

Coronavirus Latest Information, Advice and Useful Links (Updated 29 April 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 **Norfolk Resilience Forum** is driving our local response through multi-agency strategic and tactical delivery groups.

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](#).
- Everyone has a key role in promoting www.nhs.uk/coronavirus and 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.
- PHE is addressing **common questions** on its [Public Health Matters blog](#).
- **Keep up to date:** We have [a dedicated webpage for coronavirus updates](#) in Norfolk, and impacts on Norfolk County Council services. This is updated regularly so please do re-visit this page.

Latest national announcements

- The latest information on the **government response** can be found [here](#).
- **Covid-19 in Children** - Public Health England (PHE) along with NHS partners and academic collaborators has implemented a number of ongoing [surveillance programmes to monitor the course, progression and outcomes of COVID-19 in children](#).
- **New guarantee on death in service benefits** - The families of health and care workers on the frontline in England will benefit from [a new life assurance scheme during the pandemic](#), developed after discussions with health and social care unions.
- **Council cash flow regulations published** - The regulations that implement the government's measures to ease councils' cash flow pressures, by allowing local government to defer payments due to the Government in respect of the central share of business rates for three months, were laid last week and have been published. The regulations: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2020/449/made>.
- **Funding for councils** - Individual councils in England have funding allocations confirmed following Local Government Secretary's announcement of [£1.6 billion in additional funding](#).
- **'Bounce Back' Scheme launched** - Firms will be able to get loans worth up to £50,000, chancellor Rishi Sunak has announced, as part of a ['bounce back' scheme for businesses](#) with 100% government backing.
- **Further expansion of access to coronavirus testing** – Anyone in England with symptoms of coronavirus who has to leave home to go to work, and all symptomatic members of the public aged 65 and over, will now be able to get tested, the government has announced. This will mean people who cannot work from home and those aged 65 and over can know for sure whether they have coronavirus and need to continue isolating. Members of their households with symptoms – a new continuous cough or high temperature - will also be eligible for testing. Those included in the announcement can book a test using the [online portal](#).

Public information – Key messages for residents

- **Social distancing for shops** - The [guidance on social distancing in the workplace](#) has been updated to include information for shops running a pick-up or delivery service.
- **Stay at home guidance for households with possible coronavirus (COVID-19) infection** – [Government guidance has been issued](#) for households with grandparents, parents and children living together where someone is at increased risk or has symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) infection.

Community resilience

- **New distribution centre** - A new distribution centre, run by the Council on behalf of the Norfolk Resilience Forum, has been set up to sort and distribute food and personal protective equipment to vulnerable people.

Staffed by NCC and Nurse staff (redeployed from services such as highways, libraries and catering services) the distribution centre sorts supplies and distributes them to district council colleagues, who deliver them to vulnerable people on the shielded list if they haven't received their doorstep delivery, or if they have specific dietary requirements. The base is also being used to distribute personal protective equipment to care homes.

Adult Social Care

- **Employing a personal assistant carer** - A [coronavirus-related FAQs](#) has been set-up on the NCC webpages for people employing a personal assistant carer.
- **How to work safely in domiciliary care.** [New guidance has been published for those working in domiciliary care providing information on the use of personal protective equipment \(PPE\)](#)
- Norfolk County Council has been completely managing **PPE allocation and distribution** from central government sources to providers and giving support around the ongoing challenge of securing and sustaining PPE. Up to the week beginning April 27th, the Adult Social Services Quality Assurance Team had ensured about 305,000 items had been provided out of emergency stocks. In a BBC survey, 8 out of 8 Norfolk care homes have been satisfied with NCCs response to urgent PPE requirements.

Children and young people

- **Funding for play equipment helps SEND children during coronavirus lockdown** - A dedicated team at Norfolk County Council has made major changes to its service to help a group of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) cope with the challenges they face during the Coronavirus lockdown. Thanks to the Short Breaks Team, [funding has been made available for the families of over 900 children with SEND who receive short breaks](#), to buy much-needed play equipment to support their needs at home. The team normally administers short breaks outside of school hours for children and young people aged between five and 17 who meet the eligibility criteria.
- **Short breaks direct payments for children** - A [coronavirus-related FAQ](#) has been setup on the NCC Webpages for those who receive short breaks direct payments for children.
- **Young carers** - As part of our focus on vulnerable children and young people during Covid 19, a multi-agency group, including commissioned young carer providers, health and adult services, has formed and is meeting weekly to focus on action we can take collectively to support young carers. We have also invited Dr Kate Blake-Holmes who is leading a new research project involving the University of East Anglia on the impact of Covid 19 on young carers to be part of the group. The group is focused on raising awareness about the needs of young carers in the current challenging context, with the aim that agencies can respond effectively and enable young carers to access the support they need, especially around their emotional wellbeing as well as the practical help that families need at this time. We are ensuring that our wider safeguarding messages include a focus on the needs of young carers and their families.
- **Linking with the existing young carer forum** - We are expanding with our wider engagement with young people (currently via weekly Zoom meetings with a range of young people), so that their voice informs our responses during Covid 19.

Education, schools and settings

- **Resilience Planning** - We have further developed our resilience planning in identifying potential cluster school hubs should we see a significant reduction in school capacity across areas of the county due to school staff illness. This forms part of our strategy to adopt a phased conflation of provision across the county, which could if required move to a worst-case scenario where we would prioritise provision in 3 identified venues adjacent to the 3 main Norfolk hospitals in Norwich, Kings Lynn, and Gorleston. These venues will offer childcare provision for children, aged 0-12, of key NHS staff.
- **Online and Curriculum Learning** - We have stepped up our promotion of the educational resources we have on our website for children and young people of all ages and abilities. These resources supplement the work schools are settings are completing for their students, and the DfE home learning support including the OAK Academy, which is supported by Two of Norfolk's academy trusts and will provide 180 online lessons a week. Our renewed digital and media promotion will seek to support parents and carers to make sense of the vast

array of resources both locally and nationally on offer, and we will be sharing best practices across the sector to further support schools.

- **Children not on a school roll** - A focus on supporting the learning and welfare is in place for all children not on a school roll for one reason or another. We have provided some with laptops and online tuition and support. Weekly welfare checks are now in place for all 16-18 year olds who are not in employment, education, or training.
- **Transition back into school** - We continue to develop our plans for how we support schools and settings with being ready for transition to all being open for all pupils once the restrictions are lifted. The approach will remain flexible to consider future GOVT advice, planned re-integration, and social distancing guidance. This will include buildings, staffing, and infrastructure all being ready for when they are required

Business and economy

- **The Big Small Business Check In** – New Anglia LEP has [launched a campaign](#) to ensure that small business owners don't miss out on claiming for grant aid to help them through the covid-19 outbreak. How you can help:
 - Check in with your favourite small businesses to see if they are aware of the help out there.
 - If you are a business owner get free guidance on the grants available and other business support from the New Anglia Growth Hub team of advisors by calling 0300 333 6536.
 - Visit the [Growth Hub website](#) to keep up to date on the latest news, funding opportunities, free online workshops and more.
- **Business Resilience and Recovery Scheme** - [New Anglia LEP has launched a new Business Resilience and Recovery Scheme](#) to support Norfolk and Suffolk's businesses through the Covid-19 pandemic and into economic recovery. The new funding scheme will provide grants to support short-term business resilience projects and longer-term recovery and diversification projects. The new scheme is part of a package of measures totalling over £10m in place from New Anglia LEP to support businesses and economic growth:
 - New £3.5m Business Resilience and Recovery Scheme
 - New Growth Through Innovation Fund to support companies investing in research and development with grants from £1,000 to £25,000
 - Growing Business Fund which provides capital grants from £25,000 to £500,000
 - Growing Places Fund to kickstart development projects and sites
 - Small Grant Scheme which provides capital grants from £1,000 to £25,000
 - Access to angel investment through New Anglia Capital and to grants for agri-food businesses through the Eastern Agri-Tech scheme.
- **Extra month to claim for farm payments.** Farmers and land managers now have until 15 June to apply for BPS payments and to claim funding for their environmental and woodland work under other schemes. Find out more [here](#).
- **New free online learning platform to boost workplace skills** -. A new online learning platform to help boost the nation's skills while people are staying at home has been [launched by Education Secretary Gavin Williamson](#). Workers who have been furloughed as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic are being offered the opportunity to improve their numeracy and digital skills with a free online learning platform set up by the government. Free courses are available through a new online platform hosted on [the GOV.UK website](#), called ['The Skills Toolkit'](#). The new platform gives people access to free, high-quality digital and numeracy courses to help build up their skills, progress in work and boost their job prospects.

Service updates

- **New online learning resources** have been launched by the Museum Service in time for the summer term, to support home schooling. The resources include a Romans video which has reached nearly 6,000 people on Facebook, with 2,200 views in 22 hours, as well as 890 views on Twitter, and The Little Kippers video which has had 1,300 views in 4 days.
- **INFORMATION ON ALL NCC SERVICE DISRUPTIONS AND CLOSURES CAN BE FOUND [HERE](#)**