

CMA publishes Annual Plan 2022 to 2023

Press release

CMA Chair Jonathan Scott says competition is “more important than ever before” as concerns mount over the cost of living.



The Annual Plan explains how the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) will protect consumers, promote competition and help support the economy in the year ahead. It aims to encourage innovation, productivity, and sustainable growth to benefit all nations and regions of the UK.

Jonathan Scott, Chair of the CMA, said:

At a time of rising concern over the cost of living, competitive markets have a crucial role to play in keeping prices for consumers as low as possible. Competition will also be vital for promoting innovation, productivity and growth in our economy.

Over the last year, we have worked tirelessly to achieve great results for people in the UK, including securing refunds for people whose holidays were cancelled; freeing people from costly ground rent clauses; and launching our first investigations to crack down on companies that make misleading green claims. Looking to the year ahead, competition will be more important than ever before, and our Annual Plan outlines our continued commitment to boosting competition and protecting consumers.

In 2022 to 2023, the CMA will focus on the following themes:

- Protecting consumers from unfair behaviour by businesses, during and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic
- Fostering competition to promote innovation, productivity and long-term growth right across the UK
- Promoting effective competition in digital markets
- Supporting the transition to low carbon growth, including through the development of healthy competitive markets in sustainable products and

services

- Delivering our new responsibilities and strengthening our position as a global competition and consumer protection authority

During the consultation process for the draft Annual Plan, the CMA sought insight directly from consumers, representative charities, and businesses. As well as receiving 19 written submissions from organisations that overwhelmingly supported the themes set out in the plan, the CMA held meetings with stakeholders and hosted events across all 4 nations of the UK.

For more information, read the [annual plan](#) in full.

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[Rural pubs rescued with levelling up funds](#)

- Pubs serving remote communities in England saved by government intervention that will put them into community ownership
- Local pubs in Wiltshire, Cornwall and Leicestershire will receive much needed cash from a wider £150 million government funding package
- New funding will help with pub improvements – such as refurbishment – to keep them at the heart of local communities

Far-flung pubs in rural communities across England are among the cherished community assets being saved by [government levelling up funding](#) today (24 March 2022).

In a boost for Great British boozers, endangered pubs in areas such as West Cornwall and Melton Mowbray will be put into the hands of the local community, giving them a new lease of life for generations to come.

In rural Wiltshire, a pub that has stood at the heart of the communities of the Ogbourne Saint Andrew, Maizey and Rockley hamlets for over 100 years has been thrown a lifeline with investment of £237,500. The Silks pub is the only place that locals can get together, making it vital to the lives, wellbeing, and economy of the community.

There is funding for the Prince of Wales pub in the Cornish town of Helston too, which has become a focal point for the community after the local shop, garage and school closed in recent years. And £150,000 will breathe new life into the Bell Inn in Leicestershire, which closed two years ago and was likely to be lost to developers.

The pubs are among 10 new projects being rescued with a total of £1.8 million

of funding from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. The money is being awarded from the department's £150 million Community Ownership Fund, which helps communities take ownership of assets and amenities at risk of closure.

Today's allocations also include funding for a sports academy in Northern Ireland, a community centre in Scotland, an historic chapel in County Durham and a village shop and post office in Dorset.

Secretary of State for Levelling Up Michael Gove said:

Pubs, historic buildings and sports clubs form a vital part of our heritage and for too many places they are a disappearing part of the local community.

That is why we are helping local people take control of these beloved community assets, which would otherwise be lost.

This sits right at the heart of our vision for levelling up – giving people the power to make positive changes in their local community and restoring pride in the places where they live.

CAMRA National Chairman Nik Antona said:

Where dedicated local people are willing to save pubs in their area from closure, demolition or conversion to another use it is right that they are supported to do just that.

Our locals are vital parts of our social fabric – bringing people together, helping to tackle loneliness and social isolation, and providing a range of services for rural communities they serve.

That's why it is so encouraging to see that more communities are benefiting from Community Ownership funding to secure the future of pubs in their communities.

In Northern Ireland, the Ballymacash Sports Academy received £300,000 to provide state-of-the-art sport facilities to help young people from all backgrounds excel in their sporting talents.

Historic Vogrie Hall in Scotland will be brought back to life with a £127,251 investment. The 1930s building in the heart of Midlothian, was once a hub at the heart of the local community but was forced to close in 2020 after falling into disrepair.

The Fund is already helping communities across the nation seize ownership of prized local assets, including supporters of Bury Football Club who recently bought back the club's historic Gigg Lane stadium.

Other successful projects confirmed today include:

- £240,000 for the Prince of Wales pub in the Cornish town of Helston, which has become a focal point for the community after the local shop, garage and school closed in recent years.
- £150,000 will breathe new life into the Bell Inn in Leicestershire, which closed two years ago and was likely to be lost to developers.
- £56,760 to restore the historic Chapel in Weardale which attracts tourists from all over the world, and creating new employment opportunities for the local community.
- £247,500 will revive the much-loved George building and its courtyard garden in Newham, to create a fun, thriving historic community spot for residents and visitors, helping to build a stronger, more resilient community.
- £204,800 will keep the doors of Fontmell Magna village shop and Post Office open in Dorset. The café and tea garden are the only such local services and are one of the focal points for community life.
- £235,952 will support local junior football and street cricket clubs in Adwick Park, with refurbished facilities.
- £237,500 of investment has given a pub in rural Wiltshire a lifeline, a pub that has stood at the heart of the communities of the Ogbourne Saint Andrew, Maizey and Rockley hamlets for over 100 years. The Silks pub is the only place that locals can get together, making it vital to the lives, wellbeing, and economy of the community.

Civil news: chance to bid for Immigration Removal Centre work

News story

Tender opportunity to deliver Detained Duty Advice Scheme services at a new Immigration Removal Centre in Derwentside, County Durham.



A tender opened on 24 March to deliver Detained Duty Advice Scheme work face to face at Derwentside Immigration Removal Centre.

Successful bidders will hold exclusive schedules for the work which will be carried out under the 2018 Standard Civil Contract.

Tender requirements

Tenders are welcome from organisations who can meet the tender requirements, and either:

- hold a 2018 Standard Civil Contract with authorisation to carry out immigration and asylum work, or
- successfully bid for a 2018 Standard Civil Contract as part of this procurement process

Organisations solely regulated by the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) may not be eligible to bid as they may not be able to meet all the tender requirements.

Supervisor standard

A revised supervisor standard has been introduced for this procurement process. This is to ensure the quality of advice provided. This requires supervisors to provide additional case examples of common elements of work encountered at IRCs.

Timescales

The deadline for submitting tenders is 12 noon on 25 April 2022.

Services under the new contracts will begin 1 July 2022. Contracts will end on 31 December 2022 with the possibility of extension for an aggregate extension period of 9 months.

Where can I find out more?

Detailed information on the tender is available in the 'Information for Applicants' document on our tender pages.

Further information

[Civil tender activity](#)

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UK Government announces preparations to ensure availability of abortion services in Northern Ireland

Press release

Government is to prepare work on further regulations to ensure abortion services are made available.



- The UK Government is preparing regulations to take the necessary powers to directly commission abortion services in Northern Ireland if urgent progress is not made.
- Team of experts brought in to the Northern Ireland Office to monitor progress and assist the NI Department of Health.
- Northern Ireland Secretary, Brandon Lewis – “women and girls must have access to safe, high-quality abortion care in Northern Ireland as they do everywhere else in the UK.”

The UK Government has announced today (Thursday 24 March) its intention to prepare work on further regulations to ensure abortion services are available in Northern Ireland.

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Brandon Lewis, has today set out the legislative options being explored by the UK Government, in a [Written Ministerial Statement](#).

The announcement comes as it becomes increasingly clear that the Northern Ireland Department for Health will miss the deadline of the end of March to ensure abortion services in Northern Ireland are commissioned in full.

The regulations being planned, if they must be enacted, would place a further

duty on the Department of Health to make abortion services available as soon as is reasonably practicable, and remove the need for Executive Committee approval before services can be commissioned.

The Secretary of State will have the powers to intervene directly following the Assembly elections in May, if sufficient progress has still not been made.

The Secretary of State is also immediately setting up a small team in the Northern Ireland Office with relevant health experience to work directly with the NI Department of Health on this issue.

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Brandon Lewis said:

“I firmly believe women and girls must have access to safe, high-quality abortion care in Northern Ireland. It is unacceptable that access to basic abortion healthcare is not available as it is across the rest of the UK.

“It has become increasingly clear the Northern Ireland Department of Health will fail to commission abortion services in full by the deadline I set out last year despite being given every opportunity to do so.

“I am determined to do everything I can to ensure full services are delivered.”

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[Quin opens first defence science and technology hub in the North East](#)

Today, Defence Procurement Minister Jeremy Quin opened the hub at a formal ceremony in Newcastle, alongside Chief Scientific Adviser, Professor Dame Angela McLean DBE and Dstl’s recently appointed chief executive Paul Hollinshead.

Defence Minister Jeremy Quin said:

It’s vital that Defence is open, outgoing and engaged, tapping into the best ideas across the UK.

The Dstl science and technology hub in Newcastle will help spread Dstl’s geographic reach and harness the brilliant minds of the scientists, engineers and academics to develop cutting edge data science and artificial intelligence to support our national security.

In response to the increased emphasis on science and technology in the UK and our drive for diversity and the recruitment of core skills, [Dstl](#) is investigating opportunities for science and technology hubs around the UK to access new suppliers, including industry, small and medium-sized enterprises and academia, and alternative recruitment opportunities.

The small Dstl team will carry out AI and data science related research to help defence, turn data into information advantage, and to accelerate the responsible and ethical adoption of AI across defence.

[Dstl Newcastle](#) aims to achieve full operating capability by spring 2023.

[Recruitment](#) is ongoing in parallel with the opening event. Dstl expects to have approximately 15 employees based at the site by April next year.

Dr Paul Hollinshead MBA OBE said:

This is a really exciting time for Dstl and our drive to support UK science and technology. The hub already has seven members of staff working at The Catalyst building, and we look forward to harnessing further talent from across the region to deliver the best scientific advice and solutions to the MOD and the country.

Locally-based innovation organisations, such as the [National Innovation Centre for Data](#) and the [Defence and Security Accelerator \(DASA\)](#), will support Dstl's objectives by enhancing its understanding of the opportunities offered by innovation in data both in the North East and across the country.

Dstl's science and technology hub programme aligns with the Government's Levelling Up agenda with Dstl Newcastle cited in the recently published [White Paper](#).