

# Professor Michael Wood OBE has been reappointed as a Trustee of Historic Royal Palaces

News story

The Secretary of State has reappointed Professor Michael Wood OBE as a Trustee of Historic Royal Palaces for a second term of three years, from 11 March 2022 until 10 March 2025.



Michael Wood is a historian and filmmaker who for forty years has brought history alive for viewers and readers in Britain, the US and worldwide. He is the author of highly praised and bestselling books on English history including number one best sellers *In Search of the Dark Ages* and *Domesday*, and also *The Story of England*. He has made 120 documentary films, among them *In the Footsteps of Alexander the Great* and *The Story of India*, which the *Wall Street Journal* described as 'the gold standard' of documentary history making'.

Michael has written widely on British history. His special academic interest is in Anglo-Saxon history, and the origins of the English monarchy and state in the tenth century. He also has a long-term interest in Shakespeare—his many films include a highly praised four part life for BBC 2: *In Search of Shakespeare*.

Michael is currently Professor of Public History at the University of Manchester. He is a recipient of the Historical Association's Medlicott Medal for 'outstanding services and current contributions to History'. He recently received the British Academy President's Medal for services to History and outreach.

Historic Royal Palaces Trustees are not remunerated. This reappointment has 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. Professor Wood has not declared any activity.

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## [Biometrics and Forensics Ethics Group appoints new members](#)

News story

Two additional experts take up positions on the ethics group.



The Biometrics and Forensics Ethics Group is pleased to announce the recruitment of two new members. The new members come from diverse backgrounds, with expertise across law and forensic science.

Mark Watson-Gandy, Chair of the BFEG, said:

I am delighted to welcome the final two new members to the Biometrics and Forensics Ethics Group, who will strengthen our expertise in law and forensic science matters.

The two new members are:

- Professor Anne-Maree Farrell, Professor of Medical Jurisprudence at Edinburgh Law School
- Professor Niamh Nic Daeid, Professor of Forensic Science and Director of the Leverhulme Research Centre for Forensic Science at the University of Dundee.

Professor Farrell joined the Biometrics and Forensics Ethics Group at the

group's plenary meeting on 14 December 2021, and Professor Nic Daeid joined the Biometrics and Forensics Ethics Group on 10 January 2022.

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## [HMRC late payment interest rates to be revised after Bank of England increases base rate](#)

News story

HMRC interest rates for late payments will be revised following the Bank of England interest rate rise to 0.50%.



The Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee voted on 2 February 2022 to increase the Bank of England base rate to 0.50% from 0.25%.

HMRC interest rates are linked to the Bank of England base rate.

As a consequence of the change in the base rate, HMRC interest rates for the late payment will increase. These changes will come into effect on:

- 14 February 2022 for quarterly instalment payments
- 21 February 2022 for non-quarterly instalments payments

Repayment interest rates remain unchanged.

[Information on the interest rates for the payments](#) will be updated shortly.

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# [IPO launches new strategy to address IP crime and infringement](#)

The Intellectual Property Office (IPO) has today published the UK's new [Intellectual Property \(IP\) Counter-Infringement Strategy](#).

The new 5 year strategy represents a step change in the IPO's drive to protect IP rights. By partnering with others to set a global gold standard, it aims to make UK IP rights – and rights owned by UK businesses internationally – the best protected in the world.

The strategy seeks to establish how enforcement agencies, government and industry can work together to build upon and improve current structures, ensuring that IP infringement is tackled coherently as a strategic economic and social threat – at home and internationally. It will be underpinned by a strong research plan, and the findings will be shared widely with partner organisations to build a robust evidence base to support and inform work.

## **5 Key commitments within the strategy include:**

- to establish a national centre of excellence for the development and analysis of intelligence relating to IP infringement, placing this at the core of IP enforcement activity and ensuring it takes a central lead and coordination role in the fight against IP crime and infringement
- to work with Trading Standards, Border Force and the Police to embed IPO funded IP crime coordinators and champions in local regions to develop intelligence, coordinate activity and resource the fight against IP crime and infringement
- to work collaboratively with enforcement agencies to review how IP crime is recorded
- to develop the structures and membership of the IP Crime Group – enabling it to have a strategic and tactical enforcement focus across government, enforcement agencies and industry
- to develop impactful campaigns to reduce IP crime and infringement, working with partners and focusing on both those knowingly and unknowingly infringing

IP crime is often considered by criminals as a low-risk but very high-reward crime. The IPO's new strategy highlights the link between IP crime and other serious criminality such as money laundering, causing significant harm across communities. The strategy recognises that increased public awareness and criminal enforcement are complementary elements in addressing these harms. It commits to working toward a time when IP infringement is seen as socially unacceptable to all, while delivering intelligence driven enforcement action against the perpetrators of IP crime.

The delivery plan will be intelligence-led, harm-focused, and continuously

improved. Work within the strategy will be organised under three overarching themes:

- **partnership:** to co-ordinate the UK's fight against IP crime and infringement
- **leadership:** to continue to be a world leader on IP enforcement
- **education:** to empower consumers and businesses and raise awareness and understanding of IP crime and infringement and risks surrounding it

**The IPO's Chief Executive, Tim Moss, said:**

IP drives innovation and investment, and is at the heart of the government's Innovation Strategy. The infringement of IP rights poses a significant threat to this. It undermines the confidence IP rights give to businesses and investors, damages the economy, and has grave consequences for consumer safety and communities.

Our new strategy lays the groundwork for us to tackle IP crime and infringement in all areas, now and in the future. Our commitments within the new strategy are exciting and ambitious, and we believe they will have a real impact in the fight against IP crime at regional, national and international levels.

**Alliance for IP Director General Dan Guthrie said:**

We welcome the IPO's new Counter-Infringement Strategy, and the benefits to businesses, small and large, that greater collaboration will bring in this hugely important area.

IP rights play a fundamental role in protecting the hard work and investment of creators and inventors in every region of the UK, whilst also protecting the public. We know that our members will be keen to continue to work closely with the IPO to deliver the ambitious commitments in the strategy over the next five years, working together in the fight against IP crime and infringement, to ensure they can continue to drive economic growth across the UK.

**Detective Chief Inspector Suzanne Ferris, of the City of London Police's Intellectual Property Crime Unit (PIPCU), said:**

Intellectual property crime is not a victimless crime and often helps to fund serious and organised criminal activity. We welcome this new strategy which will help co-ordinate the fight against this type of crime and we will continue to work closely with the Intellectual Property Office, and our partners, nationally and

internationally, to tackle this and bring those responsible to justice.

**City of London Police Assistant Commissioner Pete O'Doherty, National Co-Ordinator Economic and Cyber Crime; Co-Chair IP Crime Group said:**

The launch of the new IP Counter-Infringement strategy by the UK Intellectual Property Office sets out an ambitious and comprehensive framework to tackling the infringement of IP Rights. Counterfeit goods are often sold locally, having been facilitated and routed across global supply chains by organised and international criminal networks.

This strategy sets a clear vision with the investment needed, that puts in place the foundations for a strong partnership approach with all areas of law enforcement in the years to come.

**Notes to editor:**

- 1) The [OECD](#) found that the total volume of lost sales by UK IP rights owners amounted to £8.6 billion, or 1.95% of their total sales in 2013. The 2019 OECD update report also found that in 2016 at least 86,300 jobs were lost due to counterfeiting and piracy (60,000 in 2013). That represents 1.4% of full-time equivalent employees in the UK (1.15% in 2013):
  - 2) According to the [United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice](#), counterfeiting is now the second largest source of criminal income worldwide, second only to drugs.
  - 3) The [OECD](#) estimates the trade in counterfeit and pirated products amounted to as much as \$461 billion in 2019, which equals 2.5% of world trade.
  - 4) IP criminals have been able to use the internet to reach out to consumers using legitimate platforms to advertise illicit counterfeit goods. This has resulted in almost one third of people in the UK having fallen [victim to counterfeit scams when shopping online](#).
  - 5) The IPO has regularly commissioned research into topics relating to the infringement of intellectual property rights. In addition to the [Social Media Influencers](#) research published last year, regular reports include the [Online Copyright Infringement tracker](#) and the [Physical Goods Tracker reports](#).
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# New reforms to renewable energy scheme to boost supply chains

- Proposed changes to Contracts for Difference scheme to boost supply chains
- tougher examination of developers' plans to make supply chains more competitive, productive and efficient
- proposals include expanding supply chain plans to cover new technologies such as floating offshore wind

The UK government has today (Friday 4 February) launched a consultation seeking views from industry on how to make supply chains across the low-carbon electricity generation sector more competitive, productive and efficient as part of the Contracts for Difference (CfD) scheme.

CfD is the government's primary method of supporting renewable energy, driving down the cost of technologies and encouraging private investment by providing projects with a stable income.

Consultation proposals include more rigorous questioning and scoring of questionnaire responses, along with introducing an interview – allowing for greater scrutiny of CfD applications – and raising the pass mark to make qualification more robust.

The potential changes will ensure generators commit to a range of actions to increase competitiveness of supply chains, driving down the cost of energy generation.

Energy Minister Greg Hands said:

The Contracts for Difference scheme has helped the UK become a world leader in renewable energy, drive down costs and reduce our exposure to volatile global fossil fuel prices.

The consultation also includes a suggestion to extend the Supply Chain Plan process to cover some emerging renewable energy technologies, including floating offshore wind, to ensure Supply Chain Plans are included for technologies expected to experience significant growth and mass deployment in the next CfD round.

The government's main tool to ensure CfDs can grow the low-carbon economy are Supply Chain Plans, which are put forward by developers of projects that have a capacity of 300MW or more in their CfD application and assessed in a questionnaire before they can compete in the CfD auction.

Within the CfD questionnaire, applicants choose the Supply Chain Plan commitments they wish to make, these are then tested for their quality and

ambition ahead of an application being passed, while ensuring the UK fully abides by its international obligations set out by the World Trade Organisation and in the EU-UK trade agreement.

Having already strengthened the supply chain plan assessment process in the CfD's fourth allocation round – the results of which are due to be announced in the spring/early summer – further changes will help ensure the fifth round delivers increased benefits when it opens in 2023.

The Business and Energy Secretary, Kwasi Kwarteng, has the ability to terminate a contract as a last resort if generators do not fulfil the Supply Chain Plan commitments they have made, with the consultation also inviting views on excluding sites from future application either for not signing the contract offered or for termination of the contract before or for failing to meet the delivery milestone.

The effectiveness of the CfD scheme's market-based design has been demonstrated in cost reductions seen between the first allocation round in 2015 and the third in 2019, when the price per unit (MWh) of offshore wind fell by around 65%.

Within today's consultation, the government is also launching a Call for Evidence seeking views on the potential for further changes to Supply Chain Plans for future allocation rounds.

- [Consultation on Contracts for Difference Supply Chain Plans](#)
- [Call for Evidence on future changes](#)
- the Contracts for Difference (CfD) scheme is the government's primary method of supporting low carbon electricity. It encourages investment in renewable energy by providing projects with a stable income, while protecting consumers from paying increased costs when electricity prices are high
- Contracts for Difference are 15-year private law contracts between renewable electricity generators and the Low Carbon Contracts Company (LCCC), a government-owned company that manages CfDs at arms' length from government
- developers of projects that have a capacity of 300MW or more must apply for a Supply Chain Plan Statement from the Secretary of State for Business and Energy if they are planning to take part in a CfD allocation round
- contracts are awarded in a series of competitive auctions, known as allocation rounds, which have been run approximately every 2 years. In the auction process, the lowest price bids within each pot and/or ringfence are successful, which drives efficiency and cost reduction
- CfDs give greater certainty and stability of revenues to electricity generators by reducing their exposure to volatile wholesale prices
- the scheme has delivered substantial new investment and helped deliver significant reductions in the costs of capital for some renewable technologies
- the fourth CfD round, which launched in December 2021, is aiming to secure more renewable capacity than the previous 3 rounds combined
- a total budget of £285 million a year has been allocated to the fourth



round, with £200 million available for offshore wind, £75 million for emerging technologies, such as remote island wind, tidal stream and floating offshore wind, and £10 million for established technologies, such as solar and onshore wind

- within the emerging technologies allocation, £24 million a year has been ringfenced for floating offshore wind projects and £20 million initially set aside for tidal stream projects, demonstrating the government's support for new, innovative technologies that can make an important contribution to the UK's decarbonisation commitments