

Government press conference - Wednesday 6 May

The [press conference](#) was chaired by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Robert Jenrick.

The Government outlined the support that has been provided to local authorities and Local Resilience Forums. It was confirmed that with the support of council leaders, the [Building Safety Pledge](#) means that vital building safety improvements will continue during the coronavirus pandemic.

Looking ahead to recovery, the Government confirmed that they will support authorities to develop plans to help local economies re-start and recover. Plans will be guided by scientific and medical advice, to ensure appropriate and safe social distancing, providing the public with the confidence to return to work, and to return to public spaces, to public transport and to school.

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

As of 5pm on 6 May, the total number of lab-confirmed cases was **201,101**. The daily number of lab-confirmed cases was **6,111**. The total number of Covid-19 associated deaths was **30,076**, with **649** new deaths reported on the day. The data is available to [view online](#).

National context

Pensions

The Department for Work and Pensions has [announced](#) that pensioners are now able to [apply for Pension Credit online](#) in a move to assist those who are self-isolating or shielding.

App for social care workers

The Department of Health and Social Care has [launched](#) a new dedicated app for the adult social care workforce to support staff through the Covid-19 pandemic. The app will be available to download from the Apple App Store and Google Play Store, as well as being made [accessible online](#).

Coronavirus Act 2020: status

The Department of Health and Social Care has [published](#) a table setting out the status of each measure in the Coronavirus Act 2020.

Food boxes

The Government has [announced](#) that over 1 million boxes of essential food have been delivered to those at highest risk across England, with more than 290,000 boxes being distributed every week and 330,000 delivered in the last week.

Fisheries

The Government has [published](#) an update on the support for aquaculture businesses under the Fisheries Response Fund.

Webinars

HMRC has [updated](#) the business help and support webpage to include a YouTube video about the Statutory Sick Pay rebate scheme.

Driving theory tests

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency has [changed](#) the theory test suspension date from 8 May to 31 May.

Business

[Results](#) from the latest British Chambers of Commerce Coronavirus weekly survey of firms suggest most will require three weeks or less to prepare to restart operations following any loosening of the UK lockdown. Smaller firms (with less than 10 employees) said they would need under one week.

Vulnerable young people

The Youth Endowment Fund has [announced](#) that it will commit up to £6.5 million in new grants to find the best ways to reach “increasingly invisible” vulnerable young people during the current Covid-19 restrictions. Organisations working with young people at risk of youth violence will be able to apply for funding to support the delivery of digital and virtual programmes and face-to-face work.

Medicines

The Senior Enforcement Advisor at the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency has [issued](#) a warning to the public about medicines and other medical products being sold online claiming to treat or prevent Covid-19.

Social Housing

The Regulator of Social Housing has published the [results](#) of its new monthly survey of housing associations and local authorities about how they are coping with the Covid-19 pandemic.

Data on deaths by ethnic groups

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has [published](#) a report on Covid-19 related deaths by ethnic group. The results show that the difference between ethnic groups in Covid-19 mortality is partly a result of socio-economic disadvantage and other circumstances, but a remaining part of the difference has not yet been explained.

Epidemiology surveillance report

Public Health England has [published](#) this week’s Covid-19 epidemiology surveillance summary, it is also accompanied by an [infographic](#). The report includes data from a variety of different sources and by combining the data a wider community picture is shown, including a breakdown by age, gender, ethnicity and geography. This will inform the national response to the pandemic and assist regional stakeholders in local planning.

Local context

Supporting vulnerable residents

The HantsHelp4Vulnerable helpline has, as of yesterday (6 May), received a total of 8,621 calls and has made a total of 4,567 Local Response Centre referrals. The districts with the highest number of referrals from the contact centre were: New Forest (726), Basingstoke (711) and Havant (701). 549 vulnerable people were already receiving support through Adults’ Health and Care and 61 individuals were referred to the Adults’ Health and Care brokerage team, which sources care (domiciliary, residential and nursing) for eligible clients. Help with food shopping,

and prescriptions remain the top two reasons for residents seeking support. The helpline will remain open over the bank holiday weekend.

The County Council has been working with partners to address wider issues emerging. With enhanced triage, the call handlers can now offer direct referrals to Citizen's Advice for those who would welcome support relating to benefits, employment and finances. They are also able to offer enhanced advice around the mental health support available for those experiencing stress and anxiety.

Advice for older residents

Hampshire County Council has [issued](#) advice to help older residents stay well physically and mentally during the Covid-19 crisis and beyond. The advice for [keeping well at home](#) covers a range of topics including: staying active every day, maintaining strength and balance, keeping the home safe to avoid falls, looking after mental health and wellbeing, taking medication correctly and staying hydrated. A campaign will go live this weekend with a new informative animation which will be promoted on social media.

[Connect to Support Hampshire](#), the county's online directory of care and support also has useful information and services for adults in Hampshire who want to stay independent, manage their own care and connect with their community.

Country parks

Hampshire County Council's Countryside Service has said that safety will come first in all plans for recovery ahead of the expected update from the Government this weekend. The car parks at the country parks remain closed until further notice and will only open when we are confident this can be done in a way that ensures the safety of staff and visitors. People are reminded that when taking their daily exercise, it is important to stay close to home and to maintain a two-metre distance.

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 workers fighting the coronavirus pandemic. The County Council will share a new video featuring some of our own key workers receiving thank you posters from local children. We will also promote a mini broadcast on social media from the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services and Young People, Councillor Patricia Stallard, with a [special thank you message](#) for Hampshire's young carers.

Celebrate VE Day 75 at home

Hampshire County Council is helping residents mark VE Day safely from home on Friday 8 May. The County Council is promoting a range of national commemorations taking place on social media. Events include:

- 10.30am – HCC live screening of our commemorative film (social media channels and the [County Council website](#))
- 11.00am – Moment of remembrance
- 11.30am – 'This is Your Victory' film screening ([@HampshireArchives](#)) and [@WessexFilmArchive](#))
- 2.45pm – VE Day 75 (BBC One)
- 6.00pm – Katharine Jenkins from the Royal Albert Hall ([YouTube](#))
- 9.00pm – Address from the Her Majesty the Queen (BBC One)

To celebrate at home, Hampshire Libraries have compiled a [special collection](#) of book titles, both fiction and non-fiction, about WWII. Additionally, the Royal Victoria County Park has set up a

dedicated VE Day [Facebook group](#) on which activities for families will be shared and films and music will be live streamed throughout the day.

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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