

## A message from Richard Flinton, Chief Executive

I am sure that the extended period of lockdown announced yesterday by Government has not come as a surprise to anyone and although many people are finding this really tough, the heart-warming level of compliance in North Yorkshire is giving us some reason to hope. Although we are absolutely not out of the woods – far from it – we are not seeing the surge in demand for critical care beds that some other areas have seen and our health and social care services are coping, despite this unprecedented challenge. Together with your support and the strong multi-agency management of emergencies we have here, we are making a difference in North Yorkshire and we are saving lives. Don't lose sight of that in the weeks ahead. I urge you to stay focussed on what we need to do to get through this as a county in the best possible shape to face the future.

I continue be inspired by the wonderful kindness and generosity of local individuals, businesses and partners who have donated to us what they can to help us protect our front line staff – only today we accepted a gift of face masks, aprons and other personal protection equipment from the British Library Boston Spa's Yorkshire office. Making sure that our frontline staff in health and social care, safeguarding and other areas get the PPE they need remains a key priority for us. We have negotiated new supply chains and have a better level of optimism now for our own teams. However, across the multi- agencies represented by North Yorkshire Local Resilience Forum the position remains extremely difficult and the LRF panel issuing our limited national supplies of PPE remains inundated with requests. We very much hope to see a fresh delivery from government over the next few days or we will simply run out. These are the short term emergency supplies supporting our social care providers and it's critical we get more quickly.

We continue to operate in a rapidly changing environment and we are responding in a dynamic way as a County Council. The Buy Local site we launched just a few days ago is already proving an effective way of linking businesses and tradespeople still able to work in the current environment, with customers and there is more on that below. We are also watching closely the impact on the county's economy and working with the district councils and LEP to ensure businesses know the help that's available and how to get it. The fact that from Monday employers will be able to make claims on behalf of furloughed employees is particularly welcome in North Yorkshire where we have a very large number of micro, small and medium sized businesses in need of help to retain talented staff.

Our isolation helpline team continues to proactively contact those defined by Government as being most at risk from COVID-19 and to work with the 23 community organisations and wider volunteers to get vital medical and food deliveries to people all over the county. And we have just launched a telephone befriending service for vulnerable young people who are struggling to live with the social distancing requirements during this outbreak. This will ensure that young people have access to the practical and emotional support they need during lockdown and someone close to their own age to confide in.

This week we also had a brief reminder of the importance of business-as-usual as we managed to offer over 95 per cent of families in our county their first choice of primary school. This figure remains consistently high in comparison to other areas and will be a welcome bit of news for families in this strange world we are living in. Regarding when exactly our schools will reopen to all pupils we await guidance from Government but in the meantime we continue to operate education hubs which are helping many essential key workers fight this outbreak on the frontline which is incredibly important.

In closing, as we approach another weekend, please continue to do the right thing and follow the rules. Remember we are all in this together and it is by sticking together we will fight this terrible virus and be able to enjoy our families, friends, work colleagues and our beautiful county properly again.



## A message from Dr Lincoln Sargeant, Director of Public Health

Around the world levels of COVID-19 continue to increase. World Health Organisation data shows that there have been 2,034,802 confirmed cases globally, with 135,163 deaths across 213 countries, areas or territories. The UK has overtaken both Iran and China for the total number of cases and now has the 6<sup>th</sup> highest number of cases amongst all nations (behind USA, Spain, Italy, Germany and France).

At a national level, Public Health England data shows there were 108,692 cases in the UK on 17<sup>th</sup> April. Of those hospitalised in the UK who tested positive for coronavirus, 14,576 have sadly died.

We currently have 564 confirmed cases of COVID-19 across North Yorkshire. However, this focuses on those who have been tested in hospital settings, which will only be a proportion of the total number. We expect that hospital cases are around 8 per cent of the total number of cases across the community.

There have been 246 deaths in hospital trusts covering North Yorkshire (Airedale, Harrogate, South Tees, and York) to date. Data are reported at trust level and it is not yet possible to determine deaths for North Yorkshire residents reliably. All trusts apart from Harrogate serve large populations outside North Yorkshire.

Whilst numbers continue to rise, they are not of the magnitude we were originally expecting when planning for the reasonable worst case scenario. This has certainly been helped by peoples' adherence to isolation and social distancing measures, for which we would like to extend our thanks in this difficult time. This will continue to be crucial over the next few weeks as the lockdown continues, and I am sure that people will do their very best to support our essential services with their excellent work across the County.

### **COVID-19 Mental Health Campaign**

Public Health England's Every Mind Matters campaign has launched a new suite of tips and advice, focussed on looking after people's mental wellbeing during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

The new Every Mind Matters resources, designed specifically to help manage our mental health during coronavirus, include a tailored COVID-19 Mind Plan, content for individuals and their loved

ones on managing their mental wellbeing during the outbreak, and support for specific mental health issues such as anxiety, stress, low mood and trouble sleeping. Every Mind Matters encourages people to create a personal Mind Plan, a quick and free interactive tool offering tailored mental wellbeing advice. For more information please visit <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/>

## Days off Alcohol

Alcohol can quickly become a part of your daily routine. A good way to take control of your drinking is to make sure that you have days off from alcohol.

Try to have at least two drink-free days each week. Why not try the Drink Free Days app? <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/apps/>

During social distancing and isolation, the advice on safer consumption of alcohol remains the same. It could be harmful to your health to regularly drink more than:

- six medium glasses of wine or pints of beer a week\*, or
- three medium glasses of wine or pints of beer (for women) or four medium glasses of wine or pints of beer (for men) on any single occasion\*
- Regularly drinking more than six medium glasses of wine or pints of beer a week increases your risk of cancer, heart disease and liver disease.

\*This is based approximately on a medium glass of 11% wine (1.9 units) or a pint of 3.8% beer (2.2 units)

For more information visit <http://wakeupnorthyorks.co.uk/days-off/>

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## North Yorkshire County Council

### Schools and childcare

Across our children and young people's service the response from all our teams has been amazing and people are working at pace to adapt services to meet the coronavirus challenge.

## Schools

The Education team has done an outstanding job in co-coordinating what have been unprecedented changes to schools over the last few weeks. Over 250 school staff have stepped forward to ensure that schools and settings can be opened and have gone above and beyond the Government's requirements. In addition to the emergency childcare hubs operating over the public holidays and weekends, a number of schools have opened over the Easter holiday weekdays with an average of around 600 vulnerable learners and critical worker children being provided with childcare each day.

## Primary school places allocation

This year, over 95 per cent of North Yorkshire parents or carers of primary age children secured their first school preference. Just over 98 per cent of families in the county secured one of their top three preferences.

The figure remains consistently high in comparison with many other places in the country, is one of the highest in Yorkshire and is a great achievement given current challenging circumstances. We are pleased that so many families continue to gain the first preference from their choice of schools, however we work hard with all our schools to ensure they deliver high standards of education so that families who are not given first preferences can still send their children to good schools.

### **Music Service**

The Music Service will begin remote lessons for pupils at the beginning of the summer term, using Skype for Business to interact with pupils in order to teach instrumental lessons across North Yorkshire to those who are home learning. The music service has also been providing support for schools which have remained open. This has included lesson plans, online singing sessions and individual support for pupils.

### **PPE production**

CLEAPSS, the national consortium of local authorities supporting practical science, design & technology and art have produced guidance on what schools need to do in order to be able to produce PPE equipment using school equipment whilst remaining compliant with all relevant legislation. Schools in North Yorkshire are joining this great national initiative.

### **Children and Families**

Our Children and Family teams have worked tirelessly to risk assess over 4,000 cases in a matter of days to ensure we continue to provide safe plans for young people. Social workers continue to visit families where it is appropriate to do so and they are working with schools to ensure vulnerable children are in school and when they are not, that the right support is in place.

**Our Leaving care service** has stepped up contact to our young adults and is in touch with them even more during this difficult time.

**Our Early Help teams** have been developing some extremely innovative approaches to support looked after children through a Skype buddy system as well as working on delivering support to vulnerable families. They have been delivering sessions and courses remotely, sending out information, using PowerPoint presentations, phone calls and WhatsApp groups, including one for LGBT. They have also been coordinating with their local Food Banks to ensure families are getting what they need. There has been an enormous amount of creative thinking!

**Our Foster carers** have been inspiring. They have continued to take young people in, including one carer who took very young children from a family where COVID was suspected, resulting in the carer going in to self-isolation. In addition, our No Wrong Door hubs continue to show fantastic compassion and support to our children. At a time when we are hearing stories of the private market either sending children “back” to local authorities or charging even more, I am incredibly thankful and proud that we have the ability and compassion to look after our own young people in North Yorkshire.

### **Stuart Carlton, Corporate Director for the Children and Young People’s Service**

 Support for people in isolation

As lockdown continues, it becomes increasingly important for us to keep looking out for any potentially vulnerable people in our neighbourhoods - even just a note through their door can make a big difference. We’re working with 23 community organisations across the county to help people

without family, friends or local networks. **If you know someone who needs help with shopping, picking up prescriptions or other essentials, they can call 01609 780780 between 8am and 5.30pm and we will make sure they get the help they need.**

Our customer service centre is now making around 400 calls a day to people who are being shielded and have requested support. These people are particularly vulnerable because of existing health conditions and have been advised to stay at home for 12 weeks. District councils will also be making outbound calls to people who are being shielded to make sure they are getting the help they need; in North Yorkshire, this is just under 15,000 people.

If someone on the shielded list cannot be contacted by telephone, a volunteer is deployed to check that they are safe. **Ready for Anything volunteer, Sandra Barber from Filey**, went out to check on someone who was potentially at risk last week. Sandra said "If I can help, I will. That's why I joined up with Ready For Anything. I was pleased to be asked to go and check on a vulnerable local resident. Thankfully all was ok and **I was proud to have been able to help** out in the local community."

### **Support for young people feeling isolated**

A telephone befriending service has been launched for vulnerable young people who are struggling to live with the social distancing requirements.

Our Restorative Academy recruits relief workers aged between 16 and 25, many of whom have experienced care. This befriending service is taking enquiries from leaving care services, looked after children services, fostering services and the early help service.

It will ensure young people have access to practical and emotional support throughout the lockdown period and have somebody to confide in of a similar age.

### **Online library service**

Our online library service has been embraced by residents since the temporary closure of library branches in March.

Since then, almost 1,000 people have joined the library online or by phone. The same period has seen a 68 per cent increase in loans of e-books and a 53 per cent increase in e-audio book loans. There has been a 97 per cent rise in the use of digital magazine. Online reference resources also saw big increases.

**We have added 1,400 new copies of e-books and introduced a new e-audio book platform, BorrowBox, with 1,200 titles.** Remote access has been arranged for library members to family history resources Ancestry.com and Find My Past.

Library staff have hosted video story times, rhyme times, craft sessions, quizzes and Lego challenges on libraries' Facebook pages, which have welcomed more than 3,500 new followers.

Digital library services can be found at [www.northyorks.gov.uk/digital-library](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/digital-library). To access these, you need your library card number and PIN number. If you do not know your PIN, call 01609 533878 and one will be issued. If you wish to join the library, call the same number.

### **Business sees immediate benefit from Buy Local directory**

Sam Spence, who runs Crafts of Thirsk, is one of about 200 businesspeople to register on our new Buy Local free online marketplace in its first week – and she saw an immediate benefit.

**“I registered in the morning** after seeing it on social media and **got a new order before 2pm that afternoon** off the back of it,” said Sam, who founded the Thirsk Yarnbombers and took over the 40-year-old business a year ago. “It took me only a minute to register and I’ve shared it with loads of other people, so you’ve probably been inundated!”

We launched Buy Local to enable North Yorkshire businesses and tradespeople who can work under Covid-19 restrictions to share what they offer with customers who need their services. The site can be found at [www.northyorks.gov.uk/buy-local](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/buy-local).

Sam closed her shop when Covid-19 restrictions were introduced, but began to get requests from customers.

“People started messaging to ask whether I could post or deliver craft materials,” she said. “I spoke to people about it and realised how important it is for mental health and keeping occupied.”

Sam is in the shop three days a week to pack orders, which she then posts or delivers.

**“I arrange a delivery time, leave the package and ring the bell,”** she said. “A lot of customers are on their own, and a lot have taken up crafting during the outbreak and are asking for advice. **People are so pleased with what they get they are now re-ordering.”**

### **Sam recommends Buy Local.**

“It’s a one-stop shop. I could see what people in other towns were doing. So there are companies in Scarborough, for instance, and I thought: ‘If I’ve got a birthday coming up I might use them’. So **it’s not just local to Thirsk, it’s North Yorkshire as a whole.** And I am a bit like a stick of rock with Yorkshire running through me, so you had me at that point!”

**Since its launch a week ago, almost 200 businesses have registered on Buy Local,** with more joining all the time, and about 12,270 people have visited the site.

**Businesses on the site already range from farm shops that will deliver produce to joinery to computer repairs and many others.**

### **LEP News**

#### **Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme to open for claims:**

Employers will be able to make claims on behalf of their furloughed employees from **Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April.**

A simple step by step guide is available on the York & North Yorkshire Growth Hub site:

<https://ynygrowthhub.com/blog/news/what-you-need-to-know-job-retention-scheme/>

Government have amended the timeframe of the scheme so that employees that were employed as of 19 March 2020 and were on PAYE payroll on or before that date will now be eligible.

Those employed and on payroll as of 28 February 2020 and who were made redundant or stopped working after that, and prior to 19 March 2020, can also qualify for the scheme if re-employed and put on furlough.

More information on this scheme and furloughing can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

### **Stay informed on local support during and post COVID-19**

The LEP, its Growth Hub and many partners are working hard to support the businesses in our region. We are updating all information on a regular basis and are keen to promote the following as main sources of local business support information:

- **Y&NY LEP:** <https://www.businessinspiredgrowth.com/covid-19/>
- **Y&NY GROWTH HUB:** <https://www.ynygrowthhub.com/how-we-can-help/coronavirus/>

We know there are some businesses that aren't eligible for support and we want to know about these cases so we can understand the challenges and plug the gaps with solutions.

If you think there is a gap in support for businesses, either from the government or locally – please contact us and we'll feed that in directly: [enquiries@businessinspiredgrowth.com](mailto:enquiries@businessinspiredgrowth.com). We would also encourage you to use internally this very simple survey to record feedback from businesses <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/LMXF92F>. This information will contribute to us shaping our medium to long term recovery plan which is being spearheaded by Tim Frenneaux. Please email Tim to be involved in this. [Tim.Frenneaux@businessinspiredgrowth.com](mailto:Tim.Frenneaux@businessinspiredgrowth.com)

## Social care and the NHS

This week has seen some well-deserved national recognition of the care sector, the passion and commitment of our care workers in the most challenging of circumstances and the achievements of and difficulties faced by care providers.

### **National Adult Social Care Plan**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-social-care-guidance>

The national Adult Social Care Plan was published on Wednesday evening and contained much valuable recognition of what care providers do. We are working through the Plan on the following key points:

- Proposals to develop an intermediate tier of beds for people being discharged from hospital – we have started work on this already with the NHS, building on the work we are already doing with care providers and which we hope will find solutions which ease some of the pressures and concerns on the sector in terms of admissions of new Covid positive residents;
- Rapid roll-out of testing – this is a major logistical challenge and, again, we have started work with our NHS colleagues who are leading on this issue;
- PPE – we believe that the promised Clipper distribution system is at least 4 weeks away. In the meantime, we are encouraging providers to link with their existing suppliers and, where this does not result in supplies, to make applications to the LRF by contacting [covid19PPE@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:covid19PPE@northyorks.gov.uk) And, meanwhile, we are doing all we can to source supplies and to bang the drum for care providers, locally, regionally and nationally.

## Recruitment campaign

**Our recruitment campaign** to attract emergency workers for care and support services through the [www.makecarematter.co.uk](http://www.makecarematter.co.uk) and North Yorkshire [Your community needs you](#) websites **has attracted 774 applications to date** and will be looking to expand this in addition to linking to the National recruitment campaign over the coming weeks. Our intention is also to support the wider care sector through these initiatives via the Recruitment Hub centre of excellence. **The campaign has reached over 80,000 people so far and growing.** We encourage business leaders to bring the opportunity to the attention of their staff and we are working with further education partners to ignite interest in students who have finished their studies early. **The Make Care Matter team's contact details by locality are on the website.**

In order to introduce emergency new staff quickly the Government have worked with Skills for Care to make it easier for employers to access rapid online induction training for new staff. This includes key elements of the Care Certificate and is available free of charge.

<https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/About/News/COVID-19-Essential-training.aspx>

## Financial help for care and support providers

Covid-19 is presenting us all with a fast moving and uncertain operational environment and we understand that in the coming weeks and months our care providers face issues around a reduced workforce; increases in statutory sick pay and increased use of agency staff; the need for higher volumes of PPE and therefore overall higher costs.

We recognise the importance of supporting our providers and their crucial services that we and our communities rely on and we, along with the NHS and CCGs in the North Yorkshire area, are therefore implementing the following package of financial support:

- For nursing, residential, home care and supported living providers, we are providing a 5 per cent compensatory payment increase for planned care across the sector to address Covid-19. This will be reviewed every 4 weeks during the emergency period and is in addition to any agreed inflation award for 2020/21;
- Where providers experience additional exceptional hardship during the COVID-19 period contact should be made to our Quality & Market Improvement Team within Health and Adult Services [socialservices.contractingunit@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:socialservices.contractingunit@northyorks.gov.uk)

**We hope this financial package will enable cash flow support and provides some assurance on income during this challenging period,** enabling providers to work with us to change operational practices and utilise staff in other ways.

**Richard Webb, Corporate Director for Health and Adult Services**



NYCC's website has a dedicated area for all the latest COVID-19 related news visit:

<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice-and-information>

**Follow us** on social media: @northyorkscs on Facebook and Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram.

 Advice on things to do

**Virtual links**

Lots of museums, Zoos and other tourist spots are live streaming their day's and most are offering virtual tours as something to do whilst staying at home. See links below to find out what is going on across the county. Take a look and see if somewhere local to you is live streaming their day:

- Natural History Museum- virtual activities: <https://www.nhm.ac.uk/visit/virtual-museum.html>
- Edinburgh Zoo- <https://www.edinburghzoo.org.uk/webcams/penguin-cam/>
- Chester Zoo- <https://www.facebook.com/pg/chesterzoo1/videos/>
- Forestry England- <https://www.forestryengland.uk/blog/10-ways-keep-the-kids-entertained-through-covid-19>

**Find my Past**

You can now access Find my Past from home using your NYCC library card and pin, allowing you to search our parish registers and some school log books. Follow the link and click on ancestry resources: <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/libraries-online-information-resources>

**Sport England**

A new campaign has been launched called 'Stay In, Work Out' which provides advice on physical activity during this lockdown period at <https://www.sportengland.org/stayinworkout>

**Food Waste**

Reduce food waste and make your food go further by using Love Food Hate Waste's leftover recipe search <https://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com/>

**GOV.UK**

The P.M. is holding daily press conferences the highlights from the latest one are on the link above.