

## CMO for England announces ninth case of novel coronavirus



One further patient in England has tested positive for novel coronavirus (COVID-19), bringing the total number of cases in the UK to nine.

This virus was passed on in China and the patient has now been transferred to a specialist NHS centre at Guy's and St Thomas' in London.

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## Six general licences reissued for the control of wild birds

Defra has today (Wednesday 12 February) announced that six general licences for the control of wild birds will be reissued on a temporary basis ahead of new licences coming into force on 1 August 2020.

The [current licences](#) GL26, GL28, GL31, GL34, GL35 and GL36 will be reissued from 1 March to 31 July. No action is required by licence users, beyond the ongoing requirement to act in accordance with the licence conditions.

Defra announced a longer-term review of general licensing in June 2019 which has made significant progress. An online survey to gather key information from stakeholders closed on 5 December 2019, receiving over 4,400 responses from organisations, licence users and other stakeholders. A series of consultation workshops with stakeholders have also been held.

The reissue of licences is necessary to complete the required analysis of evidence, both from scientific sources and from the online survey, and to hold further stakeholder workshops so that longer-term licensing arrangements are informed by the best available evidence. As part of the process, Defra will also consider Natural England's statutory advice.

Defra intends to publish new licences in early July to allow user groups to become acquainted with the changes before they officially come into force on 1 August.

Environment Secretary, Theresa Villiers said:

We are working intensively on delivering a robust licensing system for the future which balances the different interests at stake in a fair way. To do that, we need to ensure that we have carefully considered all of the relevant evidence, including the detailed responses to our online survey.

This extensive consultation and review process will be completed in the coming months, with the new licences coming into force on 1 August.

The general licences allow users to kill or take certain species of wild birds for a range of purposes such as the protection of livestock and crops, conservation, or public health and safety.

Following a legal challenge by Wild Justice in April 2019, Natural England revoked three general licences and subsequently issued three licences (GL26, GL28 and GL31) to cover some of the species and purposes covered by the original licences that were revoked. Defra subsequently issued three interim licences (GL34, 35 and 36) while the longer term licensing requirements were reviewed. NE's licences have remained in place, since they allow for specified activity on European protected sites which are not covered by Defra's licences. These interim licences expire on 29 February.

### **Further Information:**

The six general licences are:

- Carrion crows: licence to kill or take them to prevent serious damage to livestock (GL26)
- Canada geese: licence to kill or take them for public health and safety (GL28)
- Woodpigeons: licence to kill or take them to prevent serious damage to crops (GL31)
- Licence to kill or take wild birds to conserve wild birds and to conserve flora and fauna (GL34)
- Licence to kill or take wild birds to preserve public health or public safety (GL35)
- Licence to kill or take wild birds to prevent serious damage to livestock, foodstuffs for livestock, crops, vegetables, fruit, growing

timber, fisheries or inland waters (GL36)

Licence users seeking to kill or take wild birds on or within 300 metres of a European site, and which General Licences 26, 28 or 31 do not permit, must continue to apply for individual licences from Natural England. [You can view the areas excluded from the General Licences here.](#)

[Read guidance on applying for an individual licence here](#)

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## [Pub hours extended to mark 75th anniversary of VE Day](#)

Pubs, clubs and bars, which are licensed to trade until 11pm, will be allowed to open for an additional two hours, on Friday 8 May and Saturday 9 May from 11am until 1am the following morning, to mark the anniversary.

The order, laid in Parliament today, will also apply to premises licensed to provide entertainment such as music, dances, plays and films.

Commemorations and community events will be held across the country to remember the heroism of British, Commonwealth and Allied armed forces personnel and the contribution of ordinary citizens to the war effort.

The early May bank holiday has been moved from Monday 4 May to Friday 8 May to mark the anniversary.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

VE Day events across the country will see the nation come together to pay tribute to the heroes who fought for our freedom and supported the war effort at home.

Pubs are at the heart of our communities and this is a great opportunity to raise a glass to mark this historic occasion.

This decision follows a consultation with partners including representatives of licensing authorities, the police, the licensed trade, community groups, veterans' organisations and the Welsh Government.

Past national occasions where the government has extended licensing hours have included the FIFA World Cup in 2014 and the Diamond Jubilee celebrations in 2012.

Further details of the UK Government's commemorations for VE Day will be announced by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport in due

course. Plans to mark VJ Day are also under consideration, and further details will be provided in due course.

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## [UK further commits to NATO and European Security through JEF Readiness Declaration and deployment of Typhoons to Lithuania](#)

At the first NATO Defence Ministers' meeting of the year, Defence Secretary Ben Wallace announced a series of contributions the UK will be making to the Alliance that has protected Europe for over 70 years.

Alongside the six other NATO members who are in the UK-led Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) – Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania – Mr Wallace signed a Readiness Declaration that commits the JEF to making an enduring and substantial contribution to NATO's Readiness Initiative.

This contribution includes land capabilities as part of a UK-led brigade and in the maritime domain through a UK Carrier Strike Group.

Mr Wallace also announced that this summer four RAF Typhoons will deploy to Lithuania where they will patrol NATO skies alongside allies as part of the NATO Air Policing mission.

### **Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:**

A Global Britain will continue to play a leading role in NATO, working with multiple Allies and contributing a range of capabilities, cementing the UK as a Tier 1 military power.

That was clearly demonstrated today with the declaration that the Joint Expeditionary Force will contribute to the NATO Readiness Initiative. including through a UK-led land brigade and the UK Carrier Strike Group.

While at NATO Headquarters in Brussels the Defence Secretary met a number of counterparts from across the Alliance – including US Secretary of Defence Mark Esper – as well Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg.

## **JEF Readiness Declaration**

The JEF is a partnership of like-minded nations that provides a high-readiness force of over 10,000 personnel. It is committed to supporting global and regional peace, stability and security either on its own or through multinational institutions such as NATO.

Made up of northern European nations, the JEF's prime interest is in Euro-Atlantic security with efforts focused on but not limited to the High North, North Atlantic and Baltic regions where it can complement the NATO deterrence efforts in the region. The signing of a joint declaration to make a substantial commitment to the NATO Readiness Initiative recognises this and the Readiness Initiative's future contribution to European peace and security.

## **NATO Baltic Air Policing**

The Defence Secretary also announced that the UK would deploy four RAF Typhoon jets to Šiauliai Air Base this summer where they will contribute to the NATO Baltic Air Policing mission.

Alongside fast jets from Spain, the RAF quick reaction alert pilots will patrol Baltic skies, deter threats and intercept any incursions into NATO airspace. This follows the UK's previous deployments on NATO Baltic Air Policing in Estonia and on NATO Southern Air Policing in Romania.

## **NATO in the Middle East**

In working sessions with fellow Defence Ministers, the Defence Secretary discussed a range of issues affecting NATO including the future of NATO's Mission in Iraq as well as the role the Alliance can play in the wider Middle East. The UK agrees with the Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg that NATO could contribute even more to regional stability and the fight against international terrorism.

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**We must protect Children in Armed Conflict: "Children have been robbed of their childhood and forced to participate in brutal wars"**

Thank you, Mr President.

I'm very pleased to be able to salute those efforts and the progress of this important dossier has made under Belgian leadership. Welcome also to the

ministers here and thank you again for being with us and thank you to the Secretary-General, Commissioner Chergui and Ms Becker for your important briefings.

We've all seen and we've all heard of the dreadful and lasting effects that global conflicts have on children, their communities and also their future. And I won't repeat that. If I may, Mr President, I'd just like to highlight a couple of case studies that really illuminate how this impact devastates children's lives.

So in Syria, as stated in the recent report on children's rights by the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry, children continue to be, and I quote, "robbed of their childhood and forced to participate in a brutal war." They've been killed, maimed, raped, abducted and detained. They've been forced to act as combatants and, in the case of Daesh, as executioners. Places where they are meant to be safe and nurtured, such as schools and hospitals, have been targeted.

Over 2.5 million children have been displaced in Syria, leaving many at the mercy of the elements and without adequate sustenance or services. And this trend is far from over; as Undersecretary-General Lowcock told the Council last week, the bombardment of Idlib has seen the continued killing of civilians and attacks on civilian objects, and the displacement of over 300,000 children in north-east Syria since early December last year alone.

And as the Commission of Inquiry report found, the mental health of children is and will continue to be deeply affected for years to come. Children and young people have sustained crucial damage to their long-term prospects, and a huge number have missed out on years of education.

Turning to Mali, children continue to suffer the effects of continuing conflict, particularly in central Mali, where they are killed and maimed as direct targets of attacks in the course of inter-communal violence. Insecurity, attacks and threats on schools and teachers, the absence of state authorities and a lack of equipment have led to the closure of more than 900 schools at the last count.

As with Syria, children are suffering both the immediate effects of conflict as well as long-term effects on their mental well-being and the lack of access to services such as medical care and detention.

And in Cameroon, the impact of conflict on children in the Anglophone region is significant. Children's education is used as a political bargaining chip by the separatists who have closed down schools and taken children hostage. UNICEF estimates that 80% of schools have remained closed since 2016, and the ban on education has affected over 600,000 children.

Mr President, the scale of the impact of conflict on children is clear. But when it comes to peace and efforts for peace, their needs and their views are often neglected.

This is why we welcome the launch today of the UN's "practical guidance for

mediators to protect children in situations of armed conflict.” As the guidance points out, the Security Council has highlighted on numerous occasions the importance of integrating child protection issues into mediation and peace processes. Doing so is essential in order to: ensure that negotiating parties commit to upholding their international, regional and national child protection obligations; to ensure that the special needs of children and young people are taken into consideration and embedded in efforts to build and sustain peace; and to improve the sustainability and success of peace efforts, given the central role of children’s issues in reconciliation and development in post-conflict situations.

We welcome, Secretary-General, your personal investment in the guidance, and we look forward to its broad dissemination.

I also take this opportunity to urge all mediators, facilitators and negotiators involved in peace and mediation processes to use it as a tool in their work, noting that engaging on issues of children and armed conflict may open doors to discussion of other priorities.

In the Arria formula meeting that we hosted alongside Belgium and Poland in November, the United Kingdom called for the UN system to take a more holistic and coherent approach across its departments and agencies to ensure that child protection and development was integrated across the conflict cycle. This guidance is a very good example of this, and we hope there will be further efforts to integrate approaches across the UN system.

And we would like to renew our calls for children’s views to be taken into account on issues that affect them, in accordance with best practice, and for the Security Council to do more to implement Resolution 2282, which recognises security, development and human rights, are closely interlinked and mutually reinforcing.

Thank you, Mr President.