

Local context

Revised tier restrictions for Hampshire

The Government [announced](#) today that from 00.01 on 26 December, all districts within the Hampshire County Council area currently in Tier 2 (High alert) will move to Tier 4 (Stay at Home), except for the New Forest which will move to Tier 3 (Very High alert). Gosport and Havant will remain in Tier 4.

The key restrictions for Tier 4 (Stay at Home) require:

- Residents to stay at home, apart from limited exemptions set out in law
- Non-essential retail, indoor gyms and leisure facilities, and personal care services to close
- People to work from home if they can but they may travel to work if this is not possible, for example in the construction and manufacturing sectors
- People not to enter or leave Tier 4 areas, and Tier 4 residents must not stay overnight away from home. Individuals can only meet one person from another household in an outdoor public space.

The key restrictions for Tier 3 (Very High alert) require:

- Rule of six to be applied in specified large outdoor spaces
- People to not meet socially indoors or in gardens, apart from with their own households or with their support bubble
- People to work from home if they can but they may travel to work if this is not possible, for example in the construction and manufacturing sectors
- People to stay local where possible and avoid travel outside their Tier 3 area including overnight, unless for essential reasons

Full details of the [Tier 4 restrictions](#) and [Tier 3 restrictions](#) are available on the Government's website. The [full list of local restriction tiers by area](#) is also available online.

The County Council continues to issue communications to a wide range of stakeholders following the announcement including:

- Emails to MPs, Members, partners and stakeholders
- Press release – <https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/231220covidtierupdate>
- County Council Covid-19 webpages, banners and various updates, in progress
- Social media postings
- Covid-19 communications update to be issued to Hampshire District communication partners which includes digital assets for further circulation

In addition, the County Council has reviewed and is revising some planned social media campaigns. A new campaign will launch on Boxing Day to remind residents of what they can and cannot do under the revised Tiers.

Hampshire Coronavirus Support and Helpline

Vulnerable Hampshire residents are being [reminded](#) that there is help on hand over the festive period, including from the Hampshire Coronavirus Support and Helpline.

The Hampshire Coronavirus Support and Helpline can offer advice, information and support to anyone in need including if they are unwell from Covid-19 or self-isolating. It is available on - **0333 370 4000** (calls charged at local rate). The Christmas and New Year operating hours are included in the [press release](#).

In addition, the [Connect to Support Hampshire](#) website features a directory of helpful guidance.

Message from the Leader of Hampshire County Council

Councillor Keith Mans, Leader of Hampshire County Council, has [issued](#) a message of thanks to Hampshire residents for their fortitude, resilience and cooperation this year:

“As we approach Christmas 2020, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Hampshire residents for their fortitude and resilience during what has been an extraordinarily difficult year – on so many levels.

“We have seen our way of life change in ways that we could not have imagined as the COVID pandemic has taken its toll on the way we live and work – as well as on individual lives and those of families throughout our communities.

“While we are once again having to manage tighter restrictions and growing viral infection rates, we must also take hope that the advent of the vaccine offers promise for a happier and healthier 2021. For the time being though, it remains critical that we continue to abide by the rules for our respective areas and do all we can to look after ourselves, our loved ones and to keep Hampshire safe.

“As many look forward to a few days off over the festive period, albeit on a smaller scale than hoped for, I would also like to pay tribute to the many thousands of key workers – in social care, teaching, health, and many other professions - who have worked tirelessly since March to care for the vulnerable and those adversely affected by the virus, and keep our vital public services going. Your dedication, kindness and compassion have been truly inspirational – and a simple ‘thank you’ does not seem adequate for all that you have done.

“For now, however you are spending the holidays – on behalf of the County Council - my very best wishes for a peaceful, happy, and safe Christmas.”

Covid-19 vaccine

The Covid-19 vaccination programme will continue despite Tier escalation across much of the county. Individuals who have been offered and have booked an appointment are asked by the NHS to still attend it and the vaccination clinic they visit will ensure they stay safe through a range of measures including cleaning and disinfecting and social distancing in waiting areas.

The NHS will be working hard to ensure the vaccine gets to those who need it over the festive season, including on weekends and bank holidays – just as other vital services run every day.

National context

Press Conference – 23 December

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Matt Hancock, [delivered](#) a statement at the Downing Street Covid-19 briefing.

The Government announced further action within the tiering system as Tier 3 is not considered robust enough to control the new variant. More of the East and South East of England were moved into Tier 4 and the Government confirmed that they are also taking action in parts of the South West, where there are some early signs of the new variant. The Government also announced developments on another new strain of the virus and their work with the South African Government.

Communities

Loneliness

The Government has [announced](#) a £7.5 million funding package to help tackle loneliness over the winter period. Support will target sectors that bring people and communities together including the arts, libraries, charities and radio and will be administered via Arts Council England, the Government's Loneliness Fund and two radio funds.

Veterans

A [study](#) carried out by King's College London, found that 60% of veterans have volunteered in their community to help individuals affected by the pandemic. Of those veterans already volunteering, 66% reported as having increased their time spent helping others, as a result of Covid-19.

Local government guidance

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has [updated](#) guidance for local councils during the pandemic including the sections on Business and charity support; Housing; Local government finance and funding; Local restriction tiers; Public health; Schools and education; Social care; Testing.

Adults' social care and public health

Care home testing

The Department of Health and Social Care has [announced](#) that care home staff in all tiers will receive two rapid tests a week, in addition to the weekly PCR test. Care homes in all tiers given access to £149 million grant to support roll out of rapid testing.

Lateral flow devices

Public Health England (PHE) has [confirmed](#) that lateral flow devices (LFDs) used in mass testing can detect the new Covid-19 variant.

Environment, transport and travel

Testing HGV drivers

The Department for Transport has [issued](#) advice and information for HGV drivers using the Port of Dover or the Eurotunnel, including how they can obtain a Covid-19 test.

National Covid-19 data

As of 4pm on 23 December, the total number of people tested positive for Covid-19 was **2,149,551** and daily number of lab-confirmed cases was **39,237**. The total number of Covid-19 associated deaths within 28 days of a positive test was **69,051**, with **744** deaths reported on the day. The data is available to [view online](#).

The R number range for the UK is **1.1-1.3** and the growth rate range **+1% to +6%** per day as of 23 December.

Where to find the latest information and guidance

- 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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