

Local context

Shop local, shop safe

The County Council is encouraging residents to support local businesses this festive season, while ensuring they stay safe. In a [press release](#), Councillor Keith Mans, Leader of Hampshire County Council and Chair of the Local Outbreak Board, is quoted: “Shopping locally where possible supports Hampshire’s economy and is crucial in helping our county to recover as we head into 2021...

Local businesses are working hard to make changes and accommodate the guidelines to keep us safe... It’s only by working together and following the rules that we can help reduce the spread of the virus and keep Hampshire safe.”

[Retailers can find social distancing guidance online](#) about signage and street markings to help manage queues.

Christmas bubbles

To support residents to stay safe and follow the rules this Christmas, the County Council is promoting key messages and guidance on how to form a Christmas Bubble with loved ones during the five-day festive window, 23-27 December.

[Online guidance](#) has been published by the County Council and a [press release](#) has been issued which contains key information and signposts to [government guidance](#). The County Council has also created an [animation](#) which outlines the key points and is being promoted across social media platforms. Members are encouraged to share/retweet this with their social media followers, as well as any other relevant messages that we are posting on our corporate social media feeds – via [@hantsconnect](#) on both [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#), as well as on [Instagram](#) [LinkedIn](#).



National context

Communities

Places of worship and special religious services

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has [updated](#) the guidance on how places of worship can open, for limited permitted activities, in a manner that is safe and in line with local tier restrictions. The update includes further information on celebrating religious festivals.

Guidance for landlords and tenants

MHCLG has [updated](#) the guidance for councils, landlords and tenants in the private and social rented sectors. The update includes further advice on communal lounges in specialist sheltered and retirement housing as well as advice on canteens in extra-care housing.

Children and education

Exam support service: claiming costs

The Department for Education (DfE) has [published](#) guidance for schools and other exam centres on claiming costs for autumn exams. DfE are providing financial support for schools, colleges and other exam centres to run exams and assessments during the period October 2020 to March 2021 to ensure that they do not incur a net loss.

Exam advance information

Ofqual has [opened](#) a consultation seeking views about advance information that will be given to students to help them focus their revision before exams next summer.

Targeted testing of some children

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has [announced](#) a targeted testing drive for secondary school and college students in parts of north east London, Essex and Kent.

Adults' social care and public health

Self-Isolation period

A change to the self-isolation period from 14 to 10 days has been [announced](#). On Monday 14 December, the change to the isolation period for contacts will apply to all those who are currently self-isolating including those who commenced self-isolation before Monday. Self-isolation periods will begin on the day after exposure, a test or the start of symptoms. The NHS Test and Trace service will tell people to self-isolate for 10 days instead of 14 days from Monday.

Due to the time taken to test technical changes and release updates through the app store, the NHS COVID-19 app will only start to tell close contacts to isolate for 10 days instead of 14 days from Thursday 17 December. Those advised to isolate by the app before 17 December can leave isolation when their isolation countdown timer says, “3 days”.

Vaccine programme

Public Health England has issued a series of vaccination guides, including:

- [guidance for healthcare practitioners](#)
- [guide for social care staff](#)
- [guidance on what to expect after vaccination](#)
- [guide for older adults](#)
- [information about eligibility and vaccine supplies](#)

NHS Test and Trace plan

As part of the Government's Covid-19 Winter Plan, NHS Test and Trace yesterday (10 December) [set out](#) a new business plan for the next phase of the service. The plan outlines the approach to disrupt and prevent Covid-19 transmission, protect people's health and enable people to return towards a more normal way of life.

Test and Trace Support Payment scheme

DHSC has [published](#) a communications toolkit for the NHS Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme. This includes key messages on payment, self-isolation and support available for those that are self-isolating, case studies and content for social media.

Test and Trace over Christmas

DHSC has [confirmed](#) that the NHS Test and Trace service will be open every day over Christmas and New Year.

Flu and Covid-19 surveillance reports

Public Health England has [published](#) this week's national influenza and Covid-19 report. Surveillance indicators suggest that Covid-19 activity at a national level has plateaued during week 49 between 30 November and 6 December. Case rates have remained at a similar level in week 49 compared to the previous week across all age groups.

Economy, business and finance

Working safely

The Government has [updated](#) the guidance for working safely during the Covid-19 pandemic. The update includes information to clarify that workplace canteens open to staff only do not need to collect data for NHS Test and Trace and clarification that betting shops must keep a record of all customers, visitors and staff.

Christmas Support Payment for pubs

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has [published](#) guidance for councils on the operation and delivery of the Christmas Support Payment for wet-led pubs, as announced on 1 December.

Business evictions ban extended

MHCLG has [announced](#) that business owners affected by the Covid-19 outbreak will be protected from eviction until the end of March 2021. Alongside this, MHCLG has also announced a review of the commercial landlord and tenant legislation.

National Covid-19 data

As of 4pm on 10 December, the total number of people tested positive for Covid-19 was **1,787,783** and daily number of lab-confirmed cases was **20,964**. The total number of Covid-19 associated deaths within 28 days of a positive test was **63,082**, with **516** deaths reported on the day. The data is available to [view online](#).

The R number range for the UK is **0.9-1.0** and the growth rate range is **-2% to -0%** per day as of 11 December.

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/>

- 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>

Deborah Harkin
Assistant Chief Executive