

# Faster accommodation moves for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children

The transfer of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) from temporary hotels to long-term care will be sped up to help reduce the multi-million pound cost of accommodation to the UK taxpayer and ensure children get the care they need, the government has announced.

The changes, part of the New Plan for Immigration, will mean that UASC will spend less time in hotels and more time in long-term accommodation designed for their needs.

Currently the government spends more than £5million a day accommodating asylum seekers and Afghan refugees in hotels, including UASC.

The government is working at pace to end the use of hotels for asylum seekers and fix the broken asylum system. While there is no one single solution, the government's New Plan for Immigration is delivering a broad range of measures to tackle illegal migration and the pressures it has put on our asylum system, including through the Migration and Economic Development Partnership with Rwanda, our new Borders Act, plans for asylum reception centres and a fairer asylum dispersal system.

Minister Kevin Foster, Minister for Safe and Legal Migration said:

The government cannot deal with the impact of the rise in dangerous and illegal small boat crossings alone which is why I welcome the support from councils to help us reduce the cost of hotels and quickly move unaccompanied asylum-seeking children so they receive the care they need.

Any council which moves a child from a hotel to their care under the new scheme will receive support funding of £6,000 per child for the first three months to give them the best possible start.

Today's announcement means once a referral is made under the National Transfer Scheme, councils will have five working days rather than 10, to transfer an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child from hotel accommodation to their care.

On top of the extra £20 million of government funding announced last year, councils will receive new funding to help them deliver the changes to the scheme.

Councils will receive an additional £2,000 per child per month for the first three months if they move a UASC from a hotel to a placement within five working days. Following this councils will continue to receive up to £143 a day to support any UASC and £270 per week for all former UASC care leavers in

their area.

The Home Office has made further changes which means councils have to work to create placements based on a minimum of 0.1% UASC as a percentage of their overall child population. The change will mean children are fairly distributed between councils.

The NTS, which was made mandatory in February 2022, has seen more than 1,730 children transferred to councils with children's services between January 2021 to March 2022.

---

## Regular asymptomatic testing paused in additional settings

- Routine asymptomatic testing will be paused across remaining settings, including hospitals and care homes, from 31 August as Covid cases continue to fall
- Testing for individuals with symptoms in these settings, including health and social care staff, will continue
- Immunocompromised patients in hospitals and people being admitted into care homes and hospices will also continue to be tested

Regular asymptomatic testing for Covid in all remaining settings in England will be paused from 31 August, as Covid cases continue to fall.

Free testing for the public ended on 1 April as part of the government's Living with Covid plan, but asymptomatic testing continued to be used in some settings during periods of high case rates.

The vaccination programme means Covid cases have now fallen to 40,027 and the risk of transmission has reduced. Deaths have fallen to 744 and hospitalisations to 6,005 in the last seven days, meaning wider asymptomatic testing can soon end as planned in most instances. Symptomatic testing in high risk settings will continue.

Settings where asymptomatic testing of staff and patients or residents will be paused include:

- The NHS (including independent health care providers treating NHS patients);
- Adult social care and hospice services (apart from new admissions);
- Parts of the prison estate and some places of detention; and
- Certain domestic abuse refuges and homelessness settings.

Testing will remain in place for admissions into care homes and hospices from both hospitals and the community, and for transfers for immunocompromised

patients into and within hospital to protect those who are most vulnerable.

Testing will also be available for outbreaks in certain high-risk settings such as care homes.

Year-round symptomatic testing will continue to be provided in some settings, including:

- NHS patients who require testing as part of established clinical pathways or those eligible for Covid treatments;
- NHS staff and staff in NHS-funded independent healthcare provision;
- Staff in adult social care services and hospices and residents of care homes, extra care and supported living settings and hospices;
- Staff and detainees in prisons; and
- Staff and service users of certain domestic abuse refuges and homelessness services.

Individuals will continue to be protected through vaccination and access to antivirals where eligible.

The government continues to encourage all who are eligible to take up boosters. Autumn boosters will be available to book through the National Booking Service ahead of the wider rollout, due to start on the 12 September. The NHS will contact people when it is their turn.

Health and Social Care Secretary Steve Barclay said:

Thanks to the success of our world-leading vaccination roll-out, we are able to continue living with Covid and, from 31 August, we will pause routine asymptomatic testing in most high-risk settings.

This reflects the fact case rates have fallen and the risk of transmission has reduced, though we will continue to closely monitor the situation and work with sectors to resume testing should it be needed. Those being admitted into care homes will continue to be tested.

Our upcoming autumn booster programme will offer jabs to protect those at greatest risk from severe Covid, and I urge everyone who is eligible to take up the offer.

Dr Susan Hopkins, Chief Medical Adviser to the UK Health Security Agency, said:

Covid case rates and hospitalisations are on the decline, demonstrating the positive impact of the vaccines, which remain our best form of defence. The data from our surveillance shows prevalence is low and decreasing, and we will continue to monitor this data closely.

If you are invited to receive a booster jab in the autumn, or if you have not yet had a Covid vaccine, please do take up the offer to protect yourself and those around you.

The government expects the prevalence of Covid to remain low following the most recent wave but will keep the situation under review. In line with the Living with Covid plan, the government will continue to work closely with sectors and services and will be ready to resume testing if required.

Guidance on testing in adult social care settings will be updated today (24 August) and guidance on other high-risk settings will follow shortly.

On 15 August, the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) published its advice on which vaccines should be used in this year's Autumn booster programme. This includes the approval of new dual-strain (or "bivalent") vaccines as part of the programme, targeting both the original strain of the virus and the new, more prevalent Omicron strain.

All of the available boosters provide good protection against severe illness from Covid and the Committee has emphasised that getting a booster in good time before the winter season is more important for those eligible than the type of vaccine that is received.

## **Background:**

---

# **[Charity Commission launches inquiry into Dudley Mosque](#)**

Press release

The charity regulator has opened a statutory inquiry into Dudley Central Mosque and Muslim Community Centre (1127373).



The Charity Commission has opened an inquiry into Dudley Central Mosque and Muslim Community Centre after the charity failed in its accounting requirements for four years in a row. These failures are symptomatic of wider administration and governance issues that persist at the charity, despite previous engagement from the regulator.

The charity has been the subject of three regulatory compliance cases in the past four years, all of which examined issues arising from an ongoing dispute between two groups representing the charity.

In November 2018, the Commission issued formal regulatory advice. It advised the charity to seek legal advice to establish the official trustees in line with its constitution. It also asked the two sides to mediate and agree to hold an election overseen by an independent committee. An election took place, but one side disputed the independence of the election and governance issues remained.

The charity was also placed into the Commission's 'double defaulters' class inquiry in March 2022 as it had failed to submit its annual reports, accounts and annual returns for four years in a row. Accounting information since March 2018 is still outstanding.

The Commission is concerned that, despite previous engagement and regulatory advice, the charity has not resolved its administration and governance issues. For this reason, a statutory inquiry was opened on 1 July 2022.

The inquiry will examine the administration, governance and management of the charity and in particular:

- whether it is being managed in accordance with its governing document
- the failure to comply with legal obligations in relation to the filing of the charity's accounts and annual returns

The Commission may extend the scope of the inquiry if additional issues emerge.

**ENDS**

### **Notes to Editors**

1. The Charity Commission is the independent, non-ministerial government department that registers and regulates charities in England and Wales. Its purpose is to ensure charity can thrive and inspire trust so that people can improve lives and strengthen society.
2. The Commission has not made any conclusions and the opening of the inquiry is not a finding of wrongdoing.

Published 24 August 2022

---

# Prime Minister tells Ukraine “they will win” as he marks Independence Day: 24 August 2022

- Prime Minister Boris Johnson visits Kyiv to underline the UK’s unwavering, long term support to Ukraine as it marks 31 years of independence from the Soviet Union.
- Visit comes as the Prime Minister announces another major package of support, including unmanned surveillance and missile systems for the Armed Forces of Ukraine.
- The £54 million package of 2,000 state-of-the-art drones and loitering munitions will enable Ukraine to better track and target invading Russian forces.

The Prime Minister has travelled to Kyiv today in a show of strength and solidarity with Ukraine as he tells President Zelenskyy his country ‘can and will win the war’.

As part of the visit, his third to the city since the invasion, the Prime Minister also called on the international community to stay the course in Ukraine, as it continues to valiantly defend its sovereignty six months on from Putin’s brutal and illegal invasion.

While meeting President Zelenskyy in Kyiv today to mark 31 years of Ukraine’s independence from the Soviet Union, the Prime Minister also outlined the UK’s next major package of new support, including unmanned surveillance and anti-tank loitering munitions requested by the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

This package of unmanned air systems will be a step up in the Ukrainian’s current capability, improving their long range surveillance and defensive targeting ability.

It includes 850 hand launched Black Hornet micro-drones, which are specifically designed for use in towns and villages, and are deployed to detect approaching enemy forces.

Military personnel can be trained to fly the helicopter drones, which are smaller than a mobile phone, in under 20 minutes. Each drone feeds back live video and still images to allow forces on the ground to defend urban areas safely.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

For the past six months, the United Kingdom has stood shoulder-to-shoulder with Ukraine, supporting this sovereign country to defend

itself from this barbaric and illegal invader.

Today's package of support will give the brave and resilient Ukrainian Armed Forces another boost in capability, allowing them to continue to push back Russian forces and fight for their freedom.

What happens in Ukraine matters to us all, which is why I am here today to deliver the message that the United Kingdom is with you and will be with you for the days and months ahead, and you can and will win.

The leaders also held talks on the challenges of the winter ahead for the country, and the Prime Minister reiterated the UK's all-encompassing and unwavering support for the Ukrainian people, from humanitarian aid to supporting the investigation of war crimes and rebuilding the country's economy.

In his final visit to the country before leaving Downing Street, the Prime Minister also received Ukraine's highest award that can be bestowed on foreign nationals, 'The Order of Liberty', for the UK's staunch support of Ukraine's freedom.

Today's £54 million military package comes as the UK also prepares to give minehunting vehicles to Ukraine to help detect Russian mines in the waters off its coast. Ukrainian personnel will be trained how to use them in UK waters in the coming weeks.

The UK also continues to expand the training of Ukrainian military personnel.

Eight other countries have signed up to the major training programmes, which trains civilians to become soldiers, since the Prime Minister announced the programme on his previous visit to Ukraine in June.

Partners contributing expertise and trainers to the rapidly expanding programme include Canada, Denmark, New Zealand, The Netherlands, Norway, Finland, Sweden and Lithuania.

The UK has also helped to drive continued international momentum on funding for defensive lethal aid to Ukraine. Since the Prime Minister announced an additional £1 billion to provide military aid to Ukraine at NATO in June, a further £1.2 bn worth of financial pledges from allies were secured for Ukraine at the Copenhagen Conference, co-hosted by the UK and Denmark earlier this month.

The UK has committed more than £2.3bn of military and financial aid to Ukraine since the invasion began in February.

---

# UK agrees two deals with major gulf trading partner Qatar

The UK enhanced its relationship with our third largest Gulf trading partner, announcing two significant agreements to boost trade and investment.

UK trade minister Ranil Jayawardena met Qatar's Minister of Commerce and Industry H.E. Sheikh Mohammed bin Hamad Al-Thani in London today [24 August] to agree the new partnerships at the third UK-Qatar Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO).

It comes after the launch of negotiations on a free trade agreement with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in June. An agreement with the GCC is an opportunity to grow an overall trade relationship worth £32.4 billion in 2020, breaking down barriers to trade and supporting jobs across the whole of the UK.

## **Minister for International Trade, Ranil Jayawardena, said:**

Qatar is an important trade and investment partner for Britain. I believe we should nurture and maximise the strength of our relationship to make our economies more resilient and prosperous.

We are committed to taking steps to further deepen the trade and investment relationship we share with Qatar, and today's JETCO signals our ambition through two significant agreements.

The two new MOUs include a new agreement between Department for International Trade (DIT) and Qatar's Investment Promotion Agency, to help British businesses such as to enter the Qatari market. The collaboration will provide information to companies on strategic investment opportunities and provide guidance on market entry options.

On top of this, DIT also opened the UK export market to Qatar for the supply of vitamins and supplements, enabling Holland & Barrett to export these products to the country.

## **Nick Parker, Director of International Development, Holland & Barrett said:**

Holland and Barrett's mission is to make health and wellness a way of life for everyone and through our two franchise stores in Qatar we have been able to serve our customers there since 2015, however until now our franchise partner has been unable to offer our own range of vitamins and supplements.



During the JETCO, UK Export Finance (UKEF) signed a memorandum with Qatar Development Bank to boost efforts between the UK and Qatari companies by sharing expertise on export finance, insurance products and cooperation on projects which involve both UK and Qatari goods and services.

The meeting of Ministers concluded with the signing of a Joint Statement outlining commitments to tackling market access issues on both sides and growing trade in a range of priority sectors, including healthcare and life sciences, education, and food and drink.

The next meeting of the JETCO will be organised by the State of Qatar's Ministry of Commerce and Industry and will be held in Doha in 2023.