

## Two new COVID-19 testing sites open in south Wales

Two new drive-through coronavirus testing facilities have opened in Merthyr Tydfil and Bridgend for those with symptoms to book appointments.

The sites have opened at Keir Hardie Health Park Community Testing Site (CF48 1BZ) in Merthyr and Ysbyty'r Seren Community Testing Site (CF31 3SH), Bridgend as part of the UK Government's drive to continue to improve the accessibility of coronavirus testing for local communities.

Testing at these sites is only available for those with coronavirus symptoms – a high temperature, a new continuous cough, or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste. Anyone with one or more of these symptoms should book a test at [nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://nhs.uk/coronavirus) or by calling 119. The UK Government is committed to continue expanding the capacity of the network of UK test sites and laboratories to make it even easier to get tested and reduce the time it takes to receive test results. Appointments at both sites are made available each day.

These sites are part of the largest network of diagnostic testing facilities created in British history which has the capacity to process more than 700,000 tests a day and includes more than 800 sites across the UK, including 89 drive-through sites, 511 walk-through sites, six Lighthouse laboratories, home testing and satellite kits, and a large number of mobile units.

### **Secretary of State for Wales, Simon Hart, said:**

There are now more than 50 UK Government testing facilities in Wales, all of which are contributing to our continued fight against the virus. We are grateful to the NHS and its partners for their continued hard work in setting up new testing centres quickly and efficiently to meet demand.

With more and more test centres opening in Wales it is becoming easier for people to get tests close to home, which is very important in helping stem the spread of the virus and putting fewer people at risk of catching and spreading Covid-19.

### **Dr Kelechi Nnoaham, Director of Public Health at Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board, said:**

I'm pleased to see two new drive-through COVID-19 testing sites opening to the public in the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region. Getting a test when you have coronavirus symptoms is one of the best ways to keep your community safe. These new sites will help to ensure that testing facilities are available to anyone who needs them.

We encourage everyone to self-isolate and book a test if they have

any of the symptoms of coronavirus: a new, continuous cough, a high temperature, or a change to your sense of smell or taste.

**Health Minister, Lord Bethell, said:**

To respond to the coronavirus, we have built a major testing and tracing system from scratch. We are constantly working to expand and improve it with new technologies and innovations so everyone with symptoms can get a test.

New drive-in sites like these make it even easier to get a test no matter where you live. If you have symptoms of coronavirus, I urge you to book a test today and follow the advice of NHS Test and Trace if you are contacted to protect others and stop the spread of the virus.

**Baroness Dido Harding, Interim Executive Chair of the National Institute for Health Protection, said:**

Drive-through sites offer communities better access to coronavirus testing, so everyone with symptoms can get a test. This new site is part of our ongoing work to expand our testing network across the UK which now has the capacity to process more than 700,000 tests a day. We will continue to expand capacity to improve test turnaround times and push forward testing innovations to make sure anyone who needs a test can get one.

Please book a test if you have coronavirus symptoms: a new continuous cough, a high temperature and a loss or change in sense of smell or taste, and follow the advice of NHS Test and Trace if you are contacted.

The testing centres are being operated in partnership with PHW and will offer assisted tests.

**END**

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## **[Media Advisory Notice – Disappearance of Sarah Everard](#)**

News story

The Attorney General confirms the requirement not to publish material which

could jeopardise a fair trial.



The Attorney General confirms the requirement not to publish material which could jeopardise a fair trial.

Following the disappearance of Sarah Everard on the evening of 3 March, a police officer has been arrested on suspicion of murder.

The Attorney General Rt. Hon Michael Ellis QC MP wishes to amplify the importance of the requirement not to publish any material that could create a substantial risk that the course of justice in these proceedings could be seriously impeded or prejudiced. This includes publishing information online. Publishing this information could amount to contempt of court and could affect the fairness of any future trial.

In particular, the Attorney General draws attention to the requirement not to publish material that asserts or assumes the guilt of anyone who has been arrested. That is an issue to be determined by the jury if in due course there is a trial. The Attorney General also wishes to remind journalists and members of the public that it can amount to contempt of court to publish information relating to untested and unconnected allegations against the suspect, and matters adverse to his character, the admissibility of which a Judge in due course may need to determine.

Editors, publishers and social media users should take legal advice to ensure they are in a position to fully comply with the obligations to which they are subject under the Contempt of Court Act 1981.

The Attorney General's Office is monitoring the coverage of this investigation.

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# Northern Ireland's young people and community investment at the heart of UK Government's centenary programme

- An extensive young people's programme to inspire youth to shape Northern Ireland's future
- £1 million fund awarded to 39 community projects across Northern Ireland as part of a Shared History Fund with the National Lottery Heritage Fund
- A major Northern Ireland 2021 Business Showcase in London to boost investment and build back better. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Brandon Lewis has unveiled an extensive programme of projects and events to mark the centenary of Northern Ireland in 2021.

This includes a major Northern Ireland 2021 Business Showcase in London, a £1 million Shared History Fund, an ambitious programme for young people, tree planting projects, academic and historic events and a Cultural Programme

In addition, stakeholders from across Northern Ireland are delivering activities including a George V event in Belfast City Hall and an International church service for all denominations.

The initiatives reflect the UK Government's commitment under the New Decade New Approach deal to showcase Northern Ireland's economic, cultural and social achievements on a local, UK and international stage when marking this key anniversary. This will entail reflecting on the past and looking forward to a bright future for Northern Ireland, with the programme focusing on investment, young people, culture and the environment.

The centenary will also highlight the strength and beauty of the diverse perspectives and identities within the four nations of the UK which make our Union unique.

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Brandon Lewis said:

"The UK Government's centenary programme of events provides an opportunity for us all to reflect on the history of Northern Ireland and to take pride in all this fantastic place has to offer the UK and the world.

"In its 100th year, the people of Northern Ireland can build on their spirit of togetherness and recognise their enormous achievements over past decades.

"I hope that these projects and events will help drive Northern Ireland's post Covid recovery forward, inspire the next generation and showcase to the world the beauty, innovation and tenacity of the people of Northern Ireland."

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

"2021 marks 100 years since the creation of Northern Ireland, which has paved the way for the formation of the United Kingdom as we know it.

“Our centenary programme will reflect on the past and on the people and developments that make Northern Ireland the great place it is today.

“The activities will pay tribute to all those who have worked tirelessly to support Northern Ireland throughout the pandemic, and will champion the incredible young people in Northern Ireland who offer so much to the shared success of our United Kingdom.”

Our Story in the Making programme includes;

- A Shared History Fund – working in partnership with the National Lottery Heritage Fund, £1m has been awarded to 39 community projects across Northern Ireland, to research and demonstrate what 100 years of Northern Ireland has meant to them and their community. Projects will mark the centenary in an inclusive way, giving a wide range of people the opportunity to participate and understand the key events and history which made Northern Ireland the place it is today.
- Historic Centenary Event – Belfast City Council will host an event marking the hundredth anniversary of the opening of the Northern Ireland Parliament on 22 June 1921, by King George V. This event will take place in the Council Chamber, exactly one hundred years on from this historic occasion.
- Building Back Greener – every school in Northern Ireland will be presented with a native tree, to plant in their grounds. Each school will be encouraged to video their planting ceremony and share with the world, via [ourstoryinthemaking.com](http://ourstoryinthemaking.com), their moment in marking the centenary and working towards a greener future.
- Our Future Northern Ireland – an extensive young people’s programme exploring what the future will look like in the next 100 years, and how they can shape it to become the nation they want it to be. Working in partnership with Youth Action Northern Ireland across the mediums of live performance, radio and social media the young people of Northern Ireland will engage and showcase their hopes and ambitions for Northern Ireland’s next 100 years.
- Launch of the ‘Centenary Rose’, a unique flower of reflection and hope, produced in Northern Ireland for the centenary and planted in the gardens of Hillsborough to flower throughout the summer of 2021 and beyond. A Centenary Rose will be presented to Her Majesty the Queen for her own garden, and there will be a decorative rose pin designed and produced in the UK, to be worn by VIPs at centenary events, and given to programme participants. A small number will also be available to purchase in exchange for a charity donation.
- Hosted by the Churches, an International Service for all denominations in the autumn.
- A reception at Hillsborough Castle and historic buildings across the UK will be lit to signify a bright future for all.
- Academic Events – working in partnership with an expert Historical Advisory Panel and academic institutions including Queens’ University Belfast. A Reflection of the Government of Ireland Act, through further events which seek to explore and deepen our understanding of the historical context of the centenary. Further details of the Historical

Panel's programme will be announced by Lord Bew and the Panel members soon.

- Marking the Centenary – in partnership with Royal Mail, a special postmark reading “Our Story in the Making – Northern Ireland Beyond 100”, will be applied to stamped mail sent around the world. Stamped mail across the UK will receive the postmark from 26 April to 3 May. From 3-29 May, stamped mail originating in NI will have the postmark applied. Promotion of the 2021 Northern Ireland, First and Second Class stamps will be showcased in Post Offices around the UK.
- Build Back Better – London will pay host to a Northern Ireland 2021 Business Showcase. Companies and organisations from across Northern Ireland will promote their products, services and expertise; networking and meeting with international companies, governments and investors to showcase the very best on offer to boost exports and investment into Northern Ireland.
- Born in Northern Ireland – a dedicated cultural programme showcasing the talents and contribution of those born in Northern Ireland. Encompassing communications activity and a series of live and on-line events to promote and highlight the talents and skills of people from Northern Ireland; from doctors and teachers, contributors to the Covid-19 efforts, to writers and artists, actors, singers, poets and dancers. As part of ‘Our Story in the Making: NI Beyond 100’ campaign, this strand will run from May to September, culminating in a VIP reception and public centenary concert.

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## [New strategy to unleash the transformational power of Artificial Intelligence](#)

Digital Secretary Oliver Dowden revealed the move as he set out his [Ten Tech Priorities](#) to power a golden age of tech in the UK this week.

The new AI strategy will focus on:

- Growth of the economy through widespread use of AI technologies
- Ethical, safe and trustworthy development of responsible AI
- Resilience in the face of change through an emphasis on skills, talent and R&D

Digital Secretary Oliver Dowden said:

Unleashing the power of AI is a top priority in our plan to be the most pro-tech government ever. The UK is already a world leader in this revolutionary technology and the new AI Strategy will help us

seize its full potential – from creating new jobs and improving productivity to tackling climate change and delivering better public services.

The Government will build on the UK's strong foundations put in place through the [AI Sector Deal](#) to develop and deliver an AI Strategy that is both globally ambitious and socially inclusive.

It will consider recommendations from the AI Council, an independent expert committee that advises the government, which published its [AI Roadmap](#) in January, alongside input from industry, academia and civil society.

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

The UK is already harnessing the enormous potential of AI to improve all our lives – from faster and more effective disease diagnosis, to controlling the heating in our homes.

Through this strategy we will nurture our AI pioneers to accelerate bringing new technologies to market, unlock high-skilled jobs, drive up productivity and cement the UK's status as a global science superpower.

The National AI Strategy will align with the government's plans to support jobs and economic growth through significant investment in infrastructure, skills and innovation. This comes as the UK sees a boost in R&D investment through the government's [Research and Development Roadmap to reach 2.4 per cent of GDP by 2027](#).

Tabitha Goldstaub, Co-founder of CognitionX, AI Council Chair and AI Business Champion said

The Council are thrilled that the key recommendation of the AI Roadmap has been taken forward. We are committed to working with the Office for AI to ensure that the wider AI Ecosystem is represented in the next phase and together ensure the UK economy and society benefits from Artificial Intelligence.

Dame Wendy Hall, UK AI Skills Champion, Regius Professor of Computer Science, University of Southampton said:

I welcome the National AI Strategy and look forward to working with the Office for AI on the recommendations made in the AI Roadmap to scaleup and commit to an on going 10 year programme of high level AI skill-building whilst also committing to achieving AI and data literacy for everyone.

Sir Adrian Smith, Institute Director and Chief Executive, The Alan Turing Institute said:

Artificial intelligence has extraordinary potential to tackle some of the biggest challenges in science, society and the economy. But creating AI for public good, that brings societal benefit to all, and harnesses the UK's considerable legacy, expertise and innovation in this space requires collaboration and a shared vision.

It is extremely welcome to see the commitment to a National Strategy for AI announced today, and we at The Alan Turing Institute look forward to bringing our research excellence, thriving network and national leadership role to this effort.

Gerard Grech, CEO of Tech Nation said:

UK AI continues to go from strength-to-strength: in 2020 UK firms that were adopting or creating AI-based technologies received £1.78bn in funding, compared to £525m raised by French companies and £386m raised in Germany.

It's exciting and encouraging to hear the government announce a National AI Strategy, which will accelerate the UK's global strength in AI development. We continue to see scaleups across the UK use AI to solve pressing challenges, and this will be an important catalyst to translate into impact.

Baroness Joanna Shields OBE, CEO of BenevolentAI, Co-Chair of the GPAI Steering Committee and Chair of the GPAI Multi-stakeholder Experts Group Plenary said:

AI is vital for the future of our economy, security and society. This National Strategy on AI is key to defining and realising this vision, and unlocking the potential of AI to drive innovation, economic growth, job creation and social good. As we build back after COVID-19, this investment in technology could not be more important. Now is the time to work together to build an AI-enabled future that works for everyone, and I welcome this next step.

Jacqueline de Rojas CBE, President of techUK said:

The UK is already a global leader in AI but to remain globally competitive we must keep pace. techUK welcomes the new National AI Strategy, which will enable us to leverage joined-up thinking and investment from across industry and government. Setting a clear



vision for the UK to remain at the forefront of the development and use of innovative, responsible and ethical AI could not have come at a better time.

Dr Bill Mitchell OBE, Director of Policy, BCS – The Chartered Institute for IT said:

Tomorrow's AI technologies will be capable of transforming how we thrive in our daily lives and work, how we can care for the vulnerable in our society, and how we can build a more sustainable future in a constantly online world.

None of that will happen by chance, so the BCS very much welcomes the government's announcement that it will shape the future of AI through a new national AI strategy that has at its heart inclusivity, fairness to all and ethical values and one that is delivered by world class AI professionals. At BCS we very much look forward to playing our part in supporting that strategy.

#### Notes to editors:

- The AI Council and Office for AI have begun engaging with the AI ecosystem on the AI Council's Roadmap. This engagement will continue with a view to shaping the National AI Strategy.
- Find out more about the AI Strategy and [register your interest](#).

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## [More than £50m to keep families warm and well-fed this Easter](#)

The scheme, which was introduced in response to the current pandemic, primarily focuses on food and essential utility bills for low-income families. It has meant that councils can ensure that children in their area have the essentials they need.

This new funding comes in addition to the £170 million already allocated to the scheme from December until the end of March, and is on top of the previously announced Holiday Activities and Food Programme to support disadvantaged children during the Easter period.

Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Thérèse Coffey said:

"This scheme has helped thousands of vulnerable children stay warm and well-fed during the coldest months of the year.

“While circumstances remain difficult, it is right that we extend it to cover Easter, and I want any worried parent to know there is help at hand.”

The scheme will now run until Friday 16 April. The grants are primarily for helping families buy essentials, with at least 80% of funds ring-fenced to be spent on food, energy and water bills, with 20% available for other associated essential costs. Councils can also offer support to vulnerable individuals and households without children.

Every local authority involved in the scheme has already used it to provide food for vulnerable children. In addition, many areas provided further support thanks to the scheme, including white goods being supplied to vulnerable families in Cheshire East, and the creation of a winter clothing fund for children in Telford and Wrekin.

During the first two months of the scheme half the £170 million was spent, with almost two and a half million vulnerable households benefitting. Based on local authority reporting for this period, 95% of funding spent has been provided to families with children, and 95% of funding has been used to support households with food or utility bills.

This is all part of the government’s long-term plan to tackle poor health, hunger and education. In addition to the now-extended COVID Winter Grant Scheme, the Holiday Activities and Food Programme has been expanded to cover the major school holidays in 2021 – starting with this Easter.

The HAF provides local authorities with grants they can use to arrange childcare provision, provide valuable support to families on lower incomes, and give children the opportunity to access rewarding activities alongside healthy meals over the school holidays.

## **Information about Local Authority allocations of additional funding**

Allocations of the original £170 million grant (not including the £59.1 million additional funding) can be found on the [COVID Winter Grant Scheme](#) guidance page.

This extension brings the total value of the scheme to £229.1 million.

<b>Upper Tier Local Authority (County Councils, Metropolitan Districts, Unitary Authorities and London Boroughs</b>	<b>DWP indicative allocation of £59.1m</b>
Barking and Dagenham	£302,480
Barnet	£343,114
Barnsley	£328,913
Bath and North East Somerset	£134,435
Bedford	£167,672
Bexley	£215,445
Birmingham	£1,803,918
Blackburn with Darwen	£224,568

**Upper Tier Local Authority (County Councils,  
Metropolitan Districts, Unitary Authorities  
and London Boroughs**

**DWP indicative allocation of  
£59.1m**

Blackpool	£244,991
Bolton	£386,195
Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council	£371,401
Bracknell Forest	£76,904
Bradford	£792,765
Brent	£397,158
Brighton and Hove	£300,860
Bristol City of	£570,302
Bromley	£262,078
Buckinghamshire	£336,350
Bury	£215,339
Calderdale	£255,177
Cambridgeshire	£507,387
Camden	£272,292
Central Bedfordshire	£204,088
Cheshire East	£306,093
Cheshire West and Chester	£321,729
City of London	£7,011
Cornwall	£636,739
Coventry	£449,373
Croydon	£419,542
Cumbria	£520,225
Darlington	£126,828
Derby	£312,705
Derbyshire	£758,227
Devon	£710,157
Doncaster	£418,396
Dorset	£320,584
Dudley	£367,847
Durham	£650,974
Ealing	£371,628
East Riding of Yorkshire	£286,842
East Sussex	£554,473
Enfield	£399,635
Essex	£1,334,287
Gateshead	£257,380
Gloucestershire	£524,139
Greenwich	£336,411
Hackney	£400,490
Halton	£180,764
Hammersmith and Fulham	£203,417

**Upper Tier Local Authority (County Councils,  
Metropolitan Districts, Unitary Authorities  
and London Boroughs**

**DWP indicative allocation of  
£59.1m**

Hampshire	£1,007,725
Haringey	£342,895
Harrow	£204,749
Hartlepool	£137,998
Havering	£231,087
Herefordshire	£187,027
Hertfordshire	£866,869
Hillingdon	£289,004
Hounslow	£286,245
Isle of Wight	£158,821
Isles Of Scilly	£1,442
Islington	£304,980
Kensington and Chelsea	£164,042
Kent	£1,565,837
Kingston upon Hull City of	£427,299
Kingston upon Thames	£119,444
Kirklees	£517,219
Knowsley	£257,513
Lambeth	£388,824
Lancashire	£1,363,058
Leeds	£986,468
Leicester	£487,309
Leicestershire	£508,316
Lewisham	£376,331
Lincolnshire	£772,976
Liverpool	£847,834
Luton	£254,726
Manchester	£897,422
Medway	£315,871
Merton	£165,547
Middlesbrough	£229,320
Milton Keynes	£251,068
Newcastle upon Tyne	£398,948
Newham	£470,772
Norfolk	£952,759
North East Lincolnshire	£218,483
North Lincolnshire	£185,145
North Somerset	£183,700
North Tyneside	£224,228
North Yorkshire	£499,013
Northamptonshire	£723,355

**Upper Tier Local Authority (County Councils,  
Metropolitan Districts, Unitary Authorities  
and London Boroughs**

**DWP indicative allocation of  
£59.1m**

Northumberland	£345,045
Nottingham	£491,668
Nottinghamshire	£805,153
Oldham	£338,848
Oxfordshire	£475,549
Peterborough	£258,532
Plymouth	£321,935
Portsmouth	£266,171
Reading	£161,481
Redbridge	£274,259
Redcar and Cleveland	£181,742
Richmond upon Thames	£117,107
Rochdale	£325,716
Rotherham	£350,218
Rutland	£21,909
Salford	£378,711
Sandwell	£488,307
Sefton	£340,858
Sheffield	£726,695
Shropshire	£292,592
Slough	£165,176
Solihull	£196,712
Somerset	£537,180
South Gloucestershire	£197,867
South Tyneside	£207,539
Southampton	£313,183
Southend-on-Sea	£199,442
Southwark	£386,465
St. Helens	£249,027
Staffordshire	£772,271
Stockport	£301,674
Stockton-on-Tees	£236,223
Stoke-on-Trent	£376,703
Suffolk	£722,385
Sunderland	£372,630
Surrey	£739,234
Sutton	£160,612
Swindon	£213,781
Tameside	£311,010
Telford and Wrekin	£211,842
Thurrock	£181,821

**Upper Tier Local Authority (County Councils,  
Metropolitan Districts, Unitary Authorities  
and London Boroughs**

**DWP indicative allocation of  
£59.1m**

Torbay	£173,985
Tower Hamlets	£418,230
Trafford	£204,502
Wakefield	£437,747
Walsall	£394,491
Waltham Forest	£328,717
Wandsworth	£290,705
Warrington	£202,206
Warwickshire	£488,309
West Berkshire	£96,955
West Sussex	£691,676
Westminster	£266,431
Wigan	£390,942
Wiltshire	£385,170
Windsor and Maidenhead	£82,168
Wirral	£425,734
Wokingham	£72,555
Wolverhampton	£369,174
Worcestershire	£558,760
York	£144,875
<b>Total</b>	<b>£59,100,000</b>

- Over £50 million boost to the Covid Winter Grant Scheme will cover the 2-week Easter period
- Scheme helping thousands of vulnerable children stay “warm and well-fed” says Work and Pensions Secretary Thérèse Coffey
- Nearly 2.5 million awards were made to vulnerable households during December and January

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 3267 5144

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