

## Government press conference - 11 June

This was chaired by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Matt Hancock.

The Test and Trace programme was the main focus of the conference. The Health Secretary confirmed that monitoring the spread of Covid 19 will be critical to easing lockdown, and it was reiterated that people with symptoms must continue to self-isolate and work with contact tracers to break the chain of transmission and stop the spread of the coronavirus.

It was noted that the service will improve over time, and that local authorities are working hard to support their communities when local outbreaks do occur.

The press conference slides and datasets are available to [view online](#).

As of 4:05pm on Friday 12 June 2020 the total number of lab-confirmed cases was 292,950. The daily number of lab-confirmed cases was 1,541. The total number of Covid-19 associated deaths was 41,481, with 202 new deaths reported on the day. The data is available to [view online](#).

## National context

### Adult Social Care

The Local Government Association and the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADASS) have produced a [briefing note](#) to cover the key financial aspects of direct payments and support for personal assistants during this period. The primary target audience for this note is local authorities, but those in receipt of direct payments and their personal assistants may also find it useful

### Cyber security

The [National Cyber Security Centre yesterday published a report](#) looking at how the cyber threat to councils has changed since the Covid-19 pandemic. The report highlights that councils continue to be an attractive target due to their data and links with central government and the NHS

### High Street retail

The High Streets Task Force has today (12 June) [launched](#) a package of support to help high streets to get back on their feet. The Task Force will provide access to cutting-edge tools, training, information and advice for high streets across England as part of the Government's efforts to get shops back in business safely from 15 June. This support is open to local authorities and all organisations involved with high streets.

### Council tax collection

Yesterday (11 June) it was reported that a group of MPs and peers have called on the Chancellor to reform debt collection by local authorities, particularly around using bailiffs to collect council tax arrears. The Chair of LGA Resources Board, Cllr Richard Watts, is quoted as saying "Councils recognise the pressures households are facing during this difficult time and have put in place a wide range of measures to help those facing financial hardship. This has included some councils delaying taking council tax payments and most suspending recovery action for those with existing arrears. The LGA and councils are working with the major debt advice charities and a range of other partners to ensure that households can be supported in the most

effective way possible. This will be particularly crucial as payment holidays and forbearance come to an end.”

## No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) during the Covid-19 crisis

The LGA [has reported](#) that high numbers of people with NRPF have been approaching councils for support during the pandemic following, for example, loss of employment. The LGA is seeking to work with Government and as part current review led by Dame Louise Casey to provide greater clarity and funding for councils’ responsibilities for all those who are destitute and homeless because of their migration status.

## Local Government Ombudsman

Following a suspension of all casework activity during the pandemic due to the pressures councils and care providers were under dealing with the impact of the outbreak, the LGO has gradually restarted some casework and re-engage on investigations with councils who have identified that they have capacity. As of 29 June, the LGO will re-open for new cases regarding councils and adult social care providers and will continue to engage with councils directly as they communicate the next steps.

## Covid-19 epidemiology surveillance summary

The latest [Public Health England COVID-19 epidemiology surveillance summary](#) was published Thursday 11 June.

The report includes data from a variety of different sources, including community, primary care, secondary care, virology and mortality surveillance. Combining these sources shows a wider community picture including a breakdown by age, gender, ethnicity and geography which will help plan the national response to the pandemic and assist regional stakeholders in local planning. The [surveillance summary](#) is available here and each week’s report is accompanied by an [infographic](#).

## Coronavirus Impact Business Survey

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has [published](#) survey data on how DCMS Sectors are responding to the ongoing Covid 19 pandemic. The purpose of the survey was to highlight the characteristics of organisations in DCMS sectors whose viability is under threat in order to shape further Government support. The survey captures the impact so far of the Covid 19 outbreak on respondents, as well as their experience of and eligibility for government support packages.

## Managing public parks

A range of organisations, including the Local Government Association, have come together to [publish](#) a document on managing public parks. The document includes Government guidance as well as examples of good practice to help with the re-opening public parks and urban green spaces.

## Coronavirus FAQ on what the public can and cannot do

The [FAQ document](#) on what the public can and cannot do during the Covid 19 outbreak has been updated to reflect the latest announcements.

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## Local context

### Children's Services

The County Council has produced an [animation](#) which highlights Children's Services response to the Covid-19 pandemic, and how the service has adapted to meet the needs of children and families in Hampshire and on the Isle of Wight. The animation shows how the service has been able to operate as close to business as usual as possible, while maintaining an outstanding level of service.

### Covid-19 and smoking

With Covid 19 more likely to adversely impact those with an impaired immune system, [giving up smoking](#) has never been more important. [SmokefreeHampshire](#) provides a service for residents who want to quit smoking. This support, including access to Nicotine Replacement Therapy and other aids, is available via the Quitline on 01264 563039 or 0800 772 3649 or using the online referral form. A text service is also available - text Quit to 66777.

## 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/>
- 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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