

Press release: New champions to fight for rights of disabled consumers

Using their industry influence, the champions will remove the obstacles faced by disabled consumers across the technology, countryside and heritage, products and spaces, brand and design and web accessibility sectors.

Minister for Disabled People Sarah Newton said:

For too long businesses have been missing out on the spending power of disabled customers and their families – worth a staggering £249 billion a year.

Sadly disabled people are often locked out from the everyday experiences many of us take for granted, whether that's enjoying the great outdoors or benefitting from latest innovations in technology.

Our new champions will fight for the rights of disabled consumers so they can spend their money where and when they want, just like everyone else.

They join 14 existing champions who have already made significant progress in improving accessibility across a diverse range of industries, from insurance to music.

The new brand and design champion is Marianne Waite, founder and director of Think Designable and inclusive design consultant for Omnicom.

Brand and design champion Marianne Waite said:

Despite 90% of brands claiming to prioritise diversity and inclusion, only 4% consider the needs of disabled consumers.

I want to help hardwire inclusive design into mainstream brand practice and encourage creative teams to invest in insight from disabled consumers to drive much needed innovation.

It's time for brands to wake up to the business, economic and social benefits of disability inclusion.

The 5 new disability champions are:

- brand and design: Marianne Waite, Founder of Think Designable
- countryside and heritage: Heather Smith, National Equality Specialist for the National Trust
- products and spaces: Ed Warner, Founder of Motionspot

- technology: Patrick Stephenson, Client Managing Director for Central and Local Government at Fujitsu
- web accessibility: Paul Smyth, Head of Digital Accessibility at Barclays

The 14 existing disability champions are:

- advertising: Sam Phillips, CMO at Omnicom Media Group
- airports: Michael Connolly, Regional Training and Standards Manager at OCS ltd
- arts and culture: Andrew Miller, National Council Member for the Arts Council England and the Arts Council of Wales
- banking: Trudie Hills, Disability Manager, Lloyds Bank
- buses: Jane Cole, Managing Director at Blackpool Transport Services
- gaming: Dr Jo Twist OBE, CEO of UKIE
- hotels: Robin Sheppard, Chairman of Bespoke Hotels
- insurance: Johnny Timpson, Financial Protection Technical & Industry Affairs Manager, Scottish Widows
- leisure: Huw Edwards, Public Affairs Director at UKActive
- media: Dan Brooke, Chief Marketing and Communications Officer at Channel 4
- music: Suzanne Bull MBE, CEO of Attitude is Everything
- rail: Stephen Brookes OBE, Member of Rail Delivery Group's Governance Group and Non-Executive Director of Blackpool Transport
- retail: Samantha Sen, Head of Policy and Campaigns at Revo (Interim)
- tourism: Chris Veitch, Co-founder of Access New Business

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Follow DWP on:

[Press release: Audit regime in the UK to be transformed with new regulator](#)

- New regulator will have a new mandate, new leadership and stronger powers set down in law
- recruitment for the new Chair and Deputy Chair launching immediately
- part of the UK's modern Industrial Strategy to ensure the UK is the best place to invest, start and grow a business

The Business Secretary Greg Clark will today (11 March 2019) announce a new enhanced regulator to transform the audit and accounting sector in response to the comprehensive Independent Review led by Sir John Kingman. As per the review's recommendations, the Financial Reporting Council (FRC) will be replaced with a new regulator called the Audit, Reporting and Governance Authority.

The government welcomes and shares the Review's vision for a new regulator with a new mandate, new leadership and stronger statutory powers and has published a consultation today on implementing these reforms. The government intends to move swiftly to implement these reforms and overhaul the sector. In the interim period until the new regulator is in place, we will be working with the FRC taking forward 48 of the Review's recommendations to address the shortcomings identified in the Review such as lack of transparency and to reinforce work to enhance enforcement activity.

Specifically, the new regulator will for the first time:

- be a statutory body with powers such as those to make direct changes to accounts rather than apply to court to do so, and more comprehensive, visible reviews for greater transparency
- have strategic direction and duties to protect the interests of customers and the public by setting high standards of statutory audit, corporate reporting and corporate governance, and by holding companies and professional advisors to account
- regulate the biggest audit firms directly (rather than those being delegated)
- have a new, diverse board and strong leadership to change the culture and rebuild respect of those it regulates

There will also be greater sanctions available in cases of corporate failure, including new powers to require rapid explanations from companies and in the most serious cases publish a report about the company's conduct and management.

Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Greg Clark said:

This new body will build on our status as a great place to do business and will form an important part of strengthened public trust in businesses and the regulations that govern them.

I am most grateful to Sir John Kingman for his work in this area. Taken together with the CMA's market study and Sir Donald Brydon's review of audit quality and effectiveness, they will enable us to deliver a major set of reforms on the regulation of company audit, accounting and reporting.

The UK has always been a world leader in audit and accounting services, with world-class frameworks for corporate reporting, corporate governance and regulatory oversight. Our modern Industrial Strategy sets out our vision to ensure that the UK is the best place to invest, start and grow a business. The creation of a new regulator will ensure that the UK maintains and advances its status as a place of the highest standards in audit.

The government sees a tough and robust regulator, and an audit sector with the highest standards, as a key part of attracting investors, jobs and growth to the UK.

Sir John Kingman, Chairman of the Independent Review of the FRC said:

As I set out in my Review, we need a new audit regulator with a clear and precise sense of purpose and I am pleased that the government shares that vision.

I look forward to continuing to work closely with the Secretary of State as the Audit, Reporting and Governance Authority is established.

There is a range of important work taking place in relation to the audit market and the government looks forward to receiving the findings of the Competition and Markets Authority's market study and Sir Donald Brydon's Review into the quality and effectiveness of audit.

The establishment of new leadership at the top of the FRC, which will transition into the Audit, Reporting and Governance Authority will also begin, with the recruitment for the Chair and Deputy Chair opening shortly.

Consultation: [Independent review of the Financial Reporting Council: initial consultation on recommendations](#). It will run for 12 weeks and will close on 11 June

The Independent Review of the Financial Reporting Council (FRC) led by Sir John Kingman [published its report to government](#) on 18 December. One of the recommendations was that the FRC be replaced with a new regulator with new powers, accountable to Parliament and named the Audit, Reporting and Governance Authority.

The Government commissioned Sir John Kingman in April 2018 to make recommendations on how to reform the Financial Reporting Council to ensure the UK has a world class audit and accounting regulator.

[Details for recruitment campaign for the Chair and Deputy Chair available](#)

Press release: Audit regime in the UK to be transformed with new regulator

Financial Reporting Council to be replaced with a new regulator following review by Sir John Kingman

News story: How to give safely to charities

Our latest safer giving campaign aims to help you continue giving safely to registered charities.

Giving to charity is a longstanding and important tradition and the British public are always generous in their support for charities.

Charity scams are small in number compared to how much is given safely, but the charity sector generates an annual income of nearly £75 billion making it an attractive target for criminals.

We want to make sure that the public are aware of the correct steps to follow when supporting and donating to charity, so that all donations go to the intended beneficiaries.

By making simple checks part of the routine of donating, such as [checking the charity register](#), we can all become smarter and more conscious donors, and help promote public trust in the sector as a whole.

Key advice for safer giving

- check the charity's name and registration number www.gov.uk/checkcharity. Most charities with an annual income of £5,000 or more must be registered
- make sure the charity is genuine before giving any financial information
- be careful when responding to emails or clicking on links within them
- check whether street collectors are wearing a proper ID badge and that any collection tin is sealed and undamaged
- ask the collector for more information if in doubt
- contact the charity that you're seeking to donate to or work with to find out more about their spending
- carefully review collection bags for clothing and household goods to check whether they are from a genuine charity
- check whether fundraising materials are genuine. They should feature the charity's name, registered name and a landline contact number
- never feel under pressure by a fundraiser into making a donation immediately
- use the same level of caution every time you support or donate to a charity

Reporting suspicious activity

After making these checks, if you think that a collection or appeal is not legitimate, report it to the police. You can also [complain about a charity to us and the fundraising regulator](#).

If you think a collection is fraudulent report it to [Action Fraud through their website](#) or call them on 0300 123 2040.

If you think a collector does not have a licence – report it to the relevant Local Authority Licensing Team or the Metropolitan Police (if in Greater London). Also let the charity and Action Fraud know if you can.

Press release: Digital Secretary meets those affected by online harms

Upcoming White Paper will outline steps government will take to ensure the UK is the safest place in the world to be online.