

The complimentary client newsletter of:



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The Week in Review

Monday 11 May



"It is coming down the mountain that is often more dangerous"

Over the bank holiday weekend, the 'stay at home' message remained firmly in place, as a range of celebrations to mark the 75th anniversary of VE Day were held. A nation in lockdown paused in a moment of unity and remembrance on Friday, as a two-minute silence was held.

The Red Arrows flew over the quiet streets of London and socially distanced parties took place up and down the country, to remember and step outside for a moment of respite. Renditions of the wartime classic *'We'll Meet Again'* were sung, drawing emotive parallels for many to the current situation.

On Thursday, Dominic Raab, the Foreign Secretary tempered expectations of an imminent end to lockdown, *"The virus is not beaten yet. It remains deadly and infectious...but because we held firm three weeks ago, we are now in a position to start to think about the next phase in this pandemic."*

The road ahead

After seven weeks in lockdown, the nation tuned in to the address from the Prime Minister on Sunday evening, who outlined the roadmap to reopen society. Boris Johnson started by thanking the nation for their effort and sacrifice so far, continuing, *"it would be madness now to throw away that achievement by allowing a second spike."*

He unveiled the skeleton of a conditional plan, which will be fleshed out in a statement in Parliament on Monday. He was keen to emphasise *"all of this is conditional, it all depends on a series of big ifs."* A new Covid Alert System was detailed, which has five levels and will govern how quickly lockdown restrictions could be eased.

He went on to outline a three-step plan. People who are unable to work from home should return to the workplace but avoid public transport if possible. From Wednesday, people can take unlimited outside exercise. The next step, at the earliest by 1 June, would be for some primary pupils to return to school in England. This stage would also involve reopening shops if the science is supportive. The third step could see some hospitality businesses and other public places reopen no earlier than 1 July. The PM reiterated, *"if there are problems, we will not hesitate to put on the brakes. We have been through the initial peak – but it is coming down the mountain that is often more dangerous."*

He added that the time will soon come to quarantine everyone coming into the country arriving by air, more details are expected in the following days. He signed off, *"For now we must stay alert, control the virus and save lives."*

The measures in the address apply to England, as most decisions relating to coronavirus and the lockdown in

other parts of the UK are made by the devolved administrations.

Trade concerns dissipate

Equity markets were buoyed at the tail end of last week, as more governments around the world gradually began reopening their economies and trade tensions eased as US and Chinese trade representatives revisited the Phase 1 trade deal on Friday.

Market optimism conflicted with economic data as unemployment numbers in the US revealed 20.5 million jobs were lost in April. The Bank of England supported sterling by standing firm on monetary policy, whilst delivering a gloomy economic outlook.

A poignant address

Airing exactly 75 years on from her father King George VI's address at the end of the Second World War, the Queen gave a poignant address to mark the anniversary. Commending the country's response to the pandemic she said, *"Our streets are not empty, they are filled with the love and the care that we have for each other."*

Careful navigation

We will continue our considered, measured approach to carefully navigate these challenging conditions. Financial advice is key, so please don't hesitate to get in contact with any questions or concerns you may have.

The value of investments can go down as well as up and you may not get back the full amount you invested. The past is not a guide to future performance and past performance may not necessarily be repeated.