

COVID-19: mitigating impacts on Gypsy and Traveller communities

Lord Greenhalgh, Communities Minister, has written to local authority chief executives to highlight that some members of Gypsy and Traveller communities are likely to be particularly vulnerable to COVID-19, and may need support in accessing basic facilities such as water, sanitation and waste disposal, to enable them to adhere to public health guidelines around self-isolation and social distancing during the outbreak.

GAD's clients share their views of our service

News story

Clients have responded positively to the work and projects undertaken by the Government Actuary's Department (GAD).



Client survey findings out now

Clients have responded positively to the work and projects undertaken by the Government Actuary's Department (GAD). The findings are set out in the newly published [annual client feedback survey 2019 to 2020](#).

GAD's role is to meet the UK public sector's needs for actuarial advice, supporting effective decision-making and robust financial reporting.

Survey results

GAD received survey responses from 61 of our clients. We asked how we rated for being highly valued and 85% of respondents gave us a score of at least 8

out of 10. Respondents provided further feedback on all aspects of our service and our wider engagement.

A sample of comments from survey recipients refer to GAD as 'interesting', 'innovative' and 'considered'.

Recent changes

We have invested in our technology to continue meeting evolving client needs and to modernise the way we work.

Over the past year we have:

- improved efficiency, consistency and quality assurance by transferring calculation processes to our central actuarial services team
- embraced new technology for data visualisation to help us communicate insights in a more engaging and interactive way
- updated our communications approach including creating and posting on our new blog site [Actuaries in government](#)

Looking ahead

The Government Actuary Martin Clarke said: "These results show we are well received by clients who responded. The survey also reflects the hard work and commitment of colleagues who continue to work closely with clients and to develop effective and engaging ways of delivering work and projects."

The survey results and pointers for improvements mean we'll continue to focus on delivering high-quality actuarial expertise to our clients, providing them value for money.

Published 30 April 2020

[Forensic Science Regulator newsletter: number 34](#)

- Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home)
- If you go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home

Do not meet others, even friends or family.

You can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms.

Treasury cut taxes to reduce PPE costs

News story

From tomorrow (1 May 2020), PPE purchased by care homes, businesses, charities and individuals to protect against Covid-19 will be free from VAT for a three-month period.



- a zero-rate of VAT will apply to sales of personal protective equipment (PPE) for Covid-19 from 1 May 2020 until 31 July 2020
- move will save care homes and businesses more than £100 million
- comes after import duty also removed from PPE

VAT on essential personal protective equipment (PPE) for Covid-19 will be temporarily scrapped saving more than £100 million for care homes and businesses dealing with the coronavirus outbreak, the government has announced.

From tomorrow (1 May 2020), PPE purchased by care homes, businesses, charities and individuals to protect against Covid-19 will be free from VAT for a three-month period.

Ministers have already removed import duties from PPE to ensure more essential equipment can get to the front line quicker.

The government has acted as soon as possible to bring the measure into force. EU law governing VAT – which the UK is bound to until the end of the transitional period – requires the UK to charge VAT on the equipment.

The government is acting under an exceptional basis allowed by EU rules during health emergencies. The European Commission recently indicated support for member states to introduce temporary VAT reliefs to mitigate the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The move will particularly benefit care providers, who are often unable to reclaim the 20% VAT they incur on their purchases.

The government is providing the NHS with the funding necessary to purchase PPE and has committed to providing extra funding to ensure the NHS has whatever it needs to tackle Covid-19.

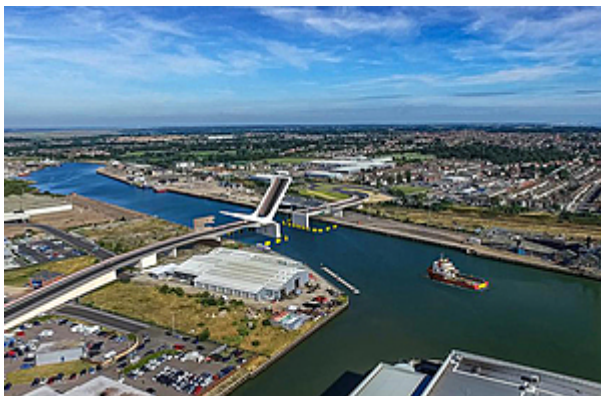
The government has already acted to speed up PPE supply, harnessing the power of UK industry, scouring the world for new stocks, and creating a giant distribution network to send PPE to keyworkers around the country.

Published 30 April 2020

[Lake Lothing Third Crossing granted development consent](#)

Press release

Today, Thursday, 30 April 2020, the application for the Lake Lothing Third Crossing has been given development consent by the Secretary of State for Transport.



Development consent has been granted to construct a new highway crossing of Lake Lothing, Lowestoft, connecting Riverside Road to the south of Lake Lothing with Peto Way to the north of Lake Lothing.

The application was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration by Suffolk County Council on the 13 July 2018 and accepted for examination on 9 August 2018. Following an Examination during which the public, statutory consultees and interested parties were given the opportunity to give evidence to the Examining Authority, a recommendation was made to the Secretary of State on 5 September 2019.

The Planning Inspectorate is committed to giving local communities the opportunity of being involved in the examination of projects that may affect them. Local people, the local authority and other interested parties were

able to participate in the 6 month long examination. The Examining Authority listened and gave full consideration to local views before making their recommendation.

The Planning Inspectorate's Chief Executive, Sarah Richards said: "The Planning Inspectorate has again demonstrated its ability to examine Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) within timescales laid down in the Planning Act 2008 providing developers and investors with the confidence to build and improve the infrastructure this country needs to secure future economic growth."

The decision announced today supports the recommendation made by the Planning Inspectorate. It is the 84th Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project to be examined and decided and brings the total of transport projects to twenty seven.

The decision, the recommendation made by the Examining Authority to the Secretary of State and the evidence considered by the Examining Authority in reaching its recommendation is publicly available on the [National Infrastructure Planning website](#).

ENDS

Journalists wanting further information should contact the Planning Inspectorate Press Office, on: 0303 444 5004 or 0303 444 5005 or email: Press.office@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Notes to editors:

The Planning Inspectorate, [National Infrastructure Programme of Projects](#) details the proposals which are anticipated to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate as applications in the coming months.

Published 30 April 2020