

# Government to safeguard vital Great Britain-Northern Ireland air links

- £5.7 million government investment will protect Great Britain-Northern Ireland air passenger flights
- vital routes safeguarded for transporting critical workers
- funding also recently announced to support ferry freight services across the UK

Air passenger services between Great Britain and Northern Ireland will be safeguarded through a £5.7 million government investment, announced today by Transport Secretary Grant Shapps.

The funding will ensure lifeline services are maintained, protecting key air links across the Union which are vital for connecting critical workers and ensuring that those who need to travel at this time can continue to do so.

The package is being funded by the UK government and the Northern Ireland Executive and will temporarily support airlines and airports that are currently operating, allowing them to continue running air passenger services along 2 routes from Belfast City, and City of Derry, to London during the coronavirus pandemic.

The package will:

- maintain 2 lifeline passenger services (Derry-Londonderry to London and Belfast to London)
- IAG Group (Aer Lingus) will maintain the Belfast to London route which would be at risk without financial assistance given low passenger numbers
- Belfast City Airport will provide airport services for the flight to and from London
- increased subsidies to Loganair to continue operating the City of Derry Airport (LDY) to London route
- support for City of Derry Airport to continue to provide airport services for this route

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

Maintaining air links between Great Britain and Northern Ireland is vital. We must ensure that critical workers can continue to fly over the Irish Sea, and today's investment in these lifeline services guarantees that.

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Brandon Lewis MP said:

Today's announcement is great news for people and businesses in

Northern Ireland, it means that crucial air services to and from London, Belfast City Airport and City of Derry Airport will be safeguarded, thanks to this multi-million pound government support package.

Alongside the recent £17 million support package the UK government announced to ensure essential ferry routes were maintained, this additional commitment to safeguard the connectivity of the entire United Kingdom will guarantee the continued supply of critical goods, such as food and medical supplies and ensure key workers are able to carry out their roles.

The UK government has promised to do everything in its power to defeat coronavirus and to protect people, jobs and livelihoods across the United Kingdom. As part of our efforts, we have been working closely with the Northern Ireland Executive and the Department for the Economy to deliver this new air connectivity support package and we will continue to work closely with them in the weeks and months ahead as we tackle this pandemic.

Northern Ireland's Infrastructure Minister Nichola Mallon said:

I am delighted that I and my executive colleagues have worked together with the British Government to secure this critical package of support of £5.7 million for City of Derry Airport (CODA) and Belfast City Airport (BCA) to help with their operating costs when so much of their business has been affected by the impact of the COVID-19 virus. This assistance will also provide financial aid to keep the remaining flights operating out of CODA and BCA during this difficult time.

Our airports have been badly affected by the dramatic drop in passenger numbers but, like me, they recognise the need to keep our island connected. This is a unique payment that will offer much needed support in the short term during the crisis. I wish to express my thanks to CODA and BCA who offer routes for essential travel and to Belfast International who keep our air freight moving. Working with Executive colleagues I will continue to do all I can to protect our people and businesses as we get through and recover from this crisis.

In addition to the funding announced today, the UK government also recently announced a [£17 million package to safeguard vital sea routes between Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#), helping ensure critical freight and essential supplies continue to move across the Union.

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# Government pledges £16 million to rescue Rugby League

The Rugby Football League (RFL) will receive a £16 million cash injection to safeguard the immediate future of the sport for the communities it serves, the Government has announced.

The emergency loan will help the sport deal with the extreme financial impact of the coronavirus outbreak while the season remains suspended, due to social distancing measures.

It comes ahead of England hosting the Rugby League World Cup next year, which will see the men's, women's and wheelchair games come together for a world first on the sport's biggest stage. The Government's manifesto included a commitment to delivering a successful tournament, with significant financial support already provided.

Oliver Dowden, Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, said:

This is a massive shot in the arm to secure the survival of Rugby League.

We recognise that many RFL clubs operate on very tight financial margins. Without their ability to stage matches with spectators and despite the Government's extensive economic package, the professional game has come very close to collapsing.

From my first sports visit as Secretary of State to Leigh Centurions, I could see how important these clubs are to the communities they serve. They are the beating heart of their towns and cities, and their impact goes far beyond what happens on the pitch.

Sports across the board are facing unprecedented pressures, and we are supporting them through wider Government measures. In this case we are intervening as an exception, not to save an individual business or organisation, but to protect an entire sport, the community it supports, the World Cup held here next year and its legacy for generations to come.

Many Rugby League clubs have well-established charitable programmes in their communities, and have adapted these to help the vulnerable during the coronavirus pandemic. For example, Hull FC and Cheshire's West Bank Bears have delivered food parcels to elderly people who are self-isolating, while players from Widnes Vikings and Warrington Wolves have been calling supporters to build connections and check in on their wellbeing.

The RFL will administer this funding, in partnership with Sport England and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. All RFL Super League, Championship and League 1 clubs based in England are eligible to apply. Further details on when the fund will open and how clubs can apply will be announced by the RFL in due course.

Steve Barclay, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, said:

Rugby League is a sport that makes a significant social impact in the communities it serves, which is even more important now as we respond to the economic pressures resulting from Covid-19.

The timing of the Rugby League World Cup next year will also be a fantastic opportunity to build on the sport's strong track record within these communities, and is an opportunity that this Government's support will ensure is delivered.

Ralph Rimmer, Chief Executive of the Rugby Football League, said:

The RFL is grateful to the Government for understanding and acting on the case for the whole sport.

In these very tough times for the country and huge demands on Government, this is confirmation of why Rugby League is important – our USP – the sport's significant social impact in Northern communities in particular.

Rugby League is not a wealthy sport but is rich in the things that matter most – outstanding sporting and life chances in often disadvantaged communities. The effects of lockdown at the start of our season genuinely threatened the survival of our clubs at all levels and their ability to continue delivering those positive social and economic impacts.

This support enables the sport to survive, to reshape and to be ready to restart in this our 125th year. And to look to a home World Cup next year and a legacy for our communities.

Watching and playing sport together, including Rugby League, has a role to play in the nation's recovery. We are part of that national sporting landscape. In the meantime, we continue to work at the heart of our communities, helping wherever we can.

The 2021 Rugby League World Cup is to be hosted predominantly in the North of England with the wheelchair final hosted in Liverpool and the men's and women's finals being hosted at Old Trafford, Manchester.

ENDS

## Notes to Editor

The Rugby League World Cup will take place between 23 October – 27 November 2021.

The tournament will take place at venues in Bolton, Coventry, Doncaster, Hull, Kirklees, Leeds, Liverpool, London, Manchester, Newcastle, Sheffield, St Helens, Tees Valley, Trafford, Warrington, Wigan and Leigh, and York.

The wheelchair final will take place at the M&S Bank Arena in Liverpool on 26 November. The women's and men's Finals will take place at Old Trafford in Manchester on 27 November.

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## [New virtual cyber school gives teens chance to try out as cyber security agents from home](#)

- Teens can learn how to crack codes, fix security flaws and dissect criminals' digital trails
- Comes as National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) launches CyberFirst summer courses online

Thousands of young people are being offered the chance to join a [virtual cyber security school](#) as part of plans to make sure the country develops the next generation of professional cyber defenders.

At a time when schools remain closed to most children, the online initiative aims to inspire future talent to work in the cyber security sector and give students a variety of extracurricular activities to do from the safety of their homes.

Teens can learn how to crack codes, fix security flaws and dissect criminals' digital trails while progressing through the game as a cyber agent. This will help them develop important skills needed for future jobs, particularly in cyber security.

The school provides free weekly webinars run by industry experts teaching fundamental security disciplines such as digital forensics, cryptography and operating systems.

Digital Infrastructure Minister Matt Warman said:

This new initiative will give teenagers something fun and educational to do from home and provide them with a glimpse into the life of a cyber security professional.

We have a world-leading cyber sector which plays a crucial role protecting the country and our digital economy, so it is absolutely vital we continue to inspire the next generation of tech talent to help maintain the UK's strong position.

The move comes as the government announces a number of other online training courses to give UK school pupils the opportunity to learn and develop cyber security skills, this includes the launch of the National Cyber Security Centre's (NCSC) hugely popular [CyberFirst summer courses](#). The courses are moving online this year to help more than a thousand 14 to 17-year-olds develop important cyber skills from home during the coronavirus pandemic.

NCSC Chief Executive Officer Ciaran Martin said:

Technology is helping us all cope with the coronavirus crisis and is playing an essential role in keeping our businesses moving and our society connected.

It has never been more important for our young people to keep engaged and learn how to protect our digital world – and I'm delighted to see our instructor led CyberFirst summer courses made available online.

Enrolled students will learn how to code and carry out cybersecurity operations in an instructor-led virtual classroom to help guide the students through the programme and build a sense of camaraderie within each cohort.

The National Crime Agency and Cyber Security Challenge UK will also this week announce teenagers can access their online cyber skills platform [CyberLand](#) for free during the coming months. In the game designed to teach teenagers the fundamentals of cyber security, players protect the virtual city 'CyberLand' from cyber attacks while learning key skills.

Deputy Director at the NCA's National Cyber Crime Unit Jim Stokley said:

Many young people have a keen interest in technology and have developed impressive cyber skills.

The virtual cyber school and CyberFirst programmes are great initiatives which will support this next generation of cyber defenders in realising their potential.

We've also partnered with Cyber Security Challenge UK to offer free access to their online platform Cyberland where young people will find games that encourage them to improve cyber skills safely and legally.

Computer science teacher & EdTech evangelist Mark Martin said:

This is a great initiative to encourage young people to consider future careers in cyber security and see that they can have a tech job keeping people safe online.

The virtual cyber school will help students learn valuable skills needed to work in the industry in a fun and entertaining way. I encourage teachers to share these programmes with their students as a productive activity to do in their spare time from home.

Cyber Discovery provider SANS Chief Technology Officer James Lyne said:

Cyber security is a fascinating field packed with opportunities for innovation and to make the online world more secure. It spans every part of society and has a huge role in our future security and technology prospects as a nation.

This is your chance to learn how to 'forensicate' like a digital Sherlock Holmes, close down vulnerabilities before the hackers find them, and break codes.

Teachers, parents, students – get online and take advantage of this wonderful opportunity amidst the unique and challenging situation our country faces right now.

CyberFirst provider QA Chairman Sir Charlie Mayfield said:

These initiatives from NCSC and DCMS are set to deliver a great summer of learning for young people across the UK. There is a shortage of digital skills in the UK and the CyberFirst programmes tackle this issue head on – and have the added benefit of keeping young minds active at this difficult time.

The road to the UK's economic recovery from this pandemic will be built on the skills we learn at this time. That's why it was critical that initiatives like CyberFirst were pivoted to virtual delivery, so they could go ahead as planned. We are proud to partner with the NCSC to deliver these fully virtual training programmes.

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[\*\*Panama City hotels during coronavirus\*\*](#)

## (COVID-19)

World news story

This page provides details of hotels in Panama City, to help British people find accommodation so that they are ready to take their flight to the UK.



Due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Panama is currently under a state of emergency, and quarantine measures are in place.

The British Embassy in Panama recommends that British people taking flights back to the UK during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic should arrive in Panama City the day before their flight. This will help to avoid last minute delays.

The Embassy suggests these hotels and hostels as options in Panama City. Other accommodation options may be available. You should book ahead and research the accommodation you choose. The Embassy cannot be held responsible for hotel/hostel conditions.

<b>Hotel</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Telephone</b>
W Hotel	Aquilino de la Guardia & Calle 50	+507 302-7555
Waldorf Hotel	47th Street & Calle Uruguay	+507 294-8000
Hilton Hotel	Balboa Avenue	+507 280-8000

Hotel	Address	Telephone
Las Americas Golden Tower	Calle 53 Este, Marbella	+507 370-4600
Hard Rock Hotel	Ave. Balboa, Mall Multicentro	+507 380-1111
Radisson Decapolis	Ave. Balboa, Mall Multicentro	+507 215-5000
The Bristol Hotel	49th Street East, Panama	+507 264-0000
Hotel Marbella	Calle D, Panama City	+507 263-2220
The Magnolia Inn	8th Street East, Casco Viejo	+507 202-0872
The Mostros Hostel	Calle 54 Este, Marbella	+507 3966570
Blu Hostel	Dr. Alberto Navarro St. between Augusto Samuel Boyd and Eric del Valle, El Cangrejo, Panama City	+507 391-1119; 6375-9597
Zebulo Hostel	Calle Abel Bravo, Panama City	+ 507 831-1805; 6328-5302

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## [PM recognises Captain Tom as neighbourhood 'Point of Light'](#)

Captain Tom Moore, who has famously raised £30million for the NHS by walking over 100 laps of his garden, has been named a Point of Light winner by Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

The Prime Minister wrote to the inspirational veteran to give him the award and to mark his 100th birthday, one of many accolades Captain Tom, or the newly appointed Colonel Tom, has been given to celebrate his incredible achievement. He has also been appointed as the first Honorary Colonel of the Army Foundation College in Harrogate, re-presented with his Second World War Defence Medal which he had previously misplaced and today, two flypasts took place by Army Air Corps helicopters and the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.

In his letter to Captain Tom, the Prime Minister said:

Every day, I write to someone in our country to thank them for their service to others and to recognise them as a Point of Light in our lives. No-one epitomises a Point of Light more than you.

You have touched our hearts, lifted our spirits and enabled millions to show their support for the wonderful men and women of our unique NHS. Because of their extraordinary courage and dedication our country will get through this difficult time and, in doing so, fulfil your optimism that tomorrow will indeed be a

better day.

Captain Tom is among the first of many neighbourhood heroes to be celebrated by the Points of Light Award scheme. 32-year-old Becky Wass from Falmouth has also been commended by Prime Minister after creating a postcard campaign to safely offer help to vulnerable neighbours during the coronavirus outbreak.

Becky's postcards allow neighbours to offer support while still socially distancing by buying items for others during essential shopping trips, posting mail during daily exercise sessions, or making a friendly phone call. The design has been downloaded by good Samaritans across the UK and has spread as far as Australia and America with the hashtag #viralkindness.

The Prime Minister praised Becky's postcards, which also remind people to wash their hands regularly and avoid physical contact, saying:

As we honour the duty we have to each other, to stay at home, protect the NHS and save lives, we can also look out for each other.

Becky's wonderful initiative is doing exactly that, supporting vulnerable neighbours all over the world. Whether it's shielding them from social contact by dropping off the shopping or fortifying their spirits with a friendly phone call. It reminds us all that being isolated need not mean being alone.

Reacting to the Prime Minister's announcement, Becky said:

It's an honour to have the #viralkindness campaign recognised in this way. It's been incredible to see the postcard being used throughout the UK and the world by extraordinary volunteers who are helping their communities at this challenging time.

The Prime Minister's UK daily Point of Light award was first launched in April 2014 to recognise outstanding individuals making a difference in their communities. As Britain unites to fight the spread of coronavirus, the award will focus exclusively on community and national efforts.