

19 May 2020

## Government press conference - 18 May

The [press conference](#) was chaired by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Dominic Raab.

The Government outlined the current advice and the steps that will be taken over the coming months to slowly reduce social distancing measures. It confirmed that anyone in the UK aged 5 and over who has symptoms can now be [tested for Covid-19](#). 21,000 people have been recruited as contact tracers and call handlers as part of the test and trace programme.

The press conference slides and datasets are available to [view online](#).

As of 4pm on 18 May, the total number of lab-confirmed cases was **246,406**. The daily number of lab-confirmed cases was **2,684**. The total number of Covid-19 associated deaths was **34,796**, with **160** new deaths reported on the day. The data is available to [view online](#).

## National context

### Health Secretary's Statement (May 18)

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Matt Hancock, [updated](#) Parliament on the Government's response to Covid-19. It was highlighted that the Government is providing an additional £600 million for infection control in care homes. The case definition of Covid-19 has been updated to include a loss of smell and taste. Eligibility for testing is being expanded and everyone aged 5 and over with symptoms will now be able to receive a test. This will be supported by the new NHS app.

### Infection Control Fund

Further to the announcement last week of £600 million in ringfenced support for care homes' infection control, the Government has [released](#) the allocations for each local authority area. These are based on the number of care beds, with an adjustment for regional cost variations. (Hampshire County Council has been allocated £18,403,841.)

### Support for children with complex needs

The Department for Education has [announced](#) a £37 million settlement to help low-income families with seriously ill or disabled children with the cost of equipment, goods or services. £10 million of the total has been committed specifically in response to the unique difficulties presented by the Covid-19 pandemic, helping parents educate and look after disabled or critically ill children who are staying at home more than usual.

### National Coronavirus Testing Programme

Following the Secretary of State for Health, Matt Hancock's announcement that all symptomatic people in the UK are now eligible to receive Covid-19 tests, details were circulated in a [letter](#) to chief executives, leaders, directors of public health and directors of adult social services.

## Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO)

Following consultation with councils, the LGO has agreed a phased return to their casework where councils have the capacity to engage. The ombudsman will only work on a limited number of pre-existing cases, many of which will already be near to resolution.

## Pick for Britain

The UK Government and the [Prince of Wales](#) have urged students and furloughed workers to apply for seasonal farm work. As part of efforts to support British farmers and growers to recruit workers throughout the harvest period, the UK Government launched the [Pick for Britain](#) website in partnership with industry to help match up available opportunities with local jobseekers.

## Treasury support schemes

The Treasury has [published](#) new figures on the UK-wide government support schemes for individuals and businesses. These show that 8 million jobs have been furloughed with £11.1 billion claimed so far through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. In addition, 2 million Self-employment Income Support claims have been submitted worth £6.1 billion. Updated figures for the schemes will be published each week.

## Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme

The Treasury has [announced](#) that the maximum loan available through the Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme will be increased from £50 million to £200 million. The expanded loans will be available from 26 May.

## Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme

The Government has [announced](#) that an online service will be launched on 26 May for small and medium-sized employers to recover Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) payments they have made to their employees. [The Coronavirus Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme](#) was originally announced in the Budget as part of a package of support measures for businesses.

## Attendance in education

The Department for Education has [updated](#) the Covid-19 attendance in education settings data to include figures up to 15 May for the number of children and teachers attending education and childcare settings.

## Energy Performance Certificates

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has [amended](#) the guidance on meeting the regulatory requirement to secure a valid Energy Performance Certificate on marketing a property during the Covid-19 pandemic.

## Transport for London (TFL)

The Secretary of State for Transport, Grant Shapps, [issued](#) a written statement to Parliament setting out the details of a support funding package for TfL which comprises £1.095bn of new grant and a further loan facility of £505m. The support can be increased by a further £300m of grant and loan if revenue loss is higher than forecast.

## Universal Credit

The Department for Work and Pensions has [published](#) statistics on the number of people and households on Universal Credit, starts and claims. The data indicates the number of people claiming unemployment benefit in the UK increased to 2.1 million in April, the first full month of the coronavirus lockdown. The total in April went up by 856,500. UK unemployment rose by 50,000 to 1.35 million in the three months to March. The unemployment rate was estimated at 3.9%, slightly down on the previous quarter.

## Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Regulations

The Office for Product Safety and Standards has [updated](#) its guidance on the PPE Regulations to clarify the obligations of importers.

## LGA Political Leadership webinars

The LGA has [published](#) a two-part webinar on the role of the ward councillor during the Covid-19 pandemic.

## Local context

### Resident communication

The County Council has today (19 May) issued the latest edition of *Your Hampshire* to residents. The regular e-newsletter aims to keep residents informed of local issues and directs them to our webpages or other trusted sources for further information. The newsletter includes information on the automated Hantshelp4vulnerable telephone calls, country park car parks, Household Waste Recycling Centres, food banks, domestic abuse support and green recovery.

### Campaigns

The County Council continues to engage with and inform residents during the Covid-19 pandemic through a number of campaigns. Currently, its mental health and wellbeing campaign, targeted at young people, has had a reach of 18,900 on Instagram and 31,117 impressions, and 48,410 impressions on Snapchat and 581 swipe ups. This acknowledges how young people may be struggling with loneliness or anxiety and signposts them to help and mental health support.

The Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) re-opening campaign has had a reach of 26,529 on Facebook and 34,282 impressions. This campaign advises residents on what to expect when visiting HWRCs. For information, the common metrics used are reach (the number of individuals who saw the ad) and impressions (the combined number of times the reach was exposed to the ad).

## Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP)

A series of help and advice e-posters have been developed by the HSCP to support children and young people, parents, carers and professionals during lockdown. Information includes advice and details of support services -

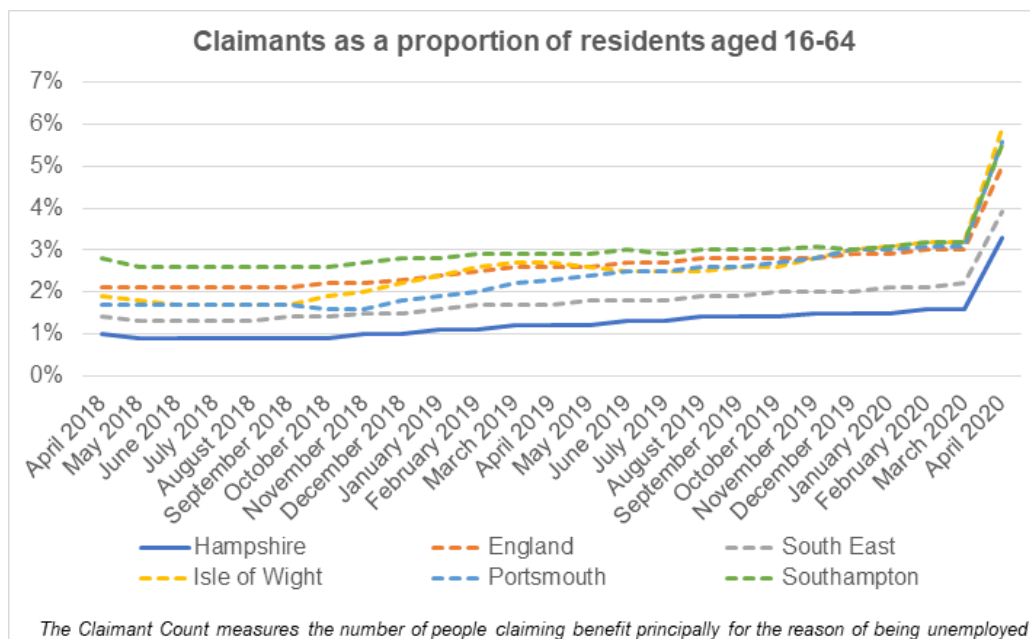
[E-poster for CYP](#), [E-poster for Parents](#), [E-poster for professionals](#)

## Hampshire CAMHS - How to cope after COVID-19

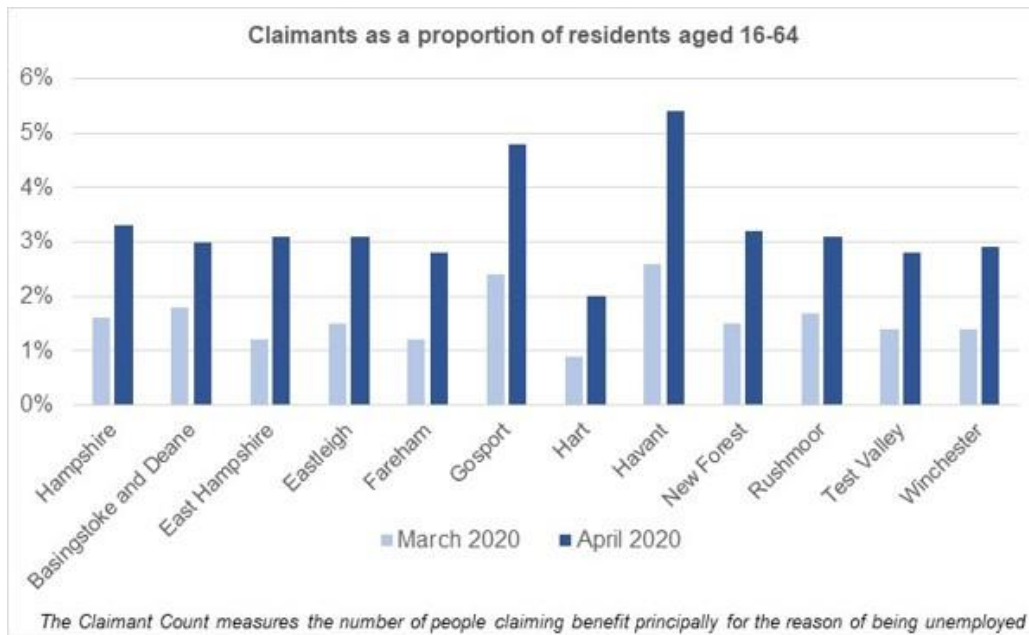
Guidance has been produced for parents, carers and professionals to support the uncertain period of transition to 'normal life'. The [document](#) is designed to be used in conjunction with relevant government guidance as well as any local guidance produced by education providers.

### Claimant count

The claimant count figures for April were released today (19 May) by [Nomis](#) – this records the number of people claiming benefit, principally for the reason of being unemployed. The below chart shows the rate of claims amongst residents aged 16-64 over the last two years in the authorities of Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton, and averages for the South East and for England. While the chart shows a substantial increase in claimants in April 2020, Hampshire remains below neighbouring authorities and below the South East and England averages. The data is presented by Nomis with the caveat that differences in rates between areas may also be influenced by the rollout of Universal Credit across the country.



Looking at the claims over the last month within Hampshire's districts, it is clear that there has been a steep rise across them all, with the largest increase in Havant (2.6% to 5.4%), Gosport (2.4% to 4.8%), and East Hampshire (1.2% to 3.1%). The smallest increases were seen in Hart (0.9% to 2.0%), Basingstoke and Deane (1.8% to 3.0%), Rushmoor (1.7% to 3.1%), and Test Valley (1.4% to 2.8%).



## 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/>
- 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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