

PM statement at coronavirus press conference: 12 July 2021

Like millions of people across this country I woke up this morning sad and rueful, but also filled with pride and hope and with thanks to Gareth Southgate and the whole England squad for the best campaign by any England team in any tournament that I can remember.

They made history. They lifted our spirits – and they brought joy to this country and I know that they will continue to do so.

And to those who have been directing racist abuse at some of the players, I say shame on you, and I hope you will crawl back under the rock from which you emerged.

Because the entire team played like heroes and I'm sure that this is just the beginning of their achievements. I say bring on Qatar next year, and let's also dare to start to hope that together with Ireland our United Kingdom can host the World Cup in 2030.

Turning now to step four of our roadmap, we've come to a stage in the pandemic when there is no easy answer or obvious date for unlocking. We have cases rising significantly – with more than 30,000 per day. And we can see what is happening across Europe as the Delta variant takes hold among our friends.

We know we're going to see more hospitalisations and more deaths from Covid. But we also know that this wave was clearly foreseen by our scientists when we first set out that roadmap in February.

And if anything, so far, we are in the middle range of their projections for infections and at the lower end of their projections for mortality.

And we also know that if we were now to delay this 4th step – for instance to September or later – then we would be re-opening as the weather gets colder and as the virus acquires a greater natural advantage and when schools are back.

And so we think now is the right moment to proceed, when we have the natural firebreak of the school holidays in the next few days. And Chris and Patrick will set out, in just a minute, how we are meeting the four tests for step 4 in England.

But it is absolutely vital that we proceed now with caution. And I cannot say this powerfully or emphatically enough. This pandemic is not over. This disease coronavirus continues to carry risks for you and for your family.

We cannot simply revert instantly from Monday 19th July to life as it was before Covid.

We will stick to our plan to lift legal restrictions and to lift social distancing, but we expect and recommend that people wear a face covering in crowded and enclosed spaces where you come into contact with those you don't normally meet, such as on public transport.

We're removing the Government instruction to work from home where you can but we don't expect that the whole country will return to their desks from Monday. And we're setting out guidance for business for a gradual return to work over the summer.

And as a matter of social responsibility we're urging nightclubs and other venues with large crowds to make use of the NHS Covid Pass – which shows proof of vaccination, a recent negative test or natural immunity – as a means of entry.

We're updating our guidance for the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable on how they can keep themselves safe and I generally urge everyone to keep thinking of others and to consider the risks.

We'll keep our tough border policy, including quarantine for those arriving from red list countries.

And we'll keep the test, trace and isolate system in place.

Every week that goes by we are getting hundreds of thousands more jobs into arms and our delay to the road map that we announced last month has enabled us to get 7 million more jobs in the last 4 weeks alone.

By next Monday, two-thirds of adults will have received a second dose and every adult will have been offered a first dose.

And it is the single most crucial thing now that you get that jab. A jab that could protect you and your family – and allow you, for instance, to go on holiday.

And it is of course only thanks to the vaccine programme that we are able to take these cautious steps now. But to take these steps we must be cautious and we must be vaccinated.

So please get that jab.