on population screening.

Over that time it has had a profound impact on health screening in the UK, as well as being a respected international leader in this area.

The UK NSC recommended national screening programmes that have:

- saved tens of thousands of lives
- prevented huge amounts of serious illness
- helped millions of people make better informed decisions about their health

As Professor Bob Steele, current chair of the committee, has said:

Thanks to our wonderful NHS, I believe our population screening programmes here in the UK are second to none, and long may that continue.

Read our report on [25 years of the UK NSC](#) for more information on its achievements and challenges over that time.

You can read a blog article from Dr Robert Sherriff, who helped to set up the committee, reflecting on [why the UK NSC is needed now as much as ever](#).

Dr Angela Raffle has also written a blog article about [how the UK NSC has transformed screening for the better](#).

Watch out for podcasts from Sir Muir Gray over the coming weeks when he will talk about the early days of the breast and cervical screening programmes.

You can [subscribe to the UK NSC blog](#) to make sure you do not miss a post.

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Folic acid to be added to flour to prevent spinal conditions in babies

- Aim to avoid hundreds of potentially life-threatening spinal conditions in babies every year
- Adding folic acid to flour across the UK builds on 80 years of fortification and follows consultation with industry, stakeholders and the public
- The addition of folic acid to food has helped to reduce neural tube defects in a number of countries worldwide

Folic acid will be added to non-wholemeal wheat flour across the UK to help prevent life-threatening spinal conditions in babies, the government and devolved administrations announced today (Tuesday 21 September).

Adding will mean foods made with flour, such as bread, will actively help avoid around 200 neural tube defects each year – around 20% of the annual UK total.

Non-wholemeal flour is already an established vehicle for fortification in the UK and the costs of fortification to industry are expected to be minimal.

The addition of folic acid to food has been a successful public health policy in a number of countries worldwide such as Australia, New Zealand and Canada, resulting in falls in neural tube defects.

The neural tube forms the early part of the brain and spine within the first 12 weeks of pregnancy – usually before the mother knows she is pregnant. Folic acid is the synthetic/man-made form of folate. Not getting enough folate (Vitamin B9) at this crucial time can lead to neural tube defects and result in spinal conditions such as spina bifida or anencephaly.

Folate helps the body make healthy red blood cells and is naturally occurring in certain foods, such as leafy green vegetables. Folic acid is already voluntarily added by food manufacturers to breakfast cereal, including some gluten free products, meaning people can usually get all they need from eating a balanced diet, but a higher intake is required in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.

The NHS strongly recommends women who could become pregnant or are planning a pregnancy take a 400 micrograms folic acid tablet every day before pregnancy and until they are 12 weeks pregnant. This advice will continue, but with around 50% of pregnancies in the UK unplanned, the government is taking action to increase folic acid intake nationally to help protect more babies, especially where a pregnancy is unplanned and supplements are not taken early enough.

Over 99% of British households buy bread and over a quarter of all groceries in the four biggest supermarkets contain flour, making adding folic acid to flour-based products a simple way to increase folate levels for tens of millions of people across the UK.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

Few things are as important as a baby's health – and folic acid-fortified flour is a quick, simple win to enhance their development.

This will give extra peace of mind to parents and families, as well as helping boost the health of adults across the country.

Health and Social Care Secretary, Sajid Javid said:

We are committed to giving more children a healthy start in life. With the safe and taste-free folic acid baked into the national diet, hundreds more babies will be born healthy each year.

Focusing on preventing life-threatening health issues such as spina bifida, will ensure fewer people [Preventing NTD's in babies means fewer people will need hospital treatment later in life, so 'fewer people' probably works best] will require hospital treatment, and more individuals and families are able to live healthier lives.

Since the Second World War, flour has been fortified with calcium, iron, niacin and thiamine during milling to support the nation's health. Today's announcement joins 80 countries, such as Australia, New Zealand and Canada, adding folic acid to staple food products to help reduce neural tube defects.

This public health decision is not anticipated to require major overhaul for industrial-scale flour producers. Folic acid will need to be added to the labelling of all foods made with flour – as is the case with other fortification.

Wholemeal flour and gluten free foods are not subject to mandatory fortification and these products are not in the initial scope of this policy. Wholemeal flour has more naturally occurring folate than non-wholemeal wheat flour, and some wholemeal and gluten free foods are already voluntarily fortified with folic acid in the UK.

Alex Waugh, Director of UK Flour Millers said:

Flour, whether white brown or wholemeal, is an ingredient in many foodstuffs and supplies a big proportion of our daily fibre and protein along with essential nutrients such as calcium, iron and B vitamins. If it is decided that folic acid should be added to flour

for public health reasons, flour millers will do all they can to overcome any practical challenges to make it happen.

Kate Steele, CEO of Shine, the charity that provides specialist support for people whose lives have been affected by spina bifida and hydrocephalus, says:

Shine is delighted by the government's decision to support mandatory fortification of the most commonly-consumed flours in the UK with folic acid – a move we have campaigned for over thirty years.

Mandatory fortification of flour with folic acid will improve public health for so many, now and in the future.

In its simplest terms, the step will reduce the numbers of families who face the devastating news that their baby has anencephaly and will not survive. It will also prevent some babies being affected by spina bifida, which can result in complex physical impairments and poor health. This is truly a momentous day'.

A four nation review of Bread and Flour Regulations is being undertaken by officials in DEFRA, Food Standards Agency, and Food Standards Scotland. It is anticipated that a UK decision on the Mandatory Fortification of Flour with folic acid would be included in this review.

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities – launching fully on October 1st – will lead efforts to level up health disparities across the nation by supporting people of all ages, in all areas of the country, to live healthier lives and prevent illness.

[PM's remarks to UN climate roundtable: 20 September 2021](#)

Over the past year we've come together many times to discuss climate change.

So you know by now how this conversation goes.

I talk about the need to rid the world of coal-fired power and internal combustion engines, the need to stop deforestation, and for developed nations to find that \$100 billion.

I'll stress that again – for this to be a success we need developed countries to find that \$100 billion.

And everyone nods and we all agree that Something Must Be Done.

Yet I confess I'm increasingly frustrated that the "something" to which many of you have committed is nowhere near enough.

It is the biggest economies in the world that are causing the problem, while the smallest suffer the worst consequences.

And while progress is being made all over the world, the gulf between what has been promised, what is actually being delivered, and what needs to happen... it remains vast.

Too many major economies – some represented here today, some absent – are lagging too far behind.

And tinkering around the edges, simply denuding the tree of its lowest fruit, simply won't achieve the change the planet needs.

I know it's not easy.

We are all answerable to our voters, to our people.

And the questions being asked are pretty tough.

In the UK we've already cut our carbon emissions in half and we have all but eliminated coal from our energy mix.

Going further than that requires a whole extra level of effort – right now we're grappling over how to get rid of gas-powered boilers, for example.

But remain committed to hitting net zero by 2050, with a huge chunk of the necessary cuts in emissions coming by 2030, by the end of the decade.

And as COP26 looms large I need to see, we all need to see, a similar level of ambition from the major economies represented here.

I'm not demanding that any nation forego the development achieved by the UK, or condemn its people to some kind of agrarian, pasteurised existence. Quite the opposite.

I want to see you leapfrogging the outdated methods of yesteryear in favour of the cheaper, cleaner, cutting-edge technology that will power the 21st century.

Wind and solar are the cheapest form of electricity generation in two-thirds of the world.

By 2030 renewables will be undercutting coal and gas almost everywhere. So going green isn't just better for the planet. It means greater prosperity for your people.

It means more opportunities for your businesses.

And it puts you on the right side of public opinion both at home and on the

international stage.

Because climate change is no longer an issue that solely concerns the unkempt fringes.

Climate change IS realpolitik.

It's a diplomacy issue, a security issue, a trade issue.

And in the years to come, the only great powers will be green powers.

We are joined today by leaders of countries already feeling the worst effects of climate change.

As the world continues to warm they will be joined in that unfortunate distinction by still more nations, home to billions of people, and an ever-growing slice of global GDP.

And if you abdicate responsibility today, do you think those who pay the price for that decision will rally to your side tomorrow?

If you say that the lives of their children are not worth the hassle of reducing domestic coal consumption, will they vote with you in fora such as this?

Will they work with you, borrow from you, stand with you if you tell the world that you don't care whether their land and their people slip below the waves?

These countries need allies.

They need help now, that's why I stress the \$100 billion so much.

To be merely a bystander is to be complicit in their fate – yet that is exactly what you will be if you fail to act this year.

I speak frankly – we are, after all, among friends.

But COP26 will be staged in the full glare of the global spotlight.

And when the summit ends, when most of the world has committed to decisive, game-changing action, it will be clear to all which of us has lacked the courage to step up.

The world will see, and your people will remember, and history will judge.

So you can look away, you can do the minimum, you can hope that if you feed the crocodile enough it will devour you last.

Or you can show leadership.

You can make the choices that will make your country stronger and your people richer.

You can make the promises we need and follow through with the action that will give them form.

And together we can make COP26 the success the world needs it to be.