

## COVID-19 – Weekly Round-up

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### Friday 25 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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### Travel Green List extended

**24<sup>th</sup> June:** The Government yesterday [announced](#) that sixteen new countries including Malta, Madeira, the Balearic Islands, several British Overseas Territories, and Caribbean islands, including Barbados would be added to the green list for travel. This means that travellers will no longer have to isolate on returning from these destinations provided they can show proof of a negative PCR test no more than 72 hours prior to arrival. The Green List is now longer than at any point since the traffic light system was introduced earlier this year and, thanks to coordination and agreement with the devolved administrations, applies across all four nations of the UK.

The Government has also confirmed this week that plans are being discussed with regard to reopening inbound international travel more broadly, including the potential removal of the requirement to self-isolate for arrivals from amber list countries who have received two vaccine doses. Full details are expected to be set out next month. Though intended to raise the hopes of a travel industry that has suffered enormous losses throughout the pandemic, the response of business leaders was not all positive. Some claimed that the plan lacked ambition and will not be enough to help the sector recover given that there is no guarantee of when quarantine rules will be fully rescinded.

Of course, international travel restrictions work in both directions and the news from the UK came as German Chancellor Angela Merkel called for all EU nations to introduce rules requiring arrivals from the UK to quarantine. Transport Secretary Grant Shapps' response was robust, claiming that Germany's concern was built on not having achieved the same vaccination levels as the UK.

### 3 in 5 adults receive both doses of Covid-19 vaccine

**23<sup>rd</sup> June:** The Government [announced](#) that over 60% of UK adults have now been vaccinated with a second dose of a Covid-19 vaccine. By 19<sup>th</sup> July, all those aged 40 and over and the clinically extremely vulnerable, who received their first dose by mid-May, will have been offered their second dose. This comes alongside news that second doses for all over 40s will be accelerated by reducing the dosing interval from twelve weeks to eight weeks. Vaccinations for 18-24 year-olds were opened up last week and since then over a third of people in that age group have received their first jab. In order to further accelerate the vaccination drive, the NHS in England is preparing to launch a “grab a jab” vaccination weekend. Edgbaston cricket ground in Birmingham, the Arsenal football stadium in London and the home of the Newcastle Eagles basketball team are among the venues that will be opened up for walk-in vaccinations over the weekend.

### Scottish reopening realigned to plans for England

**22<sup>nd</sup> June:** Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon [announced](#) on Tuesday that lockdown restrictions in Scotland will remain in place until 19<sup>th</sup> July after a 40% increase in new cases in the last week. The Scottish Government's original plan was for the entire nation to move to Level 0 from 28<sup>th</sup> June, but Sturgeon has confirmed the current rules will remain in place for a further three weeks. The revised route map will see all areas of Scotland which have not already done so move to Level 0 from mid-July, at which point the limits on household gatherings indoors will be relaxed.

The news came shortly after a surprise move, Scottish government [announced](#) on 18<sup>th</sup> June that a rise in the prevalence of Delta variant cases in North West England has led to travel restrictions being placed on visitors arriving from Manchester and Salford. The new rules came into effect on Monday and are part of wider measures put in place to prevent variants of concern being brought into Scotland from areas with high cases of the COVID-19 Delta variant.

### Millions suffering from long Covid

**14<sup>th</sup> June:** Findings from the Real-time Assessment of Community Transmission (REACT-2) studies show over one third of people - some 2 million individuals - who had COVID-19 reported their symptoms lasting at least 12 weeks. The findings from the studies, which use home testing to improve understanding of how the COVID-19 pandemic is progressing across England, suggest prevalence of persistent symptoms, labelled ‘long Covid’, increases with age, with a 3.5% increase in likelihood in each decade of life. Long Covid also appears to impact more highly on women, people who are overweight or obese, smokers, those who live in deprived areas, and those admitted to hospital. Researchers

say managing the long-term consequences of Covid-19 are a "major challenge" and Health Secretary Matt Hancock announced that the government has provided £50m for further research.

## Other news

- **22<sup>nd</sup> June 2021:** More than 60,000 fans will now be permitted to attend the semi-finals and final of UEFA EURO 2020 at Wembley Stadium, increasing attendance to 75% capacity during the latter stages of the tournament. The move follows the confirmation last week that the round 16 match on 29<sup>th</sup> June and semi-finals and final would be hosted with at least 40,000 fans under the third phase of the Government's Events Research Programme (ERP). It will see the largest crowds assembled for a sporting event in the UK in more than 15 months.
- **21<sup>st</sup> June 2021:** The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency's (MHRA) National Institute for Biological Standards and Control (NIBSC) in Hertfordshire was the Prime Minister's chosen launchpad for a new initiative to cement the UK's position as a science superpower. The plans are set to capitalise on the excellence of UK science throughout the pandemic and beyond, such as that carried out by the NIBSC in relation to COVID-19 vaccine quality control, COVID-19 testing and the essential reference materials to support safe availability of life-saving medicines around the world.

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