

All COVID-19 travel restrictions removed in the UK

- from 4am 18 March no-one entering the UK will need to take tests or complete a passenger locator form
- remaining managed hotel quarantine capacity will be fully stood down from the end of March, making the UK one of the first major economies to end all COVID-19 international travel rules
- contingency plans put in place to manage any future variants of concern (VoCs)

The government will remove the remaining restrictions on international travel for all passengers ahead of the Easter holidays, the Transport Secretary announced today (14 March 2022).

As one of the first major economies to remove all its remaining COVID-19 travel restrictions, this is a landmark moment for passengers and the travel and aviation sector.

From 4am Friday 18 March, all COVID-19 travel restrictions will be lifted, including the [passenger locator form](#) (PLF) for arrivals into UK, as well as all tests for passengers who do not qualify as vaccinated. This change, therefore, removes the need for unvaccinated passengers to take a [pre-departure test](#) and a [day 2 post arrival test](#).

This step reflects the decisions taken by the government, as set out in the [Living with COVID plan](#), and the success of the UK's vaccine and booster rollout, with 86% of the population having received a second dose and 67% of the population with a booster or third dose.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

The UK is leading the world in removing all remaining COVID-19 travel restrictions, and today's announcement is a testament to the hard work everyone in this country has put in place to roll out the vaccine and protect each other.

I said we wouldn't keep travel measures in place for any longer than necessary, which we're delivering on today – providing more welcome news and greater freedom for travellers ahead of the Easter holidays.

I look forward to continuing to work with the travel sector and partners around the world to keep international travel moving.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

As we learn to live with COVID-19, we're taking further steps to open up international travel once again ahead of the Easter holidays.

We will continue monitoring and tracking potential new variants and keep a reserve of measures that can be rapidly deployed if needed to keep us safe.

We can remove these final restrictions thanks to the incredible success of our vaccination programme, which has seen more than 8 out of 10 adults across the UK boosted.

To ensure the protection of public health, the government will maintain a range of contingency measures in reserve, which would enable it to take swift and proportionate action to delay any future harmful variants of COVID-19 entering the UK should the need arise.

In future, the government's default approach will be to use the least stringent measures, if appropriate, to minimise the impact on travel as far as possible – given the high personal, economic and international costs border measures can have – and the contingency measures will only be implemented in extreme circumstances.

Given the current state of the pandemic and a move towards global travel volumes returning to normal, the remaining managed hotel quarantine capacity will be fully stood down from the end of March.

Tim Alderslade, Chief Executive of Airlines UK, said:

Today's announcement sends a clear message to the world – the UK travel sector is back. With travellers returning to the UK no longer burdened by unnecessary forms and testing requirements, we can now look forward to the return to pre-COVID normality throughout the travel experience.

We're grateful for the timing of the announcement as we prepare to welcome back passengers this Easter and summer, for which we know there is huge pent-up demand, and for the UK's leadership in being the first major aviation market to remove all remaining restrictions. The time to return to the skies – to enjoy all that makes aviation and international travel great, for families and businesses – is now.

Karen Dee, Chief Executive of Airport Operators Association, said:

A return to restriction-free travel is good news for passengers and should allow for aviation to take significant steps towards recovery. People should feel encouraged to book their long-awaited holidays, trips to see relatives and friends abroad they haven't

seen for a long time and travel to rekindle business ties with other countries.

Steve Heapy, CEO of Jet2.com and Jet2holidays, said:

Two years after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, today's announcement marks international travel finally returning to normal. The removal of passenger locator forms and testing regimes means that customers can at long last enjoy hassle-free travel, just like they did before the pandemic.

With Easter just around the corner and summer fast approaching, this announcement comes at the perfect time. Since restrictions started to be eased at the beginning of the year, we have experienced strong, sustained demand and the complete removal of forms and requirements will boost that demand even further.

Additionally, UKHSA will continue to closely monitor the prevalence and spread of harmful variants and keep international data under review.

While there will be no border health measures on arrival in the UK from 18 March, other countries are at different stages in the pandemic and many still require passengers to comply with requirements.

Travellers should continue to check GOV.UK travel guidance including Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) [travel advice](#) to keep up to date with other countries' entry requirements.

Passengers are also encouraged to carefully check booking conditions for flexibility in amending bookings prior to buying tickets. People will continue to be able to access their vaccine and recovery records through the [NHS COVID Pass](#) to use when travelling overseas.

[Armed Forces celebrate global partnerships on Commonwealth Day 2022](#)

News story

Armed forces personnel took part in events to mark Commonwealth Day with a commemoration at the Memorial Gates and a service at Westminster Abbey.



Defence Minister Jeremy Quin attended the Commonwealth Memorial Gates service in London. 14 March 2022.

The Band of the Coldstream Guards and a Piper from 1st Battalion Scots Guards provided music for the service at the Commonwealth Memorial Gates service, while the State Trumpeters of The Band of the Household Cavalry and Fanfare Trumpeters from the Band of the Welsh Guards performed at The Commonwealth Service at Westminster Abbey.

The Band of the Scots Guards with the Commonwealth Youth Orchestra and Choir perform at Horse Guards Parade, 14 March 2022. Crown Copyright.

Defence Minister Jeremy Quin laid a wreath on behalf of the Ministry of Defence at the Commonwealth Memorial Gates. Senior Armed Forces officers from commonwealth nations attended the service.

On Horse Guards Parade, the Commonwealth Youth Orchestra and Choir performed alongside The Band of the Scots Guards.

Commonwealth representatives prepare to lay wreaths at the Memorial Gates service in London on Commonwealth Day, 14 March 2022. Crown Copyright.

The theme of Commonwealth Day 2022 is 'Delivering A Common Future', celebrating the commonwealth countries' united efforts to achieve common goals, including protecting natural resources, boosting trade, and delivering a peaceful, prosperous, and more sustainable future.

The UK armed forces have made notable high-profile contributions to these efforts throughout recent months:

- **Australia:** The UK, Australia and the US announced a landmark defence and security partnership to protect and defend our shared interests in the Indo-Pacific.
- **Tonga:** Royal Navy ship HMS Spey delivered vital humanitarian aid to Tonga, in addition to UK-funded supplies onboard the Royal Australian

Navy's HMAS Adelaide following the catastrophic tsunami that hit the islands.

- **Kenya:** The UK Armed Forces took part in a joint exercise with the Kenyan Defence Forces where troops rehearsed warfare in a demanding terrain.
- **Zambia:** British Army personnel deployed last summer to train local rangers to prevent the poaching of precious wildlife.
- **Cyprus:** The UK supports UN operations on the island and provides search and rescue support to local emergency services.
- **Nigeria:** The UK and Nigeria have signed a deal to work even more closely on defence and security, with the UK providing training to the Nigerian Armed Forces.
- **Barbados:** Royal Navy ship RAF Wave Knight and a Wildcat helicopter joined HMS Medway in Barbados to share aid for those affected by the volcanic eruption in St Vincent.
- **Jamaica:** British-Jamaican RAF gunner Lance Corporal Shanwayne Stephens competed for Team Jamaica at the 2022 Winter Olympics.

Given that 2022 is Her Majesty's Jubilee year, there was also a special focus on the role that service plays in the lives of people and communities across the commonwealth.

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[Change of Governor of the Falkland Islands: Alison Mary Blake CMG](#)

Press release

Ms Alison Blake CMG has been appointed Governor of the Falkland Islands and Her Majesty's Commissioner for South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands in succession to Mr Nigel Phillips CBE. Ms Blake will take up her appointment during July 2022.



Full name: Alison Mary Blake

Married to: Col Peter A Henry (Retd)

Dates	Role
2019 to 2021	Kabul, Her Majesty's Ambassador
2016 to 2019	Dhaka, British High Commissioner
2014 to 2015	FCO, Appeals Officer, Human Resources Directorate and also three months Full-Time language training (Bengali)
2011 to 2014	Islamabad, Deputy High Commissioner
2007 to 2010	FCO, Head, Conflict Group
2006 to 2007	Cabinet Office, Deputy Director, Defence & Overseas Secretariat
2001 to 2005	Washington, First Secretary Political
1999 to 2001	FCO, Deputy Head, Eastern Adriatic Department
1996 to 1999	UK Delegation to NATO, Brussels, First Secretary
1989 to 1995	Ministry of Defence, including Assistant Private Secretary to the Secretary of State for Defence
1989	Joined the Civil Service

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[Reinforcing our support and appreciation for the work of the OSCE](#)

Thank you Mr President, and thank you Chair-in-Office, Foreign Minister Rau, for your briefing, and Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo for yours.

I would like first to pay tribute to the bravery and dedication of OSCE staff, and in particular to Maryna Fenina, a Ukrainian Special Monitoring Mission employee, who was killed in the Russian shelling of Kharkiv on March 1 while getting medicine for her family.

For decades, the OSCE has worked to bring security to Europe.

And yet, we meet today in the middle of Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine – one OSCE signatory tearing up the rulebook and pursuing war against another, as Foreign Minister Rau said, as if the Geneva Conventions and humanitarian law never existed.

President Putin's war violates fundamental principles of both the OSCE and the United Nations: sovereignty; inviolability of borders; respect for territorial integrity; and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

This war is a threat to us all. To the systems we have built together to preserve peace. It's a threat too to the peace and security of millions of people in Europe, Africa and Asia who rely on agricultural, energy and commodity supply chains – already profoundly disrupted by Russia's invasion.

We recognise the extensive efforts, which Foreign Minister Rau described, which the OSCE has made to try and avoid this catastrophe:

Russia was offered a chance to raise any security concerns in the OSCE Renewed European Security Dialogue – but said it was not the right time. We now know they were planning war all along.

Ukraine and others invoked the OSCE Vienna Document Risk Reduction Mechanism – to seek transparency from Russia and Belarus and to de-escalate the situation. Russia refused to engage.

And of course, the OSCE has worked for years to support implementation of the Minsk agreements.

Russia is accused of the gravest war crimes – bombing schools, hospitals and homes; targeting families as they try to run to safety. We welcome action taken under the Moscow Mechanism to hold Russia to account. The OSCE fact-finding mission must be given full access so that evidence can be gathered.

Finally Mr President, I would like to stress that we continue to support the vital role of the OSCE field missions in Central Asia and the Western Balkans, including through its Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. We strongly support OSCE efforts to facilitate a peaceful resolution of the conflicts in Georgia, Moldova and Nagorno-Karabakh.

The United Kingdom remains steadfast in our support and appreciation for the work of the OSCE, and for Poland's Chairmanship at this critical time.

I thank you, Mr President.

Children to benefit from changes to

Child Maintenance Service

Press release

Children of separated parents are set to benefit from changes to the Child Maintenance Service announced today (14 March 2022) as new powers are revealed.



The new powers being introduced will expand the list of companies and organisations required to provide information to the Child Maintenance Service (CMS) which will help the service trace the paying parent, calculate maintenance and enforce arrears more effectively.

To make it easier for companies to respond quickly and securely, the process is now being simplified so information can be passed on by secure digital means instead of compulsory in-person visits from CMS inspectors.

The government is also bringing forward proposals to allow all communications to be digital, which will speed up the service and make sure information is passed on to parents quickly.

Following responses from children's charities, parents and interested organisations, the government has published the details of the new powers in its response to the [consultation on the Child Maintenance Service](#).

DWP Lords Minister Baroness Stedman-Scott said:

At the heart of these changes is our commitment to making sure children get the financial support they need to have the best start in life.

We're bringing the service into the modern age, removing barriers that can slow down cases and prevent money reaching children.

The Child Maintenance Service collected or arranged £1 billion for

children over the last 12 months, improving the lives of hundreds of thousands of children across the UK.

The CMS is set up for parents who have not been able to make a private arrangement about how their child's living costs will be paid. Child maintenance payments help lift around 120,000 children across the UK out of poverty each year.

Plans for future changes when the legislation timetable allows will:

- include unearned income in child maintenance calculations
- extinguish small volumes of very low value debt (£6.99 and under) where the maintenance calculation has ended but there remains an outstanding debt, and the value of the debt is substantially less than the cost of collecting it
- extinguish arrears where child maintenance has been deducted from a parent's earnings and their employer has gone into administration, and the outstanding arrears can no longer be recovered.

Further information: – The Child Maintenance Service was established in 2012 to replace the old Child Support Agency, to increase levels of cooperation between separated parents and encourage parents to meet their responsibilities to provide their children with the financial support they need to secure better outcomes in life. – The full consultation response can be found [here](#). – Regulation for digital notifications and expanded information regulations will be laid and come into force as soon as parliamentary time allows. – Postal communications will still be available for all communications where parents prefer this.

Media enquiries for this press release – 0115 965 8781

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