

Government press conference - 13 May

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

The Government outlined the [plan](#) to safely “restart, reopen and renew” the housing market. Beginning yesterday (13 May) anyone in England can move home if they [follow new guidance](#) in line with social distancing advice. All buyers and renters will be able to complete purchases and view properties in person, while estate agents, conveyancers and removals firms can return to work. It was confirmed that later this year, the Government’s First Homes programme will give a 30% discount on new homes for key workers, including nurses and teachers and police officers as well as local first-time buyers.

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

As of 4pm on 13 May, the total number of lab-confirmed cases was **229,705**. The daily number of lab-confirmed cases was **3,242**. The total number of Covid-19 associated deaths was **33,186**, with **494** new deaths reported on the day. The data is available to [view online](#).

National context

Infrastructure investment

The Government has [announced](#) a multi-billion-pound infrastructure package for roads and railways to support the country’s economic recovery. The package includes £1.7 billion to improve journeys for cyclists, pedestrians and drivers with repairs to local roads, fast tracked construction works worth £175 million and plans to retain the environmental benefits seen during lockdown through the vision to boost England’s charging infrastructure for electric vehicles over the next decade.

Adult social care

During Prime Minister’s Questions yesterday (13 May), Boris Johnson [announced](#) a further £600 million to be allocated to councils for infection control in care homes.

Health inequalities

PHE, in collaboration with the LGA, ADPH, and NHSEI, have collated a [suite of resources](#) relating to health inequalities and Covid-19 to support place-based approaches to planning and responding to the pandemic, while mitigating against the potential impacts on those with the poorest health outcomes.

Schools

The Department for Education has [updated](#) the guidance on critical workers who can access schools or educational settings. This reflects that children of critical workers are encouraged to attend school and plans for wider opening of schools from 1 June.

Business

The Government has [announced](#) the temporary suspension of wrongful trading liability will continue until 30 June, and temporary measures to provide flexibility on AGMs is now retrospective to 26 March.

Planning

The Planning Inspectorate has [announced](#) that they are now scaling up capacity to progress more cases – site visits are to recommence and more digital case events are being planned.

Local death management

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has [updated](#) the statutory guidance for local authorities in Schedule 28 to the Coronavirus Act, which provides powers to support local and national death management. [Templates for local authorities](#) have now been added.

Awarding qualifications in summer 2020

Ofqual has [updated](#) the guidance on awarding summer qualifications to include [Guidance for Centres](#) - The awarding of vocational and technical qualifications, and other general qualifications, in summer 2020.

Self Employment Income Support Scheme

The Government has [updated](#) the guidance for businesses to include a YouTube video with a step-by-step guide on how to make a claim through the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme.

Travel advice

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has [updated](#) the travel advice to reflect new social distancing guidance.

Business support grant funding

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has [updated](#) the guidance for local authorities on business support grant funding to include guidance on the [Local Authority Discretionary Fund](#).

Guidance for Local Government

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has [updated](#) the guidance for local councils during the Covid-19 pandemic to include links to relevant new guidance and information.

Construction

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has [published](#) a set of questions and answers following yesterday's (13 May) announcement on construction site working hours to enable social distancing working practices.

Sport and recreation

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has [issued](#) guidance for the public, providers of outdoor sport facilities, elite athletes, personal trainers and coaches on the phased return of sport and recreation.

Holiday entitlement and pay

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has [issued](#) guidance which outlines how holiday entitlement and pay operate during the Covid-19 pandemic. It is designed to help employers understand their legal obligations, in terms of workers who either continued to work or have been placed on furlough.

Testing

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency has [published](#) information for members of the public, patients, professionals and industry about Covid-19 tests and testing kits, including how they work, the different types of tests and the specifications manufacturers need to follow.

The Department of Health and Social Care has [updated](#) the guidance on coronavirus testing to include a new version of the visual guide on adult social care testing.

Cyber security

The National Cyber Security Centre is [urging](#) people to follow simple steps to ensure they stay safe online and protect themselves and their family from online scams.

Local context

School attendance

Schools, early years educators and nurseries in Hampshire remain open to look after children of key workers and vulnerable children. The number of children in education settings fluctuates daily. Last Thursday (7 May) there were 6,410 children of statutory school age in schools, which equates to 3.6% of the school age population. 29% of children with a social worker were in attendance.

Cycling and walking

Hampshire County Council [welcomes](#) the Government's commitment to fund cycling and walking as part of our Green Recovery and awaits details of the £2bn national pot [announced](#) at the weekend. A range of measures are being investigated that could be implemented across the county to keep people walking and cycling safely while maintaining social distancing, as the country gradually moves back to traveling to work and school. These could include reallocating road space, signing to encourage physical distancing and low-cost temporary changes to limit access by certain vehicles to specific areas.

Mental health and wellbeing

The County Council's Public Health team is implementing a mental health and wellbeing plan to support people in Hampshire during the Covid-19 pandemic and beyond. Working closely with the Communications and Marketing team, the plan will deliver both universal messages as well as messages aimed at groups who may need specific support and advice. As part of this, a campaign launched today on Snapchat, Facebook and Instagram aimed at young people aged 13-18. The campaign acknowledges how young people may be struggling with loneliness or anxiety and signposts them to [Young Minds](#) for Covid-19 related help and mental health support.

Supporting vulnerable residents

The HantsHelp4Vulnerable helpline has, as of yesterday (13 May), received a total of 9,976 calls and has made a total of 4,968 Local Response Centre referrals. The districts with the highest number of referrals from the contact centre were: New Forest (807), Basingstoke (771) and Havant (761). 581 vulnerable people were already receiving support through Adults' Health and Care and 63 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 consistently remain the top two reasons for residents seeking support.

Food banks

The County Council is [asking](#) residents who are able to do so to consider donating items to local food banks. The response from the community to the challenges presented by the Covid-19 crisis has been overwhelmingly positive, with local groups and organisations coming together to distribute food and household essentials to those who need them.

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 [video](#) featuring some of our own key workers receiving thank you posters from local children.

Social media

The County Council continues to monitor the effectiveness of its social media channels during the Covid-19 pandemic. It is evident that more residents are using these platforms to keep up to date with the latest news and information. The growth in *Twitter* daily reach since 23 March has increased by 25 per cent to 25,000 impressions per day on average. *Facebook* reach is now achieving one million impressions per month, and followers are growing on average by 500 people each week.

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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