

Time-line framework taken from Wikipedia.org

NWN – articles from the Newbury Weekly News

Form the BBC:

The Chinese government locked down the city of Wuhan. For weeks beforehand officials had maintained that the outbreak was under control - just a few dozen cases linked to a live animal market. But in fact the virus had been spreading throughout the city and around China.

By 30 December, several people had been admitted to hospitals in the central city of Wuhan, having fallen ill with high fever and pneumonia. The first known case was a man in his 70s who had fallen ill on 1 December. Many of those were connected to a sprawling live animal market, Huanan Seafood Market, and doctors had begun to suspect this wasn't regular pneumonia.

Samples from infected lungs had been sent to genetic sequencing companies to identify the cause of the disease, and preliminary results had indicated a novel coronavirus similar to Sars. The local health authorities and the country's Center for Disease Control (CDC) had already been notified, but nothing had been said to the public.

Although no-one knew it at the time, between 2,300 and 4,000 people were by now likely infected, according to a [recent model by MOBS Lab at Northeastern University in Boston](#). The outbreak was also thought to be doubling in size every few days. Epidemiologists say that at this early part of an outbreak, each day and even each hour is critical.

30 December 2019: Virus alert

At around 16:00 on 30 December, the head of the Emergency Department at Wuhan Central Hospital was handed the results of a test carried out by sequencing lab Capital Bio Medicals in Beijing.

She went into a cold sweat as she read the report, according to an interview given later to Chinese state media.

At the top were the alarming words: "SARS CORONAVIRUS". She circled them in bright red, and passed it on to colleagues over the Chinese messaging site WeChat.

Within an hour and a half, the grainy image with its large red circle reached a doctor in the hospital's ophthalmology department, Li Wenliang. He shared it with his hundreds-strong university class group, adding the warning, "Don't circulate the message outside this group. Get your family and loved ones to take precautions."

When Sars spread through southern China in late 2002 and 2003, Beijing covered up the outbreak, insisting that everything was under control. This allowed the virus to spread around the world. Beijing's response invoked international criticism and - worryingly for a

regime deeply concerned about stability - anger and protests within China. Between 2002 and 2004, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (Sars) went on to infect more than 8,000 people and kill almost 800 worldwide.

Over the coming hours, screen shots of Li's message spread widely online. Across China, millions of people began talking about Sars online.

It would turn out that the sequencers made a mistake - this was not Sars, but a new coronavirus very similar to it. But this was a critical moment. News of a possible outbreak had escaped.

The Wuhan Health Commission was already aware that there was something going on in the city's hospitals. That day, officials from the National Health Commission in Beijing arrived, and lung samples were sent to at least five state labs in Wuhan and Beijing to sequence the virus in parallel.

Now, as messages suggesting the possible return of Sars began flying over Chinese social media, the Wuhan Health Commission sent two orders out to hospitals. It instructed them to report all cases direct to the Health Commission, and told them not to make anything public without authorisation.

Within 12 minutes, these orders were leaked online.

It might have taken a couple more days for the online chatter to make the leap from Chinese-speaking social media to the wider world if it wasn't for the efforts of veteran epidemiologist Marjorie Pollack.

The deputy editor of ProMed-mail, an organisation which sends out alerts on disease outbreaks worldwide, received an email from a contact in Taiwan, asking if she knew anything about the chatter online.

Back in February 2003, ProMed had been the first to break the news of Sars. Now, Pollack had *deja vu*. "My reaction was: 'We're in trouble,'" she told the BBC.

Three hours later, she had finished writing [an emergency post](#), requesting more information on the new outbreak. It was sent out to ProMed's approximately 80,000 subscribers at one minute to midnight.

31 December: Offers of help

As word began to spread, Professor George F Gao, director general of China's Center for Disease Control [CDC], was receiving offers of help from contacts around the world.

China revamped its infectious disease infrastructure after Sars - and in 2019, Gao had promised that China's vast online surveillance system would be able to prevent another outbreak like it.

But two scientists who contacted Gao say the CDC head did not seem alarmed.

"I sent a really long text to George Gao, offering to send a team out and do anything to support them," Dr Peter Daszak, the president of New York-based infectious diseases

research group EcoHealth Alliance, told the BBC. But he says that all he received in reply was a short message wishing him Happy New Year.

Epidemiologist Ian Lipkin of Columbia University in New York was also trying to reach Gao. Just as he was having dinner to ring in the New Year, Gao returned his call. The details Lipkin reveals about their conversation offer new insights into what leading Chinese officials were prepared to say at this critical point.

"He had identified the virus. It was a new coronavirus. And it was not highly transmissible. This didn't really resonate with me because I'd heard that many, many people had been infected," Lipkin told the BBC. "I don't think he was duplicitous, I think he was just wrong."

Ian Lipkin says he thinks Gao should have released the sequences they had already obtained. My view is that you get it out. This is too important to hesitate."

Gao, who refused the BBC's requests for an interview, has told state media that the sequences were released as soon as possible, and that he never said publicly that there was no human-to-human transmission.

That day, the Wuhan Health Commission issued a press release stating that 27 cases of viral pneumonia had been identified, but that there was no clear evidence of human to human transmission.

It would be a further 12 days before China shared the genetic sequences with the international community.

The Chinese government refused multiple interview requests by the BBC. Instead, it gave us detailed statements on China's response, which state that in the fight against Covid-19 China "has always acted with openness, transparency and responsibility, and ... in a timely manner."

1 January 2020: International frustration

International law stipulates that new infectious disease outbreaks of global concern be reported to the World Health Organization within 24 hours. But on 1 January the WHO still had not had official notification of the outbreak. The previous day, officials there had spotted the ProMed post and reports online, so they contacted China's National Health Commission.

"It was reportable," says Professor Lawrence Gostin, Director of the WHO Collaborating Center on national and global health law at Georgetown University in Washington DC, and a member of the International Health Regulations roster of experts. "The failure to report clearly was a violation of the International Health Regulations."

Dr Maria Van Kerkhove, a WHO epidemiologist who would become the agency's Covid-19 technical lead, joined the first of many emergency conference calls in the middle of the night on 1 January.

"We had the assumptions initially that it may be a new coronavirus. For us it wasn't a matter of if human to human transmission was happening, it was what is the extent of it and where is that happening."

It was two days before China responded to the WHO. But what they revealed was vague - that there were now 44 cases of viral pneumonia of unknown cause.

China says that it communicated regularly and fully with the WHO from 3 January. But recordings of internal WHO meetings obtained by the Associated Press (AP) news agency some of which were shared with PBS Frontline and the BBC, paint a different picture, revealing the frustration that senior WHO officials felt by the following week.

"There's been no evidence of human to human transmission' is not good enough. We need to see the data," Mike Ryan WHO's health emergencies programme director is heard saying.

The WHO was legally required to state the information it had been provided by China. Although they suspected human to human transmission, the WHO were not able to confirm this for a further three weeks.

"Those concerns are not something they ever aired publicly. Instead, they basically deferred to China," says AP's Dake Kang. "Ultimately, the impression that the rest of the world got was just what the Chinese authorities wanted. Which is that everything was under control. Which of course it wasn't."

2 January: Silencing the doctors

The number of people infected by the virus was doubling in size every few days, and more and more people were turning up at Wuhan's hospitals.

But now - instead of allowing doctors to share their concerns publicly - state media began a campaign that effectively silenced them.

On 2 January, China Central Television ran a story about the doctors who spread the news about an outbreak four days earlier. The doctors, referred to only as "rumour mongers" and "internet users", were brought in for questioning by the Wuhan Public Security Bureau and 'dealt with' 'in accordance with the law'.

One of the doctors was Li Wenliang, the eye doctor whose warning had gone viral. He signed a confession. In February, [the doctor died of Covid-19](#).

The Chinese government says that this is not evidence that it was trying to suppress news of the outbreak, and that doctors like Li were being urged not to spread unconfirmed information.

But the impact of this public dressing down was critical. For though it was becoming apparent to doctors that there was, in fact, human-to-human transmission, they were prevented from going public.

A health worker from Li's hospital, Wuhan Central, told us that over the next few days "there were so many people who had a fever. It was out of control. We started to panic. [But] The hospital told us that we were not allowed to speak to anyone."

The Chinese government told us that "it takes a rigorous scientific process to determine if a new virus can be transmitted from person to person".

The authorities would continue to maintain for a further 18 days that there was no human-to-human transmission.

3 January: Secret memo

Labs across the country were racing to map the complete genetic sequence of the virus. Among them was a renowned virologist in Shanghai, Professor Zhang Yongzhen who began sequencing on 3 January.

After having worked for two days straight, he obtained a complete sequence. His results revealed a virus that was similar to Sars, and therefore likely transmissible.

On 5 January, Zhang's office wrote to the National Health Commission advising taking precautionary measures in public places.

"On that very day, he was working to try and get information released as soon as possible, so the rest of the world could see what it was and so we could get diagnostics going", says Zhang's research partner, Professor Edward Holmes an evolutionary virologist at the University of Sydney.

But Zhang could not make his findings public. On January 3, the National Health Commission had sent a secret memorandum to labs banning unauthorised scientists from working on the virus and disclosing the information to the public.

"What the notice effectively did," says AP's Dake Kang, "is it silenced individual scientists and laboratories from revealing information about this virus and potentially allowing word of it to leak out to the outside world and alarm people."

None of the labs went public with the genetic sequence of the virus. China continued to maintain it was viral pneumonia with no clear evidence of human-to-human transmission.

It would be six days before it announced that the new virus was a coronavirus, and even then, it did not share any genetic sequences to allow other countries to develop tests and begin tracing the spread of the virus.

Three days later, on 11 January, Zhang decided it was time to put his neck on the line. As he boarded a plane between Beijing and Shanghai, he authorised Holmes to release the sequence.

The decision came at a personal cost - his lab was closed the next day for "rectification" - but his action broke the deadlock. The next day state scientists released the sequences they had obtained. The international scientific community swung into action, and a toolkit for a diagnostic test was publicly available by 13 January.

Despite the evidence from scientists and doctors, China would not confirm there was human-to-human transmission until 20 January.

At the beginning of any emerging disease outbreak, says health law expert Lawrence Gostin, it's always chaotic. "It was always going to be very difficult to control this virus, from day

one. But by the time we knew [the international community] it was transmissible human to human, I think the cat was already out the bag, it already spread.

"That was the shot we had, and we lost it."

*As Wang Linfa, a bat virologist at Duke-Nus Medical School in Singapore, says: "**January 20th is the dividing line**, before that the Chinese could have done much better. After that, the rest of the world should be really on high alert and do much better."*

From Wikipedia:

January 2020

- Wuhan Municipal Health Commission, China, reported [a cluster of cases of pneumonia](#) in Wuhan, Hubei Province. A novel coronavirus was eventually identified.

1 January 2020 WHO had set up the IMST (Incident Management Support Team) across the three levels of the organization: headquarters, regional headquarters and country level, putting the organization on an emergency footing for dealing with the outbreak.

4 January 2020 WHO [reported on social media](#) that there was a cluster of pneumonia cases – with no deaths – in Wuhan, Hubei province.

5 January 2020 WHO published our [first Disease Outbreak News](#) on the new virus. This is a flagship technical publication to the scientific and public health community as well as global media. It contained a risk assessment and advice, and reported on what China had told the organization about the status of patients and the public health response on the cluster of pneumonia cases in Wuhan.
- **10 January 2020** WHO issued a comprehensive package of technical guidance online with advice to all countries on how to detect, test and manage potential cases, based on what was known about the virus at the time. This guidance was shared with WHO's regional emergency directors to share with WHO representatives in countries.
- Based on experience with SARS and MERS and known modes of transmission of respiratory viruses, infection and prevention control guidance were published to protect health workers recommending droplet and contact precautions when caring for patients, and airborne precautions for aerosol generating procedures conducted by health workers.
- **12 January 2020** China publicly [shared](#) the genetic sequence of COVID-19.
- **13 January 2020** Officials confirm a case of [COVID-19 in Thailand](#), the first recorded case outside of China.
- **14 January 2020** WHO's technical lead for the response noted in a press briefing there may have been limited human-to-human transmission of the coronavirus (in the 41 confirmed cases), mainly through family members, and that there was a risk of a possible wider outbreak. The lead also said that human-to-human transmission

would not be surprising given our experience with SARS, MERS and other respiratory pathogens.

- **20-21 January 2020** WHO experts from its China and Western Pacific regional offices conducted a brief field visit to Wuhan.
- **22 January 2020** WHO mission to China issued a [statement](#) saying that there was evidence of human-to-human transmission in Wuhan but more investigation was needed to understand the full extent of transmission.
- 23 January – The [Foreign and Commonwealth Office](#) advises against all but essential travel to the city of Wuhan, the original epicentre of the outbreak.
- 25 January – The Foreign and Commonwealth Office advises against all travel to China's [Hubei Province](#), where the city of Wuhan is located.^[5]
- 27 January – The Health Secretary, [Matt Hancock](#), tells the House of Commons that 200 British citizens trapped in [Wuhan, China](#), will be offered repatriation to the UK, in light of the [coronavirus outbreak there](#).^[6]
- 28 January – The Foreign and Commonwealth Office updates its travel advisory, advising against all but essential travel to the rest of [Mainland China](#).^[7]
- 29 January – [British Airways](#) suspends all flights to and from mainland China with immediate effect, due to the ongoing coronavirus threat.^[8]
- 31 January – The first two cases of [coronavirus \(2019-nCoV\) in the United Kingdom](#) are confirmed.^[9]

February 2020

- 6 February – A third case of coronavirus is confirmed in the UK.^[10]
- 10 February – The total number of cases in the UK reaches eight as four further cases are confirmed in people linked to an affected man from [Brighton](#).^{[11][12]}
- 11 February – A ninth case is confirmed in London.^[13]
- 23 February – The [DHSC](#) confirms a total of 13 cases in the UK as four new cases in passengers on the cruise ship [Diamond Princess](#) are detected. They are transferred to hospitals in the UK.^[14]
- 25 February – Government guidance states that travellers returning from [Hubei](#), Iran, and certain regions of South Korea should self-isolate on reaching home or their destination, even if they have no symptoms.^[15]
- 26/27 February – There is a coronavirus outbreak at a [Nike](#) conference in [Edinburgh](#) from which at least 25 people linked to the event are thought to have contracted the virus, including 8 residents of Scotland. [Health Protection Scotland](#) establishes an incident management team, and full contact tracing is done for delegates who have tested positive.^[16]
- 27 February
 - The total number of confirmed cases in the UK is reported as 16.^{[17][18]}
 - Authorities confirm the first case of [coronavirus](#) in Northern Ireland.^[19]
- 28 February
 - The first British death from the disease is confirmed by the [Japanese Health Ministry](#); a man [quarantined](#) on the [Diamond Princess](#) cruise ship.^[20]
 - Authorities confirm the first case of coronavirus in Wales, an individual who recently returned from holiday in Italy.^[21]

- 29 February
 - Three further cases of the virus are confirmed, bringing the total number of confirmed cases to 23, after 10,483 people have been tested.^[22] Two of the three affected people had recently returned from Italy while the third had come back from Asia.^[23]
 - Around 442,675 calls were made to the [non-emergency line 111](#) in the last week of February.^[24]

March 2020



- **1–10 March**
- 1 March – A further 13 cases are reported, adding [Greater Manchester](#) to the list of areas affected and bringing the total to 36, three of which are believed to be contacts of a case in Surrey who had no history of travel abroad.
- 2 March – The government holds a [COBRA](#) meeting to discuss its preparations and response to the virus, as the number of UK cases jumps to 36.

Brexit - Jim Brunsden (Financial Times EU Correspondent) - This is when the future relationship talks began, with a first round in Brussels. That week was supposed to set the pattern for what would follow: an alternation of rounds between Westminster and The Square, a conference centre in the Belgian capital's central Mont Des Arts district.

What few imagined at the time was that the round would be the last physical meeting of the negotiating teams for months. The second round, scheduled for March 16, was shelved as Europe went into coronavirus lockdown. On March 19, EU chief negotiator Michel Barnier announced that he had tested positive, and went into self-isolation.

- 3 March – The government publishes its action plan for dealing with coronavirus. This includes scenarios ranging from a milder pandemic to a "severe prolonged pandemic [as experienced in 1918](#)" and warns that a fifth of the national workforce could be absent from work during the infection's peak.^{[28][29]}

- 4 March – The total number of confirmed cases increases to 85.^[22]
- 5 March
 - The first death from coronavirus in the UK is confirmed,^[30] as the number of cases exceeds 100, with a total of 115 having tested positive. England's [Chief Medical Officer, Chris Whitty](#), tells MPs that the UK has now moved to the second stage of dealing with COVID-19 – from "containment" to the "delay" phase.^[31]
- 6 March – The Prime Minister announces £46 million in funding for research into a coronavirus vaccine and rapid diagnostic tests. During a visit to a laboratory in Bedfordshire, he says: "It looks like there will be a substantial period of disruption where we have to deal with this outbreak."^[32]
- 7 March – The number of cases rises to over 200.^[33]
- 8 March – A third death from coronavirus is reported, at [North Manchester General Hospital](#), as the number of cases in the UK reaches 273, the largest single-day increase so far.^[34]
- 9 March
 - The [FTSE 100](#) plunges by more than 8 percent, its largest intraday fall since 2008, amid concerns over the spread of COVID-19.^[35]
 - The Foreign and Commonwealth Office advises against all but essential travel to Italy due to the COVID-19 outbreak in the country and the nationwide lockdown.^[36]
 - The first three cases are discovered in [Dorset](#).^[37]
- 10 March – Health minister [Nadine Dorries](#) becomes the first MP to test positive for coronavirus.



Infographic - THE RACE TO STOP COVID-19

Symptoms and transmission

As a new strain of coronavirus threatens public health systems across the globe, researchers are racing to develop a vaccine

- Common symptoms*: fever (98.6%); weakness (69.6%); cough (59.4%); muscle pains (34.8%); difficulties breathing (31.2%);
- Less common symptoms*: diarrhoea (10.1%); nausea and vomiting (10.1%); dizziness

(9.4%); headaches (6.5%); stomach pain (2.2%);

- Incubation period: 0–14 days;
- Severity: data from 44,000 cases of COVID-19 in China suggest that 80.9% of cases are mild, 13.8% are severe and 4.7% are critical. Severe cases are more prevalent in older people and those with an existing long-term condition, such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, respiratory disease or hypertension;
- Transmission: person-to-person spread between close contacts (up to 1.8 metres) through respiratory droplets;
- Diagnosis: COVID-19 is suspected based on clinical symptoms. Cases are only confirmed when there is a positive laboratory test;
- Treatment: treatment of COVID-19 is symptomatic, such as providing oxygen. Medicines specifically licensed for COVID-19 are not currently available, but clinical trials of several antiviral drugs are being conducted in China. *Percentages are taken from a case series of 138 consecutive hospitalised patients in China.

Vaccine development

There are five main approaches being taken to develop a vaccine against SARS-CoV-2, with several biotechnology companies, academic organisations and pharmaceutical companies employing different technologies in the race to bring their vaccine candidate to clinical trials. The World Health Organization (WHO) hopes that a vaccine will be available by October 2021.

11 March

- The [Bank of England](#) cuts its baseline interest rate from 0.75% to 0.25%, back down to the lowest level in history.^[40]
- [Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak](#), presents the Johnson Government's [first budget](#), which includes £30 billion in measures to protect the economy from coronavirus.

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- Be accurate and well organised in approach to work.
- Have the ability to understand and advise others on policies and procedures.

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12 March

- The UK Chief Medical Officers raise the risk to the UK from moderate to high.^[44]
- The government advises that anyone with a new continuous cough or a fever should self-isolate for seven days. Schools are asked to cancel trips abroad, and people over 70 and those with pre-existing medical conditions are advised to avoid cruises.^{[45][46]}
- Following a recent series of major falls, the FTSE100 plunges again, this time by over 10%, its biggest drop since [1987](#). Other markets around the world are similarly affected by ongoing economic turmoil.^{[47][48]}
- [Public Health England](#) stops performing [contact tracing](#), as widespread infections overwhelm capacity.^{[49][50]}
- The rules published on 25 February for travellers returning from certain countries are withdrawn; they should now follow the same guidance as other households.^[15]

13 March

- Authorities confirm the first death from coronavirus in Scotland.^[51]

- The UK Government restricts the export of three drugs being administered to COVID-19 patients in clinical trials in China: [Kaletra](#), [Chloroquine phosphate](#), and [Hydroxychloroquine](#).^[52]
- [BBC Radio 1](#) cancels its [Big Weekend](#) music festival, scheduled to take place at the end of May.^[53] Organisers subsequently run an alternative event called Big Weekend UK 2020, with acts appearing on one of five virtual stages and performed from their homes; the event also features past performances from previous Big Weekend events.^[54]

14 March

- The number of confirmed cases rises to 1,140.^[55]
- A further 10 people are reported to have died from COVID-19, almost doubling the UK death toll from 11 to 21. The government's aim for a "[herd immunity](#)" approach generates controversy.^{[56][57][58]}
- [Vice President of the United States, Mike Pence](#), announces the US is to extend its European [coronavirus travel ban](#) to include the UK from 16 March.^[59]
- UK retailers release a joint letter asking customers not to panic buy products after some supermarkets sell out of items such as pasta, hand gel and toilet paper.^[60]

15 March

- The [Foreign and Commonwealth Office](#) advises against all but essential travel to Spain.^[61]
- The FCO advises against all but essential travel to the United States due to the restrictions imposed in response to the pandemic.^[62]
- Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) says that every UK resident over the age of 70 will be told "within the coming weeks" to self-isolate for "a very long time" to shield them from coronavirus.^[63]
- The government announces plans to hold daily televised press conferences to update the public on the fight against the coronavirus pandemic, starting on Monday 16 March.^[64]
- London's [Old Vic](#) becomes the first [West End theatre](#) to cancel a performance because of the pandemic when it ends its run of [Samuel Beckett's Endgame](#) two weeks early.^[65]

16 March

- The UK death toll from the pandemic reaches 55, with the number of cases of the illness passing 1,500.^[66]
- Prime Minister Boris Johnson advises everyone in the UK against "non-essential" travel and contact with others, to curb coronavirus, as well as to work from home if possible and avoid visiting social venues such as pubs, clubs or theatres. Pregnant women, people over the age of 70 and those with certain health conditions are urged to consider the advice "particularly important", and will be asked to self-isolate within days.^[66] The Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport states "it is advised that large gatherings should not take place".^[67]

- The government issues a call for businesses to support the supply of [ventilators](#) and ventilator components,^[68] the NHS has access to 8,175 ventilators but it is thought that up to 30,000 may be needed.^[69]
- The BBC delays its planned changes to TV licences for the over-75s from June to August because of the pandemic.^[70]
- Theatres in London, as well as elsewhere around the UK, close following Boris Johnson's advice that people should avoid such venues.^[71]

17 March

- The Chancellor, Rishi Sunak, announces that £330bn will be made available in loan guarantees for businesses affected by the virus.^{[72][73]}
- The Foreign and Commonwealth Office advises against all non-essential international travel due to the pandemic and the border restrictions put in place by many countries in response.^[74]
- The UK government provides a £3.2million emergency support package to help rough sleepers into accommodation.^{[75][76]} With complex physical and mental health needs, in general, [homeless people](#) are at a significant risk of catching the virus.^[75]
- The BBC announces major changes to the schedule across the network. While programmes such as [Politics Live](#), [Victoria Derbyshire](#), [The Andrew Neil Show](#), [Newswatch](#), [The Travel Show](#) and [HARDTalk](#) have been suspended, others such as [Newsnight](#) and [The Andrew Marr Show](#) will continue with a smaller number of production staff. [Question Time](#) is moved to an earlier 8pm Thursday timeslot and will be broadcast without an audience from a fixed location. Podcasts programmes [Americast](#), [Beyond Today](#) and [The Next Episode](#) are also suspended.^[77]
- Cinema chains [Odeon](#), [Cineworld](#), [Vue](#) and [Picturehouse](#) announce they will be closing all their UK outlets.^[78]

18 March

- [Pound sterling](#) falls below \$1.18, its lowest level since 1985.^{[79][80]} Bank of England governor [Andrew Bailey](#), commenting on the UK and wider economic situation, says: "It's obviously an emergency. I think we're living in completely unparalleled times... It's going to be a very big downturn – we know that."^[81]
- The UK death toll from coronavirus exceeds 100, with 32 new cases taking the total to 104.^[82]
- The government announces that all schools in the country will shut from the afternoon of Friday 20 March, except for those looking after the children of key workers and vulnerable children.^[83] No exams will take place this academic year, [Education Secretary Gavin Williamson](#) confirms.^[84]
- [Princess Beatrice](#) cancels her wedding reception at [Buckingham Palace](#) and will take further advice on whether to carry on with a private [wedding ceremony](#), scheduled to take place on 29 May.^[85]
- The 50th anniversary [Glastonbury Festival](#) is cancelled as a result of the pandemic.^[86]
- The government announces emergency legislation to bring in a ban on new evictions for three months, as part of measures to help protect renters in social and private rented accommodation.^[87]

- The BBC announces that due to the coronavirus pandemic, filming on [Casualty](#), [Doctors](#), [EastEnders](#), [Holby City](#), [Pobol y Cwm](#) and [River City](#) is suspended until further notice. Weekly episodes of *EastEnders* will also be reduced from four to two to keep it on the air for as long as possible.^[88]
- MP [Lloyd Russell-Moyle](#) announces that he has tested positive with the virus.^[89]

19 March

- The first COVID-19 death is confirmed in Northern Ireland.^[90]
- The Ministry of Defence announces the formation of the COVID Support Force, enabling the military to support public services and civilian authorities in tackling the outbreak.^[91] Two military operations are also announced: [Operation Rescript](#), which focuses on the outbreak in the United Kingdom; and Operation Broadshare, which focuses on British military activities overseas.^[92]
- In an emergency move, the Bank of England cuts interest rates again, from 0.25% to just 0.1%. This is the lowest rate in the Bank's 325-year history.^[93]
- The government announces £1.6bn for local authorities, to help with the cost of adult social care and support for the homeless; and £1.3 billion to the NHS and social care, to allow up to 15,000 people to be discharged from hospital.^[94]
- The UK government no longer deems COVID-19 to be a "high consequence infectious disease" (HCID) following opinion from the UK HCID group and the [Advisory Committee on Dangerous Pathogens](#).^{[95][96]}

20 March

- Chancellor Rishi Sunak announces that the government will pay 80% of wages for employees not working, up to £2,500 a month, as part of "unprecedented" measures to protect people's jobs.^[97]
- Prime Minister Boris Johnson [orders all cafes, pubs and restaurants to close](#) from the evening of 20 March, except for take-away food, to tackle coronavirus. All the UK's nightclubs, theatres, cinemas, gyms and leisure centres are told to close "as soon as they reasonably can".^[98]

21 March

- [Environment Secretary George Eustice](#) urges shoppers to stop [panic buying](#), as supermarkets around the UK struggle to keep up with demand.^[99] [Tesco](#), [Asda](#), [Aldi](#), and [Lidl](#) are reported to have begun a recruitment drive for up to 30,000 new staff.^[100]
- The [Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency](#) announces that all pending practical and driving theory tests are to be postponed, for at least three months in the case of practical tests, and up to and including 20 April for theory tests. All candidates are to receive notification of when their tests are rescheduled.

Coronavirus: How scientists are racing to find a Covid-19 vaccine

Tom Clarke ITV Science Editor

The first steps towards a coronavirus vaccine in the UK start next week, but a vaccine for all is still a year away at best.

Scientists at Public Health England invited the cameras in to their usually off-limits Porton Down research labs.

They're the highest containment laboratories in the UK that handle the really nasty stuff, like Ebola, Marburg disease and the much milder, but much more threatening SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

The good news is that SARS-CoV-2 is very similar to SARS. While it was a one-hit-wonder in the world of epidemics, the worry caused by SARS meant lots of candidate vaccines were developed against it. And these have given the scientific community a real head start in developing one for COVID-19.

There are now 41 candidate vaccines listed on the WHO's website.

There's a few clear leaders in the race.

Vaccines based on the RNA (or translated version of the DNA) of the virus itself. These are being made by companies like Inovio in the US and the vaccine that was first to go into humans in Seattle last week made by another US company Moderna. A team at Imperial College in London is also developing an RNA vaccine which may have advantages over these.

RNA and DNA vaccines have the advantage of being quick to develop and likely to be safe. But there are no vaccines of this type currently on the market against diseases. So no one knows if they will be the most successful against COVID-19.

Then there are more traditional vaccines, based on existing technologies that have been used for other diseases. The Institute Pasteur in France is working on converting its measles-virus based vaccine against SARS to work against COVID-19.

NHS strikes major deal to expand hospital capacity to battle coronavirus

- Unprecedented deal sees NHS secure 8,000 beds, 1,200 more ventilators and 20,000 clinical staff
- Private sector said it was providing facilities and staff at cost price
- Block booking includes all "but tiny fraction" of private capacity

Private operations are cancelled or postponed.

22 March

- The [Nursing and Midwifery Council](#) announces that more than 5,600 former nurses have registered to offer their services in the fight against coronavirus.^[103]
- Boris Johnson warns that "tougher measures" may be introduced if people do not follow government advice on social distancing.^[104]
- [Downing Street](#) confirms [Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab](#) will act in place of Prime Minister Boris Johnson if he becomes "incapacitated".^[105]
- The press reports the UK's virus's youngest victim so far, an eighteen-year-old with underlying health problems.^[104]
- ITV announces that filming on its soaps [Coronation Street](#) and [Emmerdale](#) will be temporarily halted from Monday 23 March. Its daytime programmes [Lorraine](#) and [Loose Women](#) will also temporarily cease live broadcasting.^[106]

23 March

- The government announces emergency measures to safeguard the nation's [rail network](#), with season ticket holders given refunds if working from home, and [rail franchise agreements](#) nationalised for at least six months to prevent rail companies from collapsing.^{[107][108]}
- In a televised address, Boris Johnson announces new strict rules applicable to the entire United Kingdom with the aim to slow the spread of the disease, by reducing transmission of the disease between different households. The British public are instructed that they must **stay at home**, except for certain "very limited purposes" – shopping for essential items (such as food and medicine); one form of outdoor exercise each day (such as running, walking or cycling), either alone or with others who live in the same household; for any medical need, or to provide care to a vulnerable person; and to travel to and from work where this is "absolutely necessary" and the work in question cannot be done from home. However, when these restrictions [came into force](#) on 26 March, the statutory instrument for England omitted any limit on the number of exercise sessions.^[109] All non-essential shops, libraries, places of worship, playgrounds and outdoor gyms are closed, and police are given powers to enforce the measures, including the use of fines.

LOCKDOWN - Today, and as a result of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the UK was plunged into lockdown.

Staying home and social distancing became the priority of governments and people across the UK. Overnight, public transport became something to avoid wherever possible.

Public transport helps to reduce congestion, greenhouse gases, and connect people and communities across the UK.

It is a vital lifeline for the millions of people living in the UK who do not own a car.

Buses, trams and trains provide these benefits because they bring people together onto the same vehicle to achieve efficiencies that benefit society and the environment and ensure services are financially sustainable.

But bringing people together in close proximity is no longer desirable, and this doesn't look likely to change anytime soon.

24 March

- The UK records its highest number of coronavirus deaths in one day, after a further 87 people die across the country, bringing the total to 422.^[113]
- For the first time, all of the UK's [mobile networks](#) send out a government text alert. The message reads: "GOV.UK CORONAVIRUS ALERT. New rules in force now: you must stay at home. More info and exemptions at gov.uk/coronavirus Stay at home. Protect the NHS. Save lives."^[114]
- [Health Secretary Matt Hancock](#) announces the government will open a temporary hospital, the [NHS Nightingale Hospital](#) at the [ExCeL London](#), to add extra critical care capacity in response to coronavirus pandemic.^[115]
- The [Church of England](#) closes all its buildings.^[116]
- BBC News announces that it is delaying plans to cut 450 news jobs due to the pressure of covering the coronavirus pandemic.^[117]

25 March

- [Prince Charles](#) tests positive for COVID-19.^[118]
- [Parliament](#) shuts down for a month.^[119]
- [British Transport Police](#) deploys 500 officers to patrol the UK's rail network, in an effort to discourage non-essential journeys. New measures are also introduced on the [London Underground](#) to reduce passenger numbers.^[120]
- British diplomat [Steven Dick](#), deputy ambassador to Hungary, dies in Budapest after contracting the virus.^[121]
- The police will be given the power to use "reasonable force" to enforce the lockdown regulations.^[122]
- The first two working NHS doctors die from COVID-19 on the same day, one a GP, the other a surgeon.^[123]
- The [Contingencies Fund Act 2020](#) receives [royal assent](#).^[124]

26 March

- The [Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(England\) Regulations 2020](#) (SI 350) (the 'Lockdown Regulations') come into effect, significantly extending the range of businesses that are required by law to close with immediate effect including all retail businesses not on an approved list. These regulations also include significant

restrictions on freedom of movement: "no person may leave the place where they are living without reasonable excuse".^[125]

- The number of UK coronavirus deaths increases by more than 100 in a day for the first time, rising to 578, while a total of 11,568 have tested positive for the virus.^[126]
- The government announces that some [self-employed](#) will be paid 80% of profits, up to £2,500 a month, to help them cope during the economic crisis triggered by COVID-19.^[127]
- At 8pm, millions of people around the country take part in a "[Clap for Carers](#)" tribute, applauding the NHS and other care workers.^[128]
- The [National Theatre](#) launches National Theatre at Home, a two-month programme whereby a different production from its archives will be streamed for free each week. The project begins with [Richard Bean](#)'s comedy [One Man, Two Guvvors](#), featuring [James Corden](#).

What the cruise-ship outbreaks reveal about COVID-19

Close confines help the virus to spread, but closed environments are also an ideal place to study how the new coronavirus behaves.

"Cruise ships are like an ideal experiment of a closed population. You know exactly who is there and at risk and you can measure everyone," says John Ioannidis, an epidemiologist at Stanford University in California. This is very different from trying to study the spread in a wider population, where only some people, typically those with severe symptoms, are tested and monitored.



27 March

- Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) both test positive for COVID-19. Johnson will self-isolate in [10 Downing Street](#) and Hancock is self-isolating at home whilst working. ^{[130][131]}
- Chief Medical Adviser [Chris Whitty](#) and [Labour Party](#) MP [Angela Rayner](#), the [Shadow Secretary of State for Education](#), also confirm they have been suffering symptoms and are self-isolating. ^{[132][133]}
- [Leon Restaurants](#) sets up the "[Feed NHS](#)" initiative to deliver 5,600 free meals a day to [NHS critical care](#) staff at London hospitals. ^[134]
- The 2020 [Cambridge Folk Festival](#) is cancelled. ^[135]
- [Dominic Cummings](#), Johnson's lead adviser, drives 250 miles to [Durham](#) with his wife and child. When this came to public notice in May, he explained that "there was nobody in London that [he] could reasonably ask to look after [his] child". ^[136]

28 March

- [Alister Jack](#), the [Secretary of State for Scotland](#), announces that he is self-isolating after experiencing coronavirus symptoms. ^[137]
- A further 260 deaths takes the number of fatalities past 1,000, with a total of 1,019 deaths having occurred so far; 17,089 people have tested positive. ^[138]
- At 11pm, new regulations come into force in Northern Ireland giving authorities the power to force businesses to close, and impose fines on them if they refuse, as well as on people leaving their homes without a "reasonable excuse". The measures, introduced by the [Northern Ireland Executive](#), bring Northern Ireland into line with the rest of the UK.



First Nightingale Hospital - London

29 March

- The government will send a letter to 30 million households warning things will "get worse before they get better" and that tighter restrictions could be implemented if necessary. The letter will also be accompanied by a leaflet setting out the government's lockdown rules along with health information.^[141]
- Dr [Jenny Harries](#), England's deputy chief medical officer, suggests it could be six months before life can return to "normal", because social distancing measures will have to be reduced "gradually".^[142]
- The first NHS nurse dies of COVID-19.^[123]

30 March

- As the number of reported deaths rises to 1,408, Patrick Vallance, the UK's chief scientific adviser, says there are early signs social distancing measures are "making a difference". Transmission of the virus within the community is thought to be decreasing, and hospital admission data suggests cases are not rising as fast as anticipated.^[143]
- [Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab](#) announces an arrangement between the government and major UK airlines to fly home tens of thousands of British nationals who are stranded abroad by the coronavirus outbreak.^[144]
- [Dominic Cummings](#), the [Prime Minister's Chief Adviser](#), is reported to be self-isolating after experiencing coronavirus symptoms.^[145]
- Vehicle owners are granted a six-month exemption from [MOT tests](#), enabling them to continue using their vehicles for essential travel.
- All [Gatwick Express](#) services are suspended until further notice on the grounds of significantly reduced demand for travel to [Gatwick Airport](#).



Panic buying has become common throughout March as we all deal with new coronavirus guidelines.

31 March

- A significant rise in [anxiety](#) and [depression](#) among the UK population is reported following the lockdown. The study, by researchers from the [University of Sheffield](#) and [Ulster University](#), finds that people reporting anxiety increased from 17% to 36%, while those reporting depression increased from 16% to 38%.^[148]
- The number of people in hospital with COVID-19 passes 10,000.^[149]
- The largest UK daily death toll of the outbreak so far is reported, with 381 deaths taking the total to 1,789.



Shoppers in Basingstoke, 31st March

April 2020

1 April

- The UK government confirms that a total of 2,000 NHS staff have been tested for coronavirus since the outbreak began, but [Cabinet Office](#) Minister Michael Gove says a shortage of chemical [reagents](#) needed for [COVID-19 testing](#) means it is not possible to screen the NHS's 1.2 million workforce.^[151] Gove's statement is contradicted by the [Chemical Industries Association](#), which says there is not a shortage of the relevant chemicals and that at a meeting with a business minister the week before the government had not tried to find out about potential supply problems.^[152]
- The [contactless payment](#) limit for in-store spending is raised from £30 to £45.^[153]
- Multinational pharmaceutical company [Roche](#) denies the existence of a deal to supply Wales with COVID-19 tests after First Minister [Mark Drakeford](#) and Health Minister [Vaughan Gething](#) blame the collapse of a deal for a shortage of testing kits.^[154]

2 April

- Matt Hancock, who returns to give the daily government briefing after completing his self-isolation, sets a target of carrying out 100,000 tests a day by the end of the month (encompassing both swab tests and blood tests).^[155]
- The government writes off historical debts totalling £13.4bn of over 100 hospital trusts, an action which had been under consideration since before the onset of the pandemic.^[156]
- At 8pm the UK gives another national round of applause for NHS staff and other key workers.

NWN - OUR churches cover a wide area, and our people are serving and praying for all our communities:

Avington, Beedon, Boxford, Brightwalton, Catmore, Chaddleworth, Chieveley, Cold Ash, Combe, Compton, Denford, Donnington, East Garston, East Ilsley, Eastbury, Enborne, Farnborough, Fawley, Frilsham, Great Shefford, Greenham, Hampstead Norreys, Hamstead Marshall, Hermitage, Hungerford, Inkpen, Kintbury, Lambourn, Lambourn Woodlands, Leckhampstead, Newbury, Oare, Peasemore, Shaw, Shefford Woodlands, Speen, Stockcross, Thatcham, Wash Common, Welford, Wickham, West Ilsley, West Woodhay, Winterbourne, Yattendon and all places in between.

The churches of the Newbury Deanery wish you a blessed Easter

Find us at a church near you (www.achurchnearyou.com)

Sadly our services are now suspended and our buildings are all closed, but we are still praying for you and working with others in the community to make sure everyone is supported and no-one is forgotten.

If we can help you, or someone you know, in any way, please do get in touch. Latest details can be found on our websites via A Church Near You or: "You can find your local church online by searching for A Church Near You. Contact details for all our churches are also at Newbury Deanery – Representing the Parish Churches in the Newbury Area"

A Church Near You or via the Newbury Deanery website www.newbury-deanery.org.uk representing the Parish Churches in the Newbury Deanery.

Celebrating Easter without Church? (Or changing the feel of a week at home)

Our Easter message is of hope – and don't we need some real hope in these troubled times? Ours is a hope of resurrection, of love stronger than death and life beyond this physical life we share. We are not promised an easy life, but Jesus, "God with us", who came at Christmas is still with us in the challenges of our lives. In the week before Easter we remember the challenges Jesus faced – joy, betrayal, abandonment and death – real highs and lows to match our own. You don't have to be a Christian to get a sense of that journey, with its varied feelings, so our website has an activity sheet with a week of things to do - like choosing a piece of music, or having a special meal. Some of them involve sharing with other people, so if you are alone, do contact a church to put you in touch with someone to share with.

A prayer for Easter

*Lord of all life and power,
who through the mighty resurrection of your Son
overcame the old order of sin and death
to make all things new in him:
grant that we, being dead to sin
and alive to you in Jesus Christ,
may reign with him in glory;
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit
be praise and honour, glory and might,
now and in all eternity.*



3 April

- [NHS Nightingale Hospital London](#), the first temporary hospital to treat coronavirus patients, opens at the [ExCel centre](#) in East London, employing NHS staff and military personnel, with 500 beds and potential capacity for 4,000. It is the first of several such facilities planned across the UK.^[158]
- Figures published by the [Cabinet Office](#) indicate UK road traffic levels have fallen by 73% since the lockdown measures were introduced, and are at their lowest since 1955.^[159]
- With warm weather forecast for some areas during the upcoming weekend, Matt Hancock warns people to stay at home, telling them this is an instruction "not a request".^[160]
- [The Queen](#) holds the first virtual meeting with the [Privy Council](#).^[161]

4 April

- It is announced that a five-year-old has died from the virus, believed to be the youngest victim to date.^[162]
- The results of the [2020 Labour Party leadership election](#) and the [2020 Labour Party deputy leadership election](#) are announced, in which [Keir Starmer](#) is elected as the leader of the [Labour Party](#), succeeding [Jeremy Corbyn](#), and [Angela Rayner](#) is elected as deputy leader of the party. The results are released by email after a public event to announce the results was cancelled due to the pandemic.^[163]

5 April

- [Queen Elizabeth II](#) makes a [rare broadcast to the UK](#) and the wider Commonwealth, something she has done on only four previous occasions. In the address she thanks people for following the government's social distancing rules, pays tribute to key workers, and says the UK "will succeed" in its fight against coronavirus but may have "more still to endure".^{[164][165]}
- Prime Minister Boris Johnson is admitted to hospital for tests after testing positive for coronavirus ten days earlier.^[166]
- Matt Hancock says the goal for the number of [ventilators](#) has been reduced to 18,000 and that the NHS has between 9,000 and 10,000 available.^[167]

6 April

- The death toll from COVID-19 in the UK exceeds 5,000. The total number of reported cases is nearly 52,000.^[168]
- Prime Minister Boris Johnson is taken into [intensive care](#) at [St Thomas' Hospital](#). It is announced that [First Secretary of State Dominic Raab](#) will deputise for him.^[169]
- [National Express](#) suspends all its long-distance coach services.^[170]

7 April

- Patrick Vallance, the government's chief scientific adviser, says that the number of cases are not accelerating as had been predicted but that it is too early to tell

whether the outbreak is peaking.^[171]

NWN DURING these unprecedented times the true Blitz spirit has truly been reignited.

Volunteers in their hundreds have set up support groups across the district and everyone is doing their part to ensure family, friends, neighbours and strangers are looked after throughout this pandemic.



Now, more than ever, we all need to work together. All of our journalists are working from home, so, we are asking you to let us know the news and events from your village – coronavirus related or otherwise – and as much good news as possible.

We will publish these stories (after editing, to ensure word count, style and legal process is all followed) on to a new section, 'Your Villages, Your Voice', on our website *newburytoday.co.uk*, which staggeringly had more than 1.3 million page views in March, and on our social media platforms.

Our goal is to make sure everyone can find up-to-date, factual information quickly and easily, through your chosen platform. We are living through an important time in history and we believe it is our duty to document it. So please send us your stories, your news, your support networks and don't forget to also send us your photos and pictures of how you are all getting through.

We need the important details but we also all need a smile.

We understand that every business is struggling at the moment and we are no exception. We are a small, local business that has been hit hard by this pandemic and we too have been forced to furlough a number of staff while we navigate this uncertain time.

TRANSPORT - Information for people using transport or working in the transport sector during the coronavirus outbreak.

Walking, cycling, driving and travelling by public transport in that order.

You can help control coronavirus and travel safely by walking and cycling, if you can. Where this is not possible, use public transport or preferably drive.

Train and bus firms urgently need to find a route back to viability amid the Covid-19 crisis as only 4% of the usual rail passengers travelled at the start of lockdown.



8 April

- The [Resolution Foundation](#), using figures from the [British Chambers of Commerce](#), reports that more than nine million workers are expected to be [furloughed](#) under the [government's job retention scheme](#), with an estimated cost to the taxpayer of between £30 and 40bn.^[172]

9 April

- Dominic Raab says the UK is "starting to see the impact" of the restrictions but it is "too early" to lift them, and urges people to stay indoors over the upcoming Easter weekend.^[173] With warm weather forecast again for Easter, this message is echoed by police and tourist destinations.^[174] Johnson was moved out of intensive care, but remained in hospital.^[175]
- At 8pm the nation stages a third round of applause for NHS staff and other key workers.

Coronavirus: plane-free skies spur research into warming impact of aviation

Climate Change News By Alister Doyle

As the Covid-19 pandemic response hits air traffic, scientists seize the opportunity to study how planes' contrails trap heat in the atmosphere.

Mass groundings of flights caused by the coronavirus are giving scientists a rare chance to study plane-free skies and pin down how far aviation stokes global warming.

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, air traffic has slumped in a manner not seen since the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks on the United States in 2001.

Scientists with Nasa and European research groups hope to use clear skies to narrow down massive uncertainties about the warming effect of condensation trails – the wispy white lines that criss-cross the skies in the wake of jets engines.

Understanding planes' impact on the climate is urgent because commercial aviation generates about 2% of global carbon emissions and rising, mainly from burning jet fuel. Taking into account the impact of cloud formation in the upper atmosphere, however, could make the sector's responsibility for human-caused global warming as high as 4% or 5%.

10 April

- [Jonathan Van-Tam](#), England's deputy chief medical officer, tells the UK Government's daily briefing the lockdown is "beginning to pay off" but the UK is still in a "dangerous situation", and although [cases in London](#) have started to drop they are still rising in Yorkshire and the North East.^[177]
- Matt Hancock tells the briefing a "Herculean effort" is being made to ensure daily deliveries of [personal protective equipment](#) (PPE) to frontline workers, including the establishment of a domestic manufacturing industry to produce the equipment. Fifteen [drive-through](#) testing centres have also been opened around the UK to test frontline workers.

11 April

- [Queen Elizabeth II](#) makes her first ever [Easter message to the nation](#), in which she states "coronavirus will not overcome us" and that "we need Easter as much as ever."^[179]
- After some NHS workers say they still do not have the correct personal protective equipment to treat patients, [Home Secretary Priti Patel](#) tells that day's Downing Street briefing she is "sorry if people feel there have been failings" in providing kit.^[180]
- The number of people in London hospitals for COVID-19 reaches its peak, according to week-on-week change data; elsewhere in the country, patient numbers continue to increase, although the rate of increase is slowing.^[181]
- Occupancy of critical care beds in England peaks at around 58% of capacity. Occupancy in the month of April for Scotland and Wales will only briefly exceed 40%, while Northern Ireland reported a peak of 51% early in the month.^[182]

12 April

- Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) is discharged from hospital after being treated for coronavirus and will continue his recovery at [Chequers](#).^[183]

- The number of people who died in hospital with coronavirus in the UK passes 10,000, after a daily rise of 737 to 10,612. Matt Hancock describes it as a "sombre day". [\[184\]](#)

13 April

- Dominic Raab tells the Downing Street briefing the government does not expect to make any immediate changes to the lockdown restrictions and that the UK's plan "is working [but] we are still not past the peak of this virus". [\[185\]](#)

14 April

- The Office for National Statistics indicates that coronavirus was linked to one in five deaths during the week ending 3 April. More than 16,000 deaths in the UK were recorded for that week, 6,000 higher than would be the average for that time of year. [\[186\]](#)
- Several UK charities, including [Age UK](#) and the [Alzheimer's Society](#), express their concern that older people are being "airbrushed" out of official figures because they focus on hospital deaths and do not include those in care homes or a person's own home. Responding to these concerns, [Therese Coffey](#), the [Secretary of State for Work and Pensions](#), says that hospital figures are being used because "it's accurate and quick". [\[187\]](#)
- Mobile operators report a further twenty attempted arson attacks on mobile phone masts over the previous weekend. [\[188\]](#)

15 April

- Health Secretary Matt Hancock announces new guidelines that will allow close family members to see dying relatives in order to say goodbye to them. Hancock also launches a new network to provide personal protective equipment to care home staff. [\[189\]](#)
- The 2020 [Love Supreme Jazz Festival](#), scheduled for July, is cancelled.

Brexit - Jim Brunsten (Financial Times EU Correspondent) - The show started getting back on the road. Mr Barnier spoke with UK chief negotiator David Frost, leading to an agreement to restart a limited version of the talks. Virtual rounds were also organised in an attempt to get negotiations back on track.

16 April

- A 99-year-old war veteran, [Tom Moore](#), completes 100 laps of his garden, [\[191\]](#) eventually raising over £25 million for [NHS Charities Together](#), with over a million people donating via his [JustGiving](#) page. [\[192\]](#)
- Foreign Secretary [Dominic Raab](#) announces a three-week extension to the nationwide lockdown measures as the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the UK surpasses 100,000. [\[193\]](#)

- The [NHS Nightingale Hospital Birmingham](#), at the [National Exhibition Centre](#), is officially opened by [Prince William](#).^[194]
- The UK stages a fourth round of applause for NHS staff and key workers at 8pm.^[195]
- A spokesperson for [Princess Beatrice of York](#) and [Edoardo Mapelli Mozzi](#) confirms that [their wedding](#), scheduled for 29 May, will be held on a later date.^[196]

17 April

- Matt Hancock confirms coronavirus tests will be rolled out to cover more public service staff such as police officers, firefighters and prison staff.^[197]
- Chancellor [Rishi Sunak](#) extends the subsidised wage scheme for furloughed workers for another month, to the end of June.^[198]
- Later analysis of death registrations (all causes) in England and Wales by the Office for National Statistics finds the highest total this week, which at 21,805 is 207% of the five-year average for the same week. COVID-19 is mentioned in 8,730 cases.^[199]

18 April

- [Imran Ahmad-Khan](#), the MP for [Wakefield](#), secures a shipment of 110,000 reusable face masks through his connections with charity [Solidarités internationale](#) and the [Vietnamese Government](#) for [Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust](#) to help tackle the shortage of PPE.^[200]
- Unions representing doctors and nurses express their concern at a change in government guidelines advising medics to reuse gowns or wear other kit if stocks run low.^[201]
- Speaking at the Downing Street daily briefing, [Robert Jenrick](#), the [Communities Secretary](#), says a further 400,000 gowns will be arriving from Turkey the following day.^[202] (In the event, the shipment was delayed by several days,^[203] and was said on 7 May to be unusable).^[204]
- [Care England](#), the UK's largest care homes representative body, estimates that as many as 7,500 care home residents may have died because of coronavirus, compared to the official figure of 1,400 released a few days earlier.^[201]
- Jenrick announces a further £1.6bn of support for local authorities, on top of £1.6bn that was given to them on 19 March.^[205]
- Jenrick says that the virus appears to be having a "disproportionate impact" on the [Black, Asian and minority ethnic](#) (BAME) communities, while [Stephen Powis](#) says he has asked [Public Health England](#) to investigate what may be accounting for the increased risk within these groups.^[205]
- Jenrick says that parks and cemeteries must remain open during the lockdown.^[206]

19 April

- The number of recorded deaths increases by 596 to 16,060, a lower increase than previous days. Dr Jenny Harries says the lower number of deaths is "very good news" but cautions against drawing conclusions from the figures.^[207]
- After a [Sunday Times](#) article suggests schools could reopen on 11 May, [Gavin Williamson](#), the [Secretary of State for Education](#), tells the Downing Street daily

briefing he cannot give a date for when this will happen, and that the focus will be on helping children to learn at home, with lessons made available online and free loans of laptops for disadvantaged children.^[207]

- BBC One airs a UK version of the [Together at Home](#) concert, a virtual global concert staged to celebrate healthcare workers and featuring musicians playing from home. The two-hour broadcast includes highlights of the US version and features stories of frontline workers along with extra footage of British artists.^{[208][209]}

20 April

- Online applications for the [Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme](#) are opened, with 67,000 claims registered in the first 30 minutes.^[210]
- [NHS Blood and Transplant](#) asks those who have survived COVID-19 to donate blood for trials of a treatment that will involve giving the [blood plasma](#) of survivors to patients ill in hospital with the disease.^[211]
- Prof Dame [Angela Maclean](#), the UK's deputy chief scientific adviser, says the number of confirmed cases is "flattening out".^[212] The number of people in hospital for COVID-19 has begun to fall in Scotland, Wales and every region of England, with significant falls in London and the Midlands.^[213]

21 April

- A further 823 deaths are recorded, taking the total to 17,337, a sharp rise on the previous day, but many of these relate to deaths that occurred in previous days and weeks, and some date back as far as March. Prof Sir [David Spiegelhalter](#), of the [University of Cambridge](#), says the figures suggest the UK is past the peak and in a "steadily" albeit slowly improving position.^{[214][215]}
- Figures released by the [Office for National Statistics](#) indicate deaths in England and Wales have reached a twenty year high, with 18,500 deaths from all causes in the week up to 10 April, about 8,000 more than the average for that time of year.^[214] The deaths include those in care homes, where the 1,043 year-to-date deaths related to COVID-19 is a jump from the 217 reported a week ago.^[216]
- Matt Hancock says the government is "throwing everything" at developing a vaccine as he announces £42.5m for clinical trials being conducted by [Imperial College London](#) and the [University of Oxford](#).^[217]
- Parliament reconvenes after the Easter recess with MPs approving a new arrangement with some in the [House of Commons](#) chamber and some attending via video link.^[218]
- Fundraiser Captain Tom Moore is the guest of honour at the opening of [NHS Nightingale Hospital Yorkshire and the Humber](#) in Harrogate.^[219]

22 April

- [The Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2020](#) (SI 447) come into effect, correcting errors in the original lockdown regulations and allowing some visits to burial grounds and gardens of remembrance.

- Figures show that UK inflation fell to 1.5% in March, largely because of falls in the price of clothing and fuel ahead of the lockdown.^[220]
- Parliament holds the first virtual [Prime Minister's Questions](#) with Dominic Raab standing in for Boris Johnson, at which Raab confirms the target of 100,000 tests a day by the end of the month.^[221]
- In a Commons statement Matt Hancock tells MPs "we are at the peak" of the outbreak but social distancing measures cannot be relaxed until the government's five tests have been met.^[222] Professor [Chris Whitty](#), the government's chief medical adviser, tells the Downing Street briefing the UK will have to live with some social distancing measures for at least the rest of the year, and that it is "wholly unrealistic" to expect life to suddenly return to normal in the short term.



As [coronavirus](#) continues to spread around the world and disrupts travel on an unparalleled global scale, airlines seem to be feeling the brunt of the economic pain, with no end in sight. Countries have imposed strict [restrictions and bans](#) on travel, both domestic and international, forcing carriers to slash their flight schedules by upwards of 90% in many cases.

23 April

- The first human trials of a coronavirus vaccine in Europe begin in Oxford.^[224]
- A study involving 20,000 households in England, coordinated by the [Office for National Statistics](#), will track the progress of COVID-19 and seek to better understand infection and immunity levels, with volunteers asked to provide nose and throat swabs on a regular basis to determine whether they have the virus.^[225]

- Matt Hancock states that daily test capacity has reached 51,000, and announces that all key workers and members of their households are now eligible for COVID-19 tests and will be able to book tests through the government website from the following day.^[226] Tests will be conducted at drive-through centres or using home testing kits,^[227] while mobile testing units operated by the armed forces would increase in number from the present eight to 92, with a further four operated by civilians in Northern Ireland.^[228]
- Hancock also announces preparations to reactivate [contact tracing](#) in a later phase of the outbreak, including the recruitment of 18,000 contact tracers to greatly supplement Public Health England's staff.^[226]
- DIY chain [B&Q](#) confirms it has reopened 155 of its stores following a trial opening of a small number of outlets the previous weekend.^[229]
- BBC One airs [The Big Night In](#), a first-of-its-kind joint broadcast with [Children in Need](#) and [Comic Relief](#), and featuring an evening of music and entertainment. The broadcast celebrates the acts of kindness, humour and the spirit of hope and resilience that is keeping the nation going during the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, with viewers given a chance to donate to a fund helping local charities and projects around the country.^[230] The event raises £27m for charity, with the government pledging to double that amount.^[231]
- At 8pm the UK stages a fifth round of applause for NHS staff and key workers.^[232]

24 April

- The website for key workers to book a coronavirus test temporarily closes after a high demand for the tests; 5,000 test kits are ordered within its first two minutes online. The government says it will make more tests available.^[233]
- Transport Secretary [Grant Shapps](#) announces bilateral discussions with the Irish and French governments to safeguard freight routes, and with the Northern Ireland Executive regarding support for passenger flights.^[234] Funding is to be provided to support ferry routes to Northern Ireland,^[234] the [Isle of Wight](#) and the [Isles of Scilly](#).^[235]
- A version of "[You'll Never Walk Alone](#)" recorded by Captain [Tom Moore](#) and [Michael Ball](#) to raise money for the [NHS Charities Together](#) fund reaches number one in the [UK Singles Chart](#).

25 April

- The number of recorded deaths increases by 813, taking the total past 20,000 to 20,319. Thus the UK becomes the fifth country to pass the 20,000 mark along with the United States, Italy, Spain and France.^[237]
- After figures show that A&E attendances are half their usual level, the health service urges people to seek healthcare if needed and not be put off by the coronavirus outbreak.^[238]
- COVID-19 tests for key workers are booked up within an hour.^[239]
- Guernsey partially lifts its lockdown restrictions, allowing gardeners, mechanics, estate agents and builders to return to work.^[240]

26 April

- The figure of 413 recorded deaths is the lowest daily total in April.^[241]
- Professor Stephen Powis tells the Downing Street daily briefing the benefit of social distancing is beginning to be felt, with the stabilisation of the number of new cases, and a reduction of the number of people in hospital.^[242]

27 April

- In his first public statement since returning to work, Boris Johnson says the UK is "at the moment of maximum risk" but "we are now beginning to turn the tide" as he urges people not to lose patience with the restrictions.^[243]
- The government announces that the families of NHS and care workers who die because of COVID-19 will be entitled to a payment of £60,000.^[244]
- The number of recorded deaths from COVID-19 rises by 360, taking the total to 21,092. This is the lowest daily rise for four weeks.^[245]

28 April

- Figures from the Office for National Statistics for the week ending 17 April show 22,351 deaths registered in England and Wales, nearly double the five-year average and the highest weekly total since comparable records began in 1993.^[246]
- The ONS report indicates a third of coronavirus deaths in England and Wales are occurring in care homes, with 2,000 recorded in the week ending 17 April,^[247] and the number of deaths from all causes in care homes is almost three times the number recorded three weeks ago.^[246]
- Matt Hancock announces that care home figures will be included in the daily death toll from the following day; official figures have previously included only hospital data.^[248]
- Testing capacity reaches 73,000 per day, although only 43,000 were carried out the previous day. Matt Hancock announces that testing will be expanded from the following day to include all care home workers, and people (and their family members) with symptoms who must leave home for their job or are aged over 65.^[249]
- At 11am the UK holds a [minute's silence](#) to remember key workers who have died from COVID-19.^[250]

29 April

- Speaking to the [House of Commons Education Select Committee](#), [Gavin Williamson](#), the [Secretary of State for Education](#) says that the reopening of schools will take place in a "phased manner".^[251]
- Official figures begin including deaths in care homes and the community, resulting in the number of recorded deaths increasing by 4,419 to 26,097. Dominic Raab tells the Downing Street daily briefing the figures have been included retrospectively, and account for care home and community deaths between 2 March and 28 April. In the most recent 24-hour period there have been 765 deaths.^{[252][253]}

30 April

- Prime Minister Boris Johnson says the UK is "past the peak" of the COVID-19 outbreak but that the country must not "risk a second spike", and announces that he will set out "comprehensive plan" for easing the lockdown "next week". He also stresses the importance of keeping down the [reproductive rate](#), which "is going to be absolutely vital to our recovery".^[254]
- [Captain Tom Moore](#) celebrates his 100th birthday, and is made an honorary colonel by the Queen. His appeal to raise money for the NHS reaches £32m.^[255]
- At 8pm the UK stages its weekly round of applause for NHS staff and key workers.^[256]
- [ITV](#) announces plans to resume filming live studio-based shows such as [Britain's Got Talent](#) and [The Masked Singer](#), but without the presence of an audience.^[257]
- The [British Library](#) is to archive hundreds of essays submitted to [BBC Radio 4's PM](#) programme by listeners detailing their coronavirus experiences. *The Covid Chronicles*, launched in March, has seen listeners submit their accounts of their lives during the lockdown restrictions, some of which have been broadcast.

Ten people from the Kintbury and Boxford area died with coronavirus, three in March and seven in April. The area also includes [Inkpen](#), Welford, Wickham and Winterbourne.

Government Slogan for the Covid pandemic – in sequence



May 2020

1 May

- Matt Hancock confirms the government's target of providing (but not necessarily completing) 100,000 tests a day by the end of April has been met, with 122,347 provided over the previous 24 hours.^[259]
- Hancock announces that [fertility clinics](#) will be allowed to open again from 11 May.^[260]
- "[Times Like These](#)", a charity single by the [Live Lounge Allstars](#) released to raise funds for those affected by the pandemic, reaches number one in the UK Singles Chart.^[261]
- [Facebook](#) deletes the account of conspiracy theorist [David Icke](#) for posting misinformation about the coronavirus pandemic, including claims it is being spread by the 5G network.^[262]

2 May

- Robert Jenrick announces £76m of funding to help vulnerable people, including children, victims of domestic violence and modern slavery, who may be "trapped in a nightmare" during the lockdown restrictions.^[263]
- [YouTube](#) becomes the latest social media platform to remove David Icke's official account.^[264]

3 May

- In an interview with the *Sun on Sunday*, Boris Johnson speaks about how contingency plans were made for the event of his death while he was in intensive care.^[265]
- An NHS contact tracing app designed to track and prevent the spread of COVID-19 will be trialled on the Isle of Wight during the forthcoming week.^[266]

4 May

- [Apple](#) and [Google](#) approve a test version of the NHS tracing app.^[267]
- Businessman [Simon Dolan](#) announces that he will seek a [court injunction](#) to lift the lockdown in Britain.^[268]

5 May

- The number of recorded deaths rises by 693 to 29,427,^[269] giving the UK the highest number of COVID-19 related deaths in Europe.^[270]
- Figures from the Office for National Statistics for the week ending 24 April show 21,997 deaths from all causes registered in England and Wales; this is a decrease of 354 from the previous week but still nearly twice the five-year average for the time of year. Deaths per week in hospital are falling while those in care homes continue to

increase, and for the year to 24 April, 5,890 deaths in care homes involved COVID-19.^[4]

- Trials of the [NHS contact-tracing app](#) start on the [Isle of Wight](#) with the app being made available to healthcare and council workers.^[271]
- [NHS Nightingale Hospital North East](#), a temporary critical care hospital built near Sunderland for COVID-19 patients, is officially opened by [Health Secretary Matt Hancock](#). The [virtual ceremony](#) features TV celebrities [Ant and Dec](#), football pundit [Alan Shearer](#) and cricketer [Ben Stokes](#).^[272]
- Figures from the [Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders](#) (SMMT) indicate just 4,321 new cars were registered in April, the lowest monthly number since 1946 and a 97% fall on sales from April 2019; 70% of new cars for the month were company fleet vehicles.^[273]
- Airline operator [Virgin Atlantic](#) announces it has shed more than 3,000 jobs and ended operations at [Gatwick Airport](#) as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak,^[274] as well as withdrawing all their [Boeing 747](#) fleet.^[275]
- Sir Patrick Vallance tells the [House of Commons Health Select Committee](#) earlier testing for COVID-19 would have been "beneficial" but would not have prevented the spread of the virus.^[276]
- Professor [Neil Ferguson](#), whose advice led the government to implement the lockdown restrictions, resigns from the [Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies](#) after the [Daily Telegraph](#) reports a woman named as his "married lover" visited his home during the restrictions.^[277]

6 May

- At his first Prime Minister's Questions since returning to work Boris Johnson says he "bitterly regrets" the crisis in care homes and is "working very hard" to tackle it. Johnson also pledges to reach a target of 200,000 daily UK coronavirus tests by the end of May.^[278]
- A further 649 deaths take the number of recorded deaths over 30,000, to 30,076.^[279]
- John Holland-Kaye, the CEO of [Heathrow Airport](#), tells the [Transport Select Committee](#) that the airport is trialling large-scale temperature checks at departure gates.

Work on the Inkpen Memorial Playing Field pavilion gets the go-ahead



7 May

- The government confirms that 400,000 gowns ordered from Turkey to protect NHS staff from coronavirus have been impounded, after failing to meet the required safety standards. [\[281\]](#)[\[204\]](#)
- The [Bank of England](#) warns that the [economy](#) is on course to shrink by 14% in 2020 because of the [impact of COVID-19](#), pushing the UK into its deepest recession on record. [\[282\]](#)
- Baroness [Dido Harding](#), chair of [NHS Improvement](#) and former CEO of [TalkTalk](#), is appointed to lead the government's programme of testing and tracing, supported by [John Newton](#) of Public Health England. [\[283\]](#) Testing will be led by Sarah-Jane Marsh, chief executive of [Birmingham Women's and Children's Hospitals](#), and tracing will be led by [Tom Riordan](#), chief executive of [Leeds City Council](#). [\[284\]](#)
- The UK stages another round of applause for NHS staff and key workers, the seventh to be held on consecutive Thursdays at 8pm. [\[285\]](#)

8 May

- The death of a six-week-old baby is reported. [\[286\]](#)
- With the UK beginning another Bank Holiday weekend, Environment Secretary [George Eustace](#) urges the public to abide by the rules of the lockdown restrictions and warns people have to be "realistic" about the loosening of the measures.

VE-75

The event was marked in Inkpen even though we were unable to hold a commemorative service The Councils address is below. Other commemorative items are covered in the April/May Bulletin.



We all have a lot on our minds right now and are probably finding this alternate Covid-19 reality something of a challenge. Having to spend more time at home can make us lose track of what is going on in the wider world and what has gone on in the past.

During WW2 around 75 million civilian and military personnel died, about half a million in Britain alone. In WW1, about 900,000 British service people died as a direct result of the war – more than 1 in 10 of those mobilised to fight. Nurses, doctors and carers, fighting to save life and to care for the injured and dying also risked their lives.

It is estimated that about 500 million people or **one-third of the world's population** became infected with the Spanish Flu virus. The number of deaths was estimated to be more than 50 million worldwide.

Those who died in these most terrible conflicts often died without being able to say goodbye to loved ones, their parents, brothers and sisters, wives and lovers. Those that they left behind endured their loss often for the rest of their lives. Those that returned from these obscene tragedies were left to endlessly relive their horrors.

As we now feel what is happening to us and those around us, how much more did those during WW1 and WW2. Sadness is a human condition but for most of us, this is one of the very rare times when we are unable to say our goodbyes to friends or loved ones directly.

On the 8th of May, we will be marking VE'75, the 75th anniversary of the end of the second world war in Europe. It is an opportunity for us to spare just a few moments to think of those people, those individuals, caught up in the tragedy of the second world war and of their many heartbreaks and sadnesses. And, of the loss, heartbreaks and sadness of WW1. Their sacrifices of 'then' have helped to spare us from tyranny and oppression, and have endowed us with prosperity, freedom, and a way of life which we have all taken for granted for so long.

We may not be able to express our feelings collectively, as communities, in the way that we might wish to, because of the current Covid-19 restrictions on our movement and on gatherings, but, on the 8th May please spare a little time to think of all those caught up in the first and second world wars. Thank you.

For those interested, the planned events for the day include:

- VE 75 activities will take place on Friday 8th May and will include a mix of televised and online programmes and activities in which the legion will have a significant profile. Please see link to encourage supporters to join in.
<https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/stories/ve-day-singalong>

- There will be a national moment of Remembrance at 11.00am with a two minutes silence allowing the country to remember the sacrifice and contribution of the WW2 generation whilst also reflecting on the C19 situation and those people and organisations who are doing so much to keep us and our families safe and well.
- There will be a replica broadcast of Churchill's VE Day speech to the nation at 3.00pm and also of King George VI's VE Day speech in the evening.
- In the evening there will be a 1-hour programme telling the VE Day story that will have significant input and content supplied by the legion.

Finally, if there is a bugler amongst you able to play the last post and reveille, and able to play in isolation on the Inkpen Memorial Playing Field, please let me know. This seems to be our only way to join in the commemoration on the day, as a village. Email parishcouncil@inkpenvillage.co.uk.

9 May

- Transport Secretary Grant Shapps announces £2bn of investment to improve walking and cycling, describing it as a chance for a "once in a generation change" to the way the public travels.^[288]

10 May

- The UK government updates its coronavirus message from "stay at home, protect the NHS, save lives" to "**stay alert**, control the virus, save lives". The Opposition Labour Party expresses concern the slogan could be confusing, and leaders of the devolved governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland say they will keep the original slogan.^[289]
- A new alert scale system is announced, ranging from green (level one) to red (level five), similar to the UK's [Terror Threat Levels](#).^[290]
- A recorded address by Boris Johnson is broadcast at 7pm in which he outlines a "conditional plan" to reopen society, but says it is "not the time simply to end the lockdown this week", and describes the plans as "the first careful steps to modify our measures". Those who cannot work from home, such as construction workers and those in manufacturing, are encouraged to return to work from the following day, but to avoid public transport if possible. The guidance on the number of outdoor exercise periods will be lifted from Wednesday 13 May.^[291]
- Outlining future easing of restrictions, Johnson says "step two" – no sooner than 1 June – would include reopening some shops and the return of primary school pupils, beginning with reception, [Year 1](#) and [Year 6](#); and that secondary pupils facing exams next year would get some time in school before the summer holiday. "Step three" – at the earliest by July – would begin the reopening of the hospitality industry and other public places.^[292]
- Johnson also says that passengers arriving into the UK on international flights (apart from those from the Republic of Ireland) will soon be asked to go into quarantine for fourteen days.^[293]

COVID-19 alert level
system
Level

Meaning

5	As level 4 and there is a material risk of healthcare services being overwhelmed
4	A COVID-19 epidemic is in general circulation; transmission is high or rising exponentially
3	A COVID-19 epidemic is in general circulation
2	COVID-19 is present in the UK, but the number of cases and transmission is low
1	COVID-19 no longer present in the UK

11 May

- The UK government publishes a 50-page document setting out further details of the phases for lifting the lockdown restrictions. Boris Johnson gives further details as he makes his first statement on the virus to Parliament.^{[296][297]}
- Amid concerns about the safety of people returning to work, Johnson tells the Downing Street daily briefing he is not expecting a "sudden big flood" of people returning to work, and that companies will have to prove they have introduced safety measures before they can reopen.^[298]
- The UK government advises people in England to wear face coverings in enclosed spaces where social distancing is not possible, such as on public transport and in shops.^[299]
- Air passengers arriving on flights from France will also be exempt from new quarantine rules.^[300]
- Sir [David Norgrove](#), chair of the [UK Statistics Authority](#), writes to Matt Hancock seeking clarity on the targets for the number of tests, and the reporting of the number carried out each day.^[301]
- Teaching unions express their concern at government plans to reopen schools on 1 June, describing them as "reckless" and unsafe.^[302]
- Fertility clinics can apply to the [Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority](#) to reopen.^[303]

12 May

- Figures released by the [Office for National Statistics](#) and the devolved administrations indicate the death toll from COVID-19 exceeds 40,000 – including almost 11,000 care home residents^[304] – although week-by-week numbers continue to fall.^[305] In care homes in England and Wales, the year-to-date COVID-19 total reaches 8,312 but the weekly number (to 1 May) shows a decrease for the first time since the start of the pandemic.^[305]
- Chancellor [Rishi Sunak](#) extends the UK's furlough scheme until October, with employees continuing to receive 80% of their monthly wages up to £2,500. A quarter of the workforce, some 7.5 million people, are now covered by the scheme, costing £14bn a month.^[306]

13 May

- The [Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(England\) \(Amendment No. 2\) Regulations 2020](#) (SI 500) come into effect, allowing the re-opening of garden centres, sports courts and recycling centres. In addition to outdoor exercise, open-air recreation is also permitted with no more than one member of another household. Government announcements gloss these with the (non-enforceable) requirement that social distancing must be practised. House moves and viewings are also permitted.^[307]
- After figures indicate the UK economy shrank by 2% in the first three months of 2020 and is shrinking at the fastest rate since the [late 2000s global recession](#), Chancellor Rishi Sunak says it is "very likely" the country is in a "significant recession".^[308]
- [Creamfields](#), scheduled for 27–30 August, announces the cancellation of the 2020 edition due to the pandemic.^[309]

14 May

- A total of 126,064 tests for COVID-19 have been conducted in the most recent 24 hour period, the highest number to date.^[310]
- Figures compiled by [NHS England](#) giving a breakdown of underlying health conditions among COVID-19 hospital fatalities between 31 March and 12 May indicate one in four had diabetes. Other common health conditions were dementia (18%), serious breathing problems (15%), chronic kidney disease (14%), and ischaemic heart disease (10%).^[311]
- The Office for National Statistics publishes results of the early phase of a survey programme in England. From swab tests between 27 April and 10 May, they estimate that 148,000 people, or 0.27% of the population, had COVID-19 at any given time during those two weeks (95% confidence interval: 94,000 to 222,000).^[312] This implies roughly 10,000 new cases per day.^[313] No significant difference is found between broad age groups. Their estimate for people working in healthcare or social care is higher, at 1.33% (confidence interval: 0.39% to 3.28%). The survey does not include people in hospital or care homes, where rates of infection are likely to be higher still.^[312]
- [Public Health England](#) approves a blood test developed by [Roche Diagnostics](#) that can detect COVID-19 antibodies.^[314]
- The [Office for Budget Responsibility](#) forecasts the cost to government of combating the coronavirus pandemic has risen to £123.2bn, with annual borrowing estimated to be 15.2% of the UK economy. This figure is the highest annual borrowing since the end of [World War II](#) when it stood at 22.1%.^[315]
- The BBC announces plans to resume the filming of [EastEnders](#) and [Top Gear](#) in June, with cast and crew practising social distancing, and doing their own hair and makeup.^[316]
- The UK stages its eighth [Clap for Our Carers](#) event at 8pm.^[317]

15 May

- Government scientific advice says that the [R number](#) has increased slightly from between 0.5 and 0.9 to between 0.7 and 1.0, closer to the rate at which infections could start to exponentially increase. The figures are said to be "consistent with" the fall in cases in the community and the rise of cases in care homes, but are based on data from three weeks previously, so the effect of easing the lockdown measures is unknown. [\[318\]](#)[\[319\]](#)
- Government scientists and teaching unions hold talks in a bid to safely reopen schools. [\[320\]](#) The [British Medical Association](#) voices its support for the unions over their concerns about the safety of resuming classes. [\[321\]](#)*The places of worship task force, a body consisting of leading members of faith groups and government representatives, has its inaugural meeting. The group was established in response to Boris Johnson's 10 May address, in which he said religious buildings could reopen by 4 July, and aims to examine how this can happen safely. [\[322\]](#)

16 May

- [Anne Longfield](#), the [Children's Commissioner for England](#), urges the government and teaching unions to "stop squabbling and agree a plan" to reopen schools, warning that the closure of schools is negatively affecting [disadvantaged children](#). [\[323\]](#)
- Coronavirus protests involving the gathering of people are held at venues around the UK, including [Hyde Park](#) in London, and [Glasgow Green](#) in Glasgow. [\[324\]](#)[\[325\]](#)

17 May

- In an article for [The Mail on Sunday](#), Boris Johnson acknowledges frustrations with the government's "stay alert" message for England, but urges the public to be patient as the lockdown measures are eased. [\[326\]](#)
- The number of recorded deaths rises by 170 to 34,636. The daily increase is the lowest since the day after the lockdown restrictions were introduced. [\[327\]](#)
- At the Downing Street daily briefing, Business Secretary [Alok Sharma](#) announces a further £84m of funding to help mass-produce a COVID-19 vaccine being trialled by the [University of Oxford](#) and that should be available by September. He also tells the briefing that Oxford have secured an agreement with pharmaceutical company [AstraZeneca](#) to manufacture the vaccine, and distributed it to the UK first. [\[328\]](#)

18 May

- Rail operators begin running more train services, while security guards trained in crowd control are placed on duty at some major railway stations. [\[329\]](#)
- Jury trials resume at a handful of courts in England and Wales, having been suspended since the beginning of the lockdown restrictions. [\[330\]](#)
- The UK adds [loss of smell](#) and [loss of taste](#) to the list of COVID-19 symptoms that people should look out for. [\[331\]](#)
- Health Secretary Matt Hancock announces that anyone in the UK over the age of five with symptoms can now be tested for COVID-19. [\[332\]](#)
- Matt Hancock also confirms that 21,000 [contact tracers](#) have been recruited across the UK and are ready to begin work. [\[333\]](#)

- Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab tells the Downing Street daily briefing that it is “not sustainable” to keep the lockdown in place “permanently” but that the Government is monitoring the changes it makes.^[334]

19 May

- Figures from the [Office for National Statistics](#) show the number of people claiming [Jobseeker's Allowance](#) increased by 856,500 in April, to 2.1 million. In response to this Chancellor Rishi Sunak says that it will take time for the UK economy to recover and it is "not obvious there will be an immediate bounceback".^[335]
- As figures show there have been 11,600 deaths in care homes as a result of COVID-19, Professor Martin Green, chair of Care England, criticises the government for the way it handled the outbreak in care homes, and tells MPs they should have been prioritised from the start.^[336]
- Security researchers identify major security issues with the [NHS COVID-19](#) tracing app being piloted on the Isle of Wight, and call for new legislation to prevent officials using the data collected for purposes other than identifying those at risk from the virus.^[337]
- [Captain Tom Moore](#), who raised £32m for NHS charities, is to be [knighted](#) for his fundraising efforts following a special nomination from Boris Johnson.^[338]

20 May

- At Prime Minister's Questions, Boris Johnson confirms that a track and trace system will be in place from 1 June.^[339]
- The Government faces mounting pressure from councils and teaching unions to reconsider its plans to reopen primary schools from 1 June. [Robert Buckland](#), the [Secretary of State for Justice](#), says the Government is taking all concerns "very seriously".^[340]
- [Rolls-Royce](#) announce plans to cut 9,000 jobs as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, and warns that it could take several years for the airline industry to recover.^[341]
- The number of people in hospital with COVID-19 drops below 10,000 for the first time since March.^[342]
- People with [diabetes](#) are being strongly advised to follow government advice after a study by [NHS England](#) found the condition was linked to a third of coronavirus deaths between 1 March and 11 May. Diabetics are not among the people who have been told to shield themselves, but some may be asked to do so if they are deemed to be at high risk because of a combination of health conditions.^[343]
- At the Downing Street daily briefing, [Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Oliver Dowden](#) announces the establishment of a task force that will look at how sporting and arts events can resume safely. The task force will include former women's footballer [Alex Scott](#) and television executive [Michael Grade](#).^[344]
- Dowden announces that £150m from [dormant bank accounts](#) will be used to help charities and social enterprises.^[345]
- The [2020 Queen's Birthday Honours](#) is delayed until the autumn in order to recognise the "everyday Covid heroes" who have played a role in supporting and protecting society during the crisis.^[346]

- Figures released by Public Health England indicate no new coronavirus cases were reported in London over the 24-hour period up to Monday 18 May. [\[347\]](#)

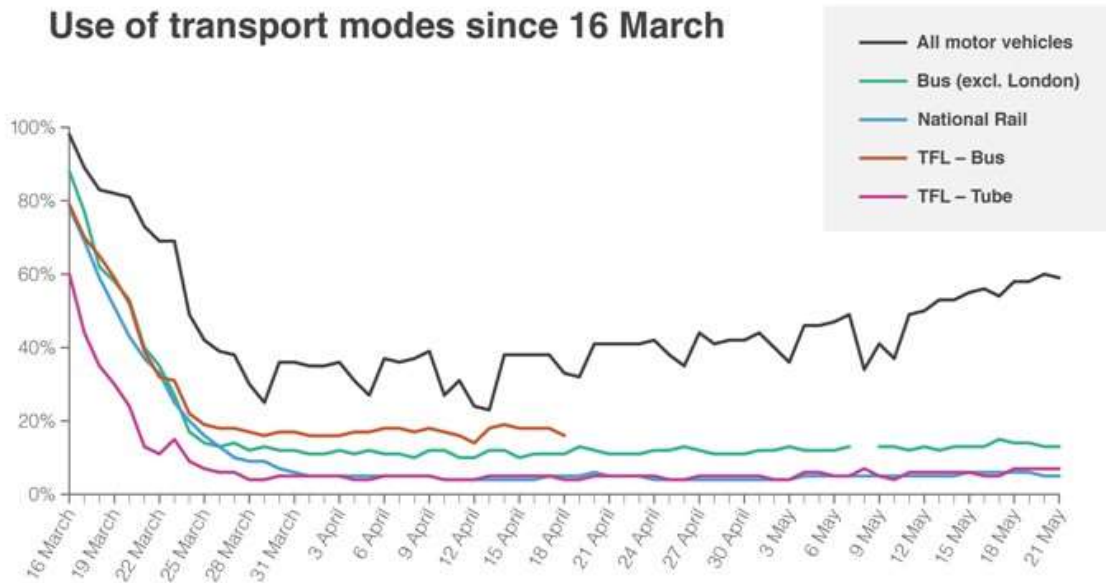
21 May

- The [NHS Confederation](#) warns that time is running out to finalise a test, track and trace strategy to avoid a possible second surge in coronavirus cases. [\[348\]](#)
- Following an agreement between the Government and the Swiss pharmaceutical company [Roche](#), a COVID-19 antibody test is made available through the NHS, with health and care staff to be the first to receive it. The test checks to see if someone has had the virus. [\[349\]](#)
- The Government announces that NHS staff and care workers from overseas will be exempt from the [immigration health surcharge](#) that usually applies to non-EU migrants. [\[350\]](#)
- The Office for National Statistics estimate that 137,000 people in England, or 0.25% of the population, had COVID-19 at any given time between 4 May and 17 May (excluding those in hospitals, care homes or other institutions). This implies around 8,700 new infections per day, compared to the 10,000 estimate made two weeks ago. [\[351\]](#)
- [ITV](#) announces that its soap [Emmerdale](#) has started a "phased return to filming" with six new episodes being recorded at its studios in Leeds. [\[352\]](#)
- The UK stages its ninth weekly [Clap for Our Carers](#) event at 8pm.



Many of you will have noticed the works going on at the Pavilion. We are thrilled that we have been able to start Phase 1 of the works which is the renovation of the changing rooms and the end extension to include two new toilets and a referee changing room. ARK Homes Limited have ensured that their working practices are in line with the Government guidelines not only in relation to general construction health & safety but also the new COVID19 construction restrictions.

Effect of Covid 19 on Public Transport



22 May

- The Government unveils new quarantine rules for travellers to the UK that will require them to self-isolate for fourteen days from 8 June. [\[354\]](#)
- The [Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies](#) publishes its evidence on the safety and impact of reopening schools on 1 June. It says the risk to school pupils is "very, very small, but it is not zero", while the risk to teachers is not above average when compared to other occupations. [\[355\]](#)
- The [Office for National Statistics](#) reports that government borrowing rose to £62bn in April, the highest monthly figure on record, after heavy spending to ease the coronavirus crisis. [\[356\]](#)
- Guernsey announces plans to move to Stage Four of its lockdown restrictions from 30 May, six weeks earlier than originally planned. This will allow restaurants and cafes, hairdressers and beauticians, cinemas, gyms and sports venues to reopen. The announcement comes after the island had 22 consecutive days with no new COVID-19 cases. [\[357\]](#) Schools on the island will also reopen for all students on 8 June. [\[358\]](#)
- Annemarie Plas, credited as starting the weekly [Clap for Our Carers](#), suggests it should end after its tenth week as the public have shown their appreciation, and should instead become an annual celebration of frontline workers. [\[359\]](#)

23 May

- The French Government announces that travellers to France from the UK will have to quarantine for 14 days from 8 June. [\[360\]](#)
- The death of a 12-year-old child is reported. [\[361\]](#)
- [Dominic Cummings](#), Boris Johnson's chief political adviser, comes under mounting pressure to resign after a joint investigation by the [Daily Mirror](#) and [The Guardian](#) reported that he travelled 260 miles from London to Durham to self-isolate during

lockdown. In response to the story, Downing Street says that Cummings travelled to the north east to be near relatives who could look after his young son if he became ill himself.^[362]

- Transport Secretary [Grant Shapps](#) announces £283m of investment in buses and light rail services in order to help improve safety, but warns capacity will be at a fifth of pre-lockdown levels because of social distancing measures. Extra martial at stations from 1 June are also announced, as well as permission for ten rail reopening projects to proceed to make business cases under the "[reversing the Beeching cuts](#)" initiative.^[363]

24 May

- After [The Observer](#) and the [Sunday Mirror](#) print allegations that Dominic Cummings made a second trip to the north east during lockdown, Boris Johnson gives his chief aide his backing at the Downing Street daily briefing, saying that Cummings had "no alternative" but to travel for childcare "when both he and his wife were about to be incapacitated by coronavirus" and has "acted responsibly, legally and with integrity". Johnson describes some of the claims as "palpably false".^[364]
- Johnson also confirms plans (outlined on 10 May) for the phased reopening of schools in England from 1 June: from that date, they will reopen for [early years](#) pupils, [Reception](#), [Year 1](#) and [Year 6](#). For the first time he states that from 15 June a quarter of [Year 10](#) and [Year 12](#) students will be allowed "some contact" to help prepare for exams.^[365]

25 May

- Dominic Cummings says "I don't regret what I did" as he gives a detailed explanation of his actions during lockdown at a press conference in the [Downing Street Rose Garden](#).^[366]
- Education Secretary [Gavin Williamson](#) warns the virus "could be with us for a year or more" and children cannot stay off school for "months and months".^[367]

26 May

- For the first day since 18 March, no new COVID deaths are reported in Northern Ireland. [Robin Swann](#), the [Northern Ireland Health Minister](#), describes it as "a clear sign of progress".^[368]
- Death registration figures for the week ending 15 May show the lowest number of COVID-19 deaths since the beginning of April.^[369]
- [Remdesivir](#), a drug that can speed up the recovery time of patients with COVID-19, is made available through the NHS.^[370]
- [Douglas Ross](#) resigns as a junior minister with the [Scotland Office](#) over the UK government's defence of Dominic Cummings, while at least 35 Conservative MPs call for Cummings to be removed from his post.^[371]
- [Tate Britain](#) announces that the annual [Turner Prize](#) will not be awarded in 2020 because of the upheaval created by the COVID outbreak.^[372]

27 May

- Boris Johnson states that a [test and trace system](#) will be operational in England from the following day.^[373]
- Johnson appears before the [House of Commons Liaison Committee](#) where he rules out holding an inquiry into the actions of Dominic Cummings.^[374]
- Figures from [HM Treasury](#) indicate the [Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme](#) for furloughed workers in the UK now covers 8.4 million people, an increase from 8 million a week earlier.^[375]

28 May

- Contact tracing systems go live in England and Scotland – [NHS Test and Trace](#) in England, and Test and Protect in Scotland.^[376] However, [Dido Harding](#) tells MPs the system in England will not be "fully operational at a local level" until the end of June.^{[377][378]}
- The weekly household survey by the Office for National Statistics reports that around 133,000 people in England had COVID-19 at any given time during 11–24 May, and estimates the rate of new infections to be around 54,000 per week. Both numbers are similar to the previous estimates, indicating that the number of infections is "relatively stable".^[379]
- A meeting of the four national [Chief Medical Officers](#) decides that the alert level should remain at 4, although Boris Johnson had said the previous day that he hoped it would come down to 3.^[380]
- [Durham Police](#) say that Dominic Cummings may have made a "minor breach" of lockdown rules during his visit to Barnard Castle, but no offence was committed.^[381]
- [EasyJet](#) announces plans to cut 4,500 jobs because of the effects of the COVID-19 outbreak on business.^[382]
- The tenth [Clap for Our Carers](#) event is staged at 8pm.^[383]

29 May

- Chancellor Rishi Sunak announces that the [Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme](#) will end at the end of October. Before then, employers must pay [National Insurance](#) and pension contributions from August, then 10% of pay from September, increasing to 20% in October.^[384] Self-employed people whose work has been affected by the outbreak will receive a "second and final" government grant in August.^[385]

NWN - Honesty Group re-opens for takeaway from next week in Hungerford, Inkpen, Kingsclere, Saddleback Farm Shop, The Base, Greenham, and Overton



Honesty will be opening most of its coffee shops, Saddleback Farm Shop and Honesty Inkpen from next week for takeaway.

Honesty Inkpen remains a general store and from Wednesday, June 3, will be offering takeaway refreshments, freshly-baked bread, pastries and cake and a new hot food takeaway menu, Thursday to Sunday.

To place your hot food order, call (01488) 668325 or email crownandgarter@honestygroup.co.uk where you will be assigned a time slot for collection.

It will have a new layout seeing the shop extended to allow for social distancing and a one-way shopping system. There will be a maximum of four customers allowed in store at any one time. The shop's trading hours will be Tuesday to Saturday, 10.30am to 4.30pm. In addition, there will be a book and collect service via email, a delivery service for those self-isolating via email and a click and collect service via the online shop.

Strict social distancing and hygiene measures, assessed by a qualified Covid-19 risk assessor, have been put in place at all sites to ensure both customers and staff are safe.

Honesty hopes to re-open for both dine-in and takeaway from July 4, with physical distancing measures in place, subject to Government advice.

Honesty owner Romilla Arber, says: "It has been the most challenging time we've had at Honesty Group. We are hugely grateful to the community for their continued support whilst we adapted the business to try and serve them better during this unsettling and uncertain time. We were proud to be able to support the vulnerable and elderly, by quickly converting Honesty Inkpen into a convenience store for the community and arranging a contactless doorstep delivery service. We were glad to bring some light relief to some dark days with our VE Day celebration boxes."

"Adapting the business from what we normally do was rewarding and we've come away brimming with ideas for the future. However, being closed for so long has put a huge financial strain on the business so we're ecstatic to be looking forward and re-opening stronger than ever. Supporting local businesses at a time like this has never been more important."

"We hope our loyal customers will feel safe in the knowledge that we will put the strictest measures in place to protect them. We truly can't wait to see them again."

30 May

- Some government scientific advisers warn of the risk associated with lifting lockdown restrictions in England too early, citing the still high number of cases and deaths. In response the government says it is following the data and evidence when making its decisions about the restrictions.^[386] Professor [Jonathan Van-Tam](#) tells the Downing Street briefing that Britain is at a "dangerous moment" and people must be "sensible and proportionate".^[387]
- At the Downing Street daily briefing Culture Secretary [Oliver Dowden](#) announces that competitive sport will be allowed in England behind closed doors from 1 June, with individual sporting bodies left to decide when to restart. Horse racing will be one of the first sporting activities to resume.^[388]
- Conservative MPs urge Boris Johnson to revise the 2 metre social distancing rule to 1.5 metres amid concerns for the hospitality industry.^[389]

31 May

- The UK exceeds its target to increase testing capacity to 200,000 tests a day by the end of May, with 205,634 available for 30 May.^[390]

June 2020

1 June

- The [Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(England\) \(Amendment No. 3\) Regulations 2020](#) (SI 558) come into effect, again without prior parliamentary scrutiny. Car and caravan showrooms, outdoor sports amenities and outdoor non-food markets may reopen. The prohibitions on leaving home are replaced by a prohibition on staying overnight away from home, with certain specific exceptions. Gatherings of people from more than one household are limited to six people outdoors and are prohibited entirely indoors, with exceptions including education. There are further exemptions for elite athletes.^[391]
- ITV announces plans to resume filming of its soap [Coronation Street](#) from 9 June following an eleven-week break. ITV have aired three episodes a week since March, and the new filming schedule will allow that number of airings to continue.^[392]

2 June

- Figures from the Office for National Statistics show the number of COVID-19 deaths to be at their lowest since March, with 2,872 death certificates mentioning the condition during the week up to 22 May.^[393]
- [The Guardian](#) has calculated the UK death toll from COVID-19 is 50,032.^[394] Meanwhile, [Reuters](#) give the figure as 49,646.^[395]

- [David Norgrove](#), chair of the [UK Statistics Authority](#), rebukes Matt Hancock in an escalation of his 11 May criticism of the government's handling of testing data, saying the figures are "still far from complete and comprehensible" and appear to be aimed at showing "the largest possible number of tests, even at the expense of understanding".^[396]
- MPs vote to end the practice of [voting from home](#), but some politicians criticise the move for excluding those unable to attend Parliament due to age or health reasons. In response, [Jacob Rees-Mogg](#), the [Leader of the House](#), says he will schedule a [motion](#) for the following day that will enable them to question the government but not to vote.^[397]
- Water companies urge people to conserve water during the lockdown restrictions by not using sprinklers and hosepipes, or filling paddling pools. The advice follows a record dry spring coupled with more people spending time at home.^[398]
- The [Royal Shakespeare Company](#) announces it has called off performances planned for the summer, autumn and winter because of the COVID-19 outbreak.^[399]
- The [England and Wales Cricket Board](#) confirms [England](#) will play three test matches against the [West Indies](#) starting on 8 July.^[400]
- The UK government is to scale back its daily Downing Street briefings to weekdays only, citing low viewing figures at weekends. Boris Johnson will also commit to leading one briefing per week.^[401]

3 June

- Home Secretary [Priti Patel](#) confirms plans to introduce a 14-day quarantine for new arrivals into the UK. Those who break the quarantine conditions in England will face fines of £1,000 and potential prosecution.^[402]
- [Business Secretary Alok Sharma](#) is tested for COVID-19 and self-isolates at home after looking visibly ill during a House of Commons debate.^[403] He subsequently tests negative for the virus.^[404]
- As the UK begins a period of wetter weather, Boris Johnson urges people not to move gatherings indoors if it rains.^[405]

4 June

- [Debenhams](#) announces plans to reopen three stores in Northern Ireland from 8 June, followed by 50 in England a week later.^[406]
- Research by [King's College London](#) has suggested that half the UK population has struggled with sleep during lockdown.^[407]

5 June

- The number of recorded deaths passes 40,000 after rising by 357 to 40,261.^[408]
- The [British Medical Association](#) urge the UK government to extend the rules regarding the wearing of face covering to all situations where social distancing is not possible.^[409]
- Sir [Patrick Vallance](#), the UK's [Government Chief Scientific Adviser](#), says the [R number](#) is between 0.7 and 0.9, but could be as high as 1 in some areas of England. His

comments come after figures from the Office for National Statistics suggest the reproductive rate is between 0.7 and 1 for England.^[410]

- The weekly household survey by the Office for National Statistics reports that around 53,000 people (95% confidence: 25,000 to 99,000) in England had COVID-19 at any given time during 17–30 May, and estimates the rate of new infections to be around 39,000 per week, down from 54,000 the previous week. Their estimates are based on small numbers: 21 positive results from just under 20,000 swab tests.^[411]
- The UK government's ban on tenant evictions in England and Wales is extended by two months to 23 August.^[412]
- Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) urges people not to breach lockdown rules by attending [protests planned for the forthcoming weekend](#). Several are planned by the organisation [Black Lives Matter](#) following the [killing of George Floyd](#) in the United States.^[413]

6 June

- Anti-racism demonstrations are held in cities across the UK; attendees are reported to be in the thousands.^[414]
- [Robert Jenrick](#) announces that places of worship will be allowed to open for individual prayer on 15 June.
- Newbury Astronomical Society was poised for the longest eclipse for 11 years, but the views were blocked by clouds

NWN - MEMBERS of Newbury Astronomical Society were left disappointed last night (Wednesday) after the weather ruined their chances of seeing the longest lunar eclipse for 11 years.

Due to the cloudy weather conditions, members of the society who had gathered to see the spectacle said that they could barely see a thing.

People in West Berkshire were poised in the hope of catching a glimpse of a very red and very large moon.

Society member, Steve Harris, said that they knew beforehand that they were not going to get a particularly great view and unlikely to ever be as good as the eclipse they witnessed in 2007, which had happened later in the evening and higher in the sky meaning there was clearer visibility.

He said: "The one last night was always at a loss.

"We are just going to have to wait again for another three or four months."

People in places such as South Africa reported better views of the eclipse with reports saying it lasted up to 100 minutes.

7 June

- No new deaths are recorded for Scotland or Northern Ireland over the most recent 24 hour period; it is the first time Scotland has recorded no new deaths since lockdown began in March.^{[415][416]}

- Thousands of protesters take part in a second day of anti-racism demonstrations in cities across the UK. [\[417\]](#)
- Professor [John Edmunds](#), one of the scientists advising the UK government, says he wishes the lockdown had been implemented earlier as the delay "cost a lot of lives", but adds that data was "really quite poor", making it "very hard" to do act earlier. [\[418\]](#) Responding to the comments, Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) says the government "took the right decision at the right time". [\[419\]](#)

8 June

- Rules requiring travellers arriving into the UK to quarantine for 14 days come into force. [\[420\]](#)
- The number of recorded deaths rises by 55 to 40,597, the lowest daily number since lockdown was introduced on 23 March; no deaths are reported in Scotland for a second consecutive day, and there are no new deaths in London hospitals. [\[421\]](#)
- [BP](#) announces plans to shed 10,000 jobs amid a global drop in demand for oil. [\[422\]](#)

9 June

- Business Secretary [Alok Sharma](#) confirms that all non-essential retailers in England can reopen from Monday 15 June providing they follow safety guidelines. However, pubs, bars, restaurants and hairdressers must wait until 4 July "at the earliest" to reopen. [\[423\]](#) Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) announces that zoos and safari parks will also reopen on 15 June. [\[424\]](#)
- Figures released by the Treasury show that 8.9 million workers are now covered by the [Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme](#), a quarter of the UK workforce, with it having cost £19.6bn to date. [\[425\]](#)
- Thirty medical organisations that represent black, Asian and minority ethnic doctors and nurses write to Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) and Equalities Minister [Kemi Badenoch](#) expressing their concern at a government review that found black, Asian and ethnic minority people are twice as likely to die from COVID-19.

NWN - Black Lives Matter protests to be held in Newbury this week, following killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis

Two protests are being organised in Newbury later this week as part of the Black Lives Matter movement.

Hundreds of thousands of people across the world have been taking to the streets to take a stand against racism, police brutality and inequality following the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

The first protest, on Friday, has been organised by 16-year-old Sam Morton from Newbury (pictured here) and Livia Popplewell from Inkpen.

Crowds will gather at the Clock Tower in The Broadway at 2pm and at 2.15pm the protesters will make their way down Northbrook Street to the Market Place. There, a number of people will speak and a minute's silence will be observed.

On Saturday, another separate peaceful protest will take place in Newbury, this time in Victoria Park, where there will be a two minute silence and a 'kneel for solidarity'.



Miss Morton said: "I think it's important for a town like ours to show other small towns we are capable of standing up and saying what happened in America is not okay.... I think some people just need to wake up and take off their rose-tinted glasses.....Things need to change. Even if it's a small change.....A small change can help others." She added: "I've not had any problems in West Berkshire but it's not the most diverse area and I grew up knowing no one looked like me.....We've got family in Virginia and every time we visit them we are double-looked by the police in America.....I thought this is outrageous, this could have been me or my cousin.....My little cousin lives in America. He doesn't know what the police are. He doesn't know what racism is. He's just the happiest little boy. It breaks my heart and worries me that one day this could happen to him and I would never forgive myself if I didn't try to do something to stop that happening."

Miss Morton said she is also going to try to video the event and put it online for those who are unable to attend.

When asked what reaction she's had, Miss Morton said: "Mainly it's been positive, but we have had a bit of negativity, with people saying 'it's [racism] not a problem around here' when actually it probably is. Others say we are stupid to do it because of the coronavirus. My reply to them is thank you for your opinion, but you don't have to come."

She added: "We would like as many people as possible to attend, but social distancing will be in place and we'd encourage you to wear a face mask if you can or, if not, a makeshift mask."

Miss Morton said hand sanitiser will be brought along and encouraged anyone who is in the at risk category not to attend and stay at home.

She made it clear that "it is a peaceful protest and we will not accept any violence or vandalism of any kind".

The Saturday event, meanwhile, is being organised by Waheeda Soomro, Claire Burdett, Helen Franklin and Sinead Hall.

Ms Soomro said: “The organisers are delighted by the coming together of people from all generations, backgrounds and across party lines, to express our solidarity at this time.

“Our work doesn’t end after the event, it is just the beginning as we continue to collaborate on bringing about positive change in our hearts, in our relationships with each other, in our town and in our country. Ultimately there is an urgent need to reassess how we understand and dismantle racism for our future generations, the time is now. As organisers, we trust these will be peaceful protests and social distancing will be managed, people’s safety is paramount. We don’t condone any kind of violence because this is our town and our home too.”

The Saturday event’s Facebook page states: “Take a stand where you stand – kneel with us in solidarity #taketheknee

“The murder of George Floyd has shaken us all to our core, adding weight to frustration and grief that has been mounting for decades and centuries.

“We want to show our brothers and sisters that we stand in solidarity with them in the fight against racism, police brutality, injustice and inequality.

“On Saturday 13th June at 12 noon, please join the local community in a silent kneel for solidarity in Victoria Park, Newbury.

“In order to manage numbers and social distancing there will be another opportunity to participate at 1pm. This is our peaceful protest in honour of George Floyd, the Black Lives Matter Movement, and for all the victims of injustice and inequality in America, UK and beyond.”

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10 June

- Professor Neil Ferguson, the government scientist whose advice was crucial in persuading the government to implement the lockdown measures, says that half of the lives lost to COVID-19 could have been saved if the measures had been introduced a week earlier.^[427]

11 June

- Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) describes participation with the [Test and Trace](#) programme as a "civic duty".^[428]
- Figures from the Office for National Statistics indicate those under the age of 30 have been hardest hit by a fall in income during the COVID-19 outbreak.^[429]

12 June

- Figures released by the [Office for National Statistics](#) show that the UK economy shrunk by 20.4% in April, the largest monthly contraction on record.^[430]
- Further ONS figures indicate deprived areas have been hit twice as hard by the COVID-19 epidemic when compared to more affluent areas. The impact has also been greater in urban areas compared to rural areas, with London experiencing the highest number of deaths per 100,000.^[431]
- The weekly ONS household survey finds that around 33,000 people in England had COVID-19 at any given time between 25 May and 7 June, and estimates the rate of new infections to be around 31,600 per week, down from 39,000 the previous week.

NWN - Black Lives Matter: Protesters take to the streets of Newbury

Hundreds march as part of global movement against racism, police brutality and inequality.

More than 500 protesters took to the streets of Newbury in the pouring rain this afternoon (Friday) as part of the Black Lives Matter movement.

People of all ages marched through the town holding banners and placards to take a stand against racism, police brutality and inequality following the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis.



Northbrook Street to the Market Place.

Their message was clear - enough is enough. The time has come for change.

The protest was organised by 16-year-olds Sam Morton from Newbury and Livia Popplewell from Inkpen.

The protesters gathered at the Clock Tower in The Broadway at 2pm and at 2.15pm made their way down

There, a number of people gave passionate speeches about their own experiences of racism before a minute's silence was observed.

Sam said: "I think it's important for a town like ours to show other small towns we are capable of standing up and saying what happened in America is not okay.

"I think some people just need to wake up and take off their rose-tinted glasses.

"Things need to change. Even if it's a small change."

13 June

- Parts of the [Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(England\) \(Amendment No. 4\) Regulations 2020](#) (SI 588) come into effect. In England and Northern Ireland, households with one adult may now become linked with one other household of any size, allowing them to be treated as one for the purpose of permitted gatherings. This also allows the members of one household to stay overnight at the home of the other. The government refers to this as a "support bubble".^[433] The rules on gatherings are also relaxed to allow medical appointments and births to be accompanied, and to permit some visits to people in hospital, hospices and care homes.
- The [Welsh Guard](#) performs a unique socially distanced military ceremony at [Windsor Castle](#) to mark the Queen's Official Birthday. The ceremony is held in place of the cancelled [Trooping of the Colour](#), and sees the Queen's first public appearance since lockdown began.^[434]

14 June

NWN - An 11-year-old girl from Inkpen is taking part in a sponsored walk for charity every day in June, to help raise funds for the West Berkshire Foodbank.

Romany Taylor, who is a pupil at Inkpen Primary School, came up with the idea of walking up Walbury Hill to Combe Gibbet 30 times – a total distance of 120 miles.



She originally set out with the intention of raising a modest £50, but just a third of the way through her challenge, has managed to raise more than 20 times that amount – with donations to her JustGiving page now topping £1,000.

Speaking to the Newbury Weekly News, she said: "I just want to say thank you very much to everyone who has been so generous.

"I didn't think I'd raise anywhere near this much.

"I'm finding the challenge OK, so far and it's getting a little bit easier every day.

"Some days my friends join me and that is a big support.

"I decided to raise money for the foodbank because a lot more people are needing it now due to the coronavirus.

“A lot of people are donating to the NHS at the moment, so I thought I’d raise money for another good cause that may need help.”

Romany is posting a photograph every day to keep everyone updated on her progress.

Kirby House Open Garden



Kirby House Garden is stunning at the moment and Katherine Astor has kindly offered to open it for one day only in aid of the IMPFT Fund Raising.

Due to the need for social distancing you will need to book a time to visit. We are making bookings at 10 min intervals so please ensure you turn up at the time allocated.

A maximum of 6 per group. Please keep social distancing in place at all times during your visit

15 June

- The remainder of the [Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(England\) \(Amendment No. 4\) Regulations 2020](#) (SI 588) comes into effect, allowing the general re-opening of English retail shops and public-facing businesses apart from those that are on a list of specific exclusions such as restaurants, bars, pubs, nightclubs, most cinemas, theatres, museums, hairdressers, indoor sports and leisure facilities. Outdoor animal-related attractions such as farms, zoos and safari

parks may open. Places of worship may again be used for private prayer (but not for communal worship). English libraries still have to remain closed.

- The Isle of Man lifts restrictions on social distancing except in health and care environments.^[435]
- Wearing a face covering becomes mandatory on public transport.

Brexit - Jim Brunsten (Financial Times EU Correspondent) - The high level meeting: Boris Johnson spoke with EU institutional leaders via videoconference, the outcome being an agreement to intensify talks throughout the month of July. Mr Johnson urged the EU to “put a tiger in the tank” while the EU’s Charles Michel refused to buy a “pig in a poke”.

16 June

- The low-dose steroid treatment [dexamethasone](#), which has been part of clinical trials for existing drugs that could be used to treat patients with COVID-19, is heralded as a major breakthrough after it was found to cut the number of deaths. Experts estimate up to 5,000 lives may have been saved in the UK had the treatment been used from the outset. Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) describes the news as a genuine cause to celebrate "a remarkable British scientific achievement". Dexamethasone will be made available through the NHS, which has a stockpile of 200,000 doses.^[436]
- Office for National Statistics figures suggest more than 600,000 people have lost their jobs between March and May because of the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak.^[437]
- A report published by [National Foundation for Educational Research](#) (NFER) suggests that 90% of teachers say their pupils are doing less work than would be the usual case for the time of year, while headteachers say a third of pupils are not engaging with the work set for them by their teachers.^[438]

17 June

- Speaking to the [Science and Technology Committee](#), [Lord Bethell](#), the [Minister for Innovation](#) at the Department of Health and Social Care, says the [contact tracing app](#) is "not a priority" and may not be ready until the winter.^[439]
- Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) is pictured slapping a colleague on the back as they arrived at the House of Commons for [Prime Minister's Questions](#), apparently forgetting social distancing measures.^[440]

18 June

- The [Bank of England](#) announces plans to inject an extra £100bn into the UK economy to help fight downturn precipitated by the pandemic.^[441]
- The UK delays the launch of the [contact tracing app](#), and changes its original format in favour of a model based on technology designed by [Apple](#) and [Google](#). Compatibility issues were found between the app's and Apple's software, but unlike Apple's model the UK app is able to better measure distance, so the plan is to

combine aspects of both into a single app. The Apple-Google model is also less centralised but more secure.^[442]

- The weekly ONS household survey estimates that around 33,000 people in England had COVID-19 at any given time between 31 May and 13 June, unchanged from the previous week. Antibodies were found in 5.4% of 1,757 people who gave blood samples since 26 April.^[443]
- Health Secretary Matt Hancock announces that pharmaceutical company [AstraZeneca](#) and [Oxford University](#) have reached a deal to begin the manufacture of a potential vaccine, even though it has yet to receive clinical approval. The plan is to stockpile the vaccine ready for its approval. Those over the age of 50 and with certain underlying health conditions will then be prioritised for the vaccine once launched.^[444]
- [Office for National Statistics](#) data for the two weeks up to 10 June indicates that of the 14,000 names passed to [NHS Test and Trace](#) for follow up, 10,200 had been contacted.^[445]

19 June

UK's COVID-19 Alert Levels (introduced in May 2020)

- The UK's COVID-19 Alert Level is lowered from Level 4 (severe risk, high transmission) to Level 3 (substantial risk, general circulation), following the agreement of all four Chief Medical Officers. Health Secretary Matt Hancock describes the change as "a big moment for the country".^{[446][447]}
- Figures from the Treasury show that UK debt stands at £1.95trn, and is larger than the economy for the first time in 50 years following a record amount of borrowing in May. The amount borrowed in May was £55.2bn, nine times higher than borrowing for May 2019, and the highest monthly amount since records began.^[448]

20 June

- Culture Secretary [Oliver Dowden](#) and Chancellor [Rishi Sunak](#) confirm that the review into the 2m social distancing rule in England will conclude within the coming days.^{[449][449]}
- Spain's foreign affairs minister [Arancha González Laya](#) announces that UK tourists will be able to visit Spain without the need for quarantine from the following day.^[450]
- Guernsey lifts the majority of its lockdown restrictions, meaning social distancing measures are no longer required and pubs, restaurants and other businesses can operate at normal capacity. But border controls remain in place.^[451]
- Northern Ireland records one death in the most recent 24 hour period, but no new cases of COVID-19 for the first time since March.^{[452][453]}

21 June

- No new COVID-19 deaths are recorded for Scotland and Northern Ireland.^{[454][455]}

22 June

- A new coronavirus [saliva test](#) is trialled in the UK.^[456]
- The UK records its lowest number of new coronavirus cases since the beginning of lockdown with 958 people having tested positive for the virus, the first time the figure has dropped below 1,000; the number of deaths recorded for the previous day stands at 15, the lowest figure since 15 March.^[457]
- The energy regulator [Ofgem](#) gives energy companies permission to follow up unpaid bills, but warns them not to be aggressive in their pursuit of unpaid debts.^[458]

23 June

- Boris Johnson leads the UK government's final Downing Street daily briefing. From now on press briefings will be held whenever there is a significant announcement.^[459]
- Doctors have expressed concern that a significant number of COVID-19 patients may be left with the permanent lung condition [pulmonary fibrosis](#) as a result of the virus, and will need to be monitored for signs of the condition.^[460]

24 June

- Scientists at [Imperial College London](#) begin human trials of a COVID-19 vaccine after tests on animals indicate an effective immune response; 300 volunteers will take part in the programme.^[461]
- The [British Medical Journal](#) publishes an open letter from health leaders in which they call on the government to launch an urgent review to determine whether the UK is prepared for what they describe as the "real risk" of a second wave of COVID-19.^[462]
- The UK government publishes new advice for businesses on how to safely reopen their premises on 4 July.^[463]

25 June

- In a letter to the [British Medical Journal](#), a group of senior health academics expresses their concern that COVID-19 antibody tests for NHS and care staff are being rolled out without "adequate assessment" and will place the health service under unnecessary strain.^[464]
- As the UK experiences a short heatwave, [Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council](#) declares a major incident after as many as half a million people travel to the Dorset coast.^[465] Professor Chris Whitty, the UK's chief medical officer, warns people to respect social distancing guidelines while enjoying the weather or the number of COVID-19 cases "will rise again".^{[466][467]}
- The weekly ONS household survey for 8–21 June estimates that new infections were occurring at a rate of 22,000 per week, and notes that the decline seen between mid-May and early June has "levelled off".^[468]
- The UK government announces plans to relax rules for England and Wales allowing pubs and restaurants to utilise outdoor spaces such as terraces, pavements and car parks, while outdoor markets and fetes will no longer need planning permission.^[469]

26 June

- Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) warns that the UK could be set back if people continue to ignore social distancing rules as those who visited the south coast the previous day have done. [\[470\]](#)
- Professor Neil Ferguson, a former government scientific adviser, says he does not believe a second national lockdown would be necessary, but instead would expect to see "targeted" measures to deal with outbreaks. [\[471\]](#)
- Research published by the [University of Oxford's Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine](#) shows that the proportion of COVID hospital patients dying each day in England has fallen from 6% to 1% between April and June. In terms of numbers, 15,468 people were in hospital in England of which 899 died (6%) on 8 April, compared to 2,698 hospital patients on 21 June, 30 of which died (1%). [\[472\]](#)
- [Intu Properties](#), owner of many of the UK's largest shopping centres, goes into administration because of the financial impact of the COVID-19 outbreak. [\[473\]](#)
- The UK government confirms that people returning from certain countries will not be required to quarantine for 14 days when returning to the UK from 6 July. A traffic lights system will be established allocating colours depending on a country's risk level, with a list of countries to be confirmed at a later date. [\[474\]](#)

27 June

- Travel companies report that holiday bookings have "exploded" since the UK government announced plans to ease quarantine restrictions on travel abroad. But Scotland says it is yet to decide on the matter. Although the UK government has authority over border control, the Scottish government must be consulted on quarantine in Scotland because health matters in Scotland are devolved to the Scottish government. [\[475\]](#)[\[476\]](#)
- The [Red Arrows](#) perform a fly-past over Scarborough for [Armed Forces Day](#); a celebration in the town for the occasion was cancelled because of the COVID-19 outbreak. [\[477\]](#)

28 June

- Home Secretary [Priti Patel](#) confirms a [Sunday Times](#) report that the government is considering imposing a local lockdown on [Leicester](#), which has seen a spike in COVID-19 cases. Of the 2,494 cases reported in the city, 658 of them (around 25%) occurred in the two weeks preceding 16 June. [\[478\]](#)

29 June

Leicester and the extent of UK's first local-lockdown

- Following a spike in COVID-19 cases in [Leicester](#), Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) announces the reintroduction of stricter lockdown measures for the city, including the closure of non-essential retailers from the following day, and the closure of schools from 2 July. People in Leicester are advised to stay at home as much as

possible, while it is recommended that all but essential travel to, from and within the city should be avoided.^{[479][480]} Of the 2,987 positive cases in Leicester since the pandemic began, 866 (29%) were reported in the two weeks preceding 23 June,^[481] while Hancock says Leicester accounted for "10% of all positive cases in the country over the past week".^[482] Sir [Peter Soulsby](#), the [Mayor of Leicester](#) has criticised a lack of communication between the UK government and [Leicester City Council](#) which he describes as "intensely frustrating".^[483]

- The UK government announces that mandatory MOT tests will be reintroduced from 1 August.^[484]
- Analysis produced by the BBC indicated that the UK has been the worst hit of the [G7](#) countries in terms of COVID-19, while England is the worst hit nation of Europe, just ahead of Spain.^[485]
- The [Greek Government](#) extends its ban on flights from the UK until 15 July.^[486]
- The [England and Wales Cricket Board](#) confirms that the [2020 County Championship](#) season will begin on 1 August.^[487]

30 June

- As Leicester begins at least two weeks of re-tightened lockdown restrictions, a list of other areas where COVID-19 cases are rising is published, though the increases are much smaller than Leicester.^[488]
- Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) sets out a £5bn post-coronavirus recovery plan for the UK that will see home building and improvements to infrastructure, describing it as a "new deal".^[489]
- Figures from the [Office for National Statistics](#) have indicated the number of deaths in the week up to 19 June fell below the five year average for the first time since March.^[490]
- Rented [motorized scooters](#) are to be permitted on UK roads from 4 July in a bid to ease pressure on public transport.^[491]
- [EasyJet](#) begins the consultation process for plans to close three of its UK bases.

1 July

- Over two days, 12,000 job losses have been announced in the retail and aviation industry as a result of the economic impact of the COVID-19 outbreak.^[4]
- Conservative MP [Giles Watling](#) warned of the impact on theatres if they have to cancel the pantomime season; his comments come after several theatres announced plans to cancel pantomimes over the coming winter season.

Brexit - Jim Brunson (Financial Times EU Correspondent) - One of the pivotal moments in the future-relationship talks because of what did not happen.

June 30 was the legal deadline for Britain to request an extension to its post-Brexit transition period, something Mr Johnson decided not to do despite the economic turmoil engulfing the UK because of Covid-19.

July 1 was also a day of missed deadlines. The political declaration that forms part of Mr

Johnson's Brexit agreement with the EU committed both sides to seek a deal by then on access to UK fishing waters for European fishermen. Instead, the issue remains one of the most difficult on the table and forms a core part of the negotiating endgame.

Similarly, the two sides had a target to reach decisions on access to each other's financial services markets by this date. Brussels sees this as another source of leverage in the talks, and virtually all the access decisions are still pending.

2 July

- [Casual Dining Group](#), the owner of [Café Rouge](#) and [Bella Italia](#), goes into administration with the loss of 1,900 of the 6,000 staff employed by the outlets,^[6] while [Airbus](#) announces the loss of 2,730 jobs at two UK factories.^[7]
- The weekly ONS household survey for 14–27 June estimates that new infections were occurring in England at a rate of 25,000 per week, a slight increase on their previous report. Blood samples show around 6% of people have antibodies.^[8]

3 July

- The UK government published a list of 59 countries for which quarantine will not apply when arriving back in England as from 10 July. They include Greece, France, Belgium and Spain, but Portugal and the United States are among those not on the list. These changes do not apply to Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, where quarantine restrictions remain in place for all arrivals from outside the UK.^[9]
- The UK government rushed [The Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(Leicester\) Regulations 2020](#) through parliament to give police the powers to enforce lockdown restrictions in Leicester as from 4 July.^{[10][11]}

4 July

- [The Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(No. 2\) \(England\) Regulations 2020](#) came into force in England, replacing and relaxing the previous [Lockdown Regulations](#) (SI 350), and giving the Secretary of State powers to make declarations restricting access to public outdoor places. [Leicester](#) was excluded from the relaxations due to its high rate of COVID-19, with more stringent regulations in force.^[12]
- The *COVID Symptom Study* reports that the two-week average number of new daily cases for the two weeks to 4 July 2020 was no lower than for the previous week; rates of new COVID cases were no longer declining.^[13]
- After [Brexit Party](#) leader [Nigel Farage](#) posted a picture of himself in a pub on Twitter a fortnight after attending a rally in support of US President [Donald Trump](#) in the United States, [Ed Davey](#), the acting leader of the [Liberal Democrats](#), wrote to [Kent Police](#) asking them to investigate whether Farage had breached lockdown restrictions.^[14] On the same day, Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#)'s father, [Stanley](#), had to defend a trip to Greece which critics say broke restrictions.^[15]
- [Augusto Santos Silva](#), the [Foreign minister of Portugal](#), criticised the UK's decision to exclude his country from the list of countries from where travellers do not have to quarantine when returning to the UK as "absurd".^[16]
- The [National Gallery](#), set to be the first museum to reopen to the public on 8 July, gave a preview to the media of its new safety measures.^[17]
- The UK held a [minute's silence](#) to remember those who had died of COVID-19.

LOCKDOWN LIFTED

For weeks, Britain has braced itself for its biggest return to freedoms since March 23 with cinemas, pubs, hairdressers and hotels all reopening on July 4.

As the doors to the UK's hospitality sector reopen, thousands of Britons will be tasting a draught beer and enjoying an overdue trip to the cinema for the first time in months.

5 July

- The UK stages a [national round of applause](#) to mark the 72nd anniversary of the founding of the National Health Service; a [Supermarine Spitfire flypast](#) over several hospitals in the east of England also takes place to mark the occasion.^[19]

6 July

- The UK government announces grants and loans of £1.57bn to support theatres, galleries, museums and other cultural venues affected by the COVID-19 outbreak.^[20]
- As concerns about increasing unemployment grow, the UK government announces a £111m scheme to help firms in England provide an extra 30,000 trainee places; £21m will be provided to fund similar schemes in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.^[21]
- Sandwich retailer [Pret a Manger](#) announces plans to close 30 outlets with the loss of 1,000 jobs.^[22]
- The BBC's [Panorama](#) programme reports that scientific research has suggested the COVID-19 outbreak could result in several thousand extra cancer deaths due to delayed diagnosis and treatment, with estimates being between 7,000 and 35,000.^[23]
- No new deaths are reported for Wales for the most recent 24-hour period.^[24]

7 July

- Figures from the [Office for National Statistics](#) indicate only 22% of people testing positive for COVID-19 had symptoms on the day they were tested.^[25]
- Downing Street rejects calls for Boris Johnson to issue an apology after comments the previous day that "too many care homes didn't really follow procedures" over COVID-19, but says what he was saying was that not enough was known about the virus in its early stages.^[26]
- Circus performers call on the UK government to include their industry in the arts rescue package unveiled the previous day.^[27]

8 July

- Chancellor [Rishi Sunak](#) unveils a [£30bn spending package](#) aimed at mitigating the [economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic](#), including a temporary reduction in [VAT](#) for the hospitality sector, a scheme to pay firms £1,000 for each employee brought back from furlough, a scheme to get young people into employment, and a temporary rise in the [stamp duty](#) threshold.^[28]
- [McDonald's](#) resumes serving [breakfast](#) at most of its sites.^[29] The annual [McDonald's Monopoly](#) campaign is postponed to 2021 for the first time in 15 years.^[30]

9 July

- High street retailers [Boots](#) and [John Lewis](#) announce job losses because of the COVID-19 pandemic, with Boots cutting 4,000 positions, and John Lewis closing eight stores with the loss of 1,300 posts. ^[31]
- Two sets of data are released that show the number of cases of COVID-19 are falling in England; [Office for National Statistics](#) figures estimate one in 3,900 people have the virus, down from one in 2,200 the previous week, while [Public Health England](#) figures indicate that cases fell by 25% in the week to 5 July. ^[32]
- The [Institute of Fiscal Studies](#) warns that taxes will have to rise to pay off the support measures put in place by the government. ^[33]
- Northern Ireland lifts quarantine regulations on arrivals from 50 countries, including France, Italy, Germany and Spain, effective from 10 July. ^[34]
- The BBC confirms it will go ahead with plans to end free TV licences for over-75s from 1 August, except for those on [pension credit](#), a measure it postponed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. ^[35]

10 July

- Quarantine rules are relaxed for people arriving into the UK from 75 countries and overseas territories. ^[36]
- Figures released by the [National Police Chiefs' Council](#) show that no fines were issued in England and Wales for breach of quarantine rules during the first two weeks after their introduction, while ten people were fined for not wearing face coverings on public transport in the two weeks preceding 22 June. ^[37]
- As the wearing of face coverings becomes mandatory in shops in Scotland, the UK Government considers whether to introduce the same rule for shops in England, while Prime Minister Boris Johnson is seen in public wearing one. ^{[38][39]}
- Bosses at the [Birmingham Repertory Theatre](#), one of the UK's leading production theatres, warn the theatre is at risk of losing 47 of its staff members (about 40% of its workforce), and is in danger of closing because of the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

NWN - 10 July



COMET Neowise is making a show of itself throughout July and this spectacular image was taken by Dave Foulger from Combe Gibbet just before midnight yesterday, July 10.

Dave took the picture with his phone on a tripod using Google Pixel 4, astrophotography mode, and with a four-minute exposure.

Comet Neowise was discovered in late March by a space telescope and is going to be visible with the naked eye from anywhere in the

UK for the rest of July.

The comet will reach its closest point to Earth on July 23, when it will be about 64 million miles away - or about 400 times further away than the Moon.

As it gets closer to Earth over the coming days it should become more visible, with its tail appearing longer and brighter and making it easier to spot. If you want to give yourself the best chance of spotting it, you should find as clear an area as possible with low light pollution and few buildings or trees blocking your view.

11 July

- Parts of [The Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(No. 2\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2020](#) come into effect, allowing outdoor swimming pools and water parks to re-open. Operators of outdoor swimming pools, many of them community groups and charities, criticise the UK government's timing, citing a lack of preparation time that has made a short summer season "unviable".^[41]
- Belgium includes Leicester on its "red zone" list, meaning anyone who has recently visited the city will be required to quarantine for 14 days on arrival in Belgium.^[42]

12 July

- High Street fashion retailer [Primark](#) says it will not take advantage of the Jobs Retention Bonus announced by Chancellor Rishi Sunak. The company placed 30,000 of its employees on furlough during the pandemic, but has since brought them all back to work, and would have been entitled to £30m under the scheme.^[43]

13 July

- The remainder of [The Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(No. 2\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2020](#) comes into effect, allowing the re-opening of nail bars and salons, tanning booths and salons, spas and beauty salons, massage parlours, tattoo parlours, and body and skin piercing services.^{[44][45]}

14 July

- A report commissioned by the UK's chief scientific adviser, Sir [Patrick Vallance](#), produces estimates for potential COVID-19 deaths in a deadly second wave scenario over the coming winter, with best and worst case outcomes depending on the level of action taken to control the virus. The report forecasts a figure of between 24,500 and 251,000 hospital deaths, with a peak in January and February 2021, but stresses the figures are forecasts and not predictions, and do not take factors such as the development of a vaccine into account.^[46]
- The UK government announces that the wearing of face coverings will become compulsory in shops and supermarkets in England from 24 July. Those who fail to do so will face a fine of up to £100. Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) says the move will "give people more confidence to shop safely and enhance protections for those who work in shops".^[47]
- Figures from the [Office for National Statistics](#) show that UK economic recovery was at 1.8% in May 2020 when compared to the previous month, a smaller amount than was expected.^[48]

15 July

- Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) confirms an independent inquiry will be held into the handling of the pandemic, but says it would not be right to devote "huge amounts of official time" to an inquiry while the pandemic is ongoing.^[49]
- A temporary cut in [Value-added tax](#) worth £4bn comes into force until 12 January 2021 as a means of helping the food and hospitality industries. [Nando's](#), [Pret a Manger](#), [KFC](#) and [McDonald's](#) are among the firms to announce price reductions as a result.^[50]
- Online retailer [ASOS](#) says it will repay furlough cash it received from the UK government after sales increased by 10% to £1bn in the four months up to 30 June.^[51]

16 July

- The [National Cyber Security Centre](#) accuses Russian spies of targeting organisations developing COVID-19 vaccines in the United Kingdom, United States and Canada in order to steal information relating to their work.^[52]
- Figures released by the UK government show the number of workers on UK payrolls fell by 649,000 from March to June, but unemployment did not increase as much as feared because many companies took advantage of the [Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme](#).^[53]
- Speaking to the House of Commons Scientific Advisory Committee, the UK's Chief Medical Officer Sir Patrick Vallance says there is "absolutely no reason" to change the advice about working from home, and that it remains a "perfectly good option" for many.^[54]
- Health Secretary Matt Hancock announces that the Leicester local lockdown is to be extended. The boundaries are redrawn so that only the [Leicester](#) unitary authority plus the borough of [Oadby and Wigston](#) are now included in the travel and business restrictions, with the other areas of Leicestershire being released. Review of the situation was set for 1 August.^[55]

17 July

- Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) announces a further easing of lockdown restrictions for England, with plans for a "significant return to normality" by Christmas. The new rules allow people to use public transport for non-essential journeys with immediate effect, while employers will have more discretion over their work places from 1 August.^[56] From 18 July, local authorities will have the power to enforce local shutdowns.^[57]
- Johnson announces an extra £3bn for the [NHS in England](#) to help prepare for a possible second wave of COVID-19 over the coming winter.^[58]
- Johnson announces a pilot scheme for a return to spectator sports, with a view to a full return by 1 October. The [2020 World Snooker Championship](#) and the [Glorious Goodwood Festival](#) are among the first two sporting events to be part of the pilot.^[59] A pilot scheme is also announced for a return to indoor performances with socially distanced audiences at theatres, music and performance venues, with a view to a full return in August.^[60]
- Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) calls for a review of the way COVID-19 deaths are recorded in England after [Public Health England](#) confirms it records deaths as COVID related even if the death occurs several months after someone has tested positive for the virus; the other Home Nations do not record a death as COVID related if it occurs more than 28 days after a positive test.^[61]
- [Rochdale](#) introduces extra social distancing precautions to avoid full lockdown following a rise in COVID-19 cases in the area.^[62]
- [Princess Beatrice](#) marries [Edoardo Mapelli Mozzi](#) at [Windsor Castle](#) in a [private ceremony](#) attended by [the Queen](#) and close family, the wedding having been postponed from 29 May due to the COVID-19 pandemic.^[63]
- [Captain Sir Tom Moore](#) is knighted by the Queen in a ceremony at Windsor Castle.^[64]

- [British Airways](#) announces plans to retire its entire fleet of [Boeing 747s](#) four years ahead of schedule following a downturn in travel precipitated by the COVID-19 outbreak.^[65]

18 July

- [Andrei Kelin](#), Russia's ambassador to the UK, rejects allegations that Russian intelligence agents tried to steal coronavirus vaccine research information.^[66]
- Local authorities in England get new powers to close shops and outdoor public spaces, and to cancel events in order to control COVID-19.^[67]

19 July

- Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) tells [The Sunday Telegraph](#) he does not believe it will be necessary to impose a second nationwide lockdown in the event of a spike in COVID-19 cases, comparing the option to a "nuclear deterrent".^[68]
- [Robert Buckland](#), the [Secretary of State for Justice](#), announces the creation of [ten temporary courts](#) in [England and Wales](#) to deal with a backlog of legal cases brought about by the pandemic.^[69]

20 July

- The UK has signed a deal for 90 million doses of promising vaccines being developed jointly by the pharmaceutical companies [BioNtech](#) and [Pfizer](#), and by [Valneva](#). This is in addition to the 100 million doses being developed by the [University of Oxford](#) and [AstraZeneca](#).^[70]
- Preliminary results of clinical trials of a drug developed by Southampton-based biotech firm [Synairgen](#), that uses the protein [interferon beta](#), have shown promising signs. The treatment involves a patient inhaling the protein, produced by the body to fight viral infections, into the lungs using a [nebuliser](#) in order to encourage an immune response.^[71]
- Clinical trials of the vaccine being developed by the University of Oxford on 1,077 patients show that it appears to be safe, and trains the immune system to produce COVID-19 antibodies.^[72]
- Boris Johnson says he is confident but not "100% confident" a vaccine will be available in 2020.^[73]
- The UK Government is investing £14m in two factories at Port Talbot, South Wales, and Blackburn, Lancashire to produce a million high quality face coverings per week.^[74]
- High Street retailer [Marks & Spencer](#) announces 950 job losses as a result of the continuing economic impact from the pandemic.^[75]

21 July

- Chancellor [Rishi Sunak](#) announces that 900,000 public sector workers, including doctors and teachers, will get an above-inflation pay rise of 3.1% in acknowledgement of the important role they have played during the pandemic.^[76]
- Health experts, including [Wellcome Trust](#) director Professor Sir [Jeremy Farrar](#), tell the House of Commons Health Committee that even with a vaccine the UK is likely to be living with COVID-19 for many years.^[77]

22 July

- Figures released by the [Home Office](#) reveal that a backlog of 400,000 passport applications have accumulated due to disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.^[78]

- An [Office for National Statistics](#) report has concluded that a majority of children have struggled with learning at home during the lockdown.^[79]
- Fitness coach [Joe Wicks](#) presents his final online *PE with Joe* exercise class after leading the daily sessions for the past 18 weeks.^[80]

23 July

- During a visit to Scotland to mark the first year of taking office as Prime Minister, Boris Johnson says that the response to the COVID-19 pandemic proves the "sheer might" and "merits of the union".^[81]
- A report published by the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee criticises the UK government for its "astonishing" failure to plan for the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.^[82]
- The House of Commons Culture Select Committee criticises the government for being too slow to respond to what it describes as the "existential threat" faced by live theatre, music and other culture because of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.^[83]
- Vacuum cleaner manufacturer [Dyson](#) announces the loss of 900 jobs, 600 of them in the UK, as a result of the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.^[84]
- Northern Ireland's Department of Health confirms the release of Northern Ireland's contact-tracing app, [StopCOVID NI](#), for as early as 29 July. Northern Ireland is the first part of the UK to launch a contact-tracing app.^[85]

24 July

- In an interview with BBC political editor [Laura Kuenssberg](#), Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) says that the UK government did not understand the nature of coronavirus at the beginning of the pandemic, and could have done things differently. He also says there are "open questions" about whether lockdown was implemented too late.^[86]
- Face coverings become compulsory in shops and most other enclosed public places in England.^{[87][88]}
- The list of countries from where travellers do not have to quarantine when arriving in England is updated, adding Estonia, Latvia, Slovakia, Slovenia and St Vincent and the Grenadines; travellers from Portugal must still isolate for 14 days.^[89]
- Office for National Statistics figures show that retail sales increased almost to pre-lockdown levels in June, having risen 13.9% compared to May.^[90]

25 July

- [Public Health England](#) warns that being obese and overweight puts people at greater risk of severe illness or death as a result of COVID-19.^[91]
- Share prices in [Synairgen](#) are reported to have increased by 540% after news of the successful [interferon-beta](#) based drug trial.^[92]
- Following a rise in COVID-19 cases in Spain, and concerns of a second wave, the UK Government confirms travellers returning to England from Spain will be required to quarantine for 14 days from 26 July.^[93]

26 July

- Foreign Secretary [Dominic Raab](#) says it was right to act quickly, following criticism of the government's short-notice decision to reimpose quarantine rules on travellers arriving from Spain.^[94]

- The UK's largest tour operator, [Tui](#), cancels all flights from the UK to mainland Spain until 9 August.^[95]
- Transport Secretary [Grant Shapps](#), who flew out to Spain for a holiday the previous day, is caught by the change of quarantine rules.^[96]

27 July

- The first confirmed case of an animal infection with SARS-CoV-2 in the UK is reported, having been detected in a pet cat.^[97]
- Analysis from the economic forecasting group the [EY Item Club](#) suggests it will take until 2024 for the UK economy to recover from the impact of COVID-19 and the lockdown.^[98]
- The UK changes its advice on travel to Spain, advising against all non-essential travel to [mainland Spain](#), the [Balearic](#) and [Canary Islands](#).^[99]
- Transport Secretary [Grant Shapps](#) announces plans to travel home early from a family holiday in Spain due to quarantine rules.^[100]
- Travel operator [Jet2](#) cancels all flights to mainland Spain from 28 July to 17 August.^[101]
- The number of people having tested positive for COVID-19 in the UK passes 300,000 after a further 685 positive tests bring the total number of cases to 300,111; seven deaths are also reported, the lowest daily number since 12 March, and taking the total to 45,759.^[102]

28 July

- Amid criticism that the decision to impose quarantine restrictions on people arriving from Spain is unjust, Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) defends the government's decision, saying further action will be taken if necessary.^[103]
- Johnson also warns that there are signs of a European second wave of the virus.^[103]
- The [Andrew Lloyd Webber](#) musical [The Phantom of the Opera](#) ends its 33-year run in the [West End](#) as a result of the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.^[104]

29 July

- Leading figures in the airline and travel industries are urging the UK government to end blanket quarantine rules which are impacting on their sectors, and instead to introduce regional restrictions allowing unrestricted travel to areas of a country without significant COVID-19 outbreaks.^[105]
- The UK government announces a £500m scheme to help film and television with the costs of projects delayed or abandoned because of the COVID-19 pandemic.^[106]
- The [National Trust](#) announces plans for 1,200 redundancies in order to save £100m; the organisation estimates it has lost £200m because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

30 July

- In a bid to avoid a resurgence of COVID-19, the period for which someone testing positive for, or showing signs of, the virus is required to self-isolate is extended from seven to ten days.^[108]
- Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) warns the UK is "not out of the woods" as he warns of the danger of a resurgence.^[109]
- Restrictions are placed on [Greater Manchester](#), and parts of East [Lancashire](#) and [Yorkshire](#) prohibiting separate households from meeting indoors following an "increasing rate of transmission" in those areas caused by people failing to adhere to social distancing rules. The restrictions take effect from midnight.^[110]

- Luxembourg is taken off the UK quarantine exemption list following a rise in COVID-19 cases.^[111]
- [Office for National Statistics](#) figures indicate England had the highest number of excess deaths in Europe between the end of February and mid-June, and had the second highest peak of deaths behind Spain.^[112]
- The Together campaign, which includes the NHS, charities, media groups and employers, launches a consultation on how to avoid community divisions in the months ahead. The organisation has noted that the sense of community spirit fostered during lockdown is beginning to fragment.^[113]
- Cinema chain [Vue](#) announces plans to reopen some of its venues from 7 August.^[114]
- The [Office for Statistics Regulation](#) criticises First Minister of Scotland [Nicola Sturgeon](#) for comments she made in which she claimed COVID-19 rates were five times higher in England than Scotland.^[115]
- Northern Ireland's contact tracing app [StopCOVID NI](#) is launched.^[116]
- [Jet2](#) tells customers in the Balearic and Canary Islands to end their holidays early.^[117]
- Tui announces the closure of 166 of its high street outlets in the UK and Ireland, affecting 900 jobs.^[118]

31 July

- Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) postpones some lockdown easing measures scheduled to begin in England on 1 August for two weeks amid concerns about rising COVID-19 cases. Bowling alleys and casinos will remain closed until 15 August, while wedding receptions of up to 30 people are also moved back to that date. Trials of spectator sporting events are also paused. From 8 August the wearing of face coverings in more indoor settings, such as cinemas and places of worship will become mandatory.^[119]
- The ONS household survey indicates COVID-19 cases in England are rising again, with an increase from 2,800 to 4,200 daily cases in the week of 20–26 July.^[120]
- The delayed [2020 British Academy Television Awards](#) are held as a virtual ceremony.^[121]
- Northern Ireland pauses its shielding programme.^[122]

August 2020

1 August

- The shielding programme is paused for England and Scotland, but will continue for the areas where extra precautions have been introduced.^[123]
- Changes to the furlough scheme come into effect, with firms who have furloughed workers required to contribute to the [Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme](#). They must pay National Insurance and pension contributions until the scheme ends in October.^[124]

2 August

- A major incident is declared in [Greater Manchester](#) after rises in coronavirus infection rates.^{[125][126]}

3 August

- The month-long "Eat Out to Help Out" scheme begins, offering a 50% discount on meals at indoor venues, three days per week, with the remainder of the cost picked up by the government.^{[127][128]}

- Restaurants, pubs and hairdressers in Leicester are allowed to reopen as lockdown restrictions are eased in the city.



Diners across the UK will see their restaurant bills slashed by as much as 50% from today as the government's landmark Eat Out to Help Out scheme officially opens for business

- from today customers will get up to 50% off on bills when visiting participating restaurants, pubs and cafes
- half price discount will run through August and applies to all food and non-alcoholic drinks consumed on the premises – with Pizza Express, Costa Coffee and Nando's among thousands signed up
- the scheme, part of the Chancellor's Plan for Jobs, aims to protect jobs in the hospitality sector – which has been hit hard by coronavirus

4 August

- Scientists warn that test and trace provisions are inadequate to prevent a second wave of COVID-19 once schools reopen in September.

The unequal impact of COVID-19 in different parts of the country

From the outset of the pandemic, local areas have been affected differently and have needed to respond in different ways to the crisis.

5 August

- A report by the Home Affairs committee concludes that the spread of COVID-19 could have been slowed by an earlier implementation of quarantine restrictions on people arriving into the UK. [\[131\]](#)
- [Bank of Ireland](#) announces plans for 1,400 job losses collectively from its UK and Ireland operations. [\[132\]](#)

6 August

- Quarantine restrictions are placed on travellers arriving into the UK from Belgium, the Bahamas and Andorra, with the new rules coming into effect from midnight in Wales, and 4am on 8 August in the rest of the UK. [\[133\]](#)

- The [Bank of England](#) predicts that the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will be less severe than previously thought, but the economy will take much longer than anticipated to recover.^[134]
- Organisers of the [2020 London Marathon](#), scheduled for 4 October, announce it is to be an elite athletes only event due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with the race taking place on a bio-secure course.^[135]

7 August

- The [R number](#) for the UK rises to between 0.8 and 1.0, up from the previous week's number of 0.8–0.9, but is believed to be above 1.0 in three parts of England – London, the South West and the North West.^[136]
- [ITV](#) confirms that the 2020 series of its reality programme [I'm a Celebrity...Get Me Out of Here!](#) will be relocated from its usual venue in the Australian jungle to a ruined castle in the UK.^[137]

8 August

- 750,000 coronavirus test kits manufactured by [Randox](#) are being recalled due to safety concerns.^[138]
- The [British Antarctic Survey](#) announces it is scaling back its research operations because of the COVID-19 pandemic.^[139]
- The use of face coverings is extended to more indoor venues in England and Scotland.^[140]

9 August

- The daily figure of confirmed new COVID-19 infections exceeds 1,000 for the first time since June, rising by 1,062 to 310,825, but it is unclear whether the rise is down to a higher infection rate or a greater volume of testing.^[141]
- Sandwich chain [Pret a Manger](#) confirms it has asked thousands of members of its staff to work fewer hours as part of its plans for post-pandemic restructuring.^[142]

11 August

- Office for National Statistics figures reveal that the number of people in work fell by 220,000 between April and June, the largest drop in employment in a decade. Prime Minister Boris Johnson warns there is a "long, long way to go" before the economy begins to improve.^[143]
- After the Scottish Government announces upgrades for thousands of [Higher](#) results that were marked down to take account of teachers' assessments, the [National Union of Students](#) calls for the same rules to be applied to [A Level](#) results for the rest of the UK.^[144]

12 August

- Figures show the UK economy shrunk by 20.4% between April and June when compared to the first quarter of the year, making it the largest slump on record and pushing the country into recession for the first time in eleven years.^[145] Chancellor [Rishi Sunak](#) describes the situation as "unprecedented".^[146]
- The [Department for Education](#) announces that students' GCSE and A Level results will be no lower than the results of their mock exams, with the introduction of a "triple lock" system whereby the highest grade is awarded from a choice of mock exams, teachers' assessment or exams taken during the autumn term.^[147]

- Following a review of the way COVID-19 deaths are recorded by [Public Health England](#), the cumulative number for the UK is reduced by 5,377 from 46,706 to 41,329. England has previously been the only part of the UK to record a death as COVID-related no matter how long it occurred after a positive result, whereas the other constituent countries have a 28-day cut-off, which England will also now use. [\[148\]](#)[\[149\]](#)

13 August

- A Level grades are published for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. School and college leaders call for an urgent review after 36% of results in England are lower than teachers predicted, while 3% are two grades lower. [\[150\]](#)
- The [Art Fund](#) charity awards £630,000 to eighteen museums around the UK to support projects designed to reach the public during the pandemic. They include a pop-up museum in a shopping centre, actor-guides to control social distancing and exhibit boxes that can be posted to schools. [\[151\]](#)
- France, the Netherlands, Monaco, Malta, Turks and Caicos, and Aruba are added to the quarantine list, requiring travellers arriving in the UK from these countries to quarantine for 14 days as of 4.00am on 15 August. [\[152\]](#)

14 August

- The UK government signs deals for 90 million doses of potential vaccines being developed by Belgian pharmaceutical company [Janssen Pharmaceutica](#) and the US biotech company [Novavax](#). [\[153\]](#)
- Extra ferries are laid on between France and the UK as thousands of holidaymakers race to return to the UK from France before quarantine restrictions begin. [\[154\]](#)
- The UK records its highest daily rate of new COVID-19 cases since 14 June, with 1,441 new cases taking the total number to 316,367. [\[155\]](#)

15 August

- There is confusion as the exam regulator [Ofqual](#) publishes guidelines on the criteria constituting grounds for a review of results, then withdraws the advice pending a review. [\[156\]](#)
- The [Local Government Association](#) urges parents to keep up-to-date with their children's vaccinations in order to ease pressure on the NHS. [\[157\]](#)
- Some restaurants and pubs report they have dropped out of the Eat Out to Help Out scheme because of "hostility towards staff". [\[158\]](#)

16 August

- The shielding programme ends in Wales; it is the last part of the UK to end its shielding programme. [\[159\]](#)

17 August

- As many as three million self-employed people whose trade has been affected by the pandemic become eligible for a second government grant worth £6,570. [\[160\]](#)
- Following controversy over A Level grades, it is confirmed that both A Level and GCSE results in England, Wales and Northern Ireland will be based on teachers' assessments. [\[161\]](#)
- A study from the [Institute of Fiscal Studies](#) says that the education gap between wealthy and poor children has widened because of the COVID-19 pandemic, and quotes a headteacher

who says it could take up to two years to get children back to their correct level of education.^[162]

18 August

- Education Secretary [Gavin Williamson](#) says he is "incredibly sorry" for the distress caused to students over their grades.^[163]

19 August

- After France makes the wearing of face coverings compulsory for most work places, Health Secretary Matt Hancock says there are no plans to do the same in the UK.^[164]
- [Pearson Education](#) delays the release of half a million [BTEC](#) qualifications, due tomorrow, in order to regrade them.^[165]
- The UK government announces plans to expand the Office for National Statistics' Infection Survey, which tests people fortnightly for COVID-19; tests will increase from 28,000 people in England to 150,000 by October.^[166]

20 August

- Portugal is added to the quarantine exemption list, while Croatia, Austria and Trinidad and Tobago are taken off it; Scotland also removes Switzerland from its own quarantine exemption list.^[167]

21 August

- Booking a driving test resumes in England and Wales, but the website through which bookings are made crashes due to excessive demand.^[168]
- Figures released by the Government Office for Science and the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies show the R number to be between 0.9 and 1.1, up from between 0.8 and 1.0 the previous week.^[169]
- [STA Travel](#), a firm with 50 high street outlets and specialising in trips for students and young people, becomes the latest business to cease trading because of the COVID-19 pandemic.^[170]

22 August

- Sir [Mark Walpole](#), a member of the government's Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) suggests that COVID-19 will be present "forever in some form or another", and not eliminated by vaccine as in the case of diseases such as [smallpox](#).^[171]

23 August

- The UK's chief medical officer, Dr Chris Whitty, says that children are more likely to be harmed by not returning to school in September than by contracting COVID-19.^[172]
- The [National Education Union](#), the UK's largest teaching union, calls for more staff, extra teaching space and greater clarity on how to deal with a spike in COVID-19 cases in order for schools to safely reopen again.^[173]

24 August

- As schools in Northern Ireland return for the autumn term, Prime Minister Boris Johnson releases a message to parents telling them it is "vitally important" children go back to school, with the life chances of a generation at stake.^[174]
- A [University of Bristol](#) study finds that young teenagers aged 13 and 14 experienced less anxiety during lockdown than they did in October 2019.^[175]
- [Tesco](#) announces the creation of 16,000 new jobs following an "exceptional growth" in its online business during lockdown.^[176]

25 August

- Scientists at the [University of Nottingham](#) have identified a 75-year-old woman from Nottinghamshire who they believe to be the first person to catch COVID-19 through transmission within the UK; she tested positive on 21 February.^[177]
- [Virgin Atlantic](#) receives £1.2bn backing from its creditors to keep operating for at least another 18 months, and save 6,500 jobs.^[178]
- Figures produced by the Treasury show that the Eat Out to Help Out scheme has been used 64 million times during the first three weeks of August.^[179]

26 August

- A BBC survey of the UK's largest employers identifies fifty that say they have no immediate plans to return all their staff to the office.^[180]
- Research carried out by the [Defence Science and Technology Laboratory](#) suggests that insect repellent that contains [Citriodiol](#) could be used to kill a strain of [coronavirus](#) that triggers [COVID-19](#).^[181]
- Restaurant chains, including Prezzo, Harvester and Pizza Pilgrims, announce plans to extend the Eat Out to Help Out scheme into September due to its success, saying they will fund it themselves once the government backed scheme ends.^[182]
- Prime Minister Boris Johnson blames a "mutant algorithm" for the exam grades chaos.^[183]
- [Jonathan Slater](#), the chief civil servant at the Department of Education, is dismissed from his position over the exams controversy.^[184]

27 August

- The number of new daily COVID cases rises by 1,522, the highest number since mid-June.^[185]
- The delayed [Liberal Democrats leadership election](#) sees Sir [Ed Davey](#) elected to lead the party.^[186]
- Switzerland, Jamaica and Czech Republic are removed from the quarantine exemption list effective from 4am on 29 August, while Cuba is added to it as a destination from where travellers will not need to quarantine.^[187]
- Sandwich chain Pret a Manger announces the loss of 3,000 jobs in a bid to save the business.^[188]
- The [Royal Shakespeare Company](#) cancels its theatre productions until 2021 because of the pandemic.^[189]
- A [YouGov](#) poll suggests support for the full-time reopening of schools in England and Wales has risen from 57% to 65% over a three-week period.^[190]

28 August

- The UK government announces the launch of another drive to encourage people to return to their workplaces, starting in the first week of September.^[191]

- The [BBC Two](#)'s current affairs programme [Newsnight](#) is given access to a SAGE document that suggests a "reasonable worst case scenario" may be to expect 85,000 COVID deaths over the coming winter. ^[192]

29 August

- The first football match with spectators takes place in Brighton, with 2,500 people allowed in to watch a pre-season friendly between [Chelsea](#) and [Brighton](#). ^[193]
- Women's football makes a return for the first time since lockdown, with a Community Shield match between [Chelsea](#) and [Manchester City](#), the first Women's Community Shield to be held since 2008. ^{[194][195]}

30 August

- As a million students prepare to go to university, the [Universities and Colleges Union](#) urges universities in the UK to delay face-to-face lectures until after Christmas amid concerns students could spark a second wave of the COVID pandemic. ^[196]
- [Emily Eavis](#), the co-organiser of the [Glastonbury Festival](#), says the organisers aim to stage [Glastonbury 2021](#) in June 2021 as usual. ^[197]
- A further 1,715 cases of COVID-19 are reported, bringing the total so far to 334,467, and representing the largest daily increase since mid-May. A single death brings the total number of fatalities to 41,499. ^[198]
- Guernsey's [Vale Earth Fair](#) is held as usual at [Vale Castle](#), attended by 3,500 people but with its lineup of performers being entirely from Guernsey. ^[199]

31 August

- The Eat Out to Help Out scheme comes to an end. Over 100 million meals were eaten under the scheme, at a cost to the government of about £522 million. ^{[200][201]} A [University of Warwick](#) study later concluded that some areas with high scheme uptake had increased new infections after about a week and that 8% to 17% of new infection clusters could be linked to the scheme. ^[202]
- Airline operator [Tui](#) launches an investigation after sixteen passengers on a flight from Zante to Cardiff subsequently test positive for COVID-19, amid claims safety measures were ignored on the flight. ^[203]
- The [Reading and Leeds Festivals](#), cancelled in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic, announce plans for their 2021 festivals from 27 to 29 August 2021. ^[204]

September 2020

1 September

- The majority of schools in England, Wales and Northern Ireland reopen for the autumn term. ^{[205][206][207]}
- [KPMG](#) speculate that the [UK economy](#) is unlikely to reach its pre-COVID level until early 2023. ^[208]
- Workers on low incomes required to self-isolate in parts of England where COVID-19 rates are high, and who cannot work from home, become entitled to a new payment scheme to top up their existing [Universal Credit](#) or [Working Tax Credit](#) claims for the duration of their isolation. The scheme will be trialled in Blackburn with Darwen, Pendle and Oldham but will roll-out to other areas with [lockdown restrictions](#) if successful. ^{[209][210]}

- Companies using the UK government's furlough scheme are required to contribute towards employees' wages as the scheme draws nearer to its end.^[211]
- [Manchester United](#) footballer [Marcus Rashford](#) forms a task force with some of the UK's leading food brands aimed at reducing child food poverty.^[212]
- Amid concerns Portugal could be taken off the quarantine exemption list after COVID-19 cases there rise, [IAG](#) chief executive [Willie Walsh](#) warns that holidaymakers returning from Portugal to the UK would face "chaos and hardship" if quarantine is reimposed.^[213]

2 September

- Chancellor [Rishi Sunak](#) attempts to reassure MPs in the [Conservative Party](#) there will not be a "horror show of tax rises with no end in sight" as the [Johnson government](#) deals with the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.^[214]
- The travel operator [Tui](#) cancels all flights to the party resort of [Laganas](#), on the Greek island of [Zante](#) from 3 September after some of its customers failed to follow COVID-19 safety regulations.^[215]

3 September

- Baroness [Dido Harding](#), the head of [NHS Test and Trace](#) apologises after it emerges that UK laboratories are struggling to keep up with demand for COVID tests, and some people were asked to travel several hundred miles to get tested for the virus.^[216]
- Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) announces £500m of funding for trials of a 20-minute COVID-19 test.^[217]
- Scotland and Wales remove Portugal from their quarantine exemption list, but the rules remain unchanged in England and Northern Ireland, leading to confusion for tourists. Although the number of cases in Portugal has passed the level at which the UK government would consider imposing quarantine restrictions, the government says several factors are taken into account when considering the situation, including the level of testing in a particular country.^[218]

4 September

- Transport Secretary [Grant Shapps](#) acknowledges that rules regarding quarantine in the UK are "confusing" after Scotland and Wales impose quarantine regulations on travellers arriving from Portugal.^[219] In response, Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) says that although devolved governments are taking different decisions "overwhelmingly the UK is proceeding as one".^[220]
- Boris Johnson rules out introducing COVID-19 tests at airports after suggestions they could be used to shorten the length of time people are required to quarantine, saying they give a "false sense of security".^[221]
- [Virgin Atlantic](#) announces the loss of another 1,150 jobs as part of its rescue package.^[222]

5 September

- Leading epidemiologist Dame Anne Johnson warns the UK faces a "critical moment" in the COVID-19 pandemic, as students prepare to return to universities and cases rise among younger people.^[223]
- Scientists have warned that the main test used to detect COVID-19 may be wrongly producing a positive result because of fragments of dead material from previous infections.^[224]

- In a letter sent to the heads of government departments, the UK government has urged them to get civil servants back to their office desks as soon as possible.^[225]
- Dr Dominic Pimenta, who resigned in protest over [Dominic Cummings'](#) trip to Durham, pledges to donate the royalties from a book he has written about his experiences with COVID-19 to NHS charities.^[226]
- The disability charity [Scope](#) expresses its concern that many people with disabilities are being "pushed out" of the post-lockdown world because of anxiety about leaving their homes.^[227]

6 September

- [Sir Lindsay Hoyle](#), the [Speaker of the House of Commons](#), tells [Times Radio](#) he has spoken to the UK government and the NHS about the possibility of daily COVID-19 tests for MPs that may allow them to safely fill the [House of Commons](#) chamber, but says he would not "compromise health and safety".^[228]
- A further 2,988 COVID-19 cases are reported in 24 hours in the UK, the highest number since 22 May. Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) says he is "concerned" about a rise in cases "predominantly among young people".

Brexit - Jim Brunsten (Financial Times EU Correspondent) - The Financial Times broke the news that the UK was planning new legislation that would override key parts of the Brexit withdrawal agreement relating to the Northern Ireland protocol.

The move — which is still going through the UK parliament — caused a crisis in the talks with the European Commission immediately launching legal action. The EU said the attempt to override the Brexit treaty was not only an infringement of international law but one that threatened the Northern Ireland peace process.

For now, the parts of the internal market bill relating to customs arrangements and state aid in Northern Ireland remain in play but could potentially be eliminated if the two sides agree a trade deal in the coming days.

7 September

- With a third of COVID-19 cases over the preceding week being among those aged 20–29, Health Secretary Matt Hancock warns younger people they risk causing a second wave of the virus if they do not adhere to social distancing rules.^[230]
- A further 2,948 new cases of COVID-19 are recorded, along with three deaths.^[231]
- The UK government announces the introduction of island travel corridors in place of country-wide quarantine rules. Seven Greek islands are taken off the quarantine exemption list for travellers arriving to England, but Greece remains a quarantine free destination.^[232]
- [Hollyoaks](#) and [EastEnders](#) return to screens after their break.^{[233][234]}

8 September

- Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) tells the [House of Commons](#) the "sharp rise" in COVID-19 cases is "concerning", and a sign that the virus "remains a threat". He urges people to adhere to social distancing measures.^{[235][236]} Later that day, the government announces that

social gatherings of more than six people will be banned in England from Monday 14 September.^[237]

- [Jonathan Van Tam](#), England's deputy chief medical officer, says the jump in daily cases is of "great concern".^[238]
- The UK records a further 2,460 new COVID-19 cases, and 30 deaths.^[239]
- The [Royal College of GPs](#) calls for the establishment of a network of clinics to support people who are chronically ill for several months with COVID-19 symptoms.^[240]
- In an interview with [ITV News](#) political editor [Robert Peston](#), Professor John Edmunds of the [Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies](#) (SAGE), warns that COVID-19 cases are "increasing exponentially".^[241]
- Composer [Andrew Lloyd Webber](#) warns that the arts are at the "point of no return" because of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.^[242]
- Supermarket chain [Morrisons](#) announce plans to make permanent thousands of temporary jobs created to expand its online operations during the pandemic; [Iceland](#) says it has also hired thousands of new workers.^[243]

9 September

- Trials for a COVID-19 vaccine being developed by [AstraZeneca](#) and the [University of Oxford](#) are paused after a participant in the UK suffers an adverse reaction.^[244]
- New rules regarding social gatherings in England from 14 September are outlined by Prime Minister Boris Johnson in a government press conference, alongside details of new legal requirements for data gathering on behalf of venues, social distancing "martial" to enforce restrictions, and a "moonshot" plan to further control the virus with greatly expanded mass virus testing.^[245] The announcement on mass testing quickly attracts scrutiny from scientists and health experts, who voice their doubt as to whether testing several million people daily with a quick turnaround is achievable with existing laboratory capacity.^{[246][247]}

10 September

- Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) praised [Belgium](#)'s effort to suppress the virus as he "sought to justify strict new" regulations on this basis. He modelled UK restrictions, such as the new "rule of six", on the [Sophie Wilmes](#) experiment.^[248]
- [Sister Bliss](#) from the dance act [Faithless](#) voices her concern that UK nightclubs are being "left to rot in a corner" because of lack of support for the sector.^[249]
- [Captain Sir Tom Moore](#) carries out his first duty as an honorary colonel, with an inspection of junior soldiers at a graduation ceremony at Harrogate's [Army Foundation College](#).^[250]
- A paper published by the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies suggests Operation Moonshot could lead to 41 per cent of the UK population having to self-isolate needlessly within six months due to the generation of false positives, and warns of potential school closures and workers' losing their wages through incorrect test results.^[251]
- The All Party Parliamentary Group on Sexual and Reproductive Health warns that the pandemic has made a "difficult situation even worse" with regard to women obtaining contraception services.^[252]

11 September

- The R number is raised to between 1.0 and 1.2 for the first time since March.^[253]
- A launch date of 24 September is confirmed for an [NHS contact-tracing app](#) covering England and Wales, which will rely on users to scan a [QR Code](#) whenever they visit hospitality businesses.

The week has been dominated by the tightening of socialising rules – and **the new rule of six** – on the back of rising infection levels.

On Thursday, the UK recorded 2,919 cases of Covid-19, making five consecutive days above 2,000 - a sharp rise on the numbers being recorded at the end of August and early September. The seven-day rate of new cases in the UK has risen above 20 cases per 100,000 – the level at which the government considers imposing quarantine rules on foreign countries.

With concerns that the virus is spreading again, regulations are being tightened across the UK. From Monday 14 September, in England it will be against the law to meet people you do not live with in a group larger than six. However, there are differences between different UK nations.



12 September

- The [Police Federation](#) warns the UK against enjoying a "party weekend" ahead of new restrictions on socialising. ^[255]
- The joint AstraZeneca–Oxford University vaccine project is resumed after it was deemed safe to continue. ^[256]
- Former chief scientific adviser Sir [Mark Walport](#) warns that the UK is "on the edge of losing control" of COVID-19 as recorded cases exceed 3,000 for the second day in a row. ^[257]

13 September

- Nearly 17,000 people from 57 countries take part in a virtual [Great North Run](#) after the official event was cancelled. ^[258]
- Food outlets, including [Deliveroo](#), write to the government requesting an extension to the moratorium on commercial evictions for non-payment of rent, which is due to end on 30 September. ^[259]

14 September

- The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (No. 2) (England) (Amendment) (No. 4) Regulations 2020 came into force at 12.01 a.m. Unless one of the exceptions applies, the statutory instrument provides authority to limit the number of persons in a gathering to no more than six; hence the *rule of six*. ^{[260][261]} Equivalent rules also begin in Wales and Scotland with some differences including exemptions for children beneath the ages of 11 and 12 respectively. ^[262]

- [Kit Malthouse](#), the [Minister for Crime and Policing](#), suggests people should report their neighbours to the authorities for any breach of the "rule of six" restrictions.^[263]
- The [Labour Party](#) confirms that their leader, Sir [Keir Starmer](#), is self-isolating after a member of his household "showed possible symptoms of the coronavirus".^[264]
- A new laboratory-made COVID-19 antibody treatment using [monoclonal antibodies](#) is to be trialled in UK hospitals, with 2,000 patients initially receiving the treatment.^[265]
- Chief scientific adviser Sir [Patrick Vallance](#) says that he was rebuked by officials for favouring a lockdown early on in the pandemic.^[266]

15 September

- Unemployment figures show that UK unemployment rose to 4.1% in the three months to July, up from 3.9% on the previous quarter. Chancellor [Rishi Sunak](#) says looking for new ways to protect jobs is his "number one priority" while Labour calls for the furlough scheme to be extended.^[267]
- Home Secretary [Priti Patel](#) suggests that families stopping to talk to each other in the street would be in breach of the "rule of six" law.^[268]
- [Office for National Statistics](#) figures show that weekly COVID-19 related deaths in England and Wales fell below 100 for the first time since March during the week ending 28 August, with 78 deaths registered that week; the drop is partly due to the August Bank Holiday weekend, over which fewer deaths were registered.^[269]

16 September

- Appearing before a committee of MPs, Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) says that a second national lockdown would have "disastrous" financial consequences for the UK, and that the government is doing "everything in our power" to avoid that scenario.^[270]
- Following an investigation by the Competition Commission, travel operator [Tui](#) says it will clear a backlog of refunds by the end of September.^[271]
- Figures reveal that the UK's inflation rate fell to 0.2% in August, from 1% in July. The fall is partly due to cheaper restaurant meals through the Eat Out to Help Out scheme, which saw prices rise at their slowest rate in five years.^[272]
- [Álex Cruz](#), CEO of [British Airways](#) says a "fire and rehire" scheme to move cabin crew onto inferior contracts as part of cost-cutting measures is "off the table". His comments come after criticism from unions and MPs.^[273]

17 September

- Baroness Dido Harding, the chief executive of [NHS Test and Trace](#) tells a committee of MPs that demand for COVID-19 testing is "significantly outstripping the capacity we have", but that she is "very confident" daily testing capacity can be raised to 500,000 by the end of October.^[274]
- [John Lewis & Partners](#) announces it won't pay its staff a bonus for the first time since 1953, having been financially affected by the lockdown closures; the firm posted a pre-tax loss of £635m for the first six months of 2020.^[275]
- The Office for National Statistics reports that 62% of workers travelled to work during the previous week.^[276]

18 September

- The R number rises to between 1.1 and 1.4 as government scientists warn the virus is widespread across the country and there are "far worse things to come".^[277]
- Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) says a second wave of COVID-19 infections is coming to the UK, and that he doesn't "want to go into bigger lockdown measures", but further restrictions with regard to social distancing may be necessary.^[278]
- A study by [Imperial College London](#) of a "lab-on-a-chip" device shows it can give an accurate COVID-19 result in 90 minutes; the device is already being used by eight NHS hospitals.^[279]
- Office for National Statistics figures show that retail sales are 4% higher than in March, largely because of an increase in sales of DIY and household goods, but sales of clothes have dropped.^[280]
- [Sir Van Morrison](#) releases three lockdown protest songs, in which he accuses the government of "taking our freedom".^[281]
- Animal welfare charities are warning of the dangers of puppy farming, smuggling and dog theft after the price of puppies rose on average to £1,900 during the COVID-19 pandemic.^[282]

19 September

- [Nicola Sturgeon](#), [Mark Drakeford](#) and [Arlene Foster](#), the respective first ministers of [Scotland](#), [Wales](#) and [Northern Ireland](#), call for "urgent" government intervention from the UK government to help the aerospace sector, which is struggling because of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the aviation industry.^[283]
- The UK government announces the levy of a fine of up to £10,000 for people in England who refuse to self-isolate. The new law, enforceable from 28 September, will apply to anyone testing positive for COVID-19, or a person ordered to self-isolate through contact-tracing. A one-off £500 payment can be given to the less well-off, while fines for employers who penalise employees for self-isolating will also be introduced.^[284]
- [Robert Dingwall](#), Professor of Sociology at [Nottingham Trent University](#), suggests there is growing public support for a complete re-evaluation of the government's strategy for dealing with COVID-19 as scientific knowledge of the virus develops.^[285]

20 September

- [The Sunday Telegraph](#) reports that [Sir Graham Brady](#), chair of the [1922 Committee](#) of backbench [Conservative](#) MPs, plans to amend the legislation that gives ministers emergency powers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The [Coronavirus Act 2020](#), due for its six-month review later in the month, comes up for renewal against a backdrop of frustration among backbench MPs over the government's handling of the pandemic. *The Telegraph* report suggests the amendment would require a Parliamentary vote each time new emergency powers are used, or fresh restrictions are introduced.^[286]
- It is reported that 1,000 jobs at [Butlins](#) are at risk when the furlough scheme comes to an end.^[287]
- [Westminster Abbey](#) holds a service to mark the 80th anniversary of the [Battle of Britain](#), the first service to be held there since March, although with greatly reduced attendance.^[288]

21 September

- At a Downing Street press conference, Dr [Patrick Vallance](#), the UK government's chief scientific adviser, says that there could be as many as 50,000 COVID-19 cases per day by mid-October if no further action is taken, and this "would be expected to lead to about 200 deaths per day".^[289]

- The UK coronavirus alert level is upgraded to level 4, meaning transmission is "high or rising exponentially".^[290]
- The government scraps [rail franchising](#), and announces plans to extend financial support for rail companies by another 18 months; passenger numbers have increased since the beginning of the pandemic, but are still less than half their pre-pandemic volume.^[291]
- [Anneliese Dodds](#), the [Shadow Chancellor](#), accuses the government of mispending billions of pounds in response to the pandemic.^[292]
- Sir Graham Brady tells the BBC that ministers have "got into the habit of ruling by decree" and warns that public opinion is "moving", and that parliament must therefore approve any further COVID-19 restrictions.^[293]
- The [FTSE 100](#) share index falls by more than 3% amid concerns a fresh wave of COVID-19 cases will impinge upon the economy, with shares in airlines, travel firms, hotel groups and pubs contributing to the fall.^[294]

22 September

- Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) tells the House of Commons the United Kingdom has reached "a perilous turning point" as he announces new restrictions for England that could last for as long as six months. These include a requirement that all shop staff wear face coverings, and a limit on weddings to fifteen people. Initial fines for rule breaking are increased from £100 to £200. Similar measures are announced for other parts of the UK by the leaders of the devolved governments.^[295]
- In a televised address to the nation, Johnson calls for people to exercise resolve and discipline to combat the virus, but warns further measures may be required if they do not adhere to the restrictions.^[296]
- [Andrew Bailey](#), the Governor of the [Bank of England](#), calls on the government to "stop and rethink" the furlough scheme, which is scheduled to finish at the end of October.

Coronavirus (COVID-19): What has changed – 22 September

The government has today announced further national measures to address rising cases of coronavirus in England.

It is critical that everybody observes the following key behaviours:

- HANDS - Wash your hands regularly and for at least 20 seconds.
- FACE - Cover your face in enclosed spaces, especially where social distancing may be difficult and where you will come into contact with people you do not normally meet.
- SPACE - Stay 2 metres apart where possible, or 1 metre with extra precautions in place.



23 September

- 6,178 new COVID-19 cases are recorded, the highest daily number recorded since 1 May.^[298]
- The UK government scraps plans for an [Autumn budget](#) because of the COVID-19 pandemic.^[299]
- Chancellor [Rishi Sunak](#) announces he will make a statement to the House of Commons the following day on what happens after the furlough scheme finishes after the UK government comes under mounting pressure from opposition politicians to decide on a replacement.^[300]
- The UK government confirms that food outlets without an alcohol licence, such as [McDonald's](#) and [Pret a Manger](#) will not need to serve customers at tables.^[301]
- [Sir John Stevens](#), a former Commissioner of the [Metropolitan Police](#) expresses concern at plans for military involvement in the enforcement of COVID-19 restrictions, describing it as "tantamount to martial law" and "dangerous".^[302]
- Supermarket retailer [Asda](#) announces it will introduce tougher measures to enforce the wearing of face coverings by its customers.^[303]

24 September

- New regulations ([SI 1029](#)) come into force, in part, at 5 am in England, prohibiting certain 'restricted businesses' and 'restricted services' from carrying on that business or providing that service between the hours of 22:00 and 05:00. The regulations affect a wide range of establishments, including restaurants, bars, public houses, social clubs, casinos, bingo halls, bowling alleys, cinemas, theatres, concert halls, amusement arcades, funfairs (indoors or outdoors), theme parks and adventure parks. The *protected area* of Bolton is excluded from the scope of this legislation as additional restrictions apply.^{[304][305]}
- The second version of the [NHS contact-tracing app](#) is made available for download by everyone aged 16 or over in England and Wales.^[306]
- In a [statement](#) to the House of Commons, Chancellor [Rishi Sunak](#) announces the [Job Support Scheme](#) as a replacement to the furlough scheme, beginning on 1 November. Under the scheme, people who work reduced hours will receive government help to top up their wages to two-thirds of their full pay. The Chancellor also announces extension (at a reduced level) of help for self-employed people, longer repayment periods for business loans, and an extension to the temporary reduction in [VAT](#) for hospitality and tourism companies.^[307]
- The UK records a further 6,634 cases, the largest daily increase since mass testing began.^[308]
- Denmark, Slovakia, Iceland and Curaçao are removed from the quarantine exemption list, requiring travellers arriving from there after 4:00am on 26 September to self-isolate for two weeks; no countries are added to the exemption list.^{[309][310]}

- [The Telegraph](#) reports that more than 40 backbench [Conservative](#) MPs have backed the Brady Amendment, requiring the UK Government to seek a parliamentary vote for any further lockdown restrictions. [\[311\]](#)
- [The Financial Times](#) reports that the UK could be the first country in the world to conduct "challenge trials", in which healthy people are infected with COVID-19 to test possible vaccines, with London suggested as a possible area where this could happen. [\[312\]](#)

25 September

- The R number rises from 1.1–1.4 to 1.2–1.5. [\[313\]](#)
- Trials by [Novavax](#) of a COVID-19 vaccine that trains the immune system to produce antibodies begin in the UK with 10,000 participants expected to take part. [\[314\]](#)
- Senior Conservative MP and former minister [Caroline Nokes](#) urges the government to provide more support for women dealing with the economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. [\[315\]](#)
- [Jo Grady](#) of the [University and College Union](#) voices concern that students are being used as scapegoats for COVID-19 outbreaks, and says this should not happen. [\[316\]](#)
- Figures from [British Transport Police](#) indicate that of the 14,726 people stopped for not wearing face coverings on trains between 15 July and 15 August, 14 were issued with a fixed penalty notice, fewer than 0.1%.

Inkpen Pavilion Refurbishment taking shape



The Phase 2 renovation of the main building has started and is due to be completed by 24th December.

26 September

- The consumer group [Which?](#) estimates that shoppers have lost as much as £100m in unused vouchers because of lockdown.^[318]
- A glitch with the [NHS COVID-19](#) app left users are unable to input the results of a negative test if the test was not booked through the app has been fixed, the [Department of Health and Social Care](#) confirms. A spokeswoman for the Department says that "everyone who receives a positive test result can log their result on the app".^[319]
- Thousands of protesters gather in [Trafalgar Square](#), London for an anti-COVID restrictions protest, but the demonstration is closed down by police because those present do not comply with social distancing regulations.^[320]
- [Mark Drakeford](#), the [First Minister of Wales](#), criticises Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) for not meeting regularly enough with the UK's devolved leaders over the COVID-19 pandemic.^[321]
- With as many as 3,000 students locked down in their accommodation around the UK, [Robert Halfon](#), chairman of the [House of Commons Education Select Committee](#), urges the UK government to update their guidance for students, and to reassure students and their families. He also describes the situation of having students in lockdown for Christmas as something that would cause "huge anguish".^[322]
- Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) pledges £500m to a global vaccine sharing scheme. The [Covax vaccines procurement pool](#) aims to give poor countries access to a COVID-19 vaccine.^[323]

27 September

- The [Labour Party](#) urges the government to pause the return of university students as thousands self-isolate due to COVID-19 outbreaks, but the return is defended by Culture Secretary [Oliver Dowden](#), who says clear guidelines are in place for universities.^{[324][325]}
- [David Lammy](#), the [Shadow Secretary of State for Justice](#), expresses concern that 10pm pub curfews have led to drinkers continuing to socialise afterwards, with them "hanging around towns" and "potentially spreading the virus".^[326]
- Lammy says that Labour are "very sympathetic" to a bid by backbench Conservatives for greater parliamentary scrutiny of COVID-19 rules.^[327]



Event HQ

This is based outside in a gazebo at the Inkpen Memorial Playing Field. Riders must sign the official signing on sheet at the HQ to obtain their race number.

Toilets will be available in the Pavilion and please follow instructions for their use, the owner has requested that masks are worn by users of the toilets. There are no changing or refreshment facilities.

Inkpen Memorial Playing Field, Post Office Road, Inkpen Common, Hungerford, Berkshire, RG17 9PY. Directions to HQ: From the East/West: From Junction 14 of M4 head south to Hungerford on the A338. At the junction with the A4 turn left and head east for approx. 2.5 miles then turn right onto Station Road towards Kintbury. After 1 mile turn left into Newbury Street and at mini roundabout turn right into Burtons Hill which becomes Laylands Green. At the 'T' junction turn left and then continue for approx. 0.5 miles then turn right at the crossroads into Post Office Road, continue ahead for approx. 0.75 miles and the HQ will be seen on the right. Total distance approx. 9 miles.

28 September

- The remainder of regulations ([SI 1029](#)) come into force in England, reducing the maximum number who can attend weddings and civil partnership ceremonies and any associated receptions from 30 to 15.^[328]
- Increased fines come into force for those who fail to self-isolate following receipt of a positive [COVID-19](#) test, with fines of up to £10,000 for those failing to comply.^{[329][330]}
- COVID-19 cases have so far been confirmed at 40 universities around the UK. Health Minister [Helen Whately](#) describes the situation as "really tough" for students, but says outbreaks must be brought "under control".^[331]
- The Houses of Parliament announces it will stop serving alcohol on its premises after 10pm, despite not being subject to England's COVID-19 laws.^[332]
- The [National Police Chiefs Council](#) (NPCC) confirms officers are being told not to install the [NHS COVID-19](#) contact-tracing app to their work smartphones, while some officers have been told they may not need to follow self-isolation alerts if they have the app on their personal phones.^[333]

29 September

- A survey of 2,000 people aged 16–25 carried out by [The Prince's Trust](#) indicates that 44% are less optimistic about their future prospects following the COVID-19 pandemic.^[334]
- Bakery chain [Greggs](#) says it is consulting with unions and staff about potential job cuts after the furlough scheme ends as part of cost-cutting measures, because it expects business to "remain below normal for the foreseeable future".^[335]
- The UK records 7,143 new COVID-19 cases with 71 COVID-related deaths, the highest since 1 July.^[336]
- After carrying out a technical review of the NHS COVID-19 app, the National Police Chiefs' Council says it will now recommend that officers can download it to their personal phones and use it at work.^[337]
- The world's longest-running play, the [Agatha Christie](#) murder mystery [The Mousetrap](#), postpones plans to resume because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The play had been scheduled to return on 23 October as one of the first [West End theatre](#) performances to recommence.^[338]

30 September

- The charity [Breast Cancer Now](#) estimates that as many as a million women have missed breast screening appointments because of the COVID-19 pandemic, and that around 8,600 may have undetected breast cancer.^[339]

- Charities, including the [Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#), call on the Chancellor to make a temporary £20 rise in [Universal Credit](#) permanent amid poverty concerns; the rise is due to expire in April 2021. ^[340]
- [Sir Lindsay Hoyle](#), the [Speaker of the House of Commons](#), rebukes the government for treating parliament with "contempt" by introducing new COVID measures without debate, but stops short of allowing time for the Brady Amendment to be debated, saying it is not a decision he has "taken lightly". ^[341] Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) subsequently says that MPs will be allowed to vote on measures "whenever possible". ^[342]
- At Prime Minister's Questions, [Boris Johnson](#) defends the use of local lockdown measures, saying that "strong local action" is needed in response to "a serious and growing" virus resurgence. ^[343]
- Johnson holds a briefing at Downing Street, where he says measures introduced two weeks previously "will take time to feed through", that the UK is at a "critical moment" and the rising number of COVID cases and deaths shows "why our plan is so essential". ^[344]

October 2020

1 October

- A study of COVID cases by [Imperial College London](#), the largest of its type in England to date, suggests the spread of the virus may be slowing. The study also suggests the R number has fallen since measures such as the rule of six were introduced, but warns infections are still high, at an estimated 1 in 200 people. ^[345]
- Boris Johnson's father, [Stanley Johnson](#), issues an apology after he was pictured in a shop without a face covering, while former Labour Party leader [Jeremy Corbyn](#) also apologises after holding a dinner party attended by more than six people. ^[346]
- The [Welsh Government](#) gives its permission for filming of the [ITV](#) reality show *I'm a Celebrity...Get Me Out of Here!* to go ahead, despite [Conwy](#), the area where it is taking place, being subject to a local lockdown. ^[347]
- [Scottish National Party](#) MP [Margaret Ferrier](#) is suspended from the party after it emerged she travelled by train from her constituency to Westminster while experiencing COVID symptoms; Ferrier says there is "no excuse" for her behaviour. ^[348]
- Teaching unions have been angered by government plans to use emergency powers under the [Coronavirus Act 2020](#) to force schools to offer online lessons as well as face-to-face teaching; one in six secondary schools are closed to some pupils because of COVID-19. ^[349]
- A report produced by a group of researchers brought together by the [Royal Society](#) concludes that even with a COVID vaccine life would not return to normal until Spring 2021. ^[350]
- Turkey, Poland and the Caribbean islands of [Bonaire](#), [St Eustatius](#) and [Saba](#) are removed from the UK's quarantine exemption list. ^[351]
- [BBC News](#) reports that COVID-19 restrictions are to be simplified into a three-tier system following confusion over local rules. ^[352]

2 October

- Around a quarter of the [population](#) of the United Kingdom, about 16.8 million people, are now in local lockdowns. This includes 23% of people in England, 76% of people in Wales and 32% of people in Scotland. ^[353]
- As the R number rises to between 1.3 and 1.6, Prime Minister Boris Johnson suggests the rise in COVID cases in the UK is due to "fraying of people's discipline" over the summer. ^[354]
- The [Metropolitan Police](#) launches an investigation into the actions of Margaret Ferrier. ^[355]

- Three separate analyses of COVID-19 cases in England and Wales indicate the rate of new infections is slowing; senior scientists urge caution.^[356]
- The release date of the James Bond film *No Time to Die* is delayed until 2 April 2021, the second time its release has been postponed because of the pandemic.^[357]
- The Department of Health says it is fixing a glitch with the [NHS COVID-19](#) app whereby people receive messages that disappear, but warns it could take some time to fix the error. The messages are being generated by the Google and Apple framework rather than by the app itself.^[358]

3 October

- The number of new daily cases exceeds 10,000, with a further 12,872 cases confirmed, but the government attributes the high number to a technical issue that means previously unreported cases from the previous week are added to the daily total.^[359]
- Travel company PGL, which specialises in hosting school trips, announces the loss of 670 jobs, a quarter of its workforce.^[360]
- Addressing the 2020 [Conservative Party Conference](#), Foreign Secretary [Dominic Raab](#) speaks of his fear for Boris Johnson's life while he was in intensive care with COVID-19.^[361]

4 October

- A further 22,961 COVID-19 cases are confirmed, taking the total so far to 502,978. This figure includes 15,841 cases confirmed between 25 September and 1 October that were not included previously because of a technical error, thus making the day's total artificially high for both England and the UK.^{[362][363]}
- Cinema chain [Cineworld](#) announces plans to temporarily close its UK cinemas due to the delay in the release of big budget films because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The company says 5,500 jobs are at risk and will write to Boris Johnson, and Culture Secretary [Oliver Dowden](#) to say the industry is now "unviable".^[364]
- The delayed [2020 London Marathon](#) is held on a specially designed closed loop course because of the COVID-19 pandemic.^[365]
- Health Secretary Matt Hancock announces that the [British Army](#) will be called in to help distribute the coronavirus vaccine alongside the NHS as soon as the vaccine is ready to be rolled out.^[366]

5 October

- [Public Health England](#) confirms that all of those involved in the delayed reporting of daily COVID-19 cases have been contacted, but that the delay has meant that their close contacts have not.^[363] An investigation is launched into the error.^[367] Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) says it should not have happened, but the glitch "has not substantially changed" the government's assessment of the epidemic.^[368]
- In a speech to the Conservative Party Conference, Chancellor [Rishi Sunak](#) says he will "always balance the books" despite the increased level of government spending brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.^[369]
- Following news that Cineworld is to temporarily close its UK and US operations, Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) urges people to go to the cinema.^[370]
- [Odeon Cinemas](#) announces it will reduce its opening hours to weekends only at some cinemas in the UK and Ireland because of the delay in big film releases.^[371]

- Amid concerns of risk to outdoor education, UK Outdoors, the body representing the sector, urges Boris Johnson to act to allow overnight school trips to resume, and thus save the "great British tradition" of outdoor education. [\[372\]](#)
- The [Welsh Government](#) says it is considering introducing quarantine restrictions for people arriving into Wales from COVID-19 hotspots elsewhere in the UK. [\[373\]](#)
- The head of the UK's [vaccine taskforce](#), Kate Bingham, reveals that less than half the country's population could be vaccinated against coronavirus and that people under 18 are not expected to be vaccinated. [\[374\]](#)

6 October

- The UK records a further 14,542 COVID-19 cases, and 76 deaths. [\[375\]](#)
- Addressing the Conservative Party Conference, Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) says the COVID-19 pandemic must be a catalyst for change, and that the UK cannot return to "normal" after it. [\[376\]](#)[\[377\]](#)
- The [Daily Record](#) reports that MP [Margaret Ferrier](#) attended mass at a Glasgow church while experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.

NWN - Coulson climbs to victory at the Walbury Hill climb

The Newbury Velo Walbury Hill Climb course record was broken five times on Sunday. The strong northerly wind favoured a fast day and Matthew Coulson of Oxford University CC made the most of it to clinch victory in a time of 3mins 39.94secs, smashing Richard Gildea's existing record by 15 seconds.

New British 'Everesting' record holder, Max Stedman (Hunt Bike Wheels) was second in 3:45.20 and National Hill Climb champion Ed Laverack, probably riding his last hill climb this season due to Swansea where he lives entering lockdown on Sunday evening, was third with 3:49.170.

The women's course record, previously held by Joss Lowden (4:46) also tumbled to Bithja Jones (Pankhurst Cycles) in 4:39.75.

Emma Grant of University of Bath CC was second in 4:53.39 and Rebecca Seal (Fareham Wheelers) a close third in 4:53.75.

The event was also the Newbury Velo Hill Climb Club Championships.



In the women's competition, the most impressive ride was by Mireille Cook, who finished in 5:23.8.

She won the women's championships and first veteran female overall, as well as taking the 40-49 age category prize.

Second Newbury Velo female was Samantha O'Connell in 6:15.4, followed by 12-year-old Emma Davies, the first

rider on the course, riding to a strong third place in 6:29.1

In the men's Newbury Velo competition, youth won over experience with Nathan Cracknell

clocking 4:21.9 to take first male.

Second place went to hill climb novice Graham Stent with a time of 4:44.0 and Tom Higgins took the third spot with 4:53.2.

The event was sponsored by many local companies: Newbury Weekly News, Banjo Cycles, Worx Bikes, PedalOn Cycles, Roc Technologies, The Newbury pub/137 Distillery, Hope and Clay Construction and Francis Construction.

West Berkshire Brewery donated the rider's bodyweight in beer for the coveted 'Lantern Rouge' competition for the slowest rider up the hill – won by Gemma Davies.

The event attracted 137 riders, just short of its previous highest entry of 143, and included a very strong contingent of youth and female riders.

7 October

- A problem with the UK's sole distribution centre for Roche in Sussex has led to a significant decrease in the capacity to process COVID-19 assays, swabs and reagents which has meant that Roche have alerted the NHS of the shortage. According to the pharmaceutical company, it could be two to three weeks before the supply chain issues are resolved.^[379]
- Pub retailer [Greene King](#) announces the loss of 800 jobs, citing the impact of tighter lockdown measures as the reason. The brewer has closed 79 pubs temporarily, a third of which it says will remain shut on a permanent basis.^[380]
- The UK government announces the establishment of the [Global Travel Taskforce](#) to look at introducing a COVID-19 testing system for travellers to the UK, giving them the chance to spend less time in self-isolation if they receive a negative test.^[381]

8 October

- Figures released by the Office for National Statistics indicate there were three times more deaths from COVID-19 than from flu and pneumonia in England and Wales between January and August 2020. 48,168 COVID deaths were recorded, compared to 13,600 from pneumonia, and 394 from flu.^[382]
- The [National Trust](#) announces the loss of 1,300 jobs, citing the COVID-19 pandemic as the reason for its decision.^[383]
- A [University of Edinburgh](#) study suggests that imposing strict lockdowns and school closures may lead to a greater number of COVID-19 deaths in the long term. The study argues that [herd immunity](#) reduces the severity of the second wave, and that lockdowns only work as a short term measure if a vaccine is found quickly.^[384]
- [Strictly Come Dancing](#)'s 2021 live arena tour is postponed until 2022 because of COVID-19.^[385]

9 October

- The [ONS](#) reports that coronavirus cases have "increased rapidly", estimating that around 1 in 240 people in England had the virus during the week to 1 October.^[386] Scientific advisers say that hospital admissions, which are currently about one fifth the level they were at their peak, are now "very close" to levels seen at the start of the crisis in early March.^[387]
- Chancellor [Rishi Sunak](#) announces an expansion of the [Job Support Scheme](#) that will see the Treasury pay two thirds of the wages of employees whose firms are forced to close because of COVID-19 restrictions.^[388]

- [Edinburgh Woollen Mill](#), owner of the Peacocks and Jaeger clothing brands, announces plans to appoint an administrator after poor retail figures during the COVID-19 pandemic leaves them on the brink of collapse.^[389]
- Figures show the [UK economy](#) grew by 2.1% in August 2020, something aided by the Eat Out to Help Out scheme, but the figures are below expectation.^[390]

10 October

- The delayed [2020 Birthday Honours](#) are published, with frontline workers and volunteers who contributed to the COVID-19 response honoured.
- The Prime Minister is to inform the [House of Commons](#) on Monday, 12 October, of the anticipated new local measures that are intended to curb the spread of the coronavirus.^[391]
- The doctors [trade union](#) the [British Medical Association](#) publishes a list of recommendations it says would help to reduce infection rates, including the compulsory wearing of face coverings in all work settings unless someone is working alone, and in all outdoor settings where two-metre social distancing is not possible.^[392]

11 October

- Warning that the UK is at a "precarious point" in COVID-19 cases, leading UK scientist Professor [Peter Horby](#) says a second national lockdown is a possibility, but something people must do their best to avoid at all costs.^[393]
- UK universities are facing anger from students in self-isolation, critical of the quality and cost of food parcels, which they say often contain "junk" food.^[394]
- In an interview with the [Sun on Sunday](#), Scottish National Party MP [Margaret Ferrier](#) says her decision to travel on public transport while experiencing COVID-19 symptoms was a "blip" and that the virus makes people "act out of character".^[395]
- [Vue Cinemas](#) announce plans to close a quarter of their venues for three days a week in order to reduce costs.^[396]
- Scientists at the [University of Exeter](#) are to begin trials of the [BCG vaccine](#), developed in 1921, to see if it is effective against COVID-19.^[397]

12 October

- Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) unveils the new [three-tier system of restrictions](#) for England, taking effect from 14 October. Areas are grouped into one of three risk categories – medium, high, or very high. Medium areas are subject to the rule of six and the 10pm curfew, high areas have restrictions on indoor meetings but groups of six can continue to meet in outdoor settings, and very high areas will see the closure of businesses such as pubs and casinos, but not restaurants. The [Liverpool City Region](#) is the only area to be placed in the very high category.^[398]
- Newly released papers show that the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies ([SAGE](#)) recommended a short "circuit breaker" lockdown for England in September as a way of controlling the virus.^[399]
- The UK hospitality sector says it will launch legal action against local lockdown rules that could force pubs, bars and restaurants to close.^[400]
- A BBC [Panorama](#) documentary reports on the growing calls for an inquest into the death of rail transport worker [Belly Mujinga](#), who died after reportedly being coughed and spat on by a passenger who claimed to have COVID-19.^{[401][402]}

13 October

- Following the news that SAGE recommended a short period of lockdown as a "circuit breaker", Labour Party leader Sir [Keir Starmer](#) urges the government to impose a two or three week period of lockdown in England so that the country does not "sleepwalk into... a bleak winter".^[403]
- Figures reveal that UK unemployment has risen to its highest level since 2017, with an increase of 4.5% in the three months up to August 2020.^[404]

14 October

- The [First COVID-19 tier regulations](#) come into force, defining three levels of restrictions to be applied as necessary in geographic areas. These replace and revoke the existing [local lockdown regulations](#). The [Liverpool City Region](#) is the first to be assigned to the strictest tier.^{[405][406]}
- The [British Medical Journal](#) reports the rare case of a patient who suffered permanent hearing loss following an episode of COVID-19.^[407]
- [NHS Hospital Trusts](#) in Plymouth, Liverpool and Belfast are cancelling planned elective procedures outright or scaling-back surgery due to an upsurge in COVID-19 patients requiring intensive care.^[408]
- [Mark Drakeford](#), the [First Minister of Wales](#), announces plans to ban visitors to Wales from other parts of the UK with high COVID-19 rates.^[409]

15 October

- A study by [University College London](#) reveals that up to 17 per cent of the population of the UK could refuse to be immunised by a COVID-19 vaccine.^[410]
- Italy, Vatican City and San Marino are removed from the quarantine exemption list following a rise in COVID-19 cases in Italy.^[411]
- The House of Commons announces plans to stop selling alcohol in its bars and restaurants amid tighter COVID restrictions for London.^[412]
- The Metropolitan Police says it will take no further action against MP Margaret Ferrier for her breach of COVID-19 rules.^[413]

16 October

- The [Office for National Statistics](#) estimates there are 27,900 new COVID-19 cases a day in England, a 60% increase on the previous week, while the [R number](#) rises to between 1.3 and 1.5.^[414]
- Wales introduces a travel ban on people from COVID hotspots in other parts of the UK, beginning from 6pm.

Brexit - Jim Brunsten (Financial Times EU Correspondent) - Mr Johnson suspended the future-relationship negotiations, saying that the EU was not serious about the talks.

The UK government pointed to the outcome of an EU summit that took place on October 15-16, seizing on the decision of diplomats to alter the wording of the meeting's draft conclusions to remove a reference to intensifying Brexit talks.

EU officials insisted that the move was not intended as a slight towards the UK, but Dutch prime minister Mark Rutte acknowledged it had been a communications mistake.

Mr Johnson said talks could continue only if there were a “fundamental” rethink on the EU side.

EU leaders at the summit including Germany’s Angela Merkel and France’s Emmanuel Macron said that both sides should be willing to compromise to get a deal, but that the EU would not sacrifice vital interests, including its fishing sector.

17 October

- Kate Bingham, chair of the UK's [Vaccine Taskforce](#), reveals that a COVID-19 vaccine will only protect some people from infection and in the first instance will be limited in supply. The [JCVI](#) advises that those in need will be prioritised.^[416]

18 October

- The [British Chambers of Commerce](#) urges the government to provide better financial support to firms in order to avoid the "catastrophic consequences" of COVID restrictions.^[417]
- [Jeremy Farrar](#), one of the scientists who sits on the SAGE committee, warns that Christmas 2020 will be "tough" and is unlikely to be the "usual celebration" of "families coming together".^[418]

19 October

- [Yasmin Qureshi](#), the MP for [Bolton South East](#), is admitted to hospital with pneumonia after testing positive for COVID-19.^[419]
- 18,804 new cases who have tested positive for COVID-19 are reported for the UK as a whole with 80 further fatalities.^[420]
- Figures published by the Office for National Statistics indicate almost 1,000 additional non-COVID deaths at home were recorded every week between March and September 2020, while there were 27 million fewer GP appointments between March and August. [Cancer Research UK](#) estimates 350,000 referrals have been missed since March, with thousands of ill patients not receiving treatment.



The IMPFT Pavilion starts to look like the architectural images and becomes watertight.

20 October

- Passengers flying from [Heathrow Airport](#) to Italy and Hong Kong now have the option of buying a rapid turnaround COVID-19 test for £80. Unlike the PCR tests used by the NHS, the LAMP tests used by the Heathrow facility do not need to be processed at a laboratory. ^[422]
- The UK announces plans to proceed with "human challenge" trials for a COVID vaccine involving around 90 people, who will be deliberately exposed to the virus in order to determine the level of exposure needed to become infected. ^[423]
- 241 COVID-19 related deaths are recorded, the highest daily number for several months. ^[424]

21 October

- Trials of a COVID-19 vaccine being developed by AstraZeneca and Oxford University are to continue following a review into the death of a volunteer in Brazil. Details of the death have not been disclosed, but Oxford University says a "careful assessment" of the circumstances has revealed no safety concerns. ^[425]
- A further 26,688 COVID-19 cases are recorded, the highest daily figure so far. ^[426]
- [Gaby Appleton](#), the former Managing Director of Researcher Products at publisher [Elsevier](#), has been appointed as boss of [NHS Test and Trace](#), succeeding Simon Thompson, [Sky News](#) reports. ^[427]

22 October

- Chancellor [Rishi Sunak](#) unveils increased support for jobs and workers affected by COVID restrictions, with employers paying less and employees able to work fewer hours before qualifying for extra financial help. ^[428]
- The [Canary Islands](#), the Greek Island of [Mykonos](#), the [Maldives](#) and [Denmark](#) are added to the quarantine exemption list, effective from 4am on 24 October, while [Liechtenstein](#) is removed from it. ^[429]

23 October

- The Office for National Statistics estimates there to be 35,200 daily COVID cases in England, an increase of 25% on the previous week, with the highest number of cases occurring in northern England.^[430]
- A warning is issued that bogus "COVID marshals" are visiting people's homes in an attempt to gain entry so they can issue spurious fines or even offer counterfeit tests for COVID-19.^[431]

24 October

- An error message when trying to access the [NHS COVID-19](#) app is reported by some users of the newly launched [iPhone 12](#) and [iPhone 12 Pro](#).^[432]
- The [Globe Theatre](#), [Birmingham Hippodrome](#), the [Old Vic](#) theatre and the [English National Ballet](#) are among 35 arts venues to receive financial help from the [Culture Recovery Fund](#).^[433]

25 October

- [The Telegraph](#) suggests the 14-day quarantine period for those who come into contact with a person having tested positive for COVID-19 could be cut to seven days amid ongoing criticism of [NHS Test and Trace](#).^[434]

26 October

- Pharmacy retailer [Boots](#) announces it will make available a COVID test that can give a result in twelve minutes. The test, produced by LumiraDx, will cost £120.^[435]
- Scientists report that the Oxford University COVID-19 vaccine shows a "strong immune response" among elderly volunteers.^[436]

27 October

- A study by [Imperial College London](#) and [Ipsos MORI](#) suggests COVID-19 antibodies may last a matter of months, with figures indicating the number of people with antibodies has fallen by 26.5% over three months.^{[437][438]}
- The United Kingdom records 367 COVID-19 deaths, the highest number in a single day since May.^[439]
- [Office for National Statistics](#) figures indicate the number of deaths mentioning COVID-19 in [England and Wales](#) has risen for the sixth week in a row, with 670 death certificates mentioning the condition in the week up to 19 October, a 53% increase on the previous week.^[440]

28 October

- A projection published by the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) suggests COVID deaths will remain high throughout the coming winter, leading to a greater number of deaths than was seen earlier in the year.^[441]

29 October

- A study by [Imperial College London](#) suggests there are 100,000 new COVID-19 cases in England each day, with the number of cases doubling every nine days.^[442]

- An updated version of the [NHS COVID-19](#) contact tracing app will issue more self-isolation notices, its new boss, Gaby Appleton, has said.^[443]
- Cyprus and Lithuania are removed from the quarantine exemption list, the change taking effect from 4am on Sunday 1 November.^[444]
- Model railway maker [Hornby](#) reports a 33% increase in profits during the six months up to September 2020 as more people take up hobbies during lockdown.^[445]
- Broadcaster [Channel 4](#) announces plans to repay £1.5m in furlough payments to the government after finding itself in a "robust financial position ahead of expectations".^[446]

30 October

- Documents produced by the [Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies](#) have claimed COVID-19 is spreading "significantly" faster through England than their predicted "worst-case" scenario, with four times as many cases as anticipated.^[447]
- The [Office for National Statistics](#) infection survey in England showed that secondary school children up to age 16 had the fastest rate of increase in COVID-19 incidence of any age range, giving them the second highest average incidence of 2.0% of any measured age range, fifty times higher than when children returned to school after the summer holiday, and just slightly behind the 16 to 24 years old age range.^{[448][449][450]}
- [Mark Drakeford](#), the First Minister of Wales, says that the UK government is to hold a meeting to discuss a set of UK-wide COVID rules for Christmas.^[451]

31 October

- The UK reaches a million COVID-19 cases, as a further 21,915 recorded cases take the total to 1,011,660.^[452]
- After scientists project that there could be several thousand COVID deaths a day, Prime Minister Boris Johnson holds a Downing Street press conference at which he announces a second lockdown for England, for four weeks from Thursday 5 November to Wednesday 2 December, in order to prevent what he describes as a "medical and moral disaster" for the NHS. England will then revert to the tier system.^{[453][454]}
- The furlough scheme, scheduled to end of 31 October, is extended until December following the announcement of the England-wide lockdown.^[455]
- The [2020 Six Nations Championship](#), delayed because of the COVID crisis, comes to a conclusion with [England](#) winning the title.^[456]

November 2020

1 November

- Mortgage payment holidays for people financially impacted by the COVID crisis are extended, having been scheduled to expire on 31 October.^[457]

2 November

- An article produced by the Oxford University-based [Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine](#) suggests slides estimating the number of COVID deaths presented at the Downing Street press conference on 31 October are based on models from at least three weeks ago, and are therefore overestimating the number of potential fatalities.^[458]
- A UK study of 100 people who have tested positive for COVID-19 shows they still have [T cells](#) six months after infection.^[459]

- [Brexit Party](#) leader [Nigel Farage](#) applies to change the name of the party to [Reform UK](#), and says it will fight the government's "woeful" response to COVID-19 and its lockdown strategy that "result in more life-years lost than it hopes to save".^[460]

3 November

- A further 397 COVID-related deaths take the total number of fatalities to 47,250, the highest daily rise since 27 May.^[461]

4 November

- MPs vote 516–39 to support the four-week lockdown restrictions for England that come into force from the following day, with 34 Conservative MPs among those to vote against the measures, while a further 19 Conservatives abstain from voting.^[462]
- The UK records a further 492 COVID-related deaths, the highest number since 19 May, and bringing the total to 47,742.^[463]

5 November

- As England's second lockdown begins, the [UK Statistics Authority](#) criticises the government over the way it presented data estimating potential COVID deaths to justify the measures at the 31 October Downing Street press conference, and calls for greater transparency of data and the way projections are made.^[464]
- Chancellor [Rishi Sunak](#) extends the furlough scheme to the end of March 2021.^[465]
- Germany and Sweden are removed from the quarantine exemption list with effect from 4am on Saturday 7 November.

UK Second Wave lockdown starts

6 November

- Figures from the Office for National Statistics indicate the rate of growth of COVID-19 cases is slowing; the ONS reports there were around 50,000 in the week ending 30 October, roughly one person in 90.^[467]
- The UK government accepts a mistake was made during the 31 October Downing Street briefing after a graph predicting 1,500 daily COVID deaths by 8 December is revised down to 1,010, but it says the "underlying analysis" of the threat to the NHS is correct.^[468]
- Denmark is removed from the quarantine exemption list as of 4am after Danish health authorities discover a mutated strain of COVID-19 present in the country's mink population.^[469]

7 November

- Non-UK nationals are banned from arriving in the UK from Denmark after the discovery of a mutated strain of COVID-19 in the country's mink population that is believed to have spread to humans.^[470]
- [Queen Elizabeth II](#) wears a face covering in public for the first time during a visit to the [Tomb of the Unknown Soldier](#) at [Westminster Abbey](#).^[471]
- The latest tranche of [Culture Recovery Fund](#) money is awarded, with £14m awarded to 162 heritage organisations, including [St Paul's Cathedral](#), which is given £2.1m.^[472]

8 November

- Non-UK hauliers are added to the Denmark travel ban.^[473]
- Scaled back [Remembrance Sunday](#) services take place, including at [Whitehall](#) which is closed to the public.^[474]

9 November

- The [Pfizer](#) and [BioNTech](#) coronavirus [vaccine](#) is reported to protect 90% of recipients in initial tests from developing COVID-19.^[475]
- Responding to news of a potential vaccine, Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) tells a Downing Street press conference the vaccine has "cleared a significant hurdle", but warns it is "very, very early days" and there are "several more hurdles" ahead.^[476]
- Transport Secretary [Grant Shapps](#) announces the UK is making "good progress" in developing a testing regime to reduce the quarantine period for international arrivals.^[477]

10 November

- Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) announces that the NHS is ready to begin providing the COVID vaccine "as fast as safely possible".^[478]
- Figures from the Office for National Statistics show the number of COVID-related deaths has exceeded 1,000 for the first time since June, with 1,379 deaths in the week ending 30 October, accounting for 12.7% of UK deaths in that week.^[479]
- Figures show that UK unemployment stood at 4.8% in the three months to September 2020, up from 4.5%, as a result of the COVID crisis.^[480]
- A group of Conservative MPs who voted against England's second lockdown have formed the [COVID Recovery Group](#) to argue for a different approach to dealing with the virus once restrictions end on 2 December, one that will enable society to "live with the virus".^[481]

11 November

- The UK becomes the fifth country to record 50,000 COVID-related deaths after the United States, Brazil, India and Mexico, when a further 595 deaths take the total to 50,365.^[482]
- A review commissioned by Chancellor [Rishi Sunak](#) suggests £1.4bn could be raised by doubling [Capital Gains Tax](#) and cutting exemptions, as the government looks for ways of paying off the debt incurred by the COVID crisis.^[483]
- A virtual meeting between Cabinet Minister [Michael Gove](#) and the leaders of the devolved nations has taken place to discuss a strategy for getting students home for Christmas.^[484]

12 November

- The UK records a further 33,470 COVID-19 cases, the highest daily increase since mass testing began.^[485]
- The UK economy expanded by 15.5% between July and September 2020 as Britain came out of the recession caused by the first lockdown, the largest growth percentage since figures began in 1955. But the Office for National Statistics indicates that [GDP](#) is still below pre-COVID levels.^[486]
- Travellers arriving into the UK from most of Greece (except Corfu, Crete, Rhodes, Kos and Zakynthos) will be required to quarantine for two weeks, effective from 4am on Saturday 14 November; Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Laos, the Turks and Caicos Islands, Bahrain, Chile, Iceland and Cambodia are all added to the quarantine exemption list.^[487]

- Scientists monitoring the ZOE COVID symptom study app suggest the [R number](#) may have dropped below 1 in the UK to around 0.9.^[488]
- Emails seen by the BBC suggest the [Health and Safety Executive](#) was pressured by the UK government to declare PPE suits bought in April as safe despite them not having been properly tested.^[489]

13 November

- The [R number](#) has fallen to between 1.2 and 1.0, while the Office for National Statistics reports that overall COVID cases in England slowed in the week ending 6 November.^[490]
- According to government scientific advisers, the number of children with COVID-19 has increased significantly in comparison to the spring, with children often bringing the virus into households. The [National Education Union](#) says it is troubled by the number of children testing positive.^[491]

14 November

- The opposition [Labour Party](#) urges the government to introduce emergency legislation to curb anti-vaccine content online.^[492]
- Bakery retailer [Greggs](#) announces the loss of 820 jobs as a result of a slump in business because of the COVID crisis.^[493]

15 November

- Professor [Ugur Sahin](#), co-founder of [BioNTech](#), says a COVID vaccine could halve the transmission rate, and enable life to return to normal by winter 2021–22.^[494]
- Professor John Edmunds, a member of the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies, calls for a long-term strategy to balance the epidemic and the economy, saying that encouraging people to visit bars and restaurants then closing them because of a surge in cases is not a "sensible way to run the epidemic".^[495]
- Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) is self-isolating after coming into contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19.^[496]

16 November

- The Prime Minister, six Conservative MPs and two political aides are now self-isolating after coming into contact with Conservative MP [Lee Anderson](#), who later tested positive for COVID-19. They were all present at a Downing Street breakfast meeting on 12 November, and were later contacted by [NHS Test and Trace](#).^[497]
- The UK secures a deal to order 5m doses of a vaccine being developed by US biotechnology company [Moderna](#), which has announced tests have shown it to be 95% effective in combating COVID-19.^[498]
- A technical glitch with the [NHS COVID-19](#) app has prevented a number of [iPhone](#) users from being able to launch it. The NHS has published a workaround for the issue but has not disclosed the cause of it.^[499]

17 November

- Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) has tested negative for COVID-19.^[500]

- Figures from the Office for National Statistics show there have been 70,830 excess deaths since the beginning of the pandemic, while 2,225 deaths mentioning COVID were recorded in the week up to 6 November. [\[501\]](#)
- Police chiefs in England and Wales temporarily suspend £10,000 fines for gatherings of over 30 people following concern over a disparity between those who pay upfront and those who challenge the fines in court. They have instead advised police forces to issue court summonses for those who break COVID restrictions. [\[502\]](#)
- Scientists at the [University of Cardiff](#) have discovered that mouthwash can destroy COVID-19 under lab conditions within 30 seconds, suggesting it may be a potential way of tackling the virus. [\[503\]](#)
- [British Airways](#) announces a COVID testing programme in partnership with [American Airlines](#) for passengers travelling on some routes between [Heathrow](#) and the United States in a bid to have quarantine restrictions lifted by the UK government. [\[504\]](#)
- Legal documents filed in the United States have revealed that a Spanish businessman who acted as a go-between to secure PPE for the NHS at the beginning of the pandemic was paid £21m of UK taxpayers' money. [\[505\]](#)

18 November

- A report by the [National Audit Office](#) has found that suppliers of [Personal Protective Equipment](#) (PPE) with political connections were 10 times more likely to be awarded contracts during the COVID crisis. [\[506\]](#) In response to the report, Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) says he is "proud" of the way the government obtained supplies of PPE. [\[507\]](#)
- All four of the Home Nations are reported to be looking at ways of relaxing COVID rules so families from across the UK can spend Christmas together. [\[508\]](#) But SAGE warns that five days of tighter restrictions may be required for every day that regulations are relaxed over the festive period. [\[509\]](#)
- Data released concerning the COVID vaccine developed by Pfizer and BioNTech indicate it to be 94% effective in those aged 65 and over, but equally effective in people of all ages and ethnicities. [\[510\]](#)
- Data released by the Office for National Statistics indicates that loneliness is at its highest since the beginning of the pandemic, with a quarter of the 4,000 people surveyed saying they felt lonely always, often or sometimes, with the figure rising to 34% among those aged 16–29. [\[511\]](#)

19 November

- The Oxford University COVID vaccine is reported to show a strong immune response in those in their 60s and 70s, something researchers have described as "encouraging". [\[512\]](#)
- Researchers in the UK and Netherlands have found that [tocilizumab](#), a drug used to treat [rheumatoid arthritis](#), shows promising signs of being able to treat critically ill COVID patients in trials. [\[513\]](#)
- Israel, Sri Lanka, Namibia, Rwanda, the US Virgin Islands, Uruguay, Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba and the Northern Mariana Islands are all added to the UK's quarantine exemption list. No countries are removed from the list. [\[514\]](#)
- Fashion retailers Peacocks and Jaeger go into administration after their owners, [Edinburgh Woollen Mill Group](#) fails to find a buyer, risking 4,700 jobs. [\[515\]](#)
- The UK government announces £300m of emergency funding for sports impacted by the absence of spectators. [\[516\]](#)
- [First Minister of Scotland Nicola Sturgeon](#) says that governments across the UK face a "difficult balance" over how to approach Christmas. [\[517\]](#)

20 November

- Figures from the Office for National Statistics suggest that COVID-19 cases are beginning to plateau in England and Scotland, but are still increasing in Wales and Northern Ireland.^[518]
- At a Downing Street briefing, Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) announces that COVID-19 vaccination centres are to be established throughout the UK in preparation for the rollout of a vaccine. These will be in addition to the vaccine being given by GP's surgeries and hospitals.^[519]
- A study of healthcare workers at [Oxford University Hospitals](#) has suggested that COVID antibodies are still present in the body six months after infection.^[520]

21 November

- Sources have reported that families will be allowed to form extended bubbles for seven days over the Christmas period to allow them to spend time together over the festive season.^[521]
- Downing Street confirms plans to introduce a tougher [three-tier system of COVID restrictions](#) for England when the lockdown ends on 2 December.^[522]
- Sources, including BBC News, report that Chancellor Rishi Sunak is to announce a £500m package to support mental health services in England, which have been in greater demand because of the COVID crisis.^[523]

22 November

- [The Observer](#) reports that campaigners are taking legal action against the UK government over its appointment of [Dido Harding](#), [Kate Bingham](#) and [Mike Coupe](#) to key roles in its tackling of COVID-19.^[524]
- Chancellor [Rishi Sunak](#) is to announce an extra £3bn for the NHS in the forthcoming spending review, but warns of an "economic shock laid bare" as the country deals with the COVID crisis.^[525]
- The Home Nations give their backing to plans to allow some household mixing "for a small number of days" over Christmas.^[526]

23 November

- A large trial of the COVID vaccine being developed by the University of Oxford indicates it to be 70% effective, but scientists believe that figure can rise to 90% by tweaking the dosage.^[527]
- Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) confirms that England's [previous three-tier system](#) of COVID regulations will return [in a new form](#) once the lockdown expires on 2 December, but with toughened measures for each area. Gyms and non-essential shops will reopen throughout England, while collective worship and weddings will be allowed again, as well as some spectator sport. The second tier status of each region will be reviewed every 14 days, with the regional approach scheduled to last until March 2021.^[528]
- Following reports over the previous two days that a "freedom pass" could be introduced to allow people who have tested negative for COVID to have greater freedom of movement, Johnson says there will be "no forced vaccination" in the UK.^[529]
- An extra £7bn of government funding is announced for [NHS Test and Trace](#), bringing the total spent on the project so far to £22bn.^[530]

24 November

- The leaders of the UK's four nations agree on plans for Christmas that will allow three households to meet up indoors and outdoors for five days from 23–27 December. Northern Ireland will be allowed seven days of relaxed restrictions from 22–28 December to accommodate those travelling to or from the mainland.^[531]
- As much as £1bn in fraudulent benefit claims made by organised gangs of criminals has been prevented from being paid during lockdown.^[532]
- Analysis of UK death certificates indicates UK deaths to be almost a fifth higher than the five year average.^[533]
- Professor [Andrew Hayward](#), director of the UCL Institute of Epidemiology and Health Care, and a member of SAGE, warns people to be cautious over Christmas, suggesting the relaxing of rules is tantamount to "throwing fuel on the Covid fire".^[534]

25 November

- Chancellor [Rishi Sunak](#) outlines the Spending Review for how much will be spent on public services, and warns that the "economic emergency" caused by COVID has only just begun. The Review comes as the [Office for Budget Responsibility](#) forecasts that unemployment will reach 7.5% because of the crisis. The UK economy is also predicted to shrink by 11.3%, the biggest decline in 300 years, while debt is forecast to be at its highest outside wartime.^[535]
- A further 696 COVID-19 deaths were announced for the UK, the highest daily figure since 5 May 2020.^{[536][537]}

26 November

- England's [new tier system](#) is announced, to come into force on 2 December. Most of the country, including London and Liverpool, will be tier 2, while large parts of the Midlands, North East and North West, including Greater Manchester and Birmingham, will be in tier 3. Only the Isle of Wight, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly will be in tier 1.^[538]
- Media question the efficiency of the [University of Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine](#), since a preliminary report combined results from two trials which used different doses.^[539]

27 November

- The [R number](#) is thought to be between 0.9 and 1.0, the first time it has been below 1 since August.^[540]
- Retail group [Arcadia](#) is reported to be on the brink of collapse, threatening 13,000 jobs. The group has stated that COVID has had a "a material impact on trading across our businesses".^[541] Arcadia goes into administration three days later.^[542]
- The UK government's [Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies](#) (SAGE) has issued a document advising people to avoid board games and sleepovers during Christmas, and to involve women in the decision making process for organising Christmas events because they "carry the burden of creating and maintaining family traditions and activities at Christmas".^[543]

28 November

- Writing in [The Times](#), Cabinet Office Minister [Michael Gove](#) warns backbench Conservative MPs planning to vote against the new tier system for England that without the measures hospitals throughout the country will become overwhelmed with COVID cases.^[544]

- Amid anger from backbench Conservatives over the tier system, Prime Minister Boris Johnson writes to rebel MPs offering them a "sunset" of 3 February for the expiration of [the regulations](#).^{[545][546]}
- [Nadhim Zahawi](#) is appointed as [Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Coronavirus Vaccine Deployment](#).^[547]

29 November

- The UK government signs a deal for a further 2 million doses of the Moderna vaccine, bringing the total number of doses secured now to 7 million, sourced from 7 different suppliers.^[548]

30 November

- Version Four of the [NHS COVID-19](#) app is to include a self-isolation payment feature in a bid to encourage more people to download it and follow its advice, and following earlier concerns over privacy safeguards that had prevented those receiving an automated message from the app from making claims.^[549]
- London AI laboratory [DeepMind](#) is reported to have predicted how a [protein folds](#) into a unique three-dimensional shape, work that could provide the answers to a number of human conditions, including COVID-19.^[550]
- In a bid to persuade backbench MPs to support the new tier regulations for England, the UK government publishes data behind its decision to introduce the measures, stating that it seeks to "balance the many complex impacts" of restrictions and keep them in place "for as short a time as possible", but that allowing COVID to spread "would lead to impacts...considered intolerable for society". In response, senior Conservative MP [Mark Harper](#) claims the "wheels are coming off the government's arguments".^[551]
- Professor Dame [Sally Davies](#), the former Chief Medical Officer for England, has suggested that a high level of obesity has led to an increased rate in the number of COVID deaths.

Brexit - Jim Brunsten (Financial Times EU Correspondent) - On the EU side, there is a general understanding that the ratification of a deal starts to become technically challenging if a deal is not reached by the end of November.

Officials are already exploring options for allowing a deal to be ratified in 2020 without it needing to be translated into all of the bloc's 24 official languages.

But any text would need to be thoroughly legally checked for errors and unforeseen legal consequences — a process known as scrubbing.

A glance from the inside of our refurbished pavilion.



December 2020

1 December

- Cabinet Office Minister [Michael Gove](#) says there are no plans to introduce a "vaccine passport" giving people access to places such as pubs and restaurants once a vaccine becomes available. [\[553\]](#)
- Education watchdog [Ofsted](#) reports that education has been "completely disrupted" by COVID-19 absences in some areas, with the West Midlands and North West of England particularly badly affected. [\[554\]](#)
- MPs vote 291–78 in favour of introducing England's tough new COVID tier system, with 55 backbench Conservatives voting against the government, while another 16 abstain. [\[555\]](#)

2 December

- The UK becomes the first country in the world to approve the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine, with vaccinations beginning once supplies arrive the following week. [\[556\]](#)
- Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) welcomes the vaccine, but warns people should not get "carried away with over optimism".

Lockdown ends in UK. Tier system restarts

99% of the population in England will live under the toughest two tiers of the country's new lockdown system, it has been revealed.

Around 32 million people - just over 57% of the population - will be in Tier 2, while 23.3 million - 41.5% of the population - will be in Tier 3.

Just 1% of the population, 714,000 people, will be living under Tier 1 restrictions.

Warrington and Liverpool are the only two places in the country which will face eased restrictions from 2 December - both are moving from Tier 3 of the previous lockdown system to Tier 2.

The tiered system has been strengthened since the original rules were in place before lockdown, with many more areas in the higher tiers in a bid to keep infection rates down.

Before the second lockdown was introduced, 42% of the population was in Tier 1.

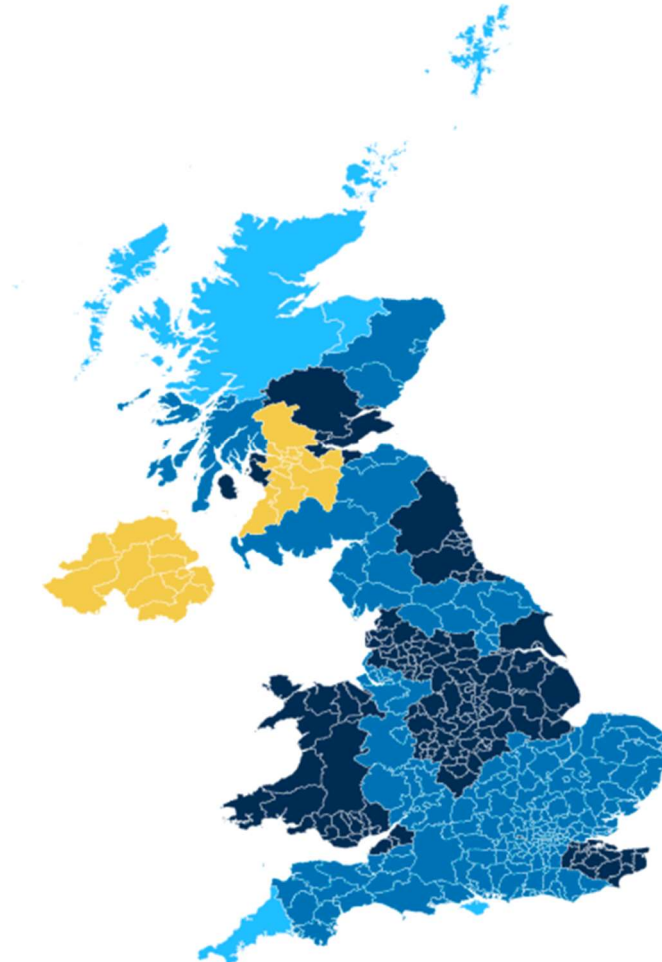
In Tier 3, there should be no mixing of households indoors or in most outdoor places, with hospitality venues closed except for takeaway, drive-through or delivery.

Indoor entertainment venues will also be closed, with people urged to avoid travelling outside the area other than where necessary.

In Tier 2, there should be no mixing of households indoors apart from support bubbles, with the rule of six applying outdoors.

What level of restrictions apply in my area?

- Rule of Six
- No household mixing indoors
- Hospitality shut or early closing time
- Non-essential retail closed



SOURCE: Gov.uk and each national government • Weekly rates from 16 to 22 November 2020
Non-essential retail closed: Level 4 (Scotland) and circuit breakers in other nations. Hospitality shut or early closing time: Level 3 (Scotland), Tier 3 (England) and similar measures in Wales and Northern Ireland. No household mixing indoors: Level 2 (Scotland), Tier 2 (England) and areas with no household mixing allowed. Rule of Six: Level 1 (Scotland), Tier 1 (England) and areas that follow the Rule of Six. Data updated on 27 November 2020

Pubs and bars must close unless operating as restaurants, while hospitality venues can only serve alcohol with substantial meals.

In Tier 1 the rule of six applies indoors and outdoors, with people urged to work from home if they can and pubs limited to table service.

The announcement of the tiers descended into chaos when an online postcode checker was launched before Health Secretary Matt Hancock formally revealed the details, although it crashed within minutes of coming online.

In a move aimed at assuaging anger from local leaders and Conservative MPs, Boris Johnson has promised that the tier allocations will be reviewed on 16 December.

But a number of Tories have already said they will vote against the new tiers next week, including 1922 Committee chairman Sir Graham Brady, Bournemouth East MP Tobias Ellwood and Poole MP Sir Robert Syms.

Steve Baker, deputy chairman of the COVID Recovery Group which has been critical of lockdown restrictions, said the "authoritarianism at work today is truly appalling".

"The government must publish its analysis of the impact interventions are likely to have on controlling COVID, as well as the non-Covid health impact and the impact on society, people's livelihoods and businesses," he said.

Sir Roger Gale, MP for the Kent constituency of North Thanet, criticised the decision to place all of the county in Tier 3, telling Sky News he fears people will "skip over the boundary" to go to a nearby pub in Tier 2.

In a bid to soften the blow for Tier 3 areas, ministers are promising them access to rapid-result COVID-19 tests to help bring down infections, as well as cash subsidies.

Extra cash will also be on offer to areas placed into Tier 2 and Tier 3.

The health secretary said "these are not easy decisions, but they have been made according to the best clinical advice".

Matt Hancock told MPs: "Thanks to the shared sacrifice of everyone in recent weeks, in following the national restrictions, we have been able to start to bring the virus back under control and slow its growth, easing some of the pressure on the NHS.

"We will do this by returning to a regional tiered approach, saving the toughest measures for the parts of the country where prevalence remains too high."

Downing Street has denied that economic factors played a part in the decision-making process, with the prime minister's spokesman saying: "We have based tiers on the criteria that we have set out.

"We have been clear on the criteria that we have based the tiering system on and you have got the WMS [written ministerial statement] that explains the rationale for each area."

Mr Johnson's spokesman added that the government expects the public to continue to follow the rules, saying: "I think what you've seen throughout the pandemic is the public's will to abide by the restrictions and play their role in driving down the virus.

"We saw that both in the first lockdown, throughout the first set of tiers, throughout the second lockdown, and we believe that will continue to be the case."

Labour's shadow health secretary Jon Ashworth said the nation is "still in the tunnel" despite the light offered by vaccines, telling the Commons: "We have a significant way to go to drive infection rates down and keep our constituents safe."

"We understand why tough restrictions are still needed, but let's be clear: today millions of people trying to survive in the second lockdown will soon be forced to endure further local lockdown restrictions."

The Confederation of British Industry said some businesses would be left "hanging by a thread" under the new rules.

"For many businesses in England, going into toughened tiers while waiting for a vaccine will feel like suspended animation," UK policy director Matthew Fell said.

Greater Manchester Andy Burnham told Sky News that he "can see why" the area has been placed into Tier 3, but that the restrictions hit hospitality "far too hard".

"This is some of the poorest parts of the country that we are talking about. Cities, particularly outside of London and many in the North, will be very, very hard hit indeed by hospitality being closed in December.

"Many of the businesses will not make it through to the new year."

London mayor Sadiq Khan welcomed news that the capital will be moved back into Tier 2, having previously been in Tier 3, telling Sky News it was the "right decision".

But he added there was "no room for complacency" among Londoners.

Joe Anderson, mayor of Liverpool, said it was good news that the area was once again in Tier 2, but warned: "We must remain vigilant and ensure this tentative step back to semi-normality is sustained."

3 December

- The number of recorded COVID-related deaths in the UK passes 60,000 after a further 414 deaths take the total to 60,113.^[558]
- Dr [Anthony Fauci](#), the leading infectious disease expert in the United States, criticises the UK's approval process for the [Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine](#), suggesting the it has not been as rigorous as that of the US. In defence the UK says the vaccination is safe and effective.^[559] Fauci later retracts his statement and apologises for the comments.^[560]
- England's deputy chief medical officer, [Jonathan Van-Tam](#), says that the first wave of vaccines could cut the number of hospitalisations and deaths in England by 99%.^[561]
- After some ministers suggest that [Brexit](#) speeded up the process allowing the UK to get the vaccine first, Education Secretary [Gavin Williamson](#) responds by saying that

the UK got the vaccine first because it is a "much better country" with superior medical experts.^[562]

- The first batch of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine arrives in the UK, and is stored at an undisclosed location ready for distribution to hospitals vaccination centres around the country.^[563]
- The student travel window opens, allowing them to return home from university for Christmas.^[564]
- Supermarket retailer [ASDA](#) announces plans to repay £340m of business rates relief to the government, joining [Tesco](#), [Sainsbury's](#), [Morrisons](#) and [Aldi](#) which have made similar announcements, meaning £1.7bn of rates relief is to be repaid.^[565]

4 December

- The [Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency](#) says the COVID-19 vaccine will "definitely" be ready to go into care homes within the next two weeks.^[566]
- The UK is unlikely to get 10 million doses of the [Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine](#) by the end of the year after production estimates for 2020 are scaled back.^[567]
- Business Secretary [Alok Sharma](#) says the UK government is "absolutely confident" that Britain will have 800,000 doses of the [Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine](#) by the following week.^[568]
- Figures from the Office for National Statistics indicate COVID-19 rates are falling in every part of England apart from the North East, with 1 in 105 people having the virus in the week up to 28 November, down from 1 in 85 the week before.^[569]
- The [R number](#) falls to between 0.8 and 1.0.^[570]

5 December

- The [Duke](#) and [Duchess of Cambridge](#) announce a three day UK tour aboard the [Royal train](#) during which they will meet community and health workers who have played an important role during the COVID crisis.^[571]
- [Labour Party](#) leader Sir [Keir Starmer](#) is reported to be self-isolating after a member of his staff tested positive for COVID.^[572]

6 December

- The [Department of Health and Social Care](#) confirms that the UK's vaccination rollout will begin on Tuesday 8 December.^[573]

7 December

- Sir [Simon Stevens](#), the chief executive of [NHS England](#), says that the rollout of the vaccine, which begins the next day, could mark a "decisive turning point" in the battle against COVID-19.^[574]
- The UK Government says it expects the "majority" of vulnerable people to receive the vaccine in January and February 2021.^[574]

8th December

Vaccination using the Pfizer vaccine begins. NHS Staff first to receive the vaccine.



- Margaret Keenan, 90, becomes the first person to receive the [Pfizer Covid-19 vaccine](#) as the rollout of vaccinations begins, William Shakespeare, 81 from Warwickshire becomes the second.^[575]
- Research published in [The Lancet](#) has concluded the [Oxford/AstraZeneca COVID vaccine](#) is safe and effective, giving good protection. The majority of those involved in the research were under-55, but there is evidence it will protect older people too.^[576]

9 December

- Regulators have urged anyone with a history of allergies not to take the [Pfizer/BioNTech COVID vaccine](#) for the time being after two NHS workers vaccinated the previous day had allergic reactions.^[577]
- A series of reports written for the UK government's [Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies](#) (SAGE) by members of the COG-UK Consortium have attributed the resurgence of COVID cases to people travelling abroad during the summer.^[578]

10 December

- Saudi Arabia and Botswana are added to the UK's travel corridor as of 4am on Saturday 12 December, while the Canary Islands are removed from it.^[579]
- [Sky News](#) presenter [Kay Burley](#) is taken off air for six months after she admitted breaching COVID regulations while celebrating her 60th birthday.^[580]
- An update to the [NHS COVID-19](#) app is adding a way to apply for a £500 grant if it gives a self-isolation order.^[581]
- There is a warning that UK residents could be prevented from travelling to the [European Union](#) after 1 January 2021 as travel regulations associated with UK–EU travel expire because of [Brexit](#), and because of travel restrictions associated with COVID.^[582]

11 December

- The period of self-isolation for contacts of someone testing positive for COVID-19, and travellers returning from non-travel corridor countries, is reduced from 14 to 10 days, effective from Monday 14 December.^[583]
- Figures from the Office for National Statistics for the week ending 5 December indicate COVID cases in England are continuing to fall, apart from in London and the East of England.^[584]
- The [R number](#) has risen slightly on the previous week to between 0.9 and 1.0.^[585]
- A study published in the scientific journal [Nature](#) attempts to identify why some people with COVID do not display symptoms, pinpointing DNA and a shortfall of interferon as contributing factors.^[586]

12 December

- Professor [Linda Bauld](#), an expert in public health at the [University of Edinburgh](#), describes the relaxation of COVID regulations over Christmas as a "mistake", as people travel from "high to low prevalence areas" to see relatives. In response, Wales's Health Minister, [Vaughan Gething](#), says any change to Christmas rules could present "huge issues about trust" but could happen if cases remain high.^[587]
- Scientific experts have warned people to rethink their plans for Christmas as COVID cases increase in some areas, and warn the country is heading towards "disaster".^[588]
- Figures have indicated that the number of outstanding criminal cases in [England and Wales](#) has risen from 39,331 in February to 51,595 at the end of October, an increase of 31%, prompting concerns it could lead to the collapse of some cases. Although the UK government has invested in the justice system to increase the number of trials being held, some hearings have been put back to 2023.^[589]

13 December

- NHS bosses have urged people to think "really carefully" about more social contact over Christmas amid concerns it could lead to an increase in cases of COVID in January after there was an increase in cases in the United States following [Thanksgiving](#).^[590]

14 December

- Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) tells MPs that a new strain of COVID-19 has been identified that is spreading faster in some areas of the country.^[591] The variant, named 'VUI – 202012/01', showed changes to the [spike protein](#) which could make the virus more infectious. As of 13 December, there were 1,108 cases identified.^[592]
- Artist [Aliza Nisenbaum](#) has created a series of paintings of NHS workers who have worked on the front line during the pandemic.

Millions more face tier 3 as new strain of virus emerges

Jessica Elgot
Simon Murphy

More than 60% of England faces winter under the toughest Covid restrictions, with pubs and restaurants forced to close before Christmas amid warnings of a new strain of the virus.

In London and the south-east, 10 million people will enter tier 3 measures from tomorrow, the health secretary announced - less than two weeks after a national lockdown designed to suppress surging coronavirus cases.

After a week of uplifting news from the vaccine rollout, Matt Hancock said it was a "salutary warning for the whole country" as he urged people to minimise all social contact. "This isn't over yet," he said, placing London and parts of Essex and Hertfordshire under tier 3 and bringing the number of people under the strictest rules to 34 million.




MPs, including Conservative backbenchers, and scientists sounded the alarm ahead of the planned five-day Christmas relaxation of curbs but Downing Street insisted the plans

would not be reviewed. In a surprise announcement, Hancock told the Commons that more than 1,000 cases of the new virus strain had been found in almost 60 areas, predominantly in southern England.

He suggested the new strain was growing faster than existing variants but stressed that clinical advice suggested it was "highly unlikely" the mutation would fail to respond to a vaccine.

Prof Chris Whitty, England's chief medical officer, said there was no evidence the variant was more dangerous, it would be picked up by tests and it was not the main reason for more areas entering tier 3, however.

Whitty told a Downing Street press briefing: "The reason that tier 3 has been brought in is because the rates have been going up very fast in many areas. The variant may or may not be contributing to that but the reality of that is that is happening across the board, and that's the reason for making the changes."

Scientists said any potential impact on the Covid vaccine rollout would need to be examined. Prof Wendy Barclay,   



▲ Shoppers in London yesterday. The new curbs mean shops in the city will close after today PHOTOGRAPH: ANDY HALL/GUARDIAN

There is no clear-cut evidence the new variant of coronavirus - which has been detected in south-east England - is able to transmit more easily, cause more serious symptoms or render the vaccine useless.

The first known case of coronavirus in a wild animal has been reported, leading to calls for widespread monitoring of wildlife.

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) said a wild mink had tested positive around an infected mink farm in Utah.

Coronavirus outbreaks at fur farms in the US and in Europe have killed thousands of the animals.

As a consequence, millions of farmed mink have had to be culled across Europe.

There were 819,000 fewer workers on UK company payrolls in November than at the start of the pandemic, official figures show.

Hospitality was the worst hit sector, accounting for a third of the job losses, followed by retail, according to the Office for National Statistics.

The unemployment rate rose to 4.9% in the three months to October, with the jobless total up to 1.7 million people.

Redundancies hit a record high over the period.

Hospitality has been particularly badly hit by coronavirus lockdowns and restrictions, resulting in large numbers of workers losing their jobs.

Bars and restaurants in England had to shut throughout November, and thousands based in areas covered by tier 3 rules remain closed.

15 December

- Britain's two leading medical journals, the [Health Service Journal](#) and [British Medical Journal](#), have described the decision to relax COVID regulations over Christmas as a "rash decision" that could "cost many lives".^[595]
- Representatives from the four nations of the UK have met to discuss the relaxation of regulations over Christmas, but BBC News reports they are unlikely to change the agreed rules. Instead, advice on celebrating Christmas is expected to be strengthened to suggest people think carefully and remain local if they can.^[596]
- The [Test to Release](#) scheme begins in England, allowing travellers to pay privately for a COVID test five days after arrival, and end their quarantine period if they receive a negative test. But the launch is chaotic as the eleven private firms chosen by the government to administer the tests have teething problems.^[597]

16 December

- London, and parts of Essex and Hertfordshire, are placed into tier three of England's [COVID tier system](#) following an increase in case numbers in those areas.^[598]
- Following a meeting between the leaders of the four nations of the UK, Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) announces that COVID regulations will still be relaxed for five days over the Christmas period, but urges people to think before meeting up with relatives. The three household rule will stay in place, except in Wales where the law is to be changed to specify only two households can meet, while in Scotland people will be urged to meet up on only one of the five days.^[599]
- [Nadhim Zahawi](#), the [Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for COVID-19 Vaccine Deployment](#), announces that 137,897 people were given their first dose of the [Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine](#) between 8 and 15 December (the first week of the [vaccination rollout](#)).^[600]

17 December

- Figures for [England's NHS Test and Trace](#) show it is reaching 92.7% of contacts, up from 85.9% the previous week; the increased success rate is attributed to improvements to the website, a reduction in repeat calls to households and more people making those calls.^[601]

- Chancellor Rishi Sunak extends the furlough scheme for a further month until the end of April 2021.^[602]
- Conservative MP [Tobias Ellwood](#) apologises after breaching COVID regulations by giving a speech at a dinner in London where 27 people were present.^{[603][604]}

18 December

- Figures from the Office for National Statistics show that UK retail sales fell by 3.8% during November due to lockdown restrictions.^[605]
- The [R number](#) is believed to be above 1 again, and between 1.1 and 1.2.^[606]

19 December

- With respect to just England, Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) announces that London, South East and East of England are to go into new Tier 4 restrictions from the following day. The rules are mostly the same as the national restrictions in November, with non-essential retail, hairdressers and gyms closing.^{[607][608]}
- In England, plans for Christmas bubbles are scrapped completely in Tier 4, while in the rest of England Christmas bubbles are limited to meeting up on Christmas Day.^[609]
- The total number of COVID-19 cases across the UK exceeds 2 million.^[610]
- A BBC investigation discovers that fake "COVID-19 immunity boosters" are being sold in shops in London.

EAST SPREADING COVID-19 WRECKS CHRISTMAS

By **David Maddox** POLITICAL EDITOR

CHRISTMAS has been cancelled for millions of families as the virulent mutant form of Covid threw the country into chaos.

Boris Johnson yesterday said he was "bitterly disappointed" to axe festivities and create a tough new Tier 4 area for most of the south east of England.

From today, no one in those areas can visit other households to celebrate, essentially wrecking Christmas for more than 16 million people. The rest of Britain will see the new relaxed indoor mixing rules cut from five days down to just Christmas Day.

The Prime Minister said he had to act after the new strain of the

TURN TO PAGE 2



● **Five-day festivities cancelled as terrifying new virus strain spreads**

● **Household mixing is banned for 16.4 million in new Tier 4 lockdown**

● **Celebration 'bubbles' limited to Christmas Day for the rest of Britain**

20 December

- Ireland, Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Canada and Belgium halt flights to and from the UK following the emergence of a [new variant of SARS-CoV-2](#).^[612] France also halts ferry traffic for 48 hours, and the [Port of Dover](#) is closed.^[613]
- 35,928 new cases of COVID are recorded, almost double the number recorded on the same day the previous week.^[614]

21 December

- More than 40 countries have suspended flights to and from the UK.^[615] They include Hong Kong, which suspends all UK flights from the following day, with anyone spending more than two hours in the UK no longer able to fly to Hong Kong.^[616] India suspends UK flights until 31 December.^[617]
- As talks begin between UK and French officials aimed at reopening freight transport links between the two countries, UK supermarkets warn that some fresh produce may run short if the situation is not resolved.^[618]
- The [Northern Ireland Executive](#) votes against proposals to introduce a travel ban between Northern Ireland and the UK mainland.^[619]
- Sir [Patrick Vallance](#), the UK's chief scientific adviser, suggests that more areas of England will need to go into tier four restrictions to combat the new variant of COVID-19.^[620]

22 December

- The UK and France reach an agreement to reopen their border the following day. Freight drivers and EU citizens will be among people allowed to travel between the two countries, subject to a recent negative COVID test. NHS Test and Trace staff and the military will also be deployed to help carry out tests.^[621]
- [Tesco](#) reintroduces a purchasing limit on some items, including eggs, rice, soap and toilet roll to ensure there is not a shortage of the products through panic buying.^[622]
- Scientists have said the new variant of COVID was spotted in the UK because of the surveillance system in place, but that it may or may not originate outside the UK.^[623] [Ugur Sahin](#), chief executive of [BioNTech](#), says the vaccine developed by his firm in conjunction with Pfizer will work against the new strain.^[624]

23 December

- It is announced that a number of areas in England will move up tiers on Boxing Day, including more areas being placed in Tier 4.^[625]
- UK scientists have detected two cases of a second new strain of COVID-19 that is believed to originate from South Africa. The UK government consequently suspends all flights from South Africa.^{[626][627]}
- France reopens its border to the UK, but there is a backlog of freight to clear.^[628] France's decision to close the border in the first place is criticised by European Commissioner for Transport [Adina Valean](#), who says France went against the EU's recommendations.^[629]

- Former Prime Minister [Tony Blair](#) urges the government to give people a single dose of COVID vaccine rather than preserving stocks for a second jab.^[630]
- [Desmond Shawe-Taylor](#), the Surveyor of The Queen's Pictures, and [Rufus Bird](#), the Surveyor of The Queen's Works of Art, have both left their posts with the royal household and will not be replaced "for the time being" due to the impact of COVID-19 on royal finances.^[631]
- The UK government announces £1.1m of emergency funding for the radio industry to help create content to tackle loneliness during the COVID crisis.^[632]

24 December

- Researchers at the [London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine](#) have suggested schools and universities may need to remain closed after Christmas to help control the spread of the new variant of COVID, as well as tougher restrictions.^[633]
- Figures released by the Office for National Statistics indicate 1 in 85 people in England has COVID, with figures for the week to 18 December estimating that almost 650,000 people had the virus, up from 570,000 the previous week.^[634] But ONS figures for Scotland indicate a fall in cases over the same period, with 37,100 (one in 140) people having the virus in the week to 18 December, a drop from 52,500 (one in 100) in the week up to 11 December. The new variant of COVID is believed to be responsible for 38% of new cases in the week up to 18 December.^[635] Figures for Wales indicate a sharp rise in cases, with an estimated 52,200 people with the virus in the week to 18 December, 18,800 more than the preceding week.^[636]
- The Christmas Eve Jingle, a doorstep bell-ringing event, is held at 6pm to help combat loneliness over Christmas.^[637]
- A travel ban from South Africa comes into force at 9am, prohibiting visitors to the UK from that country following the discovery of a [new variant](#) of COVID-19. The ban excludes UK and Irish nationals arriving in the UK.

Brexit - new EU-UK partnership: where do we stand?

The negotiators from the European Union (EU) and the United Kingdom (UK) reached an agreement on a new partnership on 24 December 2020. This agreement sets out the rules that will apply between the EU and the UK from 1 January 2021. The European Parliament and the member states still have to approve the agreement. This process will start very soon.

The agreement sets out the new rules that will apply from 1 January 2021 in the relationship between the EU and the UK, in areas such as:

- trade in goods and services;
- a level playing field, fisheries;
- aviation and road transport;
- social security;
- UK participation in EU programmes;
- internal security.

25 December

- A further 800 military personnel are sent to Kent to help clear the backlog of lorries waiting to cross the English Channel to France.^[639]
- The number of recorded COVID-related deaths in the UK passes 70,000 after a further 570 deaths take the total to 70,195.^[640]
- [Queen Elizabeth II](#) delivers her [Christmas Message](#), telling people struggling without friends and family on Christmas Day that they "are not alone".^[641]
- The United States becomes the latest country to impose travel restrictions on the UK because of the new strain of COVID; any passengers going to the US must produce a negative COVID test before being allowed to travel.

26 December

- Following a brief relaxation of rules for Christmas Day, tougher COVID restrictions are imposed on large parts of the UK, with more areas of England entering tier four restrictions, level four measures for mainland Scotland, and lockdowns for Wales and Northern Ireland.^{[643][644][645][646]} The restrictions mean that many shops are forced to remain closed, something that is expected to have a negative impact on the [Boxing Day](#) sales.^[647]
- In the first trial of its kind held by [University College London Hospitals](#), ten people who have been in close contact with a person testing positive for COVID-19 have been given antibodies as a form of emergency protection.^[648]

27 December

- Speaking to [The Sunday Times](#), [Pascal Soriot](#), chief executive of [AstraZeneca](#), says they have found a "winning formula" with the [Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine](#).^[649] Sources, including [ITV News](#) report that the vaccine will be approved for use in the UK within days.^[650]
- The [B117 strain](#) of COVID, the presence of which was first detected in the UK, has now been identified in a number of other countries, including Australia.^[651]

28 December

- A further 41,385 COVID cases are recorded in the UK, while officials express concern for the pressure on the health service in England, where 20,426 people are being treated in hospital for the virus.^[652]
- More than 200 British tourists have fled the Swiss ski resort of [Verbier](#) after Switzerland imposed a retrospective ten day quarantine backdated to 14 December because of the [B117 strain](#) of COVID.^[653]

29 December

- A further 53,135 new COVID-19 cases are confirmed, the largest daily number so far as the figures catch up with data that went unreported over Christmas.^[654]
- Margaret Keenan, who was the first person in the UK to receive a dose of the [Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine](#), returns to hospital for her follow-up injection, meaning she has completed the vaccination process.^[655]

30 December

- The [regulator \(MHRA\)](#) is the first to approve the [Oxford/AstraZeneca](#) vaccine, meaning it is the second vaccine to enter the [national rollout](#).^[656]

Race to roll out Oxford jab to stave off full lockdown

Johnson insists there is light at the end of the tunnel despite huge Tier 4 extension

By Gordon Rayner, Sarah Knapton, Robert Mendick and Lucy Fisher

BORIS JOHNSON has said Britain is in a race to roll out a freshly approved Covid vaccine in order to avoid a third national lockdown, as the new variant of the virus surges across the country.

On the day that regulators finally approved the Oxford-AstraZeneca jab, the Prime Minister had to put more than three quarters of England into the highest tier.

50,023

DAILY CORONAVIRUS CASES

+19.9%

CHANGE IN 7-DAY AVERAGE

72,548

DEATHS **+981**

Brexit - Jim Brunsten (Financial Times EU Correspondent) - The week of the European Parliament's last plenary session before the end of the year. The ratification vote on a trade deal is pencilled in for this week, so giving the assembly's committees' the maximum time to scrutinise the text before a vote. But this does mean that the UK's new economic relationship with the EU will not be legally settled until barely two weeks before it is supposed to kick in. MEPs have made clear that the assembly is willing to organise an extra voting session at the end of the year, possibly on December 29 or December 30, to vote on the deal.

Brexit trade deal passed by parliament, marking abrupt end to 47-year alliance

By **John Stevens**
Deputy Political Editor

THE Oxford Covid vaccine and a Brexit trade deal were both given the green light on a historic day yesterday.

The decision by Parliament to rush through legislation on the accord with Brussels means Britain will cut ties with the EU at 11pm tonight.

And on Monday the first doses of the new vaccine are expected to be administered in what Boris Johnson described as a 'triumph' for British science.

The Prime Minister said he was now confident life could return to normal after Easter.

The UK has ordered 100million doses of the Oxford jab – enough to protect 50million people.

Crucially it is easier to distribute than the Pfizer vaccine because it does not need ultra-cold storage conditions.

Mr Johnson said: 'We are shifting heaven and earth to get these out as fast as we can.'

However a further 20million people were yesterday put under the toughest Covid restrictions and told to stay at home.

TWO GIANT LEAPS TO FREEDOM

31 December



Brexit - Jim Brunsten (Financial Times EU Correspondent) - When the clock strikes midnight in Brussels (11pm in Britain), the UK's transition period ends and with it the country's

membership of the single market and customs union.

No one knows for now whether that will usher in a new relationship based on a trade deal preserving tariff-free, quota-free trade in goods, or whether only basic World Trade Organization arrangements will apply. But, either way, it will be a big change.

Brussels has hinted at adopting some contingency measures should a deal not be in place, but these would be unilateral steps not the “mini deals” often mooted by UK politicians. These would do things such as temporarily preserve basic air transport links and grant temporary permissions for hauliers to cross the channel.

But what is clear is that even with a deal in place there is likely to be major disruption as new border arrangements come into force.

EU diplomats note that one of the ironies of a no-deal scenario is that talks would in all likelihood continue, probably after a cooling-off period, to try to patch up some kind of relationship.

Many point to the fact that Australia itself is currently in the process of negotiating a comprehensive trade agreement with the EU. Even Canberra does not like the “Australia model”.

1 January

- New Year celebrations are quieter than normal because of COVID restrictions,^[4] but several instances of police breaking up illegal parties are reported from around the UK.^[5] They include a party at a [500-year-old church](#) in Essex in which the building is damaged by revellers.^[6]
- The [R number](#), the rate at which the virus is transmitted, is estimated to be between 1.1 and 1.3, but a study from [Imperial College London](#) suggests the [new COVID strain](#) may have actually increased the R number by between 0.4 and 0.7.^[7]
- Saffron Cordery, of [NHS Providers](#), the body that represents hospital trusts, warns the next few weeks will be "nail-bitingly difficult" for the NHS, with staff absences because of the new variant of COVID.^[8]
- A further 53,285 COVID cases are recorded, along with 613 deaths.

2 January

- As a further 57,725 COVID cases are recorded for the UK, the largest daily number so far, senior doctor Professor [Andrew Goddard](#) warns that hospitals across the UK could face the same level of pressure seen in London and the South East in recent days.^[10]

- Batches of the [Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine](#) begin to arrive at hospitals throughout the UK in preparation for vaccination to begin on Monday 4 January.^[11]
- [Fiona Godlee](#), an editor of *The BMJ*, has asked *The New York Times* to correct an article that claimed health officials in the UK will allow people to receive doses of two different COVID vaccines, describing the story as one that is "seriously misleading and requires urgent correction".^[12]
- BBC News reports that a number of healthcare workers have criticised the process involved in becoming verified to administer the vaccine, which include answering questions on whether they are trained in how to prevent radicalisation.^[13]

Daily cases at record level

Coronavirus cases are now rising fast again, driven by a new variant of the virus thought to be much more easily transmissible than other strains.

A further 57,725 confirmed cases were announced by the government on Saturday.

The sharp rise in numbers is partly down to a lag in reporting over the holiday period but, according to Public Health England, is "largely a reflection of a real increase".

BBC report - Regional restrictions in England are "probably about to get tougher" to curb rising Covid infections, the prime minister has warned.

Boris Johnson told the BBC tougher measures may be required in parts of the country in the coming weeks. He said this included the possibility of keeping schools closed, although this is not "something we want to do". But he added ministers had to be "realistic" about the spread of the new variant of the virus.

Mr Johnson said the government was "entirely reconciled to doing what it takes to get the virus down," and warned of a "tough period ahead". He said increasing vaccination would provide a way out of restrictions and that he hoped "tens of millions" would be vaccinated in the next three months.

3 January

- A further 54,990 COVID-19 cases are recorded, the sixth day the daily figure has exceeded 50,000.^[14]
- On the eve of the rollout of the [Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine](#), Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) says that he expects "tens of millions" of COVID vaccinations to be given over the coming three months; 530,000 doses of the vaccine are ready at hospitals and GPs surgeries to be administered.^[15]
- [Boots](#) and [Tesco](#) have offered to help with the rollout of COVID-19 vaccinations.^[16]
- [Jo Stevens](#), the [Shadow Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#) and MP for [Cardiff Central](#), is reported to be in hospital where she is receiving treatment for COVID-19.

The Sunday Telegraph

'We must not furlough our children's futures'

Ofsted chief warns of dire consequences of extended school closures as unions attempt to impose total shutdown

By Christopher Hope and Steve Bird

CHILDREN cannot be "furloughed" for months while Britain waits for Covid-19 cases to subside, Ofsted's chief inspector says today in the face of attempts by unions to force the Government into keeping all schools closed.

In a rebuff to those calling for all schools to stay closed indefinitely, Amanda Spielman said that children's time out of classroom should be kept to the "absolute minimum".

Ms Spielman's comments came as teaching unions joined forces to call for schools to be kept closed to slow the spread of coronavirus, as numbers of cases in Britain hit another record.

Four national teaching unions called for all schools in England to close for two weeks amid concerns the surge in the new strain of coronavirus cases poses a threat to teachers.

The National Association of Head Teachers, along with the Association of School and College Leaders, has also launched legal action to try to force ministers to reveal the scientific advice behind their decision to allow most schools across the country to open.

In a letter to members Paul Whiteman, NAHT general secretary, said the legal process they had started "covers a wide range of issues from the scientific advice the Government is drawing on, right through to the proposed arrangements for Covid testing in schools".

The move comes a day after Gavin Williamson, the Education Secretary, announced that all London primary schools would remain shut during the first weeks of this month, despite his earlier assertion that some would reopen.

Most other primaries in England are expected to still open tomorrow while secondary schools will reopen on a staggered basis, with exam-year pupils returning on Jan 11 and others returning a week later.

However, last night Brighton and Hove City council became the first local authority to delay the reopening of primary schools without being advised to by the Government.

Ms Spielman was backed by Anne Longfield, the Children's commissioner, who said: "I hope the Government will follow my advice that these schools

should be the last to close and first to open, when it is thought safe to do so. "I hope, for children and parents' sake, that is measured in days not weeks and I would be particularly keen for primaries to stay open if at all possible."

Yesterday the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health issued a statement saying that "the new variant appears to affect all ages and, as yet, we are not seeing any greater severity amongst children and young people".

Prof Russell Viner said, its president, said: "As of now we are not seeing significant pressure from Covid-19 in paediatrics across the UK. As cases in the community rise there will be a small increase in the number of children we see with Covid-19, but the overwhelming majority of children and young people have no symptoms or very mild illness only."

There are real fears now the situation could drag on for months with teachers refusing to go to school to teach children because of the risk of catching coronavirus.

Cabinet ministers have been privately warned that officials will not know whether vaccinated people can

57,725
DAILY CORONAVIRUS CASES
+34.8%
CHANGE IN 7-DAY AVERAGE
74,570
DEATHS +445

transmit the virus - which could trigger a relaxation in restrictions - for another three months.

Separately experts warned that the chaos caused by remote and online learning when schools shut for last year's summer term will be repeated this spring and will further set back children's learning.

The closures left pupils up to four months behind on their studies and the National Foundation for Educational Research warned that "schools simply won't have had time to resolve" issues like IT problems or obtaining a suitable supply of laptops for home learning.

Writing in today's *Sunday Telegraph*, Ms Spielman, Ofsted's chief inspector since Jan 2017, said pupils cannot afford to wait while the mass vaccination effort helps ministers to get a grip on the spread of the pandemic.

She said: "It is clear that children's lives cannot just be put on hold while we wait for vaccination programmes to

Continued on Page 4

Amanda Spielman: Page 4
Editorial Comment: Page 17

Fashional fresco



A model showcases Pierre Garroudi's latest collection during the designer's flash mob fashion show in Sloane Square, London

'Cut red tape' to roll out vaccine

By Christopher Hope
CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

MATT HANCOCK has ordered officials to slash red tape putting off retired doctors from signing up to help with the mass Covid-19 inoculation programme ahead of the first jobs of the new British-made vaccine tomorrow.

The *Daily Telegraph* disclosed last week that former medics had been dissuaded from returning to the NHS by bureaucracy including a requirement to provide 21 different pieces of evidence.

However, the Health Secretary has instructed officials that he wants the process urgently streamlined. The move won't be the backing of Jeremy Hunt, the health and social care select committee chairman, who last night told *The Sunday Telegraph*: "In this new post-Brexit era of getting rid of unnecessary

red tape this should be the top of the list: never have we needed the help of skilled volunteers more badly or urgently."

Last night Boris Johnson hailed the launch of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine tomorrow from six NHS trusts, ahead of a roll-out to hundreds of GP surgeries this week, as a "triumph of British science". At least 530,000 doses of the



A vial of the first batch of Oxford-AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine arrives at West Sussex's Princess Royal Hospital

vaccine are due to be ready tomorrow. Just 5,000 out of 40,000 retired doctors who originally applied to return to the front line to assist with the vaccination programme have so far been able to work, despite 30,000 being eligible.

Mr Hancock's review will examine how to simplify the signing-up process and remove unnecessary checks while ensuring safety is maintained. A senior government source said: "Everyone has a role to play in getting our country through this pandemic and we want people to support the vaccine delivery plan. Matt wants to cut the red tape and make sure the process is as easy as possible. He has made clear it is not acceptable to have unnecessary bureaucracy getting in the way of people wanting to help."

Report: Page 5

More hospitals face 'dire' crisis after Christmas meet-ups

By Patrick Sawyer

THE Covid crisis threatening to overwhelm hospitals in London and the South East will soon spread across the country, senior clinicians have warned.

Doctors have said many more hospitals will shortly be confronting the same "dire" conditions as those faced in the capital and surrounding home counties, as cases continue to rise as a result of people mixing in greater numbers over

the Christmas and New Year holidays.

Dr Shondipon Laha, a consultant in critical care medicine and the honorary secretary of the Intensive Care Society, told *The Sunday Telegraph*: "The situation in hospitals is dire in London, but the situation around the country is only a few weeks behind and London is not at its peak yet. If you start seeing London overwhelmed it can happen everywhere else quickly."

Dr Laha said parts of the North West

were already under severe strain, with some hospitals at more than 150 per cent over baseline capacity as they try to care for growing numbers of seriously ill Covid and non-Covid patients.

He added: "Because of what was happening over Christmas we anticipate a surge in the next couple of weeks."

"The NHS is close to being overwhelmed now and we may be overwhelmed if this surge is similar to London. Staff have been working in

overloaded Intensive Care Units for almost a year and are increasingly feeling like they have little control over the future."

Latest government figures showed a further 446 people had died within 28 days of testing positive for Covid-19, as of yesterday, bringing the total number of UK fatalities to 74,570. As of 9am yesterday, there had been a further 57,725 lab-confirmed cases of coronavirus in the UK - the highest daily total so far.

Prof Andrew Goddard, president of the Royal College of Physicians, said health-care workers are "really worried" about the situation hospitals around the country will face in the coming weeks.

He said: "All hospitals that haven't had the big pressures that they've had in the South East, and London and South Wales, should expect that it's going to come their way."

Report: Page 6

Britain will be a safer country outside the EU, pledges Patel

By Christopher Hope

BRITAIN will be a safer country to live in now it has left the European Union, Priti Patel says today.

The Home Secretary pledged to use "even tougher powers to keep this country safe" now that the UK has quit the jurisdiction of the EU at the end of the Brexit transition period. The comments will be seen as a riposte to Brussels which claimed last month that the

UK would no longer have "direct, real-time access" to sensitive databases covering freedom, security and justice under its new trade deal.

The deal was seen as diminishing the UK's security as its membership of Europol, Eurojust, the European Arrest Warrant and real-time sensitive data-sharing agreements such as the Schengen Information System all ended last week. However, writing in today's *Sunday Telegraph*, Ms Patel said the deal

"gives our police and security services the tools and partnerships to help keep the public safe. And having left the EU means we can give these agencies stronger powers to keep this country safe. That includes banning foreign criminals who have served more than a year in jail from entering the UK."

"We will refuse to accept insecure national identity cards and we will be able to crack down on illegal imports of goods through the introduction of pre-arrival data on goods being imported from the EU. We will also crack down on illegal immigration and reform the broken asylum system."

She added: "Forging a new relationship with the EU also means taking back control of our borders; allowing Britain



The Home Secretary has said that taking back control of the UK's borders means it has more control over who comes in

to finally control who comes into this country. Free movement has ended and people who want to live in the UK will now have to meet the requirements of our new points-based system."

Ms Patel was, with Suella Braverman, the Attorney General, one of only two members of Boris Johnson's Cabinet who refused to vote for Theresa May's Brexit deal three times when it was put

to MPs in 2019. Also writing in *The Telegraph*, Ms Braverman said: "The jurisprudence of the Court of Justice of the European Union will no longer take precedence in the UK's higher courts. This reflects a seismic shift - which will become apparent over time - in our law-making."

"The thousands of judgments handed down by the Luxembourg court every year - interpreting EU laws, determining questions on regulations in areas as varied as competition, health and safety, manufacturing and the environment - will no longer bind our judges at home."

Priti Patel: Page 10
Suella Braverman: Page 18

50 years ago, people in Glasgow queued to get vaccinated against smallpox. Vaccinations were delivered at a rate of 600 per hour.



4 January 2021

- Brian Pinker, 82, becomes the first person to receive the [Oxford/AstraZeneca COVID vaccine](#) as vaccinations using the vaccine begin in the UK.^[18]
- [Margaret Ferrier](#), the MP for [Rutherglen and Hamilton West](#), is arrested by Scottish police and charged in connection with "alleged culpable and reckless conduct" for using public transport while experiencing COVID symptoms.^[19]
- Another lockdown is announced in England^[20] and Scotland.

JABBY MONDAY

By JONATHAN REILLY

THE first of 530,000 Oxford/AstraZeneca jabs are dished out today — a vital shot in the arm in Britain's Covid fight. Boris Johnson pledged to vaccinate tens of millions within three months and said: "We can see how we are going to get out of this with great clarity now." The Army will help with testing and vaccination programmes in its biggest peacetime operation. Many primary schools start back after the holidays today but the PM admitted restrictions are "about to get tougher" — with Tier 5 likely as the way. Full Story — Pages 4, 5, 6 and 7

● NEW BRIT VACCINE IS OUT TODAY | ● 500,000 TO BE INJECTED THIS WEEK | ● BUT BORIS WARNS TIER 5 'IS LIKELY'

5 January

- A further 60,916 new COVID-19 cases are confirmed, the largest daily number so far. [\[23\]](#)
- The UK government says that 1.3 million people in the UK have so far received their first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. [\[24\]](#) Johnson also promises to provide daily updates on the number of vaccinations administered. [\[25\]](#)
- Chancellor [Rishi Sunak](#) announces that businesses affected by the new lockdown will receive grants of up to £9,000 per property. [\[26\]](#)
- The BBC announces that programming for schools will air on [BBC Two](#) and [CBBC](#), as well as online, during lockdown, starting from Monday 11 January. [\[27\]](#)
- [YouTube](#) bans [talkRADIO](#) for allegedly violating its rules by posting information that contradicts expert advice about the COVID-19 pandemic, but reinstates the station within hours. [\[28\]](#)
- With England and Scotland back in lockdown, personal trainer [Joe Wicks](#) confirms his plans to restart free online PE lessons on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, starting from 11 January.

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Return to lockdown

● All schools close and exams on hold ● Restrictions begin in England tomorrow ● Weeks ahead hardest yet, warns PM

Francis Elliott, Chris Smyth, Kat Lay

Boris Johnson plunged England into its third national lockdown in a desperate attempt last night to prevent the NHS from becoming overwhelmed by the rising flood of Covid-19 cases.

People will be required to stay at home for all but a handful of reasons until at least February 15 in the strictest set of restrictions imposed since last March. The laws will come into effect from the early hours of tomorrow and parliament will be recalled the same day.

"The weeks ahead will be the hardest yet," the prime minister said in a televised address. "I know how tough this is. I know how frustrated you are. I know you've had more than enough of government guidance about defeating this virus. But now more than ever you must pull together."

He promised that the country was entering the final phase of the struggle and held out hope of an "accelerating" vaccine programme, pledging an average of two million jabs a week from now until the middle of next month. "With every jab that goes into our arms, we are tilting the odds against Covid and in favour of the British people," he said.

Primary and secondary schools as well as colleges in England must move to remote learning immediately. Mr Johnson said that it would not be fair for this year's GCSEs and A-levels to go ahead as planned. However, nurseries and other early years childcare can remain open. Students are being told not to return to campus for the new term but to study from their present residence until next month at least.

The latest lockdown will bring a return of the limited set of exemptions to the stay-at-home orders that include shopping for essential supplies, medical care, work if it is impossible to do from home and exercise. Those deemed clinically extremely vulnerable are being advised to shield again. The government has revived the original messaging: "Stay at Home. Protect the NHS. Save Lives."

The restrictions came as: ● The number of new cases in the past 24 hours reached 58,784, an increase of 50 per cent on the seven-day average.



Boris Johnson told Britain last night that it was necessary more than ever for people to pull together to overcome coronavirus

Downing Street presented statistics which it said showed urgent action was 45,340 the previous day. Some of the restrictions have changed from the down, reopening schools after the February half term and starting cautiously

This is a race against time to vaccinate the vulnerable

Rhys Blakely
Science Correspondent

The approval of a vaccine was meant to mark the point at which the ingenuity of our scientists forced the virus into retreat.

Instead, we find ourselves in a new race — in which our ability to vaccinate the most vulnerable is pitted against the explosive spread of a more transmissible virus variant.

Faced with steeply rising Covid-19 hospital admissions the government last night reverted to the sort of restrictions imposed in the spring.

Lockdowns are a blunt tool that cause economic havoc and severe harm to schoolchildren and others.

The new variant may require tougher measures — or far better observance of the rules — than before. During the spring lockdown, amid a heatwave, R, the rate at which people pass on the infection, dropped to about 0.6. In the November lockdown in England, it was more than 0.8.

The new variant is thought to be 50-70 per cent better at transmitting, which means it will be a struggle to keep R below 1. And if it is above 1, the epidemic will grow.

According to the government's scientific advisers, nationwide Tier-4 restrictions coupled with school closures throughout January will be necessary, alongside two million vaccinations a week, to prevent the pressure on intensive care units

6 January

England's third national lockdown has legally come into force, with MPs set to vote retrospectively on it later. The measures, which include a stay-at-home order and the closure of schools to most pupils, were announced by the prime minister on Monday. All of the UK is now under strict virus curbs, with Wales, Northern Ireland and most of Scotland also in lockdown.

- A further 62,322 new COVID-19 cases are confirmed, the largest daily number so far, a further 1,041 people have died, the largest daily number since April.^[30]
- Fast food retailer [McDonald's](#) announces it will pause its walk-in takeaway service during lockdown.^[31]
- Annemarie Plas, founder of [Clap for Our Carers](#), announces the weekly event will return from the following day, but under the name Clap for Heroes.

Tough curbs 'for months' as 1 in 50 now have virus



BUSINESS

Borrowing on course to hit record £450bn

Britain will borrow a record £450bn this year after the country was plunged back into a new lockdown, economists said. Just six weeks ago the Office for Budget Responsibility forecast £394bn in borrowing. It will raise fresh fears future generations will be saddled with massive state debt. Business chiefs called for more support as Rishi Sunak, the Chancellor, unveiled a new £4.5bn package. The borrowing would drive the deficit to about 21pc of GDP, by far its highest since the Second World War. *Business, Page 1*

NEWS

Irish boat blocked from fishing by patrol vessel

An Irish fishing boat has been blocked from entering the 12-mile zone around Rockall by a Scottish patrol vessel, after post-Brexit restrictions on European fishermen's access to UK waters were enforced for the first time. Jura, a fishery patrol vessel operated by Marine Scotland, arrived at the North Atlantic island on Jan 1, the day after the Brexit transition period ended. Crew members boarded the Northern Celt, a Donegal boat, on Monday as it prepared to cast its nets. *Page 12*

7 January

- NHS trials of two anti-inflammatory drugs, [tocilizumab](#) and [sarilumab](#), have indicated they can cut the number of COVID deaths by a quarter.^[37]
- The revived [Clap for Heroes](#) initiative is met with a quieter response than its previous run in Spring 2020, with founder Annemarie Plas, distancing herself from it after receiving online abuse.^[38]
- [National Express](#) announces the suspension of its entire coach fleet from midnight on 10 January.
- The UK government announces that road haulage drivers crossing the English Channel will continue to need a recent negative COVID test until further notice.
- Prime Minister Boris Johnson announces that the armed forces are to help with the rollout of COVID vaccines, while 1,000 GP surgeries will be able to administer "hundreds of thousands" of vaccines per day by 15 January. 1.5 million vaccine doses have been given so far.
- People travelling from the UK to the [Republic of Ireland](#) must produce a negative COVID test before being allowed to enter that country.^[33]



Police barricaded doors and shots were fired on the grounds of the Capitol after Trump supporters stormed the building. Politicians put on gas masks as protesters smashed windows and ransacked offices

US Capitol under siege

● Trump supporters storm heart of American democracy ● Shots fired as president tells mob to 'take back the country'

IN THE NEWS

Lockdown 'until April'

Boris Johnson said that tough lockdown restrictions could remain in place until April as the daily coronavirus death toll exceeded 1,000 for the first time this winter. [Page 8](#)

Vaccine clinic delay

GPs have repeatedly delayed vaccination clinics because the delivery of the Pfizer jab has been inconsistent. They start using the Oxford-Astrazeneca vaccine today. [Page 10](#)

Bang to rights

The head of the Equality and Human Rights Commission was ordered by police to leave her second home in Wales on Christmas Day for breaching lockdown rules. [Page 11](#)

Hong Kong 'purge'

China has arrested at least 53 leading democracy advocates in Hong Kong in what critics called a purge. Among those held was John Clancey, a US human rights lawyer. [Page 30](#)

Brexit rules warning

Britain should abandon full access to EU financial markets if it means becoming a regulatory rule-taker, Andrew Bailey, the Bank of England governor, has said. [Page 33](#)

City ease past United

John Stones and Fernandinho were the unlikely scorers as Manchester City beat Manchester United 2-0 at Old Trafford to book their place in the Carabao Cup final. [Page 68](#)

Reminiscent of Spain on 23 February 1981

As the Spanish dictatorship was rapidly dismantled, some of its senior military defenders did not share the massive political consensus in favour of democratisation and so endeavoured to turn back the clock at several moments in the late 1970s and, most dramatically, in the attempted coup of Colonel Antonio Tejero on 23 February 1981.



8 January

- The [Moderna vaccine](#) becomes the third COVID vaccine to be given approval for use in the UK.^[42]
- [Sadiq Kahn](#), the [Mayor of London](#), declares a "major incident" in London, where he says COVID is "out of control".^[43]
- Research from the [COVID Symptom Study](#) suggests COVID cases increased by a third in the UK and reached 70,000 new cases a day between 26 December and 3 January, while the [Office for National Statistics](#) estimates 1.2 million people had COVID over the same time period.^[44]
- The [R number](#) is estimated to be between 1.0 and 1.4.^[45]
- The UK records its largest number of daily COVID-related deaths so far, with 1,325 new deaths, bringing the total to 79,833. The figure surpasses 21 April 2020, when there were 1,224 deaths.

9 January

- A further 1,035 COVID-related deaths take the total past 80,000 to 80,868.^[50]
- People travelling from the UK to the [Republic of Ireland](#) must produce a negative COVID test before being allowed to enter that country.^[51]
- With the exception of British and Irish nationals, travellers from Namibia, Zimbabwe, Angola, Botswana, Mauritius and Seychelles, are banned from entering England because of the South Africa COVID strain.^[52]
- [Buckingham Palace](#) confirms that [Queen Elizabeth](#) and [Prince Philip](#) have received COVID vaccinations, which were administered by a royal doctor at [Windsor Castle](#).^[53]

- [The Hacking Trust](#), a property investment company, has approached GPs surgeries offering to pay £5,000 for unused COVID vaccines. A spokesman for the [Institute of General Practice Management](#) describes the story as "just appalling".^[54]

Covid daily death toll hits record as London infection 'out of control'

◆ 1,300 fatalities in 24 hours ◆ NHS in 'perilous position' ◆ Mayor declares major incident

JASMINE CAMERON-CHILESHE AND ANNA GROSS

The UK reported more than 1,300 deaths from Covid-19 yesterday, the highest daily figure since the pandemic began, as London's mayor declared a "major incident" in the city.

Sadiq Khan said that the spread of the virus in the capital was "out of control", adding that in some parts of London one in 20 people was infected.

The mayor warned that the city's hospitals risk having insufficient beds in the coming weeks and urged the government to take emergency measures, including providing extra money for people self isolating, and ensuring that

face masks be worn outside the home. The NHS said London hospitals were admitting 800 patients with Covid-19 each day. Simon Walsh, deputy chair of the BMA consultants committee and an emergency-care doctor in London, said the NHS was in a "perilous position with many hospitals creaking at the seams".

About 1,325 people in the UK died within 28 days of testing positive for Covid-19.

Although it is the highest figure recorded by the government since the start of the pandemic it is unlikely to be the largest daily total because testing was very limited during the first wave.

The government also said that 68,053 people had tested positive, the highest

daily figure recorded. This also reflects limited testing earlier in the pandemic.

Government officials said Downing Street was deeply alarmed at the rate of infections, as the prime minister aims to ramp up vaccinations following early problems with the programme.

People hospitalised with Covid-19 are likely to have been infected in mid-December or over Christmas, when doctors were concerned that family gatherings, permitted by the government, would accelerate the rate of infection.

A consultant in acute medicine at a north London hospital said there was no "peak in sight" for the number of Covid-19 patients, adding that there was a critical shortage of staff and intensive



Sadiq Khan has urged people to wear masks outside the home as hospitals risk being swamped

care was running at 250 per cent above normal levels.

The London Ambulance Service is taking up to 8,000 emergency calls each day compared with about 5,500 on average. In the week to January 6, the number of coronavirus patients in London hospitals rose 27 per cent to 7,054 and the number of patients on mechanical ventilators rose 42 per cent to 908.

The national R number, which shows how many people one person with the virus is likely to infect, rose slightly to between 1 and 1.4.

Reports & analysis pages 2 & 3
Home-schooling tips & Letters page 10
Camilla Cavendish page 12
Lex page 22

10 January

- Professor [Peter Horby](#), chair of the government's [New and Emerging Respiratory Virus Threats Advisory Group](#) tells the [Andrew Marr Show](#) "we are now in the eye of the storm" and "it was bad in [March](#), it's much worse now."^[56]
- Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) tells the BBC that everybody in the top four most vulnerable groups will be offered a vaccine by 15 February, while every adult in the UK will be offered one by the autumn.^[57] Hancock also says that the NHS is under "very serious pressure" and warns people that "flexing the rules" could be fatal.^[58]
- As the [National Police Chiefs' Council](#) issues guidelines telling police officers to issue fines more quickly for breaches of COVID regulations, Home Secretary [Priti Patel](#) defends the way police have handled lockdown breaches, and says they "will not hesitate" to enforce the rules.^[59]
- Jeremy Brown, Professor of Respiratory Infection at [University College London](#) and member of the Joint Committee on Vaccines and Immunisation, has suggested children may have to stay in isolation until they have been vaccinated.^[60]
- Online retailer [Ocado](#) warns customers of possible shortages because of the pandemic, with the possibility of "an increase of missing items and substitutions over the next few weeks".^[61]

FRONTLINE NURSE'S HEART-RENDING PLEA

Death is all around us.. so follow the rules

Shock report as toll hits 80,000

PRESSURE:
NHS nurse
Ameera Sheikh

See pages 4&5

11 January

- Sir [Simon Stevens](#), the chief executive of [NHS England](#), has described online videos reported to show empty hospitals as "a lie". The videos, which Stevens says are mostly filmed by people walking through empty hospital corridors, have

been used to argue claims the NHS is being overwhelmed by the pandemic are an exaggeration.^[62]

- Professor [Chris Whitty](#), England's Chief Medical Officer, says that the UK will go through the "most dangerous time" in the weeks before the deployment of COVID vaccines begin to have an impact.^[63]
- Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) confirms that 2.3 million people have now received a COVID vaccine.^[64]
- Chancellor [Rishi Sunak](#) warns the economy will "get worse before it gets better".^[65]
- Figures released by the [British Retail Consortium](#) indicate that retailers experienced their worst year of sales in 2020, with sales down by 0.3% as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.^[66]
- Supermarket retailers [Morrisons](#) and [Sainsbury's](#) announce their intention to prevent customers who refuse to wear face coverings from entering their premises; Sainsbury's will also challenge people who shop in groups.^[67]
- Eye health charity [Fight for Sight](#) warns of the damage too much screentime during lockdown could cause to people's eyesight.^[68]

Virus battle Mutations test drugmakers

A man receives Moderna's Covid-19 vaccine at a school in the Bronx borough of New York City yesterday.

As mass vaccination programmes are rolled out, pharmaceutical companies and drug regulators are preparing for a world in which rapid mutations in the coronavirus make existing inoculations less effective. Drugmakers are exploring how shots could be tweaked in response to genetic changes in the virus – as already happens with the annual flu jab.

Regulators in the US and Europe may also need to adapt in order to fast track approval for altered vaccines that have not fully undergone testing.

Vaccination megacentres page 2

Sweden changes tack page 4

Mutation threat page 7



12 January

- The [United Arab Emirates](#) is removed from the UK's quarantine exemption list, requiring anyone travelling from there to self-isolate for ten days.^[69]
- Home Secretary [Priti Patel](#) urges people to "play [their] part" in following COVID rules, and says she will back the police in enforcing them.^[70]
- [Tesco](#), [Asda](#) and [Waitrose](#) join Morrisons and Sainsbury's in banning customers from their stores who refuse to wear face coverings.^[71]



The wait for covid-19 vaccinations in Newbury and Thatcham is due to GP surgeries facing restrictions in its supply.

Last week the director of nursing at Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group, Debbie Simmons, said that a vaccination hub at Newbury Racecourse would go live this week. She added that all surgeries in Berkshire West would be live for Pfizer vaccinations by the end of this week.

One person has contacted NewburyToday saying that their 86-year-old neighbour had been told by their surgery that there were no doses of the vaccine in Newbury. Smaller surgeries such The Boathouse Surgery in Pangbourne began vaccinating patients before Christmas, while Chapel Row has been vaccinating over 75s since last week.

Director of Public Health Berkshire West Meradin Peachey previously said there had been "gaps in the system" and the complexity of the Pfizer vaccine had played a part in it not being available everywhere straight away.

Today (Monday) the Falkland Surgery in Wash Common said that surgeries were "very restricted by supply" of the vaccine. In a message to patients the surgery said: "Delivery of Covid-19 vaccinations at Newbury Racecourse is expected this week. "As only one batch of 975 vaccines will be delivered this week the first patients being invited will include Falkland surgery as part of Kennet PCN (Primary Care Network) and the the rural practices (six practices).

"We are very restricted by supply of this vaccine at present. We expect the supply to increase and then this will be shared across nine practices in the region". The vaccination hub at the racecourse has still not been officially confirmed by NHS England. Mrs Simmons told a public meeting last week that she wasn't officially meant to provide details but it's existence was public knowledge and had been reported in the press.

Newbury Racecourse said today that final preparations were being made for the hub to open later this week.

The Falkland Surgery said today that vaccination clinics will be held at the Racecourse over a period of two to three days at a time. In its statement it said: "Depending on when the vaccine is received will determine the dates of the clinic, if the vaccines are received on a Friday then clinics will be on Sat, Sun & Mon etc. We are not pre-booking appointments

until we have confirmation of the delivery dates as we do not want to cancel patient's appointments should no vaccines appear."

The surgery said that patients aged 80 and over and those clinically at risk could expect an invite once notification of the next vaccine delivery was received. "The timeline for appointment booking will be very short so we will be calling patients on the telephone to arrange appointments," It added. "Those patients will have appointments booked for a later clinic that week."

The surgery advised those in the first cohort who could not drive to the racecourse to contact family or friends to arrange transport, and said there might be an opportunity for volunteers to help. It warned against scams saying that surgery staff would not ask for bank details, and that people asked should put the phone down and report it to the police.

Finally, the surgery asked people not contact the practice to book a vaccination as "you may be disappointed".

By John Herring, NWN

13 January

- A further 1,564 COVID related deaths are recorded, the highest daily number so far, which brings the total to 84,767. The deaths are largely spread throughout the preceding week, with some dating back to November 2020.^{[72][73]}
- The [British Medical Association](#) has called for doctors to be supplied with higher grade face masks to protect them against catching COVID-19.^[74]
- Plans to introduce requirements for pre-travel COVID testing for travellers entering the UK are postponed from Friday 15 January to Monday 18 January in order to give people time to prepare for the changes.^[75]

14 January

- The UK announces a travel ban on arrivals from South America, Portugal and Cape Verde over fears of a new variant of COVID from Brazil; the travel ban comes into force from Friday 15 January.^[76]
- With fears that COVID cases could overwhelm hospital space, some care homes have said that insurance issues prevent them from taking COVID patients.^[77]
- Conservative MP [Steve Baker](#) of the [COVID Recovery Group](#) warns Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) he could face a leadership challenge if the government does not ease COVID restrictions.^[78]
- The [Conservative Party's Northern Research Group](#) urges Chancellor [Rishi Sunak](#) to extend financial help packages for families and businesses as the uncertainty over COVID continues.^[79]
- As the weekly [Clap for Heroes](#) gets under way at 8pm, NHS staff gather outside Downing Street to protest at the government's handling of the COVID crisis.^[80]

Here we go! It's V-Day launch today at Newbury Racecourse

First wave of coronavirus inoculations at vaccination hub

By John Garvey, NWN



IT may have been a while coming – but the first wave of vaccinations at Newbury Racecourse went like clockwork. Organisers said that, within days, they hope to be inoculating up to 1,500 people per day against coronavirus.

Dr James Cave of The Downland Practice at Chieveley, who was clinically overseeing the operation, said on Thursday, January 14: “We’ve got 12 pods, each dealing with five-minute vaccination appointments. We should be able to vaccinate 1,000 people today and it’s just the start. “There’s been no queueing and no waiting outside in the rain. The racecourse is a fantastic site and it’s great they’ve allowed us to use it.” Dr Cave said that, while other areas may have been earlier in opening a vaccination project, the mass vaccination programme at Newbury Racecourse was proving so efficient that it would more than compensate.

The over 80s were first in line and the first vaccine dose provides up to 70 per cent protection after two weeks. It will be followed by a second dose which confers even greater immunity. Dr Cave said: “It does not mean you can’t get coronavirus and you can still pass it on but, like the flu jab, it greatly reduces the severity of the illness. But this is a huge turning

point – vaccination is the key to the way out of this. I'd like to thank all our fabulous volunteers, too."

Among the first to be vaccinated was 94-year-old Sybil Benson from Thatcham. She said: "They contacted me on Monday and I said 'yes please!'" Mrs Benson said she was looking forward to be able to enjoy the company of her three daughters, five grandchildren and five great grandchildren safely.

One of her daughters, Pauline Holborn from Newbury, said: "We kept hearing it was going to be rolled out but nothing seemed to be happening. It moved really quickly once we got the call. It's brilliant news."

Ninety-three-year-old Betty Sopp from Henwick said: "I only got the call on Monday and here I am. It's such a relief."

The chairman of the Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group, Dr Abid Irfan, said the vaccination programme had begun with the Pfizer BioNTech vaccine and added: "We'll do 1,000 today but we should get that up to 1,500 a day, if we can get the supplies. But we'll take what we're given."

The Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine, meanwhile, is better suited to the care home vaccination programme. Dr Irfan said: "It's more stable and doesn't need reconstituting. I'm taking it to some care homes this afternoon. I'm now quite confident we will be able to get priority groups done on time. It's gone very, very smoothly today. We've managed to establish a mass vaccination site with the help of local GPs and practice managers. And all the volunteers, of course."

He urged people still waiting to be called to be patient and said: "We will contact you, so please don't inundate our phone lines. We'll get everybody booked in."

Newbury MP Laura Farris, who dropped in to the launch, said: "It's just amazing to see our most vulnerable and elderly coming here today for a life-saving vaccine. It's great to see how smoothly it's all going, with no queueing and plenty of social distancing. It's actually quite moving."

After receiving the vaccine, recipients are asked to sit quietly for 15 minutes in case of an allergic reaction. These are expected to be extremely rare and there are facilities to deal with them if they occur. Dr Cave said that, despite the early advice, people who carry an EpiPen adrenaline auto-injection can still be vaccinated. He added: "The bottom line is that, if you're allergic to a single thing like shellfish, nuts or stings, that's not a reason not to have the jab." Dr Cave advised anyone concerned to seek medical advice beforehand.

Mrs Farris told NewburyToday yesterday: "'I'm now confident there is a stream of supply arriving in West Berkshire". Mrs Farris said she had received communication from NHS England's vaccination team on future capacity. She said: "The programme team are working to bring additional vaccine centres and community pharmacy sites in West Berkshire online.

“The locations have not been confirmed, but they have been selected to ensure coverage of the population and this work is being carried out at pace to rapidly step up capacity in the coming weeks”. Mrs Farris said that challenges of transporting and storing the Pfizer vaccine had lead the three PCNs to set up a joint centre. She said: “What I understand is that the decision was made by the PCNs to join the operator site rather than offer vaccines at GP surgeries, and that was because of the challenges with the Pfizer vaccine... so they made a decision in December to go and use Newbury Racecourse as a combined site.

“My understanding is that site required approval and before Christmas we knew it was coming on on the 11th of January. “The Racecourse has to be specifically approved, it has to be made safe. You can’t just set up a venue and tell the NHS, the NHS have to have input in that venue and make sure they agree that it's safe, they have got the storage and the capacity, and the car parking and that patients can be processed safely”.

15 January

- The [R number](#) is estimated to be between 1.2 and 1.3, a fall on the previous week, with data also suggesting there are signs the number of COVID cases are beginning to fall.^[81]
- Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) announces that the UK will close all travel corridors from Monday 18 January to "protect against the risk of as yet unidentified new Covid strains", and meaning that anyone travelling to the UK will need to provide a negative COVID test before embarking on their journey.^[82]
- Following a ruling by the [Supreme Court](#), tens of thousands of small businesses will receive insurance payments covering losses accrued during the [first lockdown of March 2020](#).^[83]
- The [Independent Press Standards Organisation](#) (IPSO) orders [The Daily Telegraph](#) to publish a correction over a "significantly misleading" column written by [Toby Young](#) in July 2020, which claimed the [common cold](#) can provide "natural immunity" to COVID-19 and London was "probably approaching herd immunity".^[84]

<p>NEWS</p> <p>German vaccinators play the name game</p> <p>German vaccination authorities have been forced to guess people's ages based on their first names because of privacy laws. Authorities in Lower Saxony wanted to send vaccination invitations to all residents over 80 but have been blocked from using official records and have resorted to guessing. As a result, a 25-year-old with a name considered old-fashioned, such as Wolfgang or Waltraud, is more likely to receive a letter than an 85-year-old called Michael or Angela. <i>Page 8</i></p>	<p>NEWS</p> <p>Taste of honey alters as UK wildflowers die out</p> <p>The taste of British honey has changed over the past 60 years, with bees becoming more reliant on agricultural crops as native wildflowers die out. Scientists examined samples of honey from around the country for particles of pollen which show what the bees were eating, mirroring a 1952 study which found that their main food sources were clover and heather. The study found that honey bees were increasingly shifting their diets to feed on oilseed rape and Himalayan balsam. <i>Page 11</i></p>	<p>WORLD</p> <p>Republicans still loyal to Trump, poll shows</p> <p>Fewer than one in five Republicans believe Donald Trump should be removed from office, according to a new poll, which shows the depth of support the US president has among the party faithful, despite his recent impeachment. The Ipsos Mori/ Axios survey, conducted between Monday and Wednesday, also found that 57 per cent of Republicans want Mr Trump to be the party's presidential nominee at the next election in 2024. <i>Page 13</i></p>	<p>BUSINESS</p> <p>Facebook advertisers cut back after riots</p> <p>Facebook's top 100 US advertisers slashed spending on the social media site by almost \$10million (£7.3million) after violence erupted at the US Capitol amid a growing backlash over the power of big tech. A host of major names including Microsoft, PayPal, Starbucks, Nestle and Nissan froze or cut their spending in the seven days from Jan 6, according to data firm Pathmatics. It helped drag top firms' overall Facebook spend down by as much as 43 per cent year on year. <i>Business, page 1</i></p>
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16 January

- Groups representing medics, including the [British Medical Association](#), have called for legal protection for doctors and nurses who make decisions on treatment during the COVID-19 pandemic.^[87]
- Groups representing the UK aviation industry have said it "urgently" needs support if it is to survive losses brought about by the COVID pandemic.^[88]
- Epidemiologist Professor [Neil Ferguson](#) describes a new [Brazilian strain of COVID](#) as a "real cause for concern".^[89]
- UK holiday firms forecast a boom in "[staycations](#)" during 2021 once COVID restrictions are lifted.^[90]
- Figures released by the [Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel](#) have shown that incidents of child abuse increased by a quarter during the first lockdown that began in March 2020.^[91]



17 January

- Although places of worship are allowed to open for services during the present lockdowns in England and Wales, more than half of the [Church of England](#)'s 14,000 parishes do not open for Sunday services due to safety concerns.^[92]
- The [Health and Safety Executive](#) (HSE) expresses its concern about employees being required to go into workplaces that are not COVID-compliant after it received 2,945 complaints about safety issues during the week of 6–14 January.^[93]
- Foreign Secretary [Dominic Raab](#) tells the BBC a decision on whether to extend the weekly £20 increase in [Universal Credit](#) is unlikely before the [March budget](#).^[94]
- With 3.5 million COVID vaccines given, 324,000 in the last 24 hours, Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) says the UK is "nearly on the home straight".^[95]
- [Nadhim Zahawi](#), the Minister for Vaccine Deployment, says that the UK is averaging 140 vaccinations a minute.^[96] Hancock says that half of those aged 80 and over have received a COVID vaccine.^[97]

18 January

- The number of people receiving a COVID vaccine exceeds four million.^[98]
- The [House of Commons](#) votes 278–0 to pass a non-binding motion calling for the government to extend the £20 Universal Credit top up beyond 31 March.^[99]
- Figures show that cases of COVID-19 have fallen by a quarter over the preceding week.^[100]

19 January

- A further 1,610 COVID-related deaths are reported, the largest number reported in a single day, taking the total past 90,000 to 91,470.^{[101][102]} The figures do not represent the number of deaths on a particular day, but the number recorded by the government on a particular day, and some occurred previously.^[103]
- Health data shows that the number of COVID cases has fallen by 26.7% over the preceding week.^[104]
- [GOV.uk](#) confirms that 4.06 million people have received their first dose of COVID vaccine, with half of those aged over 80 having been vaccinated.^[105]
- Figures from the [Office for National Statistics](#) suggest that one in ten had been infected with COVID in the period from the beginning of the outbreak up to December 2020.^{[106][107]}
- Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) announces he is self-isolating after receiving an alert from [NHS COVID-19](#) telling him he has come into contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19.^[108]
- A number of criminal justice watchdogs have expressed "grave concerns" over the backlog of cases in England and Wales, where 54,000 cases are waiting to be heard. This means cases from 2020 may not be heard until 2022, and there are fears it could damage the justice system for a number of years.^[109]

20 January

- A further 1,820 deaths are reported of people who died within 28 days of testing positive for COVID-19, the highest daily figure so far, and bringing the total to 93,290. The high number is due to delays in reporting some deaths; at least a quarter of those recorded on this date occurred during the preceding week or earlier.^{[110][111]}
- A video obtained by the politics website [Guido Fawkes](#) shows Home Secretary [Priti Patel](#) telling a group of Conservative supporters she was an "advocate" of closing the UK borders in March 2020 as a way of slowing the spread of COVID-19.^[112]
- Travel operator [Saga](#) announces that anyone going on one of its cruises in 2021 must be vaccinated against COVID-19.^[113]

**Bizarre 4-year
nightmare that
Trump was Prez..**

**..and that he might
pardon nutcase Joe
Exotic later today..**

**..but it's all over
now. There there!
Back to bed. Shhh**

**WELL,
THAT
WAS A
WEIRD
DREAM!**



■ by CHRISTOPHER BUCKTIN
HOW frightening... we
had a horrible dream the
very fabric of democracy
was ripped apart by a
narcissistic loon in the
good old US of A.
Luckily, we woke up
today and it was all over.
Full story: Pages 4-5

21 January

- A further 1,290 deaths are reported within 28 days of testing positive for COVID-19.^[114]
- The latest vaccination figures indicate that almost five million people have received their first dose of COVID vaccine.^[115]
- At a [Downing Street](#) Press Conference, Home Secretary [Priti Patel](#) announces that fines of £800 for anyone attending a house party of more than 15 people will be introduced in England from the following week.^[116]

- Figures released by the [Crown Prosecution Service](#) (CPS) show that a quarter of COVID-related crimes in the first six months of the pandemic were made up of assaults against emergency workers.^[117]

22 January

- The [R number](#) is estimated to be between 0.8 and 1, meaning the epidemic is shrinking, while [Office for National Statistics](#) suggest infection levels have either plateaued or are beginning to decline.^[118]
- At a Downing Street press conference, Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) says early evidence suggests the [new COVID variant discovered in the UK](#) may have a higher mortality rate, but that there is huge uncertainty over the figures and vaccination is expected to work.^[119]
- The release date of the 25th James Bond film, [No Time to Die](#), is delayed for a third time because of the COVID outbreak, and will now debut on 8 October 2021.^[120]

23 January

- After Prime Minister Boris Johnson suggested the [new variant of COVID](#) may be associated with higher mortality, scientists have played down his comments, with the co-author of a study cited by Johnson saying the strain's greater deadliness remains an "open question".^[121]
- Figures released by the UK government suggest the number of COVID patients on ventilators has passed 4,000 for the first time in the pandemic, with a total of 4,076 on ventilation the previous day.^[122]
- The [British Medical Association](#) has called for the time between the first and second doses of [Pfizer BioNTech vaccine](#) to be halved from twelve to six weeks, describing the twelve week gap as "difficult to justify".^[123]
- A total of 6,329,968 doses of COVID vaccine have now been administered, with 5.8 million people having received their first dose. But England's Deputy Chief Medical Officer [Jonathan Van Tam](#) urges people to stick with the restrictions amid concerns people who have received the vaccine may stop following them.^[124]

24 January

- Speaking to [Sky News](#), Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) says he would hope for schools to be open again by Easter, but whether they do or not will depend on the data.^[125]
- Figures show that 491,970 first vaccinations were administered over the most recent 24-hour period, the highest daily figure to date, bringing the total number so far to 6.3 million.^[126]
- Figures show that British employers made plans to cut 795,000 jobs during 2020 because of lockdown, but that job losses slowed towards the end of the year.^[127]
- Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) announces that 77 cases of the [South African variant of COVID](#) have been identified in the UK.^[128]

- The [Public and Commercial Services Union](#) urges ministers to act after figures reveal that 500 people at the [DVLA](#) in Swansea have contracted COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic.^[129]

The battle of Pushkin Square



Supporters of jailed opposition leader Alexei Navalny are beaten back by special police units in Pushkin Square, Moscow, yesterday in a series of protests across cities in Russia, with thousands arrested. (See pages 30-31.) Maxim Shipenkov/EPA

25 January

- A further 32 mass vaccination centres are confirmed as opening in the forthcoming week.^[130]
- [Labour](#) leader [Keir Starmer](#) announces he's self isolating after a recent contact tested positive for Covid-19.^[131]
- [Hays Travel](#) announces the closure of 89 of its 353 shops after business was affected by national restrictions.^[132]



Lockdown on ice A covering of snow brought crowds to Primrose Hill in north London yesterday, but police warned fun-seekers not to break "bubble" rules. Page 3

26 January

- A further 1,631 deaths reported within 28 days of a positive COVID diagnosis take the total number of deaths recorded by the government past 100,000 to 100,162, ^[134] though figures released by the [Office for National Statistics](#) suggest the 100,000 figure was surpassed in the week to 15 January, when the cumulative number reached 104,000. ^[135]
- England's Chief Medical officer, Professor [Chris Whitty](#), suggests the number of daily deaths is likely to come down "relatively slowly". ^[136]
- The Opposition [Labour Party](#) calls for juries in [England and Wales](#) to be cut from twelve members to seven in order to clear the backlog of what it describes as the "gravest crisis" in the legal system since the Second World War. ^[137]

Moderna launches vaccine trials to tackle new coronavirus strain

◆ Jobs less effective on S Africa variant ◆ Merck ends Covid programme ◆ Tensions over supply

The number of lab-confirmed coronavirus cases in West Berkshire now stands at 5,182 - an increase of 38 in the past 24 hours. West Berkshire's seven-day rolling rate per 100,000 population to January 21 is 274.5, with 435 cases in the seven days to January 21. The rate is calculated by dividing the seven-day count by the area population and multiplying by 100,000.

The Government dashboard says that 6,853,327 people nationally had received a first vaccine dose as of January 25, with 472,446 having a second dose up to this date.

There is currently no breakdown for vaccination numbers by NHS Trust.

The total number of lab-confirmed cases in the UK is now 3,689,746, while the daily number of lab-confirmed cases is 20,089. Daily reported Covid-19 deaths are measured across the UK as deaths that occurred within 28 days of the first laboratory-confirmed positive test. The total number of coronavirus-related deaths in the UK within 28 days of a positive test is 100,162.

The daily number of deaths within the 28-day range is 1,631. The number of deaths with Covid-19 on the death certificate is 103,602 as of Friday, January 15.

27 January

- Communities Secretary [Robert Jenrick](#) says the government would almost certainly have handled the pandemic differently with the benefit of hindsight. [\[137\]](#)
- Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) tells the House of Commons it will not be possible for schools to return in England after February half-term, but that he is hopeful it can begin to happen from 8 March. A final decision will depend on meeting vaccination targets, and schools will get two weeks notice before returning. [\[138\]](#)
- People travelling to the UK from countries considered to be COVID hotspots will be required to quarantine in government hotels, it is announced, while anyone wishing to travel abroad will need to prove that they are making an essential trip. Policing will also be increased at air and seaports. [\[139\]](#)
- An [Office for National Statistics](#) study indicates that coughing, fatigue, a sore throat and muscle pain may be more common in people who test positive for the [new UK variant of COVID](#). [\[140\]](#)
- Ahead of an expected visit to Scotland by Boris Johnson, First Minister of Scotland [Nicola Sturgeon](#) suggests he should not make the trip as it is not classed as essential travel. [\[141\]](#)

28 January

- After the [European Union](#) urges [AstraZeneca](#) to supply it with doses of vaccine from UK plants following a row with the EU over supplies, Cabinet Office Minister [Michael Gove](#) says there "will be no interruption" to UK vaccine supplies. [\[142\]](#)
- Large scale UK trials of the [Novavax vaccine](#) show it to be 89.9% efficient, and also effective against new variants of the virus. [\[143\]](#)
- The United Arab Emirates, Burundi and Rwanda are added to the UK's "red list" of countries from where travel to the UK is banned, and takes effect from 1.00pm on Friday 29 January. [\[144\]](#)
- [Public Health England](#) and Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) give their backing to the [Oxford–AstraZeneca vaccine](#) after Germany recommends it should only be given to people aged 65 and under. PHE describes it as offering "high levels of protection" while Johnson says he is not concerned by Germany's comments. [\[145\]](#)
- The UK government withdraws a social media stay home advert because it was deemed to be sexist; the ad shows women home schooling children and doing domestic chores, while the only male featured is seen relaxing on a sofa. [\[146\]](#)

- Figures show that fines for COVID breaches have increased by a third in the latest lockdown.^[147]
- A saliva COVID test developed by LampORE has shown promising results in detecting the virus, and could soon be offered to the public.^[148]

29 January

- Trials of the single-dose [Janssen COVID-19 vaccine](#), of which the UK has ordered 60 million doses, have indicated it to be 66% effective, the Belgian pharmaceutical firm [Janssen](#) confirms.^[149]
- Office for National Statistics figures have suggested the level of COVID cases remained stable in the week up to 23 January, and may have even fallen slightly.^[150]
- The [R number](#) is estimated to be between 0.7 and 1.1, but the [Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies](#) (SAGE) warns COVID levels are still "dangerously high".^[151]
- Amid an ongoing row over vaccine shortfalls in the [European Union](#), the [European Commission](#) announces the introduction of controls on vaccines made in the bloc, including to Northern Ireland. Responding to the announcement, Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) says the EU must "urgently clarify its intentions",^[152] while First Minister [Arlene Foster](#) describes the move as "an incredible act of hostility".^[153] The Commission later reverses the decision, which overrides the [Northern Ireland Protocol](#) element of the [Brexit Agreement](#), and says that Northern Ireland will not be affected.^[152]
- [ITV](#) postpones the next series of [Britain's Got Talent](#) until 2022 amid concerns over safety during the COVID outbreak.

30 January

- Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) writes an open letter praising parents for the way they have coped during the pandemic, telling him he is "in awe" of them.^[157]
- Cabinet Office Minister [Michael Gove](#) says he is "confident" vaccine supplies and the UK's vaccine programme can continue as planned, and that the EU "made a mistake" by triggering emergency provisions in the [Brexit agreement](#).^[158]
- The latest government figures indicate that 8.9 million people have received their first COVID vaccine, with two thirds of those aged 75–79 having received the vaccine, and five out of six of those over 80 having done so.^[159]
- Figures published by the [Department of Health and Social Care](#) estimate that measures such as lockdown taken to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic could lead to a further 100,000 non-COVID deaths. These deaths could be from missed cancer operations, job losses and people struggling with their mental health during lockdown, the figures suggest.^[160]

Fury at Macron's attack on Oxford jab

French president accused of making 'untrue' claims as Brussels blocks doses in Ireland

By Harry Yorke, Lucy Fisher and Sarah Knappton

EMMANUEL MACRON was last night accused of making "nonsense" and "untrue" claims about the Oxford-AstraZeneca jab that risked undermining public confidence in the UK's vaccine programme.

Senior Conservative MPs and scientists have accused the French president of failing to understand the science after he claimed that the vaccine "doesn't work as expected" and appeared to be "quasi-ineffective" in over-65s.

Mr Macron also criticised the UK's decision to give doses 12 weeks apart, claiming this could "accelerate the mutations" of the virus. He was speaking hours before the European Medicines Agency (EMA) approved the AstraZeneca vaccine for use, stating that it could be used "in older adults".

It was the latest salvo in the extraordinary row between the EU and UK over vaccines, and came as Brussels effectively created a hard border on the island of Ireland, blocking vaccines from passing from the Republic into Northern Ireland by triggering Article 16 in the Northern Ireland Protocol.

Downing Street last night said it was "urgently seeking an explanation" from the European Commission in response to the announcement, part of wider moves by the EU to control exports and allow member states to block vaccines destined for third-party countries.

Speaking in Paris yesterday afternoon, Mr Macron said of the AstraZeneca jab: "We're waiting for the EMA results, but today everything points to thinking it is quasi-ineffective on people older than 65, some say those 60 years or older."

Sir John Bell, regius chair of medicine at the University of Oxford who led

7,891,184
VACCINE
FIRST DOSE

478,254
VACCINE
SECOND DOSE

Brussels sparks anger with border plan for Ireland to limit export of vaccines

GEORGE PARKER — LONDON
ARTHUR BEESLEY — DUBLIN
MICHAEL PEEL AND SAM FLEMING
BRUSSELS

Tensions between the EU and Britain escalated sharply yesterday as the bloc raised the prospect of a ban on exports of vaccines to the UK — failing to tell London the plan could include border restrictions on the island of Ireland.

Brussels announced tighter export controls that could let EU member states block sales abroad of vaccines to countries including the UK, US and Japan.

In an incendiary move, the European Commission said the controls would apply to trade from the Irish Republic into Northern Ireland, in effect creating the border that Brexit negotiations had intended to avoid. Politicians in Dublin, London and Belfast expressed alarm over Brussels' decision to trigger an

override mechanism in the Northern Ireland protocol to the Brexit treaty — just weeks after the UK's departure from the single market.

Irish prime minister Micheál Martin raised the matter directly with European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen last night.

Michael Gove, cabinet office minister, called European Commission vice-president Maros Sefcovic to express concern. Arlene Foster, Northern Ireland's first minister, condemned the move as an "incredible act of hostility".

The Commission said the move was justified to "avert serious societal difficulties", as lack of supply of jabs "threatened to disturb the orderly implementation" of vaccinations across the EU.

The new regulations refer to EU delivery shortfalls by "certain vaccine manufacturers" — an apparent reference to

Barnier tells EU to step back from vaccine war

Brussels U-turn over jabs crossing N Ireland border

Bruno Waterfield Brussels
Francis Elliott Political Editor
Oliver Wright Policy Editor

Michel Barnier, the EU's chief Brexit negotiator, has told *The Times* that he wants Brussels to step back from a deepening row with Britain over the shortage of vaccines in Europe.

His intervention came as Brussels was forced to backtrack last night over

to show solidarity. Reciprocally. In the fight against terrorism, climate change, financial crises, disasters.

In other developments:

● There were 29,079 cases of Covid-19 recorded, with the seven-day average down 29.5 per cent week on week, and a further 1,245 deaths, with the weekly average down 3.4 per cent.

● The vaccine programme is already easing the pandemic in Britain with

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the dispute between AstraZeneca and Brussels, where officials have queried whether supplies were sent to the UK.

But while the spat between the drug-maker and bloc continues, EU regulators yesterday approved the Oxford/AstraZeneca jab — even as Germany and France expressed concern about its effectiveness for the over-65s.

The EU wants AstraZeneca to divert production from its UK plants. Britain's reply that the company's UK plants supply British citizens has been criticised by EU politicians. Didier Reynders, justice commissioner, said: "Maybe the UK wants to start a vaccine war."

Football transfers hit page 2
Johnson rejects flag waving page 3
J&J efficacy rate page 4
Europe's vaccine turmoil page 6
Has pandemic burnt out in India page 9
FT View page 10

31 January

- This date marks one year since the United Kingdom recorded its first domestic cases of COVID-19. [\[161\]](#)
- The latest figures show that 598,389 people received their first COVID vaccination on 30 January, the highest daily figure so far, bringing the number vaccinated so far to 8,977,329. [\[162\]](#)[\[163\]](#)
- Fundraiser and World War II veteran [Captain Sir Tom Moore](#) is admitted to hospital after testing positive for COVID-19. [\[164\]](#)[\[165\]](#)
- Following the [COVID vaccine dispute](#), [AstraZeneca](#) agrees to supply the European Union with an extra nine million doses of its vaccine during the first quarter of 2021. [\[166\]](#)[\[167\]](#)

1 February

- Health Secretary [Matt Hancock](#) confirms that around 80,000 residents over the age of 16 in areas of Surrey, London, Kent, Hertfordshire, Southport and Walsall are to be asked to take tests for the [South African COVID-19 variant](#) after 11 cases were identified that could not be linked to travel.^[168]
- Prime Minister [Boris Johnson](#) confirms he will outline details for easing restrictions on 22 February, and says he is "optimistic" that people will be able to have summer holidays in 2021.^[169] But he warns that although there are signs lockdown is working, it is too early to "take your foot off the throat of the beast" by easing restrictions.^[170]
- The [Isle of Man government](#) lifts lockdown restrictions after the island has 20 days without any COVID cases. Shops, pubs and restaurants are allowed to reopen, while social distancing rules are scrapped. The Isle of Man is the only part of the British Isles to be free of COVID regulations.^[171]

2 February

RACE TO TRACE MUTANT STRAIN

By [Shaun Wooller](#)
and [Eleanor Hayward](#)

A FRANTIC bid to contain a mutant coronavirus strain was launched last night.

With the mass vaccine drive at risk, specialist teams will go door to door to test 80,000 people in areas where the more contagious variant is thought to be spreading. Scientists fear the South African strain may be able to evade vaccines and stressed that anyone who suspects they

Door-to-door tests for thousands in battle to eradicate South African virus in Britain

could be infected should self-isolate immediately. Health officials have identified 11 individuals who tested positive for the strain despite having no known links to foreign travel.

This suggests there may be hundreds more unidentified infections. Matt Hancock called for residents in the eight

affected areas in England to stay home and take 'extra special precautions'.

'We need to come down on it hard and we will,' warned the Health Secretary.

A briefing document described the plan as 'a two-week sprint' ordered by Mr Hancock in 'an attempt at eradication of the new variant if at all possi-

ble'. Labour said the development was deeply worrying and showed that quarantine controls for international arrivals were not working.

As the number of Britons given vaccine jabs reached 9.8million:

■ Boris Johnson hailed signs that the

Turn to Page 4

22 February

BBC report - The data from Public Health England (PHE) and Public Health Scotland (PHS) has been published on the day the government in England has set out its roadmap for lifting restrictions.

The research was carried out separately in the two nations, but both studies involved tracking those who had been vaccinated and comparing them against people who had not been.

The PHS study found that, by the fourth week after the first dose of either the Pfizer or AstraZeneca vaccines, the risk of being admitted to hospital had been reduced by 81%. It was slightly higher when younger age groups were included.

Lead researcher Prof Aziz Sheikh said the results were "very, very" impressive and both vaccines were working "spectacularly".

"These results are very encouraging and have given us great reasons to be optimistic for the future," he added.

23 February

Four steps to freedom

PM says more deaths inevitable as he reveals roadmap for England to leave lockdown - starting with mass return to school

MAR	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
8 at earliest	12 at earliest	17 at earliest	21 at earliest
<ul style="list-style-type: none">» All school pupils go back in England, with face masks mandatory at secondary level» Meet one other person socially in park for picnic» Care home residents can see one visitor» From 29 March, 'Rule of Six' gatherings allowed outdoors including in private gardens, 'stay at home rule' becomes 'stay local', and outdoor sports permitted	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» All shops, gyms, hairdressers, libraries and swimming pools can open» Pub beer gardens and restaurants reopen for outdoor, seated service only» UK holidays allowed for single households in self-contained lets» Outdoor venues like zoos and theme parks open» All university students hope to find out when they can return	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Rule of Six scrapped outdoors, new limit of 30» Six people or two households can meet indoors» Indoor hospitality opens, including pubs, restaurants, cinemas, hotels, B&Bs, museums» Sports venues allowed limited fans, theatres get reduced capacity» Possible return of international travel» Weddings with up to 30 people	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» All legal limits on social contact are removed» Remaining hospitality reopens» Large events and performances could restart with full crowds - offering potential for summer festivals and concerts» Theatres allowed full capacity and nightclubs reopen» No limits on people attending weddings and funerals

The End