

## Local context

### Covid-19 vaccinations

Some GP practises across Hampshire started to vaccinate patients yesterday (15 December). Nurses, paramedics, pharmacists and other NHS staff will work with GPs to ensure the following people are vaccinated first:

- those aged 80 and over,
- care home workers, and
- residents in priority groups.

Several Hampshire GP practices have been designated to help co-ordinate local vaccination centres in surgeries and other community settings, and teams are working rapidly to ensure safe processes are in place to meet the tough logistical challenges of offering the vaccination.

Across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight the ‘Wave 1’ primary care sites going live with vaccination clinics (appointment only) this week are:

- Fareham Community Hospital
- Hampshire Court Hotel, Basingstoke
- Festival Hall, Petersfield
- St Peters Surgery, Southampton
- New Milton Health Centre
- Bursledon Surgery
- Colden Common Surgery
- Badger Farm Community Centre, Winchester
- Kingston Crescent Surgery, Portsmouth
- Carisbrooke Health Centre, IoW

The NHS continues to contact people in the priority groups when it is their turn to receive the vaccine. People are asked not to contact the NHS about the vaccine.

More information about the vaccination programme is available on the [NHS website](#).

### Country Parks

Hampshire County Council has opened Covid-safe Christmas themed trails at Royal Victoria, Queen Elizabeth and Lepe country parks.

In the [press release](#), the Executive Member for Recreation, Heritage, Countryside and Rural Affairs, Councillor Edward Heron, is quoted: “We know that many families are having to celebrate this year in different ways due to the coronavirus pandemic and ongoing restrictions to help prevent further spread of the virus. Our Elfventure Christmas Trail has been specially designed with Covid-secure measures and maximum festive fun in mind, and we hope it offers families an enjoyable and memorable time out.”

For further details about the Elfventure Christmas Trail visit the [countryside webpages](#).

# National context

## Communities

### Regional tier system

The Government has [announced](#) that Tier 3 Restrictions will apply in all 32 London boroughs and the City of London, parts of Essex and parts of Hertfordshire from today (16 December).

It is understood that any further changes to the local restrictions/tier levels will be communicated by government tomorrow (17 December) and changes will come into force on Saturday (19 December).

### National Leisure Recovery Fund

Sport England has [announced](#) the launch of the National Leisure Recovery Fund to support publicly owned leisure facilities through the pandemic. Funded through £100 million in Government investment, it is open for applications between 14 December – 8 January.

### Accommodation for asylum seekers

Public Health England has [published](#) new guidance for staff involved in the support of asylum seekers in all accommodation settings.

## Children and education

### Testing in schools and children's homes

The Department for Education (DfE) has [announced](#) that lateral flow tests will be deployed to all secondary schools and colleges from January.

The Government has also [published](#) guidance to support children's homes in distributing test kits.

### Providing remote education information

DfE has [updated](#) guidance for schools with the requirement for schools to publish their remote education offer on their website from January 2021. DfE has also [published](#) an optional template to support schools with meeting this expectation during the spring term.

### Early years

DfE has [confirmed](#) that over 6,500 schools have signed up for the Nuffield Early Language Intervention programme which aims to boost early language skills among Reception age children whose early development in spoken language skills has been disrupted by Covid-19.

### Ofsted report

Ofsted has [published](#) its third and final set of reports looking at the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on children and young people. The report praises education and social care staff for their hard work, creativity and resilience against all the odds when faced with pressures associated with the pandemic. However, the report also highlights the impact social isolation is having particularly on children arriving at secure children's homes and on children with special education needs and/or disabilities.

## Adults' social care and public health

### Novel strain of COVID-19

On Monday (14 December), Public Health England (PHE) [published](#) a statement on a new variant of the virus that causes Covid-19, which has been predominantly identified in the South and East of England.

PHE is working with partners to investigate and plans to share its findings over the next 2 weeks. There is currently no evidence to suggest that the strain has any impact on disease severity, antibody response or vaccine efficacy.

### **Covid-19 vaccine figures**

The Department of Health and Social Care has [released](#) provisional figures which show at least 137,897 people received their first dose of the vaccine by the end of Tuesday 15 December. 108,000 people were vaccinated in England. Formal statistics will be published every week from next week.

### **Valneva Covid-19 vaccine**

Valneva has started UK clinical trials for its Covid-19 vaccine, currently being developed in Livingston, West Lothian. The UK government has already pre-ordered Valneva's vaccine candidate and should studies prove it to be safe and effective, 60 million doses could be made available to the UK by the end of 2021.

### **Disinfectant spray**

The Ministry of Defence has [announced](#) that a novel disinfectant spray - Virusend spray - developed by the Army that can eliminate 99.99% of the Covid-19 virus will be made available to the public and used by military personnel on the frontline as they support the battle against the virus.

### **REACT study**

The results from the seventh report of the REACT study have been [published](#) today by Imperial College London and Ipsos MORI. Findings show infections fell by over 30% during lockdown and levelled off, with 91 per 10,000 people infected in the most recent data.

## **Economy, finance and business**

### **Import tariffs**

The Department for International Trade has [announced](#) that tariffs will be suspended from 1 January 2021 on a wide range of goods related to fighting Covid-19, including face masks, gloves and other protective equipment.

## **Environment, transport and travel**

### **Rail fares**

The Department for Transport has [announced](#) that they will delay the normal annual January change to rail fares until 1 March 2021. Regulated fares will then increase by RPI+1, a 2.6% rise.

### **Airline refunds**

The Competition and Markets Authority has [announced](#) it is investigating whether airlines have breached consumers' legal rights by failing to offer cash refunds for flights they could not lawfully take.

### **Urban Centre Recovery Task Force**

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has [announced](#) details of the new Urban Centre Recovery Taskforce which will advise how government can work with local leaders to support cities to recovery from Covid-19 and thrive.

## **National Covid-19 data**

As of 4pm on 15 December, the total number of people tested positive for Covid-19 was **1,888,116** and daily number of lab-confirmed cases was **18,450**. The total number of Covid-19 associated deaths within 28 days of a positive test was **64,908**, with **506** 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**