



Nigel Huddleston MP

Member of Parliament for Mid Worcestershire



Reporting Back on March 2024

Chancellor announces Spring Budget 2024

March started with a pivotal fiscal event as the Chancellor announced the Spring Budget 2024 on March 6. In my role as Financial Secretary to the Treasury, I was delighted to join the Chancellor outside the door of Downing Street and then be in the Chamber to see him deliver the Spring Budget we have been working on. It is a budget that prioritises long-term growth and fiscal responsibility focusing on reducing the tax burden for millions of workers and incentivising business investment.

Some of the key measures of Spring Budget 2024 include:

- A reduction of employee National Insurance by a further 2%, to a rate of 8% from the 6th of April for 27 million workers. Two million self-employed also get a second tax cut through a further reduction in the NICs main rate from 8% to 6%.
- Raising the High Income Child Benefit Charge (HICBC) threshold to £60,000, increasing the threshold to receive any child benefit to £80,000 and halving the rate at which it is repaid. The Government will also consult on moving the High-Income Child Benefit Charge to a household-based system, ending the unfairness on single-earner families by April 2026.
- A £3.45 billion funding for the NHS productivity plan.
- Cutting Capital Gains Tax on residential property sales.
- Abolishing non-domicile status.

I know that the announcements on further cuts in National Insurance contributions and changes to the high income benefit charge will be particularly pleasing for my constituents in Worcestershire, and I look forward to working alongside the Chancellor and my ministerial colleagues to deliver upon our promises to further cut taxes and generate long term economic growth.

Of course, while the Spring Budget contained tax cuts for employees and the self-employed which will be brought in from April, 12 million pensioners will also see increases in pensions of between £690 and £900 a year from April as a result of the 8.5% increase due to the triple lock that was confirmed in the Autumn Statement. And thousands of workers in the constituency will also benefit from the increase in the National Living Wage on 1 April to £11.44 per hour.



£460,000 funding for a new pedestrian crossing in Droitwich

The Government has announced £101 million of funding to promote 'Active Travel', making it easier and safer to choose to cycle or walk. This includes £460,000 for a new pedestrian crossing in Westlands, Droitwich, with further funding from Worcestershire County and Wychavon District Councils bringing the total up to £1 million.

Connecting the estate to the economic opportunities of the town, the funding is an important step to help enable those in Westlands to be able to better access Droitwich town centre and promises to bring social and economic benefits. Furthermore, with safety and accessibility at the heart of Active Travel schemes, the new crossing will address the current safety risks at the busy A38 roundabout and, most significantly, will be both wheelchair and cycle-friendly.

This funding is something that I, alongside Councillors Mike Rouse and Richard Morris, have long campaigned for. I pay tribute to their hard work and perseverance in securing this vital funding for Droitwich.



Government announces Independent Football Regulator

Introduced as part of a wider Football Governance Bill, the legislation to create a new independent regulator will aim to block clubs from joining breakaway leagues, create a new licensing scheme for owners, and enable more fan representation. The Bill delivers on the Government's longstanding commitment to protect the national game.

Football clubs are at the heart of our local communities, however, the collapse of Bury FC and the failed attempt by some English clubs to join a breakaway European Super League have demonstrated the need for more accountability to fans. As a former Minister for Sport, I know that the Government is right to give greater access to fans through the new independent regulator.

[Details of the new legislation can be found here.](#)

Animal Welfare Bill Backed in Parliament

I have also supported a landmark Private Members Bill, which has been brought forward by North Devon MP Selaine Saxby. Dog lovers in Mid Worcestershire will soon be assured about the health and safety of puppies in their community thanks to the proposed new Animal Welfare (Importation of Dogs, Cats and Ferrets) Bill. This law that aims to prevent puppy smugglers from importing poorly and ill dogs was backed in Parliament by the Government.

Under the Animal Welfare (Importation of Dogs, Cats and Ferrets) Bill, people selling pets would be banned from importing puppies under six months old, and heavily pregnant dogs would also not be allowed to travel, while 'mutilated' animals, such as puppies with cropped ears, would also be stopped. By ensuring pets can only be brought into this country in the proper and correct ways, this Bill will help bring puppy smuggling to an end.

[Details of this Bill can be found here.](#)



The Department for Education has announced £1.8 billion in capital funding for the 2024-25 financial year to improve the condition of buildings and grounds in schools and sixth-form colleges in England. Additionally, the Department of Education will also allocate £850 million of capital allocations to local authorities to support the creation of new places for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or who require alternative provision.

I have spent a significant amount of time in the House of Commons this month, particularly to present the Spring Budget and the resulting National Insurance Bill.

In my speech presenting the Spring Budget, I explained the Government's accomplishments in recovering the economy, bringing inflation down to less than 4% and cutting taxes, and further plans for growth and decreased tax burden. I also outlined what good news the new Budget will bring for pensioners and those on low incomes. The excerpts can be found below.



Following the Spring Budget, the Government put the National Insurance Bill, which lowers NICs to 6%, to Parliament. An excerpt from my speech on the Bill can be found below.



Other updates from Westminster:

- [Attending Building Digital UK's Parliamentary drop-in session](#)



- Appearance on BBC's Any Questions



- Prince Henry's High School and Offenham First School visit Parliament



- Roundtable Discussion on the Spring Budget with TechUK



- Welcoming Work Experience Student Bridget Jones



This month in Worcestershire

March has been a busy month in Westminster, with the spring budget and getting legislation through Parliament. It has been equally busy in the constituency as well, where I have visited many businesses, events and organisations. A key focus this month has been tourism, with English Tourism Week and the Worcestershire Tourism Awards being hosted in Ombersley Court in my constituency. I was delighted to see two Mid Worcestershire-based winners at these awards, and I would like to congratulate both Hadley Bowling Green Inn and Battle of Evesham teams.

With the weather improving as we head into the spring months, I have taken the opportunity to enjoy some time in our beautiful countryside. I took a tour along part of the Blossom Trail and also visited local National Trust properties including Hanbury Hall and Hidcote.

We also had reason to celebrate in Evesham as the Almonry received over £2million of Arts Council funding for much needed refurbishment and maintenance. Congratulations to the team for securing this grant.

Another highlight was visiting Claire Dyson's stud farm in Cleeve Prior. It was hugely enjoyable to spend a morning watching the water treadmill in use and to also see some horses do a piece of work on the gallops. It was great to learn of Claire's charity work too, raising over £110,000 for the Air Ambulance.

I was also delighted to present, on behalf of the Prime Minister, a Point of Light Award to Karen Blanchfield – the founder of Little Litter Warriors.

Further visits and events are highlighted in the link and pictures below:

- [Meeting with Severn Trent and Avove](#)



- Visit to White Logistics and Storage Ltd



- Presenting PM Point of Light award to Karen Blanchfield, founder of 'Little Litter Warriors'



- Visit to Claire Dyson Equine Water Treadmill and Rehabilitation Centre



- Litter Picking in Evesham for GB Spring Clean



- Attending the Visit Worcestershire Tourism Awards



- Visit to Hanbury Hall



Walking the Blossom Trail



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