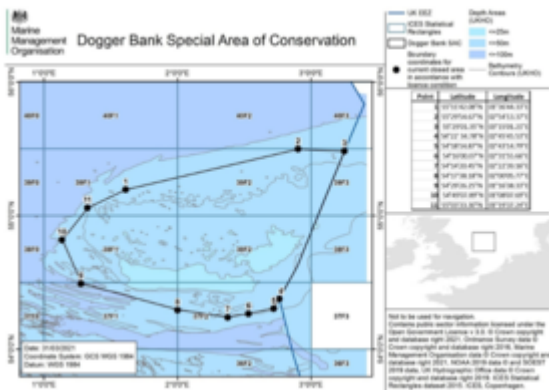


Dogger Bank Scallops

News story

Scallop fishing in UK waters of the North Sea around Dogger Bank can resume from 5 April except in the Special Area of Conservation (SAC) where a closure will remain in place.



The opening comes after a series of closures agreed with industry last year that covered the whole of UK seas in the Dogger Bank to enable improved scientific understanding of the scallop stock to be developed.

The changes will come in to force via a fishing vessel licence variation from 5 April 2021.

The scallop fishing closure in the Dogger Bank SAC will remain in place until the outcome of the MMO consultation on a proposed byelaw to prohibit all bottom towed gear in the area is decided in late summer.

The four UK Fisheries Administrations are committed to continuing their engagement with industry on the management of fishing in the area.

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UK Space Agency launches multi-million pound drive to design hospital of the future

The hospital could use technologies and techniques pioneered on missions to Mars or the International Space Station to help treat patients and make life

easier for hard-working NHS staff.

Up to £5 million of UK Space Agency funding is available to support a joint initiative with the Hampshire Together: Modernising our Hospitals and Health Services programme. The programme is part of the government's Health Infrastructure Plan, which includes the provision of 40 new hospitals across England by 2030.

The space-enabled services could be inspired by a whole range of activities and technologies pioneered by the UK's growing space sector, which currently contributes nearly £15 billion to GDP and supports 42,000 jobs. They might include new diagnostic tools, improved logistics by tracing goods or using drones, improving hospital parking or better patient reach using tele-rehabilitation or care.

Science Minister Amanda Solloway said:

The UK is a world leader in using space technology and data to tackle the challenges we face on Earth, and this initiative is another example of how one of our most thriving sectors is driving improvements in everyday life.

As we build back better from the pandemic, I am confident that UK businesses large and small will come forward to produce some truly awe-inspiring ideas to help design this space-age hospital, support our heroic NHS staff and ultimately save lives.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said:

This trailblazing collaboration – bringing together exceptional scientists from the UK Space Agency and Hampshire Together – will help us apply space age innovations to building hospitals of the future.

The UK is unashamedly pro-tech and these government-backed medical advancements will give our amazing NHS access to some of the most innovative technologies.

Credit: ESA

Space is already playing an important role in supporting healthcare. The UK Space Agency has provided funding for projects to help the NHS tackle the Coronavirus pandemic, including electric drones that navigate via satellite-enabled GPS, carrying COVID-19 samples, test-kits and PPE to improve delivery times and free up transport infrastructure.

Health technologies inspired by space technologies have helped provide real-time diagnosis of bowel cancer, developed more compact 3D X-ray machines and

improved healthcare in the community through both remote diagnostics and an app targeting people at risk of social isolation and mental health issues.

The Hampshire Together programme is a partnership between a wide range of bodies responsible for the health and wellbeing of the people of north and mid Hampshire, focused on ensuring that any investment is made not just in hospital buildings – but in local people.

Tony Mears, Associate Director of Innovation for the Hampshire Together programme, said:

We are delighted to be working with the UK Space Agency as part of our programme. It opens up new opportunities for us in terms of innovation and technology and shows our commitment to incorporating new ideas into our plans for the future.

The UK Space Agency has really helped the NHS to overcome the challenges posed by COVID-19 and we are excited to see how we can use this innovation-by-nature sector to help provide the best health and care services for people across Hampshire in the future.

The call for space-inspired ideas is supported by the European Space Agency's Space Solutions, through their Business Applications programme, in which the UK is the leading investor. The UK continues to be a leading member of ESA, which is independent of the EU, having committed a record investment of £374 million per year in November 2019.

A panel of experts, including representatives from the UK Space Agency, Hampshire Together and ESA, will assess the proposals for how space-derived technologies can contribute to the design, development and utilisation of services for any new hospital and its surrounding community.

The successful projects, which could be new ideas, or using technology that already exists in a different way to support healthcare, will then be incorporated in any new facility, as well as the wider health system. Where appropriate, these ideas will also be used to improve services across the area before the construction of any new buildings.

Arnaud Runge, Medical Engineer at ESA's European Space Research and Technology Centre, said:

In the past but also more recently throughout the COVID-19 crisis, the use of space technologies and satellite data has proven to be an essential driver for innovation in the healthcare sector to address existing and new challenges.

We are delighted to extend our fruitful collaboration with the UK Space Agency and NHS in this exciting initiative and demonstrate how space can contribute today to shape the hospital of tomorrow.

National Living Wage extended to younger workers

Press release

The age threshold for the National Living Wage changes from 25 to 23 as the rate increases on 1 April.



The National Living Wage (NLW) will increase on Thursday 1 April to £8.91, giving a real-terms pay rise to millions of workers. At the same time, the age threshold for the rate will move from 25 to 23, meaning that thousands of young workers will be eligible for a higher wage floor. These changes follow recommendations made to the Government by the Low Pay Commission (LPC) and are a first step towards the target of the NLW reaching two-thirds of median earnings for workers aged 21 and over by 2024.

In the 3 March Budget, the Government asked the LPC to monitor and evaluate the impact of these changes and recommend the rate that should apply from 2022. They asked the LPC to monitor developments in the labour market and advise on whether the target is achievable in the timeframe. The LPC will make its recommendations to Government on the 2022 National Minimum Wage rates in October.

Bryan Sanderson, Chair of the Low Pay Commission, said:

This has been an extraordinary year for all of us, but particularly for minimum wage workers, many of whom have worked throughout the pandemic in frontline roles or have worked in the sectors that have been hardest hit by lockdown measures.

This week's increase in the NLW is our first step towards the Government's target of two-thirds of median earnings. It is a real-

terms increase, meaning that an hour's work can buy more than it could last year, at the start of the pandemic. The level of the new rate however also reflects the need to protect workers from job losses.

Importantly, the NLW will now apply to workers aged 23 and over. This is an important change which is strongly endorsed by the Commission. Young people should be fairly rewarded for their work. We will seek to understand how young people's pay and employment are affected by this in our consideration of a further reduction in the NLW age qualification to 21.

The LPC has today published a short report which outlines how we will respond to our remit and approach our recommendations on the April 2022 rates, in the context of economic uncertainty and recovery from the pandemic. The report sets out a pathway to the target of two-thirds of median earnings. Our best current estimate for the on-course NLW rate in 2022 is £9.42, a 5.7 per cent increase. However, this is subject to more uncertainty than usual and is likely to change. We will publish an updated path in the summer.

The other rates of the National Minimum Wage will also increase alongside the NLW.

	Previous rate	Rate from April 2021	Increase
National Living Wage	£8.72	£8.91	2.2%
21-22 Year Old Rate	£8.20	£8.36	2.0%
18-20 Year Old Rate	£6.45	£6.56	1.7%
16-17 Year Old Rate	£4.55	£4.62	1.5%
Apprentice Rate	£4.15	£4.30	3.6%
Accommodation Offset	£8.20	£8.36	2.0%

Notes for editors

1. The LPC originally submitted its recommendations on 30 October 2020. The Government announced its acceptance of those recommendations on 25 November 2020. [The LPC's 2020 Report](#), which sets out the evidence underpinning its recommendations, was published on 11 December 2020.
2. The National Living Wage (NLW) is the statutory minimum wage which will apply as of 1 April for workers aged 23 and over. Different minimum wage rates apply to 21-22 year olds, 18-20 year olds, 16-17 year olds and apprentices aged under 19 or in the first year of an apprenticeship.
3. The age threshold for the NLW will be reduced from 25 to 23 in 2021, and then further to 21 by 2024. This follows a review of the structure of the National Minimum Wage youth rates and recommendations made by the LPC in 2019.
4. The Government published its remit to the LPC for 2021 alongside the 3 March Budget. In the remit, the Government asks the LPC "to monitor the labour market and the impacts of the National Living Wage closely,

advise on any emerging risks and – if the economic evidence warrants it – recommend that the government reviews its target or timeframe. This emergency brake will ensure that the lowest-paid workers continue to see pay rises without significant risks to their employment prospects.” The full remit letter is available [here](#).

5. Rates for workers aged under 23, 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.
6. The Accommodation Offset is an allowable deduction from wages for accommodation, applicable for each day of the week. In April 2021 it will increase to £8.36 per day, matching the level of the National Minimum Wage.
7. The National Living Wage is different from the UK Living Wage and the London Living Wage calculated by the Living Wage Foundation. 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 23 and over. The Low Pay Commission has no role in the UK Living Wage or the London Living Wage.
8. 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 rate recommendations introduced today were agreed unanimously by the Commission.
9. The current Low Pay Commissioners are: Bryan Sanderson, Professor Sarah Brown, Professor Richard Dickens, Kate Bell, Kay Carberry, Simon Sapper, Neil Carberry and Martin McTague.
10. Bryan Sanderson can be contacted via the Low Pay Commission’s press office (0207 211 8132).

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[Hundreds of free qualifications on offer to boost skills and jobs](#)

An estimated 11 million adults now have the opportunity to gain a new

qualification for free, designed to help them to gain in-demand skills and secure great jobs.

Almost [400 qualifications](#) are available to take from today (1 April) – backed by £95 million in government funding in 2021/22 – as part of the government's Lifetime Skills Guarantee.

The qualifications on offer range from engineering to social care to conservation and are available to any adult who has not already achieved a qualification at Level 3 (equivalent to A-levels).

The roll out marks a major milestone in the delivery of the landmark Lifetime Skills Guarantee – [announced by the Prime Minister in September 2020](#). The Guarantee aims to transform the skills system so everyone, no matter where they live or their background, can gain the skills they need to progress in work at any stage of their lives. It will also ensure employers have access to the skilled workforce they need, and more people are trained for the skills gaps that exist now, and in the future.

Adults who take up the free courses have the potential to boost career prospects, wages and help fill skills gaps, while supporting the economy and building back better.

For example, with a Diploma in Engineering Technology adults can progress to roles in Maintenance or Manufacturing Engineering. A Level 3 Diploma in Electrical Installation or a qualification in Adult Care can also provide a gateway to sectors offering rewarding careers and where there are multiple job opportunities.

So more unemployed people can take full advantage of these courses, the government will pilot an extension to the length of time they can receive Universal Credit while undertaking work-focused study.

They will now be able to train full time for up to 12 weeks, or up to 16 weeks on a full time skills bootcamp in England, while receiving Universal Credit to support their living costs This will allow access to more training options and provide a better chance of finding work, while continuing to receive the support they need.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

As we cautiously lift lockdown restrictions, the government's focus is on recovering from the pandemic and building back better.

The Lifetime Skills Guarantee is fundamental to that – with free courses giving adults the expertise they need to find new, better jobs.

My message is clear. At every stage of your life, we will help you get the skills you need to train, retrain, and get into jobs you want and our economy needs.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

The launch of these free qualifications for adults is a pivotal moment in the delivery of our Lifetime Skills Guarantee, which will make sure everyone can train, retrain or upskill throughout their lives.

As we build back better and rebuild our economy, it is vital we level up more opportunities for people across the country and help more people progress in work.

This offer will help give millions of adults the chance to gain the skills they need to secure rewarding careers in key sectors of the economy including construction, healthcare and digital. With almost 400 to choose from, there is something there for everyone.

Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Therese Coffey MP said:

Opening up a wider choice of courses and qualifications for jobseekers could be the clincher that lands them their next job.

Helping people get the skills they need is a central part of our Plan for Jobs which is already supporting people of all ages into work as we build back better from the pandemic.

Helen Tupper, co-author of Sunday Times best-selling book *The Squiggly Career*, said:

Our jobs today are constantly changing and one of the ways people can increase their ability to adapt is through ongoing learning. Course fees are a barrier for many adults but the introduction of the Lifetime Skills Guarantee has significantly increased the accessibility of adult learning opportunities, making hundreds of free courses available for people to increase their employability and gain skills to progress in work or secure a better job. If you're an adult considering your next step, I'd really encourage you to think about how new skills could boost your existing strengths and check out any free opportunities you're eligible for.

As well as the free courses, as part of the Lifetime Skills Guarantee, thousands of adults have taken advantage of new [Skills Bootcamps](#) which offer free, flexible courses lasting up to 16 weeks covering areas including construction, digital and technical. Skills Bootcamps – which are currently running in six areas of the country – provide a chance to learn specific skills and offer a fast-track to an interview with a local employer at the end. Skills Bootcamps will be expanded across the country later this year.

The government's [Skills for Jobs White Paper](#), published in January, enshrines the Lifetime Skills Guarantee – setting out landmark reforms that will realigning the post-16 education system around the needs of employers, so that people are trained for the skills gaps that exist now, and in the future, in sectors the economy needs, including construction, digital, clean energy and manufacturing.

The White Paper forms a key part of the government's [Plan for Jobs](#) which is protecting, supporting and creating jobs across the country and will help everyone to benefit from the opportunities available to them.

Millions get pay rise from today as National Living Wage and National Minimum Wage increase comes into effect

- Around 2 million of the UK's lowest-paid workers will benefit from an increase in National Living Wage and National Minimum Wage
- National Living Wage will rise 2.2% to £8.91, and be given to 23 and 24-year-olds for the first time
- Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng urges workers to check their pay packet to ensure they get what they are entitled to

Millions of workers in all parts of the UK will receive a pay increase from today (April 1), as the National Living Wage and National Minimum Wage uplift comes into effect.

The rate rises include a 2.2% increase in the National Living Wage to £8.91, the equivalent of more than £345 extra per year for someone working full-time.

And for the first time since it came into effect in 2016 more younger people will be eligible for the National Living Wage, as the age threshold will be lowered from 25 to 23 years old.

The rise means someone working full time on the National Living Wage from April 2021 will be taking home £5,400 more annually than they were in 2010.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

The National Minimum and Living Wages have increased every year since they were introduced, supporting the lowest paid, and despite the challenges we've faced recently, this year will be no

different.

That's why we're providing a well-earned pay rise to 2 million people, which will be a welcome boost to families right across the UK.

To make sure the next generation isn't left behind, everyone over 23 years old will also now be eligible.

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

In this toughest of years, we're protecting workers by putting more money in the pockets of the UK's lowest paid.

To support our next generation of workers, we've also lowered the age threshold for the Living Wage to 23 – ensuring even more people have the security of a decent wage.

This increase will help millions of families in every corner of the country, while supporting businesses as we prepare to safely reopen our economy and build back better from the pandemic.

I'd urge all workers to check their pay packet to ensure they're getting what they are entitled to, and remind employers of their duty to pay the correct wage.

Chancellor Rishi Sunak said:

We know that the past year has been very difficult for businesses and families across the country. This pay rise will help support employees as we steadily reopen the economy and get more people back to work.

At the same time, our Plan for Jobs is helping support businesses to recover and create more jobs, with measures such as VAT cuts, business rates relief, and cash grants for the most affected sectors.

From today, those over the age of 23 are eligible for the National Living Wage. The National Minimum Wage applies to those from school leaving age to 22. The uplift will particularly benefit workers in sectors such as retail, hospitality and cleaning and maintenance.

In full, the increases from April 1 2021 are:

- National Living Wage (23+) has increased 2.2%, from £8.72 to £8.91
- National Minimum Wage (21-22) has increased 2%, from £8.20 to £8.36
- National Minimum Wage (18-20) has increased 1.7% from £6.45 to £6.56
- National Minimum Wage (under 18) has increased 1.5% from £4.55 to £4.62

- Apprentice Rate has increased 3.6% from £4.15 to £4.30

The National Living Wage and National Minimum Wage have increased every year since their introduction – and, in this extraordinary year, there is no exception. The government is committed to providing both workers and businesses with certainty in this difficult time.

The new rates – announced at the Chancellor’s Spending Review 2020 – were recommended by the independent body the Low Pay Commission, following extensive consultation. The government is committed to the target of the National Living Wage reaching two-thirds of median earnings by 2024, and this increase allows progress to continue to be made towards it.

The figures were recommended with the aim to provide a rise in pay for millions of families across the UK, while ensuring businesses can thrive as the country continues to recover from COVID-19.

Throughout the pandemic the government’s priority has always been to protect jobs and incomes. And, indeed, many low paid workers have supported the country through these challenging times.

Over the past year, the UK government has helped millions of people to continue to provide for their families as part of its Plan for Jobs to protect, support and create employment.

An unprecedented £352 billion support package has helped to safeguard jobs, businesses and public services in every region and nation of the UK.

Our support package includes protecting 11.2 million jobs through the furlough scheme, £18.9 billion to support 2.7 million self-employed workers to date, and billions of pounds in tax deferrals and grants for businesses.

The £2 billion Kickstart scheme has created over 120,000 opportunities for young people and we’re offering employers £3,000 for every new apprentice they hire.

Last month’s Budget introduced new measures to cut down on the cost of living by freezing fuel duty for the eleventh consecutive year – saving an average car driver £12.84 per tank and a cumulative £1,600, and freezing all alcohol duties, saving drinkers £1.7 billion.

Through the pandemic, we’ve offered support targeted specifically to parents, like keeping nurseries open and support bubbles so grandparents and other carers can provide childcare provision. Working parents are able to be furloughed if they need to look after their children, and we have ensured women will not lose Statutory Maternity Pay if their roles have been furloughed.

In October we announced a new easement for Tax-Free Childcare which means working parents in a government coronavirus job support scheme who would normally be eligible for Tax Free Childcare or 30 hours free childcare but whose incomes are below the minimum threshold for these schemes due to the pandemic, can retain their eligibility.

And we've ended the Tampon Tax meaning women will save, on average, £0.07 on a pack of 20 tampons and £0.05 on a pack of 12 pads, which has been welcomed by the Fawcett Society as well as others.

If someone is concerned that they are not being paid the correct wage, they should speak with their employer. If the problem is not resolved, they can contact Acas (the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) on 0300 123 1100, or complain to HMRC.

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) is working with partners to run a campaign to encourage eligible workers to visit [the Check Your Pay site](#) where they can check their pay and find out what they can do if they believe they are underpaid. The campaign aims to reach workers through social media, digital and other channels.

The 23-24 age category for the National Minimum Wage has been abolished, following the lowering of the age of the eligibility for the National Living Wage to 23 years old.

This table shows the number of workers projected for April 2021 covered by NLW and NMW rates, by region. Estimates are based on 2020 data from Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE). The survey covers data for April of each year: ASHE 2021 data will not be released until the autumn.

Coverage of all NLW and NMW rates: projected number of workers paid at or below in April 2021

Region	Projected no. of workers paid at or below NLW rates	Projected no. of workers paid at or below NMW rates
North East	90,000	13,000
North West	239,000	27,000
Yorkshire & Humber	196,000	27,000
East Midlands	163,000	25,000
West Midlands	197,000	24,000
South West	186,000	30,000
East	176,000	24,000
London	180,000	18,000
South East	245,000	38,000
Wales	101,000	12,000
Scotland	130,000	17,000
Northern Ireland	86,000	15,000
Total	1,991,000	269,000