

# New saliva test for coronavirus piloted in Southampton

- New coronavirus saliva test to be trialled in Southampton
- Weekly tests can be completed by transferring saliva into a sample pot
- Over 14,000 GP staff, other essential key workers and university staff and their households will participate in the first phase of the trial

Participants will be able to complete coronavirus tests at home by putting their saliva into a sample pot to be tested for current infections of the virus.

GP staff, other essential key workers, university employees and members of their households will be among the first groups to participate in the pilot, with test kits delivered either to their home or place of work for them to complete every week.

Samples will be collected safely from homes by University of Southampton staff or returned to an agreed location on a weekly basis and participants will receive test results within 48 hours.

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

Saliva testing could potentially make it even easier for people to take coronavirus tests at home, without having to use swabs. This trial will also help us learn if routine, at-home testing could pick up cases of the virus earlier.

I am very grateful to everyone involved in the trial who is helping us develop our understanding of the virus which will benefit not only our but the global response to it.

The new saliva test will be significant to increasing testing capacity and accessibility as it does not require the use of a swab, which some people find uncomfortable. The test has already been shown to be highly promising and the pilot is undertaking further validation against polymerase chain reaction (PCR) nasal swabs.

Weekly testing as part of the pilot will help to identify coronavirus cases early on, including for those with no or minor symptoms, meaning those who test positive can isolate within their households. The details of those who test positive will be shared with the NHS Test and Trace programme so contact tracing can start immediately.

This comes on top of the routine testing of asymptomatic staff in health and care settings already taking place using existing testing capacity.

The pilot will be jointly led by Southampton City Council, the University of

Southampton and the NHS, alongside a wider network of public services in Hampshire.

In addition to the new application of using saliva from Optigene being piloted in Southampton, we are currently exploring the potential of other no-swab saliva-based coronavirus tests with companies, including Chronomics, Avacta, MAP Science and Oxford Nanoimaging (ONI). We are also working with a number of suppliers, including DNA Genotek, International Scientific Supplies Ltd, Isohelix and other leading manufacturers, to develop bespoke saliva collection kits and scale up manufacturing for products that can be used with existing PCR tests.

Southampton City Council Director of Public Health Debbie Chase said:

We will initially invite Southampton's 800-strong GP practice workforce and their households to take part, followed by some other essential key workers and some University of Southampton staff and students as we evaluate the logistics needed for regular testing of large population groups.

Professor Keith Godfrey, University of Southampton, said:

The health, social and economic impacts of lockdown cannot be underestimated. Through this initiative we believe we can contribute to safely restoring economic activity within the city and region during national relaxation measures, whilst enabling people to regain their lives, work and education.

The pilot will run for up to 4 weeks testing people on a weekly basis. Participants for the pilot are currently being registered with self-testing due to start next week.

When participants are enrolled in the trial they will be informed that their details will be shared with the NHS Test and Trace programme so contact tracing can start immediately if there is a positive test.

The need for self-isolation if participants test positive is stated in the introductory information for the pilot and the NHS Test and Trace programme will be contacting everyone who tests positive.

Up to 2,000 saliva tests using Direct RT-LAMP have been completed and the results will be used in the pre-programme validation of the saliva sample test.

The groups we will be rolling out sampling to include GP practice staff with their households, staff of 2 big employers and their households and university students in halls of residence:

- week 2 to 4: initial GP staff and household members (200 tests per week)

for 3 weeks

- week 3 to 4: wider GP staff (2,300 tests/week), some University of Southampton employees (10,000 tests per week) and some key workers at Southampton City Council (2,200 tests per week) for 2 weeks, including their household members
- week 4: university students in halls of residence (about 1,300 tests)

Total tests carried out: 33,000 to 40,000 LAMP assays (depending on household sizes).

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## Thousands of hours in delays to be saved as UK's first mainline digital railway introduced

- £350 million new investment to deliver real-time digital signalling on part of East Coast Main Line
- passengers to benefit from fewer delays and missed connections as conventional signalling system is replaced and brought into 21st century
- major boost for the supply chain will support jobs and economic growth, ahead of national roll-out of the technology

The East Coast Main Line is set to become Britain's first mainline digital rail link with £350 million of new investment to install state-of-the art electronic signalling designed to cut journey times and slash delays.

This huge cash injection – on top of £1.2 billion already earmarked to upgrade one of the country's most important rail arteries – will fund the replacement of conventional signalling with a digital system that allows trains to talk to the track. This will smooth the flow of trains, make journeys safer and reduce signal failures that every year result in thousands of hours of delays.

The upgrading of the line is just one element of the government's plan for a 21st century rail network that will help spread prosperity to all parts of the country. A third of the United Kingdom's population lives within 20 minutes of an East Coast Mainline station and together they produce 41% of GDP.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps has accelerated the roll-out of digital signalling to speed up Britain's economic recovery as we climb out of the COVID-19 crisis. It's part of a wider national plan aimed at introducing digital signalling on to the entire rail network in Great Britain.

The new technology allows signallers to know exactly where each train is at

every minute of every journey. The East Coast Main Line is a mixed-use railway, with trains of different sizes and speeds, both passenger and freight, all using the same tracks. This smart signalling recognises these different trains, allowing train and track to talk to each other continuously in real-time. This 'in-cab' system will mean an end to conventional signalling at the side of tracks – first used in the Victorian era.

The introduction of digital signalling is also set to create high-skilled jobs across the supply chain, helping boost the economy as the country builds out of COVID-19.

More than 80 million journeys are made each year on the East Coast Main Line, linking London with Edinburgh, with congestion on the route compounded by signalling nearing the end of its useful life. The upgrade, between London King's Cross and Stoke Tunnel in Lincolnshire, will ensure that more travellers reach their destinations on time. Delays in the south of the route have a knock-on effect further north, so the modernisation work will make life easier for people along the entire length of this vital national asset.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

As the country recovers from COVID-19 we want to speed up our economy and reap the benefits of new transport technology. The Victorians gave us the world's first great rail network and now it's our turn to be modern transport pioneers and build on that great tradition.

Upgrading this country's conventional signalling system, and giving drivers technology fit for the 21st century, will boost train performance, cut delays, improve safety and support the supply chain.

This is just the beginning. In time, we will digitise signalling right across the country to make good on our promise of better reliability and punctuality for passengers.

Passengers shouldn't have to worry about missing connections or being late home to see their children, and I've been clear that getting the trains to run on time is a personal priority.

Today's funding comes on top of the government's investment of £1.2 billion between 2014 and 2024 to improve passenger journeys on the East Coast Main Line, creating capacity for up to 10,000 extra seats a day on long-distance services, speeding up journeys and improving reliability for passengers.

Development work is already underway with Network Rail to roll out digital signalling on further routes including sections of the West Coast Main Line, Midland Main Line and Anglia from 2026, leading to safer, more reliable, more resilient railways. The government also announced today that £12 million is being invested in fitting out 33 new trains for the Midland Main Line with digital signalling equipment.

Toufic Machnouk, Programme Director of the East Coast Digital Programme, said:

Today's announcement is a big step towards transforming the network for the millions of passengers that use the East Coast Main Line and a welcome endorsement of the partnership approach that the rail industry has adopted to deliver Britain's first inter-city digital railway. The funding detailed by the Secretary of State is very significant and will enable the vital building blocks needed to build a modern, right time railway.

David Horne, London North East Railway (LNER) Managing Director and Chair of the East Coast Digital Programme's Industry Steering Board said:

After LNER and other operators on the East Coast successfully introduced brand new fleets, in-cab signalling will be the next exciting step we take to maximise the benefits of the technology that Azuma and all the trains on this route offer. This investment is good news for all customers, who will see even more improvements in services, reliability and sustainability.

Will Rogers, Managing Director of East Midlands Railway, said:

This vital signal investment is great news for the Midland Mainline and all the passengers we serve. Our new state of the art bi-mode trains will now come into service during 2023 with digital signalling technology ready to take advantage of the greater efficiency and flexibility this route upgrade will offer.

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## [World news story \(UK Visas & Immigration\) 2020](#)

World news story

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# UK Government

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UKVI (Coronavirus Immigration Helpline (CIH) [CIH@HomeOffice.gov.uk](mailto:CIH@HomeOffice.gov.uk) (GW) (CIH) (replacement visa)

2020 UKVI 8

# 'Bounce back' plan for agriculture, food and drink industry launched

- Package of measures designed to turbo charge UK food and drink as the world recovers from coronavirus
- The plan will provide unprecedented help for SMEs and allow them to capitalise on trade agreements being negotiated by DIT with Japan, US, Australia and New Zealand
- Designed in conjunction with business and the devolved administrations, the plan will be driven jointly by Defra and DIT

The new strategic interventions jointly announced by the Department for International Trade (DIT) and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) will offer immediate support to help businesses in the industry grow their trade activity overseas.

The agriculture, food and drink industry is the UK's largest manufacturing industry and plays a vital role in the UK's food supply chain, which contributed £121 billion to the UK economy in 2018 – supporting around 4 million jobs. In 2019, UK food, feed and drink exports were worth £23.7bn – up 4.9% from 2018.

The measures introduced today will support producers, manufacturers and agri-tech companies across the food supply chain, from farm to fork, and has been developed with insight from the devolved administrations, trade associations, businesses and DIT's regional and international networks.

The UK agriculture, food and drink industry has been significantly impacted by Coronavirus. Although it has done well to adapt, exports have been hit and the Government is committed to supporting this most important of industries get back into international markets and start growing market share once again.

That's why we're proud to announce our 'bounce back' plan, introducing a new programme of physical and virtual events that have been tailored to help a variety of businesses and exporters. These include an overseas virtual buyer trial, a 'Smart Distance Selling Process', and a package of 'Ready to Trade' Exporting Masterclass webinars.

Leveraging DIT's existing E-exporting Programme, we are also launching a new SME E-commerce Accelerator Pilot to increase the level of international e-commerce backing for SMEs in the food and drink industry.

The plan will also see the introduction of Defra's first Agri-food Counsellor serving the Gulf. In this new role, they will support the UK's food and drink industry and represent the interests of UK businesses already exporting, or planning to export, to the region.

These measures are being announced as part of a programme of support for the agriculture, food and drink industry to ensure they benefit from new trade

and investment opportunities – including future free trade agreements (FTAs).

Over the last two months the Department for International Trade has launched the first round of talks for the US, Japan and Australia and New Zealand Free Trade Agreement negotiations. Additionally, the department has announced the first UK Tariff in almost 50 years, the UK Global Tariff, which firmly backs British industry, including agri-food and drink. In 2019 the UK exported £2.4bn of food and drink to the US, £312m to Japan, £453m to Australia and £58m to New Zealand.

Minister for Export, Graham Stuart MP, DIT said:

More trade is absolutely critical to helping the UK's agriculture, food and drink industry recover from the impact of coronavirus.

The package of measures we have announced today will support 'bounce back' in exports, and help our world-class producers and manufacturers increase trade with the rest of the world. It will also get the industry ready to capitalise on the opportunities that are being opened up by the series of free trade agreements that my department is negotiating around the world.

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Victoria Prentis, Defra said:

The high quality of British food and drink is recognised around the world and the wider industry supports thousands of jobs across the UK.

This package of measures signifies our strong commitment to support the sector in recovering from the impact of coronavirus. It includes the promotion and showcasing of British expertise and produce to new export markets, identifying opportunities and strengthening existing relationships.

Our new Agri food counsellor serving the Gulf region will be an important new role representing the interests of UK businesses exporting to the area, working to open new export markets and supporting food and drink promotion activities within the region.

Ian Wright CBE, Chief Executive of the Food and Drink Federation said:

Support on this scale from UK Government is extremely welcome at this uncertain time. The package of measures is testament to the close and long-running work between FDF, DIT and Defra to boost our exports performance. Our success in restarting and expanding exports will be absolutely vital in aiding the UK's post-Covid economic recovery.



UK food and drink is an international success story, exporting more than £23 billion of quality products each year. The 'bounce back' plan will ensure that specialist support is available to those UK businesses which trade around the world and provides fantastic potential for those companies looking to export. With a footprint in every constituency, food and drink is uniquely placed to drive an exports-led recovery. In the longer term, it is important that government and industry continue to work together to take advantage of export opportunities and address fragmentation in available support across the UK.

AHDB's International Market Development Director Dr Phil Hadley said:

We welcome today's announcement by government to launch a new recovery package, which will provide immediate support to those businesses looking to grow their trade activity overseas. Coronavirus has had a big impact on the UK's export activity and while we continue to ship our produce around the world, the challenges of the pandemic have been strongly felt in all sectors.

Therefore, we are very encouraged to see this 'bounce back' plan, which will provide significant support to many of the UK businesses we assist in growing their overseas trade. We hope that many will benefit from new trade and investment opportunities, so that AHDB, in partnership with government, can continue to put UK produce on the tables of more households around the world.

UK Government minister for Scotland David Duguid said:

Scottish food and drink is world-famous and highly sought after around the globe. This 'bounce back plan' will help support the thousands of people working in the industry across Scotland and is a further example of the UK Government doing everything we can to make sure we recover from the unprecedented pandemic.

We are working to ensure we enjoy the new opportunities as a country outside the EU through making new free trade agreements with countries around the world – bringing a wealth of new markets to our sector.

Agriculture, food and drink are among Scotland's biggest success stories and vital to our economy and we are working to make sure this flourishes for many years to come.

Secretary of State for Wales Simon Hart said:

Wales has a proud and growing international food and drink reputation. This bounce-back plan will provide opportunities for Welsh businesses to market their produce around the world and help support thousands of people working in the industry.

The UK Government said it would do whatever it took to support the people and businesses of Wales through the pandemic and we have produced an unprecedented package of measures to deliver on that promise.

The full range of measures announced today include:

1. Launch of a GREAT DIT Food & Drink Exporting Masterclass, an extensive and bespoke programme of webinars to be produced in conjunction with trade associations, UK regions, including Devolved Administrations, and DIT's international network, all supported by DIT's Export Specialists.
2. Launch of Food & Drink SME E-commerce Accelerator Pilot to leverage DIT's E-exporting Programme to increase the level of international e-commerce support for food and drink SMEs, including agri-tech. This will include the offer of one-to-one e-commerce export clinics with the programme's e-commerce specialists and regional advisers, a new series of industry webinars and podcasts focussed on highlighting the opportunities available to export through e-marketplaces internationally, as well as virtual workshops on internationalising their websites for those companies selling direct to consumers in various markets around the world.
3. Promote 50 Food and Drink Export Champions to stimulate aspiring exporters, while utilising International Trade Advisor specialist networks focused on agri-food.
4. Announce the first Defra Agri-food Counsellor serving the UAE and wider Gulf Region, with the role focussing on supporting our food and drink sector and representing the interests of UK businesses already exporting to the area, as well as those looking to export for the first time. The new Defra-funded Regional Agri-Food Counsellor will be based in Dubai and will work alongside DIT's existing sector leads in the UAE, providing specialist knowledge and engagement in Government to Government discussions on behalf of UK interests and sectors. She will also support food and drink promotion activity at the UK pavilion at World Expo in 2021, identifying opportunities for new markets and further developing existing export relationships.
5. Launch of a programme of physical and virtual events, using innovative,

interactive software to connect buyers, promote the UK and reach international markets. This will include: an overseas virtual buyer trial working directly with chosen US buyers through a virtual delivery programme; and developing a UK 'Smart Distance Selling Process', which includes the dispatch of food and drink samples to buyers.

6. Leveraging Defra's Food is GREAT campaign, which will extend into the UAE and the EU later this year, to provide impactful and targeted activity in priority export markets, such as USA, China and Japan. This also will be complemented by new agri-food creative imagery within DIT's GREAT Ready to Trade campaign when this resumes in the summer, under the Food is GREAT and Invest in GREAT pillars.
7. Two Virtual Investor Roundtables chaired by Lord Grimstone, Minister for Investment, with agri-food and drink, and agri-tech companies to inform the development of the UK's investment strategy, the UK Agri-Tech International Strategy and the launch of Phase 2 of the High Potential Opportunity Programme.
8. Uplift of UK Export Finance's "Exporters' Edge" campaign to further outreach and engagement to identify and respond to the needs of the industry and raise awareness of how UKEF and Trade Finance can help the businesses win and fulfil export contracts. UKEF is also accelerating the development of its products to allow a wider range of UK exporters to access its support. Its enhanced offer will provide easier access to working capital for UK exporters by offering financing that is not tied to specific export contracts but instead supports general business activities.

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## **New Cross-Government Working Group launched to address challenges faced by Windrush generation and their families**

As part of the ongoing efforts to right the wrongs experienced by the Windrush generation, Home Secretary Priti Patel has today (Monday 22 June) launched the Windrush Cross-Government Working Group.

The Group, co-chaired by the Home Secretary and Bishop Derek Webley, brings together stakeholders and community leaders with senior representatives from

a number of government departments to address the challenges faced by the Windrush generation and their descendants.

Progress is being made to right the wrongs, with more payments made every week under the Windrush Compensation Scheme.

However, there is much more to do. This Group will play an important role in ensuring the Government upholds its commitment to the Windrush generation.

The purpose of the Group is to:

- Provide strategic input into the Home Office's response to the Wendy Williams Lessons Learned Review
- Support the design and delivery of practical solutions to address the wider challenges that disproportionately affect people from Black and wider BAME backgrounds. This will include programmes on education, work and health
- Advise on the design and delivery of the Windrush Schemes Community Fund

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

This group is crucial to delivering on our promise to right the wrongs experienced by the Windrush generation and it is right that we advance these issues in a constructive, sensitive and responsible way.

We know that the best way to make sure we reach all those affected is by listening to them and hearing their voices, including how best to address the wider challenges that disproportionately affect those from BAME backgrounds.

From issues affecting education, work and health, this group will support Government to deliver practical solutions as well as advising on the design of the Windrush Community Fund scheme and response to the Wendy Williams review.

What we need most now is action and I am excited to work in partnership with this group who themselves hold valuable experience within the community and are driven to bring the ultimate change that we all want to achieve, which is making a difference to people's lives.

Bishop Derek Webley, co-chair of the Windrush Cross-Government Working Group said:

It's an honour to be able to serve members of the Windrush generation who have served this country with dignity and pride, and helped to build this country over many years.

This Working Group recognises that the work we're doing can't be done without the voices of the community, and we will work with them and the government in finding a way forward that would meet the satisfaction of the Windrush community.

Group members include stakeholders and community leaders representing the affected communities, including Bishop Joe Aldred from Churches Together in England; Paulette Simpson, Executive Director of the Voice; Blondel Cluff, Chief Executive of the West India Committee and Kunle Olulode, Director of Voice4Change England. All members bring a balance of experience in community engagement and specific sector expertise.

Members also will include representation at a senior level from a number of government departments, including No10, the Home Office, the Department for Education, the Department of Health and Social Care, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Department for Work and Pensions.

Member of the Group, Duwayne Brooks OBE said:

The Windrush generation were treated terribly by successive governments and it is time this is put right.

I am pleased that the government is committed to righting these wrongs and I am looking forward to working with the Home Secretary and others to ensure all those affected come forward to claim the compensation they deserve and get the support they need to move on.

Blondel Cluff CBE, who is also a member on the Group said:

We are at a seminal moment as a nation and as such I welcome the invitation to serve on the Cross-Government Windrush Group, particularly given the evident 'buy in' across government.

I trust that together we shall make tangible, positive, and sustainable progress on this critical matter.

The Home Office, as requested by Wendy Williams, is carefully considering the Lessons Learned Review. The Home Secretary has agreed to respond in full by the end of September and has also committed to provide an update to

Parliament before summer recess.

The Group will play an important role in assisting with the Home Office's response by providing insight and guidance, as well as help to ensure that the lessons from the Windrush review are shared across government.

As announced by the Home Secretary in March, the Home Office will shortly launch a separate £500k Windrush Scheme Community Fund for grassroots organisations, to help improve uptake and awareness of the schemes supporting those who were directly affected. This includes the Windrush Scheme, which has so far provided over 12,000 people with documentation confirming their status. One of the first tasks for the Group will be to work with stakeholders to co-design and deliver this Fund.

To ensure that all those affected are reached, the Home Office is also launching a £750k targeted advertising campaign, using a range of channels, such as adverts and social media, to make sure those most affected around the UK are aware of the support available to them and know how to apply. The Government will work closely with stakeholders to ensure our campaign encourages as many people as possible to apply.

Grassroots activity, including recruiting community ambassadors nationally and in priority areas to encourage and support applications among their networks, is also being undertaken. More details on this activity will be announced in due course.

Black communities and wider minority ethnic communities still face injustices, and the Government is dedicated to tackling this, including by launching a cross-governmental commission into racial inequality. The Windrush Cross-Government Working Group will also have an instrumental role to play in this work, and in ensuring we address the wider challenges that disproportionately affect people from black and wider minority ethnic backgrounds. The Working Group will meet quarterly for the duration of the Windrush Compensation Scheme, which is currently open until April 2023. The date will be kept under review.

The Group will complement the Race Equality Commission, which is being set up by Number 10 and will sit separately to this group.

For more information on the measures put in place to support the Windrush generation, please see our factsheet:

<https://homeofficemedia.blog.gov.uk/2020/05/13/wind/>