

# Health and Social Care Secretary's statement on coronavirus (COVID-19): 1 June 2020

Good afternoon and welcome to Downing Street for today's coronavirus briefing.

We're going to do things slightly differently today. I'm going to go through the charts. I'm joined by Professor John Newton from the test and trace programme. We'll then answer questions from the public and from journalists.

If there's one message that we have today it's that it is incredibly important for anybody who has symptoms of coronavirus – a cough or a fever or a change in your sense of taste or smell – that you get a test.

It's by people coming forward to get a test, which you can get on [nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://nhs.uk/coronavirus) or by dialling 119. It's by getting those tests that we're able to identify those who have the virus, ensuring you get the best possible treatment and ensuring that we can then trace the virus and through that we can control the virus.

That is the most important message and what everyone can do to help control this virus.

The first slide shows testing capacity and new cases. Yesterday there were 128,437 tests in the UK, meaning there has been a total 4.48 million tests carried out since the start of this crisis. Of course testing capacity stands at a higher level, 206,444.

This shows there is extra capacity for more tests and tests are available right now on the website if you go to [nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://nhs.uk/coronavirus) or dial 119. I want to highlight that because it's so important that people come forward for a test and anyone who needs a test can get a test.

The next chart shows that there are 1,570 cases confirmed as of yesterday. This is the lowest number since 25 March. In total, 276,332 cases have been confirmed. But this number of 1,570 shows that we've seen continued downward progress is the number of new confirmed cases.

We're getting this virus under control, which is why we can make the cautious, small, positive steps we've been able to make today. If we look at the number of admissions to hospital with COVID-19, 479. That's down from a peak of 3,121 on 2 April. The proportion of people on mechanical ventilators, the number which corresponds to that 9% figure, is that there are 606 people on mechanical ventilators. Again, that is the lowest since late March.

The picture is repeated across the country. We've seen in almost every case the number of people in hospital with COVID-19 is the lowest since late March. As of yesterday there were 7,541 in hospital with COVID-19.

The final slide. Sadly, 39,045 people have died with coronavirus, confirmed with a positive test. That's 111 yesterday. Again, that figure is the lowest figure since lockdown began on 23 March.

We can see from these charts the pattern right across the board, which is that we're making significant progress, but that there is still more to be done.

I want to say a few notes of thanks: thanks to our volunteer responders who in their hundreds of thousands have come forward and stepped up to the plate.

Thanks to the charities and the charity groups who are working so hard in very difficult times.

Thanks to colleagues in the NHS and in social care. Also to the businesses, pharmaceutical companies and diagnostic companies, without whom we simply couldn't have mounted this response.

To the pharmacists and the dentists, and I'm very pleased that dentistry is going to restart from next week. Especially for their hard work and their understanding, all of the families who stand behind those who are on the frontline.

At the start of pride season, I want to take a moment when we can't get together as we normally would to thank all colleagues in the LGBT community who do so much in the NHS and across social care.

I think this data shows that the action plan is working. The data shows that we're winning the battle against coronavirus.

Today, we're therefore able to make some cautious changes to the lockdown rules, carefully and safely. Of course these are balanced judgements and we take these decisions very carefully.

We must all remember that, in the war against this virus, we are all on the same side. We've come so far together, we can take these steps together. But do not step too far. The disease is not done yet. We mustn't throw away the progress that has been made.

Please take your responsibility seriously. If you have symptoms you must get a test and if the NHS asks you to isolate you must do so.

To everybody, stay alert, control the virus and save lives.

---

**[Office of Tax Simplification: new](#)**

# board member announced

Press release

Professor Judith Freedman CBE has joined the OTS board



The Chancellor has appointed Professor Judith Freedman CBE to the Board of the Office of Tax Simplification (OTS), in succession to Paul Johnson CBE.

OTS Chair, Kathryn Cearn's OBE said:

I am delighted to welcome Judith to the OTS Board. She will bring invaluable academic expertise, including a long-standing interest in tax simplification. She will strengthen the ability of the OTS to provide the government with advice on how to simplify the tax system.

I would also like to place on record our appreciation for all the input and advice that Paul Johnson has provided during his time as a member of the Board.

## **Further Information**

The OTS was established in 2010 to provide advice to the Chancellor on simplifying the UK tax system and was made a permanent, independent office of HM Treasury in July 2015. It was put on a statutory footing in the Finance Act 2016.

Judith Freedman is Pinsent Masons Professor of Taxation Law and Policy at Oxford University. She was a joint founder of the Oxford University Centre for Business Taxation and contributed to the Mirrlees Review on Reforming the Tax System for the 21st Century. She is General Editor of British Tax Review, chair of the Tax Law Review Committee of the Institute of Fiscal Studies and on the Advisory Group of the Tax Administration Research Centre.

The members of the OTS Board are now:

- Kathryn Cearns OBE (Chair)
- Bill Dodwell (Tax Director)
- Teresa Graham DBE (Senior Independent Director)
- John Cullinane
- Kathleen Russ
- Professor Judith Freedman CBE
- Beth Russell (HM Treasury)
- Ruth Stanier OBE (HMRC)

Press enquiries only please contact Julie Gillespie, OTS Press Officer 03000 585028

Published 2 June 2020

---

## [Leeds trial using nature to reduce flood risk gets on its marks](#)

A trial is being launched by the Environment Agency and University of Leeds at the Brownlee Triathlon Centre to look at how nature can be used to help reduce flood risk.

This will be the first urban pilot site set up as part of the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme's natural flood management (NFM) project.

It is being launched at the centre, owned by University of Leeds, to inspire students and the Leeds community to test how natural solutions such as creating wetlands can be used to help reduce the risk of flooding along the River Aire and in Leeds.

The site will be used to showcase many innovative ways to deliver NFM which will be used for academic research and help to develop practical ways to monitor different techniques and gather evidence on their success. When work on this urban pilot site begins towards the end of the year, it will be carried out in line with the latest government guidelines on social distancing.

Five pilot sites have been set up as part of the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme using techniques such as woodland creation, wetland scrapes and leaky barriers.

Holly Radcliffe Leeds NFM project manager from the Environment Agency, said:

We are very grateful to University of Leeds for working with us to develop a pilot site at the Brownlee Triathlon Centre to trial and test natural flood management.

The Triathlon Centre is a real asset for students and the local community, and are excited to work further with them to develop suitable designs for the site. "We hope that visitors will also be able to learn about how effective NFM techniques can be.

As the country faces a national and global climate emergency, restoring our natural environment is an important component to help reach net zero emissions in the future.

Natural Flood Management offers potential for climate mitigation, for example, creating wetlands, restoring our uplands and planting trees can help to capture tonnes of carbon from the atmosphere.

James Wright, from grounds and gardens team at University of Leeds, said:

We are delighted to be working with the Environment Agency on a natural flood management project at the Brownlee Centre.

This is a great opportunity to showcase the huge benefits of working with natural process to Leeds Community and academic partners across the university.

Councillor Judith Blake, Leader of Leeds City Council said:

This first urban pilot of the natural flood management programme is an exciting addition to the range of natural solutions we are exploring across the catchment to reduce flood risk. This approach can bring many different benefits so this is a promising opportunity to both enhance the local environment whilst building our resilience to climate change.

The site earmarked for the project is at Bodington Playing Fields to the north east of Leeds city centre.

The Brownlee Triathlon site earmarked for the project is to the north east of Leeds city centre.

Proposals for the site currently include:-

- Woodland creation – planting almost 4,000 trees and hedges at various locations across the site
- Measures to improve the management of the flow of surface water including grass covered earth bund -embankments which act as flood barriers to store water and pocket wetland – to be formed from series of wetland scrapes (shallow ponds) to control storm-water
- An interactive information board to educate

visitors about the benefits of each type of NFM and monitoring taking place on the site • A teaching area for groups, for example a two-tier grass covered amphitheatre, formed as an earth bund, an NFM measure and benches made from wood from various tree species on site • Demonstration areas featuring how to build your own leaky dam, the life-cycle of a tree and a sand pit where you can re-meander a straightened water channel • A discovery walk featuring sculptures, nature base art, activities, wildlife spotting, edible hedges and a sensory trail • Creation of a virtual tour of the site using 360 degree photographs

This pilot site will be part of the flagship Natural Flood Management (NFM) programme which forms part of the second phase of the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme alongside traditional engineering.

The development of the scheme is being led by Leeds City Council, working alongside the Environment Agency. This phase got underway this year and aims to invest £112.1 million in flood prevention measures for areas upstream of Leeds city centre, to better protect 1,048 homes and 474 businesses.

The NFM element is transformational in scale working with nature to reduce the risk of flooding across the catchment from the source of the River Aire, at Malham, through to Leeds City Centre. The programme will not only reduce flow of water from upstream so the landscape can hold more water in times of flood but also restore and create new habitat, increase biodiversity resilience and improve water quality. As well as tree and hedge planting, it includes re-channelling rivers to their natural courses, soil aeration, wetland creation and moorland restoration all of which have lots of benefits for people and wildlife.

This will contribute to delivering the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan and realising the vision of the Northern Forest in the Aire catchment.

For more information about the LeedsFAS [visit](#)

If you have land and would like to know more about how you could be involved in an NFM project, please get in touch with the project team and provide your contact details and they will get back to you. Email: [LeedsFAS.nfm@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:LeedsFAS.nfm@environment-agency.gov.uk)

---

## [\*\*The British Embassy Ashgabat opens its call for project proposals\*\*](#)

Call for project proposals to support the prevention, preparedness and response to the severe acute respiratory infectious diseases, particularly COVID-19

The British Embassy Ashgabat has now opened its call for project proposals for project work in Turkmenistan for the period April 2020 – March 2021. The Embassy will provide funding up to \$50,000 per project for successful project ideas that support activities related to Turkmenistan's national plan to prevent and respond to the spread of acute respiratory infectious diseases. Smaller-scale project proposals are also welcome. An emphasis will be placed on the efforts:

- to prevent the penetration of severe acute respiratory infectious diseases, particularly COVID-19, into the country
- to prevent their spread and mitigate potential health risks
- to train and raise awareness of health personnel and ordinary population
- to maintain the pace of socio-economic development of the country during the global pandemic, with a focus on vulnerable groups such as women, children, older people and people with disabilities

This assistance is part of the UK Government's broader COVID-19 global response to help the authorities respond effectively to the pandemic and its negative impacts.

## **Eligibility criteria**

In order to be eligible, the implementing partner must demonstrate:

- a proven record of successful implementation and delivery of similar projects in Turkmenistan
- sufficient operational, financial, human and expert capacities to deliver the expected results
- be legally able to carry out the activities indicated in the bid

Potential implementers may combine efforts and submit their project proposals in consortium of several organisations (implementers). Those could be both international and local organisations.

## **Bidding guidance**

The selection process will be competitive, fair and transparent. All proposals must have a clear purpose supported by achievable and measurable outputs/results (i.e. specific deliverables, outputs with indicators) and outcome(s) (the anticipated change resulting from the relevant project outputs and activities).

The proposals must be submitted in English using the appropriate project proposal form (A or B) and a fully developed activity-based budget with a financial breakdown on an Excel spreadsheet:

- Project Proposal Form A should be used for projects between \$15,000 and \$50,000 or the equivalent in local currency
- Project Proposal Form B should be used for smaller-scale, high-impact or exploratory projects up to \$15,000 or the equivalent in local currency

Implementing partners need to break down all activity costs into components so that it is clear how they are made up and which month each payment is due. You should provide as much detail as possible (e.g. figures for a workshop should be broken down into costs for the venue, catering, travel costs, etc.)

Implementing partners should not directly procure COVID-19-related medical supplies. This includes: personal protective equipment (PPE), oxygen-related equipment (incl. ventilators) and diagnostic tests/materials. Instead, the private sector is encouraged to increase local production and supply of medical supplies where possible.

As a rule, project funding should not be used to buy equipment, particularly those that an implementing agency should reasonably be expected to provide itself (business as usual items). However, the Embassy can exceptionally approve some purchases if there is a genuine need and the implementing partner could not be expected to hold such equipment as part of its core business operations.

The combined total of management fees, overheads and administration costs specifically related to the project (e.g. rent, project management, mandatory operational or legal costs, office maintenance, utilities, communications, stationery, bank charges, other crosscutting staff costs not directly attributable to the project, etc.) should not exceed 10% of the overall project budget. Management fees, if any, should be reflected as a fixed sum and not as a percentage of the budget.

The Embassy does not routinely make advance payments to implementing partners. The final payment to implementing partners will not be made before the Embassy receives project completion and financial reports, and is satisfied that the project has been delivered and completed satisfactorily.

Although for-profit/commercial organisations can submit project proposals for grant funding in response to a call for bids, no organisation of any kind is permitted to make a profit from a grant award.

All agreed project activities must be completed before 1 March 2021.

## **Selection criteria and bids assessment**

All project proposals will be assessed against the following criteria:

- alignment with the above mentioned objectives
- buy-in of the key beneficiaries/stakeholders of the project. An analysis of the project beneficiaries/stakeholders should be carried out during the preparation of the project, including consultation with the key beneficiaries/stakeholders. The project proposal should make clear who the key beneficiaries/stakeholders are and the level of their support for the project
- project outcomes that are measurable, realistic, impactful and achievable within the funding period
- project design that includes clear monitoring and evaluation procedures
- sustainability, demonstrating that project benefits continue after the

funding ends. Are the stated assumptions on sustainability too optimistic? How realistic is it that the changes will continue after the funding runs out?

- risk and financial accountability procedures. Implementing partners need to demonstrate how they would mitigate potential risks to project delivery. The aim is not to discourage projects with a high-level of risk, but to provide assurance that risk is being managed systematically and escalated appropriately when necessary
- the organisation's safeguarding policies to ensure the protection of beneficiaries
- feasibility of project delivery under current circumstances
- overall value for money. Have costs been reduced as far as possible? Will the project deliver the best product for the best price? Will the project support and deliver against our objectives?

## Timing

To apply for British Embassy funding organisations must submit completed applications to [eldar.latypov@fco.gov.uk](mailto:eldar.latypov@fco.gov.uk) by 22 June 2020.

## Additional guidance and documentation

---

# [Update on Fisheries Response Fund: Further payment for eligible businesses](#)

News story

Qualifying businesses will receive a further and final payment under the Fisheries Response Fund. A £10 million fund announced by the government in response to Covid-19.



Picture of the coast looking out to sea

Qualifying fishing and aquaculture businesses will receive a further and final payment from the government's £10 million Fisheries Response Fund.

[Eligible businesses](#) will be contacted by the Marine Management Organisation and payments will be made directly into business accounts by June 15.

So far more than 1200 fishing and aquaculture businesses have received payments from the Fund for April and May. The payment for June is the final payment from this Fund.

The Fund included £1m for the Domestic Seafood Supply Scheme, a grant scheme for projects to support the sale and consumption of locally caught fish. A joint endeavour between Defra, Cefas, the fishing industry and MMO, the first successful projects were awarded grants this week. The judging panel is due to review further projects on 8 June.

The Fund has been welcomed by the fishing industry which warned of businesses closing unless help was provided.

Tom McCormack, CEO, MMO, said: "We mobilised quickly to be able to put both of these funds in place and ensure the cash from the Treasury and the Maritime and Fisheries Fund was invested directly into the fishing industry at the earliest opportunity."

Please see [MMO's guide](#) to further assistance and support available the fishing industry.

Published 2 June 2020