

## National context

### Government's daily press conference

The press conference was chaired by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Matt Hancock.

The Government reported the latest coronavirus figures – 397,670 people have been tested, 129,044 of whom have tested positive. 17,681 people are currently in hospital with coronavirus and there have been 17,366 deaths in hospitals.

An update was provided on personal protective equipment (PPE) and the Government confirmed that they are working to improve supply through a diverse range of suppliers. 8,331 offers of PPE equipment have been received and the Government is grateful to all who have come forward to offer support.

The Government highlighted that in the long run the best way to defeat the virus is through a vaccine. The UK is at the forefront of the global effort to develop a vaccine for coronavirus and two of the most promising projects are at UK universities – Imperial College and Oxford. It was announced that the Government will give £22.5 million to the Imperial College project and £20 million to the Oxford project to support clinical trials. It was also announced that the Oxford project will begin human trials from Thursday. An investment in manufacturing capacity will be made to enable production of any successful vaccine.

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

### Attendance in education settings

The Department for Education has [published](#) a summary of how many children and teachers attended education settings between Monday 23 March and Friday 17 April.

### Managing loss of life

The Cabinet Office has [released](#) a collection of the guidance currently available to support employers and workers when handling an increased number of deaths and to make sure that any loss of life is handled with respect and care.

### Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme

The Chancellor has [announced](#) further details of the CLBILS ahead of its launch on Monday. All viable businesses with turnover of more than £45 million will be able to apply for Government-backed support, and firms with turnover of more than £250 million can borrow up to £50 million.

### Business grant funding

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has [published](#) data on the amount of money distributed by local authorities as part of the two grant schemes launched to help businesses deal with coronavirus.

### Business support finder tool

The Government has [launched](#) a new online platform to help businesses and self-employed people determine what financial support is available to them during the coronavirus pandemic.

### Building Regulations

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has [issued](#) guidance for Building Control Bodies operating in England in relation to temporary healthcare buildings and related facilities. There is further guidance on Building Control operations during the current period of social distancing.

## Traffic orders

The Department for Transport has [published](#) additional and temporary guidance on making traffic orders during coronavirus restrictions. This recognises that certain requirements are currently difficult for local authorities to implement.

## Letter to Leaders

The Minister for Regional Growth and Local Government, Simon Clarke, has [written](#) to local authority Leaders to thank them for their efforts responding to the coronavirus pandemic. He has also provided further details on the additional £1.6 billion of funding announced recently. The Government aim to confirm allocations as soon as practicable and pay the grants in May.

## School meals

The Department for Education has [updated](#) the guidance for schools and local authorities on free school meals arrangements to include information about school food contracts and eligibility. In addition, there is added guidance and a sample application form for the temporary extension of eligibility to No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) groups.

## Reducing burdens on educational and care settings

The Department for Education has [issued](#) guidance on which data collections, services or requests will be cancelled, paused or will continue from all education and care settings.

## Social Worker recruitment

The Local Government Association, in partnership with Social Work England and the Department for Education and the Department of Health and Social Care, has [launched](#) a platform to connect social workers returning to the frontline to support the local response to coronavirus with local employers.

## Vulnerable children

The Child Protection Information Sharing (CP-IS) is being urgently [amended](#) so that school nurses and health visitors will receive alerts under the system. This tool currently alerts NHS staff and social workers when children who are subject to a child protection plan, children designated as 'looked after', or pregnant women who have an unborn child protection plan, present at an unscheduled care setting e.g. A&E or a walk-in centre.

## Direct payments

The Department of Health and Social Care has [issued](#) guidance for people who buy care and support through direct payments. It is accompanied by a Q&A which responds to concerns raised by direct payment holders, personal assistants, and charities and organisations that support them.

## Home care webinar

The Better Care Support Team are [running](#) a series of webinars this week that will discuss coronavirus and the home care sector. The webinars will consist of an overview of the guidance through short presentations, followed by opportunities for Q&A.

## Tier 4 sponsors, migrants and short-term students

The Home Office has [published](#) guidance that sets out temporary policy concessions for Tier 4 sponsors, Tier 4 students and short-term study students in response to coronavirus.

## Reporting modern slavery

The Home Office has [issued](#) guidance for businesses outlining how they should address and report on modern slavery risks during the coronavirus pandemic. This should be read alongside guidance on [government support for victims](#) of modern slavery.

## Driving tests

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency has [confirmed](#) that driving theory tests have been suspended up to and including 8 May, and car driving tests have been suspended for up to 3 months. Individuals can apply for an emergency test if their work is [critical to the coronavirus response](#).

## Protecting the supply chain from fraud

The LGA and the CIPFA Counter Fraud Centre have [published](#) joint guidance on protecting the local government sector supply chain from fraud. It highlights the continuing risks to supply chains posed by fraud and corruption, many of which are exacerbated by emergency circumstances.

## Local context

### Support for vulnerable residents

The County Council continues to reach out proactively to residents identified by the NHS as 'extremely vulnerable' and in need of support through a range of communication channels, including text messages, messages to landlines (launching on 22 April), outbound calls and home visits, with regular follow-up reviews arranged as required. There are 30,223 residents in Hampshire identified by the NHS as 'extremely vulnerable', of which 20,294 registered on the Government site. 6,147 residents who registered indicated they require help. As of 21 April, the County Council has contacted 5,440 'extremely vulnerable' residents requiring support through outbound calls. Vulnerable residents already known to, or in receipt of, County Council social care services are also being contacted through social work teams.

The *hantshelp4vulnerable* call centre has received a total of 5,299 inbound calls as of 21 April. Of these, 1,342 residents were provided with information or signposted to further advice and support; 3,063 were referred to district-based Local Response Centres; and 1,027 were identified as having more complex needs and referred to the County Council's Adult Health and Care Welfare team. 334 people who contacted the call centre were already known to Social Services. Contact also led to 34 new care and support packages being provided by Adults' Health and Care.

This letter of thanks (see below) was received today:

*To All Involved,*

*Today I was completely overwhelmed with gratitude, for an unexpected but very welcome Food Delivery, and a follow up phone call with a lovely lady from your new but amazing team, helping people who are felling very 'cut off' from life, like me. I really am so appreciative and grateful for the support, just sorry that I was not able to pay you (I offered but was told it was free). Having been told to stay at home completely for 12 weeks, I had not realised how we take the little things in life for granted. Your delivery volunteers were so lovely and I felt so grateful, and just wanted to send a card to express how much it cheered me. What an incredible service you are offering to so many, at such short notice. It is strange, but truly heartening, that out of such a tragedy, such generosity and togetherness emerges.*

*With grateful thanks*

*(name and post code supplied)*

### Testing centre

The Department of Health and Social Care has confirmed that a drive-through coronavirus testing facility is to open in Portsmouth. The Portsmouth site is part of an expanding network of testing

centres being established and will operate on an appointment-only basis for NHS staff and other key workers. The facility will be piloted for its first few days of operation and will soon provide thousands more PCR swab tests - which are used to identify if an individual currently has the virus.

Arrangements for the Isle of Wight are currently being finalised to enable key workers to be tested on the island rather than travelling to the mainland. The County Council is rapidly developing its approach to the site and will issue further information shortly.

## Support for care leavers

Hampshire County Council recognises the impact that the coronavirus pandemic is having on care leavers and is doing everything possible to ensure that the right support is being provided.

Contact is being maintained using technology and social media, and face to face where it is in the best interests of a young person. Other practical support has included purchasing smart phones for those without access to video calling; topping up phone credit; helping with online learning; making additional payments for food and sending gift cards to help young people buy their own independent living fund items.

## Safeguarding

Hampshire County Council's safeguarding duties to children, young people and adults remain a priority, with services operating fully to ensure support is available. The County Council has [issued](#) a press release outlining the contact details that should be used by anyone worried about their own safety, or that of a child or adult they know. In addition to the safeguarding telephone lines, the County Council also commissions support for victims of domestic abuse. Help can be sought from [Hampshire's Domestic Abuse Service](#) online and via email. A telephone helpline – 03300 165 112 – is open from 11.30am to 2.30pm, Monday to Friday.

## VE Day commemorations

Hampshire County Council's Armed Forces Champion, Councillor Andrew Joy, has [announced](#) that the County Council will mark the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE day on 8 May by inviting residents to join us online to watch a specially prepared film. Full details of the commemoration will be published on the County Council's website at the beginning of May.

## 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>

**Deborah Harkin**  
Assistant Chief Executive