

# Balance:

## Wealth Planning

GUIDE TO THE

# Spring Budget 2024

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# Welcome

## *Spring Budget 2024 – what it means for you and your money*

In the Spring Budget 2024, Chancellor Jeremy Hunt made a significant announcement, revealing a further 2p cut in Class 1 National Insurance Contributions (NICs). He said this move is part of his strategy to support families through ‘permanent cuts in taxation’, demonstrating a commitment to long-term growth.

**W**hile this reduction in NICs may not be as impactful as a speculated cut to the Income Tax rate, it is expected to provide some relief for the workforce, particularly those feeling the financial strain. However, it's worth noting that the continued freeze on tax thresholds could gradually diminish the benefits of this NICs reduction over the next four years.

The Chancellor plans to finance this reduction through increased duty on tobacco and vapes and changes to the tax system for non-UK domiciles. The latter will result in higher taxes paid to the UK on foreign income and profits while encouraging inward investment by eliminating the ‘remittance basis’ taxation for these individuals.

Hunt also announced easing the Child Benefit income threshold, changing different taxes and revamping the Individual

Savings Account (ISA) system, introducing a new British ISA. This allows an extra £5,000 tax-efficient investment into UK equities beyond the current limits, which remain unchanged. Along with a new British Savings Bond, this measure aims to incentivise people to invest in UK-centric assets, with the goal of stimulating the economy in a targeted way. ◀

### WHAT DOES THE SPRING BUDGET 2024 MEAN FOR YOU?

Our review of the Spring Budget 2024 delves into the main announcements. If you need additional information or wish to explore how these measures might impact your finances or business, please contact us for a more in-depth discussion and details.

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THIS GUIDE TO SPRING BUDGET 2024 DOES NOT CONSTITUTE FINANCIAL, TAX OR LEGAL ADVICE AND SHOULD NOT BE RELIED UPON AS SUCH. FOR GUIDANCE, SEEK PROFESSIONAL ADVICE.



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# The key announcements of Chancellor Jeremy Hunt's speech at a glance

*An attempt to revitalise the economy while addressing key concerns of workers and parents*

Chancellor Jeremy Hunt positioned worker and parental tax cuts at the core of his Spring Budget 2024 in a move to bolster the economy. The most substantial change announced was a 2p reduction in the rate of Class 1 National Insurance paid by employees. This tax cut will be compensated for through tax rises in other areas, including business class fares, short-term holiday let owners, vapes and tobacco.

By contrast, a few taxes remain unchanged, such as fuel duty and alcohol duty, thereby providing some relief to consumers. In addition, the income limit for parents to qualify for child benefits has been increased, expanding the number of families eligible for this support.

A new initiative, dubbed 'British ISAs', has been introduced to stimulate investment in UK companies. These ISAs grant an additional £5,000 tax-free allowance for savings invested domestically.

These moves by Mr Hunt are seen as an attempt to revitalise the economy while addressing key concerns of workers and parents. Our Guide to Spring Budget 2024 summarises the key points announced.

## PUBLIC DEBT, INFLATION AND THE ECONOMY

### GROWTH

- Office for Budget Responsibility predicts the UK economy to grow by 0.8% this year and 1.9% next year
- Growth of 2% predicted for 2026, with 1.8% in 2027 and 1.7% in 2028

### PUBLIC DEBT

- Public debt, excluding Bank of England debt, is forecast to be 91.7% of GDP this year, rising to 92.8% next year

### INFLATION

- UK's inflation rate is forecast to fall below the 2% target by the end of June, falling to 1.5% next year

## TAXATION

- Class 1 National Insurance Contributions (NICs) cut for employees from 10% to 8%, and for the self-employed, Class 4 NICs cut from 8% to 6%
- 'The NICs cut means an additional £450 a year for the average employee or £350 for someone self-employed,' Mr Hunt said
- Non-UK domiciled tax regime for UK residents whose permanent home is overseas to be replaced with new rules from April 2025
- £5,000 UK Individual Savings Account (ISA) tax allowance for savers investing in 'UK-focused' shares to be set up following a consultation

## BENEFITS AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The High Income Child Benefit Charge, which affects payments if one parent earns above £50,000 a year, is to move to a household-based system – the threshold will rise to £60,000 from April in the meantime
- Partial Child Benefit to be paid where the highest earner earns up to £80,000
- Longer repayment period for people on benefits taking out emergency budgeting loans from the government
- Government fund for people struggling with cost of living pressures to continue for another six months
- £90 admin fee to obtain a debt relief order scrapped

## TRANSPORT AND ENERGY

- Fuel duty frozen again, with the 5p cut in fuel duty on petrol and diesel, due to end later this month, kept for another year
- 'Windfall' tax on the profits of energy firms, which had been scheduled to end in March 2028, extended until 2029
- Air passenger duty, the tax paid on flights, goes up for business class tickets
- £160 million deal for UK government to purchase site of planned Wylfa nuclear site in North Wales
- A further £120 million for a government fund that invests in green energy projects

## HOUSING

- The higher rate of property Capital Gains Tax will be reduced from 28% to 24%
- Tax breaks for owners of holiday let properties scrapped. Mr Hunt said the furnished holiday lettings regime created 'a distortion meaning that there are not enough properties available for long-term rental by local people'
- Stamp Duty tax break when purchasing multiple properties (known as Multiple Dwellings Relief) in England or Northern Ireland to end in June

## CIGARETTES, VAPES AND ALCOHOL

- Freeze on alcohol duty, which had been due to end in August, to continue until February 2025, benefitting 38,000 pubs across the UK
- New tax on vaping products from October 2026, linked to the levels of nicotine
- Tobacco duty to go up £2.00 per 100 cigarettes at the same time to ensure vaping remains cheaper

## BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT

- The threshold at which small businesses must register to pay VAT raised from £85,000 to £90,000 from April
- COVID-era government loan scheme for small businesses extended until March 2026
- Tax reliefs for touring and orchestral productions, which had been due to end in March 2025, made permanent

## OTHER MEASURES

- To help people save, a new British Savings Bond, delivered through NS&I, will offer a guaranteed rate and fixed for three years
- 40% corporate tax relief for film and TV studios through 2034
- New tax credit for independent films shot in the UK that have a budget of less than £15m
- 5% increase in credit for visual effects in film and high-end TV, along with the removal of the 80% cap.



## 2p cut in National Insurance Contributions

*Widely trailed in advance of the Budget and applying from 6 April*

Chancellor Jeremy Hunt confirmed a cut in National Insurance Contributions (NICs) in the Spring Budget. The cut, widely trailed in advance of the Budget and applying from 6 April, will cost the Treasury approximately £10 billion a year.

Mr Hunt said this was a further cut worth over £10 billion a year for workers, following the government NICs cut for 29 million workers in the Autumn Statement 2023.

The government is cutting the main rate of employee Class 1 NICs by 2p from 10% to 8% from 6 April 2024. Combined with the 2p cut announced at Autumn Statement 2023, the Chancellor said this will save the average worker on £35,400 over £900 a year.

The government is also cutting a further 2p from the main rate of self-employed Class 4 NICs on top of the 1p cut announced at Autumn Statement 2023. This means that from 6 April 2024, the main rate for the

self-employed will now be reduced from 9% to 6%. Combined with the abolition of the requirement to pay Class 2, the Chancellor announced that this will save an average self-employed person on £28,000 around £650 a year.

The Chancellor commented that the combined effects of these reductions to NICs also mean that a person on the average wage now has the lowest effective personal tax rate since 1975.

The Office For Budget Responsibility (OBR) forecasts that, as a result of the reductions to NICs at the Spring Budget, total hours worked will increase by the equivalent of almost 100,000 full-time workers by 2028/29. Combined with the impact of the NICs cuts announced at the Autumn Statement 2023, the OBR expects that total hours worked will increase by the equivalent of around 200,000 full-time workers by 2028/29. ◀

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# Non-UK domiciled tax status abolished

*Tax status applied to thousands of affluent foreign residents*

In a significant shift in UK tax policy, Chancellor Jeremy Hunt announced in the Spring Budget the abolition of the non-UK domiciled (non-dom) tax status, which has long been a point of contention within the nation's tax system. This tax status applied to thousands of affluent foreign residents in the UK, allowing them to limit the taxes they paid on overseas income.

This measure abolishes the remittance basis of taxation for non-dom individuals and replaces it with a simpler residence-based regime. Individuals who opt into the new regime will not pay UK tax on any foreign income and gains arising in their first four years of tax residence, provided they have been non-tax residents for the last ten years. This new regime will commence on 6 April 2025 and applies UK-wide.

Mr Hunt said this would create a 'fairer and competitive' tax system, replacing the existing framework with a more modern residency system. This move signifies a major overhaul aimed at increasing the government's tax

revenue, with projections suggesting it could raise approximately £2.7 billion annually.

The government will introduce the following transitional arrangements for existing non-doms claiming the remittance basis:

- an option to rebase the value of capital assets to 5 April 2019
- a temporary 50% exemption for the taxation of foreign income for the first year of the new regime (2025/26)
- a two-year Temporary Repatriation Facility to bring previously accrued foreign income and gains into the UK at a 12% rate of tax.

This decision marks a significant shift in the UK's approach to taxation, aiming to ensure that all residents contribute equitably to the nation's finances. It also signals a commitment to modernising the tax system and making it more competitive on a global scale.

The government will also reform Overseas Workday Relief (OWR). Eligible employees will be able to claim OWR for the first three years of tax residence, benefitting from Income Tax relief on earnings for employment duties carried out overseas but with current restrictions on remitting these earnings removed. ◀



## Rewarding working people

*Growing the economy while simultaneously delivering on public services*

In the Spring Budget 2024, Chancellor Jeremy Hunt outlined plans to reward working people across the United Kingdom. These reforms are designed to grow the economy while simultaneously delivering on public services, Mr Hunt announced.

### NATIONAL INSURANCE CONTRIBUTIONS (NICS) RATES

The government will cut the main rate of Class 1 employee NICs from 10% to 8%. This will take effect from 6 April 2024. The government will also make a further 2p cut to the main rate of self-employed National Insurance on top of the 1p cut announced in the Autumn Statement. This means that from 6 April 2024 the main rate of Class 4 self-employed NICs will now be reduced from 9% to 6%.

### CHILDCARE FUTURE FUNDING

The government confirmed that the hourly rate providers are paid to deliver the free hours offers for children aged 9 months to 4 years will increase in line with the metric used in Spring Budget 2023 for the next two years. This reflects that workforce costs are the most significant costs for childcare providers and represent an estimated additional £500 million of investment over two years.

### HIGH-INCOME CHILD BENEFIT CHARGE (HICBC) REFORM

Starting from April 2024, the HICBC threshold for eligibility will increase from £50,000 to £60,000, and the income level at which the entire benefit must be repaid will rise from £60,000 to £80,000.

These changes mean that nearly half a million families stand to benefit, with an average boost of close to £1,300. Additionally, Hunt has unveiled plans for a consultation to transition the HICBC to a system based on household income, set to be implemented by April 2026. It remains uncertain whether this proposed change will lead to another increase in the threshold.

### EXPLORING OPTIONS TO TARGET SUPPORT TO HOUSEHOLDS BETTER

The government will consult shortly on options to enable better targeting of economic support to households. This will improve the fairness of policies such as HICBC by allowing it to move to a system based on household income and the targeting of future economic support, including in times of crisis. ◀

# Reforming public spending

*Mr Hunt announces plans to build a stronger, more resilient economy that benefits all members of society*

Chancellor Jeremy Hunt's Spring Budget 2024 proposed a number of reforms to public spending. As Mr Hunt outlined, these reforms aim to build a stronger, more resilient economy that benefits all members of society. By streamlining processes, increasing efficiency and cutting down on wasteful expenditure, the Chancellor said he aims to create a more sustainable financial framework that can support the nation's needs in the long term.

He proposed reforms to public spending and set the stage for exploring the individual policies and measures he intends to implement as part of a progressive financial strategy.

## PRODUCTIVITY OF PUBLIC SERVICES

Despite this increase in funding, the average productivity of public services is estimated to be 5.9% below pre-pandemic levels. Returning productivity to pre-pandemic levels would deliver up to £20 billion of benefits a year.

To address this, the government is announcing the next steps in the Public Sector Productivity Programme, including a comprehensive NHS productivity plan backed by £3.4 billion of funding.

This will double investment in NHS technological and digital transformation, including upgrading vital MRI scanners, rolling out universal electronic patient records and reducing the time frontline workers spend on administrative tasks. This will help unlock £35 billion in cumulative productivity savings from 2025/26 to 2029/30.

## ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR THE NHS

The government is allocating an additional £2.5 billion to the NHS in England for 2024/25, protecting day-to-day funding in real terms and supporting the NHS's continued improvement in performance and reduction of waiting times.

## MATERNITY CARE

The government and NHS England will invest nearly £35 million over three years from 2024/25 to 2026/27 to improve maternity safety across England, with specialist training for staff, additional midwives and support to



ensure maternity services listen to and act on women's experiences to improve care.

## NHS AGENCY STAFFING

The government will work with NHS England to reduce agency staffing costs, including ending the use of expensive 'off-framework' agency staffing from July 2024 while ensuring that emergency cover can continue. NHS England will also introduce measures to review agency price caps, tighten controls and rules around agency staffing, and improve support and transparency.

## POLICE PRODUCTIVITY AND TECHNOLOGY

The government is giving police forces £230 million to pilot or roll out cutting-edge technology such as live facial recognition, automation and using drones as first responders. The government will establish a Centre for Police Productivity to support police forces' use of data and deliver this technology, maximising productivity and the use of AI.

## EXPANDING COUNTER FRAUD CAPABILITY THROUGH DEPLOYING AI

The government is announcing £34 million to expand the Public Sector Fraud Authority by deploying AI to help combat fraud across the public sector, making it easier to spot, stop and catch fraudsters, thereby saving £100 million for the public purse.

## NEW SPECIAL FREE SCHOOLS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

A £105 million initial investment was also announced to fund an additional wave of 15 special free schools. This builds on the significant levels of capital invested at Spending Review 2021 to create additional places for children with special educational needs and disabilities.

## ALTERNATIVE PROVISION FREE SCHOOL LOCATIONS

The government confirmed the location of 20 alternative provision free schools in England as part of the Spending Review 2021 commitment to invest £2.6 billion capital in high-needs

## CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE REFORM

The government will provide £45 million match funding to local authorities to build an additional 200 open children's home placements and £120 million to fund the maintenance of the existing secure children's home estate.

The government will also develop proposals on what more can be done to combat profiteering, bring down costs and create a more sustainable market for residential placements, which it will publish later this year. Furthermore, it will work with the Local Government Pension Scheme to consider the role they could play in unlocking investment in new children's homes. ◀



# A fair and sustainable tax system

*Chancellor explains measures to boost the UK's long-term growth*

**C**hancellor Jeremy Hunt's Spring Budget 2024 plans to implement a fairer and more sustainable tax system. Dubbed the 'Budget for Long-Term Growth', it focuses on investing in high-potential industries. However, it has also drawn criticism for prioritising short-term relief measures over long-term sustainability, particularly in relation to a green economy.

Despite some contention, Mr Hunt's tax strategy, he said, underpins the Spring Budget 2024 and sets the tone for his ambitious financial roadmap for the UK.

## INVESTMENT IN HMRC DIGITAL SERVICES

The government will improve and simplify HMRC's digital services to support Income Tax Self-Assessment for taxpayers seeking to pay tax in instalments. These changes will be implemented in September 2025.

## ENERGY PROFITS LEVY EXTENSION AND PRICE FLOOR LEGISLATION

The government is extending the Energy Profits Levy (EPL) to the end of March 2029. At the same time, to give the oil and gas sector certainty that the EPL will not apply if prices fall below the levels set by the Energy Security Investment Mechanism, the government is delivering on its commitment to provide for the mechanism in legislation through the Spring Finance Bill 2024.

## VAPING PRODUCTS DUTY

The government will introduce a new duty on vaping products from 1 October 2026, with registrations for the duty opening from 1 April 2026. The rates will be £1.00 per 10ml for nicotine-free liquids, £2.00 per 10ml on liquids that contain 0.1-10.9 mg nicotine per ml, and £3.00 per 10ml on liquids that contain 11mg or more per ml. A 12-week consultation will be published on the policy design and technical details alongside the Spring Budget. The government will also introduce a one-off tobacco duty increase of £2.00 per 100 cigarettes or 50 grams of tobacco from 1 October 2026.

## AIR PASSENGER DUTY (APD) RATES

The 2025/26 APD rates for economy passengers will increase in line with the

forecast RPI, rounded to the nearest pound. Rates for premium economy, business and first class, and private jet passengers will also increase by the forecast RPI and will be further adjusted for recent high inflation to help maintain their real-term value.

## STARTING RATE FOR SAVINGS

The government will maintain the starting rate for savings, the 0% band for savings income, at £5,000 from 6 April 2024 to 5 April 2025.

## AMENDING GIFT AID LEGISLATION DUE TO IMPLICATIONS OF THE DIGITAL MARKETS, COMPETITION AND CONSUMERS BILL

The Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Bill is introducing new protections for consumers who take out subscription contracts. The government will amend existing Gift Aid legislation by Statutory Instrument so that charities can continue to claim Gift Aid while complying with these new protections. The government's intention is that these amendments to the Gift Aid regime will be in place by the time the relevant provisions of the Bill come into force.

## INVESTMENT IN HMRC DEBT MANAGEMENT CAPABILITY

The government is investing a further £140 million to improve HMRC's ability to manage tax debts. This will expand HMRC's debt management capacity to support both individual and business taxpayers out of debt faster and collect tax that is due.

## CRYPTO-ASSET REPORTING FRAMEWORK

The government is launching a consultation to seek views on how best to implement the Crypto-Asset Reporting Framework and Amendments to the Common Reporting Standard. As announced on 10 November 2023, these changes will be made in time to ensure that information exchanges take place from 2027.

## TRANSFER OF ASSETS ABROAD

The government will legislate in the Spring Finance Bill 2024 to ensure individuals cannot use a company to bypass anti-avoidance legislation, known as Transfer of Assets Abroad (ToAA) provisions, in order to avoid UK Income Tax. The changes will take effect for income arising to a person abroad from 6 April 2024. ◀



*The government is investing a further £140 million to improve HMRC's ability to manage tax debts. This will expand HMRC's debt management capacity to support both individual and business taxpayers out of debt faster and collect tax that is due.*





Key among these measures is a robust focus placed on supporting UK households through a series of initiatives designed to provide immediate financial relief.

# Supporting households

*Mr Hunt aims to alleviate financial pressures and improve the standard of living for families*

**C**hancellor Jeremy Hunt announced that the Spring Budget 2024 focuses on supporting households across the UK. This plan is anchored by a series of measures designed to alleviate financial pressures and improve the standard of living for families nationwide.

Mr Hunt said the key among these measures is a robust focus placed on supporting UK households through a series of initiatives designed to provide immediate financial relief.

## FUEL DUTY MAIN RATES

The government is freezing fuel duty rates for 2024/25, a tax cut worth £3.1 billion over 2024/25. The temporary 5p cut in fuel duty rates will be extended until March 2025, and the planned inflation increase for 2024/25 will not take place.

## ALCOHOL DUTY FROZEN

The government will freeze alcohol duty from

1 August 2024 until 1 February 2025. This extends the six-month freeze announced at Autumn Statement 2023, to support the hospitality sector and help consumers with the cost of living.

## PREPAYMENT METER (PPM) LEVELISATION

As announced by Ofgem on 23 February, the government is delivering on its commitment to remove the prepayment meter (PPM) standing charge premium on an enduring basis, saving PPM customers an average of £50 a year.

## CHANGES TO DEBT RELIEF ORDERS

The government is making changes to Debt Relief Orders (DROs) in England and Wales. In April 2024, the government will remove the £90 administration fee. In June 2024, the government will amend the eligibility criteria for DRO entry, raising both the maximum debt value threshold and the maximum value

of motor vehicles. Scotland and Northern Ireland will receive equivalent Barnett Consequential funding.

## UNIVERSAL CREDIT: EXTENDING BUDGETING ADVANCE REPAYMENT PERIODS

The government will increase the maximum repayment period on new Budgeting Advance loans from 12 months to 24 months. This will apply to Budgeting Advances taken from December 2024 onwards.

## HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND EXTENSION

To help the most vulnerable households with the cost of essentials such as food and utilities, the government is also providing an additional £500 million (including Barnett impact) to enable the extension of the Household Support Fund in England from April to September 2024. ◀

# Housing

*What does the Spring Budget mean for the housing sector?*

In the Spring Budget 2024, Chancellor Jeremy Hunt made a series of key announcements to address the housing situation in the UK, which, he said, signified a commitment to revitalising the sector.

The overall plan is a key housing component of the UK's economic and social framework and a key pillar of the UK's economic and social landscape, Mr Hunt announced.

## COMMUNITY HOUSING

An investment of £20 million in a social finance fund to support the development of community-led housing schemes over ten years was announced, subject to a business case.

## CAPITAL GAINS TAX: HIGHER RATE CUT FOR RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY

From 6 April 2024, the higher rate of Capital Gains Tax for residential property disposals will be cut from 28% to 24%. The lower rate will remain at 18% for any gains that fall within an individual's basic rate band. Private Residence Relief will continue to apply, meaning most

residential property disposals will pay no Capital Gains Tax.

## ABOLITION OF FURNISHED HOLIDAY LETTINGS TAX REGIME

The government is abolishing the Furnished Holiday Lettings tax regime, eliminating the tax advantage for landlords who let short-term furnished holiday properties over those who let residential properties to longer-term tenants. This will take effect from 6 April 2025 and draft legislation will be published in due course.

## STAMP DUTY LAND TAX: ABOLITION OF MULTIPLE DWELLINGS RELIEF

From 1 June 2024, Multiple Dwellings Relief, a bulk purchase relief in the Stamp Duty Land Tax regime in England and Northern Ireland, will be abolished. Property transactions with contracts exchanged on or before 6 March 2024 will continue to benefit from the relief regardless of when they are completed, as will any other purchases completed before 1 June 2024.

## STAMP DUTY LAND TAX: ACQUISITIONS BY REGISTERED SOCIAL LANDLORDS AND PUBLIC BODIES

The legislation will be updated to ensure that from 6 March 2024, registered providers of social housing in England and Northern Ireland are not liable for Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT) when purchasing property with a public subsidy and public bodies will be exempted from the 15% anti-avoidance rate of SDLT.

## STAMP DUTY LAND TAX: FIRST-TIME BUYERS' RELIEF FOR NOMINEE PURCHASERS

From 6 March 2024, the rules for claiming First-Time Buyers' Relief from Stamp Duty Land Tax in England and Northern Ireland will be amended so that individuals buying a leasehold residential property through a nominee or bare trustee, including victims of domestic abuse, will be able to claim First-Time Buyers' Relief. ◀

*From 6 April 2024, the higher rate of Capital Gains Tax for residential property disposals will be cut from 28% to 24%. The lower rate will remain at 18% for any gains that fall within an individual's basic rate band.*



# Financial system, savings, pension funds

*Supporting British growth and individuals in securing their financial future*

**C**hancellor Jeremy Hunt, in the Spring Budget 2024, laid out plans for the financial system, focusing on savings and pension funds. He announced this to support British growth and individuals in securing their financial future.

Overall, Mr Hunt said, these measures underscore the government's commitment to promoting long-term financial wellbeing for the UK's citizens.

## BRITISH SAVINGS BONDS

The government has announced that National Savings & Investments (NS&I) will launch a product which will offer consumers a guaranteed interest rate, fixed for three years. This product will increase savings opportunities available to consumers in the UK and will be brought on sale in early April 2024.

## UK INDIVIDUAL SAVINGS ACCOUNT (ISA)

Mr Hunt unveiled that the British ISA will come in the form of an extra £5,000

tax-efficient allowance to encourage retail investment in UK-listed companies. This is in addition to the current £20,000 that can be subscribed into an ISA. The Chancellor said those opening British ISAs would 'benefit from the growth of the most promising UK businesses'.

## NATWEST RETAIL OFFER

The government intends to deliver a sale of part of its NatWest shareholding to retail investors. A sale would take place this summer at the earliest, subject to supportive market conditions and achieving value for money for the taxpayer. Further information will be made available on gov.uk.

## NATWEST SHAREHOLDING

The government intends to fully exit its shareholding in NatWest Group by 2025/26, subject to supportive market conditions and sales representing value for money.

## PENSIONS LIFETIME PROVIDER

The government has confirmed that it remains committed to exploring a lifetime provider model for Defined Contribution (DC) pension schemes in the long term. The government will undertake continued analysis and engagement to ensure that this would improve outcomes for pension savers, and build on the foundations of reforms already underway, including the Value for Money Framework. ◀



# Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

*Building an economy that fosters a balanced and thriving business ecosystem*

**C**hancellor Jeremy Hunt's commitment in the Spring Budget 2024, he said, was to support Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the UK to build an economy that fosters a balanced and thriving business ecosystem.

The Budget outlined a number of measures aimed at providing financial relief and promoting growth among these businesses. Mr Hunt announced these proposals, which reflect the government's strategy to bolster economic growth by empowering SMEs and recognising their crucial role in the UK.

## EXTENSION OF THE RECOVERY LOAN SCHEME (RLS)

The Recovery Loan Scheme has been

renamed as the Growth Guarantee Scheme and extended until the end of March 2026. The scheme offers a 70% government guarantee on loans to SMEs of up to £2 million in Great Britain, and £1 million in Northern Ireland.

## HMRC GUIDANCE ON RETRAINING TAX DEDUCTIBILITY

HMRC has published new guidance around the tax deductibility of training costs for sole traders and the self-employed. This guidance ensures that updating existing skills, and maintaining pace with technological advancements and changes in industry practices, are allowable costs when calculating taxable profits.

## VAT REGISTRATION THRESHOLD: INCREASE TO £90,000

The government will increase the VAT registration threshold from £85,000 to £90,000, and the deregistration threshold from £83,000 to £88,000, freezing them at these levels. These changes will apply from 1 April 2024.

## FINANCIAL PROMOTION EXEMPTIONS

The government will legislate to reinstate the previous eligibility criteria to qualify as a high net worth or sophisticated investor. The government will carry out further work to review the scope of the exemptions. ◀

# Spring Budget 2024: How will my finances and business be affected?

If you want to discuss how the announced measures could affect your finances or business, please contact us for more information.

**We look forward to hearing from you.**

The content of this Spring Budget 2024 summary, which was produced on Wednesday 6 March 2024, is for your general information and use only and is not intended to address your particular requirements. The content should not be entirely relied upon and shall not be deemed to be, or constitute, advice. Although endeavours have been made to provide accurate and timely information, there can be no guarantee that such information is accurate as of the date it is received or that it will continue to be accurate in the future. Individuals or companies should only act upon such information if they receive appropriate professional advice after thoroughly examining their particular situation. We cannot accept responsibility for any loss due to acts or omissions taken regarding the content. Thresholds, percentage rates and tax legislation may change in subsequent Finance Acts. Levels and bases of, and reliefs from, taxation are subject to change, and their value depends on an individual's personal circumstances.