

WELCOME FROM **Richard Flinton, Chief Executive**

Coronavirus is now the largest pandemic on record and is the leading cause of deaths worldwide with more than 35 million cases and sadly over one million deaths recorded.

That is a sobering thought.

In North Yorkshire, our average rates continue to track just below the England average and are roughly half those of Yorkshire and Humber. As I have said many times, that is due to the actions you take every day. That Team North Yorkshire spirit means we remain in tier 1 – also known as medium. However, we know how quickly positions can change and we have a number of areas currently close to and one above the England average. In Selby, the latest figure for a rolling seven-day average is 179 with the England average 169. In recent weeks, we have seen the highest stats in Harrogate and Craven. The numbers are volatile; partly because of the lower population levels in many areas and partly because a single outbreak can have a considerable impact. I am telling you all of this not to alarm you, but to focus the mind and to ensure that you are aware of the need for continuing vigilance.

This is particularly important as we head into the half-term school holidays next week. I hope many of you will have planned nice things to do with your families. We must try to continue to enjoy our beautiful county and to support its rich array of shops, cafes and restaurants. While doing so, we need to stay alert to the risks and take the simple actions that we know protect us and our loved ones. So, please, while you are out and about keep washing your hands and using the hand sanitisers in businesses, wear a face covering where advised indoors and outdoors where it's difficult to keep a safe distance from people you don't live with. And don't forget the rule of six, of course. We should not lose sight of the huge effort made by our hospitality and retail businesses to put in place a raft of measures to protect you and their staff and these are very successful. In fact, there is very little transmission in these settings as a result of that huge and positive effort. The majority of cases can be tracked back to households and socialising too closely with other people. If we are to stay out of additional measures this is where we need to make the changes. Only you can make that difference, so that is my ask of you today. Enjoy a Covid-safe half-term! There are even some top tips for a safe Halloween here on our website, too. Trick or treat may be out this year but how about a pumpkin trail? <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/news/article/be-covid-aware-you-enjoy-scare-halloween>

If you fancy something more home-based, don't forget our libraries have a great online offer and the latest addition is thanks to Skipton. Our library there has teamed up with East Riding to join in on the What Was Here digital heritage trail. You can sit in the comfort of your armchair and take an online historical tour. There is more on that here <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/news/article/new-digital-heritage-trail-brings-skiptons-past-life>

On a separate subject entirely, many of you have been following our position regarding the best way to land a strong devolution deal for North Yorkshire. As part of that, we have been invited to submit a proposal for how local services would be delivered by a new single and sustainable council to replace the current two-tier structure and pave the way for a mayoral-led combined authority with York. The district councils are also working on a bid, which splits North Yorkshire in

half on an east/west basis. We will be publishing our plan in detail next week and you will be able to read it. Ahead of that, I wanted to thank the many people, businesses, groups and organisations that have taken the time to help us develop the details. We are extremely grateful for your time and thoughts. It is a very big deal and we know how much strong local services mean to you all. Our bid document will reflect all of that feedback and all of those ideas. I will talk to you more about that next week.

Until then stay safe and enjoy half-term.

## Keeping in touch

NYCC's website has a dedicated area for all the latest news, see links below:

- COVID-19 related news: <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice-and-information>
- Devolution/Stronger together: <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/stronger-together>

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

## Public health and social care

### North Yorkshire Coronavirus Data

The number of cases of Covid-19 in North Yorkshire continues to increase. At 18 October, there have been 5,970 positive tests since 3 March, with 1,470 new cases reported in the past two weeks. Over the past week, the average number of new cases is approximately 91 per day. Work continues to ensure effective monitoring of all areas, with support for incidents being provided across a range of settings, which are reviewed daily.

Further information on North Yorkshire data provided at county, district and local area level can be found here: <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/coronavirus-data>.

### Events Guidance

Staying safe and protecting others when wanting to take part in local events and celebrations is one of the Covid-19 challenges faced by individuals, families and communities. However, we know from the North Yorkshire Covid-19 data that a key source of infection spread occurs within households and through social interactions. It is important that anyone attending local events remains vigilant and follows the principles of Hands, Face, Space. Advice about how to enjoy Halloween safely has been issued by the North Yorkshire Local Resilience Forum (NYLRF), including suggestions for alternative Halloween activities:

- Be creative: create a pumpkin trail where you live so everyone can join in without knocking on doors.
- Be active: get dressed up and take a walk around your neighbourhood to see homes decorated for Halloween.
- Be virtual: consider an online party with decorations, fancy dress and themed food. Play Hallowe'en games, bake Hallowe'en treats or tell spooky stories.
- Be social: take pictures of your spooky costumes and activities to share on social media.
- Be colourful: dress up the outside of your house with Halloween decorations for you and your neighbours to enjoy.
- Be treat-wise: buy your own sweets to give to your children so they don't miss out.

- Be bright: if you carve a pumpkin, use a battery-powered light inside it to reduce the risk of fire.

More detail can be found here:

<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/news/article/be-covid-aware-you-enjoy-scare-halloween>

The North Yorkshire County Council Public Health team continues to work closely with district colleagues and event organisers to ensure that local events have been risk assessed and appropriate measures taken where needed. Guidance for local event organisers can be found here: <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/guidance-events>

## Working together towards recovery

### Testing

Testing sites in North Yorkshire, as elsewhere in England, are operated and managed by the Department of Health and Social Care and private contractors employed by them. We try to help the Department by promoting the Mobile Testing Site locations and hosting information on how people with symptoms can book a test via the national government portal. **We do not manage the national booking system or laboratory testing process.**

Indications are that lab testing capacity is improving but, if you are unable to book a test at a local site straight away, please keep checking as availability varies during the day.

We are also supporting the Department in asking the public to get a test only if they are directed to do so by NHS Test and Trace or other NHS services – OR – if they have symptoms, to ensure that those people who need tests the most can be prioritised.

Before you attend, you must book a test. Tests can be booked from 8pm the night before.

Testing sites operated and managed by the Department of Health and Social Care will be running at the following locations over the coming days between 11am and 3pm:

- **Every day - Harrogate** - Dragon Road Car Park, Dragon Road, Harrogate, HG1 5DB
- **Thursday 22 October - Whitby** - Whitby Park and Ride, Whitby, YO21 1TL
- **Thursday 22 October - Richmond** - Round Howe Car Park, Reeth Road, Richmond, DL10 4TL
- **Friday 23 October - Northallerton** - Newby Wiske Hall, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL7 9HA
- **Friday 23 October - Sherburn in Elmet** - White Rose Sports Club, The Recreation Ground, Tadcaster Road, Sherburn in Elmet, LS25 6EL
- **Friday 23 October - Thornton Le Dale** - National Trust Car Park, No.5. Chestnut Avenue, Pickering, North Yorkshire, YO18 7RR
- **Saturday 24 October - Skipton** - Coach St car park, Skipton, North Yorkshire, BD23 1LH
- **Saturday 24 October - Selby** - South Entrance, Drax Power Station, New Road, Selby, YO8 8PH
- **Sunday 25 October - Scarborough** - Scarborough Park and Ride, Seamer Road, Scarborough, YO12 4LW
- **Sunday 25 October - Richmond** - Round Howe Car Park, Reeth Road, Richmond, DL10 4TL

Watch this video to find out what to expect and how to prepare for the test:

<https://youtu.be/QawyKwllfKQ>

See the latest dates and locations, find out more and how to book at

[www.northyorks.gov.uk/testing](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/testing)

## Supporting our schools and childcare

As we move into the half-term holidays and Halloween we want to get the balance right between protecting people and reducing the spread of the virus and making sure families and children enjoy themselves.

We want people to have that social time, but it's important that we help families and children remember the rules and know that they apply every day, not just in school, but on other occasions such as Halloween.

It's important that people remember not to meet in groups of more than six indoors or outdoors when seeing people you do not live with, or who are not part of your support bubble, to protect yourselves and others. This applies to play dates, leisure activities and get-togethers.

Other times to be vigilant are when attending clubs and activities such as dance classes or football training, or other supervised activities for young people. Make sure you continue to social distance when arriving or leaving out-of-school groups, use face masks when in crowded places and shops and remember to wash your hands regularly.

North Yorkshire Youth have been carrying out some voluntary work in Scarborough, going out on to the streets to speak to young people and handing out free face masks. As a local authority, we're continuing to work with schools and other settings to make sure they're ready to open again after half-term.

Pupil attendance in North Yorkshire's schools still remains high and is currently at 2 per cent above the national average.

At the present time, we have cases of coronavirus at 94 settings out of 1,100 settings, including local authority, academy and independent schools, early years settings, colleges and post-16 education. In the vast majority of cases this involves one or two pupils or staff members and only close contacts have had needed to self-isolate.

## Teamwork to support our residents

Since March, Harrogate and District Community Action (HADCA) has been working alongside Ripon Community House as part of the community support organisation network helping people through the coronavirus pandemic. One of their volunteers, Stewart Webb, has made the transition from volunteer driver to Harrogate Easier Living Project (HELP) volunteer.

Anna Woollven, HELP Project Development Worker, said: "Stewart has been volunteering with our service for the last two years. Up until March, he was helping people get to medical appointments, make essential trips and other journeys as one of our volunteer drivers. We reshaped our services to also offer shopping, prescription collections, errand running and telephone befriending.

"Stewart was one of the first to sign up to help in this new capacity as a 'Here to HELP' volunteer. He has been an absolute stalwart throughout. In the early days when people were struggling to obtain food supplies, he helped set up and coordinate food boxes. As well as assistance on a practical level, Stewart has been keeping a friendly eye on some of his regular clients and flagged up any concerns to us. For example, where he feels clients might enjoy a befriending call. We are

extremely grateful to Stewart, and all our other volunteers, for giving their time and support to help other people.”

Stewart said: “I lost my wife 11 years ago and I was getting bored. I went to Age Concern and asked what I could do and somebody said ‘we’d like you to come and be one of our car drivers’. That was about two and a half years ago. When Covid hit, we came to a full stop. There was no handbook. No rules. We had to start from scratch.

“It can be very rewarding and helps keep me occupied. People feel awkward sometimes and struggle to accept support, having a sense of humour can help. We’re a bit like a tree really, if we can’t help, we have branches and we know someone who can.”

As the number of coronavirus cases across the county continues to increase, community support organisations and the voluntary sector partners they are working alongside are preparing for a potential increase in demand.

People who are self-isolating and need support with shopping, prescriptions and other essentials but don’t have anyone to call on, or anyone concerned about the welfare of someone else, can contact North Yorkshire County Council’s customer service centre on 01609 780780. The centre is open seven days a week 8am to 5.30pm. People can also find details of local voluntary and community groups offering support at [www.northyorkshireconnect.org.uk](http://www.northyorkshireconnect.org.uk)

For more information about the support available, go to [www.northyorks.gov.uk/help-you-during-coronavirus-covid-19](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/help-you-during-coronavirus-covid-19)

Communities are also being encouraged to keep checking on family, friends and neighbours who might need a helping hand with shopping, collecting medication, or simply being there for a chat.

## Growing our local economy

### LEP News: Local business support for those in Tier 2

York is now in the Tier 2/High Risk category. The York & North Yorkshire LEP and Growth Hub are here to provide assistance and support to these businesses and others across the region.

We continue to lobby government for more financial support for the businesses impacted, as do many from across the North.

Bounce Back Loans and Coronavirus Interruption Loans are schemes that are both still open. Nearly 17,000 loans have been granted across our region, amounting to £643.6m. For more information on these, go to <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/business-support> .

REMINDER: The York & North Yorkshire Growth Hub continues to offer eligible businesses 12-months fully funded membership to the online, community-led shopping platform, ShopAppy.com. For more information on this, visit <https://www.ynygrowthhub.com/how-we-can-help/12-months-shopappy-membership/>

### Local Covid Alert Levels

The Government’s Covid regulations ([Alert levels of Medium, High & Very High](#)) have come into force in England.

The launch of a new [Postcode Checker](#) enables people to find out quickly the [Covid alert level](#) in the areas that they live and work.

## Chamber to explore future skills needs

The West & North Yorkshire Chamber in partnership with West Yorkshire Learning Providers is conducting research into future skills needs for businesses across the region.

A short survey can be completed here <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Chamber-WYLP-skills2020>

## How can your business benefit from the circular economy?

- FREE webinar: 2 November, 12 noon

To celebrate the start of [Circular Yorkshire month](#), businesses are invited to attend a free webinar that will explore practical steps to help businesses benefit from the circular economy.

All attendees will be given access to our new Circular Economy: 6 Benefits to Business e-guides, developed with the FSB, CBI and West and North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce. These are full of practical advice and information about making simple changes within your business.

Register here: <https://www.ynygrowthhub.com/events/how-can-your-business-benefit-from-the-circular-economy/>

## How businesses need to prepare for EU exit

Letters are going out to VAT-registered businesses from HMRC to highlight actions that are required to continue to trade with the EU from 1 January 2021.

Read [here](#) for more information.

The Government is committed to helping businesses to get ready for the end of the Transition Period on 31 December 2020. For more information, visit: <https://bit.ly/transitionnorth>

## Government launches Export Growth Plan to help business

The Government has launched an Export Growth Plan to help businesses in England build back better following the pandemic. Details of this can be found [here](#)

## Film & TV Production Restart Scheme is now open

A £500 million scheme to cover Covid-related insurance costs is now live.

Screen productions struggling to restart due to a lack of coronavirus-related insurance will now get the go-ahead, as the Government-backed Film and TV Production Restart Scheme formally launches. For more information, read [here](#)

## Staying informed

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

- GOVERNMENT: <https://www.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/>