

## Vulnerable families to benefit from additional package of support

Vulnerable families will benefit from a multi-million pound investment in programmes aimed at reaching 'hidden' children and the creation of a national centre to improve early education and health services.

In a speech today [Tuesday 8 December] at the Early Intervention Foundation's National Conference, Children's Minister Vicky Ford will announce an investment of almost £4.4 million to extend Covid-19 response programmes run by major children's charities, as well as setting out plans to create a National Centre for Family Hubs that will improve families' access to vital services across the country.

An extra £4.2 million will go to a coalition of charities to continue the 'See, Hear, Respond' programme until March 2021, supporting vulnerable children who fall below the threshold for statutory support and early help, including those in need of crisis support due to the pandemic.

Since its launch in June the partnership, which is made up of national children's charities as well as community-based organisations, has reached more than 39,000 vulnerable or 'hidden' children whose usual support networks of friends, extended family or out-of-school activities have been impacted by national and local pandemic restrictions.

This additional funding will reach an estimated 15,000 more children and young people, as well as 11,000 parents and carers in need of extra help.

Recognising the need to improve the long-term support for vulnerable families, the Children's Minister will also announce plans to launch the procurement process for a new National Centre for Family Hubs and Integrated Services, to support areas and councils set up new family hubs.

This builds on the Government's manifesto commitment to champion these hubs and better serve vulnerable families with integrated health and education services. The new centre will draw on existing good practice among councils, where hubs often operate an 'open door' approach and families can be referred for extra help by a range of professional services, including midwives, health visitors, GPs, schools or social services.

Children's Minister Vicky Ford said:

This pandemic has caused unparalleled challenges for us as a country, but it has been particularly difficult for many vulnerable families who need the most support. This funding will expand the vital service provided by the See, Hear, Respond partnership, which has already helped find and protect 39,000 children who may otherwise have remained 'invisible' without it.

We must go further, not just tackling the most urgent and immediate issues but also looking at our vision for the future by improving the resources that already exist. We promised to champion family hubs and the plans set out today will help make sure even more families and children can access the early health and education services we know can have a lifelong impact.

The Minister will also confirm a further £190,000 for the NSPCC's helpline which provides advice to adults who have concerns about the welfare of a child.

Minister Ford will also announce an evaluation innovation fund, inviting suppliers to work alongside family hubs to design and deliver robust evaluations of their effectiveness and value for money. This will help national and local organisations understand which models work most effectively and can be replicated, as well as the best way to integrate a range of family services.

The package builds on confirmation in November's Spending Review of an additional £24 million investment in 2021-22 to expand capacity within secure children's homes, as well as £165 million funding for the Government's Troubled Families programme. This is in addition to the initial Covid response to support vulnerable and disadvantaged children, including:

- £160 million to support remote education and access to online social care via laptops, tablets and 4G routers;
- £350m for the National Tutoring Programme to help the most disadvantaged children catch up from time missed of their education; and
- £7.6m for the Vulnerable Children National Charities Strategic Relief fund which supported national charities who provide critical frontline services in England and Wales affected by the pandemic and who are experiencing immediate financial hardship.

---

## Government's Vaccines Taskforce has worked "decisively" and at "great pace" to improve UK's pandemic preparedness

- Report on Taskforce's vaccines strategy, goals and achievements published, highlighting foundations for future pandemic preparedness
- rapid access to 357 million doses of most promising vaccines and UK's vaccine manufacturing capability transformed
- more than 360,000 volunteers joined NHS Vaccines Research Registry to

take part in clinical trials supporting the search for a vaccine

The government has today (Tuesday 8 December) published a [report highlighting the work and achievements of its Vaccines Taskforce \(VTF\)](#), 6 months after it was set up to help in the fight against COVID-19.

The independent review by Sir Richard Sykes, chair of the Royal Institution and former chair Imperial College Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, found the VTF acted decisively and at great pace in the face of the pandemic, to secure access to 357 million doses of the most promising COVID-19 vaccines for the UK.

The report found the successes of the VTF have been achieved through the expertise of its members, who operated with agility to put the UK ahead at the forefront of global efforts to tackle COVID-19. Key successes include the creation of the world's first citizen registry of over 360,000 volunteers able to rapidly join vaccine trials, the pioneering of human challenge studies to accelerate future vaccine development and strategic investment to enhance the UK's vaccine research and manufacturing infrastructure, including flexible manufacturing capability at sites at Harwell, Braintree and Livingston.

Marking the publication of a report into work of the Vaccines Taskforce in the 6 months since it was set up, the Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

The approval of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for use in the UK marks a momentous step in our fight against COVID-19.

I am hugely grateful for the hard work and dedication of the Vaccine Taskforce, under Kate Bingham's leadership, which has brought us to this point in challenging circumstances, representing the best the government and civil service can do – working with businesses, experts and the public to tackle a common problem at incredible pace. The country owes them a debt of gratitude.

But we still have some way to go and everyone needs to keep following the rules to keep the virus under control.

The VTF was established in April 2020 by the government's Chief Scientific Advisor, Sir Patrick Vallance, to drive forward, expedite and co-ordinate efforts to ensure the UK population would have access to a clinically safe and effective vaccine against COVID-19. Kate Bingham was appointed in May 2020 as Chair of the VTF, reporting directly to the Prime Minister and working under the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

In addition to securing access to vaccines, the VTF set out to establish a long-term vaccine strategy to prepare the UK for future pandemics and work with partners to support equitable access to vaccines for people worldwide, whether rich or poor.

Business Secretary, Alok Sharma said:

Our Vaccine Taskforce has undoubtedly risen to the challenge to build a diverse portfolio of promising vaccine candidates to give the UK the greatest chance of finding one that works.

Thanks to Kate Bingham and her team, we were the first country to sign a deal with Pfizer/BioNTech, have secured more doses per head of population than almost any other country, and built a vaccine manufacturing base from scratch to strengthen our resilience to respond to COVID-19 and to future pandemics.

The Taskforce's impressive record has only been possible by bringing together business, science, industry expertise and the civil service to ensure the British public get access to a safe and effective vaccine as soon as possible. Our country owes every single person involved in this national effort a huge debt of gratitude.

The outgoing chair of the Vaccines Taskforce, Kate Bingham said:

Thanks to the mandate we were given by the Prime Minister, the Taskforce was able to rapidly strike deals for promising vaccines. Our aim was to ensure that the search for COVID-19 vaccines yielded positive results for the UK and the world. In doing so, we have cemented the UK's global leadership in vaccine research, established much stronger manufacturing capability and clinical development capacity, ensuring we are much better prepared if, and when future pandemics arise.

I am delighted that the skill and nimbleness of the Taskforce has enabled us to secure millions of doses of the first vaccine conditionally approved by the MHRA and that the British public are now starting to be protected with the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine.

Kate Bingham's tenure as chair of the Vaccines Taskforce is due to conclude this month, as agreed when she was appointed earlier this year. Clive Dix, current deputy chair, will step into the role of interim chair of the VTF following her departure.

The interim chair of the Vaccines Taskforce, Clive Dix said:

The UK is now prepared to start dealing with COVID-19 with the first vaccines to prevent the disease. Although this is a huge success, there is more for us to do. We must continue to develop our research and response capabilities in the UK and finish the task of building an infrastructure to enable us to manufacture vaccines at scale.

In less than 6 months, the VTF has built a portfolio of 7 different vaccines from more than 240 vaccines in development across 4 different formats: adenoviral vectors, mRNA, adjuvanted proteins, and whole inactivated viral vaccines. This includes 40 million doses of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine, 100 million doses of the Oxford-Astrazeneca vaccine and 7 million doses of the Moderna vaccine.

Internationally, the UK has committed to ensuring that everyone at risk of coronavirus, anywhere in the world, has access to a safe and effective vaccine. To do this, the UK has committed up to £548 million to the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access Facility (Covax). It will deliver vaccines for the UK population and provide access to vaccines for lower income countries.

Read the [independent interim report](#).

## About the Vaccines Taskforce

The [Vaccines Taskforce \(VTF\)](#) was set up under the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) in May 2020, to ensure that the UK population has access to clinically effective and safe vaccines as soon as possible, while working with partners to support international access to successful vaccines. This is to place the UK at the forefront of global vaccine research, development, manufacture and distribution.

The Vaccines Taskforce comprises a dedicated team of private sector industry professionals and officials from across government who are working at speed to build a portfolio of promising vaccine candidates that can end the global pandemic. It is chaired by biotech and life sciences expert Kate Bingham, who was appointed by the Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

The Vaccines Taskforce's approach to securing access to vaccines is through:

- procuring the rights to a diverse range of promising vaccine candidates to spread risk and optimise chances for success
- providing funding for clinical studies, diagnostic monitoring and regulatory support to rapidly evaluate vaccines for safety and efficacy
- providing funding and support for manufacturing scale-up and fill and finish at risk so that the UK has vaccines produced at scale and ready for administration should any of these prove successful

The 4 different vaccine classes that the government has secured to date for the UK are:

- adenoviral vaccines (Oxford/AstraZeneca, Janssen)
- mRNA vaccines (BioNTech/Pfizer, Moderna)
- inactivated whole virus vaccines (Valneva)
- protein adjuvant vaccines (GSK/Sanofi, Novavax)

Once approved by regulators, vaccines would first be given to priority groups such as frontline health and social care workers, the elderly and adults with underlying health conditions.

---

# Joint Statement from UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson and European Commission President von der Leyen: 7 December 2020

Press release

A joint statement from UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson and European Commission President von der Leyen.



As agreed on Saturday, we took stock today of the ongoing negotiations. We agreed that the conditions for finalizing an agreement are not there due to the remaining significant differences on three critical issues: level playing field, governance and fisheries.

We asked our Chief Negotiators and their teams to prepare an overview of the remaining differences to be discussed in a physical meeting in Brussels in the coming days.

Published 7 December 2020

---

## DVLA's bilingual online services: behind the scenes

[English] – [[Cymraeg](#)]

If you've ever used DVLA's public online services, you may well have spotted that most of them are also available in Welsh or used them yourself if you speak the language. As today is Welsh language rights day ('Mae gen i hawl'), it's the ideal time to reveal more about how we developed our 2 newest bilingual online services.

[Welsh language rights day](#), which is promoted by the Welsh Language Commissioner, celebrates the Welsh language services provided by organisations and the rights people have to use them. We definitely had good reason to celebrate our bilingual online services recently, as our 2 latest ones – [change address on your vehicle log book \(V5C\)](#) and [get a duplicate log book \(V5C\)](#) – were the first ones we developed and launched in English and Welsh at the same time.

## Here's how we did it

I've worked with the Welsh Language Policy (WLP) team regularly over the last few years as vehicle registration service designer on several big changes, and I'm fully aware of the Welsh Language Act 1993 requirements to provide translations of forms, letters and online services. My first step was to include these requirements from the very start for our vehicle change of address (or VCOA for short) and duplicate V5C services.

We shared the content and structure with WLP Manager Rhianedd Rhys and her team as soon as they were finalised. This meant she could get the translations over to us to integrate into the service as a finished product.

What really helped us achieve this was the great working partnership between my Service Design team, the business analysts for the project and WLP, which ensured we got everything done successfully and on time.



## There were a couple of challenges...

Our biggest challenge was around time really and making sure what we sent to be translated was the final wording. Welsh translations tend to be longer

than the English equivalent so we did face some issues about length of fields and space on screens to accommodate the additional space needed for the translations, which can be tricky at times. Nothing we couldn't get sorted together though.

## **We learned handy lessons too**

We certainly learned from VCOA, as we started working on the get a duplicate V5C service within a week of VCOA going live. We structured the project planning more, so when we finalised the screens we passed them for translation more regularly. There were a few last-minute changes because of insight but that is to be expected. It is [agile](#) after all.

## **Bilingual bonus for users**

The signs so far from users are really encouraging. Take-up of the 2 new Welsh services is already on a par with our long-established services like [tax your vehicle online](#) and [driver licensing online](#), which have been around for many years.

## **And finally...**

I'm not a Welsh speaker but was proud to deliver these services in Welsh. It would never occur to me that to do so would ever be an optional extra, so I see it as standard. I would like to recognise the patience, support and delivery of Rhianedd and her team, as we would not have done it on time without them.

I'm absolutely delighted that the Welsh services went live at the same time as the English services," adds Rhianedd. "These end-to-end Welsh language journeys are great news for us and our customers who wish to transact with us in Welsh, and build on the Welsh services we already provide. Thanks to everyone who made this happen!

"Our [Welsh language scheme](#) sets out our commitments to the Welsh language, as agreed with the Welsh Language Commissioner. We have a responsibility to show that we're treating the Welsh and English languages equally. We're very proud that usage of our current Welsh online services has increased year on year, so it was extremely important that these 2 services were launched at the same time as the English ones to make sure our Welsh-speaking customers can use their language of choice.

Da iawn bawb (well done everyone)!

All of our Welsh online services are listed on GOV.UK's [Welsh online services page](#), and you can find them under 'Trwyddedau gyrru' and 'Rhifau cofrestru cerbyd, treth cerbyd a phrofion MOT'.

[[English](#)] – [Cymraeg]

Os ydych chi erioed wedi defnyddio gwasanaethau ar-lein cyhoeddus, mae'n bosibl eich bod wedi gweld bod y rhan fwyaf ohonynt hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg neu efallai eich bod wedi eu defnyddio nhw os ydych yn siaradwr Cymraeg. Gan fod heddiw yn ddiwrnod 'Mae gen i hawl', hwn yw'r amser perffaith i ddatgelu mwy ynghylch sut wnaethom ddatblygu ein 2 wasanaeth ar-lein dwyieithog fwyaf newydd.

Mae diwrnod '[Mae gen i hawl](#)' sy'n cael ei hyrwyddo gan Gomisiynydd y Gymraeg, yn dathlu'r gwasanaethau Cymraeg sy'n cael eu darparu gan sefydliadau a'r hawliau sydd gan bobl i'w defnyddio nhw. Yn bendant roedd gennym reswm da i ddathlu ein gwasanaethau ar-lein dwyieithog yn ddiweddar, wrth i'n 2 wasanaeth newydd – [newid cyfeiriad ar eich llyfr log cerbyd \(V5CW\)](#) a [chael llyfr log dyblyg \(V5CW\)](#) – fod y rhai cyntaf i ni eu datblygu a'u lansio yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg ar yr un pryd.

## Dyma sut aethom ati

Rwyf wedi gweithio gyda thîm Polisi'r Iaith Gymraeg yn rheolaidd dros y blynyddoedd diwethaf fel dylunydd gwasanaeth cofrestru cerbydau ar nifer o newidiadau mawr, ac rwyf yn llwyr ymwybodol o ofynion Deddf yr Iaith Gymraeg 1993 i ddarparu ffurflenni, llythyron a gwasanaethau Cymraeg. Fy nghan cyntaf oedd cynnwys y gofynion hyn o'r dechrau gyntaf ar gyfer ein gwasanaethau – newid cyfeiriad cerbyd (VCOA yn fyr) a V5CW dyblyg.

Rhannom y cynnwys a'r strwythur gyda Rheolwr Polisi'r Gymraeg Rhianedd Rhys a'i thîm mor gynted â'u bod wedi'u gorffen. Roedd hyn yn golygu y gallai anfon y cyfieithiadau draw atom fel y gallwn eu hintegreiddio i'r gwasanaeth fel cynnyrch a oedd wedi'u cwblhau.

Yr hyn a oedd wedi ein helpu i gyflawni hyn oedd y bartneriaeth gweithio da rhwng y tîm Dylunio Gwasanaeth, y dadansoddwyr busnes am y prosiect a thîm Polisi'r Gymraeg, a wnaeth sicrhau ein bod wedi gallu gwneud popeth yn llwyddiannus ac ar amser.



## Roedd ychydig o heriau...

Ein her fwyaf oedd yn ymwneud ag amser yn bennaf a sicrhau bod y gwaith roeddwn yn anfon i'w cyfieithu oedd y cynnwys terfynol. Mae cyfieithiadau Cymraeg yn dueddol o fod yn hirach na'r cynnwys Saesneg felly wnaethom wynebu rhai problemau gyda hyd y meysydd a'r lle ar y sgrin i gynnwys y lle ychwanegol oedd eu hangen am y cyfieithiadau, a allai fod yn ddyrys ar adegau. Serch hynny, nid oedd dim byd nad oeddwn yn gallu eu datrys gyda'n gilydd.

## Dysgom gwersi hwylus hefyd

Roeddwn yn bendant wedi dysgu o VCOA, wrth i ni ddechrau gweithio ar y gwasanaethau cael V5CW dyblyg o fewn wythnos i VCOA fynd yn fyw. Roeddwn wedi strwythuro cynllunio'r prosiect yn fwy, felly wrth i ni orffen y sgriniau roeddwn yn eu hanfon i gael eu cyfieithu'n fwy rheolaidd. Roedd ychydig o newidiadau munud diwethaf yn dilyn mewnwelediad ond mae hynny i'w disgwyl. Dyna beth yw gweithio'n [ystwyth](#) wedi'r cwbl.

## Bonws dwyieithog am ddefnyddwyr

Mae'r arwyddion hyd yma wrth ddefnyddwyr yn galonogol iawn. Mae'r nifer sydd wedi defnyddio'r 2 wasanaeth Cymraeg newydd yn barod yn hafal gyda'n gwasanaethau sydd wedi'u sefydlu ers tro fel [trethu eich cerbyd ar-lein](#) a [thrwyddedu gyrwyr ar-lein](#), sydd wedi bod mewn bodolaeth ers nifer o flynyddoedd.

## Ac yn olaf...

Nid wyf yn siaradwr Cymraeg (diolch i Rhianedd am gyfieithu'r flog hwn i mi), ond roeddwn yn falch iawn i greu'r gwasanaethau yma'n Gymraeg. Ni fyddai fyth yn croesi fy meddwl ei fod yn ychwanegiad opsiynol, felly rwyf yn ei weld fel cam safonol. Hoffwn gydnabod amynedd, cefnogaeth a gwaith Rhianedd a'i thîm, oherwydd ni fyddwn wedi gallu eu cyflwyno ar amser hebddynt.

Rwy'n hynod falch fod y gwasanaethau Cymraeg wedi mynd yn fyw ar yr un adeg â'r gwasanaethau Saesneg," ychwanegodd Rhianedd. "Mae'r teithiau hyn sy'n gwbl Gymraeg o'r dechrau i'r diwedd yn newyddion arbennig i ni a'n cwsmeriaid sy'n dymuno trafod gyda ni yn Gymraeg ac yn adeiladu ar y gwasanaethau Cymraeg rydym eisoes yn eu darparu. Diolch i bawb a wnaeth i hyn ddigwydd!

"Mae ein [Cynllun Iaith Gymraeg](#) a gytunwyd gyda Chomisiynydd y Gymraeg yn dangos ein hymrwymiad i'r iaith Gymraeg. Mae gennym gyfrifoldeb i ddangos ein bod yn trin y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg yn gyfartal. Rydym yn falch iawn bod ein gwasanaethau Cymraeg presennol wedi gweld cynnydd blwyddyn ar ôl blwyddyn yn y nifer sy'n eu defnyddio felly roedd yn bwysig iawn sicrhau bod y 2 wasanaeth newydd hyn yn cael eu lansio ar yr un pryd â'r

gwasanaethau Saesneg. Mae hyn yn sicrhau bod ein cwsmeriaid Cymraeg eu hiaith yn gallu defnyddio'r iaith o'u dewis nhw wrth drafod gyda ni.

Da iawn bawb!

Mae ein holl wasanaethau ar-lein Cymraeg wedi'u rhestri ar [dudalen gwasanaethau ar-lein Cymraeg](#) GOV.UK, a gallwch ddod o hyd iddynt o dan 'Trwyddedau gyrru' a Rhifau cofrestru cerbyd, treth cerbyd a phrofion MOT'.

[Let's block ads! \(Why?\)](#)

---

## Foreign Secretary meets senior ASEAN diplomats

Press release

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab held a virtual meeting with Ambassadors and High Commissioners from the ten ASEAN member states today.



Topics discussed included the importance of collaboration on COVID-19 vaccine production and distribution, as well as our shared challenge in tackling climate change and how the UK and Association of Southeast Asian Nations can strengthen ties by working together to build back a more sustainable global economy after the pandemic.

Earlier this year, the Foreign Secretary submitted the UK's application to become an [ASEAN Dialogue Partner](#) to join other countries including Australia, India and Japan in areas of common interest.

Foreign Secretary, Dominic Raab, said:

Whether it's fighting climate change, beating COVID19, or flying

the flag for free trade – the UK is a friend to ASEAN, and that was my clear message today on speaking to all ten ASEAN Ambassadors and High Commissioners to the UK.

We want 2021 to be a historic year for UK-ASEAN relations, and we look forward to building back better and greener together after the pandemic.

The wider Indo-Pacific region is a key partner for the UK. The ASEAN bloc is set to become the fourth largest 'single market' by 2030 and is of increasing geostrategic importance as political, economic and military power shifts towards Asia this century.

Published 7 December 2020