

Government press conferences over the weekend (1 - 3 May)

The [press conference](#) on **Friday (1 May)** was chaired by the Health and Social Care Secretary, Matt Hancock. The Government [confirmed](#) the restoration of fertility services. Furthermore, that work to have 18,000 contact tracers in place by mid-May was underway, and the test, track and trace model will lower the 'R'.

The [press conference](#) on **Saturday (2 May)** was chaired by the Communities Secretary, Robert Jenrick. The Government confirmed that through the Domestic Abuse Bill, victims of domestic violence will get 'priority need' status in order to access local housing services more easily.

A [package of over £76 million](#) in new funding was announced, to support the most vulnerable in society during the pandemic. The funding will help charities provide front line support including enabling refugees to provide more places. It was announced that [Dame Louise Casey](#) will oversee the specialist taskforce that has been created to lead the next phase of the Government's support for rough sleepers during the pandemic.

The press conference on **Sunday (3 May)** was chaired by the Minister for the Cabinet Office, Michael Gove. The Government confirmed that a comprehensive roadmap on easing the lockdown will be published this week. The Government also highlighted that they want more vulnerable children to attend school.

The slides and datasets from the conferences are available to view online - [1 May](#) used by Professor Stephen Powis; [2 May](#) used by Dr Jenny Harries; [3 May](#) used by Professor Stephen Powis.

As of 5.30pm on 3 May, the total number of lab-confirmed cases was **186,599**. The daily number of lab-confirmed cases was **4,339**. The total number of COVID-19 associated deaths was **28,446**, with **315** new deaths reported on the day. The data is available to [view online](#).

National context

Public Health England (PHE) priorities

The Health Minister, Jo Churchill, has written a [letter](#) confirming PHE's role and priorities for the financial year 2020 to 2021.

Contact tracing

The Deputy Chief Executive of Public Health England, Richard Gleave, has [written](#) to directors of public health providing an update on the scaling up of contact tracing.

Tax credits

HMRC has [announced](#) that people who are unable to work their normal hours because of the pandemic will still receive their usual tax credits payments.

Webinars for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)

The Department for International Trade will host a series of free coronavirus webinars for SMEs. The webinars will offer practical advice and focus on issues businesses trading internationally are

facing. Business can register via [great.gov.uk](https://www.great.gov.uk). There is also a programme of webinars from other government departments listed [here](#).

Bounce Back Loans

From 9am this morning (4 May) small businesses have been able to apply to the [Bounce Back Loan scheme](#) for a 100% government backed loan of between £2,000 and £50,000.

Self Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS)

HMRC will today (4 May) begin contacting customers who may be eligible for the [SEISS](#). HMRC is also inviting customers, or their agents, to [check eligibility](#) for the scheme. The claims service will open on 13 May and payments will be made within 6 working days of making a claim.

Local business grant funds scheme

The Government has [confirmed](#) that a discretionary fund has been set up to accommodate certain small businesses previously outside the scope of the business grant funds scheme. Up to £617 million will be available for small businesses with ongoing fixed property-related costs.

Support for zoos

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has [launched](#) a [£14 million support fund](#) for zoos and aquariums. Grants of up to £100,000 are available for licensed zoos and aquariums which are experiencing severe financial difficulties because of lost revenue.

Fertility services

The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority has [confirmed](#) that fertility clinics across the UK can apply to reopen from Monday 11 May. The regulator has set out new conditions for clinics, both private and NHS, to meet in response to the coronavirus outbreak.

Support for universities and students

The Government has [announced](#) a range of measures to protect students and universities, including temporary student number controls.

Technology support for children and schools

The guidance for local authorities, academy trusts and schools on how to get internet access, digital devices and support to provide remote education during the pandemic has been [updated](#).

Education provision

The Department for Education has [updated](#) the guidance for parents and carers about schools to include new information about the May bank holiday, admissions appeals, and updates to the support that is available to parents to help them educate their children at home.

Tackling violent extremism

Counter-terrorism police have launched a campaign to encourage residents with worries or concerns about radicalisation to visit the dedicated “[Let's Talk About It](#)” website. There have been some concerns about an increased risk of individuals being drawn into violent extremism or terrorism because of measures to tackle the pandemic leading to increased online communication.

NHS reset

The NHS Confederation has [launched](#) a new campaign, NHS Reset. The campaign aims to lead the public debate on what the health and care system should look like in the future, both at a national strategic level and by looking at local systems. They are encouraging local partners to join the conversation and share their own learning and experience.

Vaccines

The NHS is [urging](#) the public to attend all regular vaccination appointments to prevent outbreaks of serious diseases and reduce pressure on the health service.

Care technology deployment tool

The LGA has [launched](#) an online tool to support adult social care teams seeking to use and deploy care technology at pace as part of their Covid-19 response.

Health outcomes

Public Health England is [leading a review](#) which will analyse how different factors can impact on people's health outcomes from Covid-19. The review will help provide insight into emerging evidence to suggest Covid-19 may be having a disproportionate impact on different groups and examine the potential effects of other factors such as ethnicity, level of obesity or gender.

Local context

Isle of Wight contact-tracing app

It was confirmed over the weekend that the Isle of Wight has been selected to pilot the national contact-tracing app. Public sector workers on the Island will begin downloading the new NHSX app today (4 May), with invitations to be rolled out to each of the Island's c.140,000 residents by the end of the week - alongside a local campaign. Isle of Wight MP, Bob Seely, [suggests](#) that if the app is downloaded by 50% of the Island's population, the virus could be effectively eliminated.

Hampshire Highways

Hampshire's Highways teams have [confirmed](#) that they will be starting the annual programme of surface treatments this month to ensure that as far as possible, works are completed while traffic levels are relatively low. The programme will begin by treating 128 miles of Hampshire's rural routes, targeting areas where re-sealing road surfaces or improving skid resistance have been identified as priorities.

Keep going social distancing campaign - narrated by a six-year-old

Hampshire County Council produced a new [animation](#) on behalf of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Resilience Forum. It acknowledges residents are having to make sacrifices by staying home but encourages them to *keep going* to help reduce the spread of the virus. The animation, which is narrated by a 6-year-old, has had an overwhelmingly positive response on *Facebook*, *Instagram* and *Twitter*, reaching 58,000 residents over the weekend. The campaign will continue to run this week.

Activities for children

Hampshire Library Service launched *Scribe Tribe Snack* sessions today (4 May) which will run every day this week. Local children's author, Ali Sparkes, will post a writing challenge for children every morning and will provide feedback on submitted work each afternoon, all live on the Hampshire Library Service [Facebook](#) page. Children are still able to [sign up](#).

Stubbington Study Centre has produced [outdoor activities sheets](#) for children, which can be completed in the garden at home, or in a local green space while taking daily exercise.

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>

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