

# [Coronavirus: letter to the agricultural sector on workplace testing](#)

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## [Government expands military benefits in response to Selous Report](#)

Press release

Dozens of support measures are outlined today in the UK Government's official response to Andrew Selous MP's report 'Living in Our Shoes – understanding the needs of UK Armed Forces families.'



Military families will benefit from increased accommodation choice, free childcare and tailored career support.

These bespoke Ministry of Defence initiatives have been introduced over the last year to support service personnel and their loved ones.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

I am grateful to Andrew Selous and his team for this detailed and

valuable report. We're committed to taking forward its recommendations and giving service families the support they deserve.

This Government is committed to ensuring no member of our serving personnel or their loved ones are disadvantaged due to the unique challenges of service life.

These improvements will also be reflected in the Armed Forces Bill, which will see the Armed Forces Covenant enshrined in law.

In the official [response](#) the Government outlines substantial progress made against the report's recommendations.

These include a £200 million cash injection for improvements and renovations to service family and single-living accommodation, and the launch of the Partner Career Support Programme Pilot. The pilot alone has provided online career advice and mentoring to more than 500 military spouses and partners thus far.

In addition, military families across several defence sites have benefited from the roll out of the 'wraparound childcare' pilot, providing children of service personnel aged 4-11 with free breakfast and after-school care to help to ease the burden for parents who are often held at readiness to be deployed on operations at short notice.

The new initiatives are part of the Government's ongoing commitment to make the Armed Forces a more modern and inclusive employer.

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## [\*\*New vaccine advice for adults living with adults who are immunosuppressed\*\*](#)

Press release

JCVI recommends that adults living with adults who are immunosuppressed should be prioritised for the COVID-19 vaccine.



The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has advised the government to prioritise people for the coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine who are over 16 and living with adults who have weakened immune systems, such as those with blood cancer, HIV or those on immunosuppressive treatment including chemotherapy.

[Adults who are immunosuppressed](#) have a weaker immune system, meaning they are less able to fight infections naturally. These individuals are more likely to have poorer outcomes following COVID-19 infection and recent evidence suggests that they may not respond as well to the COVID-19 vaccine as others.

There is growing evidence that the COVID-19 vaccines may reduce the chance of someone who has been vaccinated passing the virus on. Given this emerging evidence, the JCVI advises that those over 16 years of age who live with severely immunosuppressed adults are offered the COVID-19 vaccination alongside priority group 6. This will help limit the spread of the virus to immunosuppressed adults.

Professor Wei Shen Lim, Chair of COVID-19 Immunisation within the JCVI, commented:

The vaccination programme has so far seen high vaccine uptake and very encouraging results on infection rates, hospitalisations and mortality. Yet we know that the vaccine isn't as effective in those who are immunosuppressed. Our latest advice will help reduce the risk of infection in those who may not be able to fully benefit from being vaccinated themselves.

Dr Mary Ramsay, Head of Immunisation at Public Health England, said:

Our surveillance systems and research studies are showing that the COVID-19 vaccines can reduce asymptomatic infection and limit transmission of the virus. By vaccinating those who live with adults who are immunosuppressed, we can further help protect vulnerable people.

Household contacts considered as a priority would be those over 16 who share living accommodation with adults who are immunosuppressed. The JCVI does not

currently advise vaccination of household contacts of immunosuppressed children, or household contacts of immunosuppressed adults who are themselves children.

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## [Change of Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Philippines](#)

Press release

Ms Laure Beaufils has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Republic of the Philippines and Her Majesty's Non-Resident Ambassador to the Republic of Palau.



Ms Laure Beaufils has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Republic of the Philippines and Her Majesty's Non-Resident Ambassador to the Republic of Palau in succession to Mr Daniel Pruce. Ms Beaufils will take up her appointment during August 2021.

### **Curriculum Vitae**

Full name: Laure Beaufils

Married to: Neil Naughton

Children: Two

**2019 to Present** Amman, Deputy Director, Middle East and North Africa (with oversight for Jordan, Iraq and Occupied Palestinian Territories)

**2017 to 2019** Lagos, Head of Mission and Deputy High Commissioner to Nigeria

**2014 to 2017** Department for International Development (DFID) Kigali, Head of DFID Rwanda and Burundi

**2013 to 2014** DFID, Head of Overseas Territories Department

**2012 to 2013** DFID, Lead Advisor, Strategy and Engagement, Prime Minister's team on the post-2015 Development Agenda

**2009 to 2012** DFID, Head, Climate Change Adaptation and Forestry Team then Head, Forestry and Environment Team

**2008 to 2009** DFID, Head, Climate and Environment Strategy Unit

**2008** New York, First Secretary Development and Human Rights Team, UK Mission to United Nations

**2007 to 2008** DFID, Private Secretary / Head of Parliamentary Under Secretary of State's Office and Deputy Head, Top Management Group

**2007** DFID, Head, East and Central Africa Unit

**2004 to 2007** Addis Ababa, DFID Education Advisor

**2003 to 2004** DFID, Policy Analyst, Aid Effectiveness Team

**2002 to 2003** DFID, Education Advisor

**2001 to 2002** WOMANKIND Worldwide, Head, South Asia Programmes then Head, Advocacy

**1998 to 2000** Phnom Penh, UNFPA Reproductive Health Programme Officer

**1997 to 1998** Paris, Auditor, Arthur Andersen

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**[Gibraltar: Foreign Secretary travels to UK-Gibraltar Joint Ministerial](#)**

# Council

## News story

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab will travel to Gibraltar today to meet with the Chief Minister and attend the UK-Gibraltar Joint Ministerial Council.



UK Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab will today, 29 March, attend the UK-Gibraltar Joint Ministerial Council and hold bilateral talks with the Gibraltar Chief Minister Fabian Picardo.

During the visit, the Foreign Secretary will reaffirm the UK's commitment to reaching agreement on a future treaty between the UK and EU in respect of Gibraltar.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

As a valued member of the UK family, we stand side by side with Gibraltar as we enter into the forthcoming negotiations with the EU on Gibraltar's future relationship.

We are committed to delivering a treaty which safeguards UK's sovereignty of Gibraltar and supports the prosperity of both Gibraltar and the surrounding region.

The UK-Gibraltar Joint Ministerial Council is the highest negotiating forum for ministers to come together and discuss matters of shared importance. The Joint Ministerial Council (Gibraltar EU Negotiations) was originally formed to discuss the UK's exit from the European Union, but has come into its own as a forum for agile discussion between the UK and Gibraltar across the range of shared interests.

## **Background**

- As a result of the position taken by the EU, Gibraltar was not covered by the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement.
- The UK, working side by side with the Government of Gibraltar, reached a

political agreement with Spain on 31 December 2020 on a framework for Gibraltar's future relationship with the EU.

- This framework provides the basis for a treaty between the EU and UK regarding Gibraltar. The European Commission are currently developing their own mandate for the negotiation of a Treaty. This will then need to be agreed by the European Council before negotiations begin.
- The key issue for the negotiation is border fluidity – maintaining mutually beneficial fluidity of movement for people and also of goods between Gibraltar and the surrounding region.

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