

BEIS in the Autumn Statement

Yesterday (Thursday 17 November), the Chancellor delivered his [Autumn Statement](#) to the House of Commons, announcing a raft of measures aimed at ensuring the UK's economic stability, continuing growth, and providing support to the most vulnerable.

The Chancellor highlighted how the government's priority is to tackle inflation and prevent it eating into the paycheques and savings of people across the country, while eliminating disruption to business growth plans.

Among the key measures that BEIS will be charged with delivering is an uplift in the National Minimum Wage and the largest ever cash increase in the National Living Wage – helping protect over 2.5 million of the lowest-paid workers in the UK against the rising cost of living.

As well as continuing to support households with their energy bills by extending the Energy Price Guarantee, the Autumn Statement also prioritised boosting the UK's energy independence and efficiency. This includes an investment in Sizewell C and the creation of a new taskforce for energy efficiency.

The Chancellor also outlined how innovation would be crucial to unlocking economic growth, announcing that the government will be protecting £20 billion in research and development investment in 2024 to 2025.

Business Secretary Grant Shapps said:

We are doing everything we can to support the most vulnerable in these challenging times, and this Autumn Statement builds on the measures already in place to protect businesses and consumers over the coming months.

From delivering the biggest increase yet to the National Living Wage, to supporting businesses and households from rising costs and investing in innovative new technologies, we are prioritising stability and growth to ensure the UK can prosper.

Among the BEIS policies announced in the Autumn Statement include:

Energy support

Energy Price Guarantee

The Energy Price Guarantee is a scheme which limits the unit price households pay for electricity and gas across the UK. It brings a typical household energy bill in Great Britain down to the equivalent of around £2,500 per year (for the period of 6 months) from 1 October 2022 to end of March 2023 (with

equivalent support in Northern Ireland (NI)); and then to around £3,000 per year for a typical household in Great Britain from April 2023 to April 2024 (again with equivalent support in NI).

The government will consult on amending the scheme as soon as is feasible after April 2023 so that those who use very large volumes of energy have their state support capped, whilst the vast majority of households can continue to benefit. This proposal is intended to ensure taxpayers do not subsidise all of the energy usage of those households with extremely high usage. This consultation will explore the best ways to ensure that vulnerable high energy users, such as those with medical requirements, are not put at risk.

New approach from April 2024

The government will develop a new approach to consumer protection in relation to energy, which will apply from April 2024 onwards. It will work with consumer groups and industry to consider the best approach, including options such as social tariffs, as part of wider retail market reforms. The objectives of this new approach will be to deliver a fair deal for consumers, ensure the energy market is resilient and investable over the long-term, and support an efficient and flexible energy system.

Alternative fuel payments

The government will double the level of support for households that use alternative fuels, such as heating oil, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), coal, or biomass, to heat their homes to £200. This support will be delivered as soon as possible this winter. The government will provide this payment to all Northern Ireland households in recognition of the prevalence of alternative fuel usage in Northern Ireland. The government will also provide a fixed payment of £150 to all UK non-domestic consumers who are off the gas grid and use alternative fuels, with additional 'top-up' payments for large users of heating oil based on actual usage.

Energy Efficiency Taskforce

The government will form a new Energy Efficiency Taskforce, charged with driving improvements in energy efficiency to bring down bills for households, businesses, and the public sector. The taskforce will support a new ambition to reduce energy demand from buildings and industry by 15% by 2030. New government funding worth £6 billion will be made available from 2025 to 2028, in addition to the £6.6 billion provided in this Parliament.

Energy security

Electricity Generator Levy

To help offset the costs of energy bill support schemes as well as vital public services, the government will be introducing a new temporary tax of 45% on certain electricity generators in the UK, called the Electricity

Generator Levy. The levy, replacing the Cost Plus Revenue Limit, will be used to raise revenue from generators receiving extraordinary returns from higher electricity prices and will help fund the unprecedented package of support for energy bills the government is offering.

From January, the Energy Profits Levy on oil and gas companies will also increase from 25% to 35%, bringing the headline tax rate for the sector to 75% helping raise revenue, recognising their continued high profits. The Energy Profits Levy is applied to total profits rather than a measure of extraordinary returns and will come on top of other additional taxes applied to oil and gas production in the UK.

Sizewell C

Plans for the new plant at Sizewell C continue. Subject to final approvals, contracts are expected to be signed with relevant parties, including EDF, in the coming weeks. The project will create 10,000 highly skilled jobs for the area and provide reliable, low-carbon, power to the equivalent of 6 million homes for over 50 years. The government's £700 million investment is the first state backing for a nuclear project in over 30 years and represents the biggest step in the UK's journey to energy independence.

Backing business and workers

National Living and Minimum Wage increases

Over 2 million of the lowest-paid workers in the UK will receive a pay rise, as the National Living Wage rate is increased by around 10%, its largest ever cash increase. These generous increases will support workers across the UK with the rising cost of living and provide added certainty for businesses for the year ahead. The National Minimum Wage, which is designed for younger workers, also receives a generous rise that protects their employment prospects. The new rates, recommended by the Low Pay Commission, an independent body with worker and business representatives, will come into force in April 2023.

Digital Markets Competition & Consumers Bill

The Digital Markets Competition & Consumers Bill will be brought forward in the third Parliamentary session to reform the UK's digital markets, competition and consumer laws, strengthening public and business confidence in the power of free markets, and provide new powers to the Digital Markets Unit. In doing this, consumers' hard-earned cash will be further protected from scams and rip-offs, markets will become more competitive and dynamic, meaning consumers get the very best deals, and a new regime will be introduced to address the far-reaching market power a small number of very powerful tech firms have on the market.

Unleashing innovation

Research and development

Investing in R&D is absolutely vital to help the economy and businesses grow. The government will ensure £20 billion in research and development investment is protected in 2024 to 2025, to help unlock growth across the UK. R&D tax reliefs will also be reformed, to ensure that taxpayers' money is spent as effectively and efficiently as possible.

Made Smarter

The government will extend the Made Smarter Adoption programme to the East Midlands, supporting more small and medium manufacturing firms in boosting their productivity, efficiency, and resilience through adopting advanced industrial digital technologies, including robotics and automation, additive manufacturing, and AI. The extension follows the positive feedback the Made Smarter Adoption programme has already received in the North East, West Midlands, North West, and Yorkshire and the Humber.

Catapult Network

Funding for the Catapult Network, which promotes research and development through business-led collaboration, will increase by 30% compared to the last 5-year funding cycle. This £1.6 billion investment will provide SMEs access to world-leading facilities, expertise, skills, and equipment; accelerating innovation clusters and stimulating additional private sector investment in R&D across the UK.

Background information

In full, the National Living and Minimum Wage increases are:

- National Living Wage (23+) to increase 9.7%, from £9.50 to £10.42
- National Minimum Wage (21-22) to increase 10.9%, from £9.18 to £10.18
- National Minimum Wage (18-20) to increase 9.7% from £6.83 to £7.49
- National Minimum Wage (under 18) to increase 9.7% from £4.81 to £5.28
- Apprenticeship National Minimum Wage to increase 9.7% from £4.81 to £5.28
- Accommodation offset to increase 4.6% from £8.70 to £9.10. The accommodation offset is the maximum amount of value for provision of a workers' accommodation that can count towards National Minimum Wage pay

The Low Pay Commission, an independent body with worker and business representatives recommends the rates to the government every year. The government has accepted the Low Pay Commission's rate recommendations in full.

Recruitment for Head of Policy and Communications in the Antimicrobial Resistance Team

News story

Details of a permanent vacancy for the Antimicrobial Resistance Team.



This is an exciting time to join the VMD's Antimicrobial Resistance team who are currently expanding. You will lead a small team responsible for the coordination and delivery of the Defra group's, including VMD, commitments in the UK's national action plan for AMR, as well as development and implementation of the team's communications strategy.

Job Title

Antimicrobial Resistance Head of Policy and Communications Team

Grade

G7

Salary & Pension

£54,328 – £61,392 per annum with Pension Scheme

Annual Leave entitlement

Commencing at 25 days

Role

As Head of Policy and Communications in the AMR team, you will develop government policy on AMR and animal health.

You will work closely with colleagues within VMD and across government to develop AMR elements of new UK veterinary medicines legislation to ensure a coordinated, one health approach to international AMR policy. Key to delivery will be engagement with our stakeholders in the veterinary profession, agriculture sectors, pharmaceutical industry and others to implement AMR policy that works.

How to apply

You must make your application via [Antimicrobial Resistance Head of Policy and Communications Team – Civil Service Jobs – GOV.UK](#) where you will find a full job description including salary details.

Closing Date

14 December 2022

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Published 18 November 2022

[RFCA annual conference highlights the importance of connecting Defence with society](#)

News story

The RFCA annual conference 2022 attracted delegates from across the UK membership of the RFCAs, government, politics, and industry to discuss the associations' continued support of the nations' Reserves and Cadets.



The 2022 Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Associations annual conference took place at the Queen Elizabeth II Centre, Westminster, where delegates from across the UK were briefed by Admiral Sir Tony Radakin KCB ADC, Chief of the Defence Staff. The event allowed delegates to contribute to several discussions on how the RFCAs can continue to support the nations' Reserves and Cadets.

Topics included:

- transforming the Reserves through a refreshed Integrated Review;
- attracting a membership that better reflects the society within which it operates;
- supporting the single Services' cadet organisations to enhance and further the outcomes for young people.

The day's keynote speaker was General Sir Richard Barrons KCB CBE, who presented his view on the future of warfare and how the Reserve Forces will be a vital part of this.

President of the RFCAs, General the Lord Houghton, said:

The real value of Reserves, Cadets and the Associations' membership is the collective contribution we make to the social cohesion and the institutional integrity that helps provide national resilience. We need to understand far better the role that we play and make very sure that we do not neglect it.

Challenging the RFCAs, Lord Houghton added:

If we want to survive as RFCAs we have got to change because ultimately, we are the custodians of a societal relationship that attempts to ensure the vibrancy of the cadet and Reserve Force elements.

[RFCAs Snapshot 2022](#)

[Find out more about your local RFCAs.](#)

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SLC launches recruitment campaign to recruit more than 100 employees

The Student Loans Company (SLC) has launched a campaign to recruit more than 100 permanent employees at its office in Darlington.

Based at Lingfield Point, the Student Finance Officer (SFO) roles are vital to the smooth running of the organisation. SLC processes up to two million student finance applications each year and in the last academic year (21/22) paid £9.2 billion in loans and grants to new and existing students, as well as £12.6 billion in tuition fees to higher and further education providers.

SLC's mission is to enable people to invest in their futures through access to further and higher education. The SFO role is vital as it includes supporting customers at the various stages of their student finance journeys, including processing applications, case managing applications and answering questions from across a number of channels including inbound and outbound calls, email, webchat and by post.

Chris Larmer, Executive Director of Operations at SLC, hosted a launch event in Darlington on Friday (18 November), welcoming local stakeholders into the office to learn more about what the organisation has to offer and to speak to staff about their roles.

Rianna Craggs, SFO, joined SLC at the start of 2022. She said: "Working at SLC has been really rewarding. I'm learning and gaining confidence every day. I love being part of an inclusive organisation as there are people from all walks of life and age groups working together, striving for the same aim – providing excellent service for our customers."

Chris said: "As a big employer, we take our responsibility to the local area seriously. We know how much talent there is in Darlington and the North East, and we want people to consider a career with us.

"We have been speaking to a range of stakeholders from across the region to promote our recruitment campaign and I'm looking forward to welcoming our new recruits in the new year. The importance of our SFO roles cannot be understated – we simply couldn't do our job without them."

Peter Gibson, MP for Darlington, also attended the event. He said: "I warmly welcome the Student Loans Company's announcement that they are now recruiting

for over 100 new permanent Student Finance Officer roles based in Darlington. These new roles offer a fantastic new opportunity for local people and offer a fantastic rewards and benefits package.

“These are exciting times to live and work in Darlington, with huge Government investments and the Darlington Economic Campus bringing more jobs and opportunities to the town. I know that these new roles with the Student Loans Company will offer more local people the chance to stay local but go far.”

Successful candidates will receive a reward and benefits package, which includes access to the civil service pension scheme, generous holiday entitlement, options to buy and sell holidays and access to a range of lifestyle benefits. They will also benefit from SLC’s routes for progression, with opportunities to learn, develop and upskill. SLC has a blended approach to work, with colleagues spending time in the office and at home, so applications are being encouraged from across the North East.

Find out more about the new roles and how to apply at <https://careers.slc.co.uk/apply/>.

Fight against international wildlife crime stepped up

- UK Government pushing for further protections for endangered species including pangolin and sharks on the global stage
- Move comes just weeks ahead of crucial UN Convention on Biological Diversity

The fight against international wildlife crime received a boost today with the announcement of new funding for the International Consortium’s Vision 2030, a long-term vision of working towards a world free of wildlife crime.

The government is pledging £4m of new funding for the International Consortium on Combatting Wildlife Crime (ICWC). The announcement has been made at the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in Panama, where the UK government is pushing to secure stronger protections for some of the world’s most threatened species such as pangolins and requiem sharks. Ongoing pressures, including legal and illegal international trade, continue to threaten their survival.

CITES is an international agreement between governments that protects over 38,000 wild plant and animal species from the impacts of international trade. Wildlife crime undermines efforts to ensure that international trade is legal and sustainable. Since 2010, the ICWC, with their collective expertise and extensive experience, has been delivering essential work to eradicate this

vile trade.

The new funding will go towards the next phase of ICCWC programming and will help fight wildlife crime by increasing the detection, disruption and detention of criminals. Transnational criminal networks profit from illegal trade, causing serious security implications for many countries and regions.

Environment Secretary Thérèse Coffey said:

We want to keep protecting our most endangered plants and animals. This £4 million of funding going to the ICCWC will help tackle criminals and stop this vile trade.

The UK is showing global leadership on conservation and proposing stronger protections for a range of rare species at this summit such as pangolins and sharks. We will also be driving global efforts to secure a post-2020 global biodiversity framework at the UN Convention on Biological Diversity in Montreal next month.

The UK is demonstrating global leadership on conservation and sustainable use at CITES CoP 19, advocating for:

- Better protection of 54 species of shark to help shield them from overexploitation in the fin trade.
- Strengthening commitments to protect pangolins, the most trafficked mammal in the world, through cooperation and demand reduction measures.
- Improving CITES implementation for agarwood to assist in conservation efforts.
- Upholding the ban on international commercial trade in ivory and rhino horn, managing ivory stockpiles, and ending trade in live African elephants to non-range states.
- Enhancing CITES' role in relation to reducing the risk of zoonotic disease emergence, tackling the illegal trade in CITES species, better engagement of indigenous people and local communities.

Welcoming the additional funding as an endorsement of ICCWC's work, CITES Secretary-General, Ivonne Higuero, said:

We're grateful to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for this important contribution to support the efforts of CITES Parties to combat wildlife crime. It is a vote of confidence in the coordinated work being done by ICCWC partners to put an end to this scourge affecting our planet and its people.

The 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties has acknowledged and welcomed the excellent work with Parties conducted under the Consortium and the development of the ICCWC Vision 2030. This funding means more Parties will be assisted by the Consortium to

further strengthen their capabilities in the decade to come.

Poaching and the illegal wildlife trade (IWT) has been estimated to be worth up to £17 billion a year. It fuels corruption, creates instability, impacts economic development and deprives some of the world's poorest communities of sustainable livelihoods. For some of the most endangered species – like pangolins, succulents and turtles – the illegal wildlife trade is the gravest threat to their future.

This funding will provide for a range of training courses, tools, services and capacity building activities, designed to strengthen criminal justice systems and support co-operation among countries exposed to the threats of wildlife trafficking.