

## Local context

### NHS open letter

NHS leaders across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight have [signed an open letter](#) to communities explaining that the NHS is under an extraordinary level of pressure and needs increased support from the public. The letter asks people to continue playing a part in the effort to Keep Hampshire safe by:

- Staying at home
- Making sure you do the right thing all the time (hands-face-space)
- Expecting the same of friends and family

### Vaccinations in care homes

The County Council can report a snapshot on care home vaccinations, based on self-reporting by care providers. To date (13 January), 32% of care home residents in Hampshire have received their first dose of a Covid-19 vaccination, additionally 30% of care home staff have received a vaccination.

### School places

Hampshire County Council is [asking](#) parents who are critical workers to consider carefully if they should be sending their children to school and whether it is possible for them to stay at home, so that only children of those critical workers who cannot be looked after at home, and vulnerable children, are in school.

Critical workers are defined by the Government as those whose work is critical to the Covid-19 and EU transition response. Children with at least one parent or carer who is a critical worker can go to school or college if required. More detail is available on [gov.uk/coronavirus](http://gov.uk/coronavirus).

### Winter Reading Challenge

Hampshire County Council's Library Service is [encouraging](#) children to sign up for this year's Winter Reading Challenge. In the press release, Councillor Edward Heron, Executive Member for Recreation, Heritage, Countryside and Rural Affairs, is quoted: Over the school holidays, children can experience a 'dip' in reading skills and learning, and the disruption to education caused by Covid-19 means that supporting children's literacy is more important than ever."

For more about the Winter Reading Challenge, please visit the [Hampshire Library Service webpages](#).

### Hampshire Perspectives - internet and online services

The responses from the latest Hampshire Perspectives survey have been analysed. The online residents' forum survey took place between 17 December and 3 January and sought to understand how residents are using the internet and online services during the pandemic. A total of 770 responses were received. Key findings include:

Respondents are increasingly turning to digital technology in many aspects of their lives – there are significant new and increased uses to engage with local healthcare providers and local authorities.

- Increased use of digital technology is likely to be ongoing - with most respondents, including first time users, intending to embed many aspects of their behaviour change.
- Over half of respondents had supported their family to go online during the pandemic – most commonly for shopping, communicating, and booking GP appointments.
- Use of digital technologies to communicate during the pandemic had a strong correlation with reduced isolation, improved mental health and wellbeing and the maintenance and development of relationships.

- Respondents who are reluctant to use digital technologies generally expressed a preference for doing things in person -insufficient equipment or broadband was a barrier for one in five respondents.

For more information on Hampshire Perspectives and to see findings from completed projects visit the [Hampshire Perspectives](#) webpages.

## Covid-secure measures in the workplace

The County Council has communicated to staff that, in addition to existing Covid-secure measures in the Authority's offices, face coverings must now be worn in all parts of the buildings, except when working at a designated desk. The use of face coverings is in line with the approach being taken by several public sector partners and therefore, provides a consistent approach for staff where they are working across organisations and in different settings.

Only a very small number of staff are currently working from the offices, including those who are completely unable to work from home, and have agreement from their Head of Service.

## National context

### National Covid-19 cases, deaths and vaccines data

The NHS Covid-19 vaccination daily data shows that within the reporting period 8 December 2020 – 12 January 2021, a total of **2,254,556** people have received the 1<sup>st</sup> dose and a total of **407,294** people have received the 2<sup>nd</sup> dose. The data, including the weekly statistical release, is available to [view online](#).

As of 4pm on 13 January, the total number of people tested positive for Covid-19 was **3,211,576** and daily number of lab-confirmed cases was **47,525**. The total number of Covid-19 associated deaths within 28 days of a positive test was **84,767**, with **1,564** deaths reported on the day. The data is available to [view online](#).

The R number range for the UK is **1.0- 1.4** and the growth rate range **0% to +6%** per day as of 8 January.

## Children and education

### Devices

The Department for Education (DfE) has [announced](#) a further 300,000 laptops and tablets to help disadvantaged children and young people learn at home as part of the Get Help with Technology Programme.

### Review your remote education provision

DfE has [published](#) a framework to help schools, and further education providers identify strengths and areas for improvement in their remote education provision.

### Ofsted inspections and complaints

Ofsted has [announced](#) that following a review they will carry out all planned inspection activity remotely until after the February half term. However, they will continue to undertake on-site inspections if they have immediate concerns.

Ofsted will also consider [complaints](#) made by parents about remote education to help resolve problems and ensure children are being well served.

### 2021 exams

The Secretary of State for Education, Gavin Williamson, has [written](#) to Ofqual's Chief Regulator, Simon Lebus, outlining the process to agree alternative arrangements for exams in 2021.

### School meals

DfE has [updated](#) the guidance on school meals with further information on how to order vouchers, sending eCodes to families, supermarkets and redeeming the vouchers.

## Adults' social care and public health

### Community testing

The Government has [updated](#) the policy paper on community testing: a guide for local delivery.

During the current period of national restrictions, the Community Testing Programme will be extended to all councils across England. The Government will support the programme until at least the end of March, with continued provision of lateral flow tests, funding, and wider government support.

### Care home visits

The Department of Health and Social Care yesterday (12 January), [updated](#) the guidance on visiting arrangements in care homes and for visits out of the care home, to reflect the new national restrictions.

### Flu vaccine uptake

Public Health England has [announced](#) that flu vaccine uptake among over 65s is the highest on record, with over 80% having received the vaccine so far.

### Vaccine surveillance strategy

Public Health England has [published](#) a Covid-19 vaccine surveillance strategy which outlines the proposed post-implementation surveillance plan for Covid-19 vaccines.

## Environment, transport and travel

### International travel update

The Government has [announced](#) that it will start to introduce pre-departure testing requirements for all inbound passengers to England from 4am on 15 January.

Passengers arriving by ship, plane or train will have to take a test up to three days before departure and provide evidence of a negative result before they travel.

This will be an additional requirement that applies to all passengers, including those travelling from a travel corridor country, other than those on a very short list of exemptions.

## 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>

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