

Welsh recipients recognised in 2021 New Year Honours

News story

Welsh Secretary congratulates people from across Wales who have received awards.

2021 HONOURS

Secretary of State for Wales Simon Hart has praised people from Wales who have received awards in this year's New Year's Honours list.

The list recognises the work and achievements of a wide range of remarkable people across the United Kingdom from all backgrounds.

Recipients from Wales in 2021 include people who have worked on the front line of the Covid-19 pandemic, familiar names from the world of sport and volunteers who have given up their time to help others.

Expressing his heartfelt thanks for their "inspiring achievements" Mr Hart congratulated all of those receiving awards.

Secretary of State for Wales Simon Hart said:

In what has been an extraordinarily challenging year, it is vital that we recognise and praise the inspiring achievements of some truly remarkable people.

These awards celebrate the people who are the mainstays of communities across Wales, selflessly giving back to those around them through their work and their personal lives.

I am delighted to see a whole host of Welsh recipients from all walks of life recognised for their commitment to charity, sport, education and – during a global pandemic – some amazing work in the fight against Covid-19.

I'd like to extend my gratitude to each person honoured for their

efforts. Congratulations to everyone receiving an honour.

Among those in Wales receiving awards, were former Swansea City and Wales footballer Alan Curtis who received an MBE for his services to football, Dr Tamas Szakmany, who was awarded an MBE for his services to the NHS in Wales during the Covid-19 pandemic, charity fundraisers Brian Frederick Keylock and Lorna Keylock of Brecon who received BEMs and North Wales-based Professor Laurence Alison who was awarded an MBE for services to critical incident handling and to the NHS during the pandemic.

[Find the full lists of 2021 New Year Honour Recipients here.](#)

Published 31 December 2020

NHS Test and Trace reaches record number of people as demand increases significantly

- Everybody who needs a test is still able to get one, despite huge increase in demand
- Contact tracers are successfully contacting more people than ever before

NHS Test and Trace is reaching significantly more people as cases continue to rise across the country. More than 550,000 cases and contacts were successfully reached and told to isolate in the week before Christmas, many of whom might otherwise have gone on to unknowingly spread the virus to their loved ones over the festive period.

In a week when the number of positive cases transferred to the contact-tracing system increased by 52% compared with the previous week, contact tracers have redoubled their efforts to ensure that the great majority of cases and contacts continue to be reached.

For the week of 17 to 23 December, 181,910 people who tested positive were successfully reached – 58,398 more than the previous week and 85.8% of the total number of cases. Over the same week, 377,459 close contacts of people who tested positive were successfully reached – 110,801 more than the previous week and 92.6% of all close contacts identified.

Not only are more cases being reached, but they're being reached more quickly too, with 80.2% reached within 24 hours, compared with 77.1% the previous week.

These improvements have been brought about by operational changes such as

improving the contact-tracing website, introducing more effective systems for contacting members of the same household, and further increases to the number of local authority tracing partnerships.

Due to growing demand over the holiday period, and the emergence of a new and more transmissible strain of coronavirus, the service has prioritised making more tests available so that anyone who needs a test can get one. Nearly 2.4 million people were tested at least once during the reporting week, with labs processing ever greater numbers of tests. This increased demand and supply has resulted in a temporary dip in turnaround times, but tests are available for anyone who needs one.

NHS Test and Trace remained open every day over Christmas and will continue to do so over New Year, providing and processing tests for those who need them and tracing contacts of positive cases.

NHS Test and Trace's vastly expanded test site network now has more than 700 test sites, including 400 local test sites, in operation. The median distance travelled for a test increased slightly due to the high demand in some areas, but remained low, at just 2.8 miles, compared with 5.1 miles as recently as September. More than 50 million tests have been processed in the UK in total since testing began, more than any other comparable European country.

Health Minister Lord Bethell said:

The improvements we've made to the contact-tracing process over the past months are really bearing fruit now, with record numbers of people being successfully contacted by the service. It's important to remember that every single successful call our contact tracers make is another person prevented from the risk of unknowingly spreading this awful virus to the people around them.

As we enter the new year, I would urge the public to heed our advice on 'Hands. Face. Space', and not to hesitate to book a test if they have coronavirus symptoms.

I would like to thank everyone who has been working so hard over the festive period to keep NHS Test and Trace running, processing huge numbers of tests, ensuring that anyone who needs a test can get one, and reaching the great majority of people who test positive and their contacts to help ensure they self-isolate.

Interim Executive Chair of the National Institute for Health Protection Baroness Dido Harding said:

Despite record numbers of people using NHS Test and Trace, we are successfully reaching record numbers of people who have tested positive and their contacts.

Turnaround times have temporarily increased over the festive period

as we deal with huge increases in demand, but we continue to make tests available to anybody who needs one, while our labs are processing ever greater numbers of tests.

I am hugely grateful for the hard work and dedication of the NHS Test and Trace team and our partners over this challenging festive period.

The [NHS COVID-19 app](#) was the second most downloaded free iPhone app on its App Store in the UK this year and has been downloaded more than 20.9 million times.

Testing

During the week of 17 to 23 December, 2,398,512 people were tested under pillars 1 and 2 in England.

More than 50 million tests have been processed in the UK in total since testing began, more than any other comparable European country.

For this reporting period, 45% of in-person test results were received the next day after the test was taken, compared with 61% reported in the previous week. 93% of pillar 1 test results were made available within 24 hours, consistent with the previous week.

The NHS Test and Trace laboratory network will also be processing samples as normal with the same level of capacity, including on bank holidays, to ensure continuity of service. Testing capacity for those with COVID-19 symptoms has increased 7-fold in 8 months, from 100,000 a day at the end of April to more than 700,000 a day.

Tracing

211,914 positive cases were transferred to contact tracers between 17 December and 23 December, an increase of 52% on the previous week (139,332). 85.8% of cases were reached and told to self-isolate, compared with 88.6% the previous week.

Between 17 December and 23 December, 407,603 people were identified as recent close contacts (up from 287,756 the previous week), with 96.4% for whom communication details were provided reached and told to self-isolate, which was consistent with the previous week, despite the increase in cases transferred.

Since NHS Test and Trace launched, 84.7% of close contacts for whom contact details were provided have been reached.

Over the past few months our teams have been working incredibly hard to make the contact-tracing service as effective as possible and NHS Test and Trace has now reached more than 4 million people.

Background information

The [statistics from week 30 of NHS Test and Trace](#) show in the most recent week of operations (17 December to 23 December):

- a total of 2,907,074 tests were conducted for pillars 1 and 2 in the UK, compared with 2,293,012 the previous week
- the proportion of contacts reached by tracing service remains consistent at 92.6%
- 85.8% of people who tested positive and were transferred to the contact-tracing system were reached and asked to provide information about their contacts, compared with 88.6% the previous week
- 96.4% of contacts where communication details were given were reached and told to self-isolate, compared with 96.5% the previous week
- 45.0% of in-person test results were received the next day after the test was taken, compared with 61.0% of tests the previous week (England only)
- 93.0% of pillar 1 test results were made available within 24 hours, compared with 93.9% the previous week
- 16.9% (176,581) of in-person test results were received within 24 hours after the test was taken, compared with 34.1% (247,767) the previous week
- 66.7% (461,730) of satellite (care home) tests were received within 3 days, compared with 91.1% (518,561) the previous week
- since NHS Test and Trace launched, over 2.9 million contacts have been identified, and 84.7% of all contacts where communication details were given have been reached and told to self-isolate

NHS COVID-19 app users in England, who have been instructed to self-isolate via the app, will be able to claim the £500 Test and Trace Support Payment, providing they meet the eligibility criteria.

New Independent Monitoring Authority goes live on 31 December 2020

News story

The Independent Monitoring Authority for the Citizens' Rights Agreements (IMA) becomes operational at the end of the transition period.



From 11pm GMT today (Thursday 31 December 2020), the Independent Monitoring Authority for the Citizens' Rights Agreements (IMA) will begin work.

The IMA is a brand-new independent public body, which has been established under the [EU \(Withdrawal Agreement\) Act 2020 \(EUWAA\)](#). The IMA will work to protect the rights of EU and EEA EFTA (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) citizens in the UK and Gibraltar.

Its purpose is to monitor how public bodies in the UK and Gibraltar implement and apply the citizens' rights parts of the following agreements:

The IMA will have the power to receive complaints, launch inquiries and initiate judicial review proceedings. The IMA will also have a role in reviewing the effectiveness of the citizens' rights legislative framework, for instance by reviewing draft legislation. In exercising its functions, the IMA must have regard to the importance of dealing with general or systemic issues, as well as receiving and investigating individual complaints.

The [IMA has its own website](#) where the public can find further information on IMA and their work.

The IMA is an executive non-departmental public body (NDPB) and as an independent authority will be accountable to parliament through its sponsor department, the [Ministry of Justice](#).

Published 31 December 2020

Provisional fishing quota published



The UK government has published provisional catch limits for fishermen in the UK.

The UK government has today (14 January) published [provisional catch limits for fishermen in the UK](#) to ensure fishing continues uninterrupted until annual fisheries negotiations with the EU, Norway and Faroe Islands conclude.

The UK government, following consultation with the Devolved Administrations and Marine Management Organisation, has set provisional catch limits in line with the UK/EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement. These are generally calculated using a percentage of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) advice for each stock. Where needed, a higher allocation has been made for seasonal fisheries.

These provisional catch limits apply until the end of March. However, they will be regularly reviewed and will be updated as and when annual negotiations conclude.

The annual negotiations will take place now the UK and EU have concluded the Trade and Cooperation Agreement. Under that agreement, the UK will see year on year increases in our share of the total allowable catch, moving from just over half of the quota stocks in our own waters now, to two thirds of the stocks in our waters after five and a half years.

Fisheries Minister, Victoria Prentis said:

For the first time in 40 years we enter into annual fisheries negotiations as an independent coastal State.

As a responsible independent coastal State we are taking measures to ensure that we fish sustainably, and that our fishermen can continue to operate smoothly while those annual negotiations take place.

As the UK/EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement states, UK vessels will be permitted to fish in EU waters and EU vessels in UK waters. However, from 1 January, UK and EU vessels must not fish in each other's waters without a

licence. A list of vessels licensed to fish in the 12-200nm zones of UK and EU waters has been published by [the UK Single Issuing Authority](#). Licences to fish in the 6-12nm zones will be issued once the eligibility criteria has been agreed.

Until agreement is reached with Norway and the Faroe Islands, UK vessels are not permitted to fish in their waters and vice versa.

[Policy paper: Fishing opportunities for British fishing boats in 2021.](#)

Published 31 December 2020

Last updated 14 January 2021 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 14 January 2021

The press release now reflects that provisional catch limits have now been published.

2. 31 December 2020

First published.

[Mel Neahraini receives C.B. in Queen's 2021 New Year's Honours List](#)

News story

Litigation Director (and former DHSC Legal Director) appointed Companion of the Bath



Happy New Year. Along with a general optimism that this year will be better than last, it's a pleasure to ring in the new by congratulating GLD's Mel Neahraini, former Legal Director of the Department for Health and Social Care Legal Team, who has been appointed a Companion of the Bath (C.B.) in the

Queen's 2021 New Year's Honours List.

The citation for her award states it is in recognition of her services to the Government Legal profession, especially during the COVID crisis.

Mel said:

"I was stunned when I was told I was being appointed Companion of the Bath – it was so unexpected – but I am also utterly thrilled and proud. I want to thank all those who have supported me without whom this would never have happened. It is truly an honour!"

Mel has undertaken legal work over a number of years and in several different legal teams, deftly handling a range of important issues. She has demonstrated leadership over a sustained period, particularly during the COVID crisis, in which she played a key role in co-ordinating legal issues across Whitehall.

Her work in the networks across GLD, particularly on race and as champion of the parents network, has been a leading light in promoting these issues across the civil service and in helping people across GLD.

GLD Interim Permanent Secretary and Treasury Solicitor Peter Fish said:

"Mel has demonstrated great skill, commitment and compassion in every area of her work. I am proud to congratulate her on this achievement."

We join with Peter in congratulating Mel and wishing her continued success.

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