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Summer 2022 British Edition



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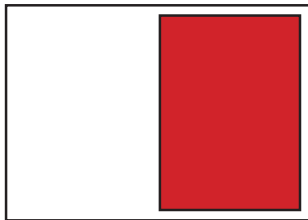
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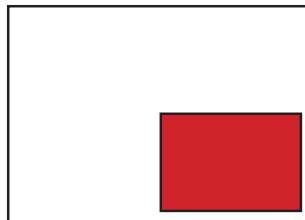
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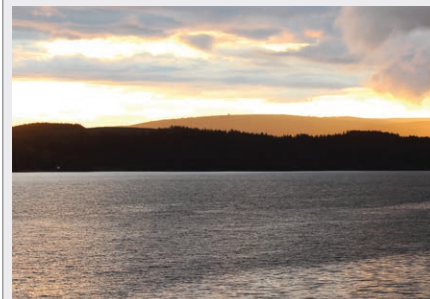
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Office: 08702 416 422

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Submissions should be sent to

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Email: submissions@government-world.com

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A Greylag Goose enjoying the Summer weather



News & Sports Roundup

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

By Paul G Bazeley for Government World

April News Review

Russia's war on Ukraine continued. While the Ukrainian forces held their own against the Russian onslaught, even pushing them back and recapturing some towns early in the month, the country took heavy losses in numbers of dead and injured and ground lost. Still, halfway through the month, President Volodymyr Zelensky announced the city of Mariupol was 'completely destroyed' with tens of thousands killed.



An independent report and several countries accused Russia of war crimes in Ukraine as evidence of looting, execution, and rape against civilians was reported. NATO, America and the European Union called for further sanctions against Russia. A few days later, images of a massacre in Bucha led U.S. President Joe Biden to call for Vladimir Putin, the Russian President, to be tried for war crimes.

Russia claimed that the Ukrainian air force had carried out an airstrike on fuel facilities in the city of Belgorod. Videos were posted to social media showing helicopters firing rockets at the fuel facility.

There were ceasefire talks during the month, reportedly over a video link. Russia said it would stop the invasion if Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky agreed to conditions, including a legal guarantee that Ukraine would not join NATO, and it was written in the country's constitution.

The Food and Agriculture Organisation of

the United Nations food price index went up 13% to a record high. The fallout of Russia's invasion of Ukraine was said to be the overwhelming factor.



Prime Minister Boris Johnson, his wife Carrie Johnson and Chancellor Rishi Sunak were fined for breaching COVID-19 rules. The MET said they had issued over 50 fines. Mr Johnson apologised for his actions as there were once again calls for him to quit.



Ahmed Khan, was convicted of sexually assaulting a 15-year-old boy in 2008. The court heard he made the youngster drink gin and made him watch pornography before assaulting him. Mr Khan said he would appeal his conviction.



Neil Parish, a Conservative MP, was investigated by the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards after allegedly watching pornography in the House of Commons.

Marie Le Pen conceded defeat to Emmanuel Macron in the French Presidential election.



The win makes Macron the first president to be re-elected since 2002, when Jacques Chirac claimed victory against Jean-Marie Le Pen (Marie Le Pen's father).

A mass shooting and smoke bomb attack injured 23 people in a subway station during the morning commute in New York City. Following tips from bystanders, a suspect was arrested.



A galaxy known as HD1 was discovered 13.5million lightyears away from Earth, making it the furthest known galaxy found.

April Sports Review

Tyson Fury defeated Dillian Whyte by a technical knockout in six rounds. The win saw Fury retain his WBC world heavyweight

title in front of over 90,000 boxing fans in Wembley Stadium.



Scottie Scheffler won the Masters golf tournament at Augusta National Golf Club in America.



Noble Yeats, the 50-1 outsider, ridden by the jockey Sam Waley-Cohen, won the 2022 Grand National at Aintree Racecourse.

May News Review

Vladimir Putin told French President Emmanuel Macron that Russia was open to continuing peace talks with Ukraine despite reports that they had stalled. Volodymyr Zelensky said he was also willing to resume peace talks if Russia guaranteed the removal of troops from Ukraine, restoration of preinvasion borders and the return of Ukrainians who were forcefully evacuated to Russia. Throughout the month, Russia continued its advance in Ukraine.

A draft opinion was leaked to Politico that suggested the U.S. Supreme Court could overturn the Roe v Wade ruling and the Planned Parenthood v Casey ruling. It would



mean people would lose the right to abortion in some states.

Monkeypox, a viral disease, was detected and confirmed after being found in the United Kingdom. The infection seems to present as a fever a week or two after exposure and then creates a rash, often with lesions, that will last for a few weeks before falling off.



The 66th Eurovision Song Contest took place in Italy. The Kalush Orchestra representing Ukraine won the event beating Sam Ryder, the United Kingdom's entry, who took second place by 175 points.

McDonald's announced it would sell all its Russian restaurants due to the "humanitarian crisis caused by the war in Ukraine". Marks and Spencer also closed all their Russian stores stating they are a 'values-led business.



Apple announced it was discontinuing the iPod Touch to officially end the 20-year iPod line of media players.



May Sports Review

Jake Daniels, a midfielder for Blackpool F.C., became the first openly gay professional footballer in the United Kingdom since 1990.

Eintracht Frankfurt beat Glasgow Ranger in the Europa League final. Meanwhile, Manchester City retained the Premier League title, winning it for the third time in a row. They beat Liverpool by one point on the final day of the season. Finally, in football, Real Madrid defeated



Liverpool 1-0 to win the Champions League Final in Paris.

Justin Thomas won the PGA Championship at the Southern Hills Country Club in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

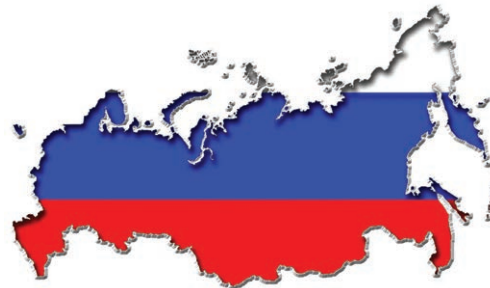
June News Review

Celebrations for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee took place in the United Kingdom to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II being on the throne for 70 years. There was an extended bank holiday weekend in June, with the May bank holiday being moved and an additional holiday given for the year. The festivities saw street parties, a service of thanksgiving for the Queen's reign, a trooping of the colour, a platinum party at the palace and much more



to commemorate such a special occasion.

Russian forces continued their invasion of Ukraine. During the month, Russia claimed what was left of the strategic city of Sievierodonetsk and cut off all escape routes. Nike, among others, followed the choice of other companies and chose to end all dealings in Russia due to the ongoing



conflict. Countries, including the U.K., continued to provide support to Ukraine and its army.

The Chairman of the Conservative Party's 1922 Committee received over 54 letters to trigger a no-confidence vote in the party's



leadership. Prime Minister Boris Johnson survived the vote of no confidence by a margin of 211-148.

The United States Supreme Court

overturned the Roe v Wade and Planned Parenthood v Casey decisions. The reversal ended the protection of the right to an abortion from a federal level to a state choice. Twenty-two states triggered laws banning abortions following the news.



The World Health Organisation (WHO) declared Monkeypox a public health emergency of national concern as its presence had spread across the world. It was also stated that the infection was most commonly found in men that had sex with other men.

Johnny Depp won his defamation lawsuit against his ex-wife Amber Heard. The jury found that Mr Depp had proven defamation for all three of the statements

in Ms Heard's op-ed piece. As a result, Depp was awarded \$10 million in compensatory damages and \$5 million in punitive damages, which was reduced to \$350,000 due to state law.

The United Kingdom was asked to hold the 2023 Eurovision Song Contest after the organisers decided that Ukraine would be unable to host the competition due to the ongoing Russian invasion.

June Sports Review

Rafael Nadal beat Casper Ruud in the men's singles final to win the French Tennis Open at Roland Garros. It took the Spaniard's total Grand Slam titles to 23.

Kenichi Horie, the Japanese Yachtsman, became the oldest person to sail across the Pacific Ocean solo at the age of 83.



The Golden State Warriors beat the Boston Celtics in six games to claim their fourth NBA Championship title, with Steph Curry winning the NBA Finals MVP award.

End

National Living Wage Increase boosts pay of low-paid workers

April

The National Living Wage (NLW) will increase on Friday 1 April by 6.6 per cent to £9.50, providing a pay rise to millions of workers across the UK. There will be a real terms pay increase for 21-22 year olds who will see their pay increase by 9.8 per cent to £9.18 per hour. These increases follow recommendations made to the Government by the Low Pay Commission in the autumn. The increase means a significant step forward towards reaching the target set by the Government for the NLW to reach two-thirds of median earnings by 2024.

The Government published its remit to the LPC for 2022 in March. This asks the Low Pay Commission (LPC) "to monitor the labour market and the impacts of the National Living Wage closely, advise on any emerging risks and - if the economic evidence warrants it - recommend that the government reviews its target or timeframe. This emergency brake will ensure that the lowest-paid workers

continue to see pay rises without significant risks to their employment prospects." The LPC will make its recommendations to Government on the 2023 National Minimum Wage rates in October.

Bryan Sanderson, Chair of the Low Pay Commission, said:

"Minimum wage workers across the United Kingdom continue to play a vital role in ensuring a strong post-pandemic economic recovery. In previous years the LPC has sought to keep increases to the minimum wage above inflation. However, inflation is now expected to be higher than the forecasts we had when we made our recommendations last October.

Workers on the minimum wage; care for our elderly and sick, harvest and deliver our food, and do a multitude of other tasks which help us all.

Many public sector workers including for example teaching assistants will also shortly be included. They all deserve to be properly remunerated and respected as key members of our society.

Therefore, while today's NLW increase of 6.6 per cent gets us back on track to reach the 2024 target of two-thirds of median earnings, it will unfortunately likely be a real terms cut. Though, 21-22 year olds will receive a real terms increase with a rise of 9.8 per cent. We will soon make this group eligible for the NLW and judged it sensible to close the gap between the rates over a longer period, rather than a very large increase once they become eligible.

The Low Pay Commission met with around a hundred representative bodies last year before making its recommendations. We are frequently their main sometimes even their only advocates. With government support we will continue to try to ensure that they do not suffer from the neglect which was so often characteristic of the past.”

The LPC has today published a short report which looks ahead at what the new rates will mean, and the path of the NLW to its target of two-thirds of median hourly earnings by 2024. Estimating the forward

path of the NLW is very challenging as earnings growth is difficult to measure and predict in the current economic climate. Nevertheless, our estimate of the on-course rate of the NLW for 2023 is £10.32 (an 8.6% increase) and £10.95 in 2024 (a 6.1% increase). Because of the uncertainty we will update our estimates in the summer

Today, the other rates of the National Minimum Wage will also increase alongside the NLW.

	Previous rate	Rate from April 2022	Increase
National Living Wage	£8.91	£9.50	6.6%
21-22 Year old rate	£8.36	£9.18	9.8%
18-20 Year old rate	£6.56	£6.83	4.1%
16-17 Year old rate	£4.62	£4.81	4.1%
Apprentice Rate	£4.81	11.9%	



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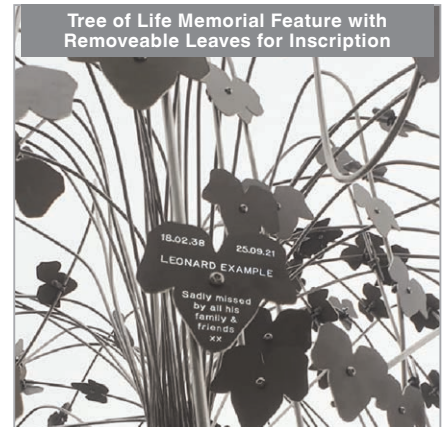
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Window for climate action closing fast

April

- The window to keep 1.5C in reach is closing fast
- Global growth in emissions slowed in last decade but further urgent action vital
- UK COP Presidency calls on countries to deliver on the historic Glasgow Climate Pact agreed at COP26

The United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report published today (Monday 4 April) shows growth in global emissions has slowed over the past decade, but much more needs to be done, including halving global emissions by 2030, to keep the goal of 1.5C in reach and avoid the worst impacts of global warming.

The IPCC's independent report highlights the need for urgent action in decarbonising energy, industry, transport and making homes more energy efficient, to achieve the Paris Agreement's central

goal of keeping a global temperature rise this century to well below 2C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5C.

The report also shows reasons for optimism with a trend showing a slowing growth of global emissions. It also details how economic growth can be achieved alongside ambitious emissions reductions and the falling costs of renewables. Since 2010, solar energy costs and lithium-ion battery costs have decreased by around 85%, and wind energy by around 55%.

The UK is calling on countries to deliver on the Glasgow Climate Pact, in which 197 countries agreed to revisit and strengthen their 2030 emissions reduction commitments (Nationally Determined Contributions) as necessary this year to align with the Paris Agreement temperature goal and thereby limit the worst impacts of climate change.

Governments from around the world have spent a fortnight at a UK-hosted session examining climate scientists' evidence for this report. The IPCC has concluded that to limit warming to 1.5C, global emissions must peak before 2025, and then be halved by early 2030s - in part by ending the world's reliance on fossil fuels, including reducing use of unabated coal by three quarters by 2030.

COP26 President Alok Sharma, said:

"This report makes clear that the window to keep 1.5 degrees alive is closing alarmingly fast. The warning lights are yet again flashing bright red on the climate dashboard and it is high time for governments to sit up and act before it is too late.

That is why it is absolutely vital that as agreed in the Glasgow Climate Pact all countries, especially the G20

nations which are responsible for 80 per cent of global emissions, revisit and strengthen their 2030 emission reduction targets this year as necessary to align with the Paris temperature goal if we are to avoid the catastrophic impacts of climate change.

But this report also gives hope that the rate of growth in emissions is slowing and that thanks to the falling cost of renewables and technological innovation it is possible to transition to a cleaner future.

We know that a net zero economy presents huge opportunities for growth and the creation of good green jobs and so countries and companies need to accelerate that transition.”

The UK has already committed to reducing carbon emissions by 68% by 2030 and by 78% by 2035 compared to 1990 levels, before reaching net zero by 2050 as set out in the UK’s comprehensive Net-Zero Strategy. It is calling on the global community to honour the commitment to provide at least \$100bn a year to support developing countries take ambitious climate action.

UK Minister of State for Energy and Climate Change, Greg Hands, said:

“Today’s report is a reminder to the world of the grave threat of climate change.

There is still a window of opportunity to act to reduce the effects.

The UK is going further and faster to generate more cheap and clean renewable power. This will reduce our exposure to expensive global gas prices.

We call on the global community to seize the moment and join us in stepping up a green transition.”

The IPCC’s last report, published in February, warned that some of the

impacts of global warming are “irreversible”, with more than 40% of the world’s population now highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, such as extreme weather events like floods and heatwaves.

Today’s report also highlights the economic opportunities from the transition to a net zero economy, with the falling costs of renewable energy, and comes six months after the UK published a comprehensive Net Zero Strategy. This sets out how it will secure 440,000 well-paid jobs and unlock £90 billion in investment by 2030, by helping British businesses and consumers transition to clean energy and green technology. It included £1 billion investment in electric vehicles, £3.9 billion for insulating our homes, along with support for commercialising sustainable aviation fuel and help heavy industry move to hydrogen power.

This month the UK is starting to spend its £200 million pledged to support developing countries cut emissions through the new extension of the Partnering for Accelerated Climate Transitions (PACT) programme.



The UK will also soon publish a new International Climate Finance (ICF) Strategy, laying out its delivery plan for £11.6 billion of investment to help countries across the globe respond to the climate emergency. The funding represents a doubling of support for communities worst affected by global warming.

- The IPCC provides the most authoritative, cutting-edge, scientific assessment of climate change. Independent of politics, the IPCC provides Governments around the world with a totally impartial scientific evidence base for climate policy and UN climate negotiations.
- Its scale of global scientific collaboration is unique, bringing together hundreds of world-leading authors from across the world. This Working Group report on mitigation has been developed with 278 scientists from 65 countries, all who have volunteered their time and expertise to produce this report.
- This latest report is the product of 7 years' work with thousands of contributions from scientists, individuals and countries, through an extensive review and consultation process.

UK to host world-leading Nato Defence Innovation Headquarters

April

The United Kingdom, in partnership with Estonia, will host the European HQ of a programme for NATO allies to accelerate, test, evaluate and validate new technologies that address critical defence challenges and contribute to Alliance deterrence.

Announced today by the NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, the Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic (DIANA) will see transatlantic cooperation on critical technologies and help NATO work more closely with industry and academia.

The UK's accelerator will be twinned with a new accelerator in Tallinn, Estonia to encourage the sharing of expertise, explore the use of virtual sites to trial vehicles, including autonomous ones, and test cyber innovations.

As hosts, the UK and Estonia will:

- Support start-up companies with funding, guidance and business expertise through twinned accelerator networks.
- Offer the use of 'deep tech' test centres to assess technological solutions to military problems, utilising the Defence BattleLab.
- Work with NATO to develop a virtual marketplace to connect start-ups with trusted investors, as well as a rapid acquisition service to connect products to buyers at pace.

UK Defence Secretary, Ben Wallace said:

"The UK and Estonia are two of the most innovative countries in NATO and our hosting of DIANA will harness that innovation for the benefit of all Allies tackling future military threats.

The UK has a vibrant tech community, combining the academia, financiers, and high-tech start-ups that make it an ideal place to develop the next generation of military technologies.

Estonia was the natural partner for the UK given its international leadership in cyber, autonomy and AI, and our close partnership forged through the Enhanced Forward Presence.”

Ranked in the world’s top ten innovative universities, Imperial College London will bring together academia, industry and government by hosting the headquarters of DIANA and a DIANA Accelerator at the Innovation Hub (IHUB) in the White City Innovation District, in a space shared with the UK’s Defence and Security Accelerator (DASA), Major Defence Contractors and The US Directors of Defence’s Tri-Service Office.

Supported by DASA, the UK and Estonia DIANA HQ is expected to be operational from July 2022. DIANA is essential to delivering the NATO 2030 vision and ensuring that the Alliance develops the military capabilities needed to deter and defend against existing and future threats.

Estonian Defence Minister, Kalle Laanet.

“The goal of DIANA is to support deep technologies companies that contribute to defence. It will bring together talented innovators with new technologies end-users in the area of defence. We are very glad to see that the good cooperation we have with the UK will expand even further and also encompass our universities and private sector more,

Cooperation between the UK and Estonia is working well on every level because we have a common understanding of

defence policy. Good relations with Allies is a cornerstone of Estonian defence policy, and a successful start to this programme for us is a sign that this cornerstone is strong.”

Co- Director, Institute for Security Science and Technology, Imperial College London, Professor Deeph Chana, said:

“As one of the top STEM-B universities in the world, in one of the most diverse cities, Imperial College London is uniquely placed to power a progressive, responsible and holistic dual-use security and defence technology innovation program by hosting DIANA. Coordinated through our Institute for Security Science and Technology and Business School we’re committed to working on disruptive research and innovation to reduce insecurity and to deal with global threats and challenges.”

DIANA will support all seven of the key emerging and disruptive technologies that NATO has identified as priorities: artificial intelligence, big-data processing, quantum-enabled technologies, autonomy, biotechnology, hypersonics and space.



UK to bolster defensive aid to Ukraine with new £100m package

April

The new support will include more anti-tank missiles and air defence systems, as well as loitering munitions and non-lethal aid like helmets, body armour and night vision goggles

The package will include more Starstreak air defence systems (MoD Crown Copyright)

The UK will provide a further package of military aid to Ukraine, the Prime Minister announced today.



The new support will include:

- More than 800 more NLAW anti-tank missiles
- Additional Javelin anti-tank systems
- Additional loitering munitions
- Additional Starstreak air defence systems
- Additional non-lethal aid including ballistic helmets, body armour and night vision goggles

This package amounts to more than £100 million and has been designed in consultation with the Armed Forces of Ukraine to ensure that it meets their military needs. This builds on the £350 million of military aid and around £400m of economic and humanitarian support that the UK has already provided.

As well as providing bilateral lethal aid, the UK Armed Forces – alongside Polish, US and international partners – have established an International Donor Coordination Centre in Stuttgart.

This plays a leading role in the international effort and ensures that the military aid delivered to Ukraine is as coordinated and effective as possible. The team from 104 Logistics Brigade was established following the first International Donor Conference convened by the Defence Secretary in February.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

“Putin has steeled our resolve, sharpened our focus and forced Europe to begin to rearm to guarantee our shared security.

Alongside our allies, this military

support will bolster Ukraine's efforts to ensure Russia's barbaric invasion fails."

The Defence Secretary Ben Wallace MP said:

"The UK Government is resolute in our support for Ukraine and determined that no barbaric Russian act goes unanswered.

Another 800 NLAWs will not only support the Ukrainian defence, but show Putin that his brutality only stiffens our resolve."

The aid announced today builds on last week's second International Donor Conference, where the UK brought together more than 35 international partners. Following the first Donor Conference on 25 February, the international community provided 2.5 million items of military weapons and equipment to Ukraine, amounting to more than £1.5 billion.

Earlier this week, ministers from the Ministry of Defence hosted a Ukrainian delegation on Salisbury Plain Training Area to demonstrate UK equipment which will contribute to future planned support packages as Ukraine's needs evolve. Further announcements will follow in due course.

Prime Minister pledges UK's unwavering support to Ukraine on visit to Kyiv: 9 April 2022

April

Prime Minister Boris Johnson meets President Zelenskyy in Kyiv and pledges to stand by the Ukrainian people.

- Prime Minister meets President Zelenskyy in Kyiv and pledges to stand by the Ukrainian people
- Leaders have discussed the support for Ukraine's long-term survival as a free and democratic country
- PM set out new military aid and an additional \$500bn World Bank guarantee to support Ukraine's economy

The Prime Minister is in Kyiv today [Saturday] to demonstrate the UK's steadfast solidarity with Ukraine and hold in-depth discussions with President Zelenskyy on military and economic assistance.

He reiterated that the UK will do everything in its power to support

Ukraine's brave fight against Russia's brutal and unprovoked invasion and ensure its long term security and prosperity.

The Prime Minister set out new military assistance of 120 armoured vehicles and new anti-ship missile systems, to support Ukraine in this



crucial phase while Russia's illegal assault continues. This is in addition to the £100 million worth of high-grade military equipment announced yesterday, including more Starstreak anti-aircraft missiles, another 800 anti-tank missiles, and high-tech loitering munitions for precision strikes.

The Prime Minister also confirmed further economic support, guaranteeing an additional \$500m [£385m] in World Bank lending to Ukraine, taking our total loan guarantee to up to \$1 billion. This comes alongside the £394m the UK has provided in grant aid, and will help ensure the continued running of vital humanitarian services for Ukrainians.

The UK has responded to the request of the Ukrainian government by liberalising tariffs on the vast majority of imports from Ukraine and providing customs easements, as part of our commitment to the country's economic stability.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

"It is a privilege to be able to travel to Ukraine and meet President Zelenskyy in person in Kyiv today.

Ukraine has defied the odds and pushed back Russian forces from the gates of

Kyiv, achieving the greatest feat of arms of the 21st century.

It is because of President Zelenskyy's resolute leadership and the invincible heroism and courage of the Ukrainian people that Putin's monstrous aims are being thwarted.

I made clear today that the United Kingdom stands unwaveringly with them in this ongoing fight, and we are in it for the long run.

We are stepping up our own military and economic support and convening a global alliance to bring this tragedy to an end, and ensure Ukraine survives and thrives as a free and sovereign nation."



The image shows the Keith Welters logo and a bronze elephant sculpture. The logo is for "Keith Welters FURNISHING" and "welters® ORGANISATION WORLDWIDE Design and Innovation" with the website "www.welters-worldwide.com". The elephant is a bronze sculpture of a standing elephant with its trunk raised.

Government uses Brexit freedoms to protect our seas

April

Damaging fishing activity will be prohibited in four new Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), the government has announced today. The move has been made possible by new post-Brexit freedoms which allow the government to protect rare habitats and wildlife in UK waters.

The byelaws, which have been subject to extensive consultation with industry and other stakeholders, will come into force in two months' time (13 June 2022).

They are being introduced using new powers under the Fisheries Act, the UK's first major domestic fisheries legislation in nearly 40 years. The new measures will prohibit fishing activities in MPAs where there is evidence that they harm wildlife or damage habitats.

The four byelaws ban the use of bottom trawls, dredges, demersal seines and semi-pelagic trawls, collectively known

as bottom towed gear, over certain areas. There are also additional restrictions in two of the sites preventing the use of certain static gears such as pots, nets or lines over especially sensitive areas.

The byelaws will bring in management measures on fishing within these four MPAs in English waters:

- Dogger Bank Special Area of Conservation
- Inner Dowsing, Race Bank and North Ridge Special Area of Conservation

- South Dorset Marine Conservation Zone

- The Canyons Marine Conservation Zone

Environment Secretary, George Eustice, said:

“Outside the EU, we are using our new freedoms to protect our marine environment. We will be stopping trawling and dredging in these Marine Protected Areas to protect wildlife and habitats, through powers we have in



our Fisheries Act 2020.”

Tom McCormack, Chief Executive Officer of MMO, said:

“Many of our inshore marine protected areas are already protected through MMO and Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority byelaws.

“The Fisheries Act includes new powers allowing us to better manage and control fishing in our offshore Marine Protected Areas.

“These new byelaws represent the next step in our nature recovery journey, ensuring our marine life can recover and thrive.”

The first four MPAs were chosen as a priority to help protect their vibrant and productive undersea environments. They include the Dogger Bank Special Area of Conservation, which has the largest shallow sandbank in British waters and supports commercial fish species such as cod and plaice, as well as sand eels that provide an important food source for kittiwakes, puffins and porpoises. They also include the Canyons Marine Conservation Zone which protects rare and highly sensitive deep water corals.

Multiplying maths skills for adults

April

Adults looking to improve their numeracy skills are set to benefit from a £270 million investment in new courses, helping to level up opportunities for more people to progress and get good, well-paid jobs.

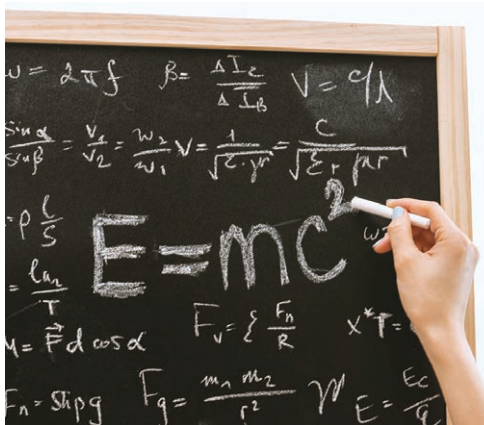
Around 17 million adults in England –

half of the working-age population – have the numeracy skills of primary school children. Poor numeracy skills can hold people back from having the confidence to get on in life and into work.

Those who improve their numeracy skills are more likely to be in employment, have higher wages, and better wellbeing.

Local councils and mayoral combined authorities across England will receive the cash boost ahead of the rollout of the government’s flagship Multiply programme this autumn.

Multiply will offer adults who do not already have a GCSE grade C/4 or higher in Maths or equivalent, and need to improve



their numeracy, free flexible courses that fit around their lives. Courses are expected to be available this autumn in person or online, at work or at home, and either on a part time or intensive basis. These courses will equip adults across the UK with the numeracy skills they need to fulfil their potential.

Employers who could benefit from boosting their workforce's skills will be able to work with their Local Authority and training providers to deliver Maths GCSEs or work-ready Functional Skills Qualifications as well as design and deliver bespoke programmes for their workforce – at no cost to them.

Minister for Skills Alex Burghart said:

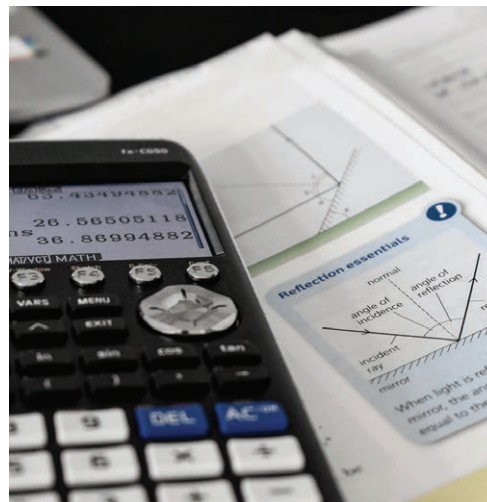
As the son of a maths teacher, I know that, with the right support, everyone can do maths. That is why making sure everyone has good maths and numeracy skills is central to the mission of this government.

Poor numeracy holds people back in their lives and careers. Multiply will be

a launchpad for people to progress into better paid jobs that will help our economy grow.

This £270 million of government funding will unlock potential and level up opportunities for people across the country. We will give this money to local areas based on need so they can find the right solutions for their communities.

There is already help available for adults to improve maths and numeracy skills including fully funded



maths courses up to GCSE to enable people to get the maths skills they need.

Multiply will build on this by offering a range of free training options helping people to build their confidence with maths in their everyday and working lives.

Businesses that develop their employees' numeracy skills can also boost productivity, increase profits and improve employee retention. Research shows that sectors with a high proportion of workers with basic or advanced numeracy skills have experienced the most rapid growth in employment over the last decade.

The funding announced today for England is part of a £2.6 billion investment through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund which is designed to help spread opportunity and level up the country. Up to £559 million in total from Fund will be invested across the UK to support the delivery of the government's Multiply programme.

Broadcasting reforms to create new golden age of British TV and help nation's public service broadcasters thrive

April

Plans to better protect viewers of video-on-demand services from harmful content with Ofcom to rule on new content standards and given new regulatory powers

Government to pursue a change of ownership of Channel 4 to give it the tools it needs to succeed in the future as a public service broadcaster while protecting its distinctiveness

TV and radio lovers will enjoy a new golden age of programming as the government updates decades-old broadcasting regulations to give the UK's vital public service system a deal fit for the streaming age.

Rapid changes in technology, viewing habits and the emergence of global media giants have brought new challenges for UK broadcasters. More people are watching programmes on their phones, laptops, tablets, games consoles and on smart TVs. Competition for viewers and advertising revenue has

intensified.

According to Ofcom, the share of total viewing for 'linear' TV channels such as ITV and the BBC fell by more than ten per cent between 2017 and 2020. The share for subscription video-on-demand services such as Netflix and Amazon Prime Video rose from six per cent to 19 per cent over the same period.

Plans in a new broadcasting white paper published on Thursday will boost domestic public service broadcasters (PSBs) which develop talent and skills, drive growth in the creative industries and deliver distinctive, diverse British content. It will allow them to compete fairly and continue to make shows loved at home and abroad and support the UK's booming production sector, which is worth £3 billion, even before accounting for the success of the BBC, ITV and Channel 5's own production studios.

UK public service broadcasters will no longer be subject to a complicated set

of 'purposes' and 'objectives' from laws made in 2003. Their remit will be overhauled and simplified, with a new definition of what it means to be a PSB and a focus on creating distinctive shows which reflect British culture, support domestic film and TV production, and provide impartial and accurate news.

While making sure PSBs continue to serve audiences across the UK with universally-available high-quality programming, they will be given greater freedom and flexibility in how they can fulfil their public service obligations. They will be allowed to meet their public service requirements showing content on online platforms instead of just on their main channels as it stands today.

The government will legislate to make sure PSB content is always carried and easy to find for UK audiences on connected devices and major online platforms, including on smart TVs,

set-top boxes and streaming sticks.

Proposals also include measures to protect audiences from a wider range of harmful material - such as unchallenged health claims - while watching programmes on video-on-demand services (VoDs). These services will be brought under UK jurisdiction and subject to a Video-on-Demand Code similar to the Broadcasting Code, enforced by Ofcom. Fines for breaches could be up to £250,000 or five per cent of annual turnover.

Culture Secretary Nadine Dorries said:

The UK's TV and radio industries are world-renowned for their creativity, driven by exceptional talent that is delivering groundbreaking public service programming.

Set against the backdrop of the digital transformation of our viewing habits, today's plans will revamp decades-old laws to help our public service broadcasters compete in the internet age and usher in a new golden age for British TV and radio. This will provide jobs and growth in the future along with the content we all love.

The white paper proposes that the opportunity to secure rights to air TV's major sporting events such as the FIFA

World Cup and Wimbledon be made an exclusive PSB benefit via reforms to the listed events regime. A review will also look at adding digital and on-demand rights to the scheme to ensure free-to-view access for the nation when watching the 'crown jewels' of sport on digital platforms.

Requiring it to continue to meet the obligations placed on PSBs, the government will move ahead with plans to move Channel 4 out of public ownership to become a privately-owned public service broadcaster like ITV and Channel 5. This will allow it to access greater investment to grow and create more great programming made by people who live



and work in the UK without losing what makes it distinctive.

Under private ownership, the government will remove a restriction on Channel 4 which effectively prohibits it from producing and selling its own content. This will allow it to diversify its revenue streams and improve its long-term sustainability. Channel 4 will still be required to commission a minimum volume of programming from independent producers, in line with the quotas placed on other PSBs, to protect its contribution to the sector.

Channel 4's existing obligations in terms of regional production outside of London and England will be maintained, as will its remit to provide distinctive, educational, innovative and experimental programming that represents the breadth of society, and obligations to show 'original' programmes and provide high quality news and current affairs.

The government will look to use some of the proceeds from the sale of Channel 4 to deliver a new creative dividend for the sector.

The government intends to legislate as soon as the parliamentary timetable allows.



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COVID-19:

What we know so far - part 8

by Paul Bazeley

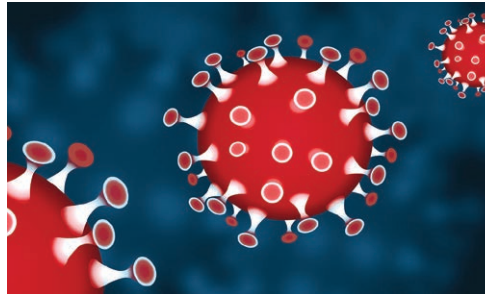
In our last instalment, restrictions were gone, and lateral flow testing was no longer being provided for most people. Still, there had been a rise in cases of COVID-19, and the weather was still cold, making many worry about what may happen. As a result, the government and NHS had also rolled out a spring booster campaign for those seen most at risk of the virus.

What has happened since?

Despite stopping free lateral flow tests to most of the public, the government advice still mentioned 'testing positive'. While you were no longer required to self-isolate, government guidance still stated, 'Try to work from home if you can. If you are unable to work from home, talk to your employer about options available to you.'

This guidance went along with the 'learn to live with the virus' idea discussed in the previous months. However, the direction stated that people should still avoid contact with people if they show symptoms of the virus or have a high temperature or test positive for COVID-19, suggesting we should all be cautious as we move into a life of no restrictions.

According to the Office for National



Statistics (ONS), at the beginning of April, the number of people testing positive in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland remained high. However, Scotland did see a decrease in overall numbers. Meanwhile, the Omicron BA.2 variant remained the dominant variant in the UK.

As we went through April, we consistently heard concerns about the strain on the NHS. Some hospitals were, in fact, so busy that they were diverting ambulances and patients to other hospitals and sites to deal with the backlog. Despite the concerns expressed by and for the NHS, a lifting of rules went ahead as patients waiting in NHS surgeries, hospitals and emergency departments were no longer required to socially distance.

Children aged five to eleven were offered a low-dose vaccine in England, with a second dose available after 12 weeks. The announcement came just days before the government released figures showing that COVID cases in English schools were stabilising compared to mid-March.

As we moved into May, the COVID-19 infection rates seemed to have declined since the beginning of April. Nevertheless, many were quick to point out that the lack of free tests meant that the data would be skewed with far fewer people now testing.

Unfortunately, the deputy chief medical officer, Professor Sir Johnathan Van-Tam, missed his knighthood ceremony after contracting COVID-19 before the event.

Figures showed that nearly 4,000 passengers on the London transport network were fined for not wearing face masks when it was mandatory to do so.

In other news, a 20-metre memorial was ceremonially burned at the Miners' Welfare Park in Bedford, Warwickshire. The event, which was attended by thousands of people, was said to help people heal as the sculpture, named Sanctuary, was raised to the ground.

For June, coronavirus news was quiet. Although there was a slight increase in the number of infections based on ONS data, there was very little coverage or talk about COVID-19. The UK seemed to move into the 'new normal' very quickly, with things almost reverting to pre-COVID times.

There are discussions of booster jabs for most of the population. At the time of writing, there is nothing confirmed



about whether this will go ahead. However, most people seem convinced that the vulnerable population will almost certainly receive a booster, and others may likely be offered the opportunity.

Where are we now?

With summer arriving and the prospect of warm weather alongside the lack of restrictions, many have returned to normality. Unfortunately, there is little news coverage concerning coronavirus, and a lack of free testing means that people are less likely to pick up whether they have the virus.

Thankfully, with warm weather hopefully on the way, the virus's spread will likely be more limited as we begin to spend more time outdoors. If this is the case, then it's likely that infection rates will stay low.

What does the future look like?

Unfortunately, we can't tell you what the future holds. But, currently, things are looking

positive. Infection rates remain relatively low, there are no restrictions, and the country seems to be back to a sense of familiarity.

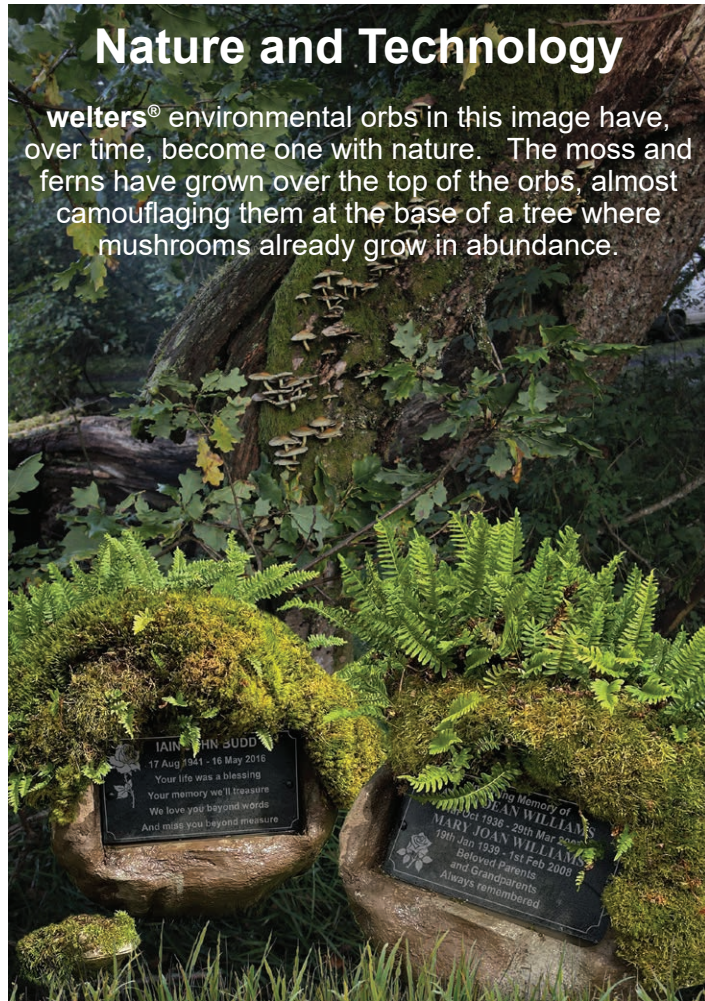
The main concern at the minute is the backlog to the NHS. There are still people with COVID-19 in hospitals, and the disruption it caused to other patients, surgeries and treatments are still yet to be seen. In addition, there were issues with the number of patients the NHS was trying to cope with before the coronavirus, so an added backlog is a hurdle that may take years to overcome.

We're also still waiting for confirmation on the extent of a vaccination rollout later this year, although it seems likely that most of us will receive one to try and stem any increase in a possible rise in serious illness. While we seem to be in a good place at the minute, it remains to be seen whether the Autumn and Winter seasons may cause any issues as the colder weather comes, more of us stay inside, and viruses tend to spread. For now, we must hope that the worst is finally out of the way.



Nature and Technology

welters® environmental orbs in this image have, over time, become one with nature. The moss and ferns have grown over the top of the orbs, almost camouflaging them at the base of a tree where mushrooms already grow in abundance.



UK donates fleet of armoured vehicles to Ukraine to evacuate civilians from besieged areas

May

- UK to donate a fleet of 13 armoured vehicles to Ukraine to rescue civilians from besieged areas.
- Vehicles will also transport key workers to rebuild vital infrastructure
- Delivery of the highly specialised fleet is in direct response to a request from the Government of Ukraine

The UK is sending a fleet of 13 protective armoured vehicles to Ukraine, to safely evacuate people from the shelled areas in east of the country.

The steel-plated vehicles will be sent following a direct request from the Ukraine government for safe and resilient transport for civilians. They will also be used to transport officials from Ukrainian ministries to temporary command posts set up for government work and the rebuilding of key infrastructure, such as energy supplies, in besieged areas.

The Ukrainian police and the National

Guard will also utilise the fleet to rebuild vital railway lines in the east of Ukraine.

The fleet is made up of highly specialised 4x4s that have been upgraded with armour to resist high velocity bullets, anti-personnel mines and improvised explosive devices – all tactics which have been used by Russian forces to slaughter civilians.

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said:

“The intentional targeting of innocent civilians is a war crime.



This latest donation of armoured vehicles will help protect innocent Ukrainians attempting to flee Russian shelling and support Ukrainian officials carrying out vital work.”

The unprovoked Russian invasion of Ukraine continues to have a massive human cost, including the murdering of innocent civilians and mass displacement of families, as well as the destruction to vital infrastructure including schools and hospitals. It is estimated that more than 12 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance with the actual figure likely to be much higher.

The vehicles, donated from the Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office's fleet, will start to arrive in the east of Ukraine in the coming days with UK government logistics teams working with partners on the ground to dispatch them as quickly as possible.

That package includes £220 million

to provide medical supplies and basic necessities on the ground, saving lives and protecting vulnerable people. This includes support through the UN, the Red Cross and NGOs, including the DEC and UK-Med.

The UK has also sent a rapid donation of food supplies following a request from the government, committed to donating up to 42 ambulances to help bring vital lifesaving care, and sent more than 5 million medical items to support lifesaving work in Ukraine.

The UK has also been playing a lead role in supporting Ukraine militarily, committing to provide Stormer armoured vehicles, Air Defence Systems, 120 armoured vehicles, new anti-ship missiles, and over 5,000 anti-tank missiles, in addition to the Challenger 2 tanks provided to Poland to backfill those they are donating to Ukraine.

The UK Ambassador to Kyiv, Melinda Simmons, also returned to Kyiv on Friday.

- the fleet is part of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) supply and is worth £660,000. The vehicles will be delivered in batches to meet the request from the Government of Ukraine

- the vehicles are protected by steel plating, with reinforced glass, enhanced suspension and upgraded brakes, and include internal VHF 2-way radio for long range communication outdoors

Monkeypox case confirmed in England

May

The patient has a recent travel history from Nigeria, which is where they are believed to have contracted the infection, before travelling to the UK.

Monkeypox is a rare viral infection that does not spread easily between people. It is usually a mild self-limiting illness and most people recover within a few weeks. However, severe illness can occur in some individuals.

The infection can be spread when someone is in close contact with an infected person; however, there is a very low risk of transmission to the general population.

The patient is receiving care at the expert infectious disease unit at the Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, London.

As a precautionary measure, UKHSA experts are working closely with NHS colleagues and will be contacting people who might have been in close contact with

the individual to provide information and health advice.

This includes contacting a number of passengers who travelled in close proximity to the patient on the same flight to the UK. People without symptoms are not considered infectious but, as a precaution, those who have been in close proximity are being contacted to ensure that if they do become unwell they can be treated quickly. If passengers are not contacted then there is no action they should take.

Dr Colin Brown, Director of Clinical and Emerging Infections, UKHSA, said:

“It is important to emphasise that monkeypox does not spread easily between people and the overall risk to the general public is very low.

“We are working with NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSEI) to

contact the individuals who have had close contact with the case prior to confirmation of their infection, to assess them as necessary and provide advice.

“UKHSA and the NHS have well established and robust infection control procedures for dealing with cases of imported infectious disease and these will be strictly followed.

Dr Nicholas Price, Director NHSE High Consequence Infection Diseases (airborne) Network and Consultant in Infectious Diseases at Guy's and St Thomas', said:

“The patient is being treated in our specialist isolation unit at St Thomas' Hospital by expert clinical staff with strict infection prevention procedures. This is a good example of the way that the High Consequence Infectious Diseases national network and UKHSA work closely together in responding swiftly and effectively to these sporadic cases.”

Initial symptoms include fever, headache, muscle aches, backache, swollen lymph nodes, chills and exhaustion. A rash can develop, often beginning on the face, then spreading to other parts of the body. The rash changes and goes through different stages before finally forming a scab, which later falls off.

New prescription charge freeze to help ease cost of living

May

- Freeze will help ease the cost of living pressures on households, saving £17 million overall

- Comes alongside record government NHS investment to tackle the Covid backlog and reduce waiting times

NHS prescription charges will be frozen

for the first time in 12 years to help with the cost of living.

Charges usually increase in line with average inflation. This year - in a move not seen for over a decade - the cost for prescriptions will remain the same to help ease cost of living pressures and ensure prescription medication remains accessible.

This means people in England who pay prescription charges are saving £17 million overall. Charges for prescriptions will remain at £9.35 for a single charge or £30.25 for a 3-month prescription prepayment certificate (PPCs). 12 month PPCs will remain at £108.10 and can be paid for in instalments, meaning people can get all the medicines they need for just over £2 a week.

In addition to the freeze on charges, the NHS Low Income scheme offers



help with prescription payments, with free prescriptions for eligible people within certain groups such as pensioners, students, and those who receive state benefits or live in care homes.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

“The rise in the cost of living has been unavoidable as we face global challenges and the repercussions of Putin’s illegal war in Ukraine. Whilst we can’t completely prevent these rises, where we can help - we absolutely will.

“This is why I am freezing prescription charges to help ease some of these pressures and put money back in people’s pockets.”

The government and NHS is working to tackle the covid backlogs while reforming routine care services, ending long waits and improving patient care. The pandemic has put huge pressure on health and care services and over the next three years, a record £39 billion will be invested through the Health and Care Levy, so the NHS has the funding it needs. The NHS is opening new surgical hubs and 160 community diagnostic centres so patients have easier access to tests closer to home - with 88 already

open, delivering over 800,000 scans.

In addition, the Health and Care Bill received Royal Assent last month, enacting the most significant health legislation in a decade into law. It marks an important step in the government’s ambitious health and care agenda, setting up systems and structures to reform how health and adult social care work together, tackle long waiting lists built up during the pandemic, and address some of the long-term challenges faced by the country including a growing and ageing population, chronic conditions and inequalities in health outcomes.

The government is listening to people’s concerns and targeting support at the lowest paid in society, with measures worth over £22 billion in 2022-23 to help with the cost of energy bills and to ensure people keep more of their money. This includes raising the threshold at which people start to pay National Insurance to £12,570, providing a £330 a year tax cut to 30 million workers in July. The National Living Wage has risen to £9.50 per hour – an extra £1,000 a year for a full-time worker, and taxes have been cut for the lowest paid workers on Universal Credit – so they can keep more of what they earn.

The prescription freeze will also apply to NHS wigs and fabric supports; these prices will remain at current levels:

- Surgical brassiere £30.70
- Abdominal or spinal support £46.30
- Stock modacrylic wig £75.70
- Partial human hair wig £200.50
- Full bespoke human hair wig £293.20

You are exempt from charges if you:

- are 60 or over
- are under 16
- are 16 to 18 and in full-time education
- are pregnant or have had a baby in the previous 12 months and have a valid maternity exemption certificate (MatEx)
- have a specified medical condition and have a valid medical exemption certificate (MedEx)
- have a continuing physical disability that prevents you going out without help from another person and have a valid medical exemption certificate (MedEx)
- hold a valid war pension exemption certificate and the prescription is for your accepted disability
- are an NHS inpatient.

New airport-style security in prisons sees record level of drug busts

May

Tougher airport-style security rolled out across the prison estate in England and Wales has intercepted almost 20,000 attempts to smuggle illegal contraband behind bars.

- New X-ray scanners have intercepted almost 20,000 smuggling plots
- Over 40 of the most challenging prisons have also been kitted out with an array of additional new technology including drug-trace machines and metal detection archways
- Prisons White Paper outlines new strategy to transform prisons and cut crime

Over the last 2 years, more than 70 cutting-edge X-ray body scanners have been installed in all closed male prisons, producing super sharp images of concealed contraband so staff can easily find and stop dangerous items from entering jails.

These scanners have thwarted almost 20,000 attempts to smuggle contraband

on to wings, including one massive haul consisting of 81 individually wrapped white rocks of crack cocaine.

Building on this success, since the beginning of the year 42 of the most challenging prisons have been kitted out with even more high-end equipment. This includes new drug-trace machines that can detect microscopic smears of new psychoactive substances such as 'spice' on mail and items of clothing – stopping dangerous drugs from getting onto wings and wreaking havoc.

Gates at these prisons have also been beefed up with new metal detection



archways and wands, extra drug dogs and biometric identification for the public. As a result, for the first time ever staff can effectively search visitors coming into jails and seize items such as phones and weapons that can fuel further crime and violence behind bars.

Deputy Prime Minister, Lord Chancellor and Justice Secretary Dominic Raab said:

“With this innovative new technology, we are enforcing our zero tolerance approach to drugs, knives and mobile phones in prisons. Illicit contraband endangers our hard-working staff and thwarts the efforts of other prisoners who are serious about their rehabilitation.

Alongside abstinence-based drug treatment, getting more prisoners than ever into work and improving facilities to maintain family ties, our strategy will make our streets safer and protect the

public.”

This success reflects record £100 million government investment in innovative technology to keep drugs, mobile phones and weapons out of jails.

The government’s ambitious plan to transform the prison estate and cut crime builds on this, as outlined in December’s Prisons Strategy White Paper.

Commitments in the White Paper include:

- All new build prisons to be equipped with security measures that cut crime as standard, including the latest technological innovations to thwart drugs, phones and weapons; X-ray body scanners and biometric visitor identification
- New facilities to support those with drug and alcohol issues to turn their backs on debilitating addictions that stand in the way of proper rehabilitation, including abstinence-based therapy
- A new Prisoner Education Service will help every prisoner leaving custody to gain the basics they need to find work on release
- Transparent prison performance data and new targets for prison governors, with an emphasis on reducing reoffending, improving safety and security, getting prisoners off drugs and improving basic skills such as numeracy and literacy

£300 million to cut youth crime and make streets safer

May

- new ‘Turnaround’ scheme to catch troubled young people teetering on edge of criminality
- up to 20,000 more children and young people to be helped over next 3 years

Thousands of troubled children and teenagers teetering on the edge of crime will be put back on the right track thanks to the largest youth justice funding boost in a generation – cutting crime and making streets safer.

Around 80 percent of prolific adult offenders begin committing crimes as children, and the estimated cost of late intervention to the economy is nearly £17 billion per year.

That’s why the government is making the biggest investment in a generation – worth £300 million over the next 3 years – to support every single council across England and Wales in catching and preventing youth offending earlier than

ever, helping to stop these children and teenagers from moving on to further, more serious offending.

And for the first time ever, local authorities will be given specific cash to intervene early with teenagers displaying signs such as poor school attendance, troubles at home, and a history of substance abuse which are known to be factors which often drive young people into crime – so they can steer them away from law-breaking before an offence is even committed.

Through ‘Turnaround’, a new early intervention scheme backed by £60 million, local Youth Offending Teams will be given extra funding to connect children and teenagers to targeted, wraparound support to stop them going down a path of criminality.

This could include mentoring, extra school tuition, sports clubs, help to

address any issues at school or at home, with their mental health or with substance misuse, tackling the root causes of their behaviour and helping them to get their lives back on track.

Funding will also be used to bolster the day-to-day running of youth justice schemes and initiatives across the country, as well as support the work of the 20,000 additional police officers the government is committed to recruiting.

As part of today's news, the Deputy Prime Minister, Dominic Raab, visited a community boxing scheme in Blackpool that is giving local children and teenagers an alternative to anti-social behaviour, giving them skills such as discipline and teamwork, and steering them away from potential offending and back into education and training.



Deputy Prime Minister, Lord Chancellor, and Secretary of State for Justice Dominic Raab said: > > Diverting more young people from gangs, drugs and violence will make our streets safer.

“So, we’re investing £300 million in preventative initiatives, to deter criminal behaviour.

Our plan will ensure thousands more young people can turn their lives around - which will transform their lives and make our communities safer.”

Minister for Youth Justice Victoria Atkins said:

“Youth offending is a destructive force that blights communities and rips families apart.

This vital new funding will help us stop youth crime in its tracks by ensuring these children stay in education and rebuild ties with their families, helping us build safer, more prosperous communities.”

Youth Justice Board Chair Keith Fraser said:

“This is a smart and insightful investment by the government. If our youth justice teams are well-resourced to help children

and families, we all benefit - from healthier, happier, safer children and from safer communities with fewer victims.

This investment highlights the importance of their work and is a huge opportunity for youth justice teams across England and Wales. I hope they feel rightly proud of the contribution they make to the safety of communities and the lives of children.”

Ministers estimate that the Turnaround programme will reach up to 20,000 more children over three years who would not otherwise have received support to turn away from offending.

While many local authorities already run successful early intervention programmes, by providing funding over a three-year period, councils will have greater certainty and be able to plan longer-term – ultimately steering more children and teenagers than ever away from crime.

Ministers will also set out plans in due course to improve how funding is targeted to local authorities, to ensure funding reaches areas who need it most and to ensure local authorities’ interventions are effective.

Teacher training to ensure excellent teachers in every classroom

May

Every teacher in the country will have access to free, high-quality, ongoing training as part of the Government's continued drive to ensure every pupil in England is taught by an excellent teacher, levelling up education across the country.

High-quality, Government-accredited training programmes - National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) - will continue to be free for teachers to take for the next two academic years (22/23 and 23/24), following Government investment of £184 million.

Today's announcements form part of the government's commitment to provide 500,000 teacher training opportunities during this Parliament, helping give every single student the opportunity to be taught by dedicated, highly trained teachers, and level up opportunity across the country.

To enable teachers and leaders in every corner of England to take up the free

training offer, additional payments to small schools are being introduced, helping ensure that where a child lives has no bearing on the quality of teaching they receive. The Targeted Support Fund will give a grant payment of £200 per participant to schools with 1-600 pupils, for every teacher or leader they employ who participates in an NPQ.



This comes as the government has announced the School Led Development Trust (SLDT), a consortium of four leading multi academy trusts, will establish and run the new flagship National Institute of Teaching.

The National Institute of Teaching will deliver high-quality Initial Teacher Training, Early Career Framework, National Professional Qualifications and National Leaders of Education development programmes and will generate and share cutting-edge research and insights into best practice, to improve the quality of teacher training nationwide.

This new package of support for teachers' continuous professional development comes as schools across the country celebrate Thank a Teacher Day, which recognises the hard work and passion of everyone working in

education.

Schools Minister Robin Walker said:

“Teachers are the backbone of our school system, inspiring, educating, caring for and ultimately preparing our next generation to make the very best of their lives. Each and every teacher and staff member deserves our thanks and recognition - they certainly have mine.

I’m privileged to have seen and met so many committed and brilliant teachers across this country and I want to make sure that they are supported to be the very best they can be, so that every single pupil – wherever they live – is taught by an excellent teacher.

The broadening in scope of our fully-funded training means that every teacher who wants to will benefit, while our first of its kind National Institute of Teaching will be at the forefront of the delivery of teacher training, driving up support for teachers and the quality of teaching in schools, ultimately helping to level up education for all.”

The availability of NPQs is also being extended, with two new NPQs set to be introduced in Early Years Leadership - to support school leaders in their work to

ensure every child gets the best start in life – and Leading Literacy, to develop school leaders’ expertise in the teaching of reading and writing. This is a step towards delivering the Government’s commitment, as set out in the Schools White Paper, to improving literacy standards across the country.

The scope of education settings eligible to support the NPQ scholarships is also being broadened to include independent special schools, hospital schools and young offender institutions, among others.

The Harris Federation, Oasis Community Learning, Outwood Grange Academies Trust and Star Academies make up the four trusts to have formed SLDT to run the National Institute of Teaching. Further

partnerships with a number of well-reputed school trusts will ensure that the National Institute of Teaching has the scale to reach teachers and leaders up and down the country.

The Institute will be led by a faculty of expert teacher educators, working from its headquarters in Blackburn, Lancashire, and its regional campuses across England. It will recruit and train teachers in the most disadvantaged areas and support levelling up by creating more than half of its new jobs in the North West and North East, and recruiting 20% of staff from the least socially mobile areas in the country. It aims to positively impact every teacher in England by 2028, either directly via its training courses or through the best



practice guidance that it will distribute.

Melanie Renowden, founding CEO of the National Institute of Teaching, said:

“The National Institute of Teaching is uniquely positioned to create a bridge between evidence and education practice. As a school-led consortium, we are perfectly equipped to translate evidence on best practice into action that can be implemented in schools up and down the country.

It is not just that we know schools and work well with schools. Our trusts and our partners are delivering education excellence in classrooms across England, often in communities that have the toughest of deals, where our work has the potential to make the biggest difference. We will investigate what has been working, codify what we learn and share it across the school system.

We are looking forward to the National Institute of Teaching playing a central role in nurturing the talents of teachers and leaders at all stages of their careers, so they can provide children and young people with the world-class education they deserve.”

Separately, having listened to sector

feedback, the Government is making improvements to the online training platform for Early Career Teachers, intended to reduce the workload for teachers, schools, delivery partners and the appropriate bodies overseeing teacher training.

Alongside this, research is being published on the experiences of Early Career Teachers, mentors and induction tutors, following the first term of the national rollout of the ECF-based induction programmes for early career teachers.

Initial findings, from a three-year

evaluation process, show high levels of enthusiasm and engagement with the programmes and underline the broad support across the sector for giving early career teachers evidence-based development and support at the start of their careers. The main challenges centred on workload and a perceived lack of flexibility in the programmes. Feedback will be used to make improvements to the programmes, including making materials more user-friendly, simplifying the digital service and producing guidance on applying the content of the programmes to different contexts and roles.



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Millions of people in the UK and around the world prepare to celebrate Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee

June

- Millions around the world set to join in Platinum Jubilee celebrations as TV channels and reporters flock to London to cover event

- More than 200,000 local events and street parties expected across the UK over the four-day bank holiday weekend

Millions of people are gearing up to celebrate Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee over a blockbuster four-day bank holiday weekend.

Celebrations begin on Thursday with the Queen's Birthday Parade (Trooping the Colour) taking place at Horseguards Parade in London. It will be followed by a Service of Thanksgiving at St Paul's on Friday, royal attendance at the Derby, Epsom on Saturday and then a Party at the Palace on Saturday night with some of the biggest names in music performing.

The weekend will be rounded off with

the Platinum Jubilee Pageant on Sunday on The Mall which will culminate in 150 national treasures, including Ed Sheeran, paying tribute to Her Majesty The Queen.

Big screens broadcasting the events will be placed in The Mall in London, Edinburgh's Princes Street Gardens and in Cardiff's Bute Park.

At home, people can watch the events on the BBC, Sky and ITV and, across the country, millions will sit down to a Big Jubilee Lunch over the weekend with more than 200,000 local events - including screenings, street parties and lunches - planned.

Across the Commonwealth and the rest of the world, more than 600 Big Jubilee Lunches are planned in more than 80 countries - from Greenland to New Zealand.

Scores of TV channels and reporters

from around the world have flocked to London to cover the historic celebrations.

Culture Secretary Nadine Dorries said:

"For seventy years The Queen has been the ultimate symbol of what it means to be British. Her steadfast leadership and unwavering service through good and bad has been an inspiration to so many.

With four days of celebrations and millions around the world taking part, this weekend will be a fitting tribute and celebration of her service and dedication to the people of the UK and the Commonwealth."

A four-day extravaganza of events

The Platinum Jubilee Bank Holiday weekend in Central London begins

on Thursday with the traditional Queen's Birthday Parade (Trooping the Colour) which will see more than 1,500 soldiers and musicians, around 240 horses and the Irish Guards mascot, Turlough Mor the Irish Wolfhound, take to Horse Guards Parade.

Around 7,000 ticketed members of the public will watch the ceremony from the stands on Horse Guards Parade as they return for the first time since the pandemic. Another 7,000 members of the Armed Forces Community invited by the Royal British Legion will watch Trooping the Colour from the seating around the Queen Victoria Memorial. The parade will finish with the traditional RAF flypast and balcony moment. Beacons will be lit throughout the UK and the Commonwealth in the evening.



On Friday, a Service of Thanksgiving for The Queen's 70-year reign will be held at St Paul's Cathedral. The service will include Bible readings, anthems, prayers and congregational hymns to express thanks for Her Majesty's reign, faith and service. The service will include a new Anthem by Judith Weir, Master of The Queen's Music, which sets to music words from the third chapter of the Book of Proverbs.

On Saturday, global music stars including Queen and Adam Lambert, Alicia Keys, Lin-Manuel Miranda, Andrea Bocelli, Ella Eyre, Craig David and Duran Duran will perform some of their biggest hits. The show, which will take place on a 360-degree stage around the Queen Victoria Memorial, will be closed by the legendary Diana Ross. More than 22,000 people will attend, including more than 7,500 key workers, members of the Armed Forces, volunteers and charities.

The Jubilee weekend comes to a close on Sunday with the Platinum Jubilee Pageant. With thousands of performers from across Britain and the Commonwealth, the Pageant will feature a giant dragon puppet the size of a double decker bus, corgis, acrobats, dancers and circus acts. The grand finale will feature 150 'national treasures'

including Ed Sheeran who, along with members of the viewing public invited to become part of the performance, will gather and pay tribute to The Queen.

In addition to the events taking place in London, organised by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport in partnership with Buckingham Palace, the Government has also extended licensing hours so people can celebrate the Jubilee in pubs and bars across England and Wales.

To mark the occasion eight UK towns were granted city status. These are Bangor in Northern Ireland, Colchester, Doncaster and Milton Keynes in England, Douglas in the Isle of Man, Dunfermline in Scotland, Stanley in the Falkland Islands and Wrexham in Wales.

The competition for city status has taken place in each of the last three Jubilee years. Previous winners include Chelmsford in England, Lisburn in Northern Ireland and Perth in Scotland. Southampton was also granted lord mayoralty status which entitles the mayor to be known as the lord mayor.

Companies hit with fines after sewage kills thousands of fish

June

Anglian Water and a contractor have been fined a total of £60,000 after raw sewage leaked into a river killing more than 2,400 fish.

On 27 December 2018, a sewer owned by Anglian Water collapsed in Stanground, Peterborough.

The water company employed contractors Danaher and Walsh to come in and fix the problem temporarily.

Danaher and Walsh set up an over-pumping system to pump the sewage back into the drainage system. However, it became blocked with rag; items that shouldn't be flushed, like baby wipes. A few days later, it failed, leading to sewage ending up in Stanground Lode.



Neither company reported the incident to the Environment Agency; instead, a concerned member of the public called the agency's incident hotline.

Environment Agency investigators found that the watercourse had been polluted for 1.6 kilometres and that at least 2,413 fish died. Among the species killed by the sewage were roach, bream, pike and European eel. This species is currently listed as a "critically endangered" species under the International Union for the Conservation of Nature.

It's believed that untreated sewage could have been discharging into the river for up to 10 hours. Levels of ammonia monitored downstream from the discharge were found to be 200 times higher than average water quality standards.

In mitigation, Danaher and Walsh said it would have been unable to predict how much rag would be flushed in this time. It said that it had never come across a blockage like that seen at Stanground in 30 years of operating.

Both companies appeared at Peterborough

magistrates' court on 1 June 2022, where they both pleaded guilty. They were charged with causing an illegal sewage discharge between 5 January and 8 January 2019 which polluted Stanground Lode. This is contrary to regulations 12(1) (b) and 38(1)(a) of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016.

The judge deemed there was a low level of culpability from both defendants. Anglian Water was fined £50,000 and told to pay £24,387.58 in costs. Danaher and Walsh was fined £10,000 and told to pay £5,000 in costs.

Yvonne Daly, an environment manager at the Environment Agency in Cambridgeshire, said:

"The Environment Agency takes such devastating pollution incidents incredibly seriously.

Anyone caught breaching environmental laws faces enforcement action, up to and including prosecution.

We are disappointed with the fine issued in this case and would like to see higher penalties to really deter polluters from future offences.

Both companies in this case failed in their environmental duties, leaving to a devastating impact on the local biodiversity. Moreover, they failed to notify the Environment Agency when something had gone wrong.

We are grateful to the vigilant members of the public that did report the pollution. Anyone with any concerns about pollution should contact us on 0800 807060.”

- The Environment Agency does not decide the fines handed out to companies and individuals who pollute our rivers. This is down to the courts.
- We will always ensure the courts have all the information they need to impose appropriate sentences.
- In 2021, the courts fined water companies £102,490,000 for pollution incidents following our prosecutions.
- Anglian Water was recently prosecuted by the Environment Agency following the deaths of more than 5,000 fish in Essex. Read more: Anglian Water fined £300,000 after pollution killed 5,000 fish - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Only pee, poo and toilet paper should go down the toilet.
- Individual actions count. Small steps such as not pouring fats and oils down the sink or flushing wet wipes and other plastic products down the loo can help to protect water quality.

Tech and innovation drive to boost food production and back British farmers

June

Plans to drive innovation and harness pioneering technology in farming will be set out today as part of the Government's Food Strategy which will back our farmers by helping to increase domestic production, spread jobs and grow the economy.

Currently, the UK only produces 15% of tomatoes supplied domestically, but new generation technology, such as sustainable and efficient glasshouses, has opened up new opportunities for British producers which will help to reduce reliance on overseas production.

The plans outlined today – including incentives for industry and investment in research - will support farmers to harness this innovation to boost home-grown fruit and vegetable production, and in turn create new job opportunities across the country.

In light of the consequences of Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine for the global economy, which has caused knock on impacts for food supplies as well as spikes in prices, the Strategy will also set out the importance of maintaining and boosting our food

security, including plans to strengthen the resilience of our supply chains and boost domestic production to help protect against future economic shocks and crises.

It commits to broadly maintaining the current level of food that we produce domestically and boosting production in sectors where there are the biggest opportunities – such as horticulture and seafood.

£270 million will be invested across farming innovation funding programmes until 2029, to unlock technologies to drive sustainable farming techniques which will help increase productivity and profitability and the sector's long-term resilience.

As well as stepping up work with industry to identify ways to help more people into jobs all along the food supply chain, the strategy also sets out plans to create a new professional body for the farming and growing industry to step up professional training and develop clear career pathways, equipping people and

businesses with the skills needed to run sustainable and profitable businesses.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said

“Our Food Strategy sets out a blueprint for how we will back farmers, boost British industry and help protect people against the impacts of future economic shocks by safeguarding our food security.

Harnessing new technologies and innovation, we will grow and eat more of our own food - unlocking jobs across the country and growing the economy, which in turn will ultimately help to reduce pressure on prices.”

Environment Secretary George Eustice said:

“The food industry is bigger than the automotive and aerospace industries combined, offering employment opportunities, apprenticeships and investment in research and development.

The strategy we are setting out today will increase the focus on skills in the food sector, and the roles and career pathways available. In particular, we will seek to boost our horticulture industry and ensure the expertise needed to develop the sector here in the UK.”

The Strategy follows the independent review of the food system by Henry Dimbleby last year, which set out an analysis of the challenges facing the food system.

The Government Food Strategy responds

to these findings and recommendations, accepting the majority of recommendations, with policy initiatives to boost health, sustainability, accessibility of diet to secure food supply, while also recognising the shared global challenges of the war in Ukraine and the impact of the pandemic on the global economy

The strategy also includes plans to:

- Consult on an ambition for 50% of public sector expenditure on food procurement to be on food either produced locally or to higher standards
- Incentivise the sector to use surplus heat and CO2 from industrial processes, and renewable sources of energy to increase domestic horticultural production
- Review the planning permission process to support new developments of glasshouses
- Launch an independent review to tackle labour shortages in the food supply chain, to



look at the roles of automation, domestic labour and migration to ensure UK businesses can access the labour they require

- Consult on how to improve on and expand animal welfare labelling, to help consumers identify when products meet or exceed our high UK animal welfare standards
- Extend the Seasonal Workers visa route to poultry, following a successful pilot last year
- Publish a framework for land use in England next year
- Consult on food waste reporting for larger businesses over a certain size
- Publish a statement setting out requirements for those wishing to access the UK market to objectively demonstrate they deliver an equivalent level of health protection to our high domestic standards
- Explore how to make the most of innovative feed additives that can reduce methane emissions from livestock, to support sustainable farming
- Launch a new partnership between the public and private sector to provide consumers with more information about the food they eat while incentivising industry to produce healthier, more ethical and sustainable goods

Over 8 million families in the UK getting new cost of living payment from 14 July 2022

June

- Over 8 million households will receive the first of two cost of living instalments totalling £650 from 14 July 2022, part of the £1,200 support package this year
- Initial automatic instalment for means-tested benefit claimants will be £326, with the rest to follow in a second instalment from the autumn
- Tax credit claimants will also receive their first instalment of the cost of living payment from HMRC later this year
- Comes as part of £37 billion government package to help families with cost of living pressures

After ministers confirmed initial payments would begin from 14 July 2022, the Department for Work and Pensions has now revealed how many people in each part of the country will receive the new financial support. They have also revealed that the disability top-up will land in bank accounts in September 2022.

These figures show that nearly one in four families will receive the means-tested benefit cost of living payment, whilst nearly one in ten of the population will get the £150 disability

top-up.

The first cost of living instalment will see millions of low-income households in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland initially £326 better off as the government delivers significant interventions to support groups who are most vulnerable to rising costs. In total, millions of households will receive at least £1,200 from the government this year to help cover rising costs.

Work and Pensions Secretary, Thérèse Coffey said:

“With millions of the lowest-income households soon seeing the first of two cash instalments land into their bank accounts, we are taking action to directly help families with the cost of living.

This one-off payment totalling £650 is part of our £37 billion cost of living support package that will put an extra £1,200 into the pockets of those most in need.”

The second instalment of £324 will be sent to qualifying low income households from the Autumn. The payments are designed to be

deliberately slightly unequal to minimise fraud risks from those who may seek to exploit this system.

The eligibility date for the second instalment will be announced soon. If customers are eligible through receiving tax credits only, HMRC will contact them and issue payments automatically, with the first instalment being made from autumn. DWP will administer payments for customers on all other eligible means-tested benefits, and customers do not need to contact them or apply for the payment.

Low-income households are benefiting from government support in a variety of different ways this year as global



inflationary pressures, exacerbated by the unjust war in Ukraine, have caused prices to rise for several essentials. The government understands that many people are worried about the impact these rising prices will have on their household finances, which is why £37 billion of support is being provided to boost budgets and mitigate the worst of these pressures.

Support includes the direct cost of living payment of up to £650 for over 8 million households on eligible means-tested benefits, a separate £300 payment for pensioners, and a £150 payment for eligible disabled people, which can be paid on top of the £650 payment.

This is on top of £400 for all households to help with energy bills, and an extra £150 for properties in Council Tax bands A-D, meaning millions of the lowest-income households will receive at least £1,200 in support this year. This is all in addition to changes to the Universal Credit taper rate and work allowances worth £1,000 a year on average for 1.7 million working claimants, a rise in the National Living Wage to £9.50 an hour, and a tax cut for around 30 million workers through a rise in National Insurance contribution thresholds.

The government has also expanded support for the Household Support Fund – which helps people with food and energy bills – with an extra £421 million, on top of £79 million for devolved nations; the total value of this support now stands at £1.5 billion. Fuel duty was also cut by 5p per litre for 12 months in March, and alcohol duty has been frozen for 2022/23.

UK supports new international drive to prevent and prepare for future pandemics

June

- UK will give £25 million to found a new World Bank fund to prevent, prepare for and respond to future devastating pandemics
- Investment in preventing future pandemics can stop the devastating human and economic impact of COVID-19 happening again

The Prime Minister has announced £25 million of UK aid backing for a new fund to ensure the world is better prepared to defeat future pandemics.

Hosted by the World Bank, the 'Financial Intermediary Fund' for pandemic prevention, preparedness and response will provide funding to countries whose healthcare systems are dangerously unprepared for the challenges caused by large outbreaks of infectious diseases. It will ensure they can quickly respond to, and as far as possible contain, outbreaks before they spread across the world.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to at least 6.2 million deaths across the world

and caused far-reaching economic devastation. Stopping a pandemic like this ever happening again will require a concerted and coordinated international effort.

At the G7 Summit today (Monday), leaders will discuss the importance of helping countries manage Covid as an endemic disease and the pressing need to invest in preparedness and other measures to prevent history repeating itself.

The new fund will help fill some of the financing gaps exposed by COVID-19, particularly insufficient financing for preparedness in national health systems and disease surveillance at country, regional and global levels. Crucially, the fund can help catalyse countries' own financing, so the world is as equipped as possible whenever and wherever a new public health risk emerges.

The Prime Minister said:

“While the worst days of the coronavirus pandemic are, thankfully, behind us, we cannot be complacent. The next potential pandemic could emerge any moment and with it the devastating human and economic consequences we have experienced over the last two and a half years.

“We must ensure we learn the lessons of COVID-19 and are better prepared next time. We owe it to the people of the world to say, ‘never again’.”

The chance of a pandemic on the scale of COVID-19 occurring in the next 25 years could be as high as 50%, and a key lesson of the coronavirus pandemic is that even small investments in pandemic preparedness can have huge returns. By contributing to preparedness in the short term, we can avoid



huge economic damage in the long-term.

Under the UK’s G7 Presidency last year, the Prime Minister drove forward international work on pandemic preparedness under his ‘five point plan’ and the 100 Days Mission, work on which was led by Sir Patrick Vallance. This included launching a worldwide network of zoonotic research hubs, increasing the global manufacturing capacity for treatment and vaccines, designing a new early warning system and agreeing global protocols for a future health emergency.

The UK also hosted a Global Pandemic Preparedness Summit in March, which raised over £1.2 billion to develop variant-proof coronavirus vaccines and speed up the process of developing vaccines against future health threats so this can be done in under 100 days.

David Malpass, President of the World Bank Group, said:

“I welcome the UK’s support for the new Financial Intermediary Fund to strengthen pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response functions in developing countries.

“The fund will provide a dedicated stream of additional, long-term funding to complement the work of existing institutions and operate with high standards of transparency and accountability.

“COVID-19 highlighted the urgent need for coordinated action to build stronger health systems and mobilise additional resources to prepare for the next pandemic in countries, regions, and around the world.”

At the G7 Summit last year, the UK galvanised international action to donate 870 million coronavirus vaccines to those who need them. This commitment, combined with UK and other investments to support the development and rapid manufacturing scale-up of COVID-19 vaccines, turned the tide on Covid around the world. Two-thirds of the global population have received at least one dose of the Covid vaccine.

The supply of coronavirus vaccines now outstrips demand and UK efforts are therefore focused on action to end the acute phase of the pandemic, help countries manage COVID-19 as an endemic disease and prepare for the next health threat.

Governments, NGOs and private donors have been encouraged to donate to the Financial Intermediary Fund, which was called for by G20 Finance Ministers in April.

The funding announced by the Prime Minister today will establish the UK as a founding donor to the fund, alongside the US, EU and others.

UK to make more forces available to NATO to counter future threats

June

The UK has announced an increased contribution to NATO as the Prime Minister and Defence Secretary attend the NATO summit in Madrid.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace MP said:

“We have always been clear that our strength and security comes from our alliances, and NATO is at the heart of that.

The New Force Model and our presence in Estonia will ensure that the Alliance is able to respond at pace, helping to determine stability across Europe in the decades to come.”

RAF Typhoon and F-35B Lightning fighter jets, Royal Navy vessels including Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers, and brigade-sized land forces will all be made available to NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) as part of the New Force Model.

NATO has introduced the New Force Model in support of Leaders' decision to modernise and strengthen the NATO Force Structure for the future. Allies will declare capabilities, equipment and forces available to support SACEUR, ensuring they are in the right place at the right time. This will allow the Alliance's

military command to plan for emerging threats, safe in the knowledge that these assets will be available to take part in the Alliance's response.

The UK will also contribute to the new Allied Reaction Force: an agile, multi-domain and combat-effective force ready to deploy at very high readiness and to respond to a range of crises.

It comes as the Alliance has agreed a new posture of stronger forward defences to reflect the radically changed security context since Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine.

In response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the UK increased its presence in Estonia to

include the temporary deployment of a second battlegroup, doubling the total number of deployed personnel to over 1,600. The lethality of these deployments will be enhanced with advanced capabilities including helicopters and artillery systems. Meanwhile, the UK's existing HQ in Tallinn will be expanded. Led by a Brigadier, it will support the rapid deployment of high readiness forces at the brigade level.

The UK will also support Estonia with training and logistics, the development of its first divisional-level HQ, as well as developing new ways of fighting through their joint hosting of the Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic European HQ, and supporting innovative dual use start-ups through the NATO Innovation Fund.

In addition to increasing its deployments to Estonia, since the Russian invasion the UK has also deployed hundreds of troops to Poland and sent more aircraft to conduct air policing in Romania. Meanwhile, HMS Prince of Wales has led the Alliance's Maritime High Readiness Force since January 2022.





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