



## Coronavirus Latest Information, Advice, Useful Links and Service Updates (Updated 30 September 2020)

This is a very fast-moving situation and our focus right now is on delaying the spread of coronavirus and ensuring our services are responding well. This is clearly hugely important and requires all of our attention.

The information below is intended as a resource to keep you up to date with the latest information and advice.

### Trusted sources of information

- The most recent **verified data on cases in the UK and Norfolk** is available from Public Health England [here](#) and the Norfolk Insights website [here](#).
- Everyone has a key role in promoting [www.nhs.uk/coronavirus](http://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus) and [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus) as trusted sources of information to the public. It is really important to ensure people go to the right sources of information and keep up to date with how to look after themselves.
- **Keep up to date:** We have [a dedicated webpage for coronavirus updates](#) in Norfolk and impact on Norfolk County Council services. This is updated regularly so please do re-visit this page.

### Latest national announcements

- **Expansion of post-18 education and training to level up and prepare workers for post-COVID economy** - The [Prime Minister has set out plans to transform the training and skills system](#), setting out a “lifetime skills guarantee”. The full speech can be found [here](#). Policies announced included:
  - Adults without an A-Level or equivalent qualification will be offered a free, fully-funded college course – in “high value” skills areas, and the opportunity to study at a time and location that suits them. This offer will be available from April in England, and will be paid for through the National Skills Fund. A full list of available courses will be set out shortly.
  - Higher education loans will be made more flexible, allowing adults and young people to space out their study across their lifetimes, take more high-quality vocational courses in further education colleges and universities, and to support people to retrain for jobs of the future.
  - Apprenticeship opportunities will be increased, with more funding for SMEs taking on apprentices, and greater flexibility in how their training is structured
  - £8 million for digital skills boot camps; expanding pilots in in four new locations. From next year, boot camps will be extended to sectors like construction and engineering
  - Extension of the free online Skills Toolkit, helping people train in digital and numeracy skills - expanded today to include 62 additional courses.
  - Continued investment in college buildings and facilities – including over £1.5 billion in capital funding.

### Public information – Key messages for residents

- **NHS COVID-19 app launches** - People across England and Wales are being urged by the government to download the [NHS COVID-19 app](#) (available to download from the App Store and Google Play), to help control the spread of coronavirus and protect themselves and their loved ones as case numbers rise.

It forms a central part of the NHS Test and Trace service in England – identifying contacts of those who have tested positive for coronavirus. A [press release](#) contains further information about how the app works.

The **government is texting and emailing people** across England to inform them of the new contact tracing app. Information about what is included in these messages can be found [here](#).

As well as contact tracing, the app has a range of **additional, enhanced features** to help reduce personal and public risk from COVID-19 as part of the wider testing and contact tracing service:

- **alert:** letting users know the level of coronavirus risk in their postcode district. There are two levels of alert: High (where your local authority, or a neighbouring local authority is using additional measures, such as lockdown); and, Medium (where your local authority, or a neighbouring local authority, has high or rising levels of infection).
- **QR check-in:** enabling users to check-in at a venue and alerting them if they have recently visited somewhere they may have come into contact with someone who later tests positive for COVID-19
- **symptoms:** allowing users to check if they have coronavirus symptoms and see if they need to order a free test
- **test:** helping users book a free test through the app and get results to know whether they have COVID-19
- **isolate:** if a user is told to self-isolate, a timer feature will help count down that period and access will be provided to relevant advice
- **New legal duty to self-isolate comes into force** – People in England are now [required by law to self-isolate](#) if they test positive or are contacted by NHS Test and Trace (rules came into force on 28 September).
- **Denmark, Slovakia, Iceland and Curaçao removed from UK travel corridor exempt list** - The government [announced](#) that people arriving in the UK from these destinations from 4am Saturday 26 September 2020 will need to self-isolate for two weeks.
- **FAQs** - The government's [Coronavirus outbreak FAQs: what you can and can't do](#) continues to be a useful resource to help answer particular queries.
- **Find out what support you can get if you're affected by** coronavirus – an [online tool](#) to find out what help and advice you can get from the government and other organisations

## Public health

- **Guidance to parents and guardians: when you should book a coronavirus test for your child** – A [letter from the Chief Nurse and Interim Chief Medical Officer of NHS Test and Trace](#) provides an outline on when parents and guardians should book a coronavirus (COVID-19) test for their child.

The letter explains that you should only book a test if your child has any of these 3 coronavirus symptoms:

- a high temperature: any new high temperature where your child feels hot to touch on their chest or back (you do not need to measure the temperature)
- a new continuous cough: coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours
- a loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste: a noticeable loss of smell or taste or things smell and taste different to normal

Your child does not need a test if they have a runny nose, are sneezing or feeling unwell but do not have a temperature, cough or loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste. This is because these are not normally symptoms of coronavirus.

## Social Care

- **Feedback from people we support** - To reflect on the first wave of the pandemic and prepare for future waves, between March and August we have been working to understand the experiences of people using our services during COVID-19. The engagement work (telephone interviews, online diary, surveys, online activities) has been undertaken by Norfolk CC, Healthwatch and Britain Thinks (for the Norfolk and Waveney Health and Care Partnership).

These findings are being shared internally, and with partners through the Health and Wellbeing Board, to inform future planning. We are also working with Healthwatch Norfolk to undertake specific engagement

work with the residential care sector to understand the impact and experiences of residents, staff and families (which will be completed in October 2020).

- **Carers Matter** - The new enhanced service for Adult Carers in Norfolk was launched on 1st September. Delivered by Carers Matter Norfolk and their Carer Connectors, the service will be able to undertake Carers Assessments and offer a range of support, including a Health and Wellbeing Grant, Carers Breaks, counselling and training.

Since the service launch, Carers Matter Norfolk were pleased to report that Carer Connectors are enjoying undertaking assessments. They have supported two carers to access Carers Breaks and one carer to access a Health and Wellbeing grant. We are also liaising with Norfolk CC practitioners, who have referred carers to Carers Matter Norfolk, to obtain feedback about their experience.

## Education, schools and settings

- **Back to School** - Within week commencing 21 September the information provided from the DfE continues to show positive movement with the number of schools that are fully open increasing from 96% last week to 97.6% this week (as of Thursday 24 September 2020). In relation to attendance, the data also shows pupil numbers have increased this week from 88% to 89%.

Schools continue to express concern of lack of tests, but this is seeming to improve in some areas of the county. To date 16 schools, early years and post 16 settings have had a 1 positive case since the start of term. All cases are supported by the outbreak management centre.

- **Post 16's** - September Guarantee is now 91.8% of offers of learning for year 12 and 86.2% for year 13 students. The data we are receiving from colleges indicate that enrolments are higher this year than last year. Schools have received the year 10 and 11 Risk of NEET Indicator reports and these are used by them to identify and target young people requiring additional support.
- **Early Years** - The number of providers that are open continues to increase and as of Thursday 24 September this stands at 626 open, with over 10,000 children attending. The number of children of critical workers attending remains steady this week whereas we saw a slight increase to 192 for children who have a social worker and 79 children with an EHCP. Again, this week we do not have any sufficiency issues and all request for a childcare place have been resolved. There are 113 providers that remain closed and as last week these continue to be mostly childminders and out of school provision.

## Community

- **Councils secure £59 million for sustainable transport** - Norwich residents will see major improvements to walking, cycling and public transport, following confirmation of funding from Central Government today. Norfolk County Council has received formal confirmation from the Department of Transport (DfT) that a joint bid with the city council and district authorities of Broadland and South Norfolk has been accepted, triggering a combined investment in local infrastructure totalling £59m. DfT have confirmed Norfolk County Council will receive £32 million from the Transforming Cities Fund. The funding will deliver vital infrastructure improvements to improve travel times for bus passengers on the most popular transit routes, giving city bus operator, First Eastern Counties, confidence to invest a further £18m in its fleet and local services.

All projects will be delivered through the [Transport for Norwich](#) partnership, with an additional £9m being allocated from local council and private contributions.

## Business and economy

- **Digital Council of the Year** - Norfolk County Council has been announced the winner of 'Digital council of the year' at the Connected Britain awards. Beating the other shortlisted councils of Brentwood Borough and Newcastle City Councils, Norfolk County Council's hard work towards its goal of becoming the best-connected rural county in the country was recognised by award, along with the wide range of work to make full use of digital technology.

Cllr Tom FitzPatrick, Cabinet Member for Innovation, Transformation and Performance, said:

“We’ve worked hard to make Norfolk a prime destination for those looking to use technology to innovate and grow their business, and winning this award shows how far we have already come. It’s the result of a lot of hard work, and I want to congratulate our IMT team and other colleagues at Norfolk County Council and our partners across the region who have helped to make this happen.

“I invite anyone looking to establish or expand their business to put Norfolk at the top of their list. The past few months have shown us the vital role that technology will continue to play in our economy so we should be proud of the fact that Norfolk is so well equipped for the future, and take pride that our work has been recognised nationally with this award.”

**Full details of the Innovation Network and how it benefits businesses in Norfolk can be found [here](#)**

- **Chancellor outlines Winter Economy Plan** - Rishi Sunak has unveiled [government’s plan to protect jobs and support businesses](#) over the coming months. Delivering a speech in Parliament, the Chancellor announced a package of measures which includes a new Jobs Support Scheme to protect millions of returning workers, extending the Self Employment Income Support Scheme and 15% VAT cut for the hospitality and tourism sectors, and help for businesses in repaying government-backed loans.
  - **New Jobs Support Scheme** - A new [Job Support Scheme](#) will be introduced from 1 November to protect viable jobs in businesses who are facing lower demand over the winter months due to coronavirus. Under the scheme, which will run for six months, the government will contribute towards the wages of employees who are working fewer than normal hours due to decreased demand. Employers will continue to pay the wages of staff for the hours they work - but for the hours not worked, the government and the employer will each pay one third of their equivalent salary. This means employees who can only go back to work on shorter time will still be paid two thirds of the hours for those hours they can’t work. In order to support only viable jobs, employees must be working at least 33% of their usual hours. The level of grant will be calculated based on employee’s usual salary, capped at £697.92 per month.
  - **Self-Employment Income Support Scheme** - Continuing support for self-employed individuals by extending the [Self Employment Income Support Scheme Grant](#) (SEISS). An initial taxable grant will be provided to those who are currently eligible for SEISS and are continuing to actively trade but face reduced demand due to coronavirus. The initial lump sum will cover three months’ worth of profits for the period from November to the end of January next year. This is worth 20% of average monthly profits, up to a total of £1,875. An additional second grant, which may be adjusted to respond to changing circumstances, will be available for self-employed individuals to cover the period from February 2021 to the end of April.
  - **Extending the temporary 15% VAT cut** for the tourism and hospitality sectors to the end of March next year.
  - **Extension of the four loan schemes** available for businesses until the end of November.

## General updates

- **Adult Learning** - Norfolk County Council’s Adult Learning team is preparing for a return to classroom-based learning at Wensum Lodge, with robust measures and new systems in place to keep students and staff safe. There will be a phased approach to the re-opening of classrooms at Wensum Lodge, beginning on 1 October with the Art Block. As an education provider, Adult Learning is exempt from the rule of six and the number of learners we allow in a class is based on health and safety guidance in relation to social distancing. **Find out more about Adult Learning courses at [www.norfolk.gov.uk/adultlearning](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/adultlearning)**
- **Protect Ourselves. Protect Others. Protect Norfolk: campaign to stop the spread of coronavirus** - A new prevention campaign has been launched by Norfolk County Council to promote the Government’s message around the three key actions of Hands, Face, Space. The campaign will run on social media and in the regional and local press across the county.

With the cold and flu season now upon us, the campaign helps to explain that colds and flu viruses are spread in exactly the same way as the coronavirus. So, the advice is to continue practising the three key activities: regular hand washing with soap and water, wearing a face covering in enclosed public spaces and keeping a safe distance from people not in your household.

As with previous coronavirus-based campaigns, the County Council's Public Health team will be sharing these messages with local authorities, businesses and schools to ensure the three key elements of the prevent campaign are communicated effectively.

- **Test your alarms call during Home Fire Safety Week** - Residents across Norfolk are being urged to think about the safety of themselves and their family this Home Fire Safety Week. (28 Sept- 4 Oct). The warning comes as Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service revealed there were 418 accidental fires in county homes in 2019-20. There were also 120 chimney fires. In 2019-2020, 245 of home fires started in the kitchen, with 191 directly linked to cooking. A total of 23 fires were caused by smoking materials, with a further 10 started by matches or cigarette lighters. While smoking is a low percentage, the risk of death or serious injury in fires linked to smoking is high. After the kitchen, fires were most likely to start in the living room or the bedroom. It is recommended that smoke alarms are fitted to all levels of the home to ensure maximum coverage, and in rooms used the most as this is where fires are most likely to start.

Residents are being urged to ensure they have enough alarms for their property and that all alarms should be tested weekly to ensure they are in good working order. Carbon monoxide is highly poisonous but one that you cannot see, taste or smell. CO alarms should be fitted in rooms with a fuel burning appliances, such as an open fire, wood burning stove or gas appliance such as a boiler or cooker. Ensure all appliances are regularly tested by qualified tradespeople.

In Norfolk, the fire and rescue service offer a free home fire risk check visit to vulnerable people, who are often referred by their families or by other organisations. During the pandemic, the service has continued to visit high risk properties to help protect the most vulnerable residents. For advice on keeping you and your family safe, or to request a free home fire risk check, visit [www.norfolk.gov.uk/fire](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/fire). The service will also be sharing advice via its social media channels this week.