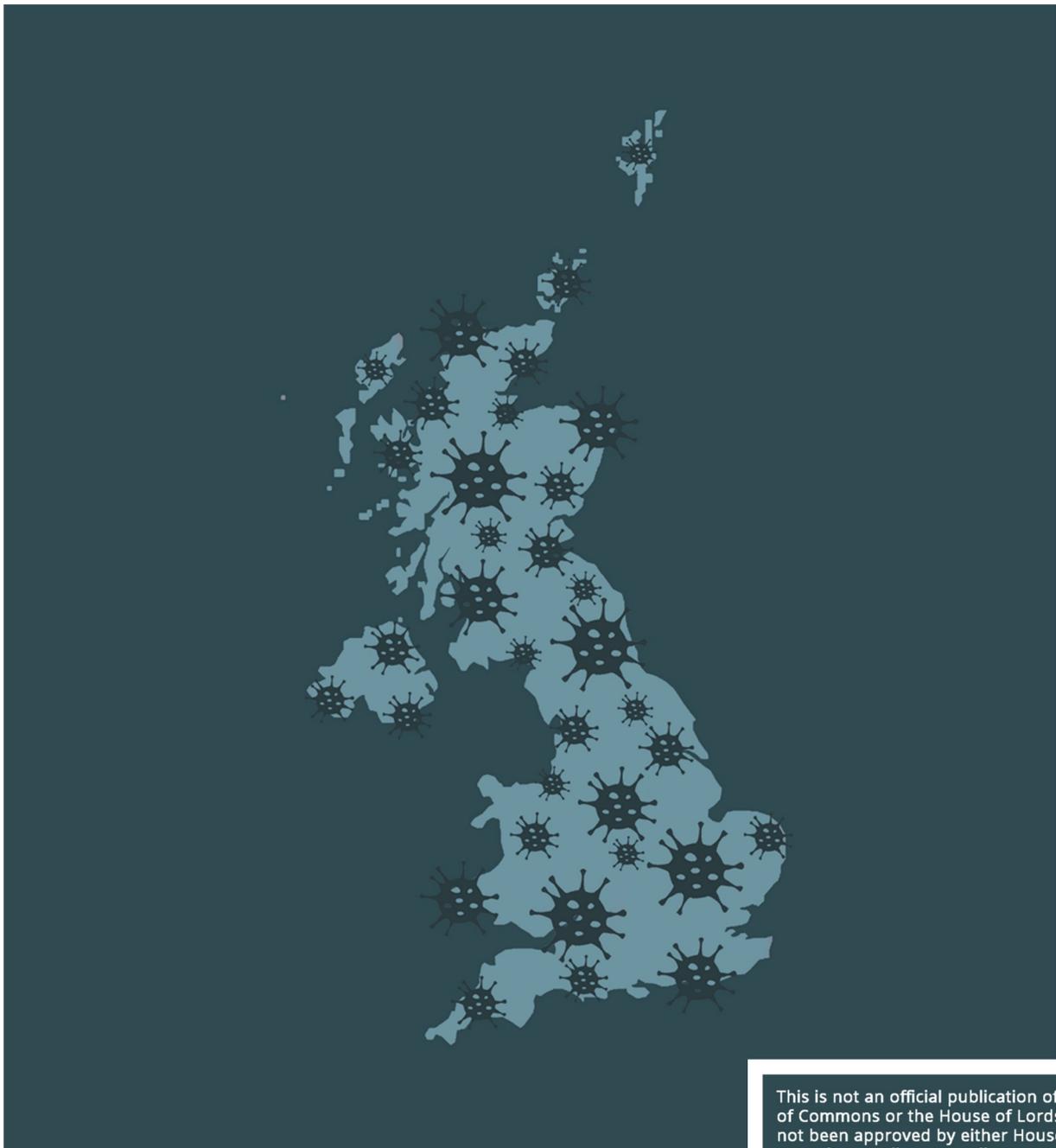




The All Party Parliamentary Group on  
**Coronavirus**

*COVID GREEN PASS FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL  
JUNE 2021*



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## All-Party Parliamentary Group on Coronavirus

The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Coronavirus (APPG) was set up in July 2020 to conduct a rapid inquiry into the UK government's handling of the Coronavirus pandemic. Its purpose is to ensure that lessons are learned from the UK Government's handling of the Coronavirus outbreak to date and to issue recommendations to the UK Government so that its preparedness and response may be improved in future.

At the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Coronavirus' [22nd session](#) on 4th May the group heard evidence on the use of 'vaccine passports' for mass events and international travel. The rapid growth of the B.1.617.2 (Delta) variant of concern highlights the importance of continued vigilance when seeking to tackle Covid-19.

The expert witnesses to the hearing outlined the important distinctions that must be drawn between the use of vaccine passports for international travel, mass events, and everyday activities.

The APPG acknowledges that the terminology surrounding 'vaccine passports' is varied and may cause confusion. For the purposes of this report and the recommendations, the APPG recommends that 'Covid Green Pass' should be used.

Based on the evidence heard, the APPG believes that current measures put in place at UK entry points by the UK government are not sufficient to address the threat of importation of new variants posed by international travel.

The APPG recommends the use of a digital 'Covid Green Pass' to standardise testing results and proof of a negative test, reducing queue length, waiting times at UK arrival halls and the risk of importing and spreading new Covid-19 variants in the UK.

The APPG recommends that the digital 'Covid Green Pass' should require and display proof of a recent negative PCR test for Covid-19 in order to travel to the UK. The 'Covid Green Pass' should contain individuals' vaccination status, but because vaccination does not negate the possibility of carrying and transmitting new variants of Covid-19, the 'Covid Green Pass' should not use vaccination status as an alternative to proof of a recent negative PCR test to travel to the UK until a high level of vaccination is attained globally.

### **Parliamentarians in attendance:**

Layla Moran MP (Chair)  
Caroline Lucas MP  
Dr Philippa Whitford MP  
Lord Strasburger  
Baroness Masham  
Barbara Keeley MP  
Lord Russell  
Baroness Finlay  
Baroness Brady

### **Evidence provided from:**

Professor Stephen Reicher  
Professor John Drury  
Dr Tolullah Oni  
Bill Bush, Premier League  
Henk van Klaveren, Airports Operators  
Association  
Paul Nuki, Telegraph

## Recommendations

**Given the risk posed by Covid variants, the UK should progress the implementation of a digital 'Covid Green Pass' before reopening international travel further.** Covid Green Passes should not be used as an alternative to low prevalence strategy, but rather as an essential element of a suppression policy such as the Covid-Secure UK plan as described in the [APPG on Coronavirus's Interim Report](#).

The Covid Green Pass should be implemented across all four nations of the UK.

### International application of Covid Green Pass

- 1. The Covid Green Pass must contain and display proof of a negative Covid-19 PCR test via a simple 'green/red' system and QR code. Vaccination status alone should not be sufficient for international travel, and should be combined with a negative PCR test in order to provide the strongest possible protections against Covid variants being imported into the UK. This should remain in place until a high level of vaccination is attained globally.**
- 2. The Covid Green Pass should be integrated with the currently available NHS app. The government should work with the NHS to ensure that wherever possible data used on the Covid Green Pass is held by the health service.**
- 3. The UK government should ensure that a Covid Green Pass is compatible and fully integrated with e-gates at UK entry points. International travel cannot resume safely until e-gate integration is completed.**
- 4. The UK government should, once international travel can resume safely, consider measures to reduce the cost of PCR tests such as VAT exemptions, capping test prices and exploring whether the NHS can build the capacity to carry out tests for international travel.**
- 5. The UK government should aim to ensure the implementation of a digital Covid Green Pass is compatible with other international systems such as the European Union Covid Green Certificate.**

## Key Findings

- 1. While the UK and global population remain only partially vaccinated, and because vaccination does not negate the risk of transmission of Covid-19, the focus of the 'Covid Green Pass' should continue to be proof of a recent negative PCR test.**
- 2. Vaccines, and therefore a Covid Green Pass, are not a 'silver bullet'. A Covid Green Pass should be considered in line with other strategies to reduce exposure risk and make spaces Covid secure. The Government should work towards a low prevalence solution.**

*2.1 "Vaccinations play a really critical role, and they are key in our armoury but not a silver bullet so then we are thinking about how to complement strategies to reduce exposure risk and make spaces safer." (Dr Tollulah Oni)*

- 3. Paper-based solutions contribute to lengthy queues and mixing in arrival halls. They are more susceptible to fraud than a digital Covid Green Pass. Paper-based documents are not a long-term solution.**

*3.1 "When I arrived at Heathrow having travelled from the Cote D'Ivoire via Brussels it was just chaotic. You arrived at a huge arrival hall, filled with people, really packed and people in close proximity and in an unventilated environment for a long period of time". (Paul Nuki)*

*3.2 "A number of red list countries, the majority of them, have a flight ban on them. If you are a UK national wanting to return to the UK, as it is your right as a UK citizen, you have to fly somewhere else. You have to fly via a different airport, and you have to fly in with other people from other parts of the world. So, the mixing is already occurring relatively early on". (Henk van Klaveren, AOA)*

*3.3 "There were too few people checking people's paperwork and the paperwork that needed to be presented wasn't a simple digital pass which pinged yes or no.. It's problematic from a health point of view and from a consumer confidence point of view... it is important you know summer is coming up fast but this issue with travel is going to last probably for three, four, five years and we need to build a system which is equitable and functional over that period otherwise we are really going to become one part of a two or three tier world". (Paul Nuki)*

*3.4 "It would be extraordinarily easy to fraud something at the moment and I don't think one can blame the Border force unable to spot it. I mean the system at the moment asks you to have a test from anyone of 101 different providers, all on different paperwork and none of them very secure so the chap or woman at Border Force he/she could have no idea and the only way they could possibly double check is to spend a couple of hours to phone up to see who has put their signature on it. Somehow deciphering if they're a real person or not. So, the answer must be a more streamline system, so a small group of approved providers who are simultaneously making their data available to a system visible to Border Force". (Paul Nuki)*

*3.5 "The vaccine certificate will probably be useful in a digital format of boarding in the UK airports and upon return, the border force in the UK and Home Office made it very clear it will not accept these digital solutions". (Henk van Klaveren, AOA)*

**4. E-gate upgrades must be implemented before international travel is resumed in summer. Without e-gates, queues will continue to be 'unacceptable from a welfare, safety and security perspective'.**

4.1 *"They're aiming to have the e-gate upgrade that is necessary to allow this digitalisation to happen completed by the Autumn. And the Autumn is a preposterous deadline. It needs to be before the summer, but that is a real significant challenge given the resources available and the process required to be able to do this. So, I think we need to separate those two things out when discussing vaccine passports here because the NHS app will not solve the border" (Henk van Klaveren, AOA)*

4.2 *"If you for example to get through the E-gate upon your return but that is not currently possible and indeed it needs to be possible and it needs to be possible really rapidly as the queues at the moment are unacceptable from a welfare perspective but also from a safety and security perspective". (Henk van Klaveren, AOA)*

**5. The Covid Green Pass should be implemented across all four nations of the UK.**

5.1 *"Then it becomes [necessary for] the next stages to ensure say that four nation approach for the three other health systems are also sharing into the process so that as a consumer you don't need to download different apps depending on whether you are travelling from England or Scotland for example, which people do" (Henk van Klaveren, AOA)*

**6. The Covid Green Pass should be integrated with the NHS app, and combine both test results and vaccination status**

6.1. *"The NHS app, if it does indeed is used for that process as vaccination proof does need to include test results" (Henk van Klaveren, AOA)*

6.2 *"Those tests are there for a reason and part of that risk-based approach. Now if Government are saying that it is essential to do that, they may wish to consider whether they take part in the NHS process indeed from an outbound perspective actually allowing the NHS to do tests for that as well, allows you to integrate significantly easier into an app as you don't have to work with third party providers and integrate that data. There is a very simple solution to that. The only issue you have is there are four NHSs in the UK" (Henk van Klaveren, AOA)*

6.3 *"A lot of the queues I was standing in were held up because the UK have a requirement that you have organised tests for day two and day eight after your arrival in the UK and they were trying to establish whether people had booked these tests. Now if the Government had required those tests to be booked through the NHS system then I could see very quickly you could have a QR code that said yes, they have got the test booked through the NHS system. But as things stand you can get those tests booked anywhere" (Paul Nuki).*



**This report was compiled by March for Change as the APPG on  
Coronavirus secretariat**

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