

Local context

Local rapid testing programme – Bramley (RG26)

The local rapid testing programme in Bramley started today (17 February) and will most likely run until Friday 19 February. A team from the County Council and Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, along with local volunteers from the Red Cross and REACT will visit around 2,000 properties to drop off and then collect polymerase chain reaction (PCR) Covid-19 tests. Householders should receive their results from NHS Test and Trace within 2-3 days.

For those who may be out when the testing team calls, a mobile testing unit is located in the village until Friday, between 9.30am – 5.30pm, to ensure that anyone who wishes to take part in the testing programme does not miss out.

In a [press release](#), the Director of Public Health, Simon Bryant, is quoted: “The test is voluntary, but I would urge local residents to take part, as the confidential findings from this local testing programme will feed into national research designed to help beat the virus, so that we can return to normal life as quickly as possible.”

More information, including a map of the affected area, information on the variant and operational detail is available on the [County Council's website](#).

Hampshire Together programme

Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is [asking](#) the public how they would like to receive information and provide feedback on potential changes to hospital services. The results will inform public consultation plans for the Hampshire Together: Modernising our Hospitals and Health Services programme, which has been delayed until later this year. The Trust are particularly interested in how people’s ways of receiving information and engaging in local communities has changed during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Further information about the programme can be found on the [Hampshire Together website](#) and the survey can be found [online here](#) – closes at 5pm on Thursday 24 March 2021.

National context

National Covid-19 cases, deaths and vaccines data

The Covid-19 vaccination daily data shows that up to 16 February, a total of **15,940,972** people have received the 1st dose and a total of **558,577** people have received the 2nd dose.

As of 4pm on 17 February, the total number of people tested positive for Covid-19 was **4,071,185** and daily number of lab-confirmed cases was **12,718**. The total number of Covid-19 associated deaths within 28 days of a positive test was **118,933** with **738** deaths reported on the day. The data is available to [view online](#).

The R number range for the UK is **0.7 – 0.9** and the growth rate range **-5% to -2%** per day as of 12 February.

Communities

Nightingale Courts

The Government has [announced](#) that 14 more temporary courtrooms (Nightingale Courts) and a 'super courtroom' to hear large, complex cases will be created to help reduce delays.

Equalities

The Local Government Association (LGA) is [hosting](#) a free webinar on vaccine equalities on 25 February. This session will provide an update on the vaccination roll out and the implications for councils in engaging with their communities, with a focus on equalities.

Children and education

Remote education

The Department for Education (DfE) has [updated](#) guidance on the support for parents and carers of children who are learning at home. The update includes further information on the Reading Well booklist which supports mental health, on local library services, and online support for parents and carers to keep children and young people safe from online harm.

Devices

DfE has [announced](#) that statistics published today show the Government has delivered 1,055,745 laptops and tablets to children to support remote learning.

Adults' social care and public health

Shielding expansion

The Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) has [announced](#) the introduction of a new predictive risk model to help clinicians identify a new group of people who may be at high risk from Covid-19. Up to 1.7 million patients have been identified.

Those identified will be sent a letter from NHS England in the coming days explaining that their risk factors may help identify them as high clinical risk and that they are included within the support and advice for the clinically extremely vulnerable. They will be invited to receive a Covid-19 vaccine as soon as possible and will be given advice on precautionary measures, including shielding.

Surge testing

DHSC has [announced](#) additional surge testing and genomic sequencing is being deployed to targeted areas within Norfolk (targeted areas within the IP22 postcode), Southampton (SO15 5) and Woking, Surrey (GU22) where the Covid-19 variant first identified in South Africa has been found.

COVID-19 variants

Public Health England (PHE) has [identified](#) 38 cases of Covid-19 which genomic sequencing has shown to feature a specific set of mutations which are currently being referred to as lineage B.1.525. Cases are geographically dispersed across England and enhanced contact tracing and genomic sequencing is underway to monitor the situation as it develops.

Human Challenge study

The Government has [announced](#) that the UK will be the first country in the world to run a Covid-19 human challenge study, following approval from the UK's clinical trials ethics body. Up to 90 volunteers aged 18 - 30 years will be exposed to Covid-19 in a safe and controlled environment to increase understanding of how the virus affects people.

Testing for personal assistants

DHSC has [issued](#) guidance outlining how personal assistants working in adult social care can access weekly Covid-19 testing.

Environment, transport and travel

Travel and tourism

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has [published](#) analysis of the how the UK travel and tourism industries have been affected by the pandemic. The study utilises business performance and labour market data, including data on employment in travel and tourism by local authority which shows that local authorities with the highest proportions of local employment in the travel and tourism industries could generally be found in coastal regions.

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>

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