

## COVID-19 – Weekly Round-up

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### Friday 18 June 2021

Heart of London Business Alliance is committed to ensuring our members receive the support they need while the situation in relation to COVID-19 is fast-changing. Our Daily Bulletin provides you with an update on the important announcements and guidance from the Government. In addition, it is recommended that our members monitor the [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) website for guidance regarding COVID-19.

Together with our local Member of Parliament, Nickie Aiken, Heart of London will continue to lobby Government for support for our members and your employees during this difficult time.

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### Full reopening delayed until 19<sup>th</sup> July

**14<sup>th</sup> June:** The Prime Minister announced in a [press conference](#) on 14<sup>th</sup> June that Step 4 of England's roadmap out of lockdown is to be delayed until Monday 19<sup>th</sup> July. This final step had been pencilled in for 21<sup>st</sup> June, however the spread of the Delta variant has led to the decision to pause the final easing of restrictions. The government is using the extra time to double job two-thirds of the adult population, including all over-50s, and to have offered a first dose to all eligible adults. There are a small number of exceptions to this delay, with weddings and funerals able to go ahead with over 30 guests so long as social distancing is adhered to, and pilot events such as Euro 2020 and some theatrical performances set to continue. The Prime Minister cited the “remorseless logic” of exponential growth, noting that the “average number of people being admitted to hospital in England has increased by 50 per cent week on week, and by 61 per cent in the North West.” Much of this growth is being driven by younger people who are not yet vaccinated.

However, businesses which remain under some form of restriction have been vocal about the additional loss of revenue they now face and will be advocating, along with a significant number of Tory backbenchers, for a definite reopening on the 19<sup>th</sup> July. At present, such definite advice looks unlikely, though the Government is committed to proceed with the final step of unlocking sooner than the given date should the risk of a significant new wave of transmissions have diminished after two weeks.

## All over-18s invited for first vaccines

**17<sup>th</sup> June:** All adults in England have been invited to book their Covid-19 vaccine from Friday, as eligibility is extended to everybody over 18. Health Secretary Matt Hancock said four in every five adults in England have now had their first jab. The government say they are considering proposals that could allow people who have had both jabs to avoid quarantine on their return from amber list countries - but testing will still be required. New [analysis](#) by Public Health England has shown for the first time that two doses of COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective against hospitalisation from the Delta variant.

## Reopening delayed and second doses brought forward in Scotland and Wales

**17<sup>th</sup> June:** Today, Welsh First Minister Mark Drakeford is set to [announce](#) a 4-week pause to the Covid-19 rules. The Welsh Government aims to speed up second doses of the vaccine during this period, with a planned deployment of more than half a million doses to help prevent a fresh wave of serious illness as cases of the virus begin to rise. Wales' coronavirus case rate has risen steadily since the end of May and the latest figures show there are almost 490 cases of the delta variant in Wales. A number of small technical changes have also been made, including: the number of people who can attend a wedding or civil partnership reception or wake will be determined by the size of the venue and a risk assessment, small grassroots music and comedy venues will be able to operate on the same basis as hospitality venues, like pubs and cafes and primary school children in the same school contact group or bubble will be able to stay overnight in a residential outdoor education centre. The regulations will be reviewed on 15<sup>th</sup> July and the First Minister urged people to take up their invitation for a vaccine.

**11<sup>th</sup> June:** First Minister Nicola Sturgeon indicated that the current level of restrictions were likely to remain in place in Scotland until 19 July, with no areas moving down a level of restrictions on that date. The Scottish Government is expected to take a final decision next week. The Government also [outlined](#) that people over 40 whose second coronavirus vaccination appointment is scheduled more than eight weeks after their first are being encouraged to seek an earlier slot. It follows recent advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), recommending that the interval for second doses be brought forward from twelve to eight weeks – where supply allows – particularly in areas where the Delta variant is a major threat.

## More surge testing as Covid-19 epidemic grows across England

**11<sup>th</sup> June:** Following actions taken in other areas in which the Delta variant has been identified, NHS Test and Trace have deployed further surge testing across the UK following the identification of a number of confirmed cases of the

Delta variant. This includes across the areas of [Cheshire West](#), [Staffordshire](#), [Bracknell Forest](#), and [Slough](#). While all confirmed cases have been instructed to self-isolate and their contacts have been identified, the UK Government has encouraged everyone who lives or works in these areas to take a COVID-19 PCR test, whether they are showing symptoms or not.

### Other news

- The UK Government have [appointed](#) Sir Richard Sykes as the new chair of the Vaccine Taskforce. Sir Richard will use his extensive experience in biotechnology and pharmaceuticals to lead the significant programme of work to find, procure and deliver vaccines to support the vaccination programme. He has previously held senior positions in a number of internationally recognised scientific, pharmaceutical and medical organisations, within both the public and private sectors. These include chairing organisations including the Royal Institution of Great Britain, King Edward VII's Hospital, the UK Stem Cell Foundation, and the Singapore Biomedical Sciences International Advisory Council.

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