

Foreign Secretary statement: Arrest of Alexey Navalny

Press release

The Foreign Secretary has responded to the arrest of Alexey Navalny by the Russian authorities



It is appalling that Alexey Navalny, the victim of a despicable crime, has been detained by Russian authorities. He must be immediately released.

Rather than persecuting Mr Navalny Russia should explain how a chemical weapon came to be used on Russian soil.

Published 18 January 2021

Act now to keep your business moving in 2021, Business Minister urges

- Firms urged to ensure they have ticked off checklist of six key actions, as UK begins its new start outside of the EU
- Business Minister warns “Business is changing: you must not delay any further”
- Department launches series of on demand videos – on subjects ranging from trade to data – to help companies understand the new rules

As the UK embarks on its new start as an independent trading nation, Business Minister Paul Scully has set out six key actions businesses must take to

ensure they can seize all the opportunities on the horizon.

The zero tariff, zero quota trade deal the UK has struck with the European Union will help unlock investment and protect jobs across the United Kingdom and will allow businesses to benefit from new trade deals with partners all around the world.

However, there are a range of actions businesses must take in order to take advantage of these opportunities outside the customs union and single market. Today, Minister Scully is urging businesses who have not yet taken steps to prepare for the UK's new start to act now to avoid any potential disruption to their operations.

Business Minister Paul Scully said:

The UK is finally out of the EU single market and customs union, and business is changing.

Many businesses have made great strides to get ready for the UK's new start, but we know some are further behind. To avoid any potential disruption to your business, you must not delay – make your final preparations now.

The government will be here to help businesses navigate this change. You can use this checklist, watch our on demand videos, or visit gov.uk/transition to get personalised advice.

The six key actions many firms may need to take are:

1. Goods – if you import or export goods to the EU, you must get an EORI number, make customs declarations or employ an agent to do them for you, check if your goods require extra papers (like plant or animal products) and speak to the EU business you're trading with to make sure they're completing the right EU paperwork. There are also special rules that apply to Northern Ireland. Hauliers must obtain a Kent Access Permit and have a negative Covid test before they head to port in Kent
2. Services – if you deliver services to the EU, you must check whether your professional qualification is recognised by the appropriate EU regulator
3. People – if you need to hire skilled staff from the EU, you must apply to become a licensed sponsor
4. Travel – if you need to travel to the EU for business, you must check whether you need a visa or work permit

5. Data – if your goods are protected by Intellectual Property (IP), you will need to check the new rules for parallel exporting IP protected goods from the UK to the EU, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein. You risk infringing on IP rights if you do not follow the new rules
6. Accounting & Reporting – if your business has a presence in the EU you may need to change how you undertake accounting and reporting to ensure compliance with the relevant requirements

These six key actions should act as a guide for every business affected by the new rules, with more detailed, personalised advice available through the checker tool on gov.uk/transition.

To further support firms, today (Monday 18 January), the Business Department has launched a series of new, on demand videos to help businesses familiarise themselves with the new rules, which will be available via gov.uk/transition. Topics include importing and exporting, trade, data, and audit and accounting.

Businesses can select which videos to view from the list, or can choose their sector and see videos that are recommended for them.

Many actions related to EU exit needed to have been taken regardless of the outcome of negotiations, and are therefore unaffected by the trade deal the UK has negotiated with the EU. However, in some areas, such as tariffs and audit and accounting, there is new guidance that businesses will need to familiarise themselves with.

The Business Support Helpline (0800 098 1098) is a free service operating across England. It can provide information on a wide range of business issues, including starting up, business continuity, growth and access to finance, including the range of business support available from Government. Similar services are available in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

[Social care to receive £269 million to boost staff levels and testing](#)

The impact of the new variant is being felt across the country, with staff absence rates rising sharply both in care homes and among home care staff, due to testing positive or having to self-isolate.

The funding announced today will protect and support the social care sector, including care homes and domiciliary care providers, by increasing workforce capacity and increasing testing.

The vital infection prevention and control guidance on staff movement in care homes is also being reinforced, with a reminder to providers to continue following the rules and keep staff and residents safe.

The new £120 million funding will help local authorities to boost staffing levels, a direct ask of the sector. The funding can:

- provide additional care staff where shortages arise
- support administrative tasks so experienced and skilled staff can focus on providing care
- help existing staff to take on additional hours if they wish with overtime payments or by covering childcare costs

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

This funding will bolster staffing numbers in a controlled and safe way, whilst ensuring people continue to receive the highest quality of care.

Since the start of the pandemic, we have taken steps to protect care homes, including increasing the testing available for staff and residents, providing free PPE, and investing billions of pounds of additional funding for infection control.

Help is on the way with the offer of a vaccine, with over 40 per cent of elderly care home residents having already received their first dose.

Many local authorities across the country already have staffing initiatives in place to increase capacity and address staffing issues. These include care worker staff banks where new recruits are paid during training, re-deployment models where DBS checked staff are trained and moved into operational roles, and end-to-end training and recruitment services. The new £120m fund will ensure such initiatives can continue, and help other local authorities implement similar schemes.

The £120m fund is in addition to the £149 million announced in December, which will be used to support rapid testing of staff testing and facilitate visits from family and friends where possible. The funding will help care home providers with the costs incurred, including setting up safe testing areas, providing staff training and will contribute towards staff time spent administering and receiving tests.

This £149 million grant is ringfenced for lateral flow device testing in adult social care. Local authorities will be required to pass on 80 per cent of the funding to care homes on a per beds basis, with 20 per cent used at the local authorities discretion to support the care sector in delivering additional lateral flow device testing. All the funding will be available later this month, so local authorities can take action quickly to respond to the pandemic.

Minister for Care Helen Whately said:

This additional funding gives a boost to the social care workforce during some of the most difficult days of this pandemic so far.

Care workers have been doing the most amazing job throughout the pandemic. In challenging circumstances, they have been caring for some of the people most at risk from this virus with compassion and skill.

This additional £120 million will support social care to cope where there are pressing staff shortages due to the pandemic and comes on top of the £149 million to support safer testing.

We're continuing to listen to care providers to make sure they have the help they need, from free PPE to extra testing, along with all the work to vaccinate care home residents, staff and the wider social care workforce.

Increased staff testing remains a critical part reducing transmission. Care homes currently have access to 3 tests per week for their staff, with daily testing for 7 days in the event of a positive case to protect staff and residents.

Care homes will have additional lateral flow devices to test individuals working in more than one setting before the start of every shift.

Restricting staff movement remains critical to minimising the risk of transmission. In response to the government's consultation, the sector called for an increase in staffing capacity instead of regulation to achieve this goal.

Professor Martin Green OBE, CEO of Care England, said:

As the largest representative body for independent providers of adult social care, Care England, is pleased the government listened to the sector regarding their deep concerns about banning staff movement.

We want to work with the department to ensure the staff capacity fund delivers to the front line and is suitably flexible to reflect the crisis whereby providers are struggling with staff illness and absenteeism in the same way as their colleagues in the NHS are.

Staff are our most precious resource and we want to do all that we can to support them especially in these incredibly difficult times.

Vic Rayner – Chief Executive of the National Care Forum said:

It is positive that the government has taken note of the extreme staffing pressure that care providers across the country are experiencing.

The funding announced and confirmed today is welcome news, but must be subject to continuous review.

Communities across the country desperately need care organisations to be properly supported now and in the future so that they are ready and able to face every twist and turn of this pandemic.

Around 40 per cent of people aged 80 and over and a quarter of older care home residents have now received their first vaccine dose. By the end of next week we aim to have offered a jab to all care home residents and staff.

[New legal protection for England's heritage](#)

- New legal safeguards introduced for historic monuments at risk of removal
- All historic statues, plaques and other monuments will now require full planning permission to remove, ensuring due process and local consultation in every case
- The law will make clear that historic monuments should be retained and explained
- The Secretary of State able to "call in" any application and ensure the law is followed
- The most significant new protection for England's heritage since the 1967 Civic Amenities Act established Conservation Areas
- Measures build on proposals that embed beauty, design and quality in England's planning system for the first time

New laws to protect England's cultural and historic heritage have been announced by Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick today (17 January 2021).

The new legal protections mean that historic statues should be 'retained and explained' for future generations. Individuals who want to remove any historic statue, whether listed or not, will now require listed building consent or planning permission.

Under the new regulations, if the council intends to grant permission for removal of a particular statue and Historic England objects, the Communities Secretary will be notified so he can make the final decision about the application in question.

Historic England and the Secretary of State will apply the new policy of “retain and explain”, meaning historic statues will only be removed in the most exceptional circumstances.

Many unlisted heritage assets are of interest, significance and pride to the local communities in which they are erected and it is right that protections are put in place for them.

These new laws will protect 20,000 statues and monuments throughout England for future generations.

These landmark legal changes come in the tradition of previous landmark heritage protection laws such as the Civic Amenities Act 1967 and the Town & Country Planning Act 1947.

Communities Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

For hundreds of years, public statues and monuments have been erected across the country to celebrate individuals and great moments in British history.

They reflected the people’s preferences at the time, not a single, official narrative or doctrine. They are hugely varied, some loved, some reviled, but all part of the weft and weave of our uniquely rich history and built environment.

We cannot – and should not – now try to edit or censor our past. That’s why I am changing the law to protect historic monuments and ensure we don’t repeat the errors of previous generations, losing our inheritance of the past without proper care.

What has stood for generations should be considered thoughtfully, not removed on a whim, any removal should require planning permission and local people should have the chance to be properly consulted. Our policy in law will be clear, that we believe in explaining and retaining heritage, not tearing it down.

Culture Secretary Rt Hon Oliver Dowden MP said:

I strongly believe that we should learn from our past – in order to retain and explain our rich history.

The decisions we make now will shape the environment inherited by our children and grandchildren.

It is our duty to preserve our culture and heritage for future generations and these new laws will help to do so.

The new rules will also apply to unlisted historic plaques, memorials or monuments which will also require planning permission and Historic England to

be informed.

AI at the forefront of efforts to treat coronavirus patients

- AI imaging database will improve diagnosis of patients presenting with COVID-19 symptoms
- Increased speed and accuracy in diagnosis can lead to early medical intervention and save lives

NHSX, a unit tasked with driving the digital transformation of care in the NHS, has brought together over 40,000 CT scans, MRIs and X-rays from more than 10,000 patients across the UK during the course of the pandemic.

Access to this National COVID-19 Chest Imaging Database (NCCID) has now been extended to hospitals and universities across the country who are using the images to track patterns and markers of illness. The database can speed up diagnosis of COVID-19, leading to a quick treatment plan and greater understanding of whether the patient may end up in a critical condition.

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

The use of artificial intelligence is already beginning to transform patient care by making the NHS a more predictive, preventive and personalised health and care service.

It is vital we always search for new ways to improve care, especially as we fight the pandemic with the recovery beyond. This excellent work is testament to how technology can help to save lives in the UK.

Clinicians at Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge are developing an algorithm based on the NCCID images to help inform a more accurate diagnosis of patients when they present to hospital with potential COVID-19 symptoms and have not yet had a confirmed test. Using visual signatures of the virus, as they appear in chest scans, they are able to compare the patterns in the patient's imaging with those seen previously in the NCCID to get a more accurate diagnosis and prognosis.

Understanding the earlier stages of disease means that clinicians are more easily able to implement appropriate, early medical interventions, reducing the potential for later complications. This includes giving patients oxygen and medication before they reach a critical stage, and predicting the need for additional ICU capacity, enabling the management of beds and staff resource in those settings.

Carola-Bibiane Schönlieb, Professor of Applied Mathematics and head of the [Cambridge Image Analysis](#) group at the University of Cambridge, said:

The NCCID has been invaluable in accelerating our research and provided us with a diverse, well-curated, dataset of UK patients to use in our algorithm development.

The ability to access the data for 18 different trusts centrally has increased our efficiency and ensures we can focus most of our time on designing and implementing the algorithms for use in the clinic for the benefit of patients.

By understanding in the early stages of disease, whether a patient is likely to deteriorate, we can intervene earlier to change the course of their disease and potentially save lives as a result.

The NCCID is also helping researchers from universities in London (University College London), and Bradford, to develop AI tools that could help doctors improve the treatment for patients with COVID-19.

The database is helping to inform the development of a potential national AI imaging platform to safely collect and share data, developing AI technologies to address a number of other conditions such as heart disease and cancers.

The NCCID is one workstream taken forward by the NHS AI Lab at NHSX. The NHS AI Lab has also set up and launched a £140 million AI award this year in collaboration with the Accelerated Access Collaborative (AAC) and National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), which aims to bring the benefits of AI technologies to patients and staff across health and care. Initial bids were awarded to 42 organisations in September 2020 with a further round of bids closing last month.

Dominic Cushnan, Head of AI Imaging at NHSX, said:

We are applying the power of artificial intelligence to quickly detect disease patterns and develop new treatments for patients. There is huge potential for patient care, whether through quicker analysis of chest images or better identification of abnormalities.

The industrial scale collaboration of the NHS, research and innovators on this project alone has demonstrated the huge potential and benefits of technology in transforming care.

Evis Sala, Professor of Oncological Imaging at the [University of Cambridge](#), said:

The NCCID team have been extremely knowledgeable, helpful and responsive to our questions throughout the process. This is

precisely the initiative we need to ensure we are better prepared and more responsive for future pandemics.

Dr Joe Jacob, consultant radiologist and research lead at BSTI, said:

The National COVID-19 Chest Imaging Database was developed with the support and enthusiasm of chest radiologists and healthcare professionals from around the United Kingdom.

Their efforts have helped to provide a resource that will help the NHS in the management of the healthcare emergency engendered by COVID-19.

NHSX was able to quickly establish the project during the spring by working closely with Royal Surrey NHS Foundation Trust to scale up an existing data collection process.

Dr Mark Halling-Brown, Head of Scientific Computing at Royal Surrey County Hospital, said:

Royal Surrey NHS Foundation Trust has led the way in creating and sharing research imaging databases that have enabled the development of AI tools, and has more recently specialised in the evaluation and validation of AI radiology products within a range of specialties supporting their safe deployment into the clinic.

Our expertise allowed us to help build the National COVID-19 Chest Imaging Database and we are excited by the potential of the AI solutions being developed and the research underway that will use this dataset.

Led by NHSX, the NCCID is a collaborative effort with the British Society of Thoracic Imaging (BSTI), Royal Surrey NHS Foundation Trust and Faculty, a London-based AI specialist.

All of the scans in the library are stripped of any identifying patient details by each hospital trust before they are submitted to the national collection, ensuring researchers are only able to access pseudonymised information.

To deliver technology for use in health and care, the NHS AI Lab has also this week published [A guide to good practice for digital and data-driven health technologies](#), setting out what the NHS is looking for when it buys digital and data-driven technology for use in health and care.

[Find out more about the NCCID and see a full list of research projects](#)

The full list of NHS trusts submitting data is below and we actively encourage more trusts to send in their data to continue to grow the database:

1. Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust
2. Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust
3. London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust
4. George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust
5. Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board
6. Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
7. Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
8. Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals
9. Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust
10. Sheffield Children's NHS Foundation Trust
11. Liverpool Heart and Chest Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
12. Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
13. Royal Surrey NHS Foundation Trust
14. Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust
15. West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust
16. Somerset NHS Foundation Trust
17. Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
18. Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust
19. Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
20. Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

See a list of [AI in Health and Care Award winners](#)