

[Impact of war on Ukraine on food chain supply: information resource](#)

News story

The Food Authenticity Network has created a new information resource base for stakeholders



The Food Authenticity Network has created a [new information resource base](#) for stakeholders to signpost stakeholders to information related to potential or actual disruption to the food and drink supply chain resulting from the current conflict in Ukraine.

The information is organised under three headings:

- Government Information
- Industry information
- Events

The [Food Authenticity Network](#) was set-up in July 2015 by LGC with funding from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) as a direct response to Recommendation 4 of the [Elliott Review](#) into the Integrity and Assurance of Food Supply, which highlighted the need for standardised testing approaches.

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Strong progress being made on the UK's Geospatial Strategy



Rolling out the National Underground Assets Register, piloting public sector access to commercial satellite data and publishing expert guidance on investing in location data are among the key priorities for the Geospatial Commission over the next year.

[The Geospatial Commission today \(22 June\) published its plan for 2022/23](#), which sets out priorities for the coming year and reflects on the growing use of location data as a strategic national asset to support levelling up, help meet net zero targets and drive science and technology innovation.

The Geospatial Commission's priorities for the coming year are:

- **Continuing to rollout the National Underground Assets Register (NUAR)** to build a shared, national underground utilities data asset to improve safe digging and UK-wide infrastructure delivery, realising at least £345 million of economic value each year
- **Piloting public sector access to commercial satellite data**, to better understand whether collective access will help overcome barriers to the wider public sector adoption of Earth Observation data
- **Publishing guidance about how to make an effective case for investing in location data**, ensuring that its full value is well understood, assessed, and articulated

The publication also highlights the progress made towards the [2020 UK Geospatial Strategy](#) over the last year, including:

- **Core public sector data:** We undertook the [first coordinated assessment](#) of the UK's geospatial data assets against FAIR data principles, alongside our Partner Bodies
- **Transport location data:** We published [Positioning the UK in the Fast Lane](#), supported [innovative businesses](#) to meet key public sector transport data challenges and [launched a project](#) to explore how location data can support delivery of electric vehicle chargepoints
- **Land use data:** We initiated a [National Land Data Programme](#) to demonstrate the value of enhancing the UK's spatial modelling capability to inform land use scenario planning

- **Property data:** We announced an intention to legislate to expand access to property attribute data held by the Valuation Office Agency

Minister of State for the Cabinet Office, Lord True CBE said:

Location data is a powerful strategic national asset, underpinning decisions about how we invest to level up, how we distribute resources to improve public health and how we speed up our journey to decarbonisation.

Understanding how this data can be used and deployed will be integral to driving scientific innovation, sustainability and economic growth across the UK.

[The Geospatial Commission also published a location data ethics policy paper](#), as promised in the UK's Geospatial Strategy. This proposes an ABC – Accountability, Bias and Clarity – as the building blocks for good governance of location data use, to maximise public trust and confidence in the use, sharing and reuse of location data.

Independent Commissioner of the Geospatial Commission and Interim Chair of the Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation, Edwina Dunn OBE said:

Location data is a rich and powerful source of insight and input to AI and data-led decision making. As geographic data fuels innovation and improves our everyday lives, we must not forget that these significant economic, social and environmental benefits are only made possible with the trust and understanding of the UK public.

The Geospatial Commission's policy paper is the culmination of months of engagement across the geospatial landscape. It proposes three shared values – Accountability, Bias and Clarity – all designed to optimise the benefits but safeguard public trust and confidence.

Both reports were launched at an online event as part of Digital Leaders Week and you can [watch the event back on their website](#).

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Last updated 23 June 2022 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 23 June 2022

Link to Digileaders launch event added

2. 22 June 2022

First published.

12 month extension to Government trading plan selling shares in NatWest Group

News story

The government's trading plan selling part of its shareholding in NatWest Group (formerly the Royal Bank of Scotland Group plc) has today (22 June 2022) been extended for another 12 months.



- Government extends trading plan to sell part of its shareholding in NatWest Group for another 12 months
- This represents continued progress in meeting the government's aim to return its shareholding in NatWest Group to private ownership
- So far approximately 703.5m shares have been sold through the trading plan, raising approximately £1.6bn for the taxpayer

A trading plan involves selling shares in the market through an appointed broker in an orderly way at market prices over the duration of the plan. The current trading plan which began on 12 August 2021 has been extended for a further 12 months from 12 August 2022, with sales terminating no later than 11 August 2023.

Extending the trading plan supports the government's intention to return

NatWest Group to full private ownership by 2025-26, after acquiring the shareholding as a result of the global financial crisis. The government currently has a c. 48.5% shareholding in NatWest Group and will only dispose of its NatWest Group shareholding when it represents value for money to do so and market conditions allow.

Since it was established, the government has sold approximately 703.5 million shares through the trading plan raising approximately £1.6 billion proceeds for the taxpayer.

Shares will continue to only be sold through the trading plan at a price that represents value for money for taxpayers. There is a cap on the total number of shares that could be sold through the trading plan (up to 15% of the aggregate traded volume over the extension period). The final number of shares sold will depend on, amongst other factors, the share price and market conditions throughout its duration.

HMT and UK Government Investments continue to keep all options and timings under review for future sales. Extending the trading plan does not preclude government from using other options to execute future transactions that achieve value for money for taxpayers, including further directed buybacks and/or accelerated bookbuilds.

Further information

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[New Centre for Excellence in Agriculture and Food Integrity Launched](#)

News story

The Centre for Excellence in Agriculture and Food Integrity is a strategic partnership between Queen's University Belfast and the NML at LGC



UK Government Chemist Julian Braybrook speaks at the launch of the Centre for Excellence in Agriculture and Food Integrity on 25 May 2022. Photos by Paul Mcerlane Photography.

The Centre for Excellence in Agriculture and Food Integrity will develop innovative scientific-measurement solutions and digital technologies to help make supply chains more sustainable, reliable, safe, and productive.

The Centre will also educate and train current and future industry leaders across the UK with the specialist knowledge and skills needed for a fast-changing and competitive agrifood industry.

The Centre is part of an ambitious partnership between Queen's University Belfast and the [National Measurement Laboratory \(NML\) at LGC](#) in Teddington and will be based at the [ASSET Technology Centre](#) at Queen's, in the heart of Belfast's globally significant innovation ecosystem.

[Prof Julian Braybrook](#), UK Government Chemist and Director of National Laboratories at LGC, gave a presentation at the launch event. Prof Braybrook said:

The NML at LGC and Queen's University Belfast have strong and highly complementary research environments. By adopting a 'One Health' approach, the Centre will foster an interdisciplinary culture that facilitates innovation in scientific measurement and acceleration of impact to market through supported delivery of the UK Government's [Innovation](#), Net Zero and National Food Strategies.

For more information about the work of the Government Chemist please contact:

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Moderna to open vaccine research and manufacturing centre in UK

- NHS patients to have access to next generation of mRNA vaccines and treatments as Moderna set to build state-of-the-art research and manufacturing centre in the UK
- Company to establish a global clinical trials base, endorsing UK as a science superpower
- Large manufacturing centre will give NHS patients guaranteed access to Covid jabs, future-proofing UK against emerging health threats
- Government and Moderna reach agreement in principle for strategic partnership

NHS patients will have access to the next generation of vaccines and treatments following an agreement between the government and Moderna to build a state-of-the-art manufacturing and research and development centre in the UK.

The new mRNA Innovation and Technology Centre will develop cutting-edge mRNA vaccines for a wide range of respiratory diseases, including Covid vaccines that can protect against multiple variants, helping to future-proof the UK against potential emerging health threats.

The pharmaceutical company will also open a large-scale mRNA manufacturing centre, which will offer UK patients guaranteed access to Moderna's Covid vaccine and the ability to produce jabs targeting a range of other illnesses, such as flu and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), ensuring NHS patients can access the latest advancements in vaccine technology quickly and providing a consistent home-made supply for the UK. It's anticipated the new facility will lead to job creation.

The centre will be able to scale up production rapidly in the event of a health emergency, significantly boosting the UK's ability to respond to future pandemics.

mRNA technology has proven to be one of the fastest routes to develop highly effective vaccines during the pandemic and has been pivotal in protecting people. It has the potential to be a transformative breakthrough technology in a number of disease areas, including cancer, flu, dementia and heart disease. The new research centre will look to unlock this potential by developing revolutionary treatments in the UK which will benefit NHS patients and people worldwide.

Construction is expected to commence as early as this year, with the first mRNA vaccine due to be produced in the UK in 2025.

This strategic partnership builds on the strong relationship formed between Moderna and the government through the pandemic. Moderna has worked closely with the Vaccine Taskforce, supplying Covid vaccines used in the initial rollout as well as subsequent booster campaigns.

Prime Minister, Boris Johnson said:

We are bringing supercharged, home-grown vaccines right to our shores. I want the UK to be the brightest and best in research and technology, creating more jobs and securing our economic future.

Our investment will guarantee jobs in arms against some of the toughest viruses out there, bringing us to the forefront of the fight against future threats. We've all seen what vaccines can do, and today's partnership brings us one step closer to finding cures for some of the most devastating diseases.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

Our new partnership with Moderna will cement the UK's status as a science superpower, significantly boosting the economy and creating jobs – and it has the potential to unlock the next generation of cutting-edge vaccines to fight diseases such as Covid, seasonal flu and RSV.

mRNA is a truly transformational technology and we have seen its life-saving power during the pandemic.

Thanks to this new deal, NHS patients will benefit from scientific breakthroughs and the new state-of-the-art manufacturing centre will boost our ability to respond to the next pandemic by ensuring we're able to produce vaccines rapidly on our own shores.

Stéphane Bancel, Chief Executive Officer of Moderna, said:

We are excited to be able to continue our collaboration with the UK Government and Vaccine Taskforce with this new mRNA Innovation and Technology Centre in the UK. The UK has established a world-class life sciences and research community.

We are committed to global public health, and as we continue to expand internationally, we are pleased to bring local mRNA manufacturing to the UK. We look forward to establishing our R&D activities and capabilities in the country.

Moderna plans to expand its presence in the UK through investments in R&D and will deliver a large share of its clinical trials in the UK.

The outline agreement with Moderna, negotiated by the Vaccine Taskforce and supported by the Office for Life Sciences, signals the start of detailed talks with the intention of establishing a long-term partnership. As the agreement is finalised, further details on the new centre will be announced in due course.

The partnership will support the Life Sciences Vision that was launched in July last year, setting the ambition for the UK to become the leading global hub for life sciences, helping to boost the country's status as a science superpower.

Patrick Vallance, Government Chief Scientific Adviser, said:

The establishment of the Moderna mRNA Innovation and Technology Centre is great news for the UK's R&D activities and future capabilities.

Rapid cutting-edge vaccines were vital in the response to the Covid pandemic. Developing the next generation of mRNA vaccines will be crucial in boosting our ability to prevent and respond to a wide range of diseases in the future.

The government has invested £395 million to secure and scale up the UK's vaccine manufacturing capabilities since the beginning of the pandemic and plans to invest further alongside industry to strengthen the country's domestic vaccine resilience. The government's investments together with this potential partnership will mean the UK is better placed to deal with the wider consequences and effects that we have seen result from a health emergency.

The UK led the way during the pandemic by hosting various clinical trials for Covid vaccines and discovered the first treatment for Covid – dexamethasone – which has saved more than a million lives worldwide. The UK's RECOVERY trial is responsible for identifying four successful Covid treatments.

Clinical trials are used to determine whether a new treatment is safe and effective. All treatments must undergo three robust stages of trials to gather enough data for medical regulators to approve them for use in humans.