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Autumn 2020 Edition



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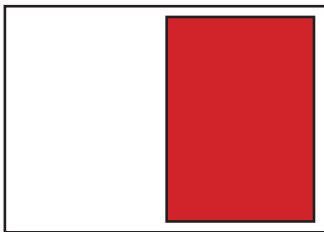
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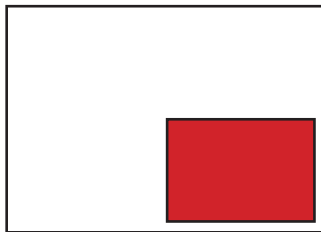
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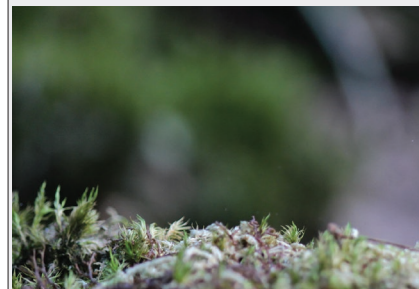
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News Roundup

and sports

Summary of the main news and sports events over the last three months

By Paul G Bazeley for Government World

July News Review

In coronavirus news, pubs, restaurants and hairdresser were allowed to re-open in England with strict distancing rules in place. While restrictions were eased earlier in the month further lockdown easings were postponed due to an increase in coronavirus cases. Places such as casinos and bowling alleys were told to remain closed after Boris Johnson stated it was 'time to squeeze the brake pedal' now that cases were beginning to increase.

Protests continued in America and the UK over the killing of George Floyd by American police and to raise awareness of racism with many of the protests being organised by the Black Lives Matter movement.

Boris Johnson announced that up to three million Hong Kong residents would be

offered UK citizenship after a controversial national security law was passed by China. China claimed the UK was violating international law and threatened to stop recognising the BNO passport (British National (Overseas) Passport).

The Casual Dining Group, who own restaurant chains Café Rouge, Bella Italia and Las Iguanas, fell into administration. They cited the Covid-19 pandemic as having been a major factor in their economic downturn. Ninety-one of the outlets closed immediately leading to 1,900 job losses.

EnchroChat, a military-grade encrypted communication system used by organised criminals, was hacked by police after a Europe-wide operation that lasted four years. The hack led to the arrests of 746 suspects and the seizure of more than £54million in goods including cash, drugs and guns.

US President Donald Trump officially declared his intent to withdraw the United States from the World Health Organisation (WHO) in 2021. The president notified Congress and the UN of his intentions after he accused the WHO of being under China's control. Presidential challenger Joe Biden tweeted that he would re-join the WHO if he were to become president.

The UK Court of Appeal ruled that Shamima Begum, a 20-year-old who left the country to join ISIL in 2015, can return to the UK to fight for her citizenship. The Home Office had previously revoked her citizenship while she was living in a refugee camp in Syria, they stated that they were disappointed by the decision and would apply for permission to appeal.

A statue of Jen Reid, a Black Lives Matter protestor, was briefly erected without permission on the plinth of the toppled statue of Edward Colston which stood in the centre of Bristol. The statue was removed the next day. Bristol Mayor Marvin Rees stated that the 'people of Bristol will decide its future' when deciding what will be placed on the plinth.

A sealed copy of the Nintendo Entertainment System game Super Mario Bros. from 1985 sold for \$114,000. It became a world record for a video game sold at auction.

It was announced that Johnnie Walker Scotch Whisky will soon be sold in paper bottles. A trial for the environmentally friendly packaging is scheduled for 2021.

July Sports Review

The Premier League concluded its 2019/2020 season with Liverpool being crowned the champions on 99 points, 18 points ahead of Man City in second place. Man United and Chelsea also managed to capture Champions League spots, while Leicester and Tottenham secured Europa League places. Bournemouth, Watford

and Norwich were relegated.

The delayed Formula One season got underway with Valtteri Bottas won the first race in Austria before a hat-trick of wins for Lewis Hamilton put the other Mercedes driver top of the driver standings at the end of the month.

August News Review

The UK economy officially entered recession for the first time since 2009. The economy shrank by 20.4% compared with the first quarter of the year. Lockdown measures due to the coronavirus saw shops close and factory and construction output fall leading to a decrease in household spending. A recession is defined as two consecutive quarters of economic decline.

The Office for National Statistics reported the worst quarterly job losses in the UK since the 2009 financial crisis. Later in the month the Office for National Statistics also claimed the UK's national debt had exceeded £2 trillion for the first time.

A-level results sparked protests after it was revealed the algorithm used to calculate

results downgraded over a third of results. It was later announced that students were able to use their teachers predicted grades instead of their algorithm results.

Joe Biden was officially nominated as the Democratic presidential candidate to run against Donald Trump (the Republican candidate) in the November US Presidential election.

Jacob Blake, a black American, was shot several times in the back by police as he tried to enter his car where his three children were seated. It is alleged that Blake had a knife before officers fired seven shots. His family said he had been left paralysed from the waist down, however, it is unknown if it is permanent. Protests broke out around the Police headquarters in Kenosha and cars were set alight before a night-time curfew was put in place.

Virgin Atlantic declared itself bankrupt and files for Chapter 15 bankruptcy protection in New York after a large decline of international

flights due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The company filed for protection after it told a court in London it would run out of money in September if a rescue deal failed.

Toshiba, which led the laptop market in the 1990s, sold its final stake in the PC manufacturer Dynabrook Inc to Sharp. The move saw Toshiba exit the PC market after 35 years.

The African Regional Certification Commission announced that they have declared Africa free of Polio. The news came four years after the last recorded case of wild polio in Nigeria.

The actor Chadwick Boseman, famed for his role in the Black Panther film, died after a battle with cancer. The news came to a surprise for many with the actor never discussing his diagnosis in public.

August Sports Review

Arsenal beat Chelsea 2-1 in the FA Cup final to secure a place in the Europa League next season. Chelsea took the lead with an early goal from Pulisic, however, a penalty saw the Gunners draw level before half time and then a strike from Aubameyang in the second half saw

them clinch victory.

Bayern Munich beat Barcelona 8-2 in the quarter-finals of the Champions League. It was the first time that a side has conceded eight goals in Champions League knockout match and was one of Barcelona's worst defeats and the first time they have conceded eight goals since 1946. Bayern went on to win the tournament after beating Paris Saint-Germain 1-0 in the final. It was the German clubs' sixth Champions League title. In the Europa League Sevilla defeated Inter Milan 3-2 in the final to claim the trophy for a record sixth time.

The Manchester United and England defender Harry Maguire was given a suspended sentence by a Greek court after being found guilty of aggravated assault, resisting arrest and attempted bribery.

September News Review

A rise in coronavirus cases led the Government to place a ban on gatherings of six or more people in England. Later in the month, the alert level in the UK was raised from 3 to 4 meaning the

transmission rate of coronavirus is 'high or rising exponentially'. The governments' scientific advisor warned there could be 50,000 cases a day by mid-October if no further action was taken.

The BBC reversed its decision to ban the songs 'Rule, Britannia!' and 'Land of Hope and Glory' from the Last Night of the Proms 2020 after expressing concerns over their links to colonialism and slavery. Critics claimed the songs were 'outdated' and glorified racism.

An article from The New York Times reported that it had obtained tax-returns for Donald Trump and his business enterprises. The documents seemed to show that Trump had paid no federal tax in 11 of the last 15 years and had paid \$750 in income taxes in 2016 and 2017.

The US National Snow and Ice Data Centre reported in 2020 the Arctic Sea had melted to an area of 3.74 million square kilometres, the second smallest area since 1979 when records began. According to reports Arctic sea ice has already

lost two-thirds of its volume over the past four decades and is a sobering reminder that polar warming is a growing issue.

The United Arab Emirates announced the Emirates Lunar Mission, in which it plans to send a space exploration vehicle to the moon by the end of 2024. In an announcement on Twitter, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum said the country will send an unmanned lunar rover to unexplored parts of the moon.

Two people were stabbed outside the former headquarters of Charlie Hebdo, the satirical magazine, in Paris. Two suspects were later arrested in the city centre with further arrests happening in the following days. The attack was thought to be connected to a terrorist enterprise and came after the magazine republished cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad as the trial of suspected accomplices of terrorist gunmen who attacked their office in 2015 began.

US Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg died of cancer at the age of 87. Ginsburg was a well-known feminist and liberal in the US. She was also the second woman to sit on the Supreme Court.

September Sports Review

The 2020/2021 Premier League season began, just seven weeks after the previous season which was disrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The first games saw strong starts for the two Merseyside clubs, Liverpool and Everton. Leicester also secured a good start to the season with fans hoping for a repeat of their 15/16 league win.

In Formula One Lewis Hamilton stayed top of the driver standings. However, Bottas secured a win in Russia at the end of the month as Hamilton slipped to third in the race giving the Fin some hope of catching his teammate.

Long-distance runners Mo Farah and Sifan Hassan broke the world record for the most distance covered in one hour for men and women respectively. Mo Farah ran 21.33 kilometres (13.254 miles) and Sifan Hassan ran 18.930 kilometres (11.763 miles).

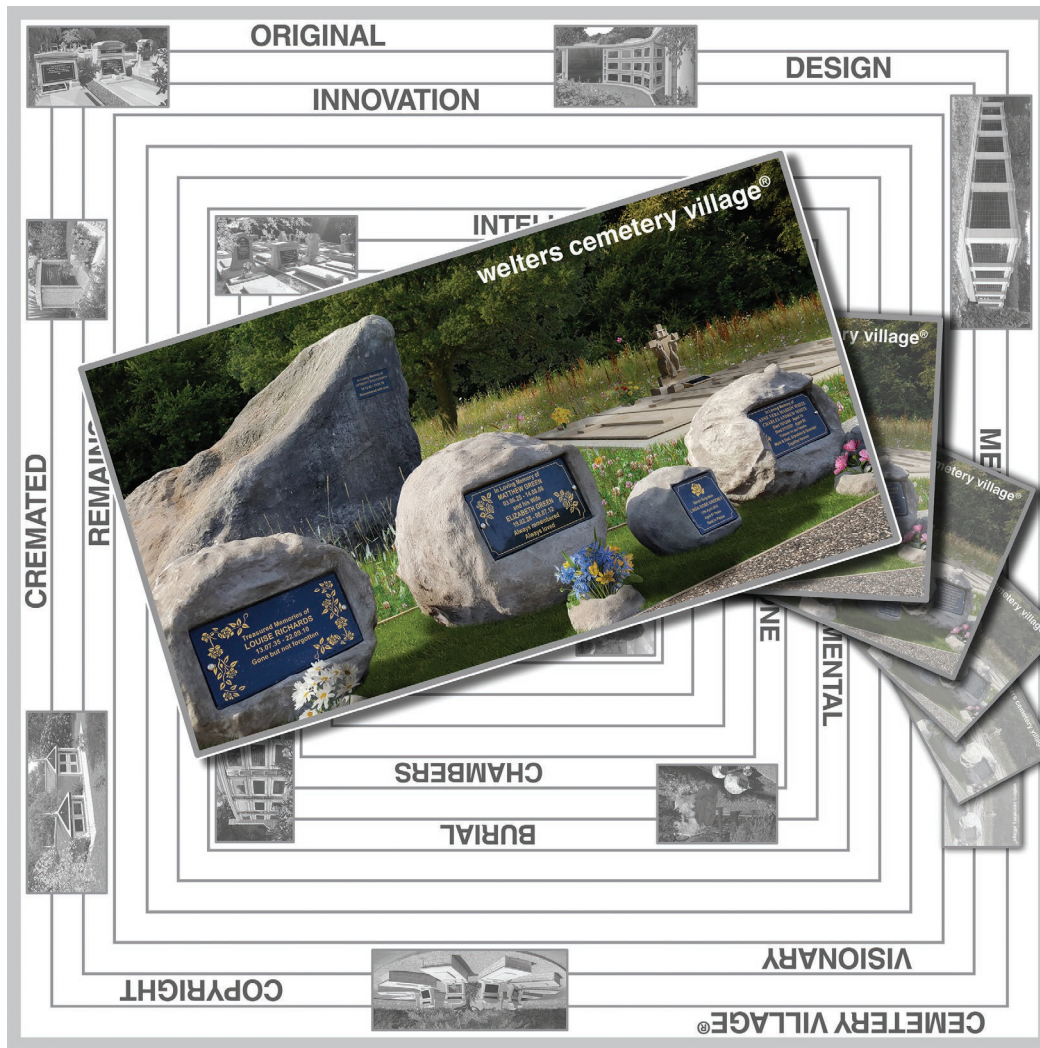
Toyota Gazoo Racing won the 24 Hour of Le Mans race. It was the team's third straight victory in consecutive years.

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Creativity keeping road workers safe and the country moving

July

Highways England has followed Government guidance and continued to carry out essential maintenance and press ahead with major schemes to get supplies and workers where they need to be during the lockdown.

But to ensure workers are also protected and can stick to strict COVID-19 restrictions, teams have developed some creative ways to maintain social distancing – ranging from waistband alarms that alert workers to anyone within 2m to virtual safety inspections.

Highways England Executive Director, Commercial and Procurement Malcolm Dare said:

“During the coronavirus crisis maintaining a safe road network while ensuring our workers are protected has been the priority.

Project teams across the country, from both Highways England and our supply chains, have taken up that challenge and developed creative and innovative ways

to get essential roadworks done without compromising the safety of workers.

We are proud of the way that during these difficult times our teams have carried on working to keep the country moving and through various safeguarding measures have been able to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.”

In the South West workers have been wearing devices tied around their waists which sets off a buzzer in their safety helmets if someone gets too close.

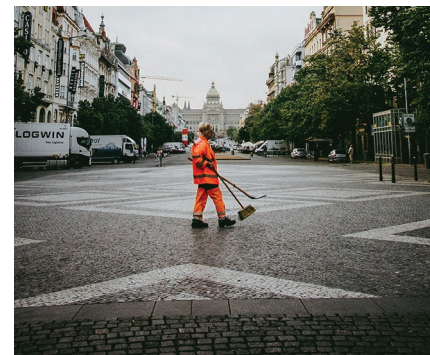
The technology was already being used by Highways England contractor, Barrier Service Ltd, to alert workers on site when heavy equipment and machinery was moving nearby. The transponders have now been adapted to alert workers to anyone close to two metres away.

Mark Fox, Head of Scheme Delivery in the South West, said:

“With the help of our contractors we

are finding innovative solutions to keeping workers safe on site by adapting existing technology designed to alert workers when heavy equipment is close by.

By reprogramming radio transponders worn on a waistband we have been able to provide a protective bubble around all our workers. When someone gets close to two metres away a buzzer is set off in the workers hard hat to alert them and social distancing can be maintained.”



The system is being used on barrier replacement schemes on the M4, M5 and M32.

It is hoped that the waistband devices will shortly be replaced with a smaller, armband alert.

While in the West Midlands, managers have been able to carry out safety checks on work sites and depots through a virtual tour which has avoided the need for additional people to travel there.

Wearing a mounted portable camera and headset, a supervisor already working on site has been directed around the facilities by the managers through Microsoft Teams. This enables them to view different areas and facilities as well as ask questions of workers on site.

As well as the usual safety checks they have also been able to check the COVID-19 measures such as wash stations and vehicle sanitisation are all in place.

Elsewhere, hi-vis jackets have been issued to those working on the A45/A6 Chowns Mill roundabout improvements project which carry messages to remind workers to keep their distance.

Workers on the Northamptonshire scheme wear jackets carrying the warnings:

Follow the guidelines
Keep 2m distance
Wash your hands

In Manchester, an important operation to lift a bridge – weighing around 800 tonnes - looked like it might not take place when a key member of the team could not be present because of COVID-19 restrictions.

Highways England is repairing the 200m-long bridge which carries the M60 over the River Mersey and Palatine Road near Didsbury and needed to lift it by 5mm so the work could take place.

Balfour Beatty's permanent works designer Phil Davis was unable to attend because of the lockdown but was vital to the work. Using Microsoft Teams, Phil could monitor the situation from his home and help complete the job without compromising anyone's health or safety.

Balvac, Balfour Beatty's repair, strengthening, refurbishment and protection specialist, is the principal contractor on the scheme to repair the 15 concrete columns that the M60 bridge currently rests on.

The bridge was originally constructed using reinforced concrete in the early part of the 1970s and some of the steel inside the concrete has now begun to rust.

Across the country Highways England projects have introduced strict measures to

prevent coronavirus including daily briefings and updates, COVID-19 risk assessments, social distancing, deep cleaning and pop-up handwashing stations.

Low traffic numbers – which have fallen by up to 85 per cent during the lockdown – have also enabled schemes across the country to safely carry out work during the daytime.

This gives the teams a longer working window than they have overnight so can finish the roadworks more quickly and means residents are not disturbed by noise during the evening.

The A500 Etruria Widening Scheme in north Staffordshire, adding an extra lane in each direction to the busy dual carriageway, has been able to switch to daytime working to get ahead of schedule.

While in the South West a number of projects have been brought forward and completed in April and May including six resurfacing schemes on the A30, A38 and M5 and the replacement of six-and-a-half miles of central reservation barrier along the M32, M5 and M4.

New video tech to increase remote hearings in civil and family courts

July

- The Cloud Video Platform is being extended to civil and family courts

- Over 120 courts set to have more reliable video tech that improves remote court hearings

- Roll out is part of HMCTS recovery plan to ensure justice continues to be served

It follows the successful implementation of the Cloud Video Platform (CVP) across 60 crown courts and 93 magistrates' courts. The technology has been used in some 3,600 crown court hearings and more than 7,000 overnight remand cases heard by magistrates.

CVP can be accessed by any device that has a camera and a microphone – such as a mobile phone or tablet. Anyone can join easily, and securely, through a web browser, and sessions can be locked to make sure only appropriate parties join.

Training rooms can also be set up so that sessions may be rehearsed before they go live.

Extending it to civil and family proceedings means that all courts in England and Wales will have the technology needed to hold remote hearings – giving users a safer, reliable, and more accessible service, while ensuring justice continues to be delivered.

Courts Minister, Chris Philp, said:

“We have worked closely with the judiciary to continue thousands of hearings during the pandemic.

This new system will bolster our efforts to prioritise urgent cases and increase our capacity to hear them remotely – ensuring justice is delivered effectively and safely.”

Today's (1 July 2020) announcement forms part of the wider HMCTS recovery

plan, which sets out how courts will tackle the expected increase in



outstanding cases following the pandemic in a safe way. Plans include:

- Increasing capacity by identifying several new 'Nightingale' court sites to increase capacity
- Assessing whether there is a need to extend operating hours
- Determining how best to hold jury trials in a socially distanced way

Thanks to dedicated HMCTS staff and the judiciary, the number of criminal, civil and family cases involving remote technology has increased by 90% since the pandemic began. This has meant that domestic abuse victims could continue to obtain protection orders, children could be safeguarded, and dangerous suspects would not be released from jail as their remand expired.

The CVP roll out will ensure that these vital cases continue to be heard safely and securely. The extension to county courts will take place over the next few months to cover every civil and family court site.

CVP is being rolled out to further Crown and Magistrates' courts this month, and it's scheduled to be available in all our criminal courtrooms by the end of July.

Comprehensive new funding package for councils to help address coronavirus pressures and cover lost income during the pandemic

July

- Government announces new comprehensive package of support to address spending pressures and in recognition of lost income

- Further £500 million brings funding given to support local councils with pressures to £4.3 billion, part of a package of over £27 billion to help councils, businesses and communities

- New scheme will also reimburse councils for lost income and allow council and business rates tax deficits to be repaid over 3 years instead of one

A major new support package to help councils respond to coronavirus has been announced by Local Government Secretary Robert Jenrick today, Thursday 2 July, as part of a comprehensive plan to ensure councils' financial sustainability for the future.

The government has delivered an unprecedented package of support to councils over recent months, and councils in England will now receive a further, unringsfenced £500 million to respond to spending pressures they are facing.

Recognising that councils are best placed to decide how to meet



pressures in their local area, this funding has not been ringfenced.

In addition to this funding, a major new scheme introduced by the government today will help to reimburse lost income during the pandemic and boost cash flow.

Where losses are more than 5% of a council's planned income from sales, fees and charges, the government will cover them for 75p in every pound lost.

Additionally, to enable them to get on the front foot and build much-needed breathing space into their budgets, the government is also bringing in changes so that they can spread their tax deficits over 3 years rather than the usual one.

Overall, in the last 6 months, government has worked closely with local authorities to understand their needs and provided more than £27 billion to help councils, businesses and communities through COVID-19.

This comprehensive support includes:

- £3.2 billion of new funding to councils
- £600 million to adult social care to support



providers through a new infection control fund

- Over £20 billion in support for businesses
- £500 million in council tax hardship funds to offer economic support to the most vulnerable
- £300 million to support track and trace

Local Government Secretary Robert Jenrick MP said:

“Councils are playing a huge part in supporting their communities during this pandemic. From supporting the most vulnerable and keeping vital services running to operating local track and trace, council workers have been at the forefront of this great national effort and are the

unsung heroes of this pandemic.

Today I am providing a further package of support that takes our support for councils during this pandemic to £4.3 billion to help meet the immediate pressures councils are facing. I know that the loss of revenue from car parks and leisure centres has created huge difficulties, so I am introducing a new scheme to help cover these losses.

This government will continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with councils and communities as we recover from this pandemic as we renew our commitment to unite and level up the country.”

The package also follows the Prime Minister's announcement yesterday of the fast tracking of £96 million of investment through the Towns Fund to help kick-start activity in town centres and high streets, improve outdoor spaces, build cycle lanes and more. £360 million will also be provided to redevelop brownfield sites to provide much-needed housing.

Scheme to cover councils' lost income

Recognising the unprecedented impact the pandemic has had on councils' income from car parks, museums and other cultural assets, the government is introducing a scheme to compensate them for these losses.

This means that all relevant losses, over and above the first 5% of planned income from sales, fees and charges, will be compensated for at a rate of 75p in every pound.

This balances the need to provide compensation given the scale of the income losses, encouraging councils to manage and minimise loss where they can and giving them the certainty they need.

In the next Spending Review, we will determine what support councils need to help them meet the pressures of income loss from council tax and business rates.

As part of this, the Local Government Secretary also announced today a proposal for a phased repayment of council tax and business rates deficits over 3 years, rather than requiring complete repayment of deficits next year.

This will allow authorities to pay deficits off in a reasonable timescale and will limit their cashflow pressures.

Minister for Regional Growth and Local Government Simon Clarke MP said:

“Since the start of this pandemic, local councils have been at the forefront of our national effort to tackle the virus, and they will continue to play a significant role as we look towards our recovery.

We are more committed than ever to unite and level up this country and this package will ensure councils have access to vital, additional funding so they can continue to serve their communities as they so admirably have done to date.”

Further information

Further details on the allocations of the funding will be made in due course.

The new income loss scheme will involve a 5% deductible rate, whereby councils will pay the first 5% of all lost planned sales, fees and charges income, with the government compensating them for 75p in every pound of loss thereafter.

By introducing a 5% deductible the government is accounting for an acceptable level of volatility, whilst shielding authorities from the worst losses.

In the next Spending Review, the government will agree an apportionment of irrecoverable council tax and business rates losses between central and local government for 2020 to 2021.

Beyond the support provided, any council that is faced with an unmanageable pressure or is concerned about their future financial position should contact Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

The Barnett formula will apply in the usual way to additional funding. The devolved administrations will therefore initially receive almost £100 million in relation to this announcement. This comprises £50 million for the Scottish Government, £30 million for the Welsh Government and £15 million for the Northern Ireland Executive.

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Ventilator Challenge hailed a success as UK production finishes

July

Scientific modelling at the start of the coronavirus crisis predicted that the NHS was going to run out of ventilators, so the Government launched the Ventilator Challenge with a call to arms to manufacturers and medical device companies to step up production of existing designs and design new ventilators from scratch.

The Government received an overwhelming response, with over 5000 companies offering their support and over 7500 members of staff contributing to the effort.

Thanks to the extraordinary sacrifices of the British people, and to businesses across the United Kingdom in joining the national effort, the NHS has been protected throughout the coronavirus crisis and everyone who needed a ventilator has been able to access one.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

“The Ventilator Challenge has proven just how much Britain can achieve when confronted with a difficult problem – bringing together the best minds in manufacturing, innovation and design.

Thanks to these efforts, everyone who needed a ventilator has had access to one, and the NHS has the vital machines it needs to continue providing life-saving support against this deadly virus.”

UK production of ventilators under the Ventilator Challenge is to draw to a close this weekend with 14,000 devices expected to have been produced in around three months, accounting for over a half of all the ventilators now available to the NHS frontline.

It has also been confirmed that the Penlon ventilator has had its CE mark confirmed, meaning that the device, which was

newly adapted for the Ventilator Challenge, is now available for export abroad. Learning from their experiences of the Ventilator Challenge Penlon are now setting up a new line aimed at exporting across the world.

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster Michael Gove said:

“The Ventilator Challenge has been a great success and I would like to thank every manufacturer and designer, and their incredible workforces, for the huge part they’ve played in the national effort to protect our NHS and save lives.

In around three months, industry has stepped up to make 14,000 new machines to save lives on the NHS frontline and to help safeguard against any future outbreak.

The Ventilator Challenge has shown that UK manufacturing always rises to the challenge at a time of national need. Everyone involved is truly a hero of the coronavirus crisis.”

The programme has formed a key part of a successful three pillar strategy to increase the number of mechanical ventilators, with over 25,000 devices now available in total to the NHS, up from 9,000 before the start of the pandemic. Over 2,500 have been imported from abroad.

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

“We protected the NHS during this global pandemic. The impact of COVID-19 showed the best and the brightest stepping forward to serve their country. The response the government received to this challenge was astonishing.

Alongside the government’s wider ventilator strategy, the Ventilator Challenge has played a crucial role in ensuring everyone who has needed a ventilator during this pandemic has had access to one.”

The Government’s strategy involved procuring devices from overseas, scaling

up the production of existing devices and calling on manufacturers who do not make ventilators, to help design and build new models.

The Ventilator Challenge helped scale up the production of three models (paraPAC, Vivo65 and Nippy4+) and helped guide one newly adapted model, the Penlon ESO 2, all the way through regulatory approval.

A number of other UK manufacturers also progressed novel designs to advanced



stages within weeks. Four of these designs, the Dyson/TTP CoVent, the Babcock Zephyr+, the Cambridge Consultants Veloci-Vent and the Swagelok Piran Vent, were deemed to have achieved a performance level which met the MHRA’s requirements. The independent testing organisation (MD-TEC) concluded that they would have all been clinically usable as pandemic ventilators and could have supported large numbers of critically ill patients. Ultimately these designs were not progressed to mass production as part of the Ventilator Challenge due to reduced demand.

Director of the Medical Devices Testing and Evaluation Centre, which tested the Ventilator Challenge devices, Dr Tom Clutton-Brock, said:

“Designing, manufacturing and testing ventilators usually takes years. So it’s outstanding the progress which has been made in a space of months.

Having tested all of these devices, it’s impressive that several new

models met the regulator's requirements.

These models would all have been clinically usable as pandemic ventilators and could have supported large numbers of critically ill patients."

The NHS now has a readily available supply of devices that will enable the health service to have resilience of supply for possible future pandemics.

Penlon and Smiths, who are part of the Ventilator Challenge UK consortium have so far delivered over 10,000 devices. Penlon is now making more ventilators in one day than the company used to deliver in ten months, further underlining the success of the scaling up of the device.

The last Penlon and Smiths devices will be delivered this weekend, subject to final manufacturing and testing, and with the addition of the final Breas devices arriving in the coming weeks, we expect the Ventilator Challenge will produce a total of over 14,000 devices.

In addition, today there are also around 11,000 non-invasive ventilators and almost 5,000 CPAP machines available to the NHS across the UK which were not available before the start of the crisis.

Guru Krishnamoorthy, CEO Penlon said:

"It has been an amazing and humbling experience for Penlon to be a part of such a nationally important project. There is nothing more purposeful for a UK medical device company than rising to an occasion like this to save thousands of lives.

Every member of Penlon has put in their best lifetime efforts into this project. We have been supported extremely well by the members and leaders of the Consortium companies, our suppliers and other business partners. We take this opportunity to thank each one of them. We wish the people of the UK and rest of the world a very safe and healthy life. We commit

ourselves to do everything required and continue to provide high quality medical devices."

Raffi Stepanian, CEO Breas Medical said:

"I would like to thank my colleagues, our suppliers and the UK Cabinet Office for the extraordinary efforts everyone has made to address the emergency need for ventilators and to support us to ramp up capacity. The ingenuity, commitment, pace and collaboration has been breathtaking and truly inspirational all against the backdrop of such demanding circumstances."



Armed Forces lead tributes to Dame Vera Lynn at her funeral

July

The Armed Forces led the nation in saying farewell to the Forces' Sweetheart with a series of ceremonial tributes at the funeral of Dame Vera Lynn today.

Dame Vera enjoyed a special connection with the Armed Forces and personnel from the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force led the tributes in a solemn ceremony at the request of her family.

Personnel from all three services lined the streets and carried Dame Vera's coffin into the private ceremony. Royal Marines bugler Corporal Kimberley Hare sounded The Last Post and Reveille during the service.

Cpl Kimberley Hare of the Royal Marines sounded The Last Post during the funeral

Paying tribute to Dame Vera, Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

"Dame Vera's inspirational work in support of our Armed Forces will never be forgotten and my thoughts are with her family and loved ones at this time. In tribute to her life, our services have come together to pay their respects at Dame Vera's funeral and honour

her memory.

As we approach the 75th anniversary of VJ Day, we remember her performances for troops in Burma during the Second World War, bringing a welcome reminder of home to those fighting in the Far East. Her support helped to sustain the fortitude of British personnel deployed around the world and those waiting for them to return.

We remember her life with fond memories, and all that she gave to our country in its time of need."

Chief of the Defence Staff General Sir Nick Carter said:

"Dame Vera Lynn's stirring performances brought comfort and joy to personnel serving far from home and lifted the nation during the darkest of times. The Armed Forces will forever be grateful to Dame Vera Lynn for her service. Our thoughts today are with her family for their loss, but her lasting legacy of lifting spirits will remain.

Dame Vera has been close to the hearts of generations of soldiers, sailors, marines,

airmen, and airwomen; she maintained a close connection with the Armed Forces throughout her life. The Royal Navy, the British Army and the Royal Air Force are proud to be part of the final farewell to the Forces' Sweetheart and celebrate a life well-lived."

Personnel from Number 7 Company Coldstream Guards, HMS Collingwood and the Queen's Colour Squadron of the RAF Regiment lined the route of the funeral cortège in Ditchling this afternoon.

Aircraft from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight performed a flypast over Ditchling before returning to RAF Coningsby in Lincolnshire.

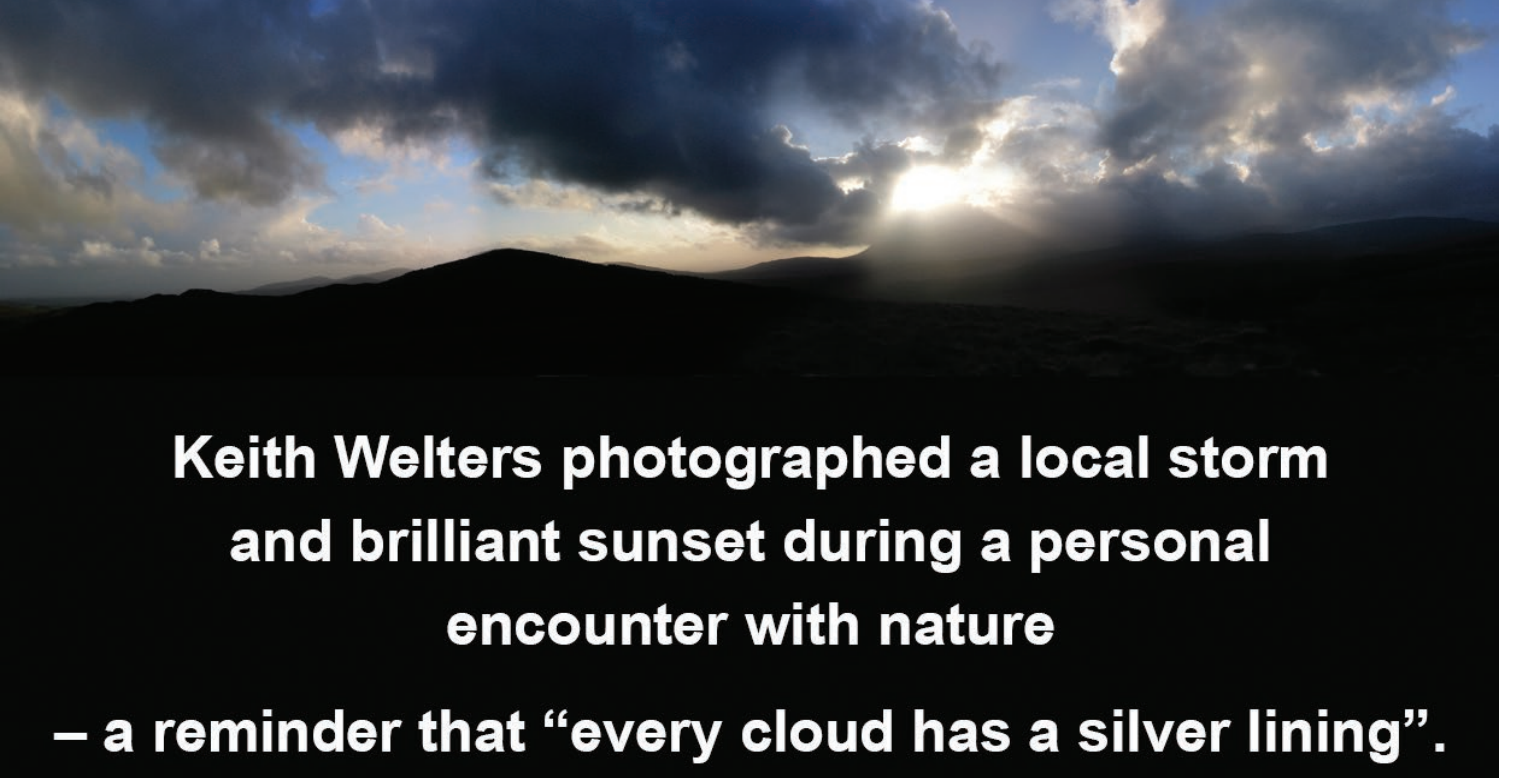
Two Second World War-era Spitfires from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight performed a tribute flypast

The Armed Forces are honoured to have held such a prominent role in today's events and to pay tribute to such a significant icon.

A Silver Lining

Social media post

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**Keith Welters photographed a local storm
and brilliant sunset during a personal
encounter with nature**

– a reminder that “every cloud has a silver lining”.

HMRC invites hospitality industry to register for Eat Out to Help Out

July

Restaurants and other establishments serving food for on-premises consumption can now sign up to a new government initiative aimed at protecting jobs in the hospitality industry and encouraging people to safely return to dining out.

The Eat Out to Help Out registration service went live this morning on GOV.UK, allowing businesses to join the scheme announced last week by Rishi Sunak MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Restaurants, bars, cafes and other establishments who use the scheme will offer a 50% reduction, up to a maximum of £10 per person, to all diners who eat and/or drink-in throughout August.

Customers do not need a voucher as participating establishments will just remove the discount from their bill. Businesses simply reclaim the discounted amount through an online service, supported by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC). Claims can be made on a weekly basis and will be paid into bank accounts

within five working days.

The scheme is open to eligible establishments across the UK and can be used all day, every Monday to Wednesday, between 3 and 31 August 2020.

Businesses will receive a window sticker to show they are using the scheme and can download promotional items from GOV.UK.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak said:

“Restaurants and other eligible establishments are now able to support jobs by signing up to a place on the Eat Out to Help Out Scheme.

HMRC’s quick and easy registration page will soon have you on your way to welcoming back your customers with discounted dining on every Monday to Wednesday throughout August, with a simple process to reclaim these discounts back from the Government each week.”

Jim Harra, Chief Executive and First Permanent Secretary of HMRC, said:

“The hospitality industry is among the sectors worst affected by COVID-19. The Eat Out to Help Out Scheme will deliver support to more than 100,000 businesses, including restaurants, cafes and bars serving food and drink, helping to protect 1.8 million jobs across the UK.

Registering is easy, and we urge businesses to sign up early so they are ready to use the scheme when it starts on 3 August.

Businesses have made great efforts to re-open their sit-down services safely in line with social distancing guidance, so people can feel confident to dine out again.

Businesses can find information about the scheme and how to register online at GOV.UK.”

Who can register?

You can register for the Eat Out to Help Out Scheme if your establishment:

sells food that is intended for consumption on the premises when purchased
provides its own dining area or shares a dining area with another establishment for eat-in meals

has registered as a food business with the relevant local authority on or before 7 July
How to register

Businesses can register to be part of the scheme online at GOV.UK.

A searchable restaurant finder tool will be available to the public before the scheme launches on 3 August.

The scheme can be used by diners who order food and/or drinks for consumption on the premises. Alcohol is excluded from the offer.



Roll-out of 2 new rapid coronavirus tests ahead of winter

August

- Both tests will be able to detect COVID-19 and other winter viruses in just 90 minutes

- New tests will hugely increase testing capacity ahead of winter, delivering fast results that will help to break chains of transmission quickly

Millions of ground-breaking rapid coronavirus tests will be rolled out to hospitals, care homes and labs across the UK to increase testing capacity ahead of winter. The tests will enable clinicians and NHS Test and Trace to quickly advise on the best course of action to stop the spread of the virus.

Two new tests – both able to detect the virus in just 90 minutes – will be made available to NHS hospitals, care homes and labs. The 2 tests will be able to detect both COVID-19 and other winter viruses such as flu and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). The tests do not require a trained health professional to operate them, meaning they can be rolled out in more non-clinical

settings.

This will help to further strengthen the coronavirus response this winter, arming both clinicians and NHS Test and Trace with the ability to distinguish between COVID-19 cases, which have specific self-isolation requirements, and other winter viruses.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said:

We're using the most innovative technologies available to tackle coronavirus. Millions of new rapid coronavirus tests will provide on-the-spot results in under 90 minutes, helping us to break chains of transmission quickly.

The fact these tests can detect flu as well as COVID-19 will be hugely beneficial as we head into winter, so patients can follow the right advice

to protect themselves and others.

I am hugely grateful for the excellent work done by DnaNudge and Oxford Nanopore to push forward these life-saving innovations in coronavirus testing.

A new test that uses DNA to detect the virus will be rolled out across NHS hospitals from September, with 5,000 DNA machines, supplied by DnaNudge, to provide 5.8 million tests in the coming months.

Separately, 450,000 90-minute LamPORE swab tests will also be available across adult care setting and laboratories from next week, supplied by Oxford Nanopore.

DNA testing for coronavirus

5,000 DNA 'Nudgebox' machines, supplied by DnaNudge, will be rolled out across NHS hospitals in the UK to analyse DNA in nose swabs, providing a positive or negative result for COVID-19 in 90 minutes, at the point of care. The machines will process up to 15 tests on the spot each day without the need for a laboratory.

The DNA COVID-19 test machines are currently operating in 8 London hospitals:

St Mary's Hospital in Paddington
Charing Cross Hospital

West Middlesex University Hospital
Chelsea and Westminster Hospital
Royal Hospital Chelsea
Queen Charlotte's and Chelsea Maternity Hospital
the Renal Transplant Centre at Hammersmith Hospital
the Tower Hamlets Centre for Mental Health at Mile End Hospital

The machines are located in cancer wards, A&E and maternity wards to protect those most at risk.

The government is signing contracts with more companies to produce machines for DNA coronavirus testing.

Rapid LamPORE tests

The new rapid LamPORE test will be able



to process swab and saliva samples to detect the presence of COVID-19 in 60 to 90 minutes.

The new test has the same sensitivity as the widely used PCR swab test, but can be used to process swabs in labs, as well as on-location through 'pop up' labs. The desktop GridION machine can process up to 15,000 tests a day, or the palm-sized MinION can process up to 2,000 tests a day for deployment in a near-community 'pop-up' lab.

450,000 of the new LamPORE tests will be available from next week across adult care settings, NHS laboratories and lighthouse laboratories, with millions more tests to be rolled out later in the year.

Details of positive test results will be shared with NHS Test and Trace, so close contacts can self-isolate in line with guidance.

Regius Professor Chris Toumazou FRS, CEO and co-founder of DnaNudge and founder of the Institute of Biomedical Engineering at Imperial College London, commented:

The DnaNudge team worked with incredible speed and skill during the peak of the pandemic to deliver this highly accurate, rapid COVID-19 test, which requires absolutely no laboratory or pipettes and can be deployed anywhere with a direct sample-to-result in around just over an hour.

We have been able to successfully adapt our in-store consumer DNA testing technology – which identifies genetic risks for chronic conditions related to obesity and type 2 diabetes – and validate it for detecting COVID-19 with gold-standard accuracy.

We are extremely proud to be playing such a pivotal role in supporting the national effort on testing, as this major contract award signifies. With the ability to test not only for COVID-19 but also FluA, FluB and RSV on the same single COVID-19 Nudge cartridge, our multiplex test offers a vital solution to protect the NHS as we head into the flu season.

Gordon Sanghera, CEO of Oxford Nanopore, said:

We are honoured to be playing a part in fighting COVID-19 in the UK, and preparing the country for the winter virus season. Ever since we founded Oxford Nanopore, our mission has been to create disruptive,

high performance technology that has a profound, positive impact on society.

LamPore has the potential to deliver a highly effective and, crucially, accessible global testing solution, not only for COVID-19 but for a range of other pathogens. We are delighted to be working with the UK government to support and empower our communities to effectively manage testing at a national and localised level.

Background information About DnaNudge

DnaNudge, based in London, is a retail based, on-the-spot genetic testing service that provides product recommendations suited to your DNA to promote a healthy lifestyle.

DnaNudge's new RNA COVID-19 tests are based on DnaNudge DNA testing innovation delivering processing outside of a laboratory environment, using DnaNudge's patented and miniaturised 'NudgeBox' analyser, which can be used anywhere.

About Oxford Nanopore

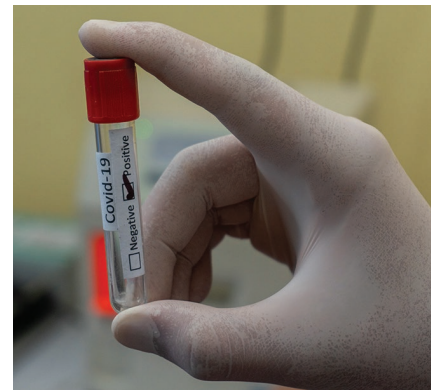
Oxford Nanopore, which last year built a factory in Oxfordshire, is a rapidly growing business that is scaling its operations to be able to provide substantial volumes of

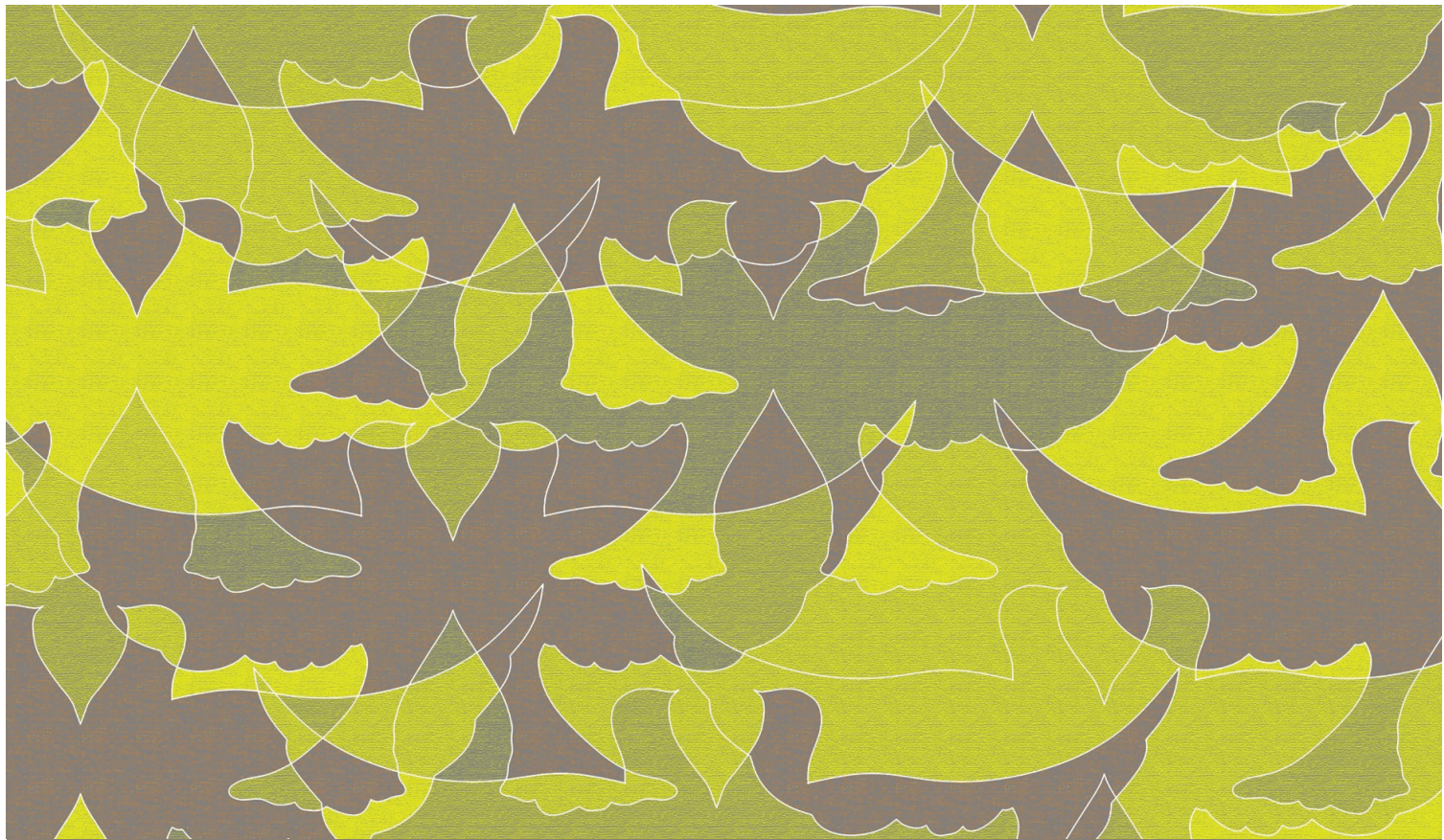
tests to the UK – critical to support expanded testing at a time when global supply chains are squeezed for traditional tests.

About LamPore

LamPore uses a method called RT-LAMP to identify and amplify the SARS-CoV-2 virus in an original sample, and Oxford Nanopore's sequencing technology to precisely identify the amplified virus. It tests for active infection, providing a complementary testing solution to antibody detection, currently only able to indicate a previous infection.

LamPore includes a control mechanism that detects and invalidates samples where there has been an error in sample collection.





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Government further boosts UK vaccine manufacturing capacity

August

- Government partners with Wockhardt to provide 'fill and finish' services as part of the effort to accelerate vaccine manufacturing in the UK

- Wockhardt's facility in North Wales could start work on COVID-19 vaccines as early as September 2020

- agreement will help ensure people in the UK can receive a safe and effective vaccine as quickly as possible once one becomes available

The UK's vaccine manufacturing capabilities will be further boosted today (Monday 3 August) thanks to a new deal to considerably increase capacity in a crucial part of the manufacturing process for COVID-19 vaccines, advancing efforts to ensure a successful vaccine is widely available to the public.

The government has entered into an 18-month agreement with global pharmaceutical and biotechnology

company Wockhardt to carry out the crucial 'fill and finish' stage of the manufacturing process, which involves dispensing the manufactured vaccine substance into vials ready for it to be distributed.

This is an essential part of the vaccines supply chain and as part of this deal, Wockhardt will provide these services for the UK government and producers of vaccines being developed around the world in large quantities.

The fill and finish line is expected to start in September 2020. It will take place at CP Pharmaceuticals, a subsidiary of Wockhardt, based in Wrexham, North Wales, which has the capacity to finish millions of coronavirus vaccine doses.

Business Secretary Alok Sharma said:

"Ensuring the UK has the capability to research, develop and manufacture a safe and effective vaccine is critical in our fight against coronavirus.

Today we have secured additional capacity to manufacture millions of doses of multiple COVID-19 candidates, guaranteeing the supply



of vaccines we need to protect people across the UK rapidly and in large numbers.”

Kate Bingham, Chair of the Vaccines Taskforce said:

“Never before have we needed to find and manufacture a vaccine at this speed and scale in order to protect the UK population.

We have made significant progress in securing a diverse portfolio of potential vaccines and treatments for COVID-19, adding a fourth vaccine candidate from GSK and Sanofi earlier this week. However, discovering a successful vaccine is only part of the solution, we also need to be able to manufacture it.

Fill and finish is a critical step in the process to get the vaccine in a form to be given to patients. The agreement with Wockhardt will boost our capability to ensure that from the moment a successful vaccine is identified we will be able to produce the quantities of vaccine required, as quickly as possible, for the people who need it.”

Founder Chairman of Wockhardt Dr Habil Khorakiwala said:

“The pandemic of COVID-19 is a challenge for all and needs a concerted effort to overcome. We are proud to be collaborating

with the UK government to make vaccines available and the arrangement brings in a huge sense of purpose and pride, it upholds our ongoing commitment to fight against such a pandemic of global human importance. As a global organisation, we are focused and committed to assist in mitigating the worldwide impact of COVID-19.”

Secretary of State for Wales Simon Hart said:

“This agreement demonstrates the importance of Welsh manufacturers in the UK’s fight against coronavirus, highlighting once again the strengths of working together across the UK to combat the pandemic.

Securing this manufacturing capacity means that safe and effective vaccines, produced in Wales, will potentially be distributed rapidly to people across the UK.”

The agreement with Wockhardt complements the new Vaccines Manufacturing and Innovation Centre, which is currently under construction in Oxfordshire as a result of £93 million government investment. The UK’s vaccine manufacturing efforts are further supported by an additional £100 million for a state-of-the-art Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult

Manufacturing Innovation Centre in Braintree, Essex, to accelerate the mass production of a successful COVID-19 vaccine in the UK.

While the Vaccines Manufacturing and Innovation Centre is under construction, the government has invested an additional £38 million to establish a rapid deployment facility opening later this summer.

Wockhardt is a global pharmaceutical and biotech organisation that brings affordable, high quality medicines to market. In the UK, Wockhardt is one of the largest suppliers into the NHS for over 20 years, has had a presence in Wrexham for over 2 decades and employs over 400 people at its 612,000 square feet high-tech manufacturing facility.

The news follows the government securing early access to millions of vaccine doses from AstraZeneca for the University of Oxford vaccine, BioNTech/Pfizer alliance, Valneva and GSK/Sanofi as part of its strategy to build a strong portfolio of promising new vaccines to protect the UK from COVID-19.

Projects to heat homes through disused mines and faster offshore wind farm construction win government backing

August

- 17 research projects across the UK will receive up to £50,000 each to drive local economic growth, provide skills training and create high-value jobs

- projects include accelerating building of offshore wind farms in the South West, digitising construction sites in the North East, and creating low carbon heat from disused mines in Glasgow

- funding forms part of government plans to power up the country's economic recovery through research and development

Ambitious research and innovation projects across the UK will today (Tuesday 11 August) receive up to £50,000 each of government funding, supporting their aim to create high value jobs, upskill local workers and boost economic growth.

The 17 projects, running from Glasgow and Belfast, through to Nottingham and parts of Cornwall, will help the UK to respond to some of the world's most pressing challenges – from climate change to the production of medicines.

Projects include heating homes and businesses in Glasgow using energy from disused mines, digitising the UK construction sector so it is safer and more productive, researching quicker ways of diagnosing cancer, and accelerating building of large scale offshore wind farms in the South West of England.

Through the second round of UK Research and Innovation's (UKRI) flagship Strength in Places Fund, each project will be able to apply for a further longer-term investment of £10-50 million later this year if the early stages of development are successful.

It follows the announcement by the government in June this year of the first wave of the fund, which saw 7 projects across the UK benefit from over £400 million of government and industry funding to develop their research and innovation projects.

One of these projects, Artemis Technologies, led a consortium that was awarded £33 million to develop zero emissions ferries in Northern Ireland – a project which will be viewed first-hand by Business Secretary

Alok Sharma during a visit to Belfast today. At the site in Belfast Harbour, the Business Secretary is expected to meet with partners of the project to hear how it plans to establish Belfast as a global leader in zero emissions maritime technology.

Business Secretary Alok Sharma said:

“We are backing our innovators and with the support they need to turn great ideas into first-class industries, products and technologies.

From virtual construction projects to extracting clean heat from disused mines, the pioneering projects we are funding today will help create jobs and boost skills across the UK as we continue to drive forward our economic recovery.”

The projects

Projects each receiving up to £50,000 of early stage government funding include:

HotScot, led by the University of Strathclyde

HotScot will provide low-cost, low carbon heat to Scottish homes and businesses by extracting energy from disused, flooded mines in Glasgow. By overseeing 3 new geothermal minewater projects, the consortium aims to deliver economic growth equivalent to £303 million and around 9,800 jobs across the Central Belt of Scotland

South West Floating Offshore Wind Accelerator, led by the offshore renewable energy research company Wave Hub

This will build on Cornwall and Plymouth's world-renowned excellence in offshore renewables business and research, to fast track the building of large-scale floating offshore wind farms in the Celtic Sea from 2025 onwards. This will enable the region to make a decisive contribution to Britain's offshore wind target of 40 gigawatts by 2030, and also target a five-fold increase in

Britain's offshore wind exports

The International Centre for Connected Construction, led by Northumbria University

This project will bring together experts from industry, academia and the public sector to create, test, and bring to market new technologies involving 3D modelling, smart cities and cloud computing. This will help engineers to tackle potential problems before building has even begun, ultimately speeding up construction and improving safety on building sites. The project aims to create 500 jobs across the North East, making the construction industry cleaner, safer, and more productive

Trans-Mid, led by the University of Nottingham

Trans-Mid will partner universities with transport technology businesses, as well as local suppliers to the vehicle, aerospace and rail industries to develop new green products, with the aim of establishing the

Midlands as a supercluster for net zero transport. The project will form part of the UK's commitment to carbon neutrality by 2050, creating thousands of new and upskilled jobs.

The Northern Ireland Precision Biomarkers and Therapeutics Consortium, a consortium led by Queen's University Belfast

This project bring partners from industry and academia together to develop new, more cost-effective targeted drugs and antibodies, as well as researching new, quicker ways of diagnosing cancer. The long term aim is to attract and secure highly-skilled jobs to the region while making Northern Ireland's life and health science sector more productive.

Today's funding forms part of the government's ambitious commitment to increase public spending in research and development (R&D) by £22 billion by 2024/25, putting the UK on track to reach 2.4% of GDP being spent on R&D across the UK economy by 2027.

It also follows the publication of the government's R&D roadmap last month, which sets out plans to drive the country's economic recovery through research and development and level up UK regions.



Chamber Stock

Another 'of the moment' example of welters 'art of manufacturing' in chamber stock to facilitate the current demand for product in response to market requirements. welters provide the widest range of chamber designs, types and sizes in the UK and beyond

Social media post

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New help on offer for disabled people working from home during the pandemic

August

Disabled people can now benefit from financial support to work from home, thanks to an extension to the Access to Work scheme.

- People who are clinically extremely vulnerable can get new applications for grant funding fast-tracked.

- Funding can now cover taxi fares and public transport costs, if a health condition prevents you from travelling on public transport during the pandemic.

Those working from home or in the workplace with a disability will benefit from extra help, thanks to an extension of the Access to Work scheme, including support for special equipment, travel costs and mental health.

Covid-19 is changing the way we work and impacting working environments and arrangements. With many employers asking workers to adapt to a new environment, Access to Work can play a key role in supporting disabled people to retain, return

to and move into employment.

New extensions to the scheme

- You can get grant funding if you're disabled and need support to work from home because of Covid-19, which can help pay for special equipment such as a screen reader or video remote interpreting or support worker services.

- This funding can also be fast-tracked if you're in the clinically extremely vulnerable group.

- If you're travelling into the office and due to your health condition public transport isn't a safe option for you at the moment, you can also apply for financial support with things like taxi fares.

- If you are anxious about returning to work and need support, you can also get mental health support through Access to Work with a tailored package of support for up to nine months.

- Applying for funding is easy -



either online at: gov.uk/access-to-work or over the phone on 0800 121 7479. Following a short assessment, you can start getting support.

Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work Justin Tomlinson said:

“In these unprecedented times, it is absolutely right that we continue to support disabled people to pursue employment without barriers.

This extension of funding and support will help to protect thousands of jobs which provide vital independence allowing disabled people to reach their full potential.”

About Access to Work

The Access to Work scheme is designed to help people who are disabled or have a physical or mental health condition stay in employment. Last year, it provided personalised support to a record 36,000 people with disabilities and health conditions to do their job.

It can help you speak to your employers about changes they need to support you, and can even provide grants up to £60,000 to keep your job accessible. Your grant is tailor-made to your needs and you'll be assigned an Access to Work adviser to support you through the process.

Pupils start returning to schools in England

September

Hundreds of thousands of children and young people across England will reunite with their teachers and friends as schools and colleges start to open their gates from today (Tuesday 1 September).

After months of hard work and dedication from school staff across the country to implement protective measures first set out in July, pupils will begin to be welcomed

back into classrooms for the autumn term.

Pupils will return to school environments with a ‘system of controls’ in place to keep all pupils, teachers and staff safe by minimising direct contacts and maintaining social distancing wherever possible.

The new school term follows the unanimous backing for a full return from the Chief Medical Officers across the four nations of the UK in their recent consensus statement, highlighting that the health risk posed by Covid-19 to children is extremely low and noting the significant risk to young people’s wellbeing if they are not back in school. A British Medical Journal study also said that the risk of severe illness due to Covid for children was ‘vanishingly small’.

Last week the National Association



of Head Teachers published survey findings that highlighted 97 per cent of schools plan to welcome all pupils full-time from the start of the autumn term and will have the range of recommended safety measures in place. The remaining 3 per cent have outlined that they will phase students back or using transition periods to reopen more widely.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

“For many, today marks the first day of a new school year, with thousands of children set to walk through their school gates again as schools across the country begin to reopen for full-time education for all pupils.

I do not underestimate how challenging the last few months have been but I do know how important it is for children to be back in school, not only for their education but for their development and wellbeing too.

But it is down to the sheer hard work of so many teachers and school staff that from today pupils will be able to learn in their classrooms together again. It has not been easy for parents nor schools, but we could not have got to this point without your support and I cannot say thank you enough for this.”

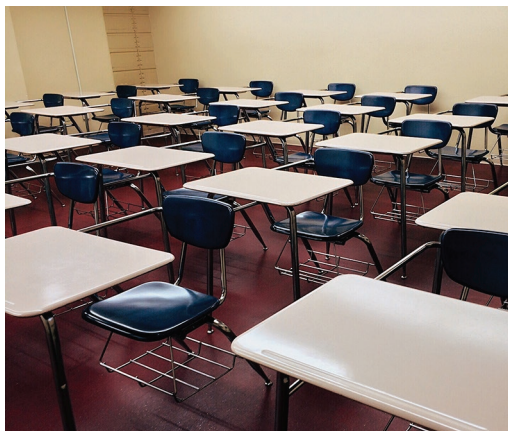
Today’s return for pupils follows the reopening of schools in Leicestershire last week, with the Prime Minister visiting to see first-hand the practical steps being taken to

ensure the risk of transmission is reduced.

The Education Secretary and Schools Minister have both been visiting schools ahead of the new term and have praised some of the innovative ways schools will be looking after children including the use of cleaning stations, and staggered breaks, keeping pupils in ‘bubbles’, social distancing and safety on transport.

School term start dates will vary across the country, with approximately 40 per cent schools expected to start term today, and bringing teachers and pupils back to school over the coming days.

It remains the Government’s priority to continue to support schools, nurseries and colleges through the next few months, continually guided by the best possible



science and medical advice.

Consistent with the latest Public Health England advice, strict hygiene and cleaning protocols will be in place along with a one-off PPE supply boost being distributed to schools for use in the small number of instances where it is necessary.

All children will stay in groups or bubbles to reduce the risk of spreading infection, and older children in particular will be expected to follow social distancing guidelines. Face coverings should also be worn in communal areas in secondary schools in any areas with local lockdowns in place.

As the shielding advice for all adults and children was paused on 1 August, even the small number of pupils who remain on the shielded patient list can also return to school, as can those who have family members who were shielding.

Pupils are encouraged to walk, cycle or scoot to school but the Government is also to providing an additional £40 million to local authorities to increase home to school transport and ease pressure on public transport.

Scottish diners eat more than 6.3 million meals to support hospitality sector

September

Thousands of jobs across Scotland have been supported after statistics revealed that more than 6.3 million meals were eaten in Scotland as part of the landmark Eat Out to Help Out scheme, and more than 100 million eaten UK-wide.

Rishi Sunak said the scheme's popularity had helped support the livelihoods of the 1.8 million people working in the hospitality sector across the UK and driven the nation's economic recovery from coronavirus.

Latest figures show that Eat Out to Help out significantly boosted restaurant bookings during the month of August, with the scheme growing in popularity each week.

By midnight on 27 August 6,333,000 meals were eaten at 8,543 establishments across Scotland, making claims worth more than

£38 million, with an average discount of £6.10 a meal. This has meant more jobs being supported as a result of people going out and boosting the economy.



These numbers are likely to grow, with restaurants having until the end of September to claim back the 50% government-funded discount applied to bills in August.

Scottish Secretary, Alister Jack said:

“The UK Government’s Eat Out to Help Out scheme has been a roaring success, helping support 1.8 million jobs in the hospitality sector. More than 6.3 million meals were enjoyed in Scotland with the UK Government paying up to £10 towards each. I want to say thank you to everyone who has supported the scheme - as well as the staff who made it possible.

This initiative is just one part of

an extensive package of UK Government support for Scotland's economy and jobs. That includes supporting more than 930,000 jobs, providing business loans, helping to get young people into jobs, and a VAT cut for tourism and hospitality businesses. We are also providing an additional £6.5 billion through the Barnett formula for the devolved administration at Holyrood."

Chancellor Rishi Sunak said:

"From the get-go our mission has been to protect jobs, and to do this we needed to be creative, brave and try things that no government has ever done before.

Today's figures continue to show Eat Out to Help Out has been a success. I want to thank everyone, from restaurant owners to waiters, chefs and diners, for embracing it and helping drive our economic recovery.

The scheme is just one part of our Plan for Jobs and we will continue to protect, support and create jobs to ensure we come back stronger as a nation."

According to OpenTable data, restaurant

bookings increased by an average of 53% on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays throughout the whole of August, compared to the same days in 2019. In July 2020, restaurant bookings were down 54% on average from Mondays to Wednesdays compared to July 2019.

On 31 August - the final day of the scheme - bookings were up 216% compared to the equivalent day in 2019. And early signs show that despite ending, the scheme has continued to boost demand, with a 2 per cent rise in restaurant bookings on Tuesday 1 September compared to the equivalent day in 2019, according to OpenTable.

There had been an upward trend in the scheme's popularity since it launched, with 10.5 million meals claimed for in total in



the first week, 35 million meals in the second, 64 million in the third and over 100 million by 31 August. The scheme was used across the entire UK, with over 2 million meals claimed for in both Wales and Northern Ireland and over 51 million meals claimed for in England by 27 August.

The Eat Out to Help Out scheme is one part of the Chancellor's Plan for Jobs. The UK Government has supported more than 930,000 jobs in Scotland through the pioneering furlough and self-employed schemes and has loaned more than £2.3 billion to 65,000 Scottish businesses.

This support for the hospitality sector comes on top of the government's unprecedented assistance for all businesses including our £1,000 job retention bonus, a £2 billion Kickstart scheme to create thousands of high quality jobs for young people and a cut to some VAT to assist tourism businesses.

Silage Crop

Part of our silage crop on one of our hill farms, for our three pedigree native breed herds (Black Galloway, White Galloway and Whitebred Shorthorn), which form an integral part of the organisation's environmental policy in maintaining and developing native species.

Social media post

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ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

- Noise Pollution

by Paul Bazeley

In the final instalment in our series about environmental issues, we look at noise pollution. Firstly, let's make it clear that not all noise is noise pollution. The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines noise above 65 decibels (dB) as noise pollution, while noises above 75 dB are considered harmful and levels above 120 dB are considered painful. It is recommended that noise levels should be kept below 65 dB throughout the day to reduce noise pollution. Sound levels should be kept below 30 dB at night to allow for restful sleep. Noise levels should be kept below 35 dB in classrooms for appropriate conditions for learning.

To put decibels into perspective, rustling leaves are said to be around 20-30dB, a lawnmower is approximately 90dB

and traffic noise averages around 100 dB. Construction sites and concerts are around 110-120 dB, a siren or a clap of thunder are near 120 dB and an aircraft can generate 130 dB.

Look on any noise map of the world and it shows that any major city has large amounts of noise pollution. The World Health Organisation (WHO) data shows about 40% of the EU population are exposed to road traffic noise above 55 dB, 20% are exposed to levels above 65 dB during the daytime and more than 30% are exposed to noises above 55 dB during the night. The most common causes of noise pollution are road traffic, air traffic, construction sites, catering and nightlife and animals.

Noise pollution is an invisible danger that is having ramifications on our health. A



study by the European Environment Agency (EEA) has estimated that 16,600 premature deaths and over 70,000 hospitalisations occur every year in Europe alone due to noise. The most common health problem is Noise-Induced Hearing Loss (NIHL), however, studies have shown that excessive noise can also cause tinnitus, high blood pressure, a racing pulse, loss of focus, headaches, stress, fatigue, irritability, depression, respiratory agitation, colitis and

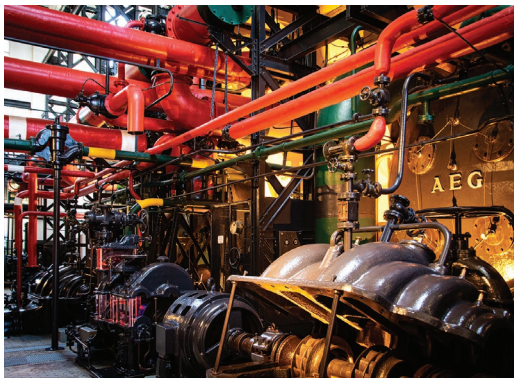
even heart attacks. While noise will impact all ages, research is showing that children are likely to be severely impacted with children who live near airports or busy streets having been found to suffer from stress, poor attention span, reading difficulties and poor memory.

Despite having serious consequences for our health noise pollution is also impacting wildlife. Animals use sound to locate food, navigate, attract mates,

and avoid predators and noise is making it difficult to accomplish these tasks and is impacting their ability to survive. Studies show that bluebirds have fewer chicks due to excessive noise, while caterpillars hearts have been found to beat faster with loud noise and whales and dolphins echolocation has been impacted by ships, sonar and oil drilling.

In terms of solutions, WHO and many other associations agree that better awareness of this invisible pollutant is key to minimising its impact. Earplugs are an obvious solution to protect our ears and insulating homes with noise absorbing materials can mean buildings are less susceptible to outside sounds. Planting trees and plants can help to absorb some noise and data shows they can reduce sounds close to them by 5-10 dB.





Governments and/or councils can/have put some restrictions in place. Many places in the UK have regulations to control noise levels with construction work only being allowed to occur during daylight hours. They are also protecting certain areas from noise such as the countryside, areas of natural interest and city parks. Further preventative and corrective measures include a separation between residential areas and places of noise such as airports or manufacturing plants and fines for any breaches in regulation.

Although noise pollution is probably

not the main talking point when environmental issues are mentioned, it does cause problems and is having an impact on our health and wildlife. Although talk of air, land and water pollution dominate the headlines the suggestions from WHO that we need to be better informed about noise pollution and its consequences seem justified. Early on in the coronavirus pandemic, when the world went into

lockdown, the earth became a much quieter place, perhaps as we slowly move toward a more normal life again the increase in noise will be noticed much more. It seems, rather paradoxically, that people need to speak louder about the impact of noise pollution before more is done, the question is, will anyone hear them?





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Big broadband boost for rural English shires and counties

September

- More than £22 million invested in government's Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme for rural areas
- 250,000 English homes and businesses eligible for boosted funding from 17 English councils

More than £22 million of additional funding is being invested into the UK Government's broadband voucher scheme, which subsidises the costs of building gigabit-capable broadband networks to hard-to-reach areas.

Gigabit-capable broadband enables internet download speeds of up to 1,000 megabits per second (mbps) - enough to download a HD movie in less than 30 seconds and lay the foundations for 8K-quality video streaming and virtual reality online gaming.

This new frontier in digital connectivity has the potential to revolutionise rural communities and make them more attractive places to live. It will give people who depend on reliable connections to work from home and keep in touch with family due to coronavirus, the freedom to live and work more flexibly and will help develop thriving digital economies.

Digital Infrastructure Minister Matt Warman



is now urging businesses and communities to apply for the vouchers to future-proof their internet connections and be ready to reap the economic and social benefits brought by new advances in technology.

Matt Warman, Minister for Digital Infrastructure, said:

This government is determined to connect every home and business to the fastest broadband speeds available from the Highlands to the Jurassic Coast.

But we can only do this with collaboration at a local and national level so I'm delighted English councils have committed to pump more money into our voucher

scheme to help rural communities get gigabit speed broadband.

“A quarter of all properties across the UK can now access these fast and reliable speeds, and we have earmarked a further £5 billion so rural towns and villages across the four nations can get the speeds they need to seize all the benefits of new technology.”

The UK Government’s Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme targets areas where the cost of building new gigabit broadband infrastructure, which often requires digging trenches to lay full fibre cables to people’s doorsteps, is likely to be too high for commercial operators to cover alone.

Since May 2019, vouchers worth up to £3,500 for small and medium sized businesses and up to £1,500 for residential premises have been available to cover these costs in rural areas across the UK.

Seventeen local councils in England have also provided £22.2 million worth of funding to top-up the values of the vouchers in their areas. At least 250,000 homes and businesses in the English countryside are

expected to be eligible for this funding.

These include the Borderlands, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, County Durham, Derbyshire, Dorset, East Riding of Yorkshire, East Sussex, Hampshire, Nottinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, West Sussex and Worcestershire.

Kent County Council also agreed to top-up the scheme for a second time, after providing additional funding back in September 2019.

Rural communities in Wales saw the value of their vouchers double in June, after the UK and Welsh governments announced they were working together to boost the scheme. The UK Government is also in discussions with the Scottish Government and the Northern Ireland Executive and local councils about the potential and approach for gigabit schemes there.

Almost 500,000 premises across the UK have been given access to gigabit-capable broadband since summer 2018 through a £1 billion UK Government funding

commitment until the end of 2021.

Combined with industry investment it means 8 million premises can now access gigabit capable broadband compared to around 1.4 million premises two years ago.

Nearly 45,000 gigabit broadband vouchers, worth more than £90 million, have already been issued and there is more than £70 million worth of vouchers on offer immediately to take companies and residents in rural towns and villages out of the digital slow lane.

On top of this, the government has promised £5 billion to ensure hard-to-reach areas get access to gigabit connections over the next few years. Details on how this will be spent will be announced this autumn.



New Lighthouse Labs to boost NHS Test and Trace capacity

September

- 2 new Lighthouse Labs to be set up in Newcastle and Bracknell, increasing capacity by tens of thousands
- Weekly data from NHS Test and Trace shows testing continues to increase each week
- 20 new testing sites opening across the country for this week

Weekly data from the 15th week of operation of NHS Test and Trace shows that 27% more people have received a test for the first time this week and repeat testing in care homes continues.

The 2 new Lighthouse Labs follow the previous announcements of others in Newport and Charnwood, which will scale testing capacity to help deliver 500,000 tests per day by the end of October.

The 4 new labs come on top of ongoing work to build capacity at existing Lighthouse and partner lab facilities. Measures taken include recruitment of hundreds of additional staff and new technology to boost the number of tests processed. Surge laboratories will continue to maximise testing as demand rises. A further 20 new testing sites are opening across the country this week, increasing the number of local booking slots available throughout England.

New labs in Newcastle and Bracknell will help increase capacity by tens of thousands, gradually increasing the number of tests they can process over the coming months. Newcastle will be able to deliver 80,000 tests per day by the end of March, and Bracknell 40,000 tests per day by February.

NHS Test and Trace has reached a record number of positive cases this week, with more than 12,800 people testing positive sharing their recent contacts. This is the result of a 74% increase in positive cases being transferred to the system since the previous week.

Contact tracers continue to reach the vast majority of those contacts identified, with 83.9% of those with contact information successfully advised to self-isolate in the latest week.

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

We are working tirelessly to boost testing capacity so that everyone who needs a test can get one. Each day, around 200,000 people are successfully booking and taking tests and we are growing our capacity to 500,000 tests across the UK by the end of October, with more and more capacity being added each week.

I cannot stress enough how important it is that only those with symptoms book tests. The service is there for those experiencing a high temperature, new continuous cough or loss or change in sense of taste or smell. If you don't have symptoms but think, or have been told by NHS Test and Trace, that you have been in contact with someone with the virus, please stay at home but do not book a test. We need everyone to help make sure that tests are there for people with symptoms who need them."

From today, a new dedicated helpline will be available for nurseries, schools and colleges to seek advice if they have a confirmed positive coronavirus case in their setting. The helpline will inform educational settings of what action is needed in response to a confirmed case from the latest public health advice and

work through a risk assessment. Where necessary, complex cases will be escalated to health protection teams to provide further support. Usually, full closure will not be necessary, but some individuals may need to self-isolate if they have had close contact with the confirmed case.

Demand is being increased in part by a large number of people without symptoms booking tests. The guidance – and the clear advice of public health experts – is that you should not book a test if you do not have symptoms, unless advised to do so by a public health professional. Anyone who is self-isolating because they have had close recent contact with someone who has tested positive must self-isolate for the full 14-day period.

Tests can be booked via [gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test](https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test) or 119, with new booking slots made available throughout the day. A number of tests continue to be reserved for NHS staff and essential workers experiencing virus symptoms.

The weekly statistics from the 15th week of NHS Test and Trace show in the most recent week of operations (3 to 9

September):

- testing capacity increased by 2% from the previous week to 1,612,543 (pillars 1 and 2) across the UK

- 82.6% of people who tested positive and were transferred to the



contact-tracing system were reached and asked to provide information about their contacts

- 83.9% of contacts where communication details were given have been reached and told to self-isolate

- pillar 1 testing capacity was at 575,043, the same as the previous week

- pillar 2 testing capacity was at 1,037,500, an increase of 4% since the previous week

- pillar 3 testing capacity was at 840,000, the same as the previous week

- pillar 4 testing capacity was at 72,700, a decrease of 12% since the previous week

Statistics from the 15th week of operation of NHS Test and Trace show that since the service launched:

417,296 people have been reached by the service. This includes both those testing positive and their contacts

86.6% of all contacts where communication details were given have been reached and told to self-isolate

Government to explore new ways of delivering ‘sat nav’ for the UK

September

Government to look at wider range of options for a UK satellite navigation and timing capability, critical for energy networks and communications to maritime, aviation and defence the government will explore cutting-edge ways to deliver vital ‘sat nav’ services to the UK – including use of satellites at different orbits this will boost the UK’s thriving space industry and expertise, paving the way for greater independence from foreign systems

New options for a UK satellite navigation and timing capability programme to support the nation’s critical infrastructure will be explored by the government, it was announced today (Thursday 24 September).

The Space-Based Positioning Navigation and Timing Programme (SBPP) will explore new and alternative ways that could be used to deliver vital satellite navigation services to the United Kingdom which are critical for the functioning of transport systems, energy networks, mobile communications and national security and defence, whilst boosting the British space industry and developing the UK’s own capabilities in these services.

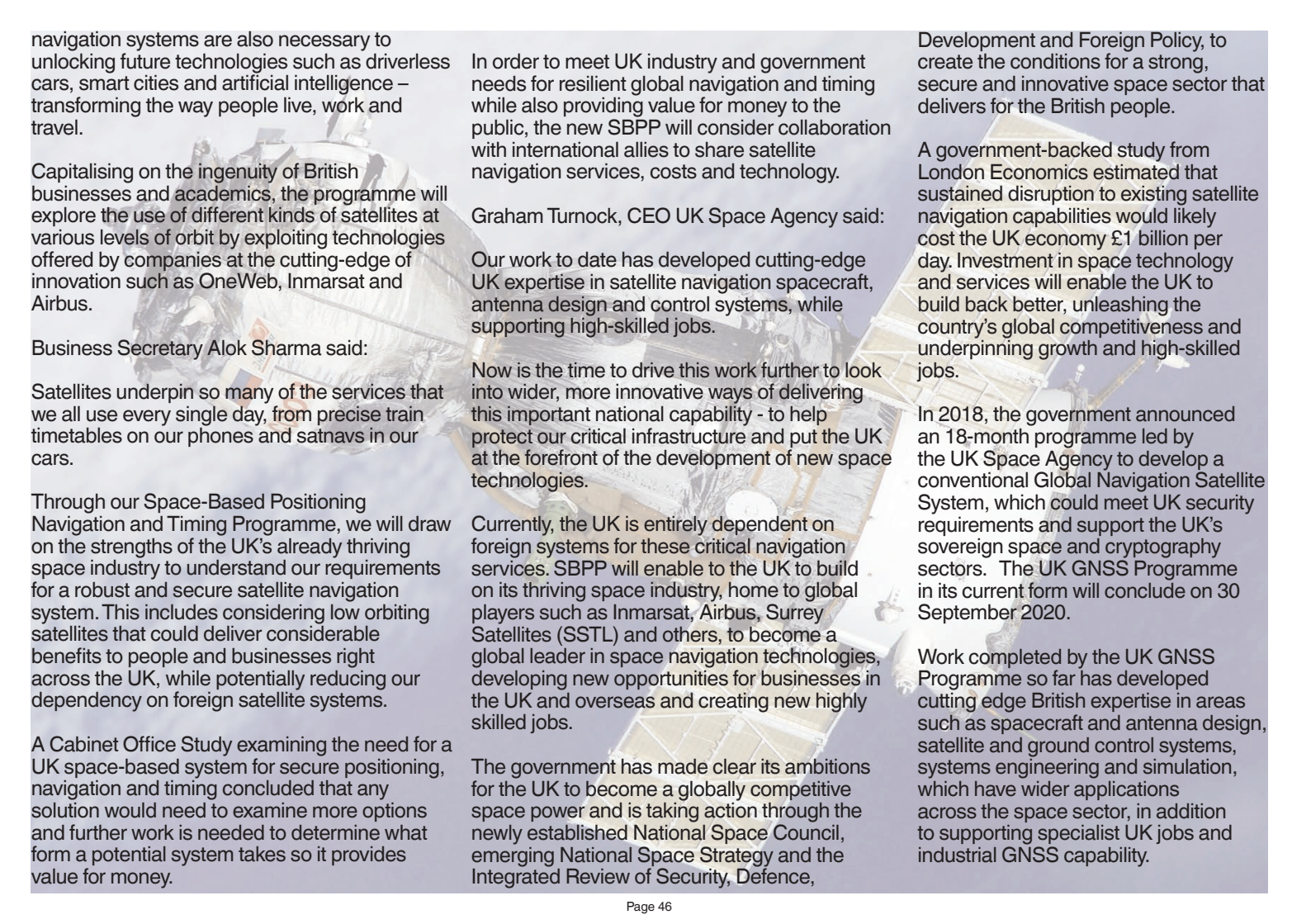
This will follow the work of the UK’s Global

Navigation Satellite System (UK GNSS) programme, which is due to conclude at the end of the month.

UK GNSS is an exploration programme which has developed outline plans for a conventional satellite system as an alternative to American GPS or the EU’s Galileo. The programme will now be reset as the SBPP to build on this work to consider newer, more innovative ideas of delivering global ‘sat nav’ and secure satellite services to meet public, government and industry needs.

Satellite navigation is a sophisticated technology that works by beaming signals from space that devices such as smartphones can use to determine their location and time – otherwise known as position, navigation and timing (PNT).

This could include technology that supports people’s everyday lives, such as emergency services to locate incidents, financial services companies to regulate exchanges on the UK stock market, or energy networks to ensure households receive power. Satellite



navigation systems are also necessary to unlocking future technologies such as driverless cars, smart cities and artificial intelligence – transforming the way people live, work and travel.

Capitalising on the ingenuity of British businesses and academics, the programme will explore the use of different kinds of satellites at various levels of orbit by exploiting technologies offered by companies at the cutting-edge of innovation such as OneWeb, Inmarsat and Airbus.

Business Secretary Alok Sharma said:

Satellites underpin so many of the services that we all use every single day, from precise train timetables on our phones and satnavs in our cars.

Through our Space-Based Positioning Navigation and Timing Programme, we will draw on the strengths of the UK's already thriving space industry to understand our requirements for a robust and secure satellite navigation system. This includes considering low orbiting satellites that could deliver considerable benefits to people and businesses right across the UK, while potentially reducing our dependency on foreign satellite systems.

A Cabinet Office Study examining the need for a UK space-based system for secure positioning, navigation and timing concluded that any solution would need to examine more options and further work is needed to determine what form a potential system takes so it provides value for money.

In order to meet UK industry and government needs for resilient global navigation and timing while also providing value for money to the public, the new SBPP will consider collaboration with international allies to share satellite navigation services, costs and technology.

Graham Turnock, CEO UK Space Agency said:

Our work to date has developed cutting-edge UK expertise in satellite navigation spacecraft, antenna design and control systems, while supporting high-skilled jobs.

Now is the time to drive this work further to look into wider, more innovative ways of delivering this important national capability - to help protect our critical infrastructure and put the UK at the forefront of the development of new space technologies.

Currently, the UK is entirely dependent on foreign systems for these critical navigation services. SBPP will enable the UK to build on its thriving space industry, home to global players such as Inmarsat, Airbus, Surrey Satellites (SSTL) and others, to become a global leader in space navigation technologies, developing new opportunities for businesses in the UK and overseas and creating new highly skilled jobs.

The government has made clear its ambitions for the UK to become a globally competitive space power and is taking action through the newly established National Space Council, emerging National Space Strategy and the Integrated Review of Security, Defence,

Development and Foreign Policy, to create the conditions for a strong, secure and innovative space sector that delivers for the British people.

A government-backed study from London Economics estimated that sustained disruption to existing satellite navigation capabilities would likely cost the UK economy £1 billion per day. Investment in space technology and services will enable the UK to build back better, unleashing the country's global competitiveness and underpinning growth and high-skilled jobs.

In 2018, the government announced an 18-month programme led by the UK Space Agency to develop a conventional Global Navigation Satellite System, which could meet UK security requirements and support the UK's sovereign space and cryptography sectors. The UK GNSS Programme in its current form will conclude on 30 September 2020.

Work completed by the UK GNSS Programme so far has developed cutting edge British expertise in areas such as spacecraft and antenna design, satellite and ground control systems, systems engineering and simulation, which have wider applications across the space sector, in addition to supporting specialist UK jobs and industrial GNSS capability.



COVER OPTIONS

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