

Recovery from Covid-19 at the local level: Using data to inform decision-making

Introduction

Over a year has passed since the World Health Organization declared the Covid-19 pandemic and the UK entered its first lockdown. The pandemic has had a severe impact on the UK economy with GDP declining 9.9 per cent during 2020. With multiple vaccines available and the UK vaccination programme proceeding at pace, the UK government has set out its roadmap for easing restrictions.¹ This will enable many economic activities to restart. However, the pace of economic recovery is uncertain and is likely to vary across localities.

This paper is intended to help local policy-makers monitor the recovery in their local area. It provides suggestions about datasets that can be used to understand what is happening at the local level, alongside suggestions about things to consider when analysing them. Recommendations are also made about data sources that may be useful for longer-term recovery planning. Advice is given on how to make best use of data and on responding to the issues identified through data analysis. To provide context for these recommendations, we start by setting out the most recent national forecasts for economic recovery.

Economic recovery

The [OBR Economic and fiscal outlook](#) published in March 2021 forecast that:

- UK GDP will grow by 4.0 per cent in 2021 and 7.3 per cent in 2022. Whilst these are historically high levels of growth, they reflect the severity of the decline in GDP during 2020. GDP will be just 93.7 per cent of the 2019 level in 2021 and 100.5 per cent in 2022.

¹ Details of the roadmap and the measures set out in Budget 2021 to support businesses and individuals during this transition period are given in Annex 1.

Forecast growth rates for subsequent years (1.7 per cent in 2023, 1.6 per cent in 2024 and 1.7 per cent in 2025) are broadly in line with pre-Covid-19 trend.

- Government consumption and investment will be the main source of growth in 2021 (with increases of 12.0 per cent and 17.8 per cent), with rates dropping significantly in subsequent years.
- Household consumption is forecast to increase each year to 2025, with the largest increase in 2022 (11.1 per cent).
- Business investment is forecast to fall in 2021 (by 2.2 per cent), followed by a large increase in 2022 (16.6 per cent).
- Unemployment is forecast to continue to rise, to 5.6 per cent in 2021 and 5.9 per cent in 2022. It is forecast to fall to 5.1 per cent in 2023, 4.5 per cent in 2024 and 4.4 per cent in 2025. Whilst the forecast declines are welcome, the forecast unemployment rate for 2025 is higher than 2019 rate of 3.8 per cent.

This suggests that the UK economy will take time to recover from the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The pace of the recovery will also vary across local areas, reflecting:

- Industrial structure of their economies
- Economic conditions in the area prior to pandemic
- Covid-19 cases, with there being some evidence that individuals adjust their behaviour in line with perceived risk

Other factors that will affect recovery will include the extent to which the pandemic has led to changes in working patterns and the impact of the UK's new trading relationship with the EU and other countries. Again, the impacts of these will vary across areas.

Monitoring local economic recovery

It will be important for local policy-makers to monitor the recovery in their economies. This will allow them to target their efforts on supporting those sectors, localities and population groups that are recovering more slowly. For example, monitoring mobility trends will allow local authorities to understand which locations have returned to pre-Covid-19 levels of activity and which may need additional support.

The data requirements will vary across local areas. This paper covers three key topics that we think local areas should consider monitoring over the short to medium term:

- Mobility
- Labour market
- Covid-19 data

These topics have been chosen, in part, because timely data is available that allow trends to be monitored in near-to-real-time. There are many other topics (for example, business closures) that would be extremely useful to track but where no timely dataset exists.

We describe several datasets under each topic. Looking at a range of datasets and indicators will help local areas to build a more detailed understanding of what is happening in their area. In addition, as all datasets have their limitations, having multiple datasets covering the same topic should help improve decision-making. A summary of each data source is provided in Annex 2, covering frequency, geographies and breakdowns available.

This section concludes by setting out a range of other resources that local policymakers may wish consult.

Mobility

Mobility data measures the movement of individuals or vehicles between locations, with most indicators focusing on the volume of movement. The widespread use of mobile phones that can track movement using in-built GPS has dramatically increased the availability of mobility data. Whilst not directly measuring economic activity, mobility data is useful as many economic activities involve movement between locations – for example, goods being transported to markets, and individuals travelling to work, study, retail or for recreational activities.

Mobility dropped dramatically during the first lockdown. Subsequent lockdowns also saw declines in mobility, but these were less severe than in the first lockdown. We would expect to see mobility increase during the recovery phase.

Some things to consider when monitoring mobility trends include:

- Mobility levels in the initial period following each easing of restrictions are likely to be highly variable. Areas with attractive retail, hospitality and recreational offerings may temporarily see mobility levels above normal levels due to pent-up demand. Similarly, if international travel is prohibited or discouraged during summer 2021, these areas are likely to see high mobility from domestic visitors.
- Whilst we expect to see mobility increase over time, it may not return to pre-Covid-19 levels if working from home becomes embedded as a working practice. The impact of this shift will vary across localities based on the proportion of jobs that can be done from home and on commuting patterns.
- It will be important to understand if there have been any changes in the type or patterns of mobility. For example, has there been a switch from public transport to car travel? Are people travelling less during the working week? Has there been a shift in retail or hospitality from city centres to local high streets?

Sources of data on mobility include:

- [Apple mobility trends](#) provide data on the relative volume of directions requests compared to a baseline volume on 13 January 2020. One data point is provided per day, per location, per transport type (walking, driving and transit), with the dataset updated daily. At the UK level, data is available for 15 major cities plus England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the UK.²
- [Google community mobility reports](#) provide data on visits to different categories of places (retail and recreation, groceries and pharmacies, parks, transit stations, workplaces, and residential). The data is updated daily, with a two-to-three-day lag. Visits are compared to a baseline value for that day of the week, based on the median value for the corresponding day of the week during the five-week period from 3 January to 6 February 2020. Data is available for around 150 geographies across the UK.
- [Springboard daily footfall data](#) provides daily data on footfall. Publicly available data aggregates to broad town types (Central London, regional cities and market towns) with more granular data available through a paid subscription.³
- [TomTom Origin-Destination Analysis](#) allows trip patterns to be analysed as it includes data on both the origin and destination of trips. This could be used to understand commuting and other mobility patterns (for example, where visitors to tourism sites come from). Outputs include maps, matrices and Sankey diagrams. The data can be accessed through a web application or an API. This is a paid service but free trials are available.

² Information about the content, coverage and frequency of all datasets is correct at date of publication. However, these may change over time so you should double-check before use.

³ Throughout this paper, we highlight several paid services that may be useful for local policy-makers to consult. Their inclusion in this paper should not be considered an endorsement, and other services may be available.

- Centre for Cities publishes a [high streets recovery tracker](#), which measures levels of activity in 63 cities and large towns using anonymised mobile phone data from Locomiser. This tracker provides data from 13 February 2020 onwards and is updated monthly. As well as providing overall city-centre footfall, it also provides indices for workers, weekends and evenings. Spend data is also provided.
- Network Rail publishes data on [station concourse footfall](#) for 18 major stations on a quarterly basis. This is published shortly after the end of the quarter.
- For local areas with a major port or airport:
 - The Office for National Statistics (ONS) publishes [weekly shipping indicators](#) as part of its 'economic activity faster indicators' series. This dataset uses satellite images to estimate the number of daily and weekly visits by ships to 15 major ports.
 - Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) publishes monthly data on 60 UK [airports](#). This includes data on airport activities, passengers, freight and mail.

In addition to benchmarking within datasets, local areas may also wish to compare trends in their local area to the official statistics published on the [pandemic](#) by the Department for Transport. This includes data by transport mode.

Labour market

With economic activities being curtailed to help prevent the spread of Covid-19, employment has decreased, and unemployment has increased. The Government introduced several measures to protect jobs, including financial support for furloughed workers through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS), and for the self-employed through the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS).

During the recovery phase, we would expect to see several trends in the labour market.

- As categories of businesses that have had to close can re-open, the number of furloughed workers should decline. We would expect to see month-on-month declines between now and September when the scheme closes. Similarly, there should be a decline in the numbers claiming SEISS, although the grant-based nature of this support may mean the trend is less clear than for CJRS.
- Many government support schemes are scheduled to end in September 2021. As these cease, some businesses will become financially unviable and cease trading, and others will need to make some staff redundant. This may lead to a decline in employment and an increase in unemployment.
- As the economy recovers over the longer-term, employment should increase and unemployment should decrease. However, it is likely to take an extensive period to reach this point, with unemployment normally continuing to rise for some time following the end of a recession.

Some things to consider when monitoring local labour market trends during the recovery phase include:

- Trends for different age groups. Young people have been most affected by Covid-19 and we would expect this to continue in the short term.
- Trends for different sectors. Hospitality, arts and recreation are the sectors that have been most significantly affected by Covid-19 lockdowns and restrictions. Other sectors that would be valuable to monitor include retail (with a focus on non-food retail), health and construction. Whilst not Covid-19-related, local areas may also want to monitor trends within their main exporting sectors, as the UK's new trading relationship with the EU may also be having an impact on their recovery.

The main sources of data on the labour market are:

- HMRC [statistics](#) on the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) and Self-Employed Income Support Scheme (SEISS).
 - CJRS statistics provide the number of CJRS claims and take-up rates at the regional, local authority and parliamentary constituency level, broken down by employee gender. A sectoral breakdown is also available at the regional and local authority level.
 - SEISS statistics provide the number of individuals claiming the SEISS grant, and the value of these claims at the regional, local authority and parliamentary constituency level. At the regional level, breakdowns are also available by gender and age of claimants, and sector.
- ONS official labour market statistics. Those that provide timely data that is likely to be most useful for monitoring the recovery include:
 - [Claimant count](#) provides data on number of adults that are unemployed and claiming benefits. It is available at the local authority level, with data for other geographies (including regions, wards and super output areas) available on [Nomis](#). The data is lagged by around a month with, for example, data on claimant count at mid-January published in mid-February. However, these initial estimates are released with the expectation that they may be updated as further data becomes available, with data normally revised the following month. The local authority data available on ONS is broken down by gender. The Nomis data can be broken down by gender and age of claimant.
 - [Regional labour market statistics](#) published monthly, based on the Labour Market Survey. These include estimates for economic activity, employment, unemployment, and economic inactivity, broken down by gender. Each release covers a quarter, with a small lag (around six weeks between the end of quarter and publication). Rates are also available but ONS has flagged that, as these are based on 2018 population estimates, they reflect pre-Covid-19 population trends. Data is also available on [redundancies](#).

- With the growth in online job adverts, it has become possible to track and analyse vacancy data in close to real-time, with several providers now offering this as a paid service. Free services include:
 - [Adzuna](#) has an API that allows analysis of vacancy and salary data. In addition, ONS has been working with Adzuna and publishes [online job advert estimates](#) on a weekly basis. Data is available at the regional level, with both year-on-year comparisons for individual weeks and an index (where 2019=100) available.
 - Indeed publish analysis of job postings through its [hiringlab](#). This regularly includes analysis for UK regions and cities.
- Centre for Cities publishes an [unemployment tracker](#) for 63 cities and large towns. This includes data from Claimant Count, CJRS and Indeed.

Covid-19 data

Over the last year, lockdowns have imposed restrictions on economic activities. However, even when lockdowns were not in place, economic activities remained below pre-Covid-19 levels. This suggests that perceived safety is likely to affect the decisions made by individuals and employers. For example, an employer may choose to keep its offices closed or an individual may choose not to eat in a restaurant while infection levels remain high. This suggests that local economic policy-makers should continue to monitor Covid-19, alongside attitudes and perceptions.

Data sources that may be useful include:

- Data on coronavirus cases.
 - Seven-day averages are [available](#) for regions and local authorities. Data is updated daily, with the data available being the seven days ending five days before the date of the update. Cases per 100,000 population are provided to allow comparison across geographies, but these do not account for different rates of testing or differences in the local demographics.
 - Data at the mid super output area (MSOA) level is also [available](#) on a weekly basis.
 - Public Health England publishes [weekly local authority watchlists and epidemiological charts](#), including heatmaps showing cases by age band.
 - Centre for Cities publishes a weekly [coronavirus tracker](#) for 63 cities and major towns based on government data.
- NHS England publishes [weekly and monthly data](#) on vaccinations. Data is available at the regional, local authority, parliamentary constituency and MSOA level, alongside several health geographies such as clinical commissioning group areas. Similar data is published by [Public Health Scotland](#), [Public Health Wales](#) and the [Department of Health](#) in Northern Ireland. The geographic breakdowns available vary across nations.
- ONS publishes [Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain](#) on a weekly basis, drawing on the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey. This survey collects data on activities undertaken to prevent the spread of Covid-19, wellbeing, impact on life, perceptions of the future and social contacts. No local breakdown is available and regional data is only available for some indicators, but this dataset is worth consulting as it gives useful insights into people's experiences and attitudes.
- ONS also publishes an interactive [coronavirus latest insights tool](#) that brings together the key sources of data on Covid-19. Whilst most data in the tool is national, [regional summaries](#) are also available.

Other resources

Another key area of interest for local policymakers will be the impact Covid-19 is having on business in their area. There are few robust sources of data at the local level but there are resources available at the national or regional level, including both quantitative and qualitative insights:

- ONS undertakes a fortnightly [business impacts and conditions survey](#) (BICS). This includes data on financial performance, workforce, prices, trade and resilience. Breakdowns by sector and business size are available.
- Data on spending is available from several commercial providers including Beauclair, Experian and Money Dashboard. Similar to mobility data, spending in the initial period following each easing of restrictions is likely to be highly variable, with areas with attractive retail, hospitality and recreational offerings potentially seeing spending above normal levels due to pent-up demand.
- HMRC publishes [regional trade statistics](#) for goods on a quarterly basis, including breakdowns by commodity.
- The Bank of England has [agents](#) across the UK that have one-to-one conversations with businesses and community organisations to understand economic conditions and prospects. The Bank of England publishes its Agents' Summary of Business Conditions quarterly. Each summary reflects discussions with around 1,000 businesses, covering all sectors of the economy. They also publish a quantitative assessment of conditions, Agent's Scores.
- The National Institute for Economic and Social Research (NIESR) publishes a summary of their quarterly [Business Conditions Forum](#), which brings together senior economists from NIESR, the public sector and major survey organisations.
- [Natwest UK Regional PMI](#) provides indices on business activity, new business, future activity, employment, outstanding business, input prices and prices charged at the regional level.
- Other sources include business representative organisations and sectoral bodies.

In addition, government publishes [data](#) on the financial supports it provides for businesses including Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS), Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme, Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBLs), Future Fund, coronavirus grant funding and coronavirus business rates relief. CBILS and BBLs data is available for regions and parliamentary constituency, coronavirus grant funding data is available for local authorities and parliamentary constituency and coronavirus business rates relief data is available for regions, local authorities and parliamentary constituencies.

Local policymakers may also wish to draw on other sources of intelligence to inform their decision-making.

- Public sector partners including local authorities, transport authorities and Growth Hubs collect administrative data that may provide useful insights.
- ONS has published several *ad hoc* analyses of how Covid-19 is affecting specific groups (for example, people with disabilities, students). Other organisations that have looked at the impacts on groups include the [Institute for Fiscal Studies](#), the [Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#) and the [Learning and Work Institute](#).
- Several commercial providers publish data on retail, commercial and industrial property vacancy rates including [Local Data Company](#) and [Sqwyre](#).

- The Economics Statistics Centre for Excellence has a regional nowcasting project which produces [estimates of quarterly economic growth](#) for all UK regions to roughly the same timetable as the release of UK GVA data.
- The [Economics Observatory](#) publishes articles on Covid-19 and the UK economy. It aims to bridge the gap between academic research, government policy and the public by providing balanced, reliable and accessible material. They publish new articles, videos and charts on a daily basis.
- The House of Commons Library is an impartial research and information service for MPs and their staff and publishes a wide range of reports and data, including many on [Covid-19](#).
- The [Emergent Alliance](#) was established in response to Covid-19 and brings together major businesses, individuals, governments, and non-governmental organisations to share data, expertise and resources that can help inform economic decision-making.

Planning for the longer term

In addition to monitoring the recovery over the short to medium term, many local policy-makers are looking to develop longer-term recovery plans for their economies. These will need to respond to the impact Covid-19 on their local economy, and address other policy priorities including ‘levelling up’ and net zero.

These plans should reflect the composition, strengths and weaknesses of local economies and data will play a key part in developing this understanding. We have previously published guidance on [using data for local economic policy](#) and we encourage local areas to make use of this as part of their longer-term strategic planning.

Topics that we think are important to understand when developing a local economic strategy include understanding economic output, productivity, employment, demographics, business base and trade. Table 1 provides a summary of key datasets and measures. Our guide to using data for local economic policy includes details on additional datasets that may also be of use to you in understanding your local economy, and ONS has a [summary](#) of data available at the local level.

Table 1: Indicators of local economic performance

Topic	Key datasets	Key measures
Gross value added (GVA)	Regional GVA (balanced approach)	GVA (£bn) GVA per capita
Productivity	Sub-regional productivity	GVA per hour worked
Demographics	Population estimates Population projections Local area migration statistics	Total population % of population aged 0-15 % of population aged 16-64 % of population aged 65+ Net migration Projected change (and % change) over next five, 10 or 20 years
Employment	Business Register and Employment Survey Annual Population Survey – workplace analysis	Total jobs Jobs per capita Breakdown of jobs by sector Breakdown of jobs by occupation
Economic activity	Annual Population Survey	Economic activity rate Employment rate Unemployment rate Economic inactivity rate
Skills	Annual Population Survey	% of working age population with no qualifications % of working age population with Level 4+ qualifications
Earnings	Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings	Median gross weekly earnings of full-time workers – residence-based Median gross weekly earnings of full-time workers – workplace-based
Business base	UK Business Counts	Total businesses Businesses per capita Breakdowns by business size Breakdowns by sector
Business births, deaths and survival rates	Business demography	Business births Business birth rate Business deaths Business death rate Survival rates at one, three and five years
International trade	HMRC Regional Trade Statistics	Value (£m) of goods exports Value (£m) of goods imports Breakdowns by market and commodity Number of exporters and importers
Innovation ⁴	R&D expenditure UK Innovation Survey	R&D spend Business expenditure on R&D % of businesses that are innovation active

4 Only available at the regional level.

One challenge is that many of these datasets have significant time lags. For example, the Business Register and Employment Survey data is normally released in the September following the year it relates to, with the 2019 data published in September 2020. Whilst this is a long-running issue and reflects the time required to collect, clean and analyse data for publication, it is a particular challenge in interpreting recent data, given the volatility of the economy.

Covid-19 has also created challenges in the collection and compilation of many ONS datasets. This has included both practical challenges – such as the need to switch from face-to-face to telephone interviewing for surveys – and conceptual challenges – such as how to categorise furloughed workers within labour market statistics. ONS has published details of the issues they have faced and the approach they have taken to resolving them. These include:

- [Coronavirus and the effects on UK labour market statistics](#)
- [Coronavirus and the effects on UK productivity measures](#)
- [Impact of the coronavirus and EU exit on the collection and compilation of UK trade statistics](#)

Local areas should take these issues into consideration when using data to inform their recovery plan development.

How to make best use of data

We encourage local policy-makers to put in place processes to ensure that the data is feeding into decision-making processes. This includes ensuring it feeds into existing decision-making structures, such as the Skills Advisory Panels. Key considerations include:

- How data will be presented – e.g. report, online dashboard, etc.
- Whether to provide analysis only or if interpretation, commentary or recommendations are required
- Frequency of reporting

We also recommend publishing your analysis. This will help others in your local area (for example, universities, colleges and training providers, businesses, third sector organisations, etc.) to make informed decisions.

The case study below sets out the approach taken by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) to embedding data analysis into to their decision-making.

Case study: West Midlands Combined Authority

The combined authority set up an Economic Impact Group following the announcement of the first lockdown in March 2020. It meets weekly.

WMCA's Office for Data Analytics team compile a Weekly Economic Monitor to feed into each meeting, in partnership with the West Midlands Regional Economic Development Institute (WM-REDI). It draws on contributions from a wide range of regional partners including Local Enterprise Partnerships, Growth Hubs and local universities. The Weekly Economic Monitor includes a mix of quantitative and qualitative data including:

- Covid-19-specific datasets developed by ONS and others to track the impact of the pandemic on the economy and society. It also includes data on cases, hospital admissions and deaths.
- Pre-existing economic datasets from ONS, government departments and others. WMCA took a cautious approach to using these, especially in the early phase, as they recognised that some datasets may be affected by Covid-19.
- Administrative and survey data collected by the three local Growth Hubs.
- Intelligence gathered by local business representative organisations on local business conditions.
- Links to news, reports and blogs published by others that provide insights that may be useful to policymakers.
- Insights from academic partners. For example, in Issue 46, there are articles from on the impact of Covid-19 on entrepreneurship, on the regional impacts of economic and financial shocks and on adoption of digital technologies.

The Weekly Economic Monitor was intended to be a practical report that focused on “*emerging issues and the best data and intelligence we have to date*” rather than trying to be comprehensive. Consideration was given to presenting data using a dashboard (with there already being several internal and external dashboards that WMCA could have built upon) but it was decided a report would be the most useful format. A report format allows a broader range of intelligence to be included and for content to vary as different topics increased or decreased in importance and as new resources became available.

The same team is responsible for compiling the Strategic Economic Development Board Dashboard, which uses rapid indicators to review the performance of the region. This dashboard is presented within the Weekly Economic Monitor. Other dashboards utilised include a summary of the Transport for West Midlands transport dashboard (included weekly) and several other organisational dashboards including one from Public Health England.

The Mayor of West Midlands normally sets the agenda for the Economic Impact Group a couple of days prior to the meeting and the Office of Data Analytics/WM-REDI pulls together intelligence that will help the Economic Impact Group understand what is happening on the topics to be covered. The Weekly Economic Monitors have fed directly into recovery planning and the State of the Region 2020 and 2021 reports.

The Weekly Economic Monitor is published on the [City-REDI/WM-REDI](#) website. In addition to feeding into the Economic Impact Group and the development of West Midlands recovery plan, the Office for Data Analytics/WM-REDI teams also regularly present intelligence gathered through this process to other local and regional groupings.

Responding to issues identified by data analysis

Analysis of relevant and timely data can help identify the key issues that need addressing within a local economy. When developing policies to address these challenges, we recommend that drawing on the literature about ‘what works’. What Works Growth has published [evidence reviews](#) and [toolkits](#) on many local economic policies that will be relevant to the recovery. Those that may be useful include:

- **Supporting people** – Evidence reviews on [employment training](#) and [apprenticeships](#) and toolkits on [responding to major job losses](#), [careers counselling](#), financial incentives for [training](#) and [apprenticeships](#), and [pre-qualification](#) and [pre-apprenticeship](#) programmes to help prepare individuals to take up training and apprenticeship opportunities
- **Supporting businesses** – Evidence reviews on [business advice](#) and [access to finance](#) and toolkits on [mentors](#), [public advisors](#), [subsidised consultancy](#), and [training](#).

We have published Covid-19-specific [resources](#), including on responding to major shocks, public transport disruptions and behaviour change, and tackling youth unemployment. We have recently published evidence briefings on [improving high streets and town centres](#) and on [levelling up](#). And, reflecting growing interest in using green investments to stimulate a more inclusive and sustainable recovery, we have also recently published a paper on [local green investment](#). We will publish additional resources throughout the year and encourage you to sign-up for our [newsletter](#) to receive information about these.

One important thing to consider when using this material is that it draws on the available evaluation evidence, and few, if any, evaluations will have been undertaken in scenarios like the Covid-19 pandemic. Whilst ‘what works’ should remain constant in different economic conditions, some recommendations may be more difficult to deliver, especially where they require employer participation or local resources.

Annex 1: Recent government announcements on recovery

COVID-19 Response – Spring 2021

In its *COVID-19 Response – Spring 2021*, the UK government set out a four-step [roadmap](#) for the easing of restrictions across England. Measures with implications for the economy include:

- **Step 1:** From 8 March, schools and colleges will be open for all students, as will wraparound childcare and practical higher education courses. From 29 March, outdoor sport and leisure facilities, organised sport and parent and child groups (up to 15 parents) will be allowed.
- **Step 2:** At least five weeks after Step 1, no earlier than 12 April, all retail, outdoor hospitality, self-contained accommodation (for single households only), indoor leisure (including gyms), outdoor attractions such as zoos, theme parks and drive-in cinemas, libraries and community centres, personal care, and all children's activities, indoor parent and child groups (up to 15 parents). Event pilots will also begin.
- **Step 3:** At least five weeks after Step 2, no earlier than 17 May, indoor entertainment and attractions, organised indoor adult sport, remaining outdoor entertainment (including performances), and remaining accommodation can open. Indoor events will be allowed 1,000 attendees or 50 per cent capacity, outdoor seated events will be allowed 10,000 attendees or 25 per cent capacity and other outdoor events will be allowed 4,000 or 50 per cent capacity. International travel will be subject to review.
- **Step 4:** At least five weeks after Step 3, no earlier than 21 June, the Government hopes to be able to allow nightclubs to reopen, larger events to go ahead and for there to be no legal limits on social contact or life events.

The Government has said that each step will be assessed against four tests before proceeding and it has recently published updates on [relevant reviews](#) that sit alongside the roadmap. Plans to ease restrictions are also in place in [Scotland](#), [Wales](#) and [Northern Ireland](#).

Budget 2021

Reflecting the timescales set out above (including potential for some stages to take more than five weeks) and acknowledging that there will be a transition period while premises reopen and activities restart, the [Budget 2021](#) announced the extension of existing support measures to September 2021, including continuation of:

- Financial support for furloughed workers through CJRS and self-employed through SEISS.
- The £20 increase Universal Credit standard allowance.
- Reduced VAT rate for hospitality, accommodation and attractions (5 per cent), following by a further six months (to 31 March 2022) at the reduced rate of 12.5 per cent.
- Support for airports through the Airports and Ground Operations Support Scheme.

An increase in payments for employers who hire new apprentices was also announced, with employers who hire a new apprentice between 1 April and 30 September 2021 receiving £3,000 per new hire (compared to previous rates of £1,500 to £2,000).

The Budget also announced several other measures to support recovery including:

- Restart Grants of up to £6,000 per premise for non-essential retail businesses and up to £18,000 per premises for hospitality, accommodation, leisure, personal care and gym businesses in England.
- Recovery Loan Scheme that will provide lenders with a guarantee of 80 per cent on eligible loans between £25,000 and £10 million.
- £425 million of discretionary Additional Restrictions Grants to be allocated by local authorities.
- 100 per cent Business Rates holiday for three months (to 30 June 2021), followed by 66 per cent relief for nine months (to 31 March 2022).
- Additional funding for work placements and training for 16-to-24-year-olds.
- Additional support for sport and culture including an additional £300 million for the Culture Recovery Fund, £90 million for National Museums and cultural bodies, £500 million for the Film and TV Production Restart Scheme, £300 million for Sports Recovery Package and £1.2 million for the UEFA Women's Euro football competition.

Annex 2: Summary of data availability for recovery indicators⁵

	Frequency				Geography					Breakdowns			
	Daily	Weekly/ fortnightly	Monthly	Quarterly	Region	Local authority	Parliamentary constituency	Small area	Other	Gender	Age	Sector	Other
Apple mobility trends	x								x				x
Google community mobility reports	x								x				x
Springboard daily footfall data	x								x				x
TomTom origin-destination Analysis									x				x
Centre for Cities high street tracker			x						x				x
Network Rail station concourse footfall				x					x				
ONS weekly shipping indicators	x	x							x				x
CAA airports statistics			x						x				x
HMRC CJRS			x		x	x	x			x	x	x	
HMRC SEISS			x		x	x	x			x	x (Region only)	x (Region only)	
ONS Claimant Count			x		x	x	x	x		x	x		
ONS Regional labour market statistics			x		x					x	x		
Adzuna API	x								x			x	x
ONS online job advert estimates		x			x								
Indeed UK and Ireland hiringlab		x			x				x				
Coronavirus cases		x			x	x	x	x	x				
PHE local authority watchlists and epidemiological charts		x			x	x					x		
Centre for Cities coronavirus tracker		x							x				
NHS Covid-19 vaccinations		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
Public Health Scotland Covid-19 vaccination in Scotland dashboard	x					x			x	x	x		
Public Health Wales Rapid Covid-19 Surveillance Latest Vaccination Summary		x				x			x		x		
Department of Health NI Covid-19 vaccinations dashboard	x								x				
ONS coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain		x			Some				x		x		x

⁵ Information about the frequency, geography and breakdowns available is correct at date of publication. However, these may change over time so you should double-check before use.

This work is published by the What Works Centre for Local Economic Growth, which is funded by a grant from the Economic and Social Research Council, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, and the Department for Transport. The support of the Funders is acknowledged. The views expressed are those of the Centre and do not represent the views of the Funders.

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the report, but no legal responsibility is accepted for any errors omissions or misleading statements.

The report includes reference to research and publications of third parties; the What Works Centre is not responsible for, and cannot guarantee the accuracy of, those third party materials or any related material.

May 2021

What Works Centre for Local
Economic Growth

info@whatworksgrowth.org
@whatworksgrowth

www.whatworksgrowth.org



HM Government



© What Works Centre for Local
Economic Growth 2021