

Hampshire County Council Divisional Report for:

Hambledon Parish Council

COVID-19

Just to remind you that here is a special helpline for Hampshire's most vulnerable residents, set up as part of a collaboration between local councils across the county and the voluntary and community sector. Anyone in need of help can call 0333 370 4000 seven days a week, from 9am-5pm.

Extended times for older people to use free bus passes.

Hampshire County Council is continuing to support older residents during the Coronavirus outbreak by removing the restriction on using free Older Person's Bus Passes before 9:30am from Monday 25th January 2021. The start time restrictions will be lifted so people can use their bus pass at any time. This temporary change to the scheme is intended to continue until schools reopen to all students. This will also help Hampshire residents take up COVID vaccinations when they are offered if they have early morning appointments, and to travel at quieter times for essential journeys such as those for food shopping. Residents who have a disabled person's bus pass can already use these at any time of day, any day of the week.

[Safer travel guidance for passengers](#) and details of the [National Lockdown restrictions](#) are available on the Government's website.

National lockdown restrictions include:

- Residents to stay at home, apart from limited exemptions set out in law such as shopping for necessities.
- 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.
- Those who are 'extremely clinically vulnerable' are advised to always stay at home, unless for exercise or medical appointments, and not to attend work, even if they are unable to work from home.

Extra funding available to support children in need in Hampshire during February half term and help for people whose income has been affected by COVID-19.

Extra funding worth more than £320,000 is being made available for childcare, voluntary and charitable organisations to provide activities and food for vulnerable Hampshire children during the February half term school holiday. Families and individuals struggling to cope financially, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns, are being reminded that help to pay for food and energy, as well as essential items, is available from the County Council's **connect4communities** programme via the Citizens Advice Service (0800 144 8848) and local community groups across Hampshire. To learn more about the

'connect4communities' projects and to apply for a Community Grant visit connect4communities.org

Help for people whose income has been affected by COVID-19

Families and individuals struggling to cope financially, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns, are being reminded that help to pay for food and energy, as well as essential items, is available from the County Council's connect4communities programme via the Citizens Advice Service and local community groups across Hampshire

A connect4communities grant of £100,000 has been awarded to the Citizens Advice Service in Hampshire specifically to support families and people in need with energy costs.

Councillor Patricia Stallard, the County Council's Executive Lead Member for Children's Services and Young People, said: "Voluntary, community and third sector organisations are in the ideal position to provide support on our behalf because they are local to the people who need this help and they know their communities best.

"Many families and individuals are finding they are under extra pressure now because of the pandemic, perhaps because of a job loss, and are struggling to pay for the basics – like fuel to heat their homes. Our 'connect4communities' programme is designed to provide the helping hand that people in this position need."

People can find their nearest branch of Citizens Advice on 0800 144 8848 or the [Service's website](#) and, on the [connect4communities](http://connect4communities.org) online directory, search for local sources of other welfare support.

In addition to the help being made available through the Citizens Advice Service, the County Council is calling for community groups to apply for grants to help fund activities in their area that aim to combat food and fuel poverty by helping to build resilience in their communities. Community, voluntary and charity groups can apply for a Community Grant via the connect4communities.org website.

'[connect4communities](http://connect4communities.org)' is programme of support provided by Hampshire County Council, in collaboration with other agency, voluntary and charitable partners. It is funded by the Authority's £2.89 million Covid Winter Grant from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). At least 80% of the total funding must go towards families with children, with up to 20% allocated for other households in need, including individuals such as young carers and care leavers. The 'connect4communities' scheme is being delivered across the county by a range of sources including schools and voluntary groups.



Cllr Roger Huxstep
Member for Meon Valley Division
Hampshire County Council

.....1st February 2021