

Local context

Local Covid data

The County Council will today (8 February) [publish](#) the latest weekly Covid-19 data summary. Hampshire is seeing a steady decrease in the number of positive cases, but the numbers in hospital remain high. The County Council is thanking residents for all they are doing in helping to keep Hampshire safe – by protecting themselves and others.

The total number of cases in Hampshire since March 2020 is now 57,487 and there have been 2,358 cases confirmed in the last seven days.

The county's current weekly case rate has decreased to 193.8 per 100,000 population and remains below the England case rate at 233.2.

There have been 2,039 Covid-19 associated deaths in Hampshire since March, and 208 deaths reported in the last seven days.

The full data dashboard is available on the [Keep Hampshire Safe webpage](#). [Data on Hampshire districts](#) and [data on positive cases in Hampshire schools](#).

National Apprenticeship Week

Hampshire County Council is celebrating this National Apprenticeship Week 2021 (8- 14 February) virtually. Apprenticeships are a key element of the County Council's Employment and Skills strategy for post-pandemic economic recovery, and are being promoted to ensure that the county will have people with the skills that employers require to meet local needs.

This week, the County Council will launch the [EM3 Apprenticeships and Skills hub](#) in the north of the county, to complement the hub already operating in the Solent area. The hubs work with businesses to match unemployed people with apprenticeship opportunities and to tackle skill shortages.

In the past year, the County Council has also:

- Doubled the allocation of Levy transfer funds to £2 million to support Hampshire businesses to commit to new apprenticeships;
- Passed the 1000th apprentice starter milestone;
- Moved school and corporate apprenticeships online to continue as remote learning;
- Launched the Apprenticeship Influencer programme, part of a national initiative.

More information is available in the [press release](#) and on the [Hampshire Futures](#) webpages.

Supporting vulnerable residents throughout the cold weather

The County Council is [reminding](#) residents to look after themselves, friends and neighbours in a Covid-safe way during the freezing temperatures forecast for much of the county.

Residents who may be worried about an elderly neighbour or relative, are urged to call Hampshire County Council's Adults' Health and Care team on 0300 555 1386, during the week in working hours, or call 0300 555 1373 out of hours and on weekends and Bank Holidays.

Anyone in need of support and advice due to Covid-19 can call the [Hampshire Coronavirus Support and Helpline](#) - available seven days a week on 0333 370 4000 (local rate charges apply).

connect4communities – the County Council's programme funded by the Department for Work and Pensions Winter Grant – has allocated £100,000 to the Citizens Advice Service in Hampshire

specifically to support families and people in need with energy costs. Residents can find their nearest branch of Citizens Advice on the [Service's website](#) and, on the [connect4communities online directory](#), search for local sources of other welfare support.

Public Health England

Keep Warm Keep Well

Coping with cold weather and COVID-19

Keep Warm

- Heat your home to at least 18°C
- Ensure you have adequate food, medication and warm clothes
- Check if you are eligible for help to keep your home warm

Keep Well

- Stay as active as you can, any exercise can bring health benefits
- Make sure you get your flu vaccine
- Follow COVID-19 guidance

Keep Connected Safely

- Get help if you need it. Speak to your GP, pharmacist, carer or key worker for advice
- Keep in touch with friends, family and your community
- Look out for others. Ask how they are keeping warm during cold weather

Further Information

- Simple Energy Advice** provides free advice on energy efficiency and National grants to help with energy bills: 0800 444202
- Plan ahead. Stay up to date with the weather forecast
- If you're worried about your health, visit the **NHS Website**, call **NHS 111** or in an emergency call 999

National context

National Covid-19 cases, deaths and vaccines data

The Covid-19 vaccination daily data shows that up to 6 February, a total of **12,014,288** people have received the 1st dose and a total of **511,447** people have received the 2nd dose.

As of 4pm on 7 February, the total number of people tested positive for Covid-19 was **3,945,680** and daily number of lab-confirmed cases was **15,845**. The total number of Covid-19 associated deaths within 28 days of a positive test was **112,465** with **373** deaths reported on the day. The data is available to [view online](#).

The R number range for the UK is **0.7 – 1.0** and the growth rate range **-5% to -2%** per day as of 5 February.

Communities

May 2021 local elections

On Friday (5 February), the Minister for the Constitution, Chloe Smith, [announced](#) the publication of a delivery plan for the May elections. Approximately £92 million will be provided to councils for the elections, of which £31 million is an uplift to directly address costs associated with making the elections Covid-secure.

The Government is also providing an indemnity to Returning Officers for both the Police and Crime Commissioner elections, and for local elections in respect of Covid-19 risks.

Adults' social care and public health

Care of the deceased

The Government has [updated](#) the guidance to assist people required to manage the bodies of deceased people infected with Covid-19. The update includes information to reflect current legislation and links to guidance on working safely during the outbreak.

Vaccine programme

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has [issued](#) a press release in which Vaccine Deployment Minister, Nadhim Zahawi, explains why the current vaccine rollout remains vitally important for protecting the healthcare system.

Rapid workplace testing

DHSC has [announced](#) a new government drive to increase workplace testing in sectors open during lockdown, to detect Covid-19 in asymptomatic people. The criteria for joining the workplace testing programme has been reduced to businesses with more than 50 employees.

Surge testing

DHSC has [confirmed](#) that additional surge testing and sequencing is being deployed to targeted areas around Worcestershire WR3, an area in Sefton PR9, and areas in Bristol and South Gloucestershire, where the new Covid-19 variants have been found.

Surge testing is in addition to existing extensive testing, and in combination with following the lockdown rules and remembering hands-face-space, will help to monitor and suppress the spread of the virus. Positive cases will be sequenced for genomic data to help understand the variants and their spread within these areas.

Deputy or attorney guidance

The Office of the Public Guardian has [updated](#) the guidance on being a deputy or attorney during the Covid-19 outbreak with new information about consent and medical treatment including the Covid-19 vaccination.

Economy, business and finance

Pay as You Grow

The Chancellor, Rishi Sunak, has [announced](#) businesses that took out government-backed Bounce Back Loans will now have greater flexibility to repay their loans. The Treasury's 'Pay as You Grow' repayment flexibilities enable borrowers to tailor their repayment schedule, with the option to extend the length of their loans from six to ten years, make interest-only payments for six months or pause repayments for up to six months.

Environment, transport and travel

Immigration and borders

The Home Office has [updated](#) the collection of guidance for those affected by changes to UK immigration and borders due to Covid-19.

Additional links

- NHS information on the Covid-19 vaccination programme: www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination
- 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/>
- FAQ from the Cabinet Office:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do>
- PPE guidance hub: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe>
- 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>

Deborah Harkin

Assistant Chief Executive