

The Covid enquiry

I am quite happy for any of my emails, texts and other messages received by Ministers and the NHS during covid to be considered and published as part of the covid enquiry if that helps and results from their release by the Ministers and officials who lie at the heart of this consideration.

I would like the Enquiry to consider the issues I raised at the time, which are also recorded on this website and available by using Search.

Air purification in hospitals and care homes

I raised the issue of using powerful UV air cleaners to kill the virus in circulating air within the ducts, and recommended checking and adapting air flows where necessary to greatly reduce the chances of passing on the virus through stale or infected circulating air. Whilst there seemed to be some agreement this could be done it did not seem to get the priority it deserved. It was an obvious thing to do in hospitals and care homes, and in restaurants, hotels etc.

Isolation hospitals and wards

I suggested demarking some hospitals as isolation hospitals for covid and keeping some others open for other conditions to limit the build up of backlogs of other medical problems. I argued for continuing use of the Nightingale hospitals for covid to relieve pressure on beds elsewhere. Instead the Nightingales were little used and quickly shut down. There were some moves to create different entrances and to segregate covid areas from other areas in some hospitals. I was a voice with others for the establishment of the Nightingales which did take place.

Discharge of patients from hospitals to care homes

I was one of the early callers to ensure people were not sent back to care homes until there was reasonable certainty they were no longer infectious.

Alleviating drugs

I argued for more and faster testing of existing drugs that might have beneficial effects in treating covid symptoms. There seemed to be reluctance and delay in doing this, though some drugs were subsequently found to be helpful.

Duration and intensity of lockdowns

I worked with the group of Conservative MPs that argued against the intensity and long duration of lockdowns, and voted accordingly. We successfully opposed a final extra lockdown period, and note that Wales which locked down harder and for longer ended up with a higher death rate than England.

Use of statistics

I raised issues about the quality and reliability of the data, and the changes made to presentations of the statistics. I was particularly critical of the UK concept of a covid death, which included death with covid as well as death from covid. I was concerned about the reliability of evidence from test and trace programmes.

[My Intervention in the Illegal Migration Statement](#)

John Redwood (Wokingham, Conservative):

If we reduced the waiting time from, say, a year to three months when making a decision on an illegal migrant, would that not cut the accommodation and other public service costs by three quarters and relieve a lot of the pressure? What is a reasonable time to come to a conclusion on whether someone is illegal and should not stay, or is welcome here and can get a job?

Suella Braverman, Secretary of State for the Home Office:

That is why I am encouraged by the progress we are making on our initial decision backlog, cases preceding last summer where people have been waiting for many months and in some cases years for a decision on their asylum application. It is essential that we bear down on that backlog, shorten the time that people are waiting for a decision and fundamentally reduce the cost to the taxpayer.

[My Interview with Talk TV](#)

Please see my interview with Talk TV where we discussed the need for tax cuts, scrapping IR35 and inheritance tax

You can find it between 2:09:01 and 2:19:00

[Letter to Business Secretary](#)

Dear Kemi

The UK vehicle industry is being badly damaged by the threat to ban sales of petrol and diesel cars from 2030. This is sooner than our main competitors, leaves insufficient time to create EV models people want and can afford and destroys a very successful UK ICE industry. Do you want all those factories to shut soon? Where are plans for new factories for making EVs with the batteries they need? How would you stop people importing nearly new ICE vehicles they want from 2030? Why do both government and Opposition want to wipe our current factories off the map?

There is a threat to our gas and oil boiler manufacture and installation businesses from the proposed ban on these boilers in new homes from 2025. Given the very low take up, high cost and questionable performance of heat pumps it would be wise to delay this ban until more progress has been made with finding good value good performance alternatives to gas and oil boilers.

I am copying Grant Shapps in to the correspondence as these policies are also unhelpful in trying to cut CO₂ emissions. EVs require a lot of energy to manufacture, and need a lot of electricity to recharge the batteries. Most days in the UK the bulk of this energy comes from fossil fuel generation. Heat pumps also need plenty of electricity to run and again often work from power mainly derived from fossil fuels. It makes the extra cost of the imports bizarre.

There is no point shifting industry from the UK to overseas to shunt round the CO₂, and no point in closing our oil and gas fields only to import these fuels instead. The UK needs to earn a living, to invest and create jobs here, not end up dependent on others.

Yours

John Redwood

[Heat Pumps are not popular](#)

The government is keen to promote heat pumps for others, yet the uptake by Ministers and senior officials is still low. I would be more impressed if those recommending them had personal experience of them first. The German government seeking to accelerate their adoption by proposing to end oil and gas boiler sales by the end of this year has suffered a blow to its ratings. The policy has acted as good stimulus for gas and oil boiler sales as people rush to renew before the deadline.

My electricity supplier tells me about heat pumps, presumably to encourage me. They say a heat pump costs between £5500 and £13000 with a government £5000 grant. They warn that I might need to put in bigger radiators and pipes which would be costly, and of course propose additional spending on insulation to allow for the lower temperatures you would otherwise get. They

say the hot water would be 50-55 degrees not 60 to 65 degrees which they propose for a gas boiler. They suggest running costs would be lower than a gas boiler.

I made enquiries for one for my small London flat where I am not allowed a gas boiler. I was told they cannot supply one as I am not allowed to place a box or pipe on the outside of the building and am not on the ground floor to allow ground source heat. Flats present a major setback for the heat pump movement, as many are unable to adapt to them.

Some users who have tried heat pumps report low levels of heating in cold snaps. Some report large electricity bills as they try to get their water and rooms up to temperature against a background of much dearer energy tariffs for electricity than for gas. Some experience difficulties in getting the systems to work. Installation is more complex and entails more work to the house than simply changing gas boilers.

These products are a hard sell. They are dear. On windless days the heat pumps require a lot of fossil fuel to be burned in power stations to keep them working. I will wait to see how many Ministers and senior officials do buy them and listen to their experiences if they still want to recommend them.