

# Carolyn Wilkins appointed to the Financial Policy Committee

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, has today announced the appointment of Carolyn Wilkins as an external member of the Financial Policy Committee (FPC).

Carolyn has 20 years of experience working in a central bank at the Bank of Canada, most recently as Senior Deputy Governor. Her appointment fills the external position previously held by Donald Kohn, who stepped down from the Committee at the end of March 2021. She will serve a three-year term, which will begin on 21 June 2021.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak said:

The FPC plays a crucial role in protecting and enhancing the resilience of our financial system. I want to thank Donald Kohn for his tremendous contribution to the FPC's work over the past ten years. I am pleased to appoint Carolyn Wilkins to the committee – Carolyn has a respected track record built over 20 years at the Bank of Canada and her extensive experience in international financial regulation will be a real asset to the FPC.

The Governor of the Bank of England, Andrew Bailey said:

Don's contribution to the work of the FPC cannot be overstated. As one of the FPC's original members his valuable expertise and insight on macroprudential policymaking and its evolution over the years has been integral to the Committee's work.

I am delighted to welcome Carolyn to the FPC as an external member. Her senior leadership positions at the Bank of Canada, most recently helping drive the Bank's response to the Covid-19 crisis, and extensive knowledge of the global financial system, means she will bring fresh analysis and valuable input to the Committee's deliberations.

## **Further information**

Prior to this appointment, Carolyn A Wilkins had a distinguished twenty-year career at the Bank of Canada, serving as Senior Deputy Governor from 2014 to 2020, setting monetary and financial system policies with the Governing Council, and overseeing strategic planning and economic research. Ms. Wilkins led the development of the Bank's market liquidity facilities and large-scale asset purchase program as part of its COVID-19 response. She has made important contributions to international financial policies over her career,

most recently as the Bank of Canada's G20 and G7 Deputy and member of the Financial Stability Board. Ms. Wilkins has published and spoken on a broad range of international issues, including economic resilience, global financial regulation, and Fintech. Ms Wilkins was recently appointed to the Board of Directors of Intact Financial Corporation, a provider of property and casualty insurance in Canada and a provider of specialty insurance in North America.

### **About the appointment process**

Carolyn Wilkins has been appointed following an open recruitment process. As part of this process, HM Treasury recruited an executive search agency. A panel comprising of Charles Roxburgh (non-voting member of the FPC and Second Permanent Secretary, HM Treasury), Katharine Braddick (Director General of Financial Services, HM Treasury) and Martin Taylor (external member of the FPC from 2013 to 2020) interviewed a number of candidates and made recommendations to the Chancellor, which informed his decision.

There were 20 applications, of which eight candidates were shortlisted for interview. The gender breakdown for this appointment is below:

<b>Application stage</b>	<b>Shortlisted for interview</b>
FPC External Member 7 women, 10 men, 3 undisclosed	5 women, 3 men

### **About the Financial Policy Committee**

- the FPC is the UK's macroprudential regulator: its objective is to protect and enhance the stability of the UK's financial system by identifying, monitoring and addressing systemic risks
- the FPC has thirteen members. Six of them are Bank of England staff including the Governor and four Deputy Governors
- there are also five external members who are selected from outside the Bank for their experience and expertise in financial services
- the Committee also includes the Chief Executive of the Financial Conduct Authority and one non-voting member from HM Treasury
- External members sit on a part-time basis and are employed on the basis of having knowledge or experience which is likely to be relevant to the Committee's functions. The Bank have robust procedures in place to monitor and manage any actual or potential conflicts of interest to ensure the independence, integrity and impartiality of the Committee, and avoid any perception that a Committee member may obtain an unfair advantage through their association with the Committee.

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**[Charity Commission seeks views on](#)**

# updated responsible investments guidance

'Responsible investments' refers to financial investments that align with a charity's mission and purpose. The regulator [announced the review in January](#), after an [informal listening exercise](#) last year found that the way responsible investment is outlined in its [existing guidance](#) does not give all trustees sufficient confidence that they can consider, or that the Commission supports, this approach to investment.

It has now published a draft of updated guidance, supported by refreshed legal analysis, and is asking charities and others to say whether the changes are clear, and make the guidance easier to use.

[View the consultation and draft updated guidance](#)

The draft guidance is clear that trustees of all charities can decide whether or not to adopt a responsible investment approach that reflects the charity's purposes and values, and not just focus on the financial return. The new draft explains that the rules applying to responsible investments are those that apply to all financial investments, including that trustees' decisions must always be made in the best interests of the charity, and in line with its governing document.

The guidance also highlights the slightly different rules that apply when charities invest permanent endowments.

The consultation, which runs for 6 weeks, is framed as a short survey, designed to help the Commission determine whether the new guidance empowers trustees to take decisions on investments that are right for their charity. The consultation closes on 20 May 2021.

Paul Latham, Director of Communications and Policy at the Charity Commission said:

During the listening exercise we held last year, we learnt that many charities are interested in considering responsible investments but need more clarity around the regulatory position.

We have worked hard to ensure our draft guidance is easy to understand and empowers trustees to make decisions that are right for their charity.

I encourage trustees, charity staff, those involved in investment management, and anyone with an interest in how charities are run to take part in our consultation, to help ensure our final guidance is as clear and empowering as possible.

The Commission's guidance on responsible investments is part of its wider guidance on Charities and Investment Matters (CC14). The remainder of the guidance is not being updated immediately. The Commission says that this is because it recognises the urgent need to first address concerns about the clarity of its existing guidance around responsible investments.

## Ends

### Notes to editors

1. The Charity Commission is the independent, non-ministerial government department that registers and regulates charities in England and Wales. Its purpose is to ensure charity can thrive and inspire trust so that people can improve lives and strengthen society.

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## [Listening and building trust: starting as I mean to go on](#)

Welcome to my first blog post as National Data Guardian for Health and Social Care. I am incredibly excited to be taking up this role. During my tenure, I intend to do my utmost to listen to the public and to advise and guide those making important decisions about data use, so that information is used for public benefit in line with people's expectations. Prior to my appointment, the Health and Social Care Committee asked me to share with them my background, motivations and priorities for this role. I submitted a statement, which is available to [read in full online](#).

I am honoured to be following in the footsteps of the late Dame Fiona Caldicott, who did so much during her time as England's first National Data Guardian. She served as a fierce champion for patients, carers, and social care service users in matters related to their data. We have much to thank her for, and her impact on health and social care information governance leaves a legacy we all continue to benefit from.

I take seriously the role that the National Data Guardian should play in supporting and influencing the safe, confidential and effective use of citizens' health and care data. In doing so, I'm keen to support data use to both improve the treatment and care of individuals now, and to advance innovation in illness prevention, treatment, and service planning for shared public benefit in future. We need only look to the last year we've all lived through to see evidence on a global scale of how essential the effective use of data has been to the world's response to the pandemic. Data has provided invaluable insights into questions such as where and how the disease is spreading, who is most vulnerable, how we can best protect ourselves and our loved ones, and what treatments are and are not effective. Using these insights to inform critical decision making has undoubtedly saved lives.

Whilst supporting such innovative data use, I will remain mindful of my responsibility as National Data Guardian to act as an independent 'critical friend' to health and care organisations, ensuring that I always call to attention the inherent risks of data sharing and use, including unintended consequences and 'mission creep', alongside its benefits. Public trust in institutions can be fragile for many reasons and is easily lost, and the effective use of accurate, complete data ultimately rests on the health of the two-way relationship between the individuals whom the data is about, and those collecting and using it. I'll seek to provide advice that maintains a balance between the extremes of individual clinicians and organisations being either too paralysed by risk aversion to use data, or acting as if positive thinking and the integrity of well-meaning individuals alone are enough to make systems worthy of public trust.

My motivation to be National Data Guardian is both professional and personal. As a clinician, I've seen first-hand the growing benefits that data-driven technology is delivering: for example, through individuals having access to digital tools and resources to strengthen their self-management, clinicians having access to AI tools for clinician decision support, and teams seeing real-time aggregated data on incidents to improve the safety of their service. I'm also aware of the need to address more fundamental issues, such as the integrity of our digital infrastructure, system governance and clinician confidence to support timely information sharing between (and sometimes within) organisations. My personal family experience has also brought home the importance of getting these basics right. I'm currently very aware of the frustration, anxiety and sometimes distress that can ensue when critical healthcare information isn't readily available to the clinicians who need it, when they need it. In my view, 'cutting-edge' digital innovation and the arguably less glamorous basics go hand in hand (indeed the success of the former relies on the latter); it's vital therefore that continuous attention is paid to the balance of investment between each.

As the pandemic abates, and as a society we explore what should (and what perhaps can't) return to 'how things used to be', it is essential that decision makers hear the public's views about how data and data-driven technology should be used in future. We must understand if attitudes have shifted, and what people expect and want, as we emerge from this (as with any) crisis. Under Dame Fiona, the Office of the National Data Guardian co-commissioned a series of citizens' juries with the University of Manchester and NHSX to explore these questions; they started last month, and I am looking forward to participating as an observer. I've no doubt that listening to a diverse range of citizens' views on this topic will provide valuable insights to inform discussions about matters such as the use of health and care data for COVID certification – discussions to which I intend to contribute.

Dame Fiona worked with an unwavering commitment for many years to safeguard public trust and advocate for the responsible, transparent use of health and care data. I intend to honour her legacy by building upon the enduring foundations she laid. We share a belief that there should be 'no surprises' for the public when it comes to their data: a belief that will guide me as I

build upon the long-standing [NDG priorities](#). Because without trust, and the dialogue and transparency that builds trust, we will not earn the public's support for initiatives that seek to improve health and care using data. I am therefore starting my tenure as I mean to go on, with an active listening exercise. Over the coming months I am greatly looking forward to meeting many of the groups and organisations for whom data matters: to listen, pose questions, and reach a rich understanding of the data landscape, and how organisations within it can build and maintain trust now, from a diverse range of perspectives.

Alongside my NDG duties, I will continue to work as a psychiatrist within adult mental health care. Maintaining a clinical position is important to me, as from previous experience, I've learnt that (for me at least), the longer I spend away from the frontline, the easier systemic problems seem to fix ('If people would just...'). So I intend to stay actively rooted in the complex clinical reality of providing (and receiving) healthcare and support to the population I will also serve in my national role.

As I listen, act and reflect over my first year as National Data Guardian, I intend to share my thoughts and findings in a series of blogs. I'm sure there will be a lot to talk about in 2021, and I look forward to having those conversations.

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## [16 UK and Singapore universities form an alliance to accelerate entrepreneurship and innovation collaboration](#)

Date: 8 April 2021

The UK-Singapore Universities Alliance for Entrepreneurship and Innovation (UKSAEI) – the first alliance of its kind to accelerate collaborations in entrepreneurship and innovation between the two countries – was launched on 8 April 2021, witnessed by H.E. Kara Owen, British High Commissioner to Singapore, and H.E. Lim Thuan Kuan, Singapore High Commissioner to the UK.

UKSAEI brings together world leading universities from the UK (Bath, Coventry, Cranfield, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, King's College London, Newcastle, Nottingham, Manchester and Strathclyde) and Singapore (Nanyang Technological University Singapore, National University of Singapore, Singapore Institute of Technology, Singapore Management University, and Singapore University of Technology and Design) to share knowledge and facilitate collaboration in commercialisation and innovation.

Enabling knowledge exchanges on technology transfer and commercialisation, cross-border licensing of technologies, and training the next generation of entrepreneurs, the Alliance will boost efforts in accelerating ideas to market and value capture, and deepen cooperation between innovation ecosystems in the UK and Singapore.

The Alliance will aim to:

- Facilitate, share knowledge and co-operate in the respective efforts of UK and Singapore universities in the areas of technology transfer and commercialisation through active engagement with government and industry.
- Develop cross-border licensing of technologies and human capacity building as well as to support and encourage innovation.
- Act as the catalyst for commercialisation activities.
- Actively facilitate and enable collaboration between universities, public research institutes, government and industry players in the innovation ecosystem in Singapore and the UK to co-create value.

H.E. Kara Owen, British High Commissioner to Singapore said,

Both the UK and Singapore are strongly committed to investing in R&D, innovation and enterprise, and recognise the importance of collaborating internationally in these areas to support economic growth. Collaboration in knowledge and education is a top priority for the SG-UK Partnership for the Future, with science and innovation at its heart.

The Alliance builds on the extensive links between UK and Singapore universities to make a practical contribution to the role innovation and enterprise development will play in post-COVID-19 recovery. Congratulations to everyone on the launch of this Alliance.

H.E. Lim Thuan Kuan, Singapore High Commissioner to the UK said,

I am honoured to be able to witness the launch of the UK-Singapore Universities Alliance for Entrepreneurship and Innovation. Since the signing of the Singapore-UK Innovation & Research Partnership Agreement in 2014, Singapore's collaboration on research, innovation and enterprise with the UK has been growing from strength to strength.

I welcome this ground-up initiative and the aim of the Alliance to facilitate commercialisation and innovation among our IHLs. I wish them every success. Congratulations to all involved on the launch of the Alliance!

The Alliance is supported by the British High Commission Singapore, the UK Science and Innovation Network in Singapore, and the UK Universities in Singapore Network.

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## [Homes England launches strategic partnerships bidding for 2021-26 affordable homes grant funding](#)

Press release

Homes England is seeking strategic partners with the ambition and capacity to deliver affordable housing at scale.



The Government's housing agency has opened a competitive bid round for its latest intake of strategic partnerships. Homes England is seeking strategic partners with the ambition and capacity to deliver affordable housing at scale; organisations interested in applying now have until noon, 18 May 2021 to submit their proposal online.

Strategic partnerships are one of two routes to access grant funding from Homes England through the Government's [Affordable Homes Programme](#)



[\(2021-2026\)](#). Rather than access funding on a scheme-by-scheme basis (via Continuous Market Engagement), strategic partners enter into a multi-year grant agreement with Homes England to deliver affordable housing. While strategic partnerships have historically only been available to not-for-profit providers, this time Homes England is welcoming proposals from for-profit affordable housing providers and developers, and local authorities.

Strategic partnerships play a pivotal role in Homes England's mission to use everything at its disposal to intervene in the market to make homes happen. Partners can benefit from the certainty of affordable homes grant funding for the duration of the deal, with greater flexibility to deliver and bespoke access to the agency's land and investment capabilities.

In return, strategic partners need to demonstrate how they are supporting Homes England's strategic objectives within their development programme. This includes the adoption of modern methods of construction (MMC), a dedication to high-quality sustainable design and a commitment to working closely with SMEs.

**Gordon More, Interim Chief Executive Homes England said:**

"Our strategic partnership model is about working with ambitious organisations to maximise successful delivery through Government funding and use of our wider resources so we can increase innovation, diversify the sector and increase the supply of much needed affordable homes.

"Building on the successes of our existing strategic partnerships, we're welcoming bids from a broader set of partners that are as committed as we are to design quality and modernisation."

For more information about strategic partnerships and the Affordable Homes Programme (2021-2026) please visit [Homes England set to launch bidding for strategic partnerships – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

**ENDS**

**Notes to editors:**

- First launched in 2018, strategic partnerships were initially designed to provide housing associations with more flexibility on 2016-21 Affordable Housing grant funding and access to wider expertise across the agency.
- To date, we have:
  - Signed 23 partnerships with 27 housing associations
  - Awarded over £1.8bn of affordable housing grant investment
- To deliver over 40,000 affordable homes

- Our first cohort of strategic partners have said that the strategic partnership has allowed them to do things that wouldn't otherwise have been possible; unlocking difficult sites for development, accessing finance and investment, and accelerating delivery of much needed homes.
- Strategic partners funded through the 2021-26 Affordable Housing Programme must drawdown eligible grant by 31 March 2026.

For more information about strategic partnerships and the Affordable Homes Programme (2021-2026) please visit [Homes England set to launch bidding for strategic partnerships – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/homes-england-set-to-launch-bidding-for-strategic-partnerships).

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