

Hampshire County Council
Public Health update
Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Briefing for County Councillors



This briefing focuses on the announcements made at today's press conference and includes government updates and information on looking after people who lack mental capacity, Universal Credit, infection prevention and testing.

It also provides an update on local issues including supporting vulnerable residents, help for unpaid carers, the Hampshire and Isle of Wight's (HIOW) Local Resilience Forum's (LRF) plans for a temporary mortuary and the Stay at Home Heroes campaign.

Please note that the briefing will not be issued over the Easter weekend, returning on Tuesday 14 April.

Members are kindly reminded to direct any coronavirus related queries and comments to the new dedicated inbox - coronavirus.memberqueries@hants.gov.uk

[View in browser](#)

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National context

Government's daily press conference

The press conference was chaired by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Dominic Raab.

The latest coronavirus figures were reported – 243,421 people have been tested, of whom 65,077 tested positive, 16,784 people have been admitted to hospital and there have been 7,978 deaths.

The Government provided an update on the Prime Minister's health – he remains in intensive care but continues to make positive steps forward and is in good spirits.

It was announced that the social distancing measures will stay in place for longer. The current measures will not be relaxed until evidence shows that the UK has moved beyond the peak of the outbreak.

The public were urged to stay at home during the bank holiday weekend and to continue following the Government guidance – stay at home to protect the NHS and save lives.

The slides and datasets to accompany today's coronavirus press conference are available to [view online](#).

Looking after people who lack mental capacity

The Department of Health and Social Care has published new [guidance](#) for health and social care staff who are caring for, or treating, a person who lacks the relevant mental capacity. It focuses on new scenarios and potential 'deprivations of liberty' created by the outbreak.

Digital communication in health and social care

The Department of Health and Social Care has [announced](#) that NHSX is working with technology firms to provide solutions to reducing social isolation during the pandemic. This includes providing video-calling devices to hospitals for patients to use, enabling health and care staff to work remotely, improving communication between clinical and care teams, shifting hospital outpatients to virtual appointments and accelerating the use of online and video consultations within GP and primary care services.

Universal Credit

The Department for Work and Pensions has [announced](#) that in response to the high volume of calls to Universal Credit phone lines, people making new claims for Universal Credit no longer need to call the Department if they need to check any of the information provided as part of the claim.

New permitted development rights

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has [published regulations](#) that provide a new time limited emergency permitted development right to support health service bodies and local authorities' immediate response to coronavirus.

HMRC business webinars

HMRC are delivering a [programme of webinars](#) on the Government's measures to support employers, employees and the self-employed through the period of disruption caused by coronavirus.

School and college performance measures

The Department for Education has [published](#) a document setting out their temporary approach to school and college accountability, performance tables and data during the coronavirus outbreak.

Prisons

The [guidance for families and friends of those in prison](#) has been updated to include additional contact information for people who have an urgent concern.

Infection prevention

Public Health England has published new [guidance](#) on appropriate infection prevention and control precautions for patients recovering, or recovered, from COVID-19 and remaining in hospital, or being discharged to their own home or residential care.

Testing

The Government have today (9 April) issued a [call to industry](#) as they seek help to supply equipment, complete testing methods and provide laboratory capacity. The Government's [national testing strategy](#) includes a commitment to deliver 100,000 tests a day by the end of the month.

Statutory residence test

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, has written a [letter](#) to the chair of the Treasury Select Committee to outline temporary changes to the Statutory Residence Test (SRT) for those coming to the country to work on Covid-19 related activity.

Summer 2020 qualifications

The Secretary of State for Education, Gavin Williamson, has sent [directions](#) to Sally Collier, Chief Regulator of Ofqual, about awarding results for qualifications being assessed summer 2020 including GCSEs, A Levels and vocational and technical qualifications.

Local context

Support for vulnerable residents

The Hampshire coronavirus Helpline – [hantshelp4vulnerable](#) – will remain fully operational over the bank holiday weekend between the hours of 9am and 5pm – with district-based Local Response Centres also continuing to coordinate support efforts. The County Council issued a [press release](#) publicising these arrangements and thanking all professionals and volunteers who continue to put Hampshire's most vulnerable residents first.

Community First has launched a [survey](#) to capture the impact of coronavirus on Hampshire's Voluntary and Community Sector organisations. The information collected will help ensure groups are being supported as effectively and quickly as possible.

Temporary mortuary facilities

The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Resilience Forum have set out their plans for the creation of a possible temporary mortuary on a carefully selected site at Southampton Airport. The site would serve Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton, should the need arise. Separate arrangements are in place for the Isle of Wight. The plans are being carefully developed in partnership between all relevant agencies including the Coroner's office and the County Council's Director of Public Health.

Household waste

The County Council is [reminding](#) residents that HWRCs will remain closed over the Easter weekend and is asking them to take a new approach to household waste during the Coronavirus outbreak. Residents are asked to consider making small adjustments which allow them to reduce rather than create waste.

The County Council continues to work with the District Councils to maintain kerbside waste collections, allowing people follow the Government guidance to stay home and avoid non-essential travel.

Help for unpaid carers

The County Council has issued a [press release](#) reminding informal (unpaid) carers that there is help and advice available to support them and the individuals they care for during the coronavirus pandemic.

Stay at home heroes

Hampshire County Council has produced a [short animation](#) on behalf of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Resilience Forum (HLOW LRF) asking residents to be a #StayatHomeHero this Easter and save lives. The animation contains a series of Easter-themed activity ideas for individuals and families to do at home.

In addition, the County Council has issued a [press release](#) on behalf of the HLOW LRF urging Hampshire, Southampton Portsmouth and Isle of Wight residents to continue adhering to the Government's direction to stay at home and help prevent the spread of Coronavirus this Easter Bank Holiday weekend.

Alongside this, a separate [animation](#) has been produced, specifically aimed at teens, which will be promoted on social media. The animation is a reminder of the risks of meeting up with friends during the pandemic, asking teens to - 'hang in there, not outside' – and follow the Government's instruction to stay at home and save lives.

Clap for key workers

The nation will come together again at 8pm this evening as part of the Clap for Our Carers campaign to recognise the efforts of frontline carers and NHS workers fighting the coronavirus pandemic. The County Council will share a new [short animation](#) showcasing the range of key workers across the Authority and will also promote a mini broadcast from the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services and Young People, Cllr Patricia Stallard.

Additional links

- Hampshire County Council webpages on coronavirus (including links to press releases): <https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/coronavirus>
- Latest information on coronavirus: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
- NHS information on coronavirus: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- Q&A from Public Health England on coronavirus: <https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2020/01/23/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-what-you-need-to-know/>
- Guidance for local government: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-local-government>

- County Councils Network (CCN) coronavirus information pages:
<https://www.countycouncilsnetwork.org.uk/coronavirus-information-for-local-authorities/>
- Local Government Association (LGA) councillor guidance:
<https://www.local.gov.uk/covid-19-outbreak-councillor-guidance>