

Report on Business Rates delayed until Autumn

The [Government has confirmed](#) that it will now publish its final report on business rates in Autumn 2021 when there is more economic certainty. This follows a commitment from the Chancellor in the last Budget to carry out a fundamental review of business rates.

The Government has delayed the report due to the ongoing and wide-ranging impacts of the pandemic and economic uncertainty. They will now [publish an interim report](#) on 23 March, along with a number of tax documents, consultations and calls for evidence on a wide-range of tax-related issues.

Motor vehicle usage at around two-thirds of normal levels

The Department for Transport has published its [latest weekly transport usage figures](#) showing that motor vehicle usage is currently running at around two-thirds of pre-pandemic levels, whilst national rail and London Underground usage peaked in the last week at 14% and 18% respectively.

Additional financial support for Wales

The UK [Government has announced](#) that it is providing the devolved administration in Wales with an additional £650 million to support people, businesses and public services affected by coronavirus.

The money is in addition to the £5.2 billion already provided for this year through the upfront Barnett guarantee, bringing the total to £5.85 billion.

820,000 more adults under 70 to be prioritised for vaccine

The Government has [announced the use of a new model](#) to identify adults in England with multiple risk factors that make them more vulnerable to Covid-19 and will be sending a [letter](#) to them in the coming days advising them to shield.

This will mean they are advised against attending work and should work from home until the next review point on 31 March.

To allow for vaccinations to be provided more quickly to people in this group, they will be included within the clinically extremely vulnerable list and will be entitled to the [same support](#) as people already on the Shielded Patient List.

Covid-19 Bulletin

19 February 2021



February sees significant drop in infection rates

[Initial findings](#) from Imperial College London and Ipsos MORI show infections fell by more than two-thirds from the last report (6-22 January), with 1 in 196 people infected. Over 85,400 volunteers were tested in England between 4 and 13 February to examine the levels of infection in the general population.

The [latest R-rate](#) for the UK is between 0.6 and 0.9 meaning that, on average, every 10 people infected will infect between 6 and 9 other people. The growth rate is between -6% and -3% meaning that the number of new infections is shrinking by between 3% and 6% every day.

Latest [Local Authority figures](#) show that of the 314 Local Authorities in England, twelve reported an increase in Covid rates per 100,000 population during the past week, five remained unchanged and the remaining 297 areas all reported a fall in rates.