

Change of Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Netherlands

Press release

Ms Joanna Roper CMG has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands in succession to Mr Peter Wilson CMG.



Ms Joanna Roper CMG has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands in succession to Mr Peter Wilson CMG who will be transferring to another Diplomatic Service appointment. Ms Roper will take up her appointment in September 2020.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Full name: Joanna Louise Roper

Married to: Thomas Drew

2017 – present FCO, Special Envoy for Gender Equality
2016 – 2017 Beijing, Interim Director General, Trade and Investment
2014 – 2016 FCO, Director, Consular Services
2012 – 2014 FCO, Head, China Department
2011 – 2012 FCO, Head, Somalia Conference Unit
2010 – 2011 Islamabad, Political Counsellor
2008 – 2010 FCO, Deputy Head of Counter-Terrorism Department
2007 – 2008 FCO, Deputy Head of Drugs and International Crime Department
2003 – 2007 Tokyo, Head of Press and Public Affairs
2001 – 2003 FCO, Deputy Head of Drugs and International Crime Department

Further information

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For journalists

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Published 7 August 2020

[Stay safe on your staycation](#)

News story

OPSS is warning consumers to be wary of summer holiday bargains that are too good to be true.



Many of us will be buying new items to take us through the summer holidays such as phone chargers, sunglasses, suntan lotion and even immersion heaters to heat up our paddling pools.

But how do you know you are getting a good quality product? Buying a bargain is always tempting but if it seems too good to be true, it probably is.

So-called bargains may be harmful and could cause severe injury. Bargain electrical goods, such as pool immersion heaters and phone chargers may not be manufactured to high standards, and can overheat, catch fire or electrocute.

Counterfeit sun cream and sunglasses may offer low or no protection from the sun's rays.

Top tips for safe staycation shopping this summer

Compare the price

If it is a fraction of the price then it is likely to be counterfeit.

- **Check the address on the product**

If there is no address or just a PO box number, it could mean it is poorly manufactured.

- **Examine the product**

Is the label and logo correct? Genuine products have standardised logos, fonts and colours. Spelling mistakes and grammatical errors can also indicate fakes.

- **Check what's missing**

Poorly manufactured electrical goods may be missing parts, or not have safety certification on the label. Check for product registration cards and the manual.

- **Check**

Are the model numbers are listed on the manufacturer's website?

If in doubt, check it out. Just because you can buy it, doesn't mean it is safe.

[Read our guidance in full.](#)

Help spread the word:

Published 7 August 2020

[Minister for Asia to attend ASEAN Day celebrations in London](#)

Press release

FCO. Minister Nigel Adams will join Ambassadors and High Commissioners from ASEAN member states for a flag raising ceremony and to discuss strengthening

the UK's partnership with Southeast Asia.



Minister for Asia Nigel Adams will visit the Brunei High Commission today (7 August) to join the ASEAN Day celebrations with London-based Ambassadors and High Commissioners of the member states of ASEAN.

This will be followed by a working lunch to continue discussions on UK's partnership with the region.

Areas of discussion will include deepening future UK-ASEAN cooperation, particularly regarding collaboration on the COVID-19 response and ensuring our recovery from the pandemic is a green one, based around environmental concerns. This follows the UK's application to become an [ASEAN Dialogue Partner](#) on 5 June.

Speaking ahead of the meeting, FCO Minister for Asia Nigel Adams MP said:

The long-standing and deep relationship between the UK and ASEAN and its member states has been strengthening over the past decade.

Last year we opened our first dedicated Mission to ASEAN, and I look forward to seeing collaboration increase in areas such as low carbon growth, education, and combatting transnational crime, as well as continued trade and investment growth with UK-ASEAN trade hitting a ten-year high in January of £41.9bn.

The COVID-19 pandemic has proven the need for global cooperation and partnerships, and research and development partnerships between UK and ASEAN institutions have already been set up, with our governments working together closely.

I look forward to further meetings with ASEAN partners as we continue to grow our relationship.

Further information

Published 7 August 2020

Coronavirus support measures help every region and nation in the UK

- new figures show government economic support is reaching every corner of the UK
- businesses across the entire UK have received government-backed loans during outbreak – with more than 130,000 firms in devolved nations receiving £4.7 billion
- data also shows that nearly 900,000 firms in England have benefitted from over £10 billion in business grants

Figures released by the Treasury show that more than 130,000 firms in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales have benefitted from £4.7 billion of coronavirus support through the government's Bounce Back Loan and Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS). This includes:

- loans and support worth more than £2.3 billion have been given to more than 65,000 firms in Scotland since the outbreak
- around 41,000 businesses in Wales have received more than £1.4 billion in finance
- and more than 25,000 businesses in Northern Ireland have received over £1 billion

The figures also show that businesses up and down England have also benefitted from more than £10 billion in business grants, with equivalent funding being made available to the nations through the Barnett formula.

- more than 102,000 business properties in Yorkshire and the Humber received £1.1 billion in grants since the pandemic
- alongside 119,000 grants made in the South West, to the value of £1.3 billion
- and 131,000 business properties in the North West receiving over £1.5 billion in support

Loan schemes, grants and business rates holidays have supported businesses across all sectors. But the retail, construction and hospitality sectors, including hotels and restaurants, have benefitted the most.

17% of loans went to the construction sector, and all retail, hospitality, and leisure businesses benefitted from a 100% business rates holiday – demonstrating how government support helped those businesses that were impacted hardest by the pandemic.

Ahead of a visit to Scotland to see the impact of the government support schemes and meet people who have benefitted, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, said:

I recently set out the government's next steps towards economic recovery and securing the UK's long-term prosperity in our Plan for Jobs.

As we embark on this next phase, the latest figures demonstrate that we are continuing to support jobs, incomes, and businesses across every corner of the UK.

As well as loan schemes, grants and businesses rates holiday, around a third of employees in every region benefitted from the furlough scheme, in addition to support through the self-employed income support scheme, as the government moved quickly to support businesses across the whole country to protect jobs. This is part of a package of over £50 billion in loans, £11 billion in grants, and 9.5 million people furloughed.

The Chancellor set out his Plan for Jobs last month, which will support jobs with the Job Retention Bonus to help businesses keep furloughed workers, and expand Worksearch Support including a Flexible Support Fund and a £2 billion Kickstart scheme to subsidise jobs for young people

The government is also creating jobs in the construction and housing sectors through funding to decarbonise public sector buildings, and protecting jobs with VAT cuts for hospitality and tourism, as well as the Eat Out to Help Out discount scheme. These schemes are union-wide, and support key industries across the whole of the UK.

This comes in addition to the government's recent announcement that the devolved administrations in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales will receive a minimum of £3.6 billion in additional funding this year, on top of the £8.9 billion confirmed since March to support the coronavirus recovery.

Stephen Pegge, Managing Director of Commercial Finance at UK Finance, said:

Lenders understand that times are tough for businesses up and down the country, but the industry has a clear plan to help them get through this crisis. Whether you're a sole trader in a rural area or a company with hundreds of employees in a major city, the banking and finance industry stands ready to offer the right support to suit your needs and these figures demonstrate that funding is well distributed throughout the UK.

Businesses should remember that any lending provided under government-backed schemes is a loan not a grant, and so should carefully consider their ability to repay before applying.

Business Secretary Alok Sharma said:

Our unprecedented package of support has helped firms of all sizes, in all sectors, and in every corner of our United Kingdom.

Today's data shows just how big an impact our measures have had, providing breathing space for millions of businesses, safeguarding jobs and protecting people's incomes.

As we bounce back from the pandemic, we will continue to prioritise jobs and skills, while placing the environment at the heart of our recovery.

Further information

Breakdown of facilities offered by region – CBILS

Region	Value of facilities offered (£m)	Number of facilities offered	Proportion of facilities	Proportion of UK Business Population*
East Midlands	776,952,806	3,325	7%	6%
East of England	1,020,035,597	4,669	11%	10%
London	2,001,937,526	7,790	17%	19%
North East	263,944,238	1,233	3%	3%
North West	1,129,802,539	4,699	10%	10%
Northern Ireland	237,817,722	836	2%	2%
Scotland	587,638,410	2,693	5%	6%
South East	1,585,052,125	7,376	16%	16%
South West	927,187,748	4,283	9%	10%
Wales	303,205,680	1,391	3%	4%
West Midlands	871,365,361	3,770	9%	8%
Yorkshire and The Humber	741,647,567	3,419	8%	7%
Unknown	39,998,100	137	0%	0%

Breakdown of loans offered by region – BBLs

Region	Number of BBL loans offered	Volume of loans under BBLs offered (£)	% of total loans	% of business population*
East Midlands	1,982,958,564	67,515	6%	6%
East of England	3,060,902,628	100,476	10%	10%
London	6,983,181,564	210,102	20%	19%
North East	939,452,112	33,651	3%	3%
North West	3,338,019,322	112,444	11%	10%
Northern Ireland	809,032,542	25,491	2%	2%
Scotland	1,844,452,115	63,649	6%	6%
South East	4,347,184,714	144,152	14%	16%
South West	2,408,463,217	84,593	8%	10%
Wales	1,115,836,982	40,195	4%	4%

Region	Number of BBL loans offered	Volume of loans under BBLs offered (£)	% of total loans	% of business population*
West Midlands	2,593,303,126	84,773	8%	8%
Yorkshire & the Humber	2,185,143,320	73,962	7%	7%
Unknown	51,761,340	1,665	0%	0%

- Source: British Business Bank
- *Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/business-population-estimates-2019>
- Offered figures published by the British Business Bank may differ from aggregate approved figures published by HM Treasury due to a time lag between the two data sources, and since some borrowers may decide not to proceed with an approved application.
- Sectoral breakdowns for the loans scheme can be found on the British Business Bank's website [here](#).
- Details on geographic and sectoral split for the CJRS and SEISS schemes can be found [here](#).

Business Grants

Region	Small Business Grant Fund number of grants paid	Small Business Grant Fund value of grants paid	Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund number of grants paid	Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund value of grants paid	Local Authority Discretionary Grant Fund number of grants paid	Local Authority Discretionary Grant Fund value of grants paid
South East	86,751	867,510,000	37,493	705,210,000	6,540	45,532,451
North West	99,153	991,530,000	26,100	471,215,000	6,632	42,190,626
East Midlands	59,470	594,700,000	15,669	285,765,000	3,319	23,498,080
East of England	68,475	684,750,000	25,012	454,455,000	4,043	25,537,623
London	60,272	602,720,000	39,732	870,295,000	1,908	10,335,262
Yorkshire and The Humber	80,122	801,220,000	19,386	353,910,000	3,383	20,819,273
South West	84,296	842,960,000	27,380	485,290,000	7,329	45,230,611
West Midlands	69,430	694,300,000	19,802	361,645,000	2,845	16,156,526
North East	33,997	339,970,000	8,971	153,850,000	1,428	8,918,500

- The data provided are based on the latest estimates for these grants by parliamentary constituency and local authority as at 5 July 2020.

- The data are self-reported by local authorities. Although some quality assurance has been carried out, it has not been possible to carry out full verification of the data provided.
- Data presented here may differ from data on grants provided by local authorities previously published by local authority as at 5 July for various reasons. For example, where a hereditament is on a boundary and not identified as being within a local authority by the postcode look up file, it is excluded from the constituency figures. A full reconciliation exercise will take place at the end of the schemes. In the meantime, these figures should be regarded as provisional.
- Business grants are England-only, but are Barnetted.

See more statistics on coronavirus funding for businesses and self employed people [here](#).

[Andorra, Belgium and The Bahamas to be removed from travel corridors list](#)

- Andorra, Belgium and The Bahamas removed from list of travel corridors for England following data showing a significant increase in confirmed cases
- Brunei and Malaysia added to list of travel corridors for England having been assessed by the Joint Biosecurity Centre as posing a lower infection risk
- travellers urged to check the latest advice from the FCO before travelling and will be required to fill in a passenger locator form before returning home

People arriving in England from Andorra, Belgium and The Bahamas from 4am Saturday 8 August 2020 will need to [self-isolate for 2 weeks](#) as the countries are removed from the travel exemptions list.

Data from the Joint Biosecurity Centre and Public Health England has indicated a significant change in both the level and pace of confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) in all 3 destinations, leading to ministers removing these from the current list of travel corridors.

There has been a consistent increase in COVID-19 cases per 100,000 of the population in Belgium since the middle of July, with a 4-fold increase in total cases over this time period. In Andorra, new cases per week have increased 5-fold over the same time period, while in The Bahamas the weekly case rate peaked at 78.6 last week, up from 3.1 in mid-July.

Brunei and Malaysia have been added to the government's travel corridor list following a decrease in confirmed cases of coronavirus. From 4am on Tuesday

11 August 2020, passengers arriving to England from these destinations will no longer need to self-isolate, so long as they haven't been in or transited through any other non-exempt countries in the 14 days preceding their arrival.

At the same time, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has also [updated its travel advice](#) to advise against all but essential travel to Andorra, Belgium and The Bahamas. Brunei and Malaysia are already exempt from the FCO's global advisory against non-essential travel.

The government has made consistently clear it will take decisive action if necessary to contain the virus, including removing countries from the travel corridors list rapidly if the public health risk of people returning from a particular country without self-isolating becomes too high.

People currently in [Andorra](#), [Belgium](#) and [The Bahamas](#) are encouraged to follow the local rules and check the FCO travel advice pages on GOV.UK for further information. The government is urging employers to be understanding of those returning from these destinations who now will need to self-isolate.

COVID-19 has profoundly changed the nature of international travel. Travellers should always check the [latest advice from the FCO](#), given the potential for changing coronavirus infection rates to affect both the advice about travelling to other countries and rules about self-isolation on return. All travellers, including those from exempt destinations, will still be required to show a complete [passenger locator form](#) on arrival into the UK unless they fall into a small group of exemptions.