

WELCOME FROM **Richard Flinton, Chief Executive**

They say a week is a long time in politics and the last week has shown that it is a long time in the course of the Covid-19 pandemic as well.

For North Yorkshire, the last week has seen our Covid-19 infection rate per 100,000 population move rapidly from below the England average to above and the rate for Selby district more than double, moving from 46.3 to 109.2 currently - placing it at the top of the national league. This shows very clearly how one outbreak can create significant turbulence and concern.

So although overall the situation is encouraging in that many of our districts show rates well below the national average, it is also volatile.

Selby is geographically located at the heart of the wider Yorkshire region, with extensive transport networks and lots of inward and outward travel to work so its Covid-19 infection rate is prone to that sort of turbulence, more than some other areas in North Yorkshire.

However, I think we can also take a great deal of reassurance from the swift action by all our partners - the county council, Public Health England, Selby District Council and the Health and Safety Executive - who have all been working hard together to carry out testing and supporting people to isolate to contain this outbreak. They have all been working closely and effectively with the logistics company Clipper, whose workforce in Selby has been significantly affected by the outbreak.

We are also doing lots of work to reinforce key prevention messages in the community such as schools and care settings and community centres to give wider information about support and prevention and help them manage any cases as and when they occur. We are also reaching out to different parts of the community, particularly where people's first language may not be English.

Selby District Council has also been working with hospitality to ensure compliance with Covid-19 regulations, though improvements required have been minimal so far. So we are all working together to make sure the outbreak is brought back under control and Selby continues to be a safe place.

Overall in our county, the signs are that everything is going in the right direction as we move along the road map out of lockdown. But we must continue to be cautious and careful in our daily lives.

We now have 23 people with Covid-19 in the four hospitals that serve North Yorkshire; five in intensive care, far fewer than only a few weeks ago. Nevertheless it is a reminder that Covid-19 can make people really poorly and it is really important that, even as the vaccination programme is rolling out successfully and progressing through the age bands, we must all continue to follow the Government guidance with regards to hands, face,

space and fresh air and refrain from household mixing indoors.

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

It is good to see our children and young people back in full swing with their learning and socialising in schools, so important for their mental and physical health and we are pleased to say that in North Yorkshire school attendance remains high at 94 per cent. We know that schools remain vigilant and robust on testing and risk assessments, so we can be confident that they will keep going to the end of the school year in this way.

Indeed there is much to look forward to with the coming May Bank Holiday, further unlocking later in the month and the summer ahead.

The growing popularity of North Yorkshire's great National Parks and spectacular coastline, as a nation emerging from lockdown increasingly appreciates their beauty and the open space and the recreation they offer, presents many greatly-needed opportunities for the tourism sector and the growth of the Staycation market.

At this week's North Yorkshire Local Resilience Forum press conference, Carolyn Nicholl from Welcome to Yorkshire outlined some of the great initiatives to attract people to the area and to encourage them to enjoy our great county in a positive way.

There is, as she says, something for everybody here from camping to glamping, fantastic B & Bs to world-class hotels. The fact so many film production companies are choosing North Yorkshire for filming, only serves to strengthen its global brand for hospitality and spectacular countryside - witness Tom Cruise in Levensham where the Mission Impossible film crew got the best welcome ever from the local population!

Carolyn gave us great insight into the ingenuity of our local businesses as they begin to open up. I particularly like the idea of the Yorkshire Hotel in Harrogate which has created a Dales scene in its car park for a Dales and Ale outdoor dining experience.

People seem to be lapping up the opportunity to get out and about again. According to Welcome to Yorkshire non-essential retail in Scarborough last week saw 97 per cent more than the average spend.

For those who want to enjoy exercise in the open air there is also the Yorkshire Cancer Research Tour de Walkshire campaign, inviting people to walk, run or cycle and raise funds for the charity. <https://join.yorkshirecancerresearch.org.uk/event/tour-de-walkshire-2021/home>

Above all this is time for people to show that now more than ever they are willing to behave in a respectful and fair manner.

Michael Graham, Director of Park Services for the North Yorks Moors National Park said the national parks welcomed the large numbers of visitors who have arrived since lockdown restrictions have eased and he commended the "vast majority" for behaving responsibly and following Covid-19 safety guidelines as well as the countryside code .

But as we look ahead to the Bank Holiday we share his key messages – continue to show consideration for other visitors, residents, wildlife and farm animals. Bin your litter and if you can't do that take it home. The same with dog poo. Avoid disturbing farm animals and wildlife; limit your camping to designated sites and not on verges or outside villages. Perhaps most importantly given an unseasonably dry April, do not light barbecues in the countryside. The vegetation currently is tinder dry.

Avoid tourist hotspots if you can and if you go somewhere and it is really busy, try to find somewhere else less busy – you might only have to go a few miles down the road to find a quieter place.

Most people are doing the right thing of course so we can look forward to a really positive summer ahead.

So enjoy the Bank Holiday and stay safe!

Keeping in touch

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

- Covid-19 related news: <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice-and-information>

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

Public health and social care

North Yorkshire Coronavirus Data

At 24th April 2021, there have been 29,759 positive tests since 3rd March 2020, with 333 new cases reported in the past two weeks. The weekly rolling average of new cases is 21 cases per day, allowing for incomplete data in the most recent days. The 7-day rate for North Yorkshire is 31.9 cases per 100,000 people, higher than the England 7-day rate of 24.6. 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>.

Coronavirus Update

North Yorkshire County Council continues to work closely with partner agencies, including district councils, PHE and the Health and Safety Executive, to ensure effective and timely monitoring across all areas of the county. We have a range of support measures that can be provided, and work continues to protect North Yorkshire residents by ensuring local outbreaks are managed quickly and effectively. We take every measure possible to help contain the virus and limit any onward spread.

Roadmap out of lockdown

As part of the plan to bring the country out of lockdown, the UK is currently at Step 2 of the government's roadmap, which allowed outdoor hospitality to reopen in England as of April 12. From May 17, indoor hospitality will be allowed to reopen under Step 3, along with museums, cinemas and hotels. Additionally, two households will be able meet indoors for the first time since Christmas.

However, the progress of the roadmap is predicated on 4 tests set by the government:

- the vaccine deployment programme continues successfully
- evidence shows vaccines are sufficiently effective in reducing hospitalisations and deaths in those vaccinated
- infection rates do not risk a surge in hospitalisations which would put unsustainable pressure on the NHS
- our assessment of the risks is not fundamentally changed by new Variants of Concern

The success of the vaccination programme is one factor - but by no means the whole story.

We know that Covid-19 is still circulating among the population and rates can easily spike. With record numbers around the world, it's very clear that the virus has not gone away. It has never been more important to continue to do our best to follow the rules. Please be extremely careful and keep following the regulations until it is safe to resume a more normal way of living – otherwise we risk all the sacrifices we have made so willingly over the last year, to be in vain.

Remember – remain vigilant! As lockdown eases, we **MUST** all make every effort to follow [the guidance](#) around hands, face, space and fresh air. Comply with the COVID-Secure measures that remain in place. Meet outdoors when we can and keep letting fresh air in. Get tested when needed. Get vaccinated when offered.

Covid is not over yet - but if we all continue to play our part, we will keep the Government's roadmap on track to a more normal life for everyone.

Working together towards recovery

Testing

Everyone can now get coronavirus tests:

- if you have symptoms you must self-isolate and book a test for people with symptoms
- if you do not have symptoms you are encouraged to get tests to carry out at home twice a week

Tests for people with symptoms

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.

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

Permanent sites are open **every day** for testing between 8am and 1:30pm:

- **Harrogate** - Dragon Road Car Park, Dragon Road, Harrogate, HG1 5DB
- **Scarborough** - William Street Car Park, Scarborough. YO12 7PL
- **Northallerton** – The Forum, Bullamore Road, Northallerton, DL6 1LP
- **Selby** – Portholme Crescent Car Park, Selby, YO8 4YR
- **Skipton** - Cavendish Street Car Park, Skipton, BD23 1RP

The new permanent sites at Malton and Catterick are open 8am to 8pm **every day**, currently for administering tests only.

- **Malton** - Wentworth Street Car Park, Wentworth Street, Malton, YO17 7JR
- **Catterick** - Ypres Lines, Richmond Road, Catterick Garrison, DL9 3JF

Mobile sites are open for testing from 9am to 3pm on the following days:

- **Thursday 29 April - Leyburn** - Harmby Road, Car Park, Leyburn, DL8 5EE
- **Thursday 29 April - Easingwold** - Easingwold Town AFC, Stillington Road, Easingwold, York, YO61 3DZ
- **Friday 30 April - Sherburn in Elmet** - Pasture Way Carpark, Sherburn in Elmet, LS25 6LY
- **Friday 30 April - Stokesley** - Stokesley Sports Club, Broughton Road, Stokesley, Middlesbrough, TS9 5JG
- **Friday 30 April - Richmond** - Round Howe Car Park, Reeth Road, Richmond, DL10 4TL
- **Saturday 1 May - Selby** - South Entrance, DRAX Power Station, New Road, Selby, YO8 8PH
- **Saturday 1 May - Thornton Le Dale** - North York Moors National Park Authority car park, No.5. Chestnut Avenue, Thornton Le Dale, Pickering, YO18 7RR
- **Saturday 1 May - Filey** - Filey Country park, Church Cliff Drive, Filey, YO14 9ET
- **Sunday 2 May - Richmond** - Round Howe Car Park, Reeth Road, Richmond, DL10 4TL
- **Sunday 2 May - Thirsk** - Millgate Car Park, Marage Road, Thirsk, YO7 1PE

Tests for people who do not have symptoms

If you do not have symptoms, you can get tests to use at home in several ways:

- online at www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests
- through your employer if they're registered for workplace testing
- at participating pharmacies, you can find local ones at <https://maps.test-and-trace.nhs.uk/>
- collecting them from one of the sites below

Testing kits can be collected **every day** between 2:30pm and 8pm from the following permanent testing sites:

- **Harrogate** - Dragon Road Car Park, Dragon Road, Harrogate, HG1 5DB
- **Scarborough** - William Street Car Park, Scarborough. YO12 7PL
- **Northallerton** – The Forum, Bullamore Road, Northallerton, DL6 1LP
- **Selby** – Portholme Crescent Car Park, Selby, YO8 4YR
- **Skipton** - Cavendish Street Car Park, Skipton, BD23 1RP

Find more information and the latest dates and locations at www.northyorks.gov.uk/testing

Supporting our schools and childcare

Support to help low income families meet the cost of food for children will continue this May half-term.

The Covid Winter Grant Scheme provided food voucher payments to parents and carers hit financially by the pandemic, allowing them to provide children with essentials over the school break by helping meet the cost of food.

The scheme has now ended, but following a recent Government announcement, payments will continue this May half-term holiday, through the Department for Work and Pensions' Covid Local Support Grant.

Later this week, the County Council will be allocating funding for the supermarket vouchers to schools, including academies, early years providers, child minders and care leavers in North Yorkshire. The vouchers amount to £15 per child, per week.

The scheme ensures children eligible for Free School Meals continue to have access to food during the school holidays and also gives schools discretion to provide help to other families in need, in recognition of the fact that some are newly struggling as a result of the pandemic on businesses and jobs. The scheme has been used successfully since the start of the Christmas break and has helped thousands of families across the county.

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Schools and families are continuing to take part in home testing for coronavirus using Lateral Flow Tests provided to pupils. Schools are also successfully continuing with their safety measures, including social distancing, increased hygiene measures and ventilating classrooms and other spaces. The system is working well and attendance at primary and secondary schools in North Yorkshire remains high, at 94 per cent to 95 per cent.

Teamwork to support our residents

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At the start of the coronavirus pandemic, Community Works was appointed as the support hub for Thirsk and surrounding areas. As restrictions have eased, the charity has slowly reintroduced events and activities with a renewed focus on building people's confidence alongside continued help and support.

Abigail Homer, Chief Executive at Community Works, said: "We still have people that are not wanting to leave the house, but that number is dropping every week.

"The idea is that there are small groups that meet weekly, following Covid guidance of course. The groups are themed, so there are some that are in our workshops where people have been making items to sell in the shop. There's a group fixing up bikes. There's a group where people meet up for a coffee and a chat. A quiz group. Lots of different groups to meet as many needs as possible.

"Some of our members are really anxious and still need that support. Then there are others who think it's all over, but we always reinforce the message that people still need to wash their hands, wear face coverings and keep their distance. People have been desperate to start socialising, but in a safe way. It's been such a long time.

"The feedback from people has been incredibly positive, they tell us that they don't know what they would have done without us. It's really helped reduce some of their anxieties and take away their worries. It's made a big difference.

"For our volunteers that have been able to come back, being able to offer their support again has been a lifeline for them as well. I think a lot of the new volunteers that joined will stay with us too. We've all been through an incredible experience together."

North Yorkshire residents who need help and support, or anyone concerned about the welfare of someone else, can contact North Yorkshire 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 at www.northyorks.gov.uk/covidhelp.

People can also find details of other local voluntary and community groups offering support at www.northyorkshireconnect.org.uk.

Find advice on how to help others safely and information about volunteering with a local organisation in your community at www.northyorks.gov.uk/helpingduringcovid.

Growing our local economy

LEP News: Sustainability support for businesses

Last week marked Earth Day 2021 where people around the world unite to focus on climate action to 'Restore Our Earth'. Through the work of the [York & North Yorkshire LEP](#), the ambition is to be the UK's first carbon negative region.

If you want to increase sustainability in your business, we have created our '[6 benefits to business guides](#)' in partnership with FSB, CBI and West & North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce. Whether you are looking to save money, attract new customers or create new revenue streams, these guides provide practical tips and advice that can help you get started.

York Top 100 Business Report

The York Press's latest edition of the York Top 100 Business Report was published this week, showcasing the city's biggest success stories. This annual report was produced by The Press, York St John University's Business School and Make it York to showcase a definitive and comprehensive list of York's most significant employers. [Find out more](#)

Skills Support for the Workforce brochure launched

Skills Support for the Workforce have launched a new brochure on its website, making it easier to find out about the free courses and support available for employers through the programme. Please click on the link to access the publication along with the employer enquiry form: [Brochures - SSW Funding Unit](#)

Business Funding Roadshow for York based businesses

Join PAPI & Make It York along with other businesses in the York area to find out what grant funding and business support is currently available.

This online event will alert SMEs (*under 250 employees and who operate predominantly B2B*) to the wide range of business support available to help your business innovate and grow.

Organised by PAPI and in partnership with Make It York the event will provide you with a single point of contact to enable you to access tailored support which is right for your business.

Sign up here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/online-event-business-funding-roadshow-for-york-based-businesses-tickets-151474814247>

Make It York: Connect over Coffee

Connect over Coffee offers you the space to network, exchange ideas, find support and discuss business challenges.

5th May – Do you find yourself feeling uncomfortable at your desk and experiencing aches in various parts of your body? You can relieve those pains! Come and take part in a mini session with Sarah Owen, Pilates Specialist and Personal Trainer, from Perfecting Pilates who can show you what exercises you can do to mobilise your muscles that will leave you energised for the rest of the day!

<https://www.ynygrowthhub.com/events/make-it-york-connect-over-coffee/>

19th May – It's all about the networking! This meeting will focus on making connections for your business, so you will have the opportunity to take part in a lot more Zoom breakout rooms than usual!

<https://www.makeityork.com/events/connect-over-coffee-19-may/>
