

Local context

Autumn events and observances

To ensure that Hampshire residents are prepared to mark celebratory events and observances over the coming months in a Covid-safe way, the County Council continues to communicate the key messages outlined below.

The Director of Public Health, Simon Bryant, has today (14 October) written to all District/Borough Council Chief Executives outlining current public health advice and the communications approach that the Authority will take in the coming months. In addition, a press release will be published containing advice for residents on events over the autumn and winter, and targeted social media campaigns will be launched. The specific advice for this season's upcoming events is as follows:

Halloween

- Trick or Treating: The practice of door knocking is not recommended because of difficulties in adhering to social distancing guidelines, risks associated with potential contact, mixing of multiple households and spread of the virus through contact with shared surfaces, including shared buckets of treats.
- Government guidance applies to any social gatherings of people of all ages both in and outdoors. This includes meeting in groups of six people or less when seeing friends and family and the need to following social distancing rules.
- Residents are encouraged to celebrate within their own household and to find alternative and creative ways of doing so.

Bonfire Night

- Large events to celebrate Bonfire night are strongly discouraged because of the potential for mixing of large numbers of people, the risk of infection spreading from other areas of the community, and the potential for required support from emergency services.
- Private events must adhere to government guidance around gathering and social distancing, with people encouraged to watch firework displays virtually wherever possible.
- Hampshire County Council will be working with the Fire Service to ensure appropriate messaging around safety, including the requirement to be Covid-safe.

Remembrance Day

- Hampshire County Council will work with its partners to ensure that any events taking place are able to go ahead safely and are planned in accordance with government guidelines. Where events do take place, strict social distancing must apply with public attendance carefully managed by the event organisers.
- Parades are strongly discouraged because of the potential for mixing of large numbers of people and the risk of infection spreading from other areas of the community.
- The County Council will work with the faith community to provide continued support, particularly with regards to special ceremonies and support for our armed forces and veterans.
- Overall, wherever possible, private moments of remembrance and reflection are encouraged.

Diwali

- Large events to celebrate Diwali are strongly discouraged because of the potential for mixing of large numbers of people and the risk of infections spreading from other areas of the community.
- Government guidance applies to any social gatherings of people of all ages both in and outdoors. This includes meeting in groups of six people or less when seeing friends and family and the need to following social distancing rules.

Culture Recovery Fund grants

Hampshire Music Service has been awarded a £249,000 grant from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's first round of the Culture Recovery Fund grants programme, being administered by Arts Council England.

In addition, from the same £1.57 billion Cultural Recovery Fund, Sir Harold Hillier Gardens in Romsey has been awarded funding. The gardens applied for funding of up to £925,000 to cover the annual revenue that is expected to be lost due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Culture Recovery Fund aims to enable cultural organisations that have been affected by the Covid-19 crisis to stay afloat, providing them with support over a six-month period to ensure that by 31 March 2021 they can reopen, either fully or partially, or operate on a sustainable, cost-efficient basis until they are able to reopen fully at a later date.

For more information, please see the press releases on [Hampshire Music Service's grant](#) and [Sir Harold Hillier Gardens' grant](#).

National context

Communities

Local Covid alert levels

Following the Prime Minister's announcement on Monday 12 October, the Government [published](#) guidance on the local Covid alert levels, including what they mean, why they are being introduced and what the different levels are. In addition, the Government [published](#) a full list of areas in England which are listed as local Covid alert level high or very high and [launched](#) a postcode checker which allows people to find out the Covid restrictions in a local area.

Test and Trace Support Payment scheme

The Government has [published](#) guidance on who can claim support and how to apply. If someone has been contacted by NHS Test and Trace and told to self-isolate on or after 28 September 2020, they are under a legal obligation to do so, and could be eligible to receive £500 from Test and Trace Support.

Rough sleeping

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has [announced](#) a £10 million Cold Weather Payment for councils and an additional £2 million to faith and community groups to help them support sleepers into accommodation.

The Government has also published guidance setting out operating principles to support commissioners, staff and volunteers of rough sleeping accommodation (night shelters) as well as rough sleepers themselves during the Covid-19 pandemic, should the decision be taken to open a shelter.

Fraud hotline

The Cabinet Office has [announced](#) that a new hotline has been launched to stop fraudsters illegally targeting Covid-19 stimulus schemes. In an initiative between government and Crimestoppers, the public can now call the Fraud Hotline (0800 587 5030) anonymously and free of charge to report suspected fraudulent activity.

Adults' social care and public health

Shielding

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) [announced](#) yesterday (13 October) that clinically extremely vulnerable people in England will receive [new guidance](#) to help them reduce their risk from Covid-19, based on the local Covid alert level in their area.

The guidance will be tied into the new local Covid alert levels framework, meaning those at the highest risk of serious illness from the virus will receive specific advice depending on the level of risk in their local area. MHCLG has also written to Chief Executives with a copy of the shielding framework guidance, to help prepare should this be introduced in their area.

Anticoagulants

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency has [issued](#) advice to healthcare professionals and patients on the monitoring of patients taking blood thinning tablets (anticoagulants) during the Covid-19 pandemic.

NHS Vaccine Registry

The Government is [urging](#) more people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds and the over 65s to volunteer for clinical studies through the NHS Vaccine Registry. These groups are currently under-represented in trials, along with vulnerable groups such as those with chronic diseases.

Designated care settings

The Department of Health and Social Care has [written](#) to directors of adult services about putting in place designated accommodation to support Covid-19 positive people before they are admitted to care homes from acute hospitals, to ensure that they are no longer infectious upon admission.

Economy and business

Tax relief for working from home

HMRC has [confirmed](#) that since the online portal opened on 1 October, more than 54,800 claims have been submitted by customers to claim tax relief for working at home.

Business support

The Chancellor [delivered](#) a statement on Monday (12 October) which confirmed that the Local Restrictions Support Grant will change so that businesses can receive:

- grants of £1,334 per month, or £667 per two weeks, for properties with a rateable value of £15,000 or under
- grants of £2000 per month, or £1000 per two weeks, for properties with a rateable value of between £15,000-£5,000

- grants of £3,000 per month, or £1,500 per two weeks, for properties with a rateable value of £51,000 or over.

Councils will continue to receive 5% of the funding, which they received for the Local Restrictions Support Grant scheme as a discretionary fund.

The scheme will apply after a “very high” local Covid alert level has been in force for two weeks.

The Chancellor also confirmed that from 1 November the scheme will be extended to include businesses which have been required to close on a national, rather than a local basis, or which have not been legally able to reopen since the first lockdown in March, for example nightclubs.

National Covid-19 data

As of 4pm on 14 October, the total number of lab-confirmed cases was **654,644**. The daily number of lab-confirmed cases was **19,724**. The total number of Covid-19 associated deaths within 28 days of a positive test was **43,155**, with **137** deaths reported on the day. The data is available to [view online](#).

The R number range for the UK is **1.2-1.5** and the growth rate range is **+4% to +9%** per day as of 9 October.

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>