



# Grow and Tend

Your monthly dose of news and opportunities for SMEs.



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November 24, 2023



## 10-Second Intro

Afternoon everyone!

If Grow and Tend looks slightly different this month, you're not seeing things. As the Contract Finder Pro team looks ahead to 2024, I'm switching up the newsletter.

From now on, Grow and Tend will cover the biggest news stories that every SME needs to know about, alongside procurement and AI news and the best new tenders.

On that note, if you want to discover more of the latest tenders from the UK, Republic of Ireland, and the EU, [simply head here](#).

First up, I have to talk about the Autumn Statement...



## What the Autumn Statement means for business owners

All eyes were on the Chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, this week as he unveiled the Autumn Statement. And here's the news that small business owners need to know:

- **Self-employed Class 2 National Insurance is being abolished.**

Self-employed business owners will no longer have to pay Class 2 NICs from April 2024, no matter how much they're earning. This is a blessing, given how convoluted the NIC system is for self-employed entrepreneurs.

- **Self-employed Class 4 National Insurance is being lowered.**

Class 4 NICs are also being lowered in April 2024, from 9% to 8%. According to the Treasury, these changes to Class 2 and 4 NICs should save a self-employed person on £28,200 per year about £350.

- **The small business multiplier is being frozen.**

The multiplier—which determines your rate of business tax—has been frozen at 49.9p for the last four years. Small businesses are guaranteed another year at this rate.

- **Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief Scheme extended.**

This scheme gives qualifying businesses in these sectors a 75% relief on their business rates, and it'll continue in 2024-25.

## UK Small Business News

- The British Business Bank has launched a new [Investment Fund for Northern Ireland](#), with a share of £70 million available in grants and loans for small businesses.
- [FundOnion](#) is the UK's first business finance comparison website – use it to search and compare the cost of business loans from over 20 providers.
- Small business lender Funding Circle has partnered with Enfuce to launch a [new small business credit card](#), which you can use to pay for everyday expenses.
- The UK Government is [tackling late payments](#) to small businesses, but we'll have to wait for an official review to see how far they're willing to go.

## Procurement News

- The long-awaited Procurement Bill [received 'royal assent' last month](#), marking its transformation into the Procurement Act – it's due to go live in October 2024.
- NHS sustainability requirements will [extend to all new contracts in January 2024](#), which means every supplier has to prove that they have a net zero strategy in place.

## Trending Technology News

- [43% of UK SMEs](#) won't explore AI solutions in the next year because of safety concerns.
- Tech adoption [among UK SMEs is slow](#), which could spell disaster in the case of large-scale AI adoption in the future.
- A new grant finder powered by AI, [Funding Finder](#), makes it easier for SMEs to find financial support.
- 28 countries have signed the '[Bletchley Declaration](#)', committing to the safe use of AI (this should offer some comfort if you're part of the 43% of SMEs above.)

## Best New Tenders!

### [Digital Marketing Services](#)

The Royal Air Force Museum

 £750,000

 Deadline: **8th December**

### [Online Academic Writing Support](#)

University of Ulster

 £1,800,000

 Deadline: **11th December**

### [Provision of Weapon Storage Boxes](#)

Ministry of Defence

 £300,000

 Deadline: **22nd December**

### [Gravesend Town Centre Christmas Illuminations 2024-2026](#)

Gravesend Borough Council

💰 £75,000

🕒 Deadline: **23rd February 2024**

## 🎉 A £100k Project for an Independent Architecture Company

Bidding is tough for small, independent companies. But just because you're small, doesn't mean you can't win.

This month, independent architecture firm Macgregor Smith secured a [£100k contract](#) for a new landscape design project in Plymouth city centre.

### Landscape Design

Published: 8/11/2023

Award 🔖 ✉️ 🔔 ⋮

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**Plymouth City Council** [🔗](#)

79415200 Design consultancy services ↕

**Location** UNITED KINGDOM

**Value** £99,150

**Duration** 3 years

**Contract Dates** 1/10/2022 »  
1/10/2025

Single Lot

**Single Contractor Appointed**  
🔗 **Macgregor Smith**

**Closed** : 8/11/2023

Finished

Landscape Design Old Town Street and New George Street

**Award Criteria**  
Not Specified

**View** [🔗](#)

This award proves that tendering is all about finding the right opportunities. If your tiny business is the best match, you can go up against Goliaths.

That's all for this edition, folks. See you next month for our last newsletter of the year!

*Lianne and the rest of the Contract Finder Pro team*

## Keep reading



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