

Co-chair appointed to BSL Board advising Government on key issues for Deaf people

- Minister for Disabled People, Tom Pursglove, announces the appointment of Craig Crowley MBE FRSA as co-chair of the BSL Advisory Board
- Mr Crowley is the CEO of Action Deafness, a Deaf-led charity providing BSL interpreting and community support
- Board's launch follows BSL Act recognising BSL as a language in England, Scotland and Wales, which approximately 151,000 people in the UK use

Mr Crowley is the CEO of Action Deafness, a Deaf-led charity providing BSL interpreting and community support. He has worked tirelessly in several key roles to support Deaf people. As a past Chair of the UK Council on Deafness, Crowley has also been a key figure in the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Deafness, advocating for improved access to BSL in public services.

Recognising BSL as a language in England, Scotland and Wales for the first time, the BSL Act 2022 will make a considerable difference to Deaf BSL signers across the country. The new Board will provide personal and expert advice to the government on the implementation of the Act.

Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work, Tom Pursglove MP, said:

“The British Sign Language Act is a key step to removing some of the barriers experienced by Deaf people in everyday life.

“The BSL Board will ensure we are guided and advised by those who know best how to make these important changes. I am delighted to announce Craig's appointment and look forward to working with him to create a more inclusive, accessible, and fair society for everyone.”

The Board's remit will be:

- advising on the use of BSL in public communications and policy delivery
- advising on how to tackle key issues facing Deaf people, such as how to increase the numbers of BSL interpreters

A senior civil servant will serve as the other co-chair. The Board membership will comprise of at least 16 members plus the co-chairs, with a majority of Deaf BSL signers. Membership will also include Deafblind people and/or those who use tactile sign.

The main criteria for appointment for all independent members will include a lived experience of BSL, alongside a willingness to work collaboratively in assisting the government to be more accessible.

ENDS

Further information:

[BSL version of press notice](#)

Members of the Board will be appointed soon.

Biography for Craig Crowley MBE FRSA

Craig Crowley is CEO of Action Deafness, a Deaf-led charity providing BSL interpreting and community support. He was founder Chair and Honorary President of UK Deaf Sport and obtained an MBE in 2006 in recognition of his service to Deaf Sport. He has also been a former Trustee of Signature and founding Trustee of the National Register of Communication Professionals working with Deaf People.

Mr Crowley currently serves as a Trustee for the Royal School for the Deaf, Derby.

As a former Chair of the UK Council on Deafness, Mr Crowley was a key figure in the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Deafness, advocating for improved access to BSL in public services and greater equity regarding Access to Work funding.

He has pioneered partnerships amongst local Deaf charities to assist in the development of new services. These collaborations have benefitted the Deaf community and provided financial sustainability for key organisations.

Minister Anne-Marie Trevelyan addresses National Press Club of Australia

Thank-you Andrew. Good afternoon everyone.

I want to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land, the Ngunnawal people, and pay respect to elders past and present.

Thank-you also to the National Press Club for giving me the privilege to speak with you today.

I understand every Australian Prime Minister and Opposition leader for the last 40 years has addressed the National Press Club – so –

I am delighted to be in such great company.

In this job, you learn to never pick a fight with people who buy ink by the barrel and I'm looking at all of you.

However, I hope the journalists in the room today will indulge me in highlighting a recent piece in The Australian.

The article asked if the UK would have the “strategic bandwidth” to focus on the Indo-Pacific, in the light of our immense support for Ukraine.

It is a fair challenge. And one that I want to address head-on.

As the UK’s newly appointed Minister for the Indo-Pacific, my answer is that we cannot afford to do anything other than focus on this region.

It is home to half the world’s people, and half of projected global growth.

It will have a huge hand to play in the global economy for decades and centuries to come. Particularly through rules-setting alliances such as the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).

It is a glittering hub of innovation, full of natural partners for British scientists, researchers and tech developers.

With the right policies and support, the high growth economies of the Indo Pacific can help lead the world to net zero.

And with 60% of global shipping passing through the region – security and stability here, has a direct impact in British homes and on British businesses.

In short, this region is critical to the UK – to our economy, our security and to the international rules based system, that both our countries cherish.

Which is why last year, when the UK Government set out our strategic direction for the next decade in our Integrated Review, we committed to pursuing deeper engagement and building stronger relationships and partnerships through an “Indo-Pacific Tilt”. This approach is one which our new Prime Minister is absolutely committed to.

Australia is of course one of our closest and most like-minded partners in the region.

In fact I think there are few countries in the world that enjoy such strong historical, political and cultural bonds as we do together

From the dark days of the Second World War to our joint fight against ISIS, we have stood side-by-side, in defence of our shared values and interests. AUKUS is perhaps a continuation of that tradition.

So when it comes to our Indo-Pacific Tilt, Australia is very much a magnetic force for us.

A reliable partner, whose counsel and judgement we respect.

Over the last couple of years we have been working to cement our Indo Pacific

‘Tilt’ through new agreements, stronger relationships and new institutional bonds.

This demonstrates that we do have the “strategic bandwidth” to focus on the Indo-Pacific, and to continue our support to Ukraine.

I will say more about those ties in a minute, but first I want to reflect on Ukraine.

Russia’s assault on Ukraine is illegal and unjustifiable. And it simply cannot be allowed to succeed.

If we allow Russia to violate another country’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, every single international border becomes less secure.

President Putin underestimated the resolve of Ukrainians.

The UK alongside Australia and our international partners, stand united against the Russian government’s egregious violation of international law and the UN Charter.

In January up to 70 Australian Defence Force personnel will deploy to the UK to help provide training to Ukrainian soldiers.

The UK’s total package of military, humanitarian and economic support for Ukraine amounts to nearly £4 billion since the start of the invasion.

We have issued nearly 200,000 visas to enable Ukrainians to find safety in the UK.

That’s a commitment of over 7 billion Australian dollars, and the equivalent of relocating the population of Townsville to our shores.

To echo Foreign Secretary James Cleverly, Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific economies and security are indivisible.

Staunch cooperation and prosperous futures are built on so much more than geography.

We are in an era of borderless challenges and competition for knowledge, ideas and global resources.

So influence over energy, critical minerals, alongside innovation and technology, are just as likely to define how states interact and prosper.

Of course we cannot talk about the Indo-Pacific region, without considering the role of China.

The UK will always stand side-by-side with our international partners and allies, and this includes in how we respond to China.

It is important to have dialogue and maintain engagement and bilateral trade with China, a global actor and driver of growth. But China poses a systemic challenge to our shared values and interests when it departs from global

rules and norms, and when it aligns itself with aggressive countries like Russia.

Alongside our partners, the UK believes in a free and open Indo-Pacific.

So, I want to reassure you that the UK Government will always stand up for our sovereignty and economic security – and that of our partners.

Let me give you a brief glimpse into the partnerships we've been building right across the Indo Pacific in three broad areas: security and defence; resilience and tackling climate change; and trade and investment.

First, our historic [AUKUS agreement](#) reflects the unique trust between the UK, US and Australia. It reflects our shared values, and our joint commitment to Indo-Pacific security.

We have made good progress on the deal, entering the final stretch of an eighteen-month feasibility study to deliver nuclear-powered submarine capability for Australia.

The UK and Australia share a long and proud history of naval cooperation. But AUKUS will be more than just this important generation of submarines for the Australian Navy.

Our collaboration on cutting edge defence technology will give our countries a competitive edge, ensuring our people are kept safe from harm and enhancing our ability to achieve shared goals, including promoting security and stability in the Indo-Pacific.

Second, the UK has increased our defence presence in the whole region.

Last year our Carrier Strike Group toured the region engaging with over 40 countries.

Our offshore patrol vessels HMS Spey and HMS Tamar are now stationed in the Indo-Pacific to be able to work with key allies and partners consistently and to build closer relationships and understanding.

HMS Tamar is one of the Royal Navy's newest and greenest ships, and she recently visited Darwin.

HMS Astute, first of her class and one of the most advanced nuclear submarines in the world, docked in Perth last year.

Our maritime partnerships are about promoting the international rules based system, and the fundamental right under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, for maritime vessels to move freely in international waters.

Third, we are working with partners to build their capacity to tackle threats to regional stability.

From illegal and unregulated fishing, to defending maritime law, to tackling serious and organised crime.

We can overcome these challenges by working with allies and partners, listening and responding to regional concerns is at the very heart of our approach.

Listening to the region, and working in partnership, is also central to our approach to building resilience, particularly to climate change.

I have just come from the [12th Conference of the Pacific Community](#) in Vanuatu.

I met with Vanuatu's Prime Minister Ishmael Kalsakau, and Minister of Foreign Affairs Jotham Napat, and learnt about their priorities of their recently-elected government.

They were very clear that Vanuatu is on the front line of the climate emergency.

So we will be working even more closely with them and with other partners to accelerate global action on climate change. Good intentions aren't enough, action and better finance flow to these most vulnerable communities is now imperative.

The UK is also supporting the delivery of the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, which sets out Pacific countries' vision for a cleaner, safer and more resilient future.

Following the UK's Presidency of COP 26, 90% of the global economy is now committed to net zero, covering 88% of global emissions.

And 90% of the world's forests are now protected under the Glasgow Leaders Declaration for Forests and Land Use.

But keeping the world to a 1.5 degree pathway is the challenge of our time. As Alok Shama said at Sharm El Sheik, just a couple of weeks ago it is really hanging by a thread right now. We can see this in the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Synthesis Report and in Australia's State of the Climate Report released last week.

I am pleased Australia has legislated for a new emissions target of 43% by 2030, and net zero by 2050.

And we welcome Australia's ambition to host COP 31 alongside Pacific partners.

The changes we need to make to our infrastructure and economies are a challenge. But the opportunities on the horizon in the green and clean economy are immense.

In the UK we now have 43% of electricity from renewable sources. We are a global leader in off-shore wind, and we will continue to work with Australia and countries in the region on their own transitions.

I am also delighted to announce a new development a little closer to here in

Canberra.

The British High Commission building will soon be home to our new Pacific Development Unit, which will help us deliver even more support for those nations suffering the harmful impacts of climate change.

The third sector of cooperation I will touch upon is trade and investment.

As the former Trade Secretary, I was committed to building the exchange of ideas and technology that we share with Australia.

Last year, we launched the Space Bridge, a new partnership to increase trade, investment, research and collaboration between our space sectors.

The UK is building similar win-win partnerships with economies and sectors across the region.

We gained ASEAN Dialogue Partner status last year, and agreed a Plan of Action over the summer, recognising the importance of ASEAN centrality to maintaining peace and prosperity across the region.

We were the first European country to secure a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with India.

And we intend to be the first European country to accede to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership.

For the UK, the benefits of membership speak for themselves: access to a high standards, free trade area worth over 16 trillion Australian Dollars a year.

And a potential market of half a billion customers in some of the fastest growing economies on the planet.

But this isn't just about benefits for the UK.

In the CPTPP we will be staunch friends to Australia.

We will be an unequivocal advocate for high standards and greater collaboration on priorities like developing our green and digital economies, and making our supply chains more resilient.

As many of you may know we are finalising the enabling legislation in the UK Parliament for our bilateral free-trade deal with Australia.

As an MP for a rural constituency, I know from sheep farmers in the North East of England that there are strong views on both sides.

But as I tell them, we have achieved a modern, world class, comprehensive deal that is good for the UK and good for Australia.

It won't just end tariffs on goods, and slash red tape for businesses, it will open up opportunities for our citizens to live and work in each other's countries.

There's a golden rule in story-telling, show don't tell.

But I hear you say – that's rich coming from me as I've just spent the last 15 minutes telling you about the UK's commitment to the Indo-Pacific!

So I'll close by showing you what we are doing

I am here, in the region. Our ships are here. Our people are here. Our High Commissions and Consuls across Australia and the Indo-Pacific are here – including six missions across the Pacific Islands, three of which we have opened in the last three years – in Vanuatu, Samoa and Tonga.

We are building science, trade and defence partnerships with Australia and our partners across the Indo-Pacific.

We are global Britain, and you are modern Australia.

We celebrate what our countries have already achieved together, and we look ahead to facing the challenges that come together.

Thank you.

Government to use Vaccine Taskforce model to tackle health challenges

- Funding for innovative research into improved treatments, including cancer immune therapies or vaccines and game-changing weight loss medication and technologies, to accelerate their development and rollout
- Prime Minister, Health and Social Care Secretary and Business Secretary will meet with key industry experts, global CEOs and NHS leaders to leverage further investment and ensure NHS patients benefit from cutting-edge new treatments
- Builds on £1 billion investment since publication of Life Sciences Vision and delivers on commitments to cement the UK as a life sciences superpower

NHS patients are set to benefit from cutting-edge new treatments and technologies as the government introduces a Vaccine Taskforce style approach to tackling some of the biggest public health challenges facing the UK.

The government has today announced over £113 million to fund research into four healthcare missions – cancer, obesity, mental health and addiction – to unlock the next generation of medicines and diagnostics to save lives, transform patient care and ensure UK patients are the first to benefit from medical breakthroughs.

Building on the Vaccine Taskforce model which led to one of the most

successful vaccine roll outs in the world and ensured millions got a Covid jab, the government will continue to harness world-leading research expertise, remove unnecessary bureaucracy, strengthen partnerships and support the new healthcare challenges.

Since the [Life Sciences Vision](#) was first launched it attracted £1 billion investment to the UK and this further research funding is expected to gain investment from leading global companies.

In addition, tackling these healthcare challenges could save the NHS and the economy billions of pounds – it is estimated obesity costs the NHS £6.1 billion a year and poor mental health costs the economy £118 billion a year.

The Prime Minister, Health and Social Care Secretary and Business Secretary will today meet with key industry figures, including global CEOs, NHS leaders and industry experts at the Life Sciences Council to discuss how their support will deliver life-changing innovations to patients, boost NHS efficiency and ensure the UK remains a global life sciences superpower.

The Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak, said:

The NHS faces real pressures, which is why we are investing over £100 million in the technologies and medicines of the future to address some of the biggest public health challenges facing our country.

This funding will improve outcomes for patients, ease existing pressures on the system and ensure that we are amongst the first to benefit from medical breakthroughs. Importantly it will also help save the NHS millions of pounds that could otherwise be spent on patient care – for example by tackling obesity which costs the health service over £6 billion annually.

It is hugely welcome too that the highly successful Vaccine Taskforce, which procured millions of life-saving vaccines in record time during the pandemic, will now become a blueprint for how we harness the best talent and expertise from around the world and drive investment in research and development.

Health and Social Care Secretary Steve Barclay said:

Conditions such as cancer and obesity prevent people leading long, healthy lives and cost the NHS billions of pounds every year.

We're leading the way in cutting-edge research which can find new ways to speed up diagnosis, enhance treatments and ensure a better quality of life for patients – both now and in the future.

By harnessing the same spirit of innovation that delivered the vaccine rollout and working hand in hand with the NHS, industry and

healthcare experts.

We're building a stronger, healthier NHS with record numbers of staff and record funding, to give people the security of knowing it will be there for them when they need it.

The research will focus on the top public health priorities, as identified by the NHS:

- Cancer: £22.5 million will go into cancer research to develop new immune-based cancer therapies, including cancer vaccines, which are targeted to a patient's specific cancer. Funding will also support the development of technologies that enable earlier, more effective cancer diagnosis. This will support progress towards the NHS Long Term Plan ambition to diagnose three-quarters of cancers at Stages 1 or 2 by 2028.
- Mental health: £40.2 million for research into mental health to develop and introduce digital technologies to support patients. This could include technology allowing patients to monitor their mental health at home and instantly report to their doctor if in need of help. Funding will be spent in the Midlands and the North to bolster services and ensure people across the UK can access support, helping level up health across the country. With one in four adults experiencing mental illness, poor mental health costs the economy £118 billion a year.
- Obesity: £20 million to trial how best to deliver new medicines and technologies for people living with obesity, particularly in deprived communities across the UK. This will help new medicines coming to market – some of which have the potential to reduce a person's weight by more than 20% – to better support people to achieve a healthy weight. The mission will explore how these medicines can be combined with cutting-edge technologies and digital tools to improve long-term health outcomes. Obesity costs the NHS £6.1 billion a year and helping people lose weight and lead healthier lifestyles could lead to significant savings.
- Addiction: £30.5 million, including funds contributed through collaboration with Scottish Government, will be deployed to accelerate the development of new technologies to prevent deaths from overdoses across the UK. This could include wearable devices which can detect the onset of a drug overdose and signal to first responders to prevent deaths, and better support people with substance use disorders to manage and combat their addiction. Funding will also help grow research capacity and capability across the UK to better understand addiction and the most effective ways to treat it as a chronic healthcare condition.

The new funding follows the [launch of the dementia mission](#) in August 2022 in

memory of the late Dame Barbara Windsor – backed by £95 million – to develop innovative research tools and boost the number and speed of clinical trials in dementia and neurodegeneration. This contributes to the commitment to double funding for dementia research to £160 million a year by 2024/25.

In line with the Vaccines Taskforce, the four healthcare missions will be led by an independent chair – an expert in that field – to accelerate the development and introduction of the latest treatments and technology into the NHS, as well as drive collaboration across partners. This will not only ensure better care for patients, but also improve the accuracy of diagnosis and free up clinician time, helping tackle the Covid backlog and ease pressure on health services.

The chairs will be appointed by an expert panel dedicated to each mission – this includes Kate Bingham who headed up the Vaccine Taskforce. The process will be completed soon so the research projects can get underway as quickly as possible.

The government is committed to ensuring patients benefit from the latest treatments and NHS England has also announced today that around 9,000 men with one of the most advanced forms of prostate cancer will be eligible for a new life-extending treatment as the NHS becomes the first in Europe to roll out darolutamide to patients whose prostate cancer has spread to other parts of the body. The deal was approved through Project Orbis, an international collaboration with top regulators around the world which enables quicker patient access to breakthrough cancer medicines.

Today also sees Innovate UK launch a new £30 million fund to advance life-changing cancer therapeutics delivered through the Biomedical Catalyst (BMC) programme. This new programme directly supports the UK government's cancer mission, combining expertise in immuno-oncology and the vaccine capabilities developed throughout the pandemic.

Minister of State for Health Will Quince said:

We have made immense strides in health research over the past year and it's crucial we continue to harness this enthusiasm and innovation.

These new healthcare missions commit to putting the lessons we've learnt into action to drive the UK forwards as a life sciences superpower.

By bottling up this scientific brilliance our Life Sciences Vision puts this innovation at the heart of our health service, helping to solve major health challenges – such as cancer and obesity – and enabling the NHS to continue delivering world class care.

Business Secretary Grant Shapps said:

The UK is a leading light in life sciences and more generally a science superpower. This funding builds on this reputation to create jobs and growth while serving as a catalyst for an avalanche of additional private investment.

These healthcare missions will drive innovations with the potential to transform the landscape of healthcare and save millions of lives, by tackling some of greatest health issues facing Britain and indeed the world.

NHS England Chief Executive, Amanda Pritchard said:

We have already seen the incredible ways that new technology and innovation can transform NHS care and the lives of patients across the country – from glucose monitors for people living with diabetes, laser therapy for those with epilepsy to genetic life-saving testing for severely ill children and babies.

Just today, we fast tracked a new drug deal for men with prostate cancer that can boost their survival – showing that the NHS is already at the forefront of delivering the latest treatments for patients.

Working with partners, we want to build on this work even further so we can work to tackle the country's biggest healthcare challenges.

Eluned Morgan MS, Minister for Health and Social Services Welsh Government said:

Last year, the UK government set out a bold and ambitious vision for life sciences that promises to deliver better healthcare outcomes for all patients across the UK. Wales has a proven track record in many of the key areas identified – dementia, mental health, genomics, cancer research and linked data – all of which play a very significant role in improving clinical outcomes and driving innovation both nationally and around the world. To maximise the potential of the Life Science agenda for the UK it is important that any investment is fully committed to delivering on 'levelling up' and it is incumbent upon all partners to work together so that our common objectives are realised across the four nations.

Professor Dame Anna Dominiczak, Chief Scientist for Health in Scotland said:

The missions launched today cover conditions that have a huge impact on people's lives. Bringing together academia, industry and

the NHS offers exciting possibilities for the development of new approaches to their prevention, diagnosis and treatment.

Drugs Policy Scottish Minister Angela Constance said:

In Scotland, we are experiencing an ongoing public health crisis of drug-related deaths, and finding solutions in innovation and new technology to inform future strategy is one way in which we can help prevent deaths and improve lives.

I therefore welcome this collaboration between the Scottish Government's Chief Scientist's Office and the UK Government Office for Life Sciences which focusses on rapid detection, response and intervention to potential overdoses. This ensures immediate action, helping people who use drugs and their support networks to work together to save lives.

Background

- As well as launching the Missions, the Health and Business Secretaries announced a suite of additional measures to further cement the UK's global leadership in Life Sciences. This includes:
- Ensuring NHS patients can access new medicines rapidly through Ministerial engagement with the pharmaceutical industry to ensure access safe, ground-breaking new medicines rapidly, whilst guaranteeing value for money for the NHS. This will build on flagship agreements which have already enabled NHS patients to access a new cancer drug before any other European country and enabled children in the UK to be amongst the first in the world to access a new medicine to treat Spinal Muscular Atrophy.
- Dedicated new Life Sciences Investment Envoy: with the Business Secretary appointing Dan Mahony, Chair of the BIA and Entrepeneur in Residence at Evotec, to the role last week. The new Envoy will champion access to finance for the UK Life Sciences sector by bridging the UK's Financial and Life Science industries. Last week's Investor Roadshow kicked this off, convening over 90 world-leading investors.
- Through [Project Orbis](#), the UK's medicines regulator, the MHRA, has teamed up with regulators in the US, Canada, Australia, Switzerland, Singapore and Brazil to review and approve applications for promising cancer treatments quickly so patients can benefit earlier.

Government joins with households to

help millions reduce their energy bills

- New £1 billion ECO+ scheme will see hundreds of thousands of homes across the country receive new home insulation, saving consumers around £310 a year
- ECO+ will extend support to those in the least energy efficient homes in the lower Council Tax bands, as well as targeting the most vulnerable
- a new £18 million campaign will give the public advice on how they can save hundreds on their own bills without sacrificing comfort

Business and Energy Secretary Grant Shapps today (Monday 28 November) launches a government push to help millions of people across the country bring down their energy costs for this winter and beyond.

It is part of wider action this week across energy policy to help the UK meet its ambition of becoming energy independent.

Under plans announced today, the new ECO+ scheme will extend support to those who do not currently benefit from any other government support to upgrade their homes. Joining the existing £6.6 billion 'Help to Heat' energy schemes this new £1 billion funding will ensure hundreds of thousands more households benefit from new home insulation and with that, lower bills.

Plus a new £18 million public information campaign will also offer technical tips and advice for people to cut their energy use, while also keeping warm this winter. Alongside the impact on their bills from the Energy Price Guarantee, the campaign will demonstrate how consumers can make significant savings.

Of the £1 billion funding available through the new ECO+ scheme, around 80% of the funding will be made available for those households who are in some of the least energy-efficient homes in the country – that is, those with an EPC rating of D or below – and in the lower Council Tax bands.

This will benefit those households who do not currently benefit from any other government support to upgrade their homes. Around a fifth of the fund will also be targeted to those who are the most vulnerable, including those on means tested benefits or in fuel poverty.

On top of this, the government will significantly expand its Help for Households campaign to help customers to reduce their own household energy usage and bills, while also giving vulnerable groups the right information for doing this without harming their health.

This includes promoting some of the government's top recommended actions to help households save money on their energy bills, such as:

- reducing the temperature a boiler heats water to before it is sent to radiators (known as the boiler flow temperature) from 75°C to 60°C

- turning down radiators in empty rooms
- reducing heating loss from the property such as by draught proofing windows and doors

It also comes ahead of the Business and Energy Secretary setting out his latest package of measures to deliver home-grown, affordable energy – helping to cut bills and bolster the country's long-term energy security and independence.

Business and Energy Secretary Grant Shapps said:

The government put immediate help in place to support households in the wake of global energy price rises caused by Putin's illegal march on Ukraine. Today, we launch the first of many measures to ensure the British public are never put in this position again as we work towards an energy independent future.

A new ECO scheme will enable thousands more to insulate their homes, protecting the pounds in their pockets, and creating jobs across the country.

And in the short term, our new public information campaign will also give people the tools they need to reduce their energy use while keeping warm this winter.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Jeremy Hunt said:

With Putin's war driving up gas prices worldwide, I know many families are feeling worried about their energy bills this winter and beyond. Our extensive energy support package is insulating people from the worst of this crisis, but we're also supporting people to permanently cut their costs.

In the longer term, we need to make Britain more energy independent by generating more clean, affordable, home-grown power, but we also need more efficient homes and buildings.

Our new ECO+ scheme will help hundreds of thousands of people across the UK to better insulate their homes to reduce consumption, with the added benefit of saving families hundreds of pounds each year.

Making homes more energy efficient is the best way to cut household energy use and is already helping reduce household energy bills, while also creating jobs across the country.

Since it was launched in January 2013, the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) schemes have delivered as many as 3.5 million energy-efficiency measures in around 2.4 million homes. The ECO+ scheme, which will run from spring 2023

for up to 3 years, extends that support even further and will see hundreds of thousands of households receive new insulation, saving them around £310 a year.

By rolling out predominantly low-cost insulation measures such as loft insulation and cavity wall insulation, the ECO+ scheme will support the government's new ambition to reduce the UK's final energy consumption from buildings and industry by 15% by 2030. The £1 billion scheme is backed by a new £6 billion investment to contribute to the existing £6.6 billion energy efficiency funding pot.

The new funding pot will also provide long-term funding certainty across for the industry, supporting the growth of supply chains and green jobs in the sector, as the government takes further action to tackle fuel poverty and reduce energy bills.

Improving the energy efficiency of UK homes is a crucial part of the government's strategy. Thanks to government support so far, the number of homes with an energy efficiency rating of C or above is at 46% and rising, up from just 13% in 2010. We are investing over £6.6 billion over this Parliament to help decarbonise homes and buildings, and to ensure all homes meet EPC band C by 2035. An additional £6 billion of new government funding will be made available from 2025 to 2028. Further details on allocation of additional funding will follow in due course.

To further support households and help meet the government's new energy demand reduction target, the government has also expanded its public awareness campaign to help reduce bills for households and protect vulnerable people over the winter and beyond. Backed by £18 million, this campaign will complement existing government support schemes, such as the Energy Price Guarantee and the Energy Bills Support Scheme and the information provided will save households money. For example, if a typical household reduced their boiler flow temperature from 75°C to 60°C and turned down radiators in empty rooms, they could save £160 a year on their energy bill at current prices. This also has the benefit of reducing the temperature a boiler heats water to before sending it to radiators, while making no difference to the temperature a room is actually heated to.

Information will be available on the existing Help for Households [website](#).

The government is delivering a new energy demand reduction target announced at the Autumn Statement to reduce energy demand by 15% by 2030.

The £6 billion of new government funding to back this target will be made available from 2025 to 2028.

This provides long-term funding certainty, supporting the growth of supply chains, and ensuring we can scale up our delivery over time.

Further details on allocation for this additional funding will follow in due course.

This is on top of £6.6 billion of existing spend in this parliament through

Help to Heat schemes including the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, Home Upgrade Grant and Local Authority Delivery Scheme.

ECO+

The existing ECO scheme (known as ECO4) is targeted at those who need support most; those in social housing, on a low-income or fuel poor. However, with the significant increase in energy bills, the government intends up to 80% of ECO+ to help a wider customer base who are currently not eligible for support under existing government-backed energy efficiency schemes.

The UK Government intends to lay necessary legislation for the scheme to launch in spring 23 and run until March 26. However, the government also plans to work with energy suppliers to explore the potential for some earlier delivery in 2023.

The [consultation](#) will run from 28 November to 23 December.

Trade Secretary: Wales Life Sciences sector key to UK growth

- New DIT report reveals how trade and investment will boost growth for the UK's world-leading Life Sciences sector
- On her first visit to Wales as Trade Secretary, Kemi Badenoch hosts the Board of Trade in Cardiff and will then visit a newly expanded pharmaceutical manufacturing company working on pioneering cancer therapies
- She will also announce 28 leading business figures as the first Export Champions for Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland to boost trade across the Union

Trade Secretary Kemi Badenoch visits Wales today (Monday 28 November) where she will praise Welsh companies as 'critical' to the UK's life sciences sector and back them to play a pivotal role in the UK Government's growth plans.

Badenoch will host the Board of Trade in Cardiff and launch the Board's report on Life Sciences, which sets out the opportunities the sector offers for economic growth across all the UK's nations and regions. Life sciences is one of five growth industries named by the Chancellor when he set out plans to change EU regulations in his Autumn Statement earlier this month.

The UK directly employs more than a quarter of a million people in the sector, with 50% of jobs located outside of London, East of England and the South East. Wales is known as a hotspot for Life Sciences companies employing

more than 12,000 people and generating £2.5bn in turnover across 270 sites, an important contribution to the UK's economy.

President of the Board of Trade and Trade Secretary Kemi Badenoch said:

Whether it is inventing new ways to combat cancer, diagnose disease or simplify surgery, Wales is critical to our life sciences sector.

Three quarters of our life sciences market is exporting to the world and with a 12,000 strong workforce covering everything from PPE production to tissue regeneration, Wales is fuelling the UK's position as a science superpower.

This new report from the Board of Trade shows why our support to SMEs across the country to export is so important and why we are committed to ensuring the UK is a world-leading destination for life sciences investment.

Today's Board of Trade's report 'Life Sciences: [What's next for this top UK sector?](#)' marks Life Sciences Day and calls on the Department for International Trade (DIT) to further support this innovative sector by:

- Redoubling efforts to encourage Research & development and manufacturing
- Targeting lucrative markets by utilising DIT's international footprint
- Support scaling up and levelling up across the UK to ensure that businesses across regions and nations have access to export support.

The Board will hear from Welsh manufacturer and exporter Dulas Ltd, which has supported immunisation and health efforts across the world by providing the first mass-produced solar-powered vaccine refrigerator. DIT has supported Dulas to access international markets for export – helping the country, and the world, build back better from the pandemic.

Today, the Trade Secretary also announces twenty-eight leading business figures as the first Export Champions for Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, who will provide advice to UK businesses on how to break into international markets. Each Champion has been selected because they have a successful international trade track record.

Finally, she will visit PCI Pharma, who recently expanded its manufacturing facility in south Wales with a multi-million-pound investment. The expansion will help the company keep pace with global demand for the production of cancer therapies and create around 200 jobs once the facility is at full capacity.

Members of the Board of Trade are champions for exports and investment to deliver economic growth and prosperity across the whole of the UK. Domestically, they engage with business and people across the four nations to drum up support for trade and help companies export, and internationally,

they help Britain campaign for free and fair trade. The Board of Trade celebrated its 350th anniversary in September this year.

Wales:

- Paola Dyboski, Dr Zigs
- Rosie Davies, Rees Machinery Group Ltd T/A RMGroup
- Sina Yamani, Yoello
- Alison Lea-Wilson MBE, Halen Môn / Anglesey Sea Salt
- Tee Sandhu, Samosa Co
- Kamal Ali, My Salah Mat
- Stephen Davies, Penderyn
- John Pattinson, Air Covers

Scotland (identified and appointed jointly with Scottish Development International):

- Lee Hanlon, Cesscon Decom
- Luis Gomes, AAC Clydespace
- Hassan Heshmat, Hydro-C
- Katie Birrell, Nairn's Oatcakes
- Alistair Walker, Walker's Shortbread
- James Varga, DirectID
- Martin Murray, Dunnet Bay Distillery
- Anna White, The Scotland Shop
- Poonam Gupta, PG Paper
- Ian Stevenson, Cyacomb
- Federico Charosky, Quorum Cyber
- Shahida Imani, Chromacity
- Robert Kennedy, Optos

Northern Ireland:

- Alan Lowry, Environmental Street Furniture
- Roger Johnston, Axial3D
- Gabriel O'Keefe, Kiverco
- Martin McKary, Texthelp
- Patricia O'Hagan, Core Systems
- David Ausdahl II, Lowden Guitars
- Susie Hamilton-Stubber, Burren Balsamics