

# Multi-billion pound investment as government unveils new long-term plan to tackle flooding

Homes and businesses across the country will be better protected and more resilient in future after the government revealed its long-term plan to tackle the risks of flooding and coastal erosion.

The measures set out in the new plan are the most comprehensive in a decade, including investment of £5.2 billion to create around 2,000 new flood and coastal defences to better protect 336,000 properties in England by 2027, alongside support to help households and businesses get back on their feet more quickly after flooding.

The plans also include £200 million for innovative projects such as sustainable drainage systems and nature-based solutions like temporary or permanent water storage areas which also boost wildlife. These will support 25 areas at risk of flooding to test and demonstrate innovative actions to adapt to a changing climate and improve their resilience.

In addition, up to £170 million will be spent to accelerate work on shovel-ready flood defence schemes that will begin construction in 2020 or 2021. 22 areas across the country will benefit from this immediate boost to jobs supporting the local economy as communities recover from the impact of coronavirus

The government's ambitious long-term plan sets out five key commitments – supported by over 40 clear actions – which will accelerate progress to better protect and better prepare the country for the coming years:

1. Upgrading and expanding flood defences and infrastructure across the country;
2. Managing the flow of water to both reduce flood risk and manage drought;
3. Harnessing the power of nature to not only reduce flood risk, but deliver benefits for the environment, nature, and communities;
4. Better preparing communities for when flooding and erosion does occur; and
5. Ensuring every area of England has a comprehensive local plan for dealing with flooding and coastal erosion.

The plan will see the delivery of flood and coastal defences to prevent £32 billion in economic damage, the creation of areas to store water during flooding and greater use of nature based solutions to reduce flood risk.

The plan also sets out proposed changes to the joint government and insurance industry Flood Re scheme. This will allow claims to include an additional amount so that flood resilience measures are included in repairs, and allow households that have property flood resilience measures in place to benefit

from lower premiums.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

Last winter I saw for myself the misery and upheaval that flooding can bring to lives and livelihoods and I said we would do more to help people.

This long-term plan will help push back the flood waters and protect hundreds of thousands of homes, businesses and livelihoods.

Our record investment will also stimulate economic growth across the UK as we build back better.

Environment Secretary George Eustice said:

The devastating impacts of last winter's flooding were an important reminder of the need to continue to invest and accelerate action to reduce the impact of flooding on our communities.

Our record investment and ambitious policies will better protect homes, schools, hospitals and businesses, but we also recognise that we cannot prevent flooding entirely, which is why we will ensure that communities at high risk are more resilient.

Working closely with the Environment Agency, local authorities, business and the third sector we will create a better protected and prepared nation.

Andy Bord, Chief Executive of Flood Re, said:

I welcome the Government's commitment today to making the nation more resilient to future flooding.

Flood Re enables access to affordable insurance for hundreds of thousands of homes at high risk of flooding. We believe it is very important that the country is built back better and making homes more resilient through the uptake of property flood resilience adaptations is a key part of addressing the increasing threat of flooding resulting from climate change.

As the nation recovers from coronavirus, the measures announced today will also give long-term reassurance to communities across the country – particularly in areas where families and businesses have had to make huge sacrifices to deal with coronavirus while still suffering from the consequences of last winter's flooding.

The pledge to harness the power of nature to reduce flood risk, while

protecting and restoring habitats, will also play a part in the UK's world-leading work to tackle climate change, especially ahead of COP26 in Glasgow in November 2021 where the restoration of nature and resilience and adaptation will be major themes.

These announcements come ahead of the publication of the Environment Agency's long-term Flood and Coast Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England, which will be published later today and sets out how the Environment Agency will work with communities to deliver the government's plan.

Emma Howard Boyd, Chair of the Environment Agency, said:

For every £1 spent improving protection from flooding and coastal erosion, we avoid around £5 of property damages. The long-term commitments announced today will make homes, businesses and infrastructure more resilient to the accelerating impacts of the climate crisis.

Many communities are all too familiar with flooding, and now the risk is increasing for others too. The Environment Agency is champing at the bit to deliver on the Government's investment with better, and greener, flood schemes. Detail about how we will do this is set out in our strategy.

With climate and nature at its heart, the strategy will provide detail on the Environment Agency's commitment to protect and prepare millions of homes and businesses.

## **Further information**

- The plan set out today represents the most substantive update to our national effort to tackle flood and coastal erosion risk in a decade since the Flood Water Management Act 2010.
- Alongside the five key over-arching policy commitments, the plan includes over 40 actions which will accelerate progress to better protect and better prepare the country against flooding and coastal erosion in the face of more frequent extreme weather as a result of climate change.
- The plan represents a comprehensive, cross-government commitment to increase our national resilience to flooding and coastal erosion, including proposals to change regulations and unlock more investment from government and others.
- The £5.2 billion capital funding programme announced here runs from 2021-2027. However other aspects of the plan will continue further into the future.
- The plan applies to England, as responsibility for flood and coastal erosion risk management is devolved. The Flood Re insurance scheme applies to the UK.

## **Further detail of key commitments and actions in the government's plan**

### **Upgrading and expanding flood defences and infrastructure across the country**

- Building 2,000 new flood and coastal defence schemes by 2027, providing better protection to 336,000 properties including 46,000 key sites including schools and hospitals, as well as ensuring existing defences continue to be well maintained.
- This will avoid £32 billion of wider economic damages – providing savings to businesses, householders and the exchequer.
- Ensuring that our existing flood defences are well-maintained and climate resilient.
- We will consider expanding local authority powers to ensure they can secure additional funding for flood schemes, and review local government funding for statutory functions to ensure that it matches the needs of communities.

### **Managing the flow of water to both reduce flood risk and manage drought**

- As flood mitigation and water management go hand-in-hand, we will ensure an integrated approach, for example storing upstream to prevent flooding during heavy rainfall, then capturing this water for use during dry weather.
- Ofwat has already permitted water companies to invest £469 million to develop water management schemes, with flood mitigation being examined as part of this.

### **Harnessing the power of nature to not only reduce flood risk, but deliver benefits for climate, nature, and communities**

- Planting trees, restoring peatland and wetlands, and properly managing soil can all contribute to reducing flood risk, while providing benefits for the climate, nature, and society.
- Commitment to double the number of government funded projects which include “nature-based solutions” such as these.
- The Environmental Land Management scheme, Nature for Climate Fund, and English Tree Strategy will all play a part in reducing flood risk for local communities, while providing them with green spaces to enjoy and habitats for wildlife.

### **Better preparing communities for when flooding does occur**

- A £200 million innovative resilience programme
- Changes to the Flood Re scheme will boost the resilience of homes, enabling a quicker and less costly recovery when flooding occurs.
- Review of policy for building in areas at flood risk, ensuring future developments are safe from floods.
- Review of the current approach to flood resilient design to help keep

water out and limit damage if water gets in.

- The flood warning system will be expanded to ensure that all properties at high risk of flooding will be aware when flooding may occur and can take action.
- Support for the voluntary sector to improve their capacity and capability to help local communities during floods.

## **Ensuring every area of England has a comprehensive local plan for dealing with flooding and coastal erosion.**

- Every area of England will have a strategic and comprehensive plan for dealing with flooding and coastal erosion from source to sea, taking into account demographic changes and the future challenges of climate change.

## **£170 million to accelerate flood defence construction**

Work will start on 22 new shovel-ready flood defence projects in 2020 and 2021 which will drive growth and unlock a range of benefits for local economies.

The flood schemes that will receive funding have strong local economic benefits, including better protecting more than 10,000 local businesses and safeguarding around 100,000 jobs:

- In Leeds, the government will provide up to £21 million to for the Leeds Phase 2 Flood Alleviation Scheme which will protect more than 370 businesses and 3,300 jobs, and enable the development of land for the creation of homes and jobs. This is subject to a satisfactory business case approved by Defra and HMT. Government will also provide £1,320,000 for the Leeds Natural Flood Management Scheme. This brings the government's total investment in Leeds to more than £100m to help prevent a repeat of the 2015 Boxing Day floods.
- In Sheffield and the Upper Don Valley, the flood scheme will protect more than 650 businesses and will play a part in delivering 70,000 new jobs in the city
- In Tenbury Wells and the Severn Valley, two flood schemes will protect nearly 3,000 homes in areas which were badly affected by last winter's floods, and protecting and creating more than 22,000 jobs along the Severn Valley. This will be supplemented by an additional scheme combining natural flood risk management, tree planting and habitat creation to reduce flood risk and capture carbon throughout the Severn Valley.
- In Hebden Bridge, the funding will provide better protection for an area that was badly affected by last winter's flooding, including nearly 1,000 businesses, while maintaining the importance of access to the river in the picturesque town.
- In Lowestoft and the Suffolk coast, the funding will deliver a tidal barrier and flood walls to protect key infrastructure and businesses, and providing a boost to the offshore energy and tourism sectors.

- In Derby, the flood scheme will protect over 1,000 businesses and 7,000 jobs, acting as a catalyst for regeneration in the city.
- In Brighton, Hove, and Shoreham, £2 million will be spent to protect critical infrastructure on the south coast, including a power plant serving 300,000 homes and one of the largest cargo ports in the south of England.
- In Falmouth, the flood scheme will reduce risks associated with surface water flooding and will allow further growth in a town centre waterfront location.
- In Bude, the flood scheme will sustain existing protection, preserving the functioning of a key part of the town and thereby allowing continued growth in the local tourism industry.
- In East Cowes, funding will be provided to reduce the risk of tidal flooding and increase resilience for properties and businesses including the ferry terminal.
- In Padiham, the flood scheme will protect over 2,000 jobs and nearly 300 businesses, delivering of £30m of economic benefits.
- In Lowdham, the storage of water in reservoirs will help to reduce flood risk in a village which has flooded three times in the last 12 months.
- In Ponteland, the flood scheme will allow the continued protection of the town, local businesses to continue to trade (almost 500 will be better protected) and provide confidence for future growth and investment.

## **£200 million Innovative Resilience Programme**

This new programme, first announced in the Budget, will deliver innovative actions in 25 local areas such as nature based solutions, sustainable drainage systems, pro-active approaches for making existing properties more flood resilient, encouraging local businesses to improve their flood resilience, and building voluntary sector capacity to respond and recover. It will demonstrate how innovative actions can work individually and in combination to improve resilience to flooding and coastal erosion, and encourage strategic thinking and working across administrative boundaries.

Funding will be around £6 million per area during 2021-27. The Environment Agency will invite Lead Local Flood Authorities and Coast Protection Authorities to work with local partners on expressions of interest later this year. We will publish a prospectus which will include a menu of actions from which each area can select those it will take forward. Once selected, the 25 areas will then work up their proposals in more detail, before the programme begins in April 2021. We will provide some preparation funding to the 25 areas in 2020-21.

The programme will also support work in the Thames and Humber estuaries, the Severn Valley and Yorkshire to trial and develop ways of planning ahead and making wise investment choices for the decades to come in face of the long-term uncertainties brought by climate change. In the Thames and Humber we will continue and build on previous work looking at major investments to manage tidal flooding. In the Severn Valley and Yorkshire this will be new work to explore how the approach might be applied to other situations where

major investments in flood and coastal erosion risk are likely to be needed over the coming decades.

The evidence gained from this programme will enable successful approaches to be identified and implemented more widely.

## **Changes to the Flood Re insurance scheme**

We are also announcing some specific changes to the Flood Re scheme that, subject to consultation, will help implement the vision set out in the long-term plan. They aim to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Flood Re scheme and encourage greater uptake of Property Flood Resilience among households at high risk of flooding across the UK.

We intend to consult later this year on a number of proposals, including some which go further than Flood Re's Quinquennial Review proposals in order to accelerate the uptake of Property Flood Resilience and better support customers and insurers to recognise the benefits. These are:

- The ability for Flood Re to offer discounted premiums to households that have fitted property flood resilience measures, such as airbrick covers or non-return valves.
- Permitting the payment of claims to include an additional amount to build back better, in a more flood resilient way.
- Speeding up resilient homes through working with Flood Re and the insurance industry to explore whether it would be beneficial for insurers to share more information with customers about their flood risk—encouraging everyone to take responsibility to encourage greater uptake.
- Exploring whether there's more that the Flood Re scheme could do to accelerate uptake of PFR, including whether the scheme's currently available funding could contribute.

Technical changes to enable Flood Re to amend the amount of levy raised from UK insurers and the maximum amount that Flood Re are liable to pay out each financial year to deliver better value for money.

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## **Major overhaul of higher technical education announced**

Measures to boost the quality and take-up of higher technical education to help plug skill gaps, level up opportunities and support the UK's economic recovery have been announced by Education Secretary Gavin Williamson today (14 July).

A major review last year revealed that higher technical education – technical

qualifications like Higher National Certificates and Higher National Diplomas that sit between A Level and degrees – can unlock the [skills employers need](#) and lead to highly skilled, well paid jobs. Despite this, not enough people are studying them which is leading to skills shortages in sectors like construction, manufacturing and digital.

The package of measures announced today marks the next step in establishing a system of higher technical education where students and employers can have confidence in high-quality courses that provide the skills they need to succeed. The package includes:

- Introducing newly approved higher technical qualifications from September 2022 supported by a government-backed brand and quality mark – qualifications will only be approved where they provide the skills employers need, providing much needed clarity for students and employers.
- Working with Ofsted and the Office for Students to make sure the quality of courses is consistently high across HE and FE institutions – building on our Institutes of Technology so students and employers can be confident courses will be high quality.
- Launching a new public awareness campaign – working in partnership with employers and careers advisers to showcase the benefits and the wide range of opportunities that studying a higher technical qualification can open up and making sure students get the right information, advice and guidance to make informed choices.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

For too long we have been training people for the jobs of yesterday instead of the jobs of today and tomorrow.

Employers are struggling to find the computer programmers, engineers, electricians and technicians they need, and students of all ages are missing out on the high skill, high wage jobs that higher technical education can lead to.

The measures I have announced today will boost the quality and take-up of these qualifications to help plug skill gaps, level up opportunities and support our economic recovery.

Matthew Percival, CBI People and Skills Director, said:

Higher technical qualifications help people develop the skills that build careers. It's fantastic to see this commitment from Government to boost their uptake.



Putting employers in the driving seat will give them confidence that courses on offer meet their needs.

With four-fifths of employers expecting to increase higher skilled roles in the coming years, offering clear progression routes through higher technical qualifications will be essential to creating a sustainable and inclusive future economy.

Lord Sainsbury of Turville, chair of the Independent Panel on Technical Education, said:

At the present time there is a serious mismatch between the skills and knowledge delivered by our education system and the needs of our economy and society (34% of graduates are in non-graduate jobs, and industry faces a persistent shortage of technical skills). This announcement of a major reform of higher technical education, together with the introduction of T Levels, should go a long way to ending this mismatch and should be strongly supported by all political parties and industry.

Today's announcement follows the [Education Secretary's FE speech](#) where Gavin Williamson pledged to publish a White Paper that will set out our plans to build a world-class, German-style further education system in Britain, which will strive toward high quality qualifications based on employer-led standards. It also follows the significant [investment announced](#) by the Chancellor to support young people's employment prospects – which includes a new 'kickstart' scheme to create work placements for young people on Universal Credit, £111 million investment to triple the number of traineeships available across England, supporting employers to create more apprenticeship opportunities, new investment to support an additional quarter of a million people with careers advice, and more.

These reforms build on work already underway to transform technical and vocational education in this country, including the introduction of new T Levels from September, working with employers to create more high-quality apprenticeship opportunities and establishing a network of Institutes of Technology, backed by up to £290 million. Higher technical qualifications will provide a natural progression route for young people taking new T Levels from 2020 or A Levels, and adults looking to upskill or retrain, enabling them to take the next step up and gain higher technical skills in key subjects like STEM.

Higher technical courses are offered at universities and FE colleges– such as Nottingham Trent University and New College Durham– and National Colleges, like the National College for Digital Skills, are well placed to expand in this area. The [Government's network of Institutes of Technology](#) – unique collaborations between universities, FE colleges, and leading employers – also specialise in delivering high-quality higher technical education and training in STEM subjects, such as digital, advanced manufacturing and

engineering that will provide employers with the skilled workforce they need.

The measure announced today will complement the Government's review of post-18 education to ensure the system is joined up, accessible and encourages the development of the skills the country needs.

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## Supporting every child's right to quality education

Thank you. It's great to be here. Really good to hear from some of the generous host countries, Kenya and Cameroon, and I think Pakistan later on. And of course, from Vodafone. We really need more public-private sector involvement as part of the solution.

And, of course, I'd also like to thank the younger refugees we've heard from today amidst this unprecedented global crisis. Bahati and Mohamed inspire us and they make me optimistic that our shared future is in good hands. And it's really vital that all of our responses are guided by their experiences and their needs.

And as we've heard today, the plight of refugees is exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. And refugees, as we know, are among the most vulnerable, often at higher risk of poverty and malnutrition and lack access to proper healthcare or shelter, with women and girls being disproportionately affected.

For now, the international community is rightly focussed on the impacts of COVID-19, which has affected us here in the UK and all around the world. But even before the pandemic, we were already in the midst of a global learning crisis, with refugees and displaced children making up the largest group of those out of school. And at the peak of global school closures, COVID-19 has kept 1.5 billion children and young people out of school. And as the UNHCR Special Envoy highlighted, half of all secondary age girls will not return when classrooms open. And so if we are truly to build back better, which we all want to do, education must be prioritised in the global recovery from the coronavirus.

It's really clear from our discussions today that this epidemic is not just a health crisis, it's an education crisis, especially for refugee children, which is why it's essential to ensure that education systems not only recover but recover better, providing all children with the skills to survive and to thrive. And without an education, these children will be unable to rebuild their lives and achieve their full potential.

We are therefore grateful for UNESCO convening the Global Education Coalition, which has brought together multilateral partners, private sector

organisations and NGOs in response to the crisis. And the UK is proud of our support to UNESCO's Institute for Statistics, which is leading the push on education data, which is vital to ensure that the responses reach those most in need.

In the last four months, the UK has adapted and reprioritised our education programs in 18 countries we work to support education systems and help keep people safe during the pandemic. And we fully recognise the importance of including refugees in national responses in line with the Global Compact on Refugees.

And of course, we must not forget the role of teachers like Mohamed in refugee education. Refugee children and their communities rely on teachers to provide education. But in this pandemic, they're relied on for so much more, including psychosocial support and vital health information. So I'm really delighted to announce today \$6.7 million of new UK funding to UNHCR, which will enable more than 5,000 teachers to provide that vital education for children in 10 refugee hosting countries over the crucial next seven months. And this funding will ensure children can continue to benefit from education during school closures and will mean teachers can provide vital outreach to get children back to school once they reopen.

We know that supporting every child's right to 12 years of quality education is one of the best investments we can make to end the cycle of displacement, poverty and conflict as we recover from coronavirus. This is a major development priority for us here in the UK, but it will require a global effort. The UK will be backing UNICEF's Open Up Better campaign and many other efforts to get children back to school when it's safe to do so. And we must place the needs of refugees and the most vulnerable children at the heart of that process.

So thank you, and I look forward to our continued work together to ensure that our efforts help those that need it most.

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## **Building a greener, more resilient global economy**

Friends and colleagues, the world remains in the grip of this pandemic, but it is time to look for the green shoots.

We are rightly focused on caring and curing. But in our response, we also need to consider climate. Our collective recovery needs strong roots in a greener and more resilient global economy.

The challenges, as you know, are enormous. You will also know how those challenges are multiplied for the most vulnerable communities, suffering the

double burden of COVID-19 and the impacts of climate change.

So as countries recover from the pandemic this is also an opportunity; an opportunity to build back better and lay the foundations for sustainable and inclusive growth.

Collective international action is crucial. The UK will lead work on 'recovering better for sustainability' at the request of the UN Secretary General. With our partners Rwanda, Fiji and the EU, we will seek to boost cooperation on a recovery that aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals and Paris.

As we prepare to host COP26 in Glasgow next year, we want all countries to submit more ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions, making the transformation to modern, clean economies.

We want all countries committed to net zero, as we have here in the UK.

Ahead of COP26, we want all countries to help speed up progress, in five key areas:

In clean energy, we need to move away from our polluted past, to embrace low-cost, zero-emissions technologies. Boosting that investment could increase global jobs in the sector fourfold by 2050.

In resilience, we need to help communities adapt to the worst effects of climate change, through resilient infrastructure and agriculture. Adaptation investments can consistently deliver high returns, with benefits between 2 and 10 times the cost. In nature, we need to safeguard ecosystems and protect natural habitats. We can scale up nature-based solutions and green our supply chains.

In transport, we need to bring forward the date when zero-emissions vehicles will be not only cleaner than petrol and diesel but also cheaper. And in finance, we need to unleash the capital that will pay for these actions.

Specifically, – We need developed countries to fulfil their commitment to \$100 billion in annual climate finance from 2020. The UK has committed to double our International Climate Finance to over £11 billion between 2021 and 2025.

- We should increase the availability of finance for adaptation and resilience. At the same time, we need action to improve the effectiveness of these investments.
- More finance needs to flow into low-carbon investments.
- We need to build new public-private partnerships. We need a pipeline of projects and market structures to increase sustainable private finance to developing countries.

- And we need better reporting of climate risk, with the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures becoming the standard. Using public finance effectively is key, finding new ways to mobilise and channel capital to the countries, sectors and projects that need it.

Our shared efforts through the Green Climate Fund, alongside other partners here today, can play a key role.

The Fund is already helping much-needed projects in over one hundred countries.

Last year the Fund raised nearly \$10 billion in its first replenishment, so it is well-resourced to do more.

The UK's pledge of over £1.4bn – making us the largest contributor to the Fund – shows the value and importance we place on multilateralism and working together through our shared, global institutions. This is even more important as we face the twin global challenges of Covid and climate change.

These are extraordinary times.

We now need our resources to go even further than before. Working together, we need to mobilise more investment from the Multilateral Development Banks and from the private sector in support of our shared goals. We need this to achieve a green recovery and deliver on the commitments made in Paris.

The UK is ready to be bold and ambitious in partnership with all of you ahead of what we hope will be a pivotal COP26 in Glasgow.

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## **97.5% of in-person coronavirus (COVID-19) tests returned next day**

- The [statistics on the 5th week of NHS Test and Trace](#) have been published today, demonstrating that anyone getting a test at a regional test site or mobile testing unit can expect their result by the next day
- 91% of in-person tests taken at regional test sites and mobile testing units were returned in less than 24 hours over the week of 25 June to 1 July, with 97.5% returned the day after the test was taken
- A new pilot to evaluate the effectiveness of asymptomatic testing for people in high-contact professions has launched today in England

The 5th set of data demonstrates a huge improvement in turnaround times of test results. Anyone getting a test at a regional test site or mobile testing unit can expect their results by the next day at the latest, with 91% of tests returned in less than 24 hours, and 97.5% of tests returned the day after the test was taken over the week of 25 June to 1 July. At the end of

May, 16.6% of tests at regional test sites and 2.5% of tests at mobile testing units were returned in under 24 hours.

More than 144,000 people who may have been at risk of unknowingly spreading the virus have been reached by the service and asked to self-isolate.

The success of test turnaround times comes as work continues to improve our understanding of the prevalence of the virus within different groups. A new pilot to evaluate the effectiveness of testing for people without symptoms of the virus who work in high-contact professions will begin today. This will include a select group of staff such as taxi drivers, cleaners and retail assistants, to see if there is demand for testing amongst these kinds of workers, and how they are affected by the virus.

This targeted, asymptomatic swab testing will take place as part of a close partnership with government, local authorities and a number of employers, with tens of thousands of tests offered to selected groups.

Partners involved in the trial include Addison Lee, BT, Mitie and Boots UK, as well as testing of groups identified by local authorities in Bradford, Newham, Brent and Oldham as being more vulnerable to the virus. Each business will receive thousands of tests for staff via home test delivery or a mobile testing unit, while local authorities will use capacity by booking in specific times for asymptomatic testing at their walk-through local test sites.

Those who test positive through targeted asymptomatic testing will need to self-isolate as normal and follow [national guidance](#). Positive results will be shared with NHS Test and Trace, in order to identify recent contacts, advise them to self-isolate and prevent further transmission of the virus.

Executive Chair of NHS Test and Trace, Dido Harding, said:

We are committed to continually improving NHS Test and Trace, to reach more people at risk of passing the virus on as quickly as possible. This week we have seen test turnaround times improve further, with the majority of positive cases reached by contact tracers in under 24 hours. Anyone with symptoms can easily book a test, expect rapid results, and will hear promptly from NHS Test and Trace if they are tested positive.

I continue to applaud all those who have played their part, got a test after experiencing symptoms, and responded to the service. I urge anyone contacted by NHS Test and Trace to follow the advice they receive to protect their families and communities.

Overall the data from the 5th week of operation (25 June to 1 July) of NHS Test and Trace shows that:

- 77.4% (3,366) of the people who had tested positive for coronavirus and were transferred to NHS Test and Trace were reached by our contact

tracers and asked to share details of their close contacts. This compares to 77.9% in the previous week

- 70.8% (10,547) of close contacts were reached and advised to self-isolate. This compares to 74.2% in the previous week

In total, since 28 May 2020:

- 30,797 people have tested positive for coronavirus in England during this period, with 31,421 transferred for contact tracing to include those that tested positive before contact tracing began
- 75.7% (23,769) of the people who tested positive for coronavirus and were transferred to NHS Test and Trace were reached by our contact tracers and asked to share details of their close contacts
- 85.1% (144,501) of close contacts were reached and advised to self-isolate

In the new network of diagnostic testing infrastructure between 25 June and 1 July:

- 98.1% of tests results from the 70 regional test sites were returned the day after the test was taken, with 91.8% in under 24 hours
- 96.7% of test results from the 182 mobile testing units were returned the day after the test was taken, with 89.6% in under 24 hours
- 83.9% of satellite test results were returned the day after the test was taken, with 65.2% in under 24 hours
- home tests take time to be posted to a person and be couriered back to the lab. Because of this a low proportion of test results will be available within 24 hours of the test being taken. 68.9% of home test results were received within 48 hours of the test being taken

This week's statistics have also informed understanding of how the virus is potentially being transmitted across England, as despite an increase in tests processed, fewer people have tested positive, and there have been fewer outbreaks or complex cases. Overall, this has meant that fewer people have had to be escalated through the 3-tiered contact-tracing system. But contact tracers dealing with non-complex cases have found that as social distancing has been eased, people who test positive are then identifying a higher number of close contacts.

Further improvements to the NHS Test and Trace service have been effective, demonstrated by consistent reductions in the time it takes for test results to be delivered. Test turnaround times have been increased for home testing kits, satellite test delivery, regional testing sites and mobile testing units. The majority of people testing positive transferred into the contact-tracing system have been contacted within 24 hours.

These extensive efforts to stop the spread of coronavirus will continue over the coming months, to further improve the service and the speed at which positive cases and contacts are informed.

NHS Test and Trace is working closely with local authorities across the country to help them respond to cases in their area, sharing postcode-level

data from the service to inform action to stop the spread of the virus in local communities.

The data published includes test turnaround times, as well as further information on positive test results, those who have shared contacts, and the contacts reached and asked to self-isolate.

The trial of asymptomatic testing for high-contact professions and high-risk groups will begin from 10 July, in partnership with 4 local authorities in Bradford, Brent, Newham and Oldham, as well as businesses representing high-contact professions (Addison Lee, Boots UK, Mitie and BT. Co-op Funeralcare added on 13 July 2020).

The approach to the publication of NHS Test and Trace data is supported by the Office for National Statistics and UK Statistics Authority who are working closely with NHS Test and Trace on the development of this weekly release and the wider granular approach to data in the programme.

This is the 5th set of data on NHS Test and Trace to be published. Over the coming weeks, this data will be integrated with those from other parts of NHS Test and Trace to provide an end-to-end view of the service that follows the journey taken by people accessing NHS Test and Trace. This includes both the numbers of people engaged and the speed of the journey through the service, including data on test turnaround times.

Please note that previous figures released on NHS Test and Trace have been revised. The figures presented are based on a data cut a number of days after the end of the reporting period, to give time for cases reported at the end of the 7-day period to have an outcome. Some cases may continue to be in progress after this period, and therefore data may need to be revised over time.

We are working towards aligning the NHS and Public Health England reporting methodologies in order to add testing turnaround times for pillar 1 into the publication. Pillar 1 methodologies differ from pillar 2 methodology as the majority of tests are provided to hospital patients. Pillar 1 is calculated as the number of test results available within and after 24 hours of the test being received by the laboratory. The NHS website publishes [data on turnaround times for NHS labs](#).