

# Summary version of the Annual Report and Accounts 2021-22

*Keeping markets competitive is more important than ever, as consumers struggle with the rising cost of living and businesses seek to grow following the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.*

The CMA's action has delivered annual savings of at least £2 billion to consumers – which works out at £22.50 of direct benefit for every £1 spent by the CMA.

## Key achievements on each theme in the CMA Annual Plan

### Protecting consumers, particularly the vulnerable, from breaches of competition and consumer protection laws and poorly functioning markets, including

- imposing fines of over £400 million on pharmaceutical companies for breaches of competition law;
- recommending improvements in the provision of children's social care;
- continuing to tackle the sale of fake online reviews, opening an investigation into Amazon and Google over concerns that they are not doing enough to combat fake reviews on their sites;
- freeing thousands of leaseholders from increasing ground rent terms that saw them trapped in homes they struggled to sell or mortgage; and
- issuing new guidance for IVF clinics on consumer rights.



### Fostering competition to promote innovation, productivity and growth, including

- operating a strong and independent system of merger control to ensure businesses continue to compete, innovate and grow;
- blocking the \$5 billion merger of Cargotec and Konecranes;
- clearing the merger between Virgin and O2; and
- securing legally binding commitments in several cases to address serious competition concerns, including from Cellnex to sell over 1,000 telecoms tower sites following its purchase of CK Hutchinson's UK towers.



## Fostering competition in digital markets, including

- securing legally binding commitments from Google to address competition concerns over its proposed removal of third-party cookies from the Chrome browser (known as the Privacy Sandbox proposals);
- requiring Facebook (now Meta) to sell Giphy after finding that the deal could harm social media users and UK advertisers; and
- launching our 'Online Rip-Off, Tip-Off' campaign, fronted by Angellica Bell, to help people avoid sneaky online sales tactics.



## Supporting the transition to a low-carbon economy, including

- making recommendations and enforcing competition law to support the growth of effective competition in electric vehicle charging;
- publishing advice on the use of 'green' claims; and
- providing advice to government on how competition and consumer regimes can better support the UK's net zero and sustainability goals.



## Taking our place as a global competition and consumer authority, including

- assuming substantial additional responsibilities following the UK's exit from the European Union; and
- launching the shadow Digital Markets Unit, setting up and launching the Office for the Internal Market, and recommencing our work to create the Subsidy Advice Unit.



We have continued to increase our **engagement with consumers, businesses and charities across the nations and regions of the UK**, building on our initiatives to get closer to consumers and improve our understanding of the issues they are facing. We are excited at the prospect of further **growing our presence in the nations and regions**, both through our offices in Belfast, Cardiff and Edinburgh and through plans for new offices in the English regions in Manchester and Darlington.