

Press release: Low Pay Commission's 2019 visits announced



The Low Pay Commission (LPC) has announced its visits programme for 2019. It is looking to meet businesses and workers affected by the National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage.

Commissioner Professor Sarah Brown said:

These visits are a vital part of our evidence base – talking to employers and employees allows us to find out what is going on more quickly and to gather more detail than aggregate statistics can ever tell us.

The LPC organises an annual programme of visits to gather evidence in support of its recommendations to government. The visits are attended by members of the Commission and LPC Secretariat. The purpose of the visits is to hear first hand evidence from employers, workers and anyone else with a view on the National Minimum Wage rates and their effects.

The visit locations were chosen because most have a higher than average proportion of workers paid the minimum wage. The LPC also seeks to visit a combination of cities and more rural areas, and places with a different industrial make-up, to gain a rounded view of the effects of the minimum wage across the UK.

On the visits, the LPC hosts meetings and travels to businesses and workers at their place of work to see the effects of the minimum wage 'on the ground'. Meetings with colleges, public sector organisations and charities are also welcomed.

2019 visit locations

20-21 March Neath and Swansea
10-11 April Ayr and Kilmarnock
15-16 May Derry
5-6 June Hartlepool

3-4 July Great Yarmouth
7-8 August Wigan and Manchester

Contact the LPC for more information or to arrange a meeting in any of the locations

Current and future minimum wage rates

	Current rate	Future rate (from April 2019)	Increase
NLW	£7.83	£8.21	4.9%
21-24 rate	£7.38	£7.70	4.3%
18-20 rate	£5.90	£6.15	4.2%
16-17 rate	£4.20	£4.35	3.6%
Apprentice rate	£3.70	£3.90	5.4%
Accommodation offset	£7.00	£7.55	7.9%

Notes

1. The Low Pay Commission is an independent body made up of employers, trade unions and experts whose role is to advise the Government on the minimum wage. The LPC's 2018 Report was published on gov.uk on Tuesday 27 November. Evidence gathered on previous visits contributed to the 2018 report.
2. The National Living Wage is the statutory minimum wage for workers aged 25 and over. It was introduced in April 2016 and has a target of 60% of median earnings by 2020, subject to sustained economic growth. The April 2019 increase will maintain the path to this target.
3. Different rates apply to 21-24 year olds, 18-20 year olds, 16-17 year olds and apprentices aged under 19 or in the first year of an apprenticeship.
4. Rates for workers aged under 25, and apprentices, are lower than the NLW in reflection of lower average earnings and higher unemployment rates. International evidence also suggests that younger workers are more exposed to employment risks arising from the pay floor than older workers. Unlike the NLW (where the possibility of some consequences for employment have been accepted by the Government), the LPC's remit requires us to set the rates for younger workers and apprentices as high as possible without causing damage to jobs and hours.
5. The Accommodation Offset is an allowable deduction from wages for accommodation, applicable for each day of the week. In April 2019 it will increase to £7.55 per day.
6. The National Living Wage is different from the UK Living Wage and the London Living Wage. Differences include that: the UK Living Wage and the London Living Wage are voluntary pay benchmarks that employers can sign up to if they wish, not legally binding requirements; the hourly rate of the UK Living Wage and London Living Wage is based on an attempt to measure need, whereas the National Living Wage is based on a target relationship between its level and average pay; the UK Living Wage and London Living Wage apply to workers aged 18 and over, the National Living Wage to workers aged 25 and over. The Low Pay Commission has no

role in the UK Living Wage or the London Living Wage.

7. The nine Low Pay Commissioners are:

- Bryan Sanderson
- Professor Sarah Brown
- Professor Richard Dickens
- Kate Bell
- Kay Carberry
- Simon Sapper
- Neil Carberry
- Clare Chapman
- Martin McTague

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[Press release: Glasgow boss banned for flouting director requirements](#)

George Fry (36), from Glasgow, was the sole director and shareholder of Connect Pavers Limited. Incorporated in September 2015, the company carried out domestic and industrial groundwork contracts.

However, just two years later in October 2017, Connect Pavers entered into liquidation following a petition at Glasgow Sheriff Court by the tax authorities for an unpaid bill of more than £140,000.

Insolvency practitioners were tasked with winding-up Connect Pavers but George Fry failed to ensure the company maintained adequate accounting records and as a result, the company could not deliver any records to the liquidator. He also caused Connect Pavers to pay no taxes throughout the two-years the company was in operation.

Further work by the Insolvency Service found that between 18 May 2016 and 3 November 2016 George Fry withdrew £101,100 from the company's account but because he failed to maintain adequate accounting records, George Fry could not adequately explain whether these transactions were legitimate or not.

On 19 December 2018, at Glasgow Sheriff Court, Sheriff Anwar granted a disqualification order for a period of 7 years.

Effective from 10 January 2019, George Fry is banned from directly or indirectly becoming involved, without the permission of the court, in the promotion, formation or management of a company.

Robert Clarke, Chief Investigator for the Insolvency Service, said:

From day one, George Fry had a responsibility to ensure the company maintained proper accounting records and pay the correct levels of taxes. But he failed on both accounts, amounting to a dereliction of duty.

Seven years is a substantial ban, severely restricting George Fry's activities, and we hope others take heed that we can stop people from running companies if they do not take their directorship duties seriously.

Mr George Fry is of Glasgow and his date of birth is 19 June 1982

Connect Pavers Limited (Company Reg no. SC516148).

A disqualification order has the effect that without specific permission of a court, a person with a disqualification cannot:

- act as a director of a company
- take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion, formation or management of a company or limited liability partnership
- be a receiver of a company's property

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings.

Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of other restrictions](#).

The Insolvency Service administers the insolvency regime, investigating all compulsory liquidations and individual insolvencies (bankruptcies) through the Official Receiver to establish why they became insolvent. It may also use powers under the Companies Act 1985 to conduct confidential fact-finding investigations into the activities of live limited companies in the UK. In addition, the agency deals with disqualification of directors in corporate failures, assesses and pays statutory entitlement to redundancy payments when an employer cannot or will not pay employees, provides banking and investment services for bankruptcy and liquidation estate funds and advises ministers and other government departments on insolvency law and practice.

Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

[News story: NHS leaders: government commits to new support and improvement measures](#)

The [Kark review of the fit and proper persons test](#) was led by Tom Kark QC. It includes 7 recommendations for how the government can better support NHS senior leaders to deliver high-quality and safe care in the NHS.

Of these recommendations, the government has accepted in principle to:

- set up a central database of information about the qualifications, previous employment and performance of directors
- make new competency standards to help people know what to expect of senior managers

The remaining recommendations will be considered as part of the workforce implementation plan later this year, which will be led by Baroness Harding, chair of NHS Improvement.

These include:

- setting up a new organisation that can suspend directors who are found to have committed serious misconduct, such as bullying and harassment of staff
- requiring old employers to provide references to potential new employers

The Department of Health and Social Care commissioned Tom Kark QC, previously counsel to the Mid Staffordshire public inquiry, to lead a review into the effectiveness of the NHS fit and proper persons test last year.

The test is overseen by the Care Quality Commission as part of their regular inspections of NHS trusts and aims to ensure executive-level managers are fit to carry out their roles to the highest standard.

It came under scrutiny following a report into the severe failures at Liverpool Community Health NHS Trust between 2010 and 2014, where poor leadership was found to have resulted in a widespread culture of bullying and harassment and declining patient care.

The government accepted the [call from Dr Bill Kirkup](#) for a wider review into the fit and proper persons test, following his examination of the failures at Liverpool Community Health NHS Trust.

[Press release: UK to host NATO 70th anniversary meeting](#)



Prime Minister Theresa May said:

The UK is one of the founding members of NATO and I am very pleased that the Secretary General has asked us to host a meeting of NATO leaders this year to mark its 70th anniversary.

For 70 years NATO has been the cornerstone of our national security. But today's challenges are very different from those we faced when the Alliance established its first headquarters in London.

The UK has played a central role throughout NATO's history as it has adapted to deal with new and complex threats to our security.

So as we pay tribute to the service men and women who have worked so hard over so many years to keep us safe, December's meeting is an important opportunity to determine the steps we must now take to modernise the Alliance and ensure its continued success.

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[News story: £48 million funding to drive down bus emissions across the UK](#)

- 263 new ultra-low emission buses will double numbers in the UK fleet
- Industry pledge to tackle loneliness through new community initiatives and innovative vehicle design
- funding for new buses and charging infrastructure will help meet low

emission targets in the government's [Clean Air Strategy](#)

Communities across the UK will benefit from greener journeys thanks to 263 new low emission buses, Minister Nusrat Ghani will announce today (Wednesday 6 February 2019). A £48 million investment from the [Office for Low Emission Vehicles](#) will fund new green vehicles and infrastructure to drive forward government plans to clean up the air in towns and cities.

Speaking at the UK Bus Summit this morning, the minister will also announce a new partnership with [Greener Journeys](#) to reflect the pivotal role played by the bus industry in tackling loneliness and social isolation.

The partnership will see companies across the sector pledge to do all they can to tackle loneliness, including through innovative vehicle design and initiatives to encourage bus passengers to talk to each other.

Buses Minister Nusrat Ghani said:

Buses are far more than a way of getting from A to B. They are a crucial tool in the fight against loneliness and it is good to see the industry taking steps to tackle isolation.

This government is doing more than ever before to reduce emissions across all modes of transport and I'm delighted to see the bus industry putting itself at the forefront of this.

[Nineteen successful bidders across England and Wales will receive funding to purchase new low emission buses and supporting infrastructure](#), such as charge points.

[Benefits of Ultra Low emission buses](#)

This is the latest funding in a long line of investment designed to drive the uptake of zero emission vehicles, following the government's £1.5 billion [Road to Zero strategy](#) published last year.

In line with the [Future of Mobility Grand Challenge](#) – set out in the government's modern [Industrial Strategy](#) – these measures chart a path for Britain to become a world leader in the zero-emission revolution, ensuring that the UK has cleaner air, a better environment and a stronger economy.

But buses are not just about cleaning up the air in our towns and cities. As a key mode of transport for older and vulnerable people, buses play a vital role in facilitating social connections.

The government also supports bus travel through a £250 million investment every year, as well as a further £1 billion for the free bus pass scheme, paving the way to a more sustainable future.

On top of this, there have already been several promising schemes launched by the bus sector, including [Go Ahead Group's 'Chatty Bus' campaign](#), encouraging

conversations between passengers, and 'Hattie,' a community bus from Stagecoach specifically designed to provide a friendly environment where people can chat to others.

Claire Haigh, Chief Executive, Greener Journeys, said:

We're delighted to be partnering with the government to tackle the epidemic of loneliness affecting millions of people in the UK. Research from Greener Journeys shows that a third of people in Britain go at least a day a week without speaking to anyone – not a friend, colleague or family member.

Buses play a vital role in facilitating social connections among the most vulnerable people, who rely on them to take them to visit friends and family. It's fantastic to see the industry come together to launch such a brilliant range of initiatives to address the problem of loneliness.

The Prime Minister launched the government's first [loneliness strategy](#) in October 2018, as a vital first step in a national mission to end loneliness in our lifetimes. Loneliness is one of the greatest public health challenges of our time and the strategy, which responds to the findings of the Jo Cox Commission, sets out a range of initiatives to help all age groups build connections.