

## A message from Richard Flinton, Chief Executive

I am sure I am not the only person who finds themselves regularly questioning how we seem to have moved from the storms at the start of this year that delivered such devastating flooding – to taking the first and very tentative steps out of the storm we are all battling today. While it is welcome to be planning our move into the first stage of lifting the lockdown – we must not underestimate the importance of the moment. We mustn't throw away all the hard work we have all put in by forgetting the fundamentals that helped us to get here.

Those first early messages that helped protect so many of you from Covid-19 are the same ones that will help get us through the weeks and months to come. We must continue to stay 2 metres apart and we must wash our hands regularly, and for at least 20 seconds, with soap and warm water. There is much talk about face masks in certain enclosed spaces but it's also clear these simple calls to action remain critical. We also recognise that the Government's announcement on the relaxation of the rules around driving for exercise, the time you can spend in the open air and the fact that you can now meet outdoors with one person outside of your household will be met with a degree of anxiety. It's completely understandable. Together with our partners in the district council and the police, we are busy mapping out the actions we can take to try and provide the safest possible spaces where we can. Our particular focus is understandably on those busiest places particularly where the streets and paths are narrow and it may, therefore, be difficult to socially distance properly and to protect yourselves and your loved ones.

We are all also working with the National Parks and Welcome to Yorkshire as well as the LEP to target messaging outside of the county to be clear that the county is very much NOT open for visitors yet. We look forward to welcoming everyone back when we are through this – but we are not there by some way yet. Facilities for hand washing and toilets will be limited; most shops and restaurants remain closed and some areas will have less car parking because we may need to use some of that space to keep people safe. We anticipate some of our beauty spots will be much busier and we will try to alleviate pressure where we can. We also encourage everyone to access open countryside close to their homes rather than head to these hot spots. We are fortunate to live somewhere with a great deal of choice around open spaces, so I urge you to stick to those places where you feel safe rather than rush to the more iconic places that will inevitably attract visitors.

We have also been planning for some time how we can safely reopen our schools. As you know, we had to close them extremely quickly when the lockdown regulations were announced by Government. While we are working closely with schools and child care settings to support pupils learning from home, at the same time a great deal of careful work continues to plan the reopening. All this preparation is helpful given the PM's announcement that we should prepare for reception, year 1 and year 6 pupils to return next month and more information on that will follow in the weeks to come. We will also be doing everything possible to continue to support our most vulnerable young people and, of course, those with important exams next summer.

Our daily and detailed work with care homes is also providing really important help for people in residential care who are particularly vulnerable and require maximum protection from the virus. This will continue for as long as it is needed. We are working hard to pull together an approach to meet the massive challenge of testing people in these places. There has been some mixed messaging around this nationally, but, in North Yorkshire, we are trying really hard to design local solutions which will speed up wide-spread testing.

So, there are many challenges to come but we will face them together – as we have done and we will continue to do the right thing and save lives. You have already proven that there's not much that will stop Team North Yorkshire from tackling whatever life throws in our way. Thank you and keep it up. There is a chink of light - now let's stay focussed on reaching it.

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

Current World Health Organization data shows that we have now passed 4 million confirmed cases globally, with 283 thousand across 215 countries, areas or territories.

At a national level, today's Public Health England data shows there were 226,463 lab confirmed cases in the UK, with 32,692 COVID-associated deaths. Locally, we currently have 1191 confirmed cases of COVID-19 across North Yorkshire.

The number of people currently in hospital with COVID-19 continues to decrease slowly. There have been 511 deaths from COVID-19 across Airedale, Harrogate, South Tees and York to date, of whom an estimated 194 will be North Yorkshire residents.

Although the COVID-19 picture in hospitals is gradually improving, one of our top priorities continues to be working to support care homes around outbreak management, improving access to testing and PPE.

### **Dying Matters - Supporting people to think about planning end of life care**

The 'Dying to be Heard' message for Dying Matters Week is being supported by North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) and NHS staff across the Vale of York. Coronavirus is changing the way we deal with death and dying.

We would like to encourage people to take five simple steps to make their end of life experience better, both for them and for their loved ones. These are:

- **Write your will** – did you know that only 35% of adults have made a will? <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/family/death-and-wills/wills/>
- **Record your funeral wishes** – only 30% of people have let someone know their funeral wishes.
- **Plan your future care and support** – only 7% of us have written down wishes about the care we would want if we couldn't make decisions. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/end-of-life-care/advance-statement/>
- **Consider registering as an organ donor** – 39% of adults have registered to be an organ donor.
- **Tell your loved ones your wishes** – only 25% of us have asked a family member about their end of life care wishes.

Many people may already have made plans but these may have to change in light of current restrictions. For example funerals and who is with them at the end of life.

<https://www.dyingmatters.org/page/my-funeral-wishes>

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## North Yorkshire County Council

### Planning for recovery

#### Guidance on what you can and can't do

The government has issued new guidance on current lockdown restrictions as part of its plan to return life to as near normal as they can, for as many people as they can, as quickly and fairly as possible in order to safeguard livelihoods, but in a way that is safe and continues to protect our NHS. FAQs to summarise what the new rules mean, when they come into force on Wednesday, have been published. The guidance sets out to inform the public on these changes which apply for England only. For further information, read <https://bit.ly/CV19FAQs>

Further guidance on schools reopening, travelling safely and borders will be circulated as they are released and the FAQs will also be updated to reflect this.

The guide at the link below will help you understand how to travel safely during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak in England. It provides guidance for walking, cycling, using private vehicles (for example cars and vans), and travelling by taxis and public transport (for example trains, buses, coaches and ferries).

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers>

Please do circulate these trackable links throughout your business networks and supply chains.

### Schools and childcare

Following the announcement by the government to prepare for the wider opening of childcare and schools from 1<sup>st</sup> June, the Children and Young Peoples' Service is involved in planning the logistics of this, working with Head teachers, Unions and other colleagues across the Council.

Head teachers and managers, staff and parents need to be reassured that procedures and systems are in place to ensure that children can, when the science guides us to, return safely to educational settings. All aspects of the day, from home to school transport, cleaning, catering and education need to be appropriately managed as Nursery, Reception, Year One and Year Six begin to look at returning to schools and settings.

Since lockdown, North Yorkshire's Children and Families service has maintained close contact with children and young people to help to keep them safe - with social workers carrying out over 1,000 face-to-face visits so far.

Over 95 per cent of children in need and child protection visits have been carried out by meeting families, children and young people in gardens and places chosen locally, demonstrating the commitment of our social workers so that children and young people at risk continue to be well supported.

North Yorkshire is judged outstanding by Ofsted for its determination, ethical and effective practice in social care and its relentless focus on building relationships with families and supporting them to change. Where social workers have not been able to make visits in person, they have used technology to stay in touch with young people. Our staff have been determined to maintain the quality of their practice, even during this very challenging period.

Staff and residents at No Wrong Door, our children and young people's residential hub at Stepney Road in Scarborough, have been creative when it comes to combatting the lockdown blues.

This includes residential hub worker Jez Pratt – a former police officer and member of the town's Rat Pack band – helping to hone musical talents.

Self-taught guitarist, Jez, has been writing songs and playing them and encouraging staff and residents to sing along.

The hub filmed a video of them all singing one of his songs with lockdown-themed lyrics.

Manager Cerena Butterworth said: "Jez is amazing and it's really helped lift spirits."

Staff have been working hard to ensure the residents at the home are safe, reassured and entertained, too.

Cerena added: "On Easter Sunday we had an egg hunt, Jez dressed up as the Easter bunny and walked around the streets which the kids found amazing.

"We've got a young man called Joe Brown who lives with us doing a Skype-a-thon – every day he Skypes different people at North Yorkshire County Council and asked for a tour of their house – including Richard Flinton! We've had metal detectors all around our garden so it looks like we've got moles, we've been baking and we've been Zorbing."

Cerena said she and her staff have been a secure, calming presence during the lockdown.

She said: "The kids have found it understandably difficult, but we've kept up with Skype meetings with family and social workers. "We've got a really resilient staff force and team."

### Support for people in isolation

Despite minor changes to lockdown restrictions, many people, particularly those who are most vulnerable to being hospitalised as a result of Covid-19, continue to need support with shopping and other essentials. The community support organisations (CSOs) will remain at the heart of this response and our message to those who don't have anyone to call on, is that we will continue to make sure they get the help they need. Last week, the CSOs delivered 1,042 lots of shopping and 666 prescriptions and are helping over 2,500 people each week with 1,576 active volunteers. This doesn't include the countless examples of neighbours looking out for each other and the army of volunteers who have formed groups in their towns and villages to make sure nobody is left without essential supplies.

Volunteers from Oatlands community group, a charity working alongside the community support organisation in Harrogate, have been putting together and delivering weekly care packages since lockdown started and are determined that nobody in their community should feel alone. They also made sure everyone in their local area could join in with VE Day celebrations at the weekend by

taking afternoon tea to older residents. Molly, who will be 101 at the end of May, had a wonderful time. Molly's daughter Frida said "Everyone was thrilled, thank you for your kindness."

For people in need of financial assistance to pay for food and household essentials during isolation, the Covid-19 support grant scheme is also providing much needed reassurance. So far, 257 grants have been approved and awarded to eligible applicants through the community support organisations. The majority of people receiving these grants have long-term health conditions or weakened immune systems and 19% are over 70.

Those in need of help, who don't have anyone else to call on, or anyone concerned about the welfare of someone else, should contact North Yorkshire County Council's customer service centre on 01609 780780. The centre is open seven days a week 8am-5:30pm including bank holidays.

For more information, including links to the main supermarkets for people who can shop safely for themselves, and a link to the Buy Local site, go to [www.northyorks.gov.uk/help-you-during-coronavirus-covid-19](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/help-you-during-coronavirus-covid-19)

### **500 of the 750 activity support packs to be delivered today.**

The first of the activity support packs, designed to help improve the physical and mental health, during lockdown, of our three target groups; older adults, families and young people, are being distributed at Bilton Hub in Harrogate today. Living Well teams, mental health teams and community volunteers will be getting into the community and delivering the first 500 activity bags, which include equipment donated by our partner organisations: North Yorkshire Sport; Rural Arts North Yorkshire; North Yorkshire Youth; Compass Buzz; and our NYCC print room, to families and young people in need.

## Local economy

### **Buy Local**

Following our bank holiday weekend advertising campaign in local press and on social media, 29 more new businesses have registered on the Buy Local online marketplace taking the total up to 488.

On average there are 1400 visits to the site each day, and the click through rate to business websites this weekend peaked at 7% (for comparable sites, a click through rate of 4.5% is considered good).

Buy Local brings together all businesses and tradespeople, eligible to operate during Covid-19, with the people who need their services. Go to [www.northyorks.gov.uk/buy-local](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/buy-local) to see the range of registered local businesses.

The Council encourages any business, which is trading at the moment, within North Yorkshire, to register. Read more about some of the businesses who have registered at [www.northyorks.gov.uk/buy-local](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/buy-local)

Please share our social media messages encouraging businesses to register, and directing the public to the site. **Follow @northyorksc on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram.**

### **LEP News: UK furlough scheme extended by four months**

The UK's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme is to be extended to October, announced the Chancellor this lunchtime.

It was confirmed that employees would continue to receive 80% of their monthly wages up to £2,500, but that companies would be asked to start sharing the cost of the scheme from August. Further details to follow.

### **Government guidance on Covid-secure workplaces**

Guidance has been issued to help employers, employees and the self-employed understand how to work safely during the coronavirus pandemic.

The government, in consultation with industry, has produced guidance to help ensure workplaces are as safe as possible as it encourages people to return to work if it is safe to do so.

There are 8 guides to cover a range of different types of work. Many businesses operate more than one type of workplace, such as an office, factory and fleet of vehicles so will need to refer to more than one guide. To read these, visit <https://bit.ly/CV19WorkingSafely>

Linked to getting people back to work, the government has also issued new guidance on the use of public transport which they want to limit given the need for continued social distancing. For more information, read [here](#).

### **Welcome to Yorkshire call to action to save tourism**

Welcome to Yorkshire have instigated, and accepted, the challenge to act as the conduit for the county's crucial tourism resurgence.

A series of seminars bringing together the region's tourism partners and businesses aims to ensure strong and safe tourism, to save tourism as #YorkshireTogether, and will take place on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020 – 11am to 1pm.

Email [info@yorkshire.com](mailto:info@yorkshire.com) to request an agenda or read [here](#) for more information.

### **Stay informed**

As always, we are keen to promote the following as main sources of business support information:

**GOVERNMENT:** <https://www.businesssupport.gov.uk/coronavirus-business-support/>

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

## Social care and the NHS

### **Support for carers**

We wish to thank the many people across the County who are caring for family members and friends during the Covid-19 pandemic.

We estimate that up to 60,000 people in North Yorkshire (one in ten of us) care for family and friends as part of everyday life and many are now providing more care than they have ever done before.

The majority of carers are providing more help with emotional support and are checking in on the person they care for more often and keeping them motivated as well as spending more money on food and household bills. The current lockdown regulations can create significant added pressure

Unpaid family carers are now also classed as essential workers and, therefore, eligible for priority testing and we are offering support and guidance on testing and where to get tested in the county.

As well as our existing services provided by Carers' charities across the County, we have partnered with 23 community support organisations to coordinate help on the ground with shopping, collecting prescriptions, caring for pets and having someone to talk to.

We have also established one point of contact – our customer service centre on **01609 780780**. The line is now open seven days a week from 8am to 5.30pm for people to call who are without other help. Carers can also ring this number if they have any questions about the wellbeing of the person they are looking after and any other care they are receiving. More information can be found at <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-community-support>

We are also encouraging carers who look after someone who couldn't manage without their help to create an emergency plan. We can give guidance on the creation of a plan which carers should have easily available and in place in case of an emergency so that anyone taking over their care has all the information they need.

We have also provided an advice pack for carers with links to partner organisations and advice on use of personal protective equipment.

**Video links:** [https://youtu.be/umPwH\\_hYhPQ](https://youtu.be/umPwH_hYhPQ)

### **Care homes connect with family and friends**

Elderly residents of care homes across North Yorkshire can stay in touch with friends, family and loved ones with new technology to battle loneliness through Covid-19.

Although the fight against the coronavirus is waging more than ever in our care homes, staff across the county have adapted to make sure residents can see the faces of their loved ones despite being in isolation.

Devices to provide video calling are being delivered to our 10 Elderly Persons Homes to facilitate video calling.

Staff at each of the homes will be trained on how to use the devices to support residents. The devices include an Echo Show, Facebook Portal and a Fire tablet. Residents can use Skype, WhatsApp and the Alexa to call their families.

An existing programme to install superfast broadband and WiFi services at each home has been accelerated to be completed by early May when the devices will be available for use.

By using this technology, grandparents can see their grandchildren, wives can see their husbands, people can communicate face to face with their families and friends without breaking lockdown rules. A conversation with a loved one and being able to see their face will make a massive difference to people living in our care homes and allow them to stay connected during these unprecedented times.

Benkhill Lodge in Bedale was the first to receive the technology. The remaining homes across the county will get it by next week.

Dawn Spare, Deputy Manager at Benkhill Lodge, said: "It's really wonderful for our residents to be able to see the faces of their loved ones – we've had a few happy tears from them.

"Having the tablets has been invaluable during this crisis when residents can't see their friends or families when normally, having visits would be the highlight of their day.

"It means families can have 'virtual visits' and it's been brilliant.

"It gives everyone reassurance and peace of mind – families know their relatives in the care home are fine and it's good for the resident's mental health and stops them feeling isolated and locked in."

Resident Carrie Watson, 93, added: "It's marvellous and makes me feel emotional."

The list of care homes receiving the technology is Silver Birches in Filey, Springfield Garth in Boroughbridge, Neville House in Gargrave, Ashfield in Skipton, Ashfield in Malton, Whitby Road in Pickering, Larpool Lane in Whitby, Benkhill Lodge in Bedale, Station View in Starbeck and Carentan House in Selby.

This is complementary to a programme being carried out by the North Yorkshire Clinical Commissioning Group to equip all North Yorkshire Independent Sector Care Homes with similar devices. The devices will be used to provide video consultations with GP's and in the future Hospital Consultants.

**Video:** Shows Carrie Watson using an iPad <https://youtu.be/7Myy2eKQ0TY>

### Communications

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

#### **Made in North Yorkshire**

Great North Yorkshire Sons and Daughters presents the fourth nomination from the public: Dr William Pickles, a leading epidemiologist who spent more than 50 years as the GP in Aysgarth, Wensleydale. He dedicated his life to investigating disease and epidemics, studying the science behind incubation periods of infectious diseases.

To find out more about Dr Pickles and the Made in North Yorkshire project follow this link:

<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/made-in-north-yorkshire>

#### **History month for libraries**

The 75th anniversary celebration of VE Day is the focus of North Yorkshire's Local and Community History Month 2020. Our libraries are promoting free home-access to family history sites Find my Past and Ancestry, as well as e-book and e-audio collections including Second World War and VE Day titles.

Selby library is encouraging its customers to send in family wartime memories and others are highlighting their digital local history collections; Harrogate library is posting a weekly Then and Now photograph; Ripon library is featuring covers from the Ripon Gazette; and Northallerton library is sharing photographs from its local history collection.

For details of all events, please visit [www.northyorks.gov.uk/libraries-news-and-events](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/libraries-news-and-events) or your local library Facebook page.

### **Tour ancient Rome**

You can explore other cities, and even other times, online; this virtual tour of ancient Rome takes you through the forum, Capitoline hill, and famous monuments.

[https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/rome?utm\\_source=fl\\_blog&utm\\_medium=organic&utm\\_campaign=covid\\_content](https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/rome?utm_source=fl_blog&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=covid_content)

### **Write a play or short film**

Try out a free screenwriting course to learn the ropes and (maybe) catapult you into stardom after your first film is made: <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/screenwriting>

### **Joy of painting**

403 episodes of the timeless Joy of Painting have been added to YouTube so you can listen to the soothing tones of Bob Ross while you paint happy little trees and enjoy the beauty of imperfections:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/BobRossInc/videos>

### **Visit the MoMA**

A huge number of art galleries and museums around the world have digitised their collections and are now offering free virtual tours: <https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/moma-the-museum-of-modern-art?hl=en>

### **Go to 500 other museums or galleries**

Google's arts and culture collection has virtual tours of 500 attractions around the world, including national galleries, individual artist museums, and even the Eiffel Tower:

<https://artsandculture.google.com/partner?hl=en>

### **Go to the aquarium**

Although they're closed to the public, Monterey Bay Aquarium has added a number of live cams to let you keep an eye on the jellyfish, kelp forest, coral reef, and even the penguins, completely free:

<https://www.montereybayaquarium.org/animals/live-cams>



The P.M. is holding daily press conferences; the highlights from the latest one can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>



