

Consultation launched on the England Tree Strategy

- Consultation to run for 12 weeks, seeking views on how to increase tree planting and tree and woodland management.
- Trees are a unique natural asset that play a crucial role in combating the biodiversity and climate crises we face.
- The government's environmental programme will play its full part as we build back better and secure a fair, green and resilient recovery from the coronavirus pandemic.

Plans to accelerate tree planting and improve the management of our existing trees and woodlands are underway as the government today (19 June) launched a [consultation to inform a new England Tree Strategy](#).

Everyone – from farmers, foresters and land managers, experts and environmental organisations, to members of the public – is being invited to give their views on the future creation and management of our trees, woodlands and forests.

Subject to consultation, the new strategy will set out policies to expand tree cover, support woodland management and increase public engagement with trees and woodlands. It will help ensure the government's tree planting commitment – to increase tree planting to 30,000 hectares per year across the UK by 2025 – is delivered, working closely with the devolved administrations, communities and landowners to do so.

The government is asking for views on:

- how to expand, protect and improve our public and private trees and woodlands,
- the increased role that trees and woodlands can play in supporting the economy,
- how best to further connect people to nature, and
- the most effective way in which trees and woodlands can be created and managed to help combat climate change.

By growing, protecting and restoring our trees, forests and woodlands we can help reduce carbon emissions, encourage biodiversity and nature recovery, grow our sustainable timber market, and improve people's health and wellbeing.

Launching the consultation, Forestry Minister Lord Goldsmith, said:

In many ways the coronavirus pandemic has shone a light on the importance of nature. Growing and protecting our nation's forests will be an integral part of our recovery, and the England Tree Strategy will give us the tools to do this.

This consultation will help inform a keystone strategy which will be vital for helping us deliver the government's tree planting commitment, our commitment to the recovery of nature and reaching net zero emissions by 2050.

But, we need input from the sector and public. I encourage everyone to give their views to design a tree strategy that delivers the maximum benefits for our environment for generations to come.

In the March Budget, Defra welcomed the new Nature for Climate Fund from HM Treasury. The England Tree Strategy will help inform how elements of this £640million fund will be used to deliver against the manifesto tree planting commitments, alongside peatland restoration and wider nature recovery.

Forestry Commission Chair and former National Tree Champion, Sir William Worsley said:

The England Tree Strategy will set out how we plan to accelerate woodland creation, but also importantly how to manage and protect the trees we already have. Significant work has gone into developing the groundwork for a strategy which will ensure the right tree is planted in the right place, and for the right reason.

We now need people to submit their views, to design a strategy that increases and balances the different benefits that our woodlands provide, to nature, to people, and to the economy.

The Forestry Commission will be at the forefront of delivery and I look forward to working closely with Defra and all stakeholders involved at this exciting time.

The England Tree Strategy will be developed in parallel with other key strategies that flow from the 25 Year Environment Plan. These include the recent Tree Health Resilience Strategy and the forthcoming England Peat Strategy and Nature Strategy, as well the future Environmental Land Management Scheme which will operate on the basis of providing public payments for public goods.

In close alignment with the England Tree Strategy, targeted stakeholder engagement is currently underway to shape the development of the England Peat Strategy and the peatland aspects of the Nature for Climate Fund.

Integrating the aims of the England Tree Strategy with the wider ongoing work in these areas enables a coordinated vision that delivers real, sustainable change.

The consultation period is due to conclude in 12 weeks on 11 September 2020. Subject to review, the England Tree Strategy will be published later in the year.

Notes to Editors

- The consultation will open on 19 June 2020 and under current plans, will close on 11 September 2020. However, in light of the coronavirus outbreak, the closing date will be kept under review.
- All feedback for the consultation is to be submitted online in line with [latest government guidance](#).
- Through this open consultation, the government is encouraging people to give their views on 4 key areas, including:

1. Expanding and connecting trees and woodlands by:

- increasing the supply of planting material, the size of the forestry workforce and encouraging collective agreement from stakeholders to obtain widespread support for woodland creation
- providing farmers and other landowners and managers with the right incentives through improving grant funding and simplified application processes
- working with partners to increase tree cover across public land
- encouraging private investment in woodland creation by helping to develop the market for the ecosystem services generated as trees grow
- expanding tree and woodland cover to contribute to the Nature Recovery Network, which aims to create or restore 500,000 hectares of wildlife-rich habitat

1. Protecting and improving our trees and woodlands by:

- building the capacity of the domestic UK nursery sector to ensure planting stock is bio-secure and from a known provenance
- reducing damage to woodlands through the sustainable management of invasive species
- stronger protection for ancient woodland sites, building on newly proposed measures of the Environment Bill which give communities a greater say in the protection of local trees
- increasing the percentage of woodlands in active management
- adapting treescapes and woodlands to the future climate and maximising the benefits they can provide to support adaptation measures, such as natural flood management and helping improve the resilience of wildlife

1. Engaging people with trees and woodland by:

- providing more and better-quality green infrastructure – including in urban areas – to make towns and cities attractive places to live and work and bring about long-term improvements in people's health
- supporting Community Forests to create new woodlands and facilitate access to existing woodlands
- closer engagement with the education and health sectors, developing skills and expertise in the forestry sector to support health programmes through social prescribing

1. Supporting the economy by:

- growing the market for wood products, and supporting and upskilling farmers and land managers to add trees to their business

- supporting the sustainable timber industry and increasing the use of all domestic forest products including timber and forest biomass for energy
 - designing grants and clearer policy to increase the uptake of agroforestry
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Health and Social Care Secretary's statement on coronavirus (COVID-19): 18 June 2020

Good afternoon, and welcome to the Downing Street daily coronavirus briefing.

I'm joined today by Baroness Dido Harding, the Executive Chair of NHS Test and Trace.

Before we start, I want to recognise the sad loss of Dame Vera Lynn. She united us in the worst crisis that this country faced. Ever since, she's inspired us all with the words she will always be associated with: 'we will meet again'.

We send our condolences to her family and we will all remember her warmly.

First things first, I'd like to take you through the latest data, then talk about NHS Test and Trace and vaccines.

First slide please.

The first slide shows that yesterday there were 136,516 tests, taking the total to 7-and-a-quarter million tests in total. There were 1,218 positive test results.

If we go to the next slide, this slide shows the estimated number of people who had COVID-19 in England according to ONS's (Office for National Statistics) survey. As you can see, the number has been coming down over time. And this same survey implies around 4.5 thousand new cases per day.

Data from hospitals also shows that broad downward direction. There 490 admissions with COVID-19 on 15 June and, as we can see, the number of people on mechanical ventilator beds is 360.

The number of people in hospital continues to come down in almost every region. You can see a very small up-tick in the east of England. But, as you can see from the charts, there is some movement in the variation in each of the lines.

Overall movement continues to be down. Overall, 5,193 down from 5,863 this time last week.

Final slide of this group. When it comes to the number of people who have sadly died from coronavirus, yesterday the number of deaths reported was 135, bringing the total to 42,288. Again, we can see the downward trajectory, thankfully, of that number.

The number of 135 is lower than this time last week, but there's still some way to go.

There's one additional report that's worth looking at.

Today's weekly surveillance report from Public Health England shows that last week, for the first week since mid-March, the number of people who died in this country, in total, from coronavirus or anything else, was no higher than is normal at this time of year. So that demonstrates that the number of deaths is coming right down

But the battle against this virus is not over.

And it's a battle with many fronts. And there are 2 areas that I want to update you about today.

Vaccines

The first is vaccines.

Before I talk about coronavirus vaccines, I just want to mention a very important reminder about other routine vaccines that are there to protect you.

Throughout the crisis we've tried to keep the vaccination programme for children going. That has been largely successful.

But if you, or your child, is invited for a vaccination, like MMR, please make sure you attend. It's very important we don't fall behind on vaccinations for other diseases because of this crisis.

During this pandemic, we have put stringent measures in place to protect people who are getting vaccinations.

And, in the long run, the best way to defeat this virus is, of course, the discovery of a vaccine. And, since the start, we have been supporting the most promising projects.

As of this week, the Imperial vaccine is now in the first phase of human clinical trials and AstraZeneca has struck a deal for the manufacture of the Oxford vaccine.

They're starting manufacturing now, even ahead of approval, so we can build up a stockpile and be ready, should it be clinically approved. Just like with dexamethasone, the treatment which we stockpiled before we had the proof it was clinically effective. So we are starting the manufacture of the Oxford vaccine now so that it will be ready should the science come off.

Today, we have published the way in which we propose to prioritise people for access to a vaccine, as soon as one comes available.

Just as we did for testing, we will be guided by the clinical science, prioritising those in most need.

I am very grateful to the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation, which has published its interim advice today.

They recommend priority vaccination for 2 groups: frontline health and social care workers, and those at increased risk of serious disease and death from coronavirus, including, for example, adults over the age of 50 and those with heart and kidney disease.

As we learn more about the virus, we will continue to take into account which groups may be particularly vulnerable, including for example those from ethnic minority backgrounds.

So we can protect the most at risk first should a vaccine become available and get this country back on her feet as soon as we possibly can.

Test and Trace

Our approach on vaccines is to throw everything at it, as fast as we can, and rigorously to test and make sure they are safe before deployment.

This is our approach across the board, including for Test and Trace too. That's the second area I want to focus on today.

Baroness Harding will talk through the latest figures from our NHS Test and Trace programme shortly.

Today's data shows a system that is working well and constantly improving. And, remember, each one of the thousands of people who are now isolating because of the NHS Test and Trace programme and all the work of those involved is someone who would have been innocently going about their daily lives not knowing that they were a risk to their community.

And, as you may remember, our plan is to complement this human contact tracing with a contact tracing app. Like other governments around the world, we have been working hard on this, and I want to be up-front and open about the challenges that we, and other countries, are facing.

Over the past few weeks, we have rigorously tested our prototype app in the Isle of Wight, and in field trials – and I want to thank everyone who has been involved and all the islanders of the Isle of Wight: the council, who have been brilliant, the local NHS, and Bob Seely, the local MP, who has played a real leadership role.

Because of this testing, we discovered a technical barrier, that every other country building their own app is also now hitting. We have found that our app works well on Android devices, but Apple's software prevents iPhones

being used effectively for contact tracing, unless you use Apple's own technology.

After we started work on our app, Google and Apple then started work on their own product, and as soon as they did this, we began working on both. We kept our options open, in the same way as we do with other areas

And I feel, personally, in this fight, more than any other, we must leave no stone unturned. So I asked Dido and the NHS expert Test and Trace team to make sure they worked on both products.

Of course, we have been testing Google and Apple's product too. And as we did this, we have found that it does not estimate distance well enough. Measuring distance is mission critical to any contact tracing app.

So, as it stands, our app won't work, because Apple won't change their system. But it can measure distance.

And their app can't measure distance well enough to a standard we are satisfied with. Throughout this, for me, what matters is what works. Because what works will save lives.

And I will work with anyone, public or private sector, here or overseas, to gain any inch of ground against this disease. So we have agreed to join forces with Google and Apple, to bring the best bits of both systems together.

We will share our algorithm and the work we have done on distance calculation and combine that with their work, to deliver a new solution.

I have always been optimistic about the contribution technology can make in this battle against coronavirus. Coming together in this way will bring together some of the best minds to find a solution to this global challenge and help to save lives.

In the meantime, the NHS Test and Trace system, based on good, old fashioned human contact tracing, is working well identifying local outbreaks and helping us to control this virus.

And so I want to ask you all once more: if you get a call or message from NHS Test and Trace, the most important thing is please do your bit to protect your community, to protect your loved ones and to protect the NHS by following their instructions.

Now I'd like to hand over to Baroness Harding, to take you through the Test and Trace statistics.

Improved training to reduce conflict in youth custody

- Staff to be trained on how to better de-escalate conflict and use physical restraint as a last resort to ensure the safety of the child and others
- Independent review finds restraint is a necessary option for preventing serious further harm
- Experienced panel will scrutinise its use

An independent [report](#) by Charlie Taylor found that ways of holding children in custody, which can cause pain if they struggle or fight back, are sometimes necessary to protect themselves or other children from more serious harm. However, improved training will now see this used less and only as a last resort.

A cross-agency expert panel will be established to scrutinise the use of restraint. They will meet regularly to review the use of restraint and ensure ones that cause pain are only being used when there is no alternative and to protect the child or others from further harm. In addition, training on how to safely apply them will no longer be taught alongside other methods to manage behaviour, to make it even clearer that these are a last resort designed only to protect children from further injury.

A [taskforce](#), with Sir Alan Wood of the Youth Justice Board acting as an independent advisor, was also set up to look into the use of separation and the effect it has on a child's development.

Separation is when young offenders are placed in a different part of the establishment and do not mix with other children. This typically happens if they have been behaving violently or there is a risk of them hurting another child or being hurt themselves. The report found that when used properly, separation was an effective means of protecting children but there were inconsistencies in how it was being used. These inconsistencies risked the practice being perceived as unfair, which is a major factor in misbehaviour.

In response, specialist training is now being provided so staff better understand children may need to be separated from others in custody and the impact it can have. This will also ensure officers have detailed plans for reintegrating each child back into the mainstream population as quickly as possible.

Facilities across the estate are also being improved to ensure children who need to live separately from others for a period, for their own and others' safety, are still able to readily access education, healthcare and other support services. Regardless of their crime, it is vital that a child's right to change for the better is not unnecessarily restricted and that they receive the support they need to turn their lives around.

Justice Minister Lucy Frazer said:

The number of children in custody has halved in the last seven years thanks to better early intervention but for those that do enter youth custody, we must ensure that is not a sign of things to come.

These children have too often been failed in their young lives and I'm determined to make sure that doesn't continue when they enter the justice system.

Specialised training for staff and new approaches tailored around each child's individual needs will allow us to give these children the best possible chance to overcome their problems and turn their lives around.

The reforms announced today follow a number of changes already made by the Youth Custody Service earlier in the year to improve how separation is used. This includes ensuring each site has a senior manager responsible for overseeing the process and improved data collection so best practise can be shared across the youth estate.

These are just the latest in a series of youth custody measures introduced by the Government, which has seen staffing levels increase by more than a third since 2017 and will see all officers receive degree-level training.

PM's meeting with President Macron: 18 June 2020

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson met French President Emmanuel Macron.



The Prime Minister welcomed French President Emmanuel Macron to Downing Street this afternoon to commemorate the 80th anniversary of General de Gaulle's 'Appel'.

The leaders began by reflecting on the sacrifice made by the British and French people in the Second World War and on the enduring strength of the UK-France relationship.

They highlighted the modern day successes of this friendship including the political and defence cooperation enshrined in the Lancaster House Agreement ten years ago.

The Prime Minister and President also welcomed the ongoing cooperation between the UK and France on small boats and illegal migration.

They agreed that the partnership between our countries will be crucial in overcoming the coronavirus pandemic and ensuring the global recovery is green and sustainable.

On UK-EU negotiations, the Prime Minister welcomed the agreement to intensify talks in July and underlined that the UK does not believe it makes sense for there to be prolonged negotiations into the autumn.

The Prime Minister and President Macron discussed the situation in Libya and agreed on the need for a UN-led political process which brings together all parties to end the conflict.

Finally, the leaders agreed to continue to work closely on other international issues, including the proposed Chinese national security law in Hong Kong which would be a breach of the Joint Declaration, and to bring about a two state solution in the Middle East Peace Process.

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NATO defence ministers focus on adaptation of the Alliance to counter modern threats

DEFENCE Secretary Ben Wallace today welcomed NATO's continued commitment to its modernisation agenda following a meeting of Defence Ministers, held amid the coronavirus pandemic.

The crisis prevented ministers meeting in person in Brussels, but continued as planned via video conferencing, including several bilateral meetings.

Work continues at pace to progress NATO's agenda to adapt and modernise to meet the threats of an increasingly unstable world, as agreed at the London Leaders' Meeting last December.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

From the outbreak of Covid-19 to Russia's new missile capabilities, the complex threats we face take many forms and derive from multiple sources.

NATO is rising to meet all of these challenges, by strengthening its response to the pandemic, pushing forward its ambitious adaptation agenda agreed last year in London and continuing to provide essential deterrence and defence in an increasingly uncertain world.

At this week's meeting, ministers discussed:

- A new deterrence and defence concept for NATO, which sets out a framework for the Alliance's military activity in response to threats across land, air, sea and in the new domains of cyber and space.
- NATO's adaptation to address Russia's deployment of new intermediate-range missiles and other new missile capabilities – NATO is responding to Russia in a balanced and responsible way, including by strengthening air and missile defences and adapting exercising.
- NATO's nuclear deterrent, including a meeting of the Nuclear Planning Group to discuss how to ensure the Alliance's nuclear deterrent remains safe, secure and effective.

- NATO's operations and missions around the world, particularly in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The UK has been integral in championing the Alliance's collective, balanced response to new Russian missiles and in strengthening NATO's deterrence and defence posture, which is the bedrock of the UK's defence.

Mr Wallace also praised the progress NATO has made in adapting to today's emerging challenges such as hybrid warfare and disruptive technologies.

COVID-19

Ministers were also joined by counterparts from Australia, Finland, Sweden and the EU's High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy to discuss the long-term security implications of COVID-19. Ministers agreed an operational plan to ensure Allies are ready to support one another through any further waves of infection, as well as new guidelines to strengthen Allies' preparedness and resilience.

Through the NATO Euro Atlantic Disaster Relief Co-ordination Committee (EADRCC), NATO Allies have helped to deliver hundreds of tonnes of vital aid where needed. The Defence Secretary recognised the important role the Armed Forces and NATO have played in the global response to COVID and assured Allies the UK will continue to support in this effort.

The UK will also make a monetary contribution to a new NATO Pandemic Response Trust Fund, which will be used to support Allies and partners through activities such as the purchase of vital equipment, the transportation of medical personnel and supplies, and the purchase and delivery of other relief resources.

NATO burden sharing – UK defence investment

In discussions the Defence Secretary underlined that the UK will continue to meet its 2% GDP defence-spending commitment and our defence budget will grow by at least 0.5% above inflation in each year of this Government. NATO is built on a commitment to collective defence and mutual support – a commitment which is reinforced by countries sharing the burden of defence investment and meeting the 2% target. Since all Allies pledged to meet the 2% target by 2024 at the Wales Summit in 2014, significant progress has been made. In 2019, defence spending by non-US Allies increased in real terms by 4.6 per cent – the fifth consecutive year of growth.

NATO – The bedrock of UK defence

The UK continues to play a leading role in NATO by contributing to operations across the globe and offering its cutting-edge capabilities to the Alliance:

- The UK has around one thousand troops deployed in Estonia and Poland as part of NATO's enhanced Forward Presence initiative.

- The RAF is contributing this summer to NATO's Baltic Air Policing mission, protecting the airspace of our Allies on a 24/7 basis.
- The UK also provides significant capacity to NATO current operations, including in Iraq and Afghanistan, providing training and assistance to forces in support of sustainable peace settlements.
- The UK is the only member to assign all its nuclear forces to the defence of NATO.
- The UK was the first Ally to offer our offensive cyber capability to the Alliance.
- The UK has nearly one thousand personnel serving in the NATO Command Structures, and we hold the post of the Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe.
- The UK has offered a significant contribution to the NATO Readiness Initiative over land, sea and air. Our nation's future flagship HMS Queen Elizabeth and cutting-edge F-35 jets will be at the heart of this offer.