

Over 21 million pieces of protective equipment have been shipped to the UK from China

- From April 2nd to 25th Government has chartered 20 medical equipment flights back from China
- These have included over 21 million pieces of PPE and more than 1,000 ventilators that have been bought and donated
- Chinese companies have reciprocated donations from UK firms made in February

The UK Government has flown over 21 million pieces of PPE and more than 1,000 ventilators to the NHS and Social Care Services from China over the last three weeks.

The British Embassy in Beijing has worked with the Department of Health to procure and source donations of medical equipment from China and deliver it to NHS hospitals and care homes all over the UK.

Dame Barbara Woodward, British Ambassador to China, said:

I am delighted that we have been able to deliver huge quantities of lifesaving equipment for the NHS and our social care services.

Our strong trade relationship with our Chinese partners has meant that we have been able to source the right equipment and we have seen both UK and Chinese firms contribute to our joint fight against Covid-19.

We are working round the clock to bolster the NHS supplies and save lives and we are seeking further deliveries as a matter of urgency.

Over 21 million pieces of protective equipment have been shipped to the UK from China

20 flights have been operated by passenger airlines British Airways and Virgin Atlantic, as well as various cargo operators and delivery specialists.

The British Embassy in Beijing is a whole of Government platform with staff from the Department for International Trade, Foreign Office, UK Visas and Immigration and the Ministry of Defence all working to support the procurement, logistics and coordination of donations.

The China Civil Aviation Authority granted the UK special permission to allow passenger routes to take cargo instead.

Guys and St Thomas hospital and Age UK have been received medical supplies that have been bought by the UK Government and donated by Chinese organisations.

David Lawson, Chief Procurement Officer at Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust said:

We are very grateful for donations from the British Chinese Community and for the support of the British Embassy in Beijing, both of which have helped to ensure a steady and timely supply of PPE and other vital medical equipment to help the NHS response to COVID-19.

Caroline Abrahams, Charity Director of Age UK, said:

We are grateful to the people of Changsha for their kind support and donation to Age UK during this challenging time.

The masks we received will be given to our local Age UKs which are providing practical support in their communities, including helping people who are recovering from the virus to leave hospital and go back to their homes, and will help to keep staff and older people safe.

Almost 2.5 million of the PPE equipment has been donated by Chinese organisations including British Chinese Community Zhejiang UK Association.

The biggest donor so far whose equipment has already reached the UK is Bank of China, who has donated over 1.8 million pieces of PPE and 20 ventilators.

At the start of the Covid-19 crisis the UK provided much needed supplies to the people of Wuhan including goggles and gloves. UK firms that have donated equipment to China include AstraZeneca and GSK.

Notes to editors:

- As well as the Chinese organisations named above the following have all provided donations (Dalian Haiqing Food, Tencent, Chinese Chevening Alumni, Administrative Committee of Changsha National High-Tech Industrial Development Zone, First Affiliated Hospital of Sun-Yat Sen University, China Construction Bank, Hangzhou Foreign and Affairs Office and Fosun International.
- As well as the UK organisation above the following provided donations to China: GSK, AstraZeneca, BP, HSBC Group, Standard Chartered, Smith and Nephew, Smith's Medical, Jaguar Land Rover, Swire Group, Diageo, RELX Group, PwC, EY, Deloitte, ReckittBenckiser, Unilever, IHG, BHP and JM Jardines

[Her Majesty The Queen to send a message to the nation to mark 75th anniversary of VE Day](#)

- His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales will read an extract from King George VI's diary from 8 May 1945 ☐
- Members of The Royal Family, the Prime Minister and the Culture Secretary will take part in video calls with Second World War veterans ☐
- Churchill's famous victory speech will be broadcast as part of BBC special programming☐
- A national moment of remembrance will take place with a two minute silence as Culture Secretary calls on the public to mark the occasion at home☐
- Second World War veterans will receive calls from NHS Volunteer Responders☐

The UK Government has announced revised plans to commemorate the 75th anniversary of VE Day which will include an address from Her Majesty The Queen.

In line with government guidance, the original plans for [VE Day 75](#), which included a veteran procession, had to be adjusted due to the ongoing coronavirus outbreak.

Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden has announced a new programme that will allow members of the public to remember and give thanks to the Second World War generation from the safety of their own homes.

Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said:

We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to the greatest generation that served in combat and on the home front during the Second World War.

Whilst we now need to celebrate VE 75 in our homes and on our doorsteps, rather than in parades and street parties, I know the nation will come together to mark this historic occasion.

In these difficult times, acts of remembrance are even more poignant and I am sure that millions will want to join me to remember and give thanks to those who gave so much to secure peace, freedom and prosperity in Europe.

To mark this historic occasion, Her Majesty The Queen will send a message to the nation at 9pm on BBC One, the exact moment her father, King George VI, gave a radio address in 1945.

His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales will read an extract from King George VI's diary from 8 May 1945 which describes the day including The Royal Family's iconic Buckingham Palace balcony appearances.

Members of The Royal Family, the Prime Minister and the Culture Secretary will take part in a series of video calls with Second World War veterans and those who served on the Home Front. First Minister of Wales Mark Drakeford will also host calls with veterans in Wales. The official commemorations will begin at 11am with a national moment of remembrance and a two minute silence.

Other plans for the day include:

- As part of special BBC programming, extracts from Sir Winston Churchill's victory speech will recreate the moment peace in Europe was announced 75 years ago at 3pm and the Prime Minister will speak about the importance of VE Day. □
- The Archbishop of Canterbury will record a special reflection and moment of prayer for VE Day. □
- Her Majesty The Queen's 9pm address to the nation will be followed by a national singalong of Dame Vera Lynn's 'We'll Meet Again'. The public will be encouraged to open their doors and join in with this national moment of celebration. □
- The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has produced a [template pack](#) so that the public can hold a [1940s style afternoon tea party at home](#) complete with homemade VE Day bunting, original recipes, games, and [educational and creative activities for children](#). □
- NHS Volunteer Responders will be deployed to give a number of Second World War veterans a call and provide an opportunity to share their stories. □
- Historian and broadcaster Dan Snow will host history lessons for children from Monday 4 May. At 4pm on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, Dan will host a History Hit live on YouTube's Timeline channel that will focus on a different aspect of the Second World War and aim to teach the public about the importance of VE Day. □
- The Government and Ancestry are working together to encourage the public to join together in commemorating VE Day by discovering their own connection to the Second World War. As part of this, all UK historical records available on [ancestry.co.uk](#) will be free for the public from Monday 4 May until Sunday 10 May, giving people the opportunity to uncover the personal stories of the Second World War and the roles their families played. □
- Legion Scotland and Poppyscotland will broadcast a virtual Service of Remembrance followed by online tributes from a range of performers. □
- The First Minister of Wales will host a video call to veterans. □
- A number of commemorative events will also take place across Northern Ireland. □

The Royal British Legion's Assistant Director of Commemorative Events, Bob Gamble OBE, said:

As we face some of the most challenging times since the Second World War, now more than ever it is important to unite in recognition of people's service to the nation, just as communities did 75 years ago.

With members of the public unable to attend VE Day 75 events, we are calling on people across the UK to mark the anniversary from home and take part in these national moments of remembrance and thanksgiving. There is no right or wrong way to take part in the Silence at 11am, some people may wish to stand at their windows or step outside their front door, but we hope that individuals and families across the UK will embrace the opportunity to share in a national moment of reflection.

Russell James, Family History expert at Ancestry®, said:

> VE Day is one of the most significant moments in British history and Ancestry is proud to be working with the UK government to help the nation commemorate its 75th anniversary from their homes. Stories of WWII are something we share not only within our families, but as a nation, so using this time to learn about those experiences through historical records and speaking to our relatives gives us all an opportunity to feel connected – to our family and to people all over the country.

Graeme Dey, Scottish Government Minister for Veterans said:

The upcoming 75th anniversary of VE Day is a fantastic opportunity to remember and thank our Second World War generation for the many personnel sacrifices they made – both at home and abroad, both in and out of uniform.

If it weren't for their efforts, we wouldn't enjoy the many freedoms which we now take for granted. I look forward to joining with the rest of the nation on May 8th to pay tribute to them.

First Minister of Wales Mark Drakeford said:

We wouldn't be where we are today without the determination of our veterans and those who contributed to Britain's efforts during the Second World War. As we remember and thank them, let's find inspiration in their bravery to guide us through our own

extraordinary moment in history.

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

- The BBC will broadcast two special programmes on BBC One to mark VE 75 which will be shown at 14:45 – 15:45 and 20:00 – 21:10.□
- All events will be pre-recorded. Journalists and the public are not encouraged to travel to watch events being filmed. The public are reminded not to travel to watch events and must adhere to the Government's social distancing and travel guidance. Everyone must stay at home, protect the NHS and save lives. □
- You can download DCMS's commemoration [afternoon tea party guide](#) here and [activity pack for children here](#).
- You can see and [take part in Dan Snow's creative challenge for children here](#).

[UK education providers are helping teachers, parents and students respond to the impact of COVID-19 worldwide](#)

Schools/Parents

The British Educational Suppliers Association, with the support of the UK Department for Education, has developed the [LendED website](#) to help schools get the most out of their existing resources, and provide teachers with easy-to-use home learning materials. You can search resources from trusted suppliers, read teacher reviews and request free access during school closures. This site includes over 200 UK companies.

Cambridge Assessment International Education is making free resources available to help schools deliver effective learning outside the classroom [here](#).

Oxford University Press are offering free access to their education platforms here for an extended period and are committed to supporting teachers through professional development training that can be accessed anytime, as well as offering teaching support for through [Oxford Owl](#) and [this website](#).

Pearson is providing access to expert faculty, best practices, and other online learning resources for people who are studying, teaching or working remotely. They are regularly updating their [site](#) which includes K12 resources.

Twinkl has created [home learning and school closure packs](#) and made them available for free, including content tailored to specific markets. Content is available on LinkedIn & Twitter for sharing.

Twig Education is offering free access to schools and ministries of education of its k-12 STEM [resources](#).

GetMyGrades helps students to keep track of progress, and is allowing schools affected by Covid-19 to use its [platform for free](#).

Century Tech creates personalised learning pathways for students and powerful data for teachers to ensure that every child gets tailored, high quality education. They are offering free maths, English and science resources [here](#).

Mangahigh is offering full and free access to Mangahigh for distance learning maths to schools closed due to COVID-19. [Visit their website](#).

Your Favourite Teachers is offering free access to their online GCSE platform to ensure students are able to continue their studies and revision uninterrupted. [Website](#).

My Online Schooling provides a full-time British education online to all children of school age. My Online Schooling offering a variety of free learning resources [here](#).

2Simple provides excellent, accessible and inspiring software to encourage children to love learning and prepare them for later life. 2Simple are offering free access to both Purple Mash and Serial Mash for schools and home users [here](#).

Firefly provides a modern learning experience platform. They are offering free access to their platform to schools in need until the end of next term and have best practices webinars to show how to implement distance learning. [Website is here](#).

Classoos is offering 90-day free digital textbooks to international schools following the British Curriculum. [Website](#).

Innovate My School showcases exciting new practices and products by teachers and education suppliers. It includes a search engine for finding the best education technology on the market, including home learning and COVID-19 filters, of 1200 products. There are over 400 COVID-19 offers. [Website](#).

COBIS provides information on safeguarding, online learning, guidance for parents/owners/governors, whole school well-being, university admissions and examinations during the pandemic. They also have [webinars and case studies](#).

The British Council offers a wide range of classroom resources to help students explore other cultures and discuss international issues, and to provide the basis for international partnerships between schools. [Website](#). The Connecting Classrooms, through Global Learning programme, helps young people engage with the sustainable development goals through free project based resources and training for teachers. [Website here](#).

Universities

FutureLearn is a digital education platform offering short courses, programs and online degrees. There are over 1300 courses available for free. New courses include COVID-19 Diagnostics and Testing. [Website](#).

The British Council delivers the Study UK campaign providing practical information, resources and insight on UK higher education for international students, including free online courses. [Website is here](#).

Pearson is providing access to expert faculty, best practices, and other [online learning resources](#) for people who are studying, teaching or working remotely. They are regularly updating their site which includes HE resources.

Oxford University Press is offering free access to Epigeum's award-winning online training courses. The courses support higher education institutions to deliver training in key areas including teaching online, blended learning and university teaching. [Website](#).

Cambridge University Press are providing free Access to Reference works and Academic Textbooks on Cambridge Core to university libraries and their associated students and faculty. [Website is here](#).

Kortext has a Free Student eTextbook Programme, is making free textbook content available from a host of publishers, in partnership with JISC and Microsoft. Over 120 UK universities signed up and the programme is open to universities worldwide providing textbooks that are relevant to the course being undertaken by the students. [Website](#).

The Open University free [online learning platform](#) provides access to health, wellbeing and educational content during the pandemic. The online site offers a chance for anyone to explore relevant topics, from teaching online and courses designed to aid mental and physical health, to family friendly interactives and content to help with the effects of Coronavirus. There are more than 950 courses available, offering 15,000 hours of free learning.

The University of London is one of the largest, most diverse universities in the UK with over 120,000 students, and a further 50,000 studying across 190 countries for a University of London degree. Website is here. (<https://london.ac.uk/>). The University of London is also part of this initiative from [Coursera](#) helping to take student learning online in response to coronavirus.

The University of Liverpool is a leader in online postgraduate education and has now made a range of learning and teaching resources available for the wider higher education community. [The University of Liverpool Centre for Innovation in Education](#) have made available resources related to curriculum design plus videos and case studies on using Teams for learning and teaching.

Coventry University has a library of short courses available online for free on the FutureLearn platform. In response to COVID-19, Coventry have collated three courses to help users make the most of their time at home. [Resources](#)

[available here](#).

Jisc are working with university libraries to ensure access to key digital resources for teaching, learning and research. Jisc are cataloguing details of publishers and content repositories who are widening access to their resources with the list available here. [Contact them to access any of the resources](#).

The University of Edinburgh offers a range of [free online short courses here](#) for academic skills and personal development.

Vocational and technical training

Pearson. For career-focused learning, Pearson provides access to the [Learning Hub](#), which contains a range of short online courses supporting BTEC, Apprenticeship and Employability.

The National Skills Academy Food and Drink are the industry experts on skills for the food and drink industry and have a range of programmes available through their Online Academy. Their [e-learning](#) is available in areas such as compliance (Food Safety, Health & Safety), technical (allergen awareness, IOSH), personal development, IT and management and leadership.

The Skills Network is a leading provider of distance learning qualifications with over 1 million users on the [learning platform](#) and over 40 UK Accredited qualifications and 100 CPD certified online courses. Courses include infection control and health and social care.

COVID-19 training

Health Education England has launched online e-Learning for Health content to support the upskilling of health workers in relation to COVID19. This content is free. [The guidance can be found here](#) and will be updated and expanded shortly.

Skills for Health, the leading provider for healthcare e-learning across the UK health sector, has developed a free Covid-19 Awareness resource. Skills for Health is also offering the Core Skills Training e-learning bundle at a heavily discounted rate; this includes Infection Prevention & Control, basic life support, Safeguarding and more. [Website](#).

Kineo are e-learning specialists and have developed e-learning courses to support people with the management of Covid-19 as they come to terms with new ways of working. [These are available for free](#).

Highfield Learning, a leading provider of technical e-learning and offers training in food safety, manual handling, health and safety, fire safety, spectator safety, customer service, first aid at work, plus a range of standard workplace awareness programmes. They are offering free training in infection prevention and control, accessed through [their website](#).

The University of Edinburgh created a set of free online resources COVID-19

Critical Care: Understanding and [Application here for healthcare professionals working in a critical care setting](#).

English Language Training

The British Council has an extensive range of free online resources for learners and teachers of English. British Council have something for kids, teenagers and adults at all levels of English. [Website is here] (<https://www.britishcouncil.org/english/learn-online>). And of course, for teachers too – [website for teacher resources] (<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk>). [EnglishScore](#), the British Council's free mobile-delivered test is available to download globally.

Macmillan Education is a global publisher that is operating in over 120 countries worldwide. [They are making our digital components and resources available for free for both Teachers and Learners](#).

Oxford University Press has created home learning guidance including links to blogs, course related content suitable for distance learning, and professional development content, alongside course material to maximise home-based learning. [Website](#) .

Pearson is offering [webinars on distance teaching and learning](#), and free 60-day access to their Digital Citizenship Online course providing professional development for teachers in an online environment.

LanguageCert is offering additional slots to accommodate candidates who wish to take their English language certification exams with remote invigilation. [More information](#).

EF English Live offers English courses including live classes and interactive lessons online. They are offering a 14-day free trial. [Website is here](#).

Cambridge Assessment English has lots of [free online activities](#) to help teenagers and adults practise their English.

Nile is a world-leading centre of excellence, offering training and development from initial qualifications to Masters, both face-to-face and online. A new course '[Take your Teaching Online](#)' is being offered for free.

East Sussex College is offering an [Online English Language](#) classes with flexible hours and small class size. There are General English, IELTS and Cambridge exam options.

InTuition provides personalised 1 to 1 [English Language Courses including English online](#). This includes a 30-minute trial lesson.

ELT Jam help clients through every stage in designing a successful learning experience and at present have a focus on adapting in-person courses and [training for online delivery as quickly as possible](#).

Further expansion of access to coronavirus testing helps protect the most vulnerable

- Everyone in England aged 65 and over with coronavirus symptoms can now get tested, along with symptomatic members of their household
- Symptomatic workers who are unable to work from home also eligible for testing
- Testing of all asymptomatic NHS and social care staff and care home residents also being rolled out
- New expansion of testing made possible due to rapidly increasing testing capacity

Anyone in England with symptoms of coronavirus who has to leave home to go to work, and all symptomatic members of the public aged 65 and over, will now be able to get tested, the government has announced today.

This will mean people who cannot work from home and those aged 65 and over can know for sure whether they have coronavirus and need to continue isolating.

Members of their households with symptoms – a new continuous cough or high temperature – will also be eligible for testing.

Anyone eligible can book a test using an [online portal](#).

The government also announced that NHS staff, care home staff and care home residents will be eligible for testing whether or not they have symptoms.

Working with Public Health England, the Care Quality Commission and the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services, the government is piloting sending packages of 'satellite' test kits directly to care homes across England to enable testing of residents.

So far, 4,760 tests have been delivered to more than 4,300 locations. In addition, over 25,000 care staff have already been tested.

Secretary of State for Health and Social Care Matt Hancock said:

Expansion of our testing programme protects our most vulnerable and keeps people safe.

Testing is now available to all over 65s and members of their households, if they have symptoms.

Any worker who needs to leave their home in order to go to work,

and their households, if any of them have symptoms can also get a test. This means construction workers to emergency plumbers, research scientists to those in manufacturing – can now be tested.

All they need to do is go on the internet and apply for a test.

Testing for coronavirus helps the government and scientists understand its current spread and plan how to manage the pandemic.

As capacity has increased, testing has been offered to different groups in a phased approach, prioritising NHS workers. However, the ultimate aim is that anyone who needs a test will be able to have one.

Today's announcement marks a further step towards that goal. It follows the announcement last week that all essential workers with symptoms can now book a coronavirus test, or order a home testing kit, using the new online portal.

There are now more than 40 drive-through testing sites across the country, and, by the end of the week, 25,000 home testing kits will be available for ordering every day.

A network of mobile testing units is also travelling the country to reach care homes, police stations, prisons and other sites where there is demand for testing. The network is expected to reach over 70 units by the weekend.

Since the beginning of April, the government has significantly increased the UK's coronavirus testing capacity, which currently stands at 73,400 tests per day and is on track to reach 100,000 tests daily by the end of the month.

The response to coronavirus is a national effort. Each of the devolved administrations will have their own eligibility criteria and testing priorities, however the government is working closely to align approaches.

[Update on the Ventilator Challenge](#)

Following a review by an expert panel of clinicians, including NHS clinicians and the regulator, the MHRA, the Government will be ending support for four devices in the Ventilator Challenge. Recognising the Government's need to create effective ventilators at pace, the panel concluded that other designs could better meet the clinical needs of the NHS at this time.

Government efforts to increase ventilator capacity have already seen an additional 2,400 mechanical ventilators made available to the NHS since the start of the pandemic, with over 250 coming from the Ventilator Challenge so far. The number of extra ventilators rises to 6,745 in total, when you include both mechanical and non-invasive ventilators

The UK now has 10,900 mechanical invasive ventilators available to the NHS, as well as 4,300 non-invasive devices.

During the coronavirus pandemic, everyone who has required a ventilator has had access to one, but the Government will continue to increase capacity through its three pillar strategy: procuring more ventilators from overseas, scaling up the production of existing or modified designs and working to design and manufacture new devices.

The Government recently announced that 15,000 Penlon Prima ES02 ventilators have been ordered, the first newly-adapted device to receive regulatory approval in the Ventilator Challenge, with production set to ramp up in the coming weeks. Smiths paraPAC ventilators, an existing device, are also being manufactured at speed and at scale as part of the Ventilator Challenge.

Devices that have been selected to continue as part of the Ventilator Challenge have been selected based upon expert clinical and technical advice. This includes feedback from rigorous testing of the ventilators by clinical experts to ensure that they meet the necessary standards for patient safety and effectiveness of treatment, which is of vital importance for any new ventilator design. This selection criteria also takes into account projections for ventilator demand, the availability of other devices which already have regulatory approval, the performance and clinical usefulness of each device and the progress to date on each device's overall development.

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster Michael Gove said:

The innovation, teamwork and commitment shown by manufacturers involved in the Ventilator Challenge has been inspirational.

While the Government will be ending support for four of the devices in the Ventilator Challenge today, I want to put on record my sincere thanks to everyone involved.

They are heroes of our national effort and their contribution to protecting our NHS and saving lives will not be forgotten.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said:

Since we launched the Ventilator Challenge the ingenuity and innovation shown by so many companies has been truly awe-inspiring and has helped us continue to get ventilators to the frontline and keep capacity ahead of demand.

Technology and innovation, operating hand-in-hand with the care and dedication of our fantastic health and social care staff, will help us overcome this virus.

I want to thank every company, and their staff, for their phenomenal achievements in going forward to the next stage.

Following the recommendations of the expert panel, the Government will continue to provide support to four devices, as well the Penlon and paraPAC. We are scaling up production of existing Breas Medical devices, the Nippy 4+ & Vivo65, with the first units expected next month. In addition, two devices are subject to ongoing review to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the NHS:

- Zephyr Plus, made by Babcock
- Gemini, made by OES Medical

Five other devices will continue to be eligible for support before being reassessed by a further clinical panel next week:

- Piran Vent, made by Swagelok
- Veloci-Vent, made by Cambridge Consultants Ltd and MetLase
- Sagentia Ventilator, made by Sagentia
- CoVent, made by TTP and Dyson
- AirCare, made by BAE Systems

From the start of the challenge we have been clear that not all designs would necessarily be taken forward and so today the Cabinet Office is ceasing support for four ventilator designs. These are:

- EVA, made by TEAM and Cogent Technology
- Helix, made by Diamedica and Plexus
- OxVent, made by KCL, Oxford University and Smith+Nephew
- InVicto, made by JFD