Letters to the Editor

Lifting restrictions

Sir, Your leading article "Testing Questions" (Feb 22) rightly highlights that the government's plans fall short in not providing free testing for the over-50s and the clinically vulnerable. However, the plans also fail to recognise, and make provisions for, the unequal impact that the pandemic has had across society so far, and the unequal risks from "living with Covid". Expecting people to take personal responsibility to reduce the spread of Covid overlooks the insufficient provision of sick pay, which means that many of those who are infected will be tempted to continue working rather than take time off. The removal of statutory sick pay from day one of isolating further increases this risk.

Further, limits to free testing could lead to infection rates increasing more rapidly in more deprived areas of the country, where the impact of infection may be more severe given the lower uptake of vaccination.

David Finch
The Health Foundation

Sir, I tested positive at 8am on Sunday morning, an hour before I was due to participate in a church service of 50 people. The idea that I could have continued to meet and minister to such a group of people with such knowledge, without any restriction, is laughable. At least, anybody around

Post Office scandal

Sir, Melanie Phillips is absolutely right about the public indifference shown over the appalling treatment by the Post Office of more than 700 innocent sub-postmasters over 14 years ("Where's the outcry over Post Office scandal?", comment, Feb 22). I have seen with many recent scandals, including HBOS, Carillion, PPE contracts and Barclays, to name but a few, where systemic wrongdoing has been alleged but the management and the media has seen more meekly convicted. This case is for women and can be

Skeleton cuts no ice

Sir, Owen Slot ("Time to end expensive fixation with skeleton", sport, Feb 21) is right. Britain must be more realistic about which sports are likely to result in medals at a Winter Olympics and put resources into those. The obvious model to emulate is the Netherlands, which has even fewer mountains and less snow than Britain but won 17 medals in Beijing, eight of which were gold. All these medals, except one bronze, came from speed skating, a sport in which they have built upon tradition with great facilities and excellent coaching. The success we have achieved at Summer Olympics in cycling, rowing gives us clear, repeatable models to find world-beating speed on the ice rink.

Alan Hearne
Woodstock, Oxon

Unwitting divorce

Sir, It has been relatively easy to obtain a divorce fraudulently ("Woman unaware of divorce for 12 years after signature forged", Feb 21). The applicant for divorce has to give the address of their spouse/civil partner on the application but no check is made as to whether the postal address is actually that of the respondent or on the identity of the respondent or authenticity of the signature of acknowledgment that is returned to the court. Anyone worried about their marital status should carry out a search of the central register of decrees absolute.

Peter Devlin
District judge, Oxford Combined Court

Unsung royal son

Sir, I was disappointed to see just one line of The Times about the Duke of Cambridge's sons ("Church and state" November 26). There is an unsung royal son, Prince Harry. He is a lovely boy with a great sense of humour, and has served the country well. Why doesn't The Times give him the same coverage as his brother?

David Cameron
London