

WELCOME FROM **Richard Flinton, Chief Executive**

Today I ask everyone to remember one number – 841.

841 is the number of people we have lost in North Yorkshire to Covid-19 since the pandemic began. That's 841 families who have lost a person they loved. A mum or dad, brother or sister, a son or daughter, a grandparent, a best friend. More than 30 people have died here in the last week alone. In a personal and professional capacity I share the sense of grief and determination to drive this virus out of our county and today I am asking you to show that team spirit and resolve like never before to help that happen.

North Yorkshire's frontline NHS staff are now treating 85 more patients in the hospitals which serve our residents than in the first wave. 30 more people who need hospital care have been admitted over the last 48 hours alone. Our NHS colleagues are using words we hoped not to hear. They are facing 'unprecedented demand'; they are in 'a dangerous place'.

I have been extremely moved by the experience of a former nurse from Harrogate, April Martin. Despite having no underlying medical conditions, just months ago her life hung in the balance in Harrogate Hospital. She was told that covid had affected her lungs so badly that she would not be resuscitated. Just days earlier she had felt a picture of health and there she found herself, fighting for her life and despite believing she was taking all precautions not to catch it.

Speaking to the media today, she talked of her worst moments on a Covid ward:

"It was more my family that was finding it very, very difficult. They could not be with me in what could have been my last moments, and I know there are many, many families who have been in that situation.

"People were dying around me of Covid and I would lie there at night thinking I wonder if it is my time tonight."

Thankfully, April pulled through and we share her admiration for the hard working frontline and back office staff delivering outstanding care and undertaking daily selfless acts to save others.

We are extremely grateful to April for sharing her experience in the hope it encourages everyone to adhere really strictly to the spirit and letter of the current lockdown. I hope her story inspires everyone to show the commitment needed and to make the sacrifices we know are hard. You can watch April talk about her experience here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-R_Do_FTjCq&feature=youtu.be

The new variant, which we know is much easier to catch than the original strain, is widespread across North Yorkshire and York and doing its best to drive infection still further here. And even though we are seeing the first small reductions in the rates of infections across the county there is a delay of around 10 to 14 days between someone testing positive for covid and developing the more serious symptoms, which may require hospital treatment. Therefore, a reduction in rates now will not translate into any relief for NHS staff for some time to come.

Only by acting collectively and consistently and making the right decision every day can we make the difference that will turn the tide on this and see us edge towards a better place.

This is even more important when we are considering the frailest residents of the county – those in care homes. Whilst there is positive news around the plans to roll out mass vaccination in care settings, we must be particularly rigorous in planning any visits to these settings. There is some good advice and guidance on that here <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/news/article/care-homes-stay-vigilant-over-visits>

On behalf of the local resilience forum and the county council I would like express my heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you who continue to do the right thing and who are staying at home.

For the tiny minority who think it's OK to have a birthday party at home with friends or drive unreasonable distances to take their daily exercise I would warn that they should expect a word from our colleagues at North Yorkshire Police. Because whilst officers have been incredibly patient in explaining the rules to people, they are equally clear that those choosing to flout them deliberately can expect a fine.

Double the number of fines were issued in the first week of this full national lockdown than the last one and I am sure many of you will have seen the stories in the media over the weekend of some of the lengthy distances travelled by some people who felt it was reasonable. Here is just one example that I am sure you will agree is completely unacceptable <https://northyorkshire.police.uk/news/driving-100-miles-through-three-counties-to-get-a-mcdonalds-is-not-essential-travel-say-police>

Before I finish today I would like to thank our schools for the outstanding work they have, and continue to do, to adapt teaching, learning and child care to the lockdown restrictions in a very short period of time. The vast majority of our schools remain open and are looking after the children of critical workers who have to go to work and cannot stay at home. They are also providing continued learning for more vulnerable young people. Many of you will find yourselves supporting your children at homes with remote learning while you are also trying to work in many instances. This won't go on forever and by staying at home you are supporting the road out of lockdown, protecting the NHS and without doubt, saving lives.

Thank you.

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

At 9 January, there have been 21,225 positive tests since 3 March, with 4,597 new cases reported in the past two weeks. The weekly rolling average of new cases is 396 cases per day, allowing for incomplete data in the most recent days. The seven-day rate for North Yorkshire is 435.7 per 100,000 people, which remains below the England seven-day rate of 610.7 cases per 100,000. 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>.

People most at risk from the complications of COVID-19 are being offered the vaccine first.

In the UK, there are two approved COVID-19 vaccines. They both require two doses to provide longer-lasting protection. Both have been shown to be effective in clinical trials and have a good safety record. An independent group of experts has recommended that the NHS first offers these vaccines to those at highest risk of catching the disease and of suffering serious complications or dying from COVID-19. This includes older adults in care homes and frontline health and social care workers. When more vaccine becomes available, the vaccines will be offered to other people at risk as soon as possible.

Eligible groups - You should have the vaccine when it is offered if you are:

- living in a care home for older adults
- a frontline health care worker
- a frontline social care worker
- a carer working in a care home for older residents

Then the vaccine will also be offered in age order to:

- those aged over 80 years
- those aged over 75 years
- those aged over 70 years
- adults on the NHS shielded patient list
- those aged over 65 years
- adults under 65 years with long-term conditions (see conditions below)

Those aged 50 to 64 will be offered it later.

Clinical conditions list:

- a blood cancer (such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma)
- diabetes
- dementia
- a heart problem
- a chest complaint or breathing difficulties, including bronchitis, emphysema or severe asthma
- a kidney disease
- a liver disease
- lowered immunity due to disease or treatment (such as HIV infection, steroid medication, chemotherapy or radiotherapy)
- rheumatoid arthritis, lupus or psoriasis
- have had an organ transplant
- had a stroke or a transient ischaemic attack (TIA)
- a neurological or muscle wasting condition
- a severe or profound learning disability
- a problem with your spleen, example sickle cell disease, or you have had your spleen removed
- are seriously overweight (BMI of 40 and above)
- are severely mentally ill

At the same time as the adults under 65 years with long-term conditions the vaccine will also be offered to:

- adults who provide regular care for an elderly or disabled person
- younger adults in long stay nursing and residential settings

Please wait your turn. If you are not in the groups above, you will have to wait for a COVID-19 vaccination until more supplies are available. When more vaccine becomes available we will be offering it to more groups of the population.

Approximately one in three people who have coronavirus have no symptoms and could be spreading it without realising it. Remember - 'Hands. Face. Space.'

Hands – wash your hands regularly and for at least 20 seconds

Face – wear a face covering in indoor settings where social distancing may be difficult, and where you will come into contact with people you do not normally meet

Space – stay two metres apart from people you do not live with where possible, or one metre with extra precautions in place (such as wearing face coverings)

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 only to get a test 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
- **Every day - Scarborough** - William Street Car Park, Scarborough. YO12 7PL
- **Every day - Northallerton** – The Forum, Bullamore Road, Northallerton, DL6 1LP
- **Every day - Selby** – Portholme Crescent Car Park, Selby, YO8 4YR
- **Every day - Skipton** - Cavendish Street Car Park, Skipton, BD23 1RP

- **Thursday 14 January - Whitby** - Whitby Marina Car Park, Langbourne Road, Whitby, YO21 1YW
- **Thursday 14 January - Malton** - Wentworth Street Car Park, Smithson Ct, Malton, YO17 7BQ
- **Thursday 14 January - Leyburn** - Harmby Road Parking, Harmby road, Leyburn, DL8 5EE
- **Friday 15 January - Richmond** - Round Howe Car Park, Reeth Road, Richmond, DL10 4TL
- **Friday 15 January - Sherburn in Elmet** - Pasture Way Car Park, Sherburn in Elmet, LS25 6LY

- **Friday 15 January - Stokesley** - Stokesley Sports Club, Broughton Road, Stokesley, Middlesbrough, TS9 5JG
- **Saturday 16 January - Selby** - South Entrance, DRAX Power Station, New Road, Selby, YO8 8PH
- **Saturday 16 January - Settle** - Greenfoot Car Park, Settle, BD24 9RW
- **Saturday 16 January - Filey** - Filey Country Park, Church Cliff Drive, Filey, YO14 9ET
- **Saturday 16 January - Thornton Le Dale** - National Trust Car Park, No.5. Chestnut Avenue, Thornton Le Dale, Pickering, YO18 7RR
- **Sunday 17 January - Scarborough** - Scarborough Park and Ride, Seamer Road, Scarborough, YO12 4LW
- **Sunday 17 January - Richmond** - Round Howe Car Park, Reeth Road, Richmond, DL10 4TL
- **Sunday 17 January - Thirsk** - Millgate Car Park, Marage Road, Thirsk, YO7 1PE

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

<https://youtu.be/QawyKwIfKQ>

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

www.northyorks.gov.uk/testing

Supporting our schools and childcare

Stuart Carlton, Director of Children and Young People's Services, said we owe a huge debt to all our schools and everyone involved with them, from leaders to teachers, teaching assistants; support staff, catering staff, cleaners and everyone else who has contributed to the tremendous effort this week to take on board the requirements of lockdown and roll them out in schools.

Schools remain open for children of critical workers and vulnerable students, but I would ask that if people can make other arrangements then please do, as one of the reasons for switching to remote learning for the majority of children is to reduce transmission rates. Currently, overall attendance rates at schools in North Yorkshire on average is about 16 per cent, which is roughly in line with attendance towards the end of the last lockdown.

Schools have now been invited to order more laptops and other devices directly from the Department for Education if they need them. All secondary schools across the county have now been notified that they can place an order and by the end of this week all primary schools will also have been invited to purchase additional devices.

Teamwork to support our residents

For people without family, friends or neighbours to lean on during the Covid pandemic, community support organisations and the voluntary sector partners they are working alongside continue to provide a lifeline during these challenging times.

In Scarborough, Jo Ellis has been volunteering with Age UK Scarborough and District since the early days of the outbreak.

Jo said: "I'd been wanting to do some form of volunteering for a long time, and at the end of last year I approached St Catherine's Hospice. I'd only been volunteering for six weeks when they had to stop volunteers entering the premises."

Jo quickly looked around to find something else she could do.

She said: "It came up on my Facebook news feed that there was a need for volunteers. I put out a message to say that I was interested in helping and now I have my own people who I ring every

week. They've become friends and are very interested in what I've been up to, especially as they can't go anywhere or do anything themselves.

"I ring them all on a Monday and ask what shopping they would like. I try to do it in as few journeys as possible. I usually plan a route via Sainsbury's and Morrisons and then get milk and prescriptions. It's like a treasure hunt sometimes.

"At the end of the day, it's something you can do if you're shopping for yourself. I've never been so busy, but honestly I love it."

Age UK Scarborough and District CEO Julie Macey-Hewitt added that more volunteers are needed. She said: "Shopping is the biggest thing we need people for, but we also require telephone befrienders. The covid hub is still providing support to the people of Scarborough and the surrounding area and we are not here to just help those who are elderly, or clinically vulnerable.

"We've also been helping people like single parents who find themselves suddenly housebound when one of their children is asked to self-isolate by their school. It's important that we're getting to people who don't normally ask for help and letting them know we're here."

People who need support with shopping and other essentials are encouraged to contact family, friends, neighbours or groups they belong to. North Yorkshire residents without those local networks can contact the County Council's customer service centre on 01609 780780 seven days a week 8am to 5.30pm. People can also complete an online form to let us know what help they need which can be found at www.northyorks.gov.uk/covidhelp

We know that many people will want to get involved in their communities and help where they can. If you have the time and want to volunteer, we can introduce you to local organisations in your own community. More information, including advice on how you can help safely, can be found at www.northyorks.gov.uk/helpingduringcovid.

For information about the support available, including a link to the latest Government advice for people who are clinically extremely vulnerable, go to www.northyorks.gov.uk/coronavirus.

Growing our local economy

LEP News: York & North Yorkshire LEP Plan for Skills 2021-2026 (20 January, 10am)

Our team will introduce our five-year plan to address local skills challenges and raise productivity, earnings and performance in a greener, fairer, stronger economy.

You will hear from our keynote speakers who will talk with authority and passion about why 'greener, fairer, stronger' is so important and how we can work together to achieve this:

- Sam Alexander - Chair of YNY LEP Skills & Employability Board
- Emily Moncuit - Associate Regional Director, Yorkshire and the Humber, CBI
- Vicky Bullivant - Head of Sustainable Business, Drax Group

We will also have a panel of experts, including social change and policy experts, data and research specialists and skills providers, ready to answer your live questions. **Register here:** <https://skillsconference2021.eventbrite.co.uk>

'How businesses can leverage apprenticeships to build their future beyond COVID'

9 February, 12:30pm

To celebrate National Apprenticeship Week 2021, we invite you to attend a free webinar event to learn how businesses, both small and large, can benefit from apprenticeships.

We will introduce an expert range of speakers and host a Q and A session to answer all your questions. All attendees will be signposted to an up to date, practical **Apprenticeships Toolkit** developed by the LEP to support SMEs with apprenticeships. **To register for this event, visit <https://leverageapprenticeships.eventbrite.co.uk>**

Business Basics Series: Know Your Numbers (14 January, 12pm)

Delivered by Managing Director of Business Works Ltd Joanne Tomlinson in partnership with CDI Alliance, this free webinar will act as a helpful refresh for existing small business owners and guide new businesses through the terminology and usefulness of different kinds of financial information.

During this webinar, you will learn:

- What information is key to your business
- The difference between profit and cash
- An understanding of the terminology that stakeholders may use in relation to your business
- What management information you should be reviewing and when

Booking link: <https://www.ynygrowthhub.com/events/know-your-numbers/>

Wellbeing Series: None of us is superhuman – maintaining positive mental health and wellbeing in difficult times (18 January, 1pm)

This webinar delivered in partnership with the University of York and speaker Caroline Forman, Leadership Development Specialist, will explore the definition of mental health and wellbeing, what happens in our brain when we experience significant change and some of the common signs of low mental wellbeing.

Attendees will be taught:

- How to identify your current level of mental wellbeing
- Some practical tools to help build positive habits and behaviours that will improve wellbeing and resilience
- How to use a self-care assessment

Booking link: <https://www.ynygrowthhub.com/events/a-guide-to-maintaining-positive-mental-health-and-wellbeing/>

Start-Up Business Basics Series: Cash is King – How to Forecast Cash flow. (19 January, 12 noon)

The next instalment in our Start-Up Business Basics series with business coach Gareth Allen will provide attendees with a better understanding of the importance of cash within a business.

In this one-hour webinar, you will gain:

- The ability to forecast revenue with intelligence
- An understanding of different costs
- An understanding of cash flow vs profit
- An introduction to Start Up Loan Scheme

Booking link: <https://www.ynygrowthhub.com/events/how-to-forecast-cashflow/>
