



### **e-UPDATE #93 - 17.01.21**

Welcome to this update.

The national vaccine rollout is proceeding at pace, and is giving real cause for hope. As the head of NHS England confirmed on the BBC this morning, **we are vaccinating four times faster than people are being infected**. 3.5m people have received their first dose, a *per capita* rate considerably higher than for any other European nation (see below).

Here in **Cheltenham**, I was delighted to hear the Prime Minister specifically commend **our town's rollout at the Downing Street press conference** on Friday. Cheltenham's primary care teams have responded truly brilliantly to this call to arms, and county-wide 55,000 people have now been vaccinated. We are very much on track to meet the national target of offering a first vaccine to everyone in the top 4 JCVI priority by 15 February.

That's vital because Gloucestershire's hospitals remain under intense pressure. Nationwide, a person is admitted with COVID *every 30 seconds*. I am advised that the first four JCVI categories represent 88% of those who die in Gloucestershire hospitals with COVID, and 53% of those admitted - so the importance of the vaccine is obvious.

In other news, **another £11m has been secured for Cheltenham to help support our businesses** - taking the total package of financial backing to Cheltenham alone to over £260m.

In Ministry of Justice news, last week I signed a statutory instrument **extending the pause on evictions** (with important exceptions, including for anti-social behaviour). I also announced in Parliament plans to increase the courts' powers to punish those who **vandalise war memorials** and other monuments.

Do also look out for news below on Cheltenham's **Cyber Park**, a particular passion of mine because of the life-changing opportunities this industry can bring to Gloucestershire's young people from all backgrounds. As part of the £22m which we secured for Cheltenham, highways engineers will be rolling out Arle Court to Gloucester Road/Lansdown Road junction eastbound carriageway improvements (towards

Cheltenham town centre).

Finally, an office update: we are moving to premises near Cheltenham Spa Railway Station. The new office has free parking and much improved disability access. The full address is Office 11, Sunningend Business Centre, Unit 22, Lansdown Industrial Estate, Cheltenham, GL51 8PL.

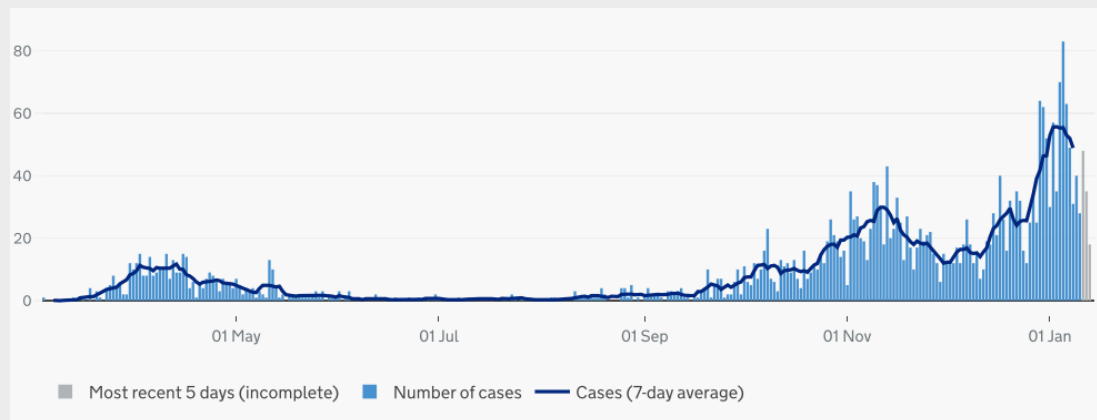
Best wishes,



**Alex Chalk MP**

*In line with data protection regulations, Alex Chalk's office processes constituents' data for policy and casework purposes under the lawful basis of public task. In instances where this lawful basis is not sufficient and explicit consent is required, a member of staff will get in touch with you to establish consent. You can find the full privacy notice on Alex's website [HERE](#)*

## COVID UPDATE



[The graph shows daily new cases recorded in Cheltenham. The highest number of daily cases since the start of the pandemic was on 5 January, with 83.]

### **COVID Hospital Patients:**

On 13 January, there were 205 COVID positive patients at Gloucestershire Hospitals

NHS Foundation Trust (GHFT). COVID-19 admissions in the last three 24 hour periods pre-13 January were the highest of the pandemic to date.

**Cases in Gloucestershire:**

**Rate per 100,000:** 360 (15 Jan). The rate for the South-West is 382.

**Total cases:** 17,021 (12 Jan).

**Cases in Cheltenham:**

**Cases in last 7 days:** 294 (w/e 12 Jan). This is down from 389 in the previous 7 days (w/e 5 Jan).

**Rate per 100,000:** 251.1 (w/e 12 Jan). This is down from 334.5 in the previous 7 days (w/e 5 Jan).

**Total cases:** 2,907 (12 Jan).

**Gloucestershire Death registrations mentioning COVID-19:**

40 in last 7 days (w/e 12 Jan).

**Testing in Gloucestershire:**

32,894 tests were undertaken via Pillar 1 and Pillar 2 sites, this is higher than the previous week. Positivity is 8.1%, down slightly from 10% last week.

**Mobile Testing Unit Location:**

University of Gloucestershire, Entrance 3, Park Campus, The Park, Cheltenham, GL50 2RH (16-17 January, and 23-24 January).

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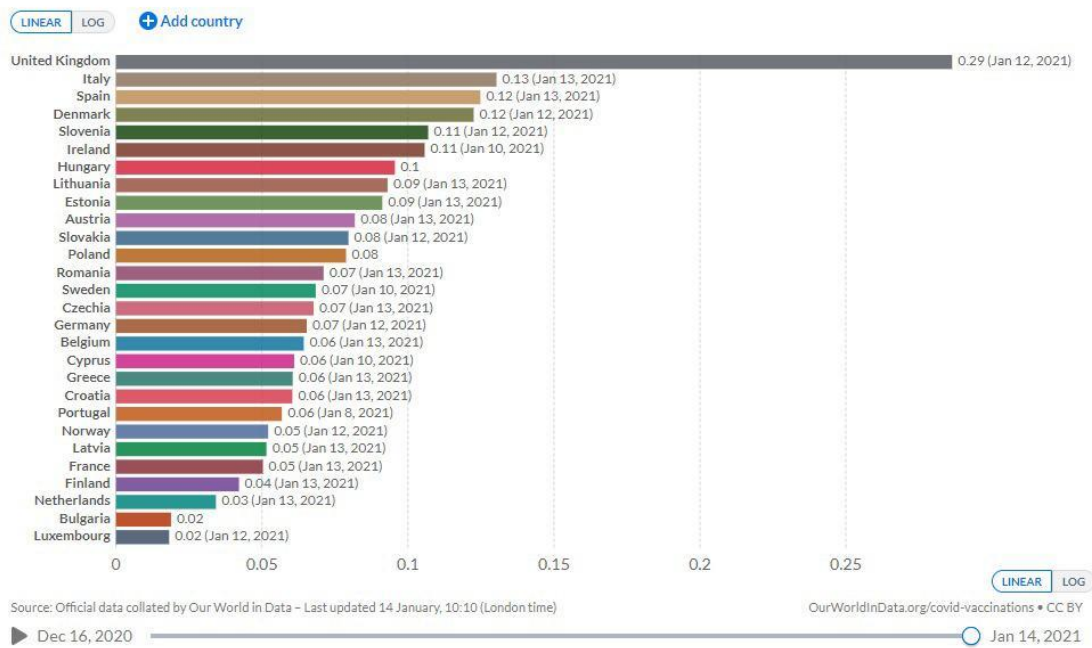
**VACCINATION UPDATE:**

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## Daily COVID-19 vaccination doses administered per 100 people, Jan 14, 2021

Shown is the rolling 7-day average per 100 people in the total population. This is counted as a single dose, and may not equal the total number of people vaccinated, depending on the specific dose regime (e.g. people receive multiple doses).

Our World  
in Data



[Source: World in Data].

### **3.5 MILLION DOSES ADMINISTERED IN UK SO FAR**

Over **3.5 million** doses of the vaccine have been administered in the UK. This is more than double the rate any other country in Europe per 100 people (as at 15 Jan). Almost **5% of the UK population** have now received their first dose.

In **Gloucestershire**, **55,000** have now had their first jab. with each first dose ensuring a good degree of immunity already. This is out of 129,000 who are eligible in the first priority groups.

Read more about the factors underpinning the speed of rollout [here](#).



[Pictured: Staff at Cheltenham's vaccination centre]

### **ALEX PAYS TRIBUTE TO LOCAL NHS STAFF**

Alex has paid tribute to Cheltenham NHS staff at Cheltenham East Fire Station.

Writing on Facebook, Alex said:

*"On Sunday [10 January], I cycled past Cheltenham East Fire Station. What a sight to behold! The place was a hive of activity, with volunteers registering patients at the door and a queue of people snaking down Keynsham Road by the Lido (see pictures below).*

*As I have said before, thanks to intensive local collaboration, Gloucestershire has assembled a formidable vaccination capability.*

*I am assured we are on track in Cheltenham to hit the national target of offering the first dose to everyone in the four top JCVI priority groups by mid-February. Two-fifths of over-80s have already received their first dose, and with the top four priority groups accounting for 88 per cent of the deaths from COVID, this helps us drive down hospital admissions and prevent deaths.*

*With every vulnerable person who is vaccinated, this disease become less lethal. That in turn offers us the hope and expectation of being able to reopen our society. But we are still a little time off that."*



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## CHELTENHAM UPDATES:

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### **IMPORTANT BUSINESS UPDATE - SUPREME COURT RULES INSURANCE FIRMS MUST PAY OUT ON PANDEMIC POLICIES**

The Supreme Court has ruled this week that the six big insurers do have to pay out due to COVID for those with relevant business interruption cover. The ruling is expected to affect up to 400,000 policyholders.

Following this decision, the insurance industry is expected to pay out over £1.8bn in coronavirus claims related to the first lockdown, which includes business interruption policies.

The FCA, which brought the test case, said: “We will be working with insurers to ensure that they now move quickly to pay claims that the judgment says should be paid, making interim payments wherever possible.”

Alex said: “This ruling will be a lifeline to many businesses who are struggling through the pandemic.”

Read more [here](#).

# £4.6 BILLION IN NEW LOCKDOWN GRANTS

- ◆ **RETAIL, HOSPITALITY AND LEISURE BUSINESSES CAN CLAIM UP TO £9K PER PROPERTY**
- ◆ **A £594 MILLION FUND TO SUPPORT OTHER IMPACTED BUSINESSES**

**ON TOP OF FURLOUGH EXTENSION UNTIL END OF APRIL 2021**

## **£11.6m FOR CHELTENHAM BUSINESSES DURING LOCKDOWN TAKES TOTAL COVID SUPPORT FOR TOWN TO OVER £260m**

Alex has been calling for additional support for Cheltenham businesses. Now the Government has responded, with an additional £11.6m for the town.

The Government has announced **£4.6 billion in new lockdown grants**, with businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors to receive a one-off grant worth up to £9,000. There is also a **£594 million discretionary fund** also made available to local authorities to support other impacted businesses.

Cheltenham has been allocated **£11,604,435** out of those pots to support businesses during this set of restrictions.

This is just the latest pot of funding the town has received since the start of the pandemic. A summary of all the other funding packages for **Cheltenham** are below:

- £93m in Government-backed loans;
- £72m (est.) to pay 15,400+ furloughed Cheltenham workers;
- £21.5m (est.) to support the self-employed via the SEISS;
- £42m in total for grants for small businesses;
- £30m for 12-month rates relief for retail/hospitality/leisure industry;
- £2.5m to support Cheltenham's arts institutions, including the Everyman Theatre, Cheltenham Trust and the Cheltenham Festivals;
- £321k for Cheltenham community groups;
- £1.8m in other additional funding assigned to Cheltenham Borough Council.

The above **totals over £260m.**

There has also been a 6-month VAT cut to 5% for hospitality, averaging a £160 saving for the average Cheltenham household. Moreover, around £2.8m has been pumped into welfare support in Cheltenham, boosting Universal Credit by £20 a week for those in need.

As well as this, Cheltenham has benefitted from a share of **almost £60m in funding assigned to Gloucestershire County Council** to tackle the pandemic. This funding includes:

- Additional unringfenced tranche of funding for 20-21: £33.85m
- Test and trace service support grant: £2.22m
- Adult social care infection control fund: £14.37m
- Other additional funding during COVID-19\*: £3.14m
- **Total additional funding for the LA in 20-21: £58.68m.**

*\*Other additional funding during Covid-19' includes: CEV Funding, Compliance and Enforcement grant, Reopening High Street Safely fund, Provisional Rough Sleeping emergency fund, Next Steps Accommodation Programme, Domestic Abuse Services grant, Local Authority Emergency Assistance grant, additional Home to school transport, and the DWP Winter Grant Scheme.*



[Subway extension - white block in centre of image - is almost complete.]

### **WORK ON SECOND STAGE OF WEST CHELTENHAM TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENT SCHEME BEGINS**

Work on the next phase of the **£22 million** West Cheltenham Transport Improvement Scheme is now underway.



The work forms a key pillar of long-term plans for the area, opening up employment land for the Cyber Park and Cyber Innovation Centre. **Since 2014, Alex has conceived of and championed the idea of the cyber hub in Cheltenham.** Alex's vision was to harness the finest GCHQ minds to support civilian tech start-ups. Since then, the NCSC's Government-funded Cyber Accelerator has been set up in Cheltenham. Over 30 start-ups have already been successfully nurtured, creating jobs and attracting millions of pounds of outside investment.

Now, with these transport improvements around Arle Court to open up the Cyber Park site, Cheltenham can look forward to a hi-tech future as a cyber powerhouse.

### **First Stage of Work:**

The first part of the work involves Arle Court Roundabout and roads leading to it. These works started in summer 2020 and are progressing well, currently on target to be completed by summer 2021.

### **Second Stage of Work:**

The second part includes the **A40 east of Arle Court Roundabout towards Cheltenham Spa Railway Station.** These works have now begun, and are expected to be completed by early 2022. These works include:

- Investment of £1.6million in continuous off road cycle facilities between Arle Court and Lansdown Rail Bridge establishing a key part of the cycle network planned between Cheltenham and Gloucester. This will be complemented by a quiet road cycle link from Princess Elizabeth Way through St Mark's to Cheltenham Spa Railway Station.
- Arle Court to Gloucester Road/Lansdown Road junction eastbound carriageway improvements (towards Cheltenham town centre)
- An extra lane around Benhall Roundabout with wider approaches and exits
- Junction improvements at two key signalised junctions on the A40 at Telstar Way and Gloucester Road

### **Planned Road Closures**

These works may cause some disruption. It is the County Council's aim to complete the work as quickly and safely as possible so as to cause the least disruption. However, the following road closures will be required:

#### **Week Commencing 11 January:**

- **12 January - from Tuesday night**, traffic management will be installed on the Telstar Way junction with the A40. This will include implementing 'No Right Turn' into Telstar Way from the A40.
- **12 and 13 Jan** - A40 westbound between Benhall roundabout and Arle Court roundabout will be closed overnight

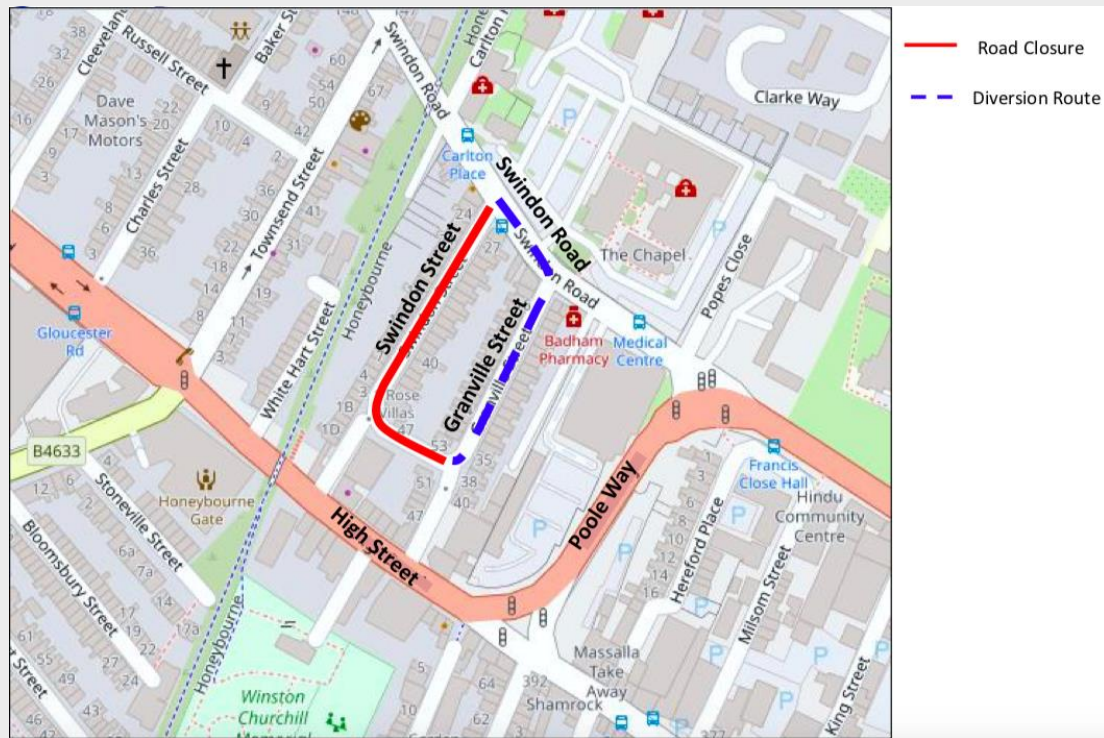
- **14 and 15 Jan** - A40 eastbound between Arle Court roundabout and Benhall roundabout will be closed overnight

**Week Commencing 18 January:**

- **Mon 18 - Thur 21** - A40 eastbound between Arle Court and Benhall roundabout will be closed for four nights
- **Fri 22** - A40 westbound between Benhall and Arle Court roundabout will be closed for one night

**Week Commencing 25 January:**

- **Mon 25 – Wed 27 Jan** inclusive - A40 westbound between Benhall and Arle Court roundabout will be closed overnight
- **Thur 28 and Fri 29 Jan** - A40 eastbound from M5 Junction 11 to Arle Court roundabout will be closed to remove barriers.



**POTHOLE UPDATE - SWINDON STREET RESURFACING UP NEXT**

Alex welcomed the news that **Swindon Street in Cheltenham will be the latest road to be resurfaced** as part of the County Council's ongoing plan to invest £150 million into the county's road. The road will be done in one day on 15 January.

Other Cheltenham roads to have been resurfaced under the scheme so far include:

1. London Road approach to Bath Road junction

2. Berkeley Road
3. Suffolk Parade
4. St James' Terrace
5. St James' Square
6. St George's Place
7. The Prom
8. Rodney Road
9. Montpellier Drive and Montpellier Parade (by Eagle Tower)
10. A40 by Granley Road
11. Portland Street
12. Vittoria Walk
13. Tommy Taylors Lane
14. Christ Church Road
15. Bath Parade.

### **ALEX'S INTERVIEW WITH THE RACING POST**

Alex has been interviewed by the Racing Post that, to discuss the impact of the pandemic on the world-renowned Cheltenham Festival. Despite the £260m+ that has been poured in Cheltenham by the Government to support businesses and jobs during this pandemic, the town's economy will still be affected as a result of a pared back Cheltenham Festival this year. But Alex stated that the **safety of the public should come first** and that the event simply could not go ahead as normal.

See below Alex's comments in full...

# RACING POST

Thursday, January 7, 2021  
Issue No. 11,779

Download the free Racing Post app for must-have news, tips and fast results

£3.50

## PULSE OF RACING

Our series continues with economics student-turned-jockey Page Fuller on the triumphs and trials of being a rider in 2021, page 6



## PAUL KEALY

A heavy-ground slogger has caught the top tipster's eye, page 8



## 'Entertaining from the beginning to the end'

The quirky but ultra-talented Might Bite retired, page 7



Wondermare Goldikova dies aged 16, page 11

Gold Cup next stop for A Plus Tard, page 2

All systems go for festival, says Mullins, page 3

## 'It's going to hurt'

### Cheltenham MP spells out £60m cost of no visitors to the festival

By James Stevens

CHELTENHAM'S MP Alex Chalk yesterday warned the lack of crowds at this year's festival will have a devastating impact on the local economy, with race week typically bringing in £60 million to the town each year. That figure equates to around 35 per cent of the £172m the town will earn through tourism each year, in a week when hotels, bars and restaurants accommodate around 250,000 visitors.

But this year there will be almost no income from the tourism sector after Cheltenham racecourse director Ian Renton confirmed on Monday that the meeting would only have a very small crowd or even be held behind closed doors. Chalk has been working with the racecourse since the start of 2020 and believes the festival, although without a crowd, will be similar to usual with no concerns about safely accommodating a high number of

Continues page 3

Today's cards: Ffos Las 12.58 38 Southwell 12.45 30 Wolverhampton 4.20 56 Clonmel 12.50 44 Meydan 3.05 26

# 'It is absolutely vital to the local economy'

From front page

Irish runners and essential staff.

Up until December, there had been £230m of financial support put into Cheltenham in various forms, including furlough, grants and payments. However, Chalk believes this only softens a massive blow to businesses in the area.

The Conservative MP said: "The Cheltenham Festival is absolutely essential to the local economy. During the week, tens of millions are pumped into the Cheltenham economy through hospitality, hotels and everything else. This is a lot of money that is not coming into our economy so I'm really concerned about that.

"There are some businesses that will use the week to build up reserves to last them through the less profitable parts of the year. It's really essential for the business model of a lot of outlets in Cheltenham so it's a big loss for the town.

"This isn't a year like any other where one week is taken out of circulation, a lot of businesses are shut anyway. There's a huge amount of financial support that is coming in but no town can really write off £60m without it hurting. It's going to hurt."



*Alex Chalk: Cheltenham MP fears for local businesses*

He added: "We really don't have the luxury of thinking what might have been - it's absolutely the right decision to not proceed with a full festival this year. Unless we can get control of the virus, we can't look forward to a fantastic Cheltenham Festival in 2022."

Last year, 181 Irish runners participated at the Cheltenham Festival, making up 39 per cent of the field sizes. There were also four runners from France in the Cross Country Chase, while Big Blue, who finished 19th in the Martin Pipe, was registered to Australian trainers Ciaran Maher and David Eustace.

However, even in the current climate, Chalk insists both the racecourse and town are confident of attracting a similar number of international raiders at this year's meeting.

"There were a lot of fears

about what would happen post-Brexit with Irish horses coming over, but they can be allayed," he added. "I'd want it to be as full and international a festival that's consistent with public health guidelines - whatever they can put on they should.

"I'd anticipate as long as it remains crowd-free there ought to be a very decent number of runners and riders. They'll need to be accommodated, but my understanding is that it can be done in a Covid-secure way."

Last year, the decision not to cancel the Cheltenham Festival was criticised with England forced into lockdown on March 23, just ten days after Gold Cup Friday. Chalk worked closely in the decision-making at that time.

Chalk said of last year: "My strong memory of that time was that people were very ambivalent as to whether it should be going ahead.

"I specifically asked the issue of the Cheltenham Festival to be placed on the agenda for a Cobra cabinet meeting - such was my concern about whether this was given specific attention. It was given that attention and the advice at the time was that it was the sensible way to proceed."



**ALEX MEETS LOCKHEED MARTIN TO DISCUSS FUTURE OF THEIR WARRIOR PROGRAMME**

Since the last update, Alex has met with both Lockheed Martin, who manufacture the Warrior armoured vehicle used by the British Army, as well as CDS Defence and Security (based in Cheltenham) who support the Warrior programme.

Alex agreed to speak with Defence Procurement Minister JeremyQuin on their behalf to press for clarity on the future of Warrior.

**Meet the Slimming World team in Cheltenham!**



**Caroline**

Monday AM  
Wyman's Brook  
Wednesday AM & PM  
St Marks  
07446157092



**Claire**

Tuesday AM  
St Marks  
Saturday AM  
St Peters  
07909139996



**Teresa**

Monday PM  
Up Hatherley  
Wednesday AM & PM  
Charlton Kings  
Thursday PM  
Prestbury  
07866196718



**Cath**

Mondays PM,  
Wednesday PM &  
Thursday AM  
Bishops Cleeve  
07988630336



**Dawn**

Tuesday AM  
Warden Hill  
Wednesday PM &  
Thursday AM  
Up Hatherley  
07703052682

*that  
Slimming  
World  
feeling!* **Groups running  
virtually in the  
lockdown, contact  
your local consultant  
to join!**

**JOIN OUR WINNING TEAM**  
and make a real difference to  
people in our area.  
Contact Claire for details on  
07909139996

### **ALEX HOLDS TALKS WITH CHELTENHAM SLIMMING WORLD TO HEAR HOW THEY'VE ADAPTED TO COVID**

Alex has met with Maxine Jackson, the Cheltenham manager of Slimming World, to hear about the work Slimming World are doing to support those in Cheltenham looking to shift the pounds. Slimming World have fifteen groups in Cheltenham that are continuing to meet virtually during the pandemic.

### **ALSO SINCE THE LAST UPDATE, ALEX HAS:**

- Received weekly coronavirus briefings, together with other Gloucestershire MPs, from the NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group
- Held a virtual constituency surgery.

### **Held Talks/Meetings with:**

- The Director of Business West in Gloucestershire
- The Chair of Governors for Saint John's Primary School
- Vaccines Minister Nadhim Zahawi
- Universities Minister Michelle Donelan, to discuss the Turing Scheme, to replace Erasmus+
- Members of the Civic Society
- South West senior representative of the Royal College of Nursing
- Cheltenham Samaritans
- Student Union President at University of Gloucestershire.

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## **ALEX'S MINISTERIAL ROUND-UP**

**Since the last update, Alex has:**

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[Click the link to watch - Alex begins his remarks at 16.13.50]

### **VOWED TO TOUGHEN THE LAW ON THE DESECRATION OF WAR MEMORIALS**

Alex responded for the Government during a Westminster Hall debate on the desecration of war memorials, emphasising the duty we all have to maintain war memorials for those who have made the ultimate sacrifice and cannot defend the memorials themselves. Alex confirmed that the Government will give courts the powers they needed to properly punish perpetrators of this crime.

Alex said:

*"This kind of behaviour corrodes our democracy, far beyond the mere monetary value of the damage caused. Memorials matter.*

*There are various approaches that the Government could adopt to tackle this issue. We have been considering all options to stop those who seek to attack emblems of our national sacrifice and pride, including the proposed Desecration of War Memorials Bill.*

***We want to make sure that any vandalism or attack on property can be met with the full force of the law, so that the courts are equipped with the tools they need to do justice on the facts of the case before them. No one is suggesting that all cases and all examples need to be dealt with by a maximum sentence; that would be absurd. The courts will do justice, but they need to have the powers so that they can do that justice on the facts as they find them to be.***

***The Government intend to deal decisively with this issue, and I thank my hon. Friends for their shared commitment to tackling this crime. I will close by saying that those who take the law into their own hands—who vandalise our heritage, lash out at symbols they disagree with, or demean and dishonour our war dead—should be on notice. We will give the courts the power to do justice on behalf of all: the dead, the living, and those who have yet to be born.***



Read Alex's remarks in full [here](#) or watch the video by clicking the image above.

**SIGNED STATUTORY INSTRUMENT PROTECTING TENANTS FROM EVICTIONS  
DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

Alex signed into law provisions which **protect tenants from eviction** during the pandemic, except in certain circumstances. These include, for example, anti-social behaviour, or where the tenant is in substantial rent arrears, with at least 6 months outstanding rent owed.

See below the signed Statutory Instrument:

*Regulations made by the Secretary of State, laid before Parliament under section 45R of the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 (c. 22), for approval by resolution of each House of Parliament within twenty-eight days beginning with the day on which the instrument is made, subject to extension for periods of dissolution, prorogation or adjournment for more than four days.*

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STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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**2021 No.**

**PUBLIC HEALTH, ENGLAND**

**The Public Health (Coronavirus) (Protection from Eviction)  
(England) Regulations 2021**

<i>Made</i>	- - - -	***
<i>Laid before Parliament</i>		***
<i>Coming into force</i>	- -	11th January 2021

The Secretary of State<sup>(a)</sup> makes the following Regulations in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 45C(1), (2), (3)(c) and 45P of the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984<sup>(b)</sup>.

These Regulations are made in response to the serious and imminent threat to public health which is posed by the incidence and spread of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) in England.

The Secretary of State considers that the restrictions and requirements imposed by these Regulations are proportionate to what they seek to achieve, which is a public health response to that threat.

In accordance with section 45R of that Act, the Secretary of State is of the opinion that, by reason of urgency, it is necessary to make this instrument without a draft having been laid before, and approved by a resolution of, each House of Parliament.

**Citation, commencement and application**

1.—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Public Health (Coronavirus) (Protection from Eviction) (England) Regulations 2021.

(2) These Regulations come into force on 11th January 2021.

(3) These Regulations apply in relation to England only.

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<sup>(a)</sup> The Secretary of State is the appropriate Minister as respects England (section 45T(6) of the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 (c.22)).

<sup>(b)</sup> 1984 c. 22. Part 2A was inserted by section 129 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (c. 14).

### Residential Tenancies (Protection from Eviction)

2.—(1) Subject to paragraphs (2), (3), and (5), no person may attend at a dwelling house for the purpose of—

- (a) executing a writ or warrant of possession; or
- (b) delivering a notice of eviction.

(2) Paragraph (1) does not apply where the court is satisfied that the notice, writ or warrant relates to an order for possession made—

- (a) against trespassers pursuant to a claim to which rule 55.6 (service of claims against trespassers) of the Civil Procedure Rules 1998(a) applies;
- (b) wholly or partly under section 84A (absolute ground for possession for anti-social behaviour) of the Housing Act 1985(b);
- (c) wholly or partly on Ground 2, Ground 2A or Ground 5 in Schedule 2 (grounds for possession of dwelling houses let under secure tenancies) to the Housing Act 1985(e);
- (d) wholly or partly on Ground 7A, Ground 14, Ground 14A or Ground 17 in Schedule 2 (grounds for possession of dwelling houses let on assured tenancies) to the Housing Act 1988(d); or
- (e) wholly or partly under case 2 of Schedule 15 (grounds for possession of dwelling-houses let on or subject to protected or statutory tenancies) to the Rent Act 1977(e).

(3) Paragraph (1) does not apply where the court is satisfied that—

- (a) the case involves substantial rent arrears; and
- (b) the notice, writ or warrant relates to an order for possession made wholly or partly—
  - (i) on Ground 1 in Schedule 2 to the Housing Act 1985;
  - (ii) on Ground 8, Ground 10 or Ground 11 in Schedule 2 to the Housing Act 1988; or
  - (iii) under case 1 of Schedule 15 to the Rent Act 1977.

(4) For the purposes of paragraph (3), a case involves substantial rent arrears if the amount of unpaid rent arrears outstanding is at least an amount equivalent to 6 months' rent.

(5) Paragraph (1) does not apply where the court is satisfied that the notice, writ or warrant relates to an order for possession made wholly or partly on Ground 7 in Schedule 2 to the Housing Act 1988.

(6) Where paragraph (5) applies, the person attending at the dwelling house must take reasonable steps to satisfy themselves that the dwelling house is unoccupied before—

- (a) delivering a notice of eviction; or
- (b) executing a writ or warrant of possession.

### Expiry

3. These Regulations expire at the end of 21st February 2021.

(a) S.I. 1998/3132. Rule 55.6 was inserted by S.I. 2001/256.

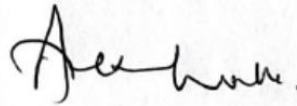
(b) 1985 c. 68. Section 84A was inserted by section 94(1) of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 ("the 2014 Act").

(c) Ground 2 was substituted by section 144 of the Housing Act 1996 (c. 52) ("the 1996 Act") and amended by s98(1) of the 2014 Act and Schedule 7 to the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 (c. 15) ("the 2005 Act"). Ground 2A was inserted by section 145 of the 1996 Act and amended by paragraph 33 of Schedule 8 to the Civil Partnership Act 2004 (c. 33) ("the 2004 Act") and by S.I. 2019/1458. Ground 5 was amended by section 146 of the 1996 Act.

(d) 1988 c. 50. Ground 7A was inserted by section 97(1) of the 2014 Act. Ground 14 was substituted by section 148 of the 1996 Act and amended by section 98(2) of the 2014 Act and Schedule 7 to the 2005 Act. Ground 14A was inserted by section 149 of the 1996 Act and amended by paragraph 43 of Schedule 8 to the 2004 Act and by S.I. 2010/866, S.I. 2011/1396 and S.I. 2019/1458. Ground 17 was inserted by section 102 of the 1996 Act.

(e) 1977 c. 42.

Date 7/1/2021



[name]  
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice  
Ministry of Justice

#### EXPLANATORY NOTE

*(This note is not part of the Regulations)*

These Regulations prevent, except in specified circumstances, attendance at a dwelling house for the purpose of executing a writ or warrant of possession or delivering a notice of eviction.

The specified circumstances are where the court is satisfied that the claim is against trespassers who are persons unknown or where it was made wholly or partly on the grounds of anti-social behaviour, nuisance, domestic abuse in social tenancies, false statements, substantial rent arrears exceeding 6 months' rent or, in cases where the person attending is satisfied that the dwelling house is unoccupied at the time of attendance, death of the occupant.

The Regulations expire at the end of 21<sup>st</sup> February 2021.

No impact assessment has been prepared for these Regulations.

### **ANSWERED WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS**

Alex responds to questions from MPs on a wide range of issues. See below some examples of Alex's responses. To see the full list of answered questions, [click here](#).

**Q. "To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will publish a breakdown of the £40 million in funding for victim services announced in the Spending Review 2020."**

**Alex responded:**

*"The Spending Review will provide a total of £40m for victims and support services. We are continuing to provide £15 million this year to fulfil the manifesto commitment to increase support for victims of sexual violence and rape, including funding for new Independent Sexual Violence Advisors to support victims through the justice system. As well as this, we are providing an additional £25 million this year for victims and support services. This recognises the negative impact that Covid-19 has had on vulnerable victims of crime, including victims of domestic abuse and builds on the £20 million we provided last year to help domestic abuse and sexual violence community-based services meet Covid-driven demand. In due course, more detailed allocations will be announced."*

**Q. To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent assessment he has made of the effect of divorce on people's mental health; and what steps his Department is taking to help reduce that effect; and to ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department is taking to raise awareness of out-of-court alternatives**

**for couples seeking divorce.**

**Alex responded:**

*"The Government has made a landmark change to the law on divorce with the Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Act 2020. We are working to implement it so that the legal process for divorce does not incentivise conflict. By making an applicant or applicants' statement conclusive evidence of the irretrievable breakdown of a marriage or civil partnership, we are removing the need to establish conduct or separation-based facts and for the drafting of supporting particulars.*

*We want to encourage positive, non-confrontational approaches to resolving problems before they reach the courts. This includes separating parents who are in conflict. In December 2020, we issued a statement on behalf of the Family Justice Board that sets out our immediate and longer-term reform priorities for the family justice system. This includes testing an earlier gateway to court to offer families a more rounded assessment of the needs of children and their families, and an improved offer for non-adversarial problem solving. This Government is committed to ensuring couples and parents can navigate the family justice system and understand the different options available to resolve their disputes, including out-of-court options such as mediation where they are safe and appropriate."*

**ALSO SINCE THE LAST UPDATE, ALEX HAS:**

**Held talks on plans for an 'Apologies Bill'**

As an MOJ minister, Alex has met with John Howell MP to discuss a potential 'Apologies Bill'. The Bill would ensure that apologies are not regarded as an admission of liability, and could therefore result in a dispute being settled without parties resorting to expensive litigation.

Whilst the Compensation Act 2006 already states that an apology 'shall not of itself amount to an admission of negligence or breach of statutory duty', a new Bill could go beyond this, and apply to breaches of contract, judicial review or other legal causes of action.

**Held Meetings/Talks with:**

- James Mulholland QC, Chair of the Criminal Bar Association;
- Dame Diana Johnson DBE.

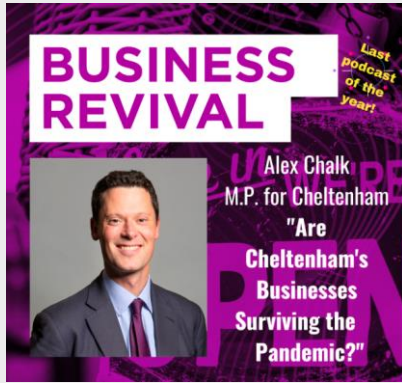
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**IN THE MEDIA, ALEX HAS:**

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## **RECORDED PODCAST ON REVIVAL OF CHELTENHAM'S BUSINESSES**

Alex features on a podcast titled 'are Cheltenham's businesses surviving the pandemic?' by Made4U Podcasts.



The episode was part of a series of podcasts to showcase Gloucestershire's businesses in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The series features interviews with a cross-section of local companies and expert commentary from business guru Gill Smith of [The Business Kitchen](#).

Listen to the podcast featuring Alex [here](#).

## **ALSO IN THE MEDIA SINCE THE LAST UPDATE:**

Alex has written three articles for the Gloucestershire Echo, in which he:

1. Accepted further restrictions were likely needed in order to **contain the new mutant strain** of COVID-19. [Read here](#).
2. Welcomed the approval of the **Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine**. [Read here](#).
3. Reluctantly accepted that the Government had little choice but to impose a third lockdown, but welcomed the **progress made so far in rolling out the vaccination programme**. [Read here](#).

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## **OTHER LOCAL NEWS**

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### **LILLIAN FAITHFULL RESIDENTS HAVE NOW BEEN VACCINATED AGAINST COVID-19**

Lilian Faithfull Care has paid tribute to local GP teams who have now vaccinated over 200 (97%) of residents across five homes in Cheltenham and Stroud.

Faithfull House care home in Cheltenham was one of the first six care homes in England to be visited and since then the NHS has successfully rolled out the programme bringing the Pfizer vaccine to over 200 residents in all of the Gloucestershire charity's homes. Their other care homes included in the roll out are Resthaven Nursing home in Stroud and Astell House, St Faith's and Royal Court in Cheltenham.

This news comes on top of Lilian Faithfull Care staff being some of the first in the country to be vaccinated at Gloucester Royal Hospital in December – of which over 50% have now received the vaccine.

“This is the light at the end of the tunnel,” says Martin Hughes, CEO of Lilian Faithfull Care.

"This protection, that our residents and teams have embraced, is making our care homes some of the safest places to live and work in the county. It is credit to the teams in the homes and testament to our relationship with our incredible partners, our GP's and practice teams at the surgeries, that we are at the forefront of battling this virus."

**Join the Covid-19  
Vaccine Team**



## **CAN YOU HELP WITH VACCINATIONS?**

Many people in Cheltenham have contacted Alex about volunteering to become a vaccinator. If you think you are able to volunteer, please click on [this link](#).

Alex has paid tribute to those signing up, saying:

*"People in Cheltenham have contacted me about volunteering to become a vaccinator. I am hugely grateful for these messages. I advised by the local NHS that, although there is sufficient capacity for now, recruits are being trained. That is a sensible strategy, as it builds workforce resilience, and also creates a surge capacity if required.*

*I hope those doing the training will note that there is no guarantee they will be called up. Much will depend on the rate at which vaccines can be manufactured and delivered. It is very reassuring, however, to know vaccinators are there in reserve."*

## **ADVICE FOR WEEKEND TRAIN TRAVEL IN JANUARY – FOR THOSE WHO MUST TRAVEL**

Network Rail are carrying out weekend improvement works on the Great Western mainline between Swindon and Didcot Parkway taking place over the next three weekends (16/17, 23/24, and 30/31 January).

During the works:

- trains between London Paddington and South Wales or Bristol Temple Meads will be diverted via an alternative route; extending journey times by up to 20 minutes
- shuttle services will run between Swindon and Cheltenham Spa with connections to London services
- shuttle services will run between Bristol Temple Meads and Swindon, except for the weekend of 23/24 January when these will terminate at Chippenham
- buses will replace trains between Swindon and Didcot Parkway or Reading, extending to Chippenham on 23/24 January
- trains will operate to an amended timetable on the Transwilt between Swindon and Westbury on 16/17 and 30/31 January, and between Chippenham and Westbury on 23/24 January, with buses replacing trains between Chippenham and Swindon

More information can be found [here](#).

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**Making the most of the snow:** Alex took his family sledding over the Christmas holidays on Cox's Meadow, to make the most of the (limited) snowfall Cheltenham received. This was prior to the announcement of a national lockdown and stay at home guidelines.

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