

# PM statement at coronavirus press conference: 5 April 2021

Good afternoon, I hope you're all continuing to enjoy the Easter break, and I know that over this weekend millions of people have been able to see loved ones for the first time in months.

And I want to thank you all again for your patience, because it is really clear now that this is paying off.

And it your collective efforts, our collective efforts, that has given us that crucial time and space to vaccinate more than 31 million people.

And I'm pleased that we've also been able to support our overseas territories so that Gibraltar has become one of the first places in the world to offer a vaccination to its entire adult population.

And the net result of your efforts and the vaccine roll-out is that I can today confirm that from Monday 12th April, we will move to Step Two of our roadmap – re-opening shops, gyms, zoos, holiday campsites, personal care services like hairdressers and, of course, beer gardens and outdoor hospitality of all kinds.

And on Monday the 12th I will be going to the pub myself – and cautiously but irreversibly raising a pint of beer to my lips.

We're also increasing the number of visitors to care homes from one to two – to allow residents to see more of their loved ones.

We think that these changes are fully justified by the data

which show we are meeting our four tests for easing the lockdown as Chris will shortly explain.

But – and you know I'm going to say this – we can't be complacent.

We can see the waves of sickness afflicting other countries and we've seen how this story goes.

We still don't know how strong the vaccine shield will be when cases begin to rise, as I'm afraid that they will –

and that's why we're saying:

Please get your vaccine or your second dose when your turn comes.

And please use the free NHS tests – even if you don't feel ill, because

remember 1 in 3 people with this virus doesn't have any symptoms – and you can get these tests from pharmacies or your local test site, you can even order them [on.gov.uk](https://www.on.gov.uk) and get home deliveries.

As part of our roadmap we're also publishing [today on gov.uk the early thinking on our four reviews](#), on the safe return of major events, on social distancing, the potential role of Covid status certification, and on the resumption of international travel.

We set out our roadmap and we're sticking to it.

And I want to stress, that we see nothing in the present data that makes us think that we will have to deviate from that roadmap.

But it is by being cautious,

by monitoring the data at every stage

and by following the rules: remembering hands, face, space and fresh air – that we hope together to make this roadmap to freedom irreversible.

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## **Government announces pilot events to pave way for larger audiences at sport, theatre and gigs this summer**

The events will be part of the government's science-led Events Research Programme (ERP) working closely with local authorities and organisers to undertake studies to get fans and audiences back in safely as restrictions are gradually eased.

The EFL Cup Final on 25 April is to have 8,000 supporters with the FA Cup semi-final on 18 April hosting an audience of 4,000.

The pilots programme will be used to provide key scientific data and research into how small and large-scale events could be permitted to safely reopen in line with the Prime Minister's Roadmap out of lockdown as part of Step 4, commencing no earlier than 21 June.

Venues participating in the programme will test specific settings to collect evidence and best practice. At the World Snooker Championships, Sheffield's world famous Crucible will test a theatre setting, for example. The evidence will then be shared widely so that venues can prepare to accommodate fuller audiences. This review will be crucial to how venues – from major sport

stadiums to comedy clubs, theatres to live music spaces, wedding venues, conference centres and nightclubs – could operate this summer.

Researchers at the events will gather evidence associated with different settings and approaches to managing and mitigating transmission risk. The pilots will explore how different approaches to social distancing, ventilation and test-on-entry protocols could ease opening and maximise participation. Covid-status certification will also be trialled as part of the pilot programme. Researchers will also be at the venues to monitor crowd movements at the pilots and look at how attendees behave in these environments as well as consider the economic impact of any mitigation measures trialled such as changes to the layout.

The initial list of pilots is as follows:

- 16 April – Hot Water Comedy Club, Liverpool – 300 people (indoor seated)
- 18 April – FA Cup Semi-Final – Wembley – 4,000 people (outdoor seated)
- 17 April – 3 May – Snooker World Championships – Sheffield Crucible Theatre – up to 1,000 people a day (indoor seated)
- 23-25 April – Luna Outdoor Cinema, Liverpool – 1,000 people (outdoor seated)
- 24-25 April – Three 10k runs – Hatfield Park – 3,000 people and up to 3,000 spectators at each event (outdoor, mass participation run)
- 25 April – Carabao Cup Final, Wembley – 8,000 people (outdoor, seated)
- 28 April – Business Event, Liverpool – 1,000 people (indoor, seated and mixing)
- 30 April – Circus Nightclub, Liverpool – circa 3,000 people (indoor club night)
- 15 May – FA Cup Final, Wembley, London – 21,000 people (outdoor, seated)

Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said:

Our sports stars and great performers need us to find ways to get bums back on seats safely. This science-led pilot programme will be the springboard in getting the buzz back of live performance. We've supported the sports and arts with unprecedented sums, but it's now time to make that Great British Summer of live events a reality.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said:

We are all longing to see stadiums full of sporting fans and gigs packed with music lovers, but as we continue the roll out of our vaccination programme, we must find a way to do so safely.

By piloting a range of measures to reduce transmission, we can gather vital scientific evidence to inform our plans for allowing events in the future.

Thanks to the input of our clinicians and the best science available, we can prepare for the moment where we will be able to

gather again in some of our best-loved cultural venues.

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

It has been enormously tough for the events sector over the past year, but these pilots are a real beacon of hope as we cautiously emerge from the pandemic. "This programme will not only provide valuable scientific evidence, but also offer confidence to the industry so we can make the most of the Great British summer and host large-scale events in a way that's safe for everybody.

Mark Bullingham, The FA's CEO, said:

We are delighted to be hosting three test events at Wembley and are confident we can offer a safe environment. This is an important first step towards getting fans back, with the end goal of full stadia – hopefully by the end of the Men's Euros. We would like to thank all authorities for their support throughout this process.

Rick Parry, Chair of the EFL said:

The Carabao Cup is a prized asset of the EFL, a great competition for clubs to win and always a fantastic occasion so we are absolutely delighted to see supporters back for the showpiece Final between Manchester City and Tottenham Hotspur, in what will hopefully be another important milestone along the way to a full return of fans.

Football has lots of expertise in crowd management so we welcome the opportunity to support the Government in its Events Research Programme and will also take great pride in hosting NHS staff at Wembley, to whom we owe so much for their momentous efforts throughout the pandemic.

World Snooker Tournament Chairman Barry Hearn OBE said:

We are delighted to be part of this Events Research Programme which will help illuminate the path for all of us back towards normal life, by using scientific data.

This is not just about snooker, it is about hosting live events in indoor settings, so it will also help theatres, concerts and other parts of the entertainment industry. We are proud to have been selected and to play our part.

We have been chosen because of our exemplary record of staging

snooker events over the past year in a safe environment. We have set the standard in the sporting world.

Our leading players have missed the excitement of walking into an arena packed with fans. The atmosphere at the Crucible is going to be very special.

Kate Nicholls, Chief Executive for UKHospitality said:

These test pilots are certainly positive news for hospitality, and could start to unlock the safe return of business conferences, festivals, concerts and larger weddings, helping people safely return to normal life from 21st June and the removal of social distancing restrictions. Hospitality is ready to assist in any way it can to help the pilots succeed.

Hugh Brasher, Event Director of London Marathon Events, said:

The government's Event Research Programme is a very significant step towards the safe return of events and London Marathon Events, along with our fellow mass participation event organisers, is doing everything we can to assist the government with this project. We would like to thank everyone involved for their support in putting on the Reunion 10k.

Matthew Ashton, Liverpool's Director of Public Health, said:

Our experience as the pilot city for mass symptom-free testing means we have the knowledge and infrastructure in place to deliver complicated projects safely. We really hope we can help provide the scientific evidence needed to ensure the wider sector is able to open across the country in the coming months. This is a continuation of the city's long-standing tradition of carrying out pioneering public health work that not only has an impact here, but also across the rest of the country and the wider world.

To build up the evidence base, a number of pilots will include spectators and fans not socially distanced under carefully controlled medical supervision.

The pilots will also test a range of non-pharmaceutical mitigating interventions during non-socially distanced events such as layout of the venue, face coverings and ventilation. Attendees will be required to take a test both before and after the event in order to ensure event safety and to gather evidence on the pilots.

They will have to adhere to an agreed code of behaviour at the point of ticket purchase and will be required to give consent acknowledging the risk

associated with attending a pilot event. They will be required to follow existing Government guidance on the use of face coverings and adhering to event specific rules. Attendees will not be permitted if they have symptoms of Covid-19. They will also have to provide contact details of everyone in their group for NHS Test and Trace.

The events research programme will include looking at risk factors in indoor and outdoor settings; small and large venues; seated and standing events and different forms of audience participation.

Transport to and from events; duration of events and catering and alcohol will also be factors that are looked at. The programme will be run in partnership with local and national health authorities and will be subject to the latest health data. Events may be delayed or cancelled as a result.

The events research programme has two co-advisers reporting to the Culture Secretary and Prime Minister – Theatre director Nicholas Hytner and businessman David Ross.

Ross was the chair of the government's Sport, Tech and Innovation group, that provided guidance on sports reopening last year.

Their role will be to focus on the measures that need to be taken to ensure the safe return of fuller audiences to revive large sporting and cultural events to closed smaller settings such as gigs and club nights.

The events research programme will produce a report to Ministers by the end of May to help inform government decisions on step four of the roadmap. It will also feed into the Government's COVID certification review, announced in the roadmap.

ENDS

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## **Twice weekly rapid testing to be available to everyone in England**

- Everyone in England, including those without symptoms, will be able to take a free rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) test twice a week
- Alongside vaccine rollout, regular testing is at the heart of plans to reopen society and the economy, helping to suppress and control the spread of variants
- Updates will be made to the NHS COVID-19 app in England to coincide with the universal testing offer

Everyone in England will be able to access free, regular, rapid coronavirus testing from 9 April, the Government has announced.

In a significant step forward, which paves the way for businesses and society reopening, anyone will be able to access free, rapid lateral flow tests (LFDs) for themselves and their families to use twice a week, in line with clinical guidance.

Rapid testing has so far been available to those most at risk and people who need to leave home for work, including frontline NHS workers, care home staff and residents, and schoolchildren and their families. Now rapid testing will be offered to everyone, with people encouraged to take regular tests to help prevent outbreaks and reclaim a more normal way of life.

One in 3 people with COVID-19 do not experience any symptoms and may be spreading the virus unwittingly. Rapid testing detects cases quickly, meaning positive cases can isolate immediately. Since rapid testing was introduced, over 120,000 positive cases that would not have been found otherwise have already been identified by LFDs. By making rapid tests available to everyone, more cases will be detected, breaking chains of transmission and saving lives.

Alongside the rollout of the vaccine, regular testing is going to be an essential part of the easing of restrictions as it will help us quickly suppress the spread of variants. Through new testing technology, positive cases of variants of concern are being detected faster than ever before. More people getting a test will increase our ability to identify and control variants.

The NHS COVID-19 app has been breaking chains of transmission to protect users and their communities since its launch in September, with over 22 million people downloading the app to date. Updates will be made to the NHS COVID-19 app in England to coincide with the offer of rapid testing for everyone.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

Massive efforts have been made by the British public to stop the spread of the virus.

As we continue to make good progress on our vaccine programme and with our roadmap to cautiously easing restrictions underway, regular rapid testing is even more important to make sure those efforts are not wasted.

That's why we're now rolling out free rapid tests to everyone across England – helping us to stop outbreaks in their tracks, so we can get back to seeing the people we love and doing the things we enjoy.

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

Around 1 in 3 people who have COVID-19 show no symptoms, and as we

reopen society and resume parts of life we have all dearly missed, regular rapid testing is going to be fundamental in helping us quickly spot positive cases and squash any outbreaks.

The vaccine programme has been a shot in the arm for the whole country, but reclaiming our lost freedoms and getting back to normal hinges on us all getting tested regularly.

The British public have shown over the last year that they quickly adapt and always do what is right in the interest of public health, and I know they will do their bit by getting tested regularly in the months ahead.

## **Getting a rapid test**

Getting a rapid test is quick and convenient. Over 100,000 businesses in England have registered their interest to provide rapid tests to their employees, and the offer of free testing is being expanded to companies with over 10 workers where on-site testing is impossible. The expanded regular testing offer for people without symptoms will be delivered through:

- a home ordering service, which allows people to order lateral flow tests online to be delivered to their home
- workplace testing programmes, on-site or at home
- community testing, offered by all local authorities
- collection at a local PCR test site during specific test collection time windows
- testing on-site at schools and colleges

A new 'Pharmacy Collect' service is also launching which will provide an additional route to regular testing. People aged over 18 without symptoms will be able to visit a participating local pharmacy and collect a box of 7 rapid tests to use twice a week at home.

The best route for testing can be found at [NHS.UK/get-tested](https://www.nhs.uk/get-tested). If testing at home, individuals will need to register their results online or by calling 119. They should self-isolate if positive and order a confirmatory PCR test.

Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 should book a test online or by calling 119.

Dr Susan Hopkins, COVID-19 Strategic Response Director at PHE and Chief Medical Adviser to NHS Test and Trace, said:

Rapid testing helps us find COVID-19 cases that we wouldn't otherwise know about, helping to break chains of transmission. These tests are effective in detecting people that are infectious and therefore most likely to transmit infection to others. They are another tool we now have to help maintain lower infection rates.

I encourage everyone to take up the offer of these free rapid tests – they are quick and easy to carry out in your own home.



Recent analysis from NHS Test and Trace shows that for every 1,000 lateral flow tests carried out, there is less than 1 false positive result. LFDs detect cases with high levels of virus and are very effective in finding people who don't have symptoms but are very likely to transmit the disease.

## **NHS COVID-19 app updates**

To coincide with the offer of free rapid testing for everyone, there will be updates to the NHS COVID-19 app in England from 8 April:

### **Everyone in a group must check in**

In line with new regulations, when a group enters a hospitality venue, every individual must check either by scanning the official NHS QR code poster with the NHS COVID-19 app, or by providing their contact details. Previously, only the lead member of the group needed to provide contact details to check in.

### **Venue history sharing**

If an app user tests positive, they will be asked to share their venue history in a privacy-protecting way via the app. This will allow venue alerts to be generated more quickly, and improve the ability to identify where outbreaks are occurring and take steps to prevent the virus spreading.

### **Additional venue alerts**

If a person has been at a venue on the same day as several other people who have since tested positive for COVID-19, they may receive an alert advising them to book a test immediately, whether they are showing symptoms or not. This is to support finding asymptomatic cases who may have caught the virus but are not displaying symptoms.

### **New QR code posters**

There will be new posters displaying QR codes for hospitality venues in England. Work has taken place with the industry to make the posters clearer and easier to use. All venues in England in scope of the regulations are legally required to display an official NHS QR code poster.

### **Notes to editors**

- A marketing campaign encouraging people to take up the offer of twice weekly rapid testing will start on 9 April.
  - The universal offer is currently for England only. The Devolved Administrations make their own policy decisions around testing. If an individual lives in a devolved nation, their guidelines around testing will differ, and the individual should follow testing guidance issued by their nation.
  - [Dr Susan Hopkins on confirmatory PCR testing and detecting variants](#)
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## 5 million people in the UK receive second dose of COVID-19 vaccine

- More than 5 million people in the UK receive their second dose of a coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine
- Nearly 1 in 10 UK adults have now received both doses
- Government urges people to take up their second doses as soon as possible to maximise protection

More than 5 million people in the UK have received their second dose of a coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine.

Health services across the UK have now administered over 36.6 million vaccines between 8 December and 02 April, including over 31.4 million people with their first dose and over 5.2 million with their second.

The milestone means nearly 1 in 10 of all UK adults have received both vaccines, ensuring maximum protection from the virus over the coming months.

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

Our spectacular vaccination programme has now delivered over 5 million second doses, giving those most vulnerable to COVID – including half of all those aged over 80 – the best possible protection.

This is vital so everyone can get the strongest possible protection against COVID-19 as we progress along the road to freedom, allowing us to reclaim the things we love.

I want to give a big thank you to all those who have helped us reach this milestone.

The UK remains on track to achieve the Prime Minister's target of offering a first dose to those aged 50 and over by mid-April, as well as all adults by the end of July.

Minister for COVID-19 Vaccine Deployment Nadhim Zahawi said:

Vaccines are an incredibly important part of our route out of lockdown and this pandemic, and it's vital people take advantage of the protection they provide.

No matter who you are, where you live, your race or your religion, I encourage everyone to take up both their vaccinations when offered and help this country get back to normality.

Dr Nikki Kanani, GP and medical director for primary care at NHS England, said:

The biggest vaccination programme in NHS history – the fastest in Europe – reaches another significant milestone as more than 5 million people have now received their second dose providing them with the strongest possible protection from serious disease.

This success is testament to the tens of thousands of volunteers, everyone working behind the scenes and NHS GPs, nurses and vaccinators who are continuing to offer vaccines to all those who are eligible so please do come forward for your second dose when called.

All vaccines being used in the UK have undergone robust clinical trials and have met the independent Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency's strict standards of safety, effectiveness and quality.

The Moderna vaccine has also been approved by the MHRA and will be deployed from the Spring. The MHRA are also assessing the Janssen and Novavax vaccines.

Data from the Public Health England (PHE) real-world study shows that both the Pfizer/BioNTech and Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccines are highly effective in reducing coronavirus (COVID-19) among older people aged 70 years and over.

The country is already seeing a significant impact from the vaccination programme on reducing hospitalisations and deaths, with at least 6,100 deaths prevented in those aged 70 and older in England up to the end of February.

The vaccines are available free of charge and are available from thousands of vaccine centres, GP practices and pharmacies, and we want everyone to take up the offer of an appointment when they are invited – all those 50 and over can book a jab now. Around 98% of people live within 10 miles of a vaccination centre in England, which includes sites such as mosques, Westminster Abbey and football stadiums.

Public Health England's real-world data on the efficacy of coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccines is available [here](#). Data on the number of deaths prevented by vaccines available [here](#).

Through the government's Vaccines Taskforce, the UK has secured early access to 457 million doses of 8 of the most promising vaccine candidates, including:

- BioNTech/Pfizer for 40 million doses

- Oxford/AstraZeneca for 100 million doses
- Moderna for 17 million doses
- GlaxoSmithKline and Sanofi Pasteur for 60 million doses
- Novavax for 60 million doses
- Janssen for 30 million doses
- Valneva for 100 million doses
- CureVac for 50 million doses

To date, the government has invested over £300 million into manufacturing a successful vaccine to enable a rapid roll out.

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## Education Secretary speech to NASUWT Annual Conference

Thank you very much for inviting me to join your conference today. I'm delighted to have this opportunity to speak to you personally.

You will often hear people say that the most important person in a classroom is the one that's standing at the front of it. That has never been more true, even though over the past year, you may not always have had a classroom to stand in front of.

I have taken every opportunity to repeat my thanks for the way everyone in our teaching communities has responded to the covid pandemic and before I go any further, I want to do so again.

I want to thank you for the way you have kept schools open.

I want to thank you for the inspiring way you switched to remote learning. And I want to thank you for the huge lengths you have gone to, to keep everyone in your school and wider community safe.

This has involved overseeing some important safety measures, such as lateral flow tests, which have enabled all our school children and students to return to classrooms after this latest lockdown.

We have all faced many challenges over the past 12 months and often this has meant doing the day job but learning to do it in an entirely different way.

For those of us in education, it has meant coming together and working together, in ways we haven't necessarily done before.

I always value talking to heads, to teachers, to carers and child minders, and of course to unions. But now more so than ever.

So I would like to pay particular tribute to Dr Patrick Roach. Our two roles don't always lend themselves to easy conversations but we have been working

hard together and I welcome the constructive engagement he has brought to our ongoing management of the pandemic.

I hope that this collaboration will continue to develop over the weeks and months ahead as we build back better.

I know that whatever job you do in our schools, whether you're a teacher, a school head, a classroom assistant, the pandemic has undoubtedly made it much harder.

You all deserve support at every stage in your careers and making sure you get it when you need it, has been high on our list of priorities.

I see for myself, regularly, the dedication and professionalism of teachers right across the country and I want to assure you that making sure that you feel that you are supported at every stage of your career is something I care passionately about.

However it is particularly important in the first years of teaching when the learning curve is steepest. I know far too many teachers leave within the first five years of joining the profession.

Every teacher who leaves the profession is a loss that we can ill afford.

After all the disruption to our schools, including to teacher training, over the past year, investing in our next generation of teachers, and enabling them to deliver high quality teaching to inspire and motivate a new generation, is more important than ever and crucial to our long-term recovery plans.

It is also central to closing the attainment gap, which the pandemic has cruelly exposed between disadvantaged pupils and their peers.

Our Early Career Framework reforms will directly support those at the start of their teaching careers and it is being backed by £130m per year when fully rolled out. When combined with Initial Teacher Training, new teachers will now be entitled to at least three years of support in the first years of their career.

From September, we are extending induction for early career teachers from one year to two years, providing a funded entitlement to a structured two-year package of high-quality professional development.

This will not only have a positive impact on the quality of teaching, but on the retention of new teachers. It will equip new teachers with the skills and confidence they need for a successful, rewarding long lasting career.

There will be a range of new National Professional Qualifications to give teachers and leaders at all levels training, support and practical guidance helping them to become more effective teachers and leaders inside and outside the classroom.

Teaching School Hubs which will be centres of excellence for delivering these

teacher development reforms and our new Institute of Teaching will be the cornerstone of these reforms. Together these are going to set up career-long development from trainee teacher through to executive headship.

All of these are building blocks but the single most important factor in schooling, the one that everything hinges on, is the quality of their teacher.

We need to go further, faster, to improve the professional training we offer teachers – at all points of their career – and ensure every teacher benefits. This will be central to the recovery plan that I am working on with Sir Kevan Collins, and while I do not want to pre-empt his findings, let me say I am confident this is going to feature strongly.

I have said before that people now have a far greater appreciation of what you all do for our children. They have seen the way you have risen to the numerous challenges that Covid has caused.

These challenges are not over by a long chalk but I want you to know that I am always ready to work with you when they arise and I am confident that between us we are going to emerge stronger, more resilient and better equipped to deliver a world-class education for all our children as a result.

Thank you.