

Hampshire County Council Divisional Report for:

Hambledon Parish Council Meeting

COVID-19 (*Reports' standing paragraph*)

The pandemic is still very much with us. Professor Chris Whitty's persistent advice is for each of us to assume that we are carrying the virus and therefore to behave accordingly – obey the rules. For up to date, data, please see:

[Hampshire COVID-19 data | Health and social care | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

Keep following the rules – even after your vaccine

With the COVID-19 vaccination programme underway, Hampshire County Council and the NHS are reminding residents who have received their vaccine that it is vital to keep following the rules of **Hands-Face-Space** to avoid putting others at risk.

Councillor Judith Grajewski, Hampshire County Council's Executive Member for Public Health said: 'The COVID-19 vaccine is a big breakthrough and a key tool in our fight against this serious and highly infectious disease. I know how keen everyone is to get their jab and get back to normal, but for those who have received their first dose, it can take a week or two to build up some protection from the virus, and it is not yet known whether people who have had the vaccine can still transmit COVID-19. Therefore, it is vital to continue following the rules after being vaccinated, to ensure that you don't unknowingly pass on the virus to anybody else. This is particularly important if you are caring for or seeing someone who is clinically vulnerable because you could be putting them at risk of severe illness or even death.'

In the current national lockdown, everyone should stay at home as much as possible. However, getting the COVID-19 vaccine, or any other vaccine, is an important medical appointment and a valid 'essential reason' for travelling.

Dr Barbara Rushton, Clinical Chair, South Eastern Hampshire, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Partnership of Clinical Commissioning Groups said: "The COVID-19 vaccine is a safe and effective way to protect yourself and your loved ones. The vaccination programme is continuing to roll out over the weeks and months ahead, with more and more people benefitting. The vaccine is being offered to those in the priority groups first before being rolled out to the rest of the population and you will be contacted when it is your turn to receive the vaccine, either by your GP practice or the national booking service, and advised how to book an appointment. However, it will take time to vaccinate everyone, so in the meantime please continue to follow Government guidance to protect the NHS and save lives." If you have to leave home for an essential reason, keep 2m distance from anyone who is not in your household or support bubble. We all want an end to lockdown, so it is now more important than ever that we continue to observe these simple behaviours, to prevent further spread of the virus and protect our communities. Remember: just because you've had the vaccine, does not mean it is safe for you to socialise."

As the COVID-19 vaccination programme rolls out across the country, Hampshire County Council and the NHS are urging residents to beware of vaccine fraudsters.

Councillor Judith Grajewski, Hampshire County Council's Executive Member for Public Health said: "The vaccine is a vital tool in our fight against COVID-19 and a safe and effective way to protect ourselves, our loved ones and our communities. Sadly, there have been cases reported of dishonest individuals approaching members of the public to offer vaccines in return for payment. Therefore, we want to remind everyone that the COVID-19 vaccine is free of charge and that the NHS will get in touch when it is your turn to receive it.

"If you're contacted by anyone claiming to be from the NHS who asks for payment or a fee - or who gives you a link to a website to take payment for the vaccine - **it is a scam.**

"No-one from the NHS would come and knock on your door unannounced and you would not receive emails inviting you to click on links. If anyone approaches you in this way, or attempts to force or coerce you into handing over funds – in person or otherwise – always contact the police."

Those most at risk of being targeted by scammers are the elderly, as well as those who live alone, are self-isolating or are in financial difficulty. Many scammers are using increasingly sophisticated methods to target people.

Councillor Grajewski added: "I completely understand that many people are keen to get their jab as soon as possible, but please remember the COVID-19 vaccine is only available from the NHS. No-one can pay for it and jump the queue. If a private organisation contacts you suggesting they can provide the vaccine, it will be a scam."

The NHS are currently prioritising people most at risk from the ill effects of coronavirus to receive the vaccine. However, all eligible adults will eventually be offered the vaccine.

Dr Barbara Rushton, Clinical Chair, South Eastern Hampshire, at the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Partnership of Clinical Commissioning Groups said: "When it is the right time, you will be contacted to make an appointment. Most of us will receive a letter either from our GP or the national booking system, which will include all the information you need. Some services are currently also phoning and texting patients to invite them in. We are working as quickly as we can to vaccinate our communities and thank residents for their patience during this huge national undertaking. We will be in contact in due course, so there is no need to contact your GP surgery to request the vaccine or check if you will be invited."

Councillor Grajewski continued: "If you would like to know more about the vaccination, it is best to avoid unreliable sources, whether that's on the internet, from social media, or from a well-meaning friend. Misinformation can create all kinds of worries and concerns and scammers are trying to take advantage of people's uncertainty and anxieties about the pandemic. The most up-to-date and validated information will be from official sources such as the Government and NHS websites."

Other coronavirus-related scams include:

- Sales of fake products such as face coverings, supplements, anti-virus kits and sanitisers, which may be harmful or never arrive

- Bogus healthcare workers who try to gain access to your home by claiming to offer testing for COVID-19
- People pretending to be from charities offering to do shopping or carry out cleaning tasks
- Emails asking for donations to the NHS (spelling and punctuation errors in the text and unusual email sender details are a clue that the email is fake)

Information about the COVID-19 vaccination programme is available on the NHS website. If you believe you are the victim of a fraud, please report this to Action Fraud as soon as possible by calling 0300 123 2040 or visiting www.actionfraud.police.uk

COVID-19: Government gives green light to community testing for Hampshire

Following Government approval, asymptomatic testing for people going out to work has started across the county.

The scheme is aimed at those **without symptoms** of coronavirus who are regularly leaving home to go to work, and who are not covered by an existing workplace testing scheme. People who are working from home or shielding should not attend a community testing site. Anyone experiencing symptoms of coronavirus - a high temperature, a new, continuous cough, or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste - should [book a test online](#) or call 119.

The County Council's Executive Member for Public Health, Councillor Judith Grajewski, said that this was a hugely positive and important development in our response to the pandemic and our continued efforts to protect the health of residents. **Around one in three people with COVID-19 display no symptoms and could be spreading the virus without knowing.** Community testing will help prevent transmission and break chains of infection, by identifying more cases quickly and ensuring that people are supported to self-isolate. Our teams at leisure centres, libraries and community centres have been working tirelessly to prepare their sites for the testing. She urged everyone who has to leave home for work to come forward for regular testing to protect themselves, their loved ones and our communities.

A total of 11 appointment-only community testing sites will become operational. **Residents should check their district council website for dates and opening hours.** The confirmed locations are:

- Basingstoke & Deane – former South Ham Library
- East Hants – Alton Sports Centre
- Eastleigh – The Point
- Fareham – Fareham College
- Gosport – Thorngate Hall Community Centre
- Hart – Hart District Council Offices
- Havant – Havant Library
- New Forest – Totton Health & Leisure Centre
- Rushmoor – Farnborough Leisure Centre
- Test Valley – Picket Twenty Sports Ground

- Winchester – Winchester Discovery Centre

Councillor Grajewski added: “I would like to reassure anyone who is visiting these sites to access the usual services that stringent infection control measures are in place. The layout at each site has been carefully designed to ensure people can move around them safely to prevent any possible spread of the virus. Furthermore, social distancing will be maintained throughout the testing process and trained staff will be in attendance on site, to guide people through the testing process and ensure that tests are completed safely and effectively.”

How asymptomatic testing works

- Tests can be booked online 24 hours in advance through any district website or on the [County Council website](#) and appointments should take no more than 30 minutes. Anyone who cannot book online should contact their district council, who will be able to book a test on your behalf.
- You will be asked not to eat anything for 30 minutes prior to your test.
- You will take a lateral flow test, which involves a self-administered swab of the nose and throat, under the guidance of trained staff.
- Results will be confirmed after leaving the testing site by text message sent direct to your mobile (or to a nominated mobile phone belonging to a family member or friend, if you do not have your own).
- You will be able to book two tests per week between three and five days after your first test throughout the programme.
- Anyone receiving a positive test result will need to [follow self-isolation guidance](#), but will not need to book a follow-up test.

For more information about testing without symptoms and to book an appointment at a community testing site, [visit the County Council’s website](#).

County Council asymptomatic testing locations

The community testing sites within the Havant Library and Winchester Discovery Centre buildings are not accessed from the main library entrances and separate entrances are clearly signposted for testing site visitors to use. Library customers using the [Ready Reads](#) click and collect service will not be impacted. Hampshire Libraries are closed for browsing, and fines are frozen. Access to Go Online public computers is temporarily suspended.



Cllr Roger Huxstep
Member for Meon Valley Division
Hampshire County Council

1st March 2021