

Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 22 April 2021

ADDENDA

11. Chairman's Report (Pages 1 - 64)

13:45

To include an update on:

- Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West (BOB) Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee (BOB HOSC)
- Scrutiny of the Community Services Strategy
- Committee briefings and communication

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Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

22nd April 2021

Chairman's Report

Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West (BOB) Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee (BOB HOSC)

1. At Oxfordshire Joint HOSC's meeting on 12 March 2021 the committee approved (by a vote) the draft Terms of Reference for a new BOB HOSC. The Terms of Reference had been updated with BOB local authority partners since the previous version was approved by Oxfordshire Joint HOSC and Council in late 2020.
2. The same Terms of Reference were approved by Oxfordshire's Council on 23 March 2021, again by a vote. Council also approved Joint HOSC's request for a delegation so that the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the HOSC Chair and Vice-Chair, might make minor changes to the Terms of Reference should other councils' approval processes require it.
3. The same Terms of Reference have since been approved by Reading Borough Council's ACE (Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Education) Committee. The Terms of Reference are due to be considered for approval as follows:
 - a. Buckinghamshire's Council meeting on 21 April
 - b. West Berkshire's Council meeting on 4 May
 - c. Reading's Council meeting on 26 May
 - d. We are awaiting confirmation of Wokingham Borough Council's timetable
4. As agreed at the 12 March Joint HOSC meeting a review of BOB HOSC after 12 months has been added to the Oxfordshire Joint HOSC's Forward Plan.

Scrutiny Toolkit for the BOB HOSC

5. At Oxfordshire Joint HOSC's meeting on 12 March 2021 committee members reiterated the importance of agreeing a toolkit to support health scrutiny decision-making once BOB HOSC has been established. The BOB HOSC Terms of Reference state that the process for determining the appropriate level of scrutiny (system or place/neighbourhood) will be in accordance with an agreed toolkit which will set out the process for initiating early dialogue between health and care system leads and the members of the BOB HOSC.
6. The toolkit will be developed and agreed before BOB HOSC meets. The toolkit will help to ensure that local health scrutiny arrangements retain their integrity and primacy.

7. Initial work on the new toolkit began in January 2021. Following approval of the updated Terms of Reference by Oxfordshire County Council in March, Policy and Scrutiny Officers in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire (as the two BOB authorities furthest advanced in approving the Terms of Reference) resumed the work to devise a template and guidance which will form the basis of the new toolkit. This work will progress in line with the timetable for approval of the Terms of Reference.
8. The intention is that BOB Integrated Care System leads will use the toolkit's template to set out change activities and proposals, and that the information in the templates will be considered by local Monitoring Officers and Health Scrutiny Chairs using the system / place / neighbourhood definitions in the Terms of Reference. The agreement of all BOB authorities will determine whether the matter in question is scrutinised by BOB HOSC or local committee.

Scrutiny of the Community Services Strategy

9. OCCG's latest update on progress with the Community Services Strategy sets out the stages and timetable for this work. Oxfordshire Joint HOSC should give consideration to the most appropriate mechanism for scrutiny of this work. Options include scrutiny by the full Joint HOSC, or by a smaller group of HOSC members on similar lines to a Task and Finish Group.
10. There are pros and cons with both options. For example, members would wish to consider whether a new, smaller group might offer (through appropriate terms of reference) greater agility and flexibility than the main committee. Or, whether or not a smaller group – such as would typically focus on a particular service or geography – would be appropriate for scrutiny of a broad county-wide strategy. Equally, if the main committee were to be the preferred scrutiny body, members would wish to consider the extent to which the emerging Strategy might dominate the committee's agenda and reduce the time for other scrutiny business.

Committee briefings and communication

11. The committee received the following written briefings since its meeting on 4 February 2021. These are in the Appendices of this report and are on:

Appendix	Name	From	Received
1	Briefing on Chipping Norton War Memorial Community Hospital	System	5/2/2021
2	System stakeholder briefing – 5 February	System	5/2/2021
3	System stakeholder briefing – 19 February	System	19/2/2021
4	System stakeholder briefing – 5 March	System	5/3/2021
5	An update on critical care at the John Radcliffe Hospital	System	5/3/2021
6	System stakeholder briefing – 19 March	System	19/3/2021
7	System stakeholder briefing – 9 April	System	9/4/2021

Briefing on Chipping Norton War Memorial Community Hospital

28 January 2021

The following briefing is to update members of the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee as to the services provided at the Chipping Norton War Memorial Community Hospital, located in Russel Way, Chipping Norton.

The Outpatient Unit for Chipping Norton and surrounding villages provides an excellent X-Ray service, open Monday, Wednesday & Friday mornings, appointments are via GP referral. The Unit is also a base for Health Visitor, Community Nursing, Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy services, plus the hospital hosts the following weekly and monthly outpatient clinics:

Consultant led outpatient clinics:

- Clinical Genetics
- Community Paediatric
- Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)
- Gastroenterology**
- Gerontology
- Gynaecology
- Memory
- Neuro Development**
- Orthopaedic
- Paediatric
- Paediatric Orthopaedic
- Paediatric Urology
- Rheumatology

**Some clinics have not re-started due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nurse, technician or therapist led outpatient clinics:

- AAA Screening
- Adult Audiology
- Audiology walk-in**
- Bladder & Bowel (adult & paediatric)
- Community Adult Mental Health
- Diabetic**
- Dietetic**
- Heart Failure
- Neurology
- Paediatric Audiology
- Parkinson's Physiotherapy
- Podiatry
- Respiratory Physiotherapy
- Speech & Language
- Talking Space**
- Ultrasound

The community hospital also houses the Cotswold Birth Centre. Managed by a team of highly skilled and experienced community midwives and dedicated maternity support workers, the Centre offers continuity of care and a sensitive, individualised approach to many low-risk women who do not need to give birth in hospital. Women can receive all of their antenatal care at the Centre, including the initial booking appointment and subsequent routine appointments.

In addition a new diagnostic ultrasound clinic was piloted at the beginning of the first lockdown last year with an ultrasound system on loan from Oxford. This had to be returned as services resumed in the city but the service is opened again this week thanks to the purchase of a new system by the League of Friends for Chipping Norton Community Hospital. The clinic will be held twice a week for patients from Chipping Norton and the surrounding areas.

As you will see from the above information, Chipping Norton War Memorial Community Hospital is a thriving facility, it is well loved and supported by the local community and the NHS. There are no plans to change services at the hospital.

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Oxfordshire

NHS & Local Authorities Stakeholder Briefing

5 February 2021

Oxfordshire health and local authority partners are working together to respond to the pandemic and help the county restart, recover and renew after COVID-19.

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Outbreak Management

After four weeks of lockdown, we are now starting to see a drop in the number of COVID-19 cases in Oxfordshire. However, rates are coming down at a much slower rate than they went up and they remain at a very high level. Case numbers are being driven by the highly infectious new UK variant, which accounts for 90% of new cases in Oxfordshire, compared with 2% in November.

For the week ending 29 January, there were 1,311 new confirmed cases in Oxfordshire, compared with 2,045 the previous week. This equates to a weekly rate of 189.5 per 100,000 people in Oxfordshire, which is more than double the rate of 83.7 per 100,000 recorded for the week ending 4 December. The pressure on our health and social care systems remains intense.

The latest COVID-19 figures can be viewed on the county council's [interactive dashboard](#), which is updated on a daily basis.

#StopTheSpread

Our communications activity continues to focus on raising awareness about the high case rates in Oxfordshire, particularly in Cherwell and Oxford, where targeted activity has been taking place including geo-targeted social media, outdoor advertising at supermarkets, and mobile advertising using a digital A-board van.

The benefit and behaviours associated with the national lockdown message are also being reinforced through a county-wide social media campaign aimed at those who are stretching the lockdown rules. Called 'What's the harm?', it's designed to make people stop and think about the impact of their actions.



Symptom-free testing

COVID-19 testing for people without symptoms will begin for select key workers in Oxfordshire from 8 February.

The new service, which will be managed by Oxfordshire County Council in partnership with the district and city councils, will use rapid lateral flow tests to identify those who have COVID-19 but display no symptoms. Identifying infectious individuals early, isolating them, and tracing their contacts can reduce transmission of the virus significantly. The local programme will work alongside lateral flow testing that has been put in place nationally in settings such as care homes, hospitals, schools and some workplaces.



The programme will start by focusing on key workers not currently included in the national

initiative – the police, fire service, followed by health, social care and early years workers. It will then gradually expand to other key workers.

The plan is that these key workers should get tested on a weekly basis. To do this, three symptom-free testing centres have been set up in the county in the following venues:

- Spiceball Leisure Centre in Banbury
- The Beacon in Wantage
- King's Centre in Oxford.

Those eligible will be prioritised by their organisations and contacted with information on how to book their appointments. The tests will take just 15 minutes using lateral flow devices and will be processed on-site, with results conveyed within an hour by text message or email. A positive result will trigger the legal duty to self-isolate and to follow the national guidance. A self-isolation information pack has been prepared to help provide individuals with advice and sources of support.

Health, Wellbeing and Social Care

Great progress in Oxfordshire COVID vaccination programme

Clinicians, NHS staff, patient participation group members and community volunteers from across Oxfordshire have made huge progress in ensuring our most at-risk staff and patient groups will have a first dose of COVID-19 vaccine by the middle of this month.

Since 8 December, two hospital hubs, 21 GP-led local vaccination sites, and the Oxfordshire vaccination centre at the Kassam Stadium have been rolled out to vaccinate the top four [priority groups](#), as advised by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation.

GP practices have been able to vaccinate all older residents in the county's care homes and are currently reaching out to housebound patients. NHS services in Oxfordshire are confident they will meet the Government's target of giving a first vaccination dose to everyone in the current priority groups by 15 February.

In Oxfordshire more than 90% of those aged over 80 have received their first vaccination dose and 50% of those aged 70 to 79. Excellent progress is being made for frontline health and social care staff, and all older adult care home residents and staff have been offered the vaccine. This equates to 105,000 people living or working in Oxfordshire (this data was approved for publication 4 Feb 2021). Enthusiasm from the public has been huge and the vaccination centres are finding patients are keen to benefit from the vaccination when called.

Dr Kiren Collison, clinical chair at Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, which supports the GP-led vaccination services in the county, said: "The hard work and huge effort from everyone involved - from clinicians to community volunteers - has ensured that we are on track to get everyone in our most at-risk groups vaccinated with a first dose in the next couple of weeks.

"This is a great achievement which is helping to reduce the spread of the virus and reduce the numbers of people seriously ill in our hospitals. But the wider public has an important part to play to help us, so we are asking:

- please continue to follow all the guidance to control the virus and save lives – that means staying at home as much as possible and following the 'hands, face, space' guidance when you are out;
- please don't contact the NHS to seek a vaccine, we will contact you;
- and when we do contact you, please attend your booked appointments, and try to arrive exactly when you're asked to, so that we can keep queues to a minimum."

Oxford Health opens mass vaccination centre at the Kassam Stadium, Oxford

All eyes were on Oxford Health's new mass vaccination centre as priority front line patient-facing staff and then members of the public aged 75 and over received their first jabs of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine.

The facility started delivering its first vaccinations on 25 January and TV, [radio and print media visited on day two](#) to speak to Prof Andrew Pollard, Oxford Health CEO Dr Nick Broughton and some of the people who had appointments that morning.



Prof Andrew Pollard gives Dr Nick Broughton his first dose of the Oxford/ AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine

Prof Pollard, the man behind the Oxford University team which developed the Oxford vaccine, administered the first jabs to Dr Broughton and others and helped push the message that everyone should take the opportunity to be vaccinated when offered.

The milestones were covered by [ITV Meridian](#), [BBC South Today](#), [BBC Radio Oxford](#), Jack FM and the [Oxford Mail](#). The story also did very well on social media helping to promote the NHS vaccination programme.

On 1 February [the first members of the public arrived for their jabs](#) and many commented on the efficiency of the operation and the helpful and friendly nature of everyone running the centre. It was also clear that the message about continuing to observe social distancing, hand washing and all other lockdown and infection prevention rules had got through to this age group.

Oxford Health's COVID Operations Director, Tehmeena Ajmal, explained: "It was amazing to be here at the start of the day to see the first members of the public coming along and to watch how all the hard work done by my colleagues has resulted in such a smooth operation.

"Seeing people who had received their vaccination afterwards looking so pleased was really rewarding. I know that many of them have been waiting for this moment and are now looking forward to getting their second jab."



Shirley Rust, 75 from Benson, proudly holding her post-vaccination leaflet at the Kassam Stadium

Oxford Health opens hospital hub for staff COVID-19 jabs

COVID-19 vaccinations for all patient-facing staff have begun at Oxford Health's first hospital hub – the Clinical Research Facility (CRF) at the Warneford site in Oxford.

The hub opened on Tuesday 26 January and is another exciting step forward in the vaccination programme at Oxford Health. It enables the Trust to ramp up provision and complement existing vaccinations being offered at the Kassam vaccination centre as well as other trusts and via primary care networks (PCNs).

The CRF hub is being led by Fiona Singleton, Immunisation Operational Team Manager for the school nursing service which was responsible for vaccinating 68,000 children in Oxfordshire against the flu last autumn.

She said: "I am so pleased to be involved in the national vaccination programme and to work with an incredible team to set up our own hospital hub."

Francesca joins OneTeamOneOUH to support BAME staff



Francesca Ridley (centre) with OUH BAME Staff Network members Reema D'Souza, Ariel Lanada and Lindley Nevers, and Chief Nursing Officer, Sam Foster

A brand new role has been created to support Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff working at Oxford University Hospitals (OUH) – thanks to the support of NHS Charities Together.

Francesca Ridley has joined our OneTeamOneOUH as the Trust's new Wellbeing Lead for BAME staff following a successful grant application by Oxford Hospitals Charity.

Her new role has been welcomed by the OUH BAME Staff Network whose Chair, Ariel Lanada, who is a nurse and a Divisional Lead for Practice Development and Education, said: "We are extremely delighted to welcome Francesca to the OUH family. Looking after the mental health and wellbeing of not only our BAME colleagues but everybody who works at OUH has never been more important, especially at the height of this pandemic." Douglas Graham, Chief Executive Officer of Oxford Hospitals Charity, added: "We are delighted that NHS Charities Together has taken such a proactive lead in focusing on the communities which have been so disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

"The grant they are providing to Oxford Hospitals Charity is helping to fund a new role within OUH to find practical and innovative ways of supporting the physical and mental health of BAME staff. We hope this will create positive and lasting change during these extremely challenging times and long into the future." You can find out more by reading the [news story on the OUH website](#).

Local MP praises engagement with BAME communities to encourage COVID vaccination

You may have spotted Imam Monawar Hussain, the Muslim Chaplain at Oxford University Hospitals (OUH), [talking about the importance of people getting the COVID-19 vaccine](#).

He has also worked with community colleagues to record messages in different languages, including [Arabic with Dr Kamel Ait Tahar](#). There are also versions in [Hindi](#), [Farsi](#), [Urdu](#), [Slovakian](#), [Tamil](#), [Punjabi](#), and [Bengali](#).

Faith leaders in Oxford have also recorded [this message](#).

Meanwhile, Dr Hosnieh Djafari-Marbini (OUH Consultant Anaesthetist and Oxford City Council's

migrant champion) co-hosted a virtual focus group discussion on 20 January to give all OUH staff an opportunity for them to speak freely about their concerns about COVID vaccination.

Research shows that hesitancy about vaccination in general, and about the new COVID vaccines in particular, is a particular issue among some Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities.

Anneliese Dodds MP has praised this vital work to engage with BAME communities. Writing in the *Oxford Mail*, she said: "Many in Oxford have been doing fantastic work in their own communities. For example, the Imam Monawar Hussain and Northfield Brook city councillor Hosnieh Djafari-Marbini have worked with the local NHS Trust to put together a video for the Farsi speaking community, and the Imam has worked hard to put together other videos in a range of languages for communities across Oxford."

OUH joins forces with Age UK Oxfordshire to keep older people well this winter

Age UK Oxfordshire is working closely with Oxford University Hospitals (OUH) and other Oxfordshire health and care system partners this winter as part of our ['Home First'](#) approach, which prioritises treating people at home where possible and reducing hospital stays. Age UK Oxfordshire staff are based at both the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford and the Horton General Hospital in Banbury seven days a week.

Ruth Swift, Head of Community Development at Age UK Oxfordshire, said: "We're really pleased to be part of the Trust team. By being on site at the hospitals, we're able to act quickly to support patients and their families on their discharge.

"We can help with all aspects of care – from being there during their hospital treatment, to planning for what's needed to help them get home safely and live independently. Our main aim is for people to feel confident and comfortable in their own home, which is often the best place for them to be."

Sam Foster, OUH Chief Nursing Officer at the Trust, added: "We're delighted to be working with Age UK

Oxfordshire again. After being in hospital, our patients can often feel nervous about returning to more independent living. With Age UK Oxfordshire working with our patients from the very beginning of their hospital stay, they can tailor their approach to suit people's individual needs." [More information is available on the OUH website.](#)

Oxford at heart of COVID vaccine research

Oxford continues to play a key role in groundbreaking research into COVID vaccines. On Tuesday (2 February), researchers at the University of Oxford published [an analysis of further data](#) from the ongoing trials of the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine.

Professor Andrew Pollard, Chief Investigator of the Oxford Vaccine Trial, and co-author of the paper, said: "These new data provide an important verification of the interim data that was used by more than 25 regulators including the MHRA and EMA to grant the vaccine emergency use authorisation.

"It also supports the policy recommendation made by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) for a 12-week prime-boost interval, as they look for the optimal approach to roll out, and reassures us that people are protected from 22 days after a single dose of the vaccine.'

On Thursday (4 February) the world's first COVID-19 vaccine study researching alternating doses and intervals of approved vaccines began in Oxford.

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR)-supported study, which will be run at the University of Oxford's Centre for Clinical Vaccinology and Tropical Medicine at the Churchill Hospital, will determine the effects of using a different vaccine for the second dose to the first dose, in addition to two different intervals between doses.

The study is being undertaken by the National Immunisation Schedule Evaluation Consortium (NISEC) and the Oxford Vaccine Group, and is backed by £7 million of Government funding from the Vaccines Taskforce.

More than 800 volunteers, including 100 in Oxford, are expected to take part in the study across eight sites across England including in London, Birmingham and Liverpool. They will be recruited this month via the NHS COVID-19 Vaccine Research Registry, with initial results expected this summer.

Matthew Snape, Associate Professor in Paediatrics and Vaccinology at the University of Oxford, said: "This is a tremendously exciting study that will provide information vital to the rollout of vaccines in the UK and globally."

Professor Jonathan Van-Tam, Deputy Chief Medical Officer and Senior Responsible Officer for the study, added: "Given the inevitable challenges of immunising large numbers of the population against COVID-19 and potential global supply constraints, there are definitely advantages to having data that could support a more flexible immunisation programme, if ever needed and approved by the medicines regulator."

'I can't thank them enough' – cancer patient thanks OUH staff for outstanding care

Steve Schmalenbach, a leukaemia patient who has been cared for at Oxford University Hospitals, filmed a video to thank Trust staff after his care involved a combination of more than 40 treatments.

Steve, who has received treatment at both the Brodey Cancer Centre at the Horton General Hospital in Banbury and the Churchill Hospital in Oxford, has had 11 biopsies, 19 blood transfusions, 2 plasma transfusions and a bone marrow transplant. He told his story because he wanted to reassure people that help and support is out there, despite the current demands on the NHS, including cancer treatment which has continued throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Steve and Chris Cunningham, Divisional Director for Surgery, Women's and Oncology at OUH, were both interviewed by ITV Meridian – [you can read more about Steve's incredible story and watch clips from his video on the ITV Meridian website.](#)

Think NHS 111

As hospitals across the county remain under pressure, there has been another push to encourage residents to contact NHS 111 first via [111 online](#) or telephone if they are thinking of attending an Emergency Department.

Launched in Oxfordshire in November 2020, the programme plays an important part in managing patient flow in healthcare settings and reducing overcrowding. NHS 111 is a national system that people can contact if they need clinical advice.

People who need clinical advice but who are not **in a life-threatening emergency** are encouraged to contact NHS 111 first **before** attending their local Emergency Department (A&E). They will then be

assessed and, if appropriate, booked into either the John Radcliffe or Horton General Hospital Emergency Department for treatment.



Community resilience

Winter Support Grant

Financial help is still available for people struggling to feed their families or heat their homes this winter as a result of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Oxfordshire County Council, in partnership with the county's district councils and Citizens Advice services, is offering support to vulnerable residents through a Winter Support Grant. Oxfordshire was awarded £400,000 by the government in December to fund the cost of food, electricity, heating and other essential items, and the financial help is available for households to claim by 31 March.

Households with children can claim up to £350, while those without children can receive up to £175. The support teams provide the funding through supermarket vouchers, cover costs for pre-payment meters, or make sure that a heating or water bill is paid. If a resident has received a food voucher from a previous scheme, they may also be eligible to have one from the Winter Support Grant. Details of how to apply are available on the [county council website](#) and district council websites.

Home library service delivers over 8,000 books

Residents across Oxfordshire have continued to benefit from the county's home library service during the pandemic, with 8,364 books delivered from April to December 2020.

The county council's home library service is offered free to users in partnership with Age UK to almost 800 residents of all ages.



These residents are unable to visit libraries through frailty, infirmity or a disability and have no other means of getting access to loaned material. It is also available to full-time carers and those who might need the service in the short-term following illness or hospitalisation.

The service depends on a team of around 180 volunteers, who supply the users with loan items on visits every three weeks. The service matches its

volunteers carefully to specific residents to allow the same volunteer to visit each time.

Economy

UK Post-EU Transition

The Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP) continues to offer businesses a tailored support service from experienced business advisers. Its Post-EU Transition Service can help find answers to specific questions, as well as reviewing the impact the recent changes may have on companies, helping them develop an action plan too.

The business advisers can provide businesses with one-to-one guidance and advice on challenges and opportunities in the following areas:

- Importing and exporting
- Regulations and standards
- Workforce and people
- Business and legal requirements
- Energy and climate
- Public procurement, IP and UK EU Funding

OxLEP held the first of a series of business support webinars on 2 February and a recording is available to view at www.oxfordshirelep.com/uk-transition.

Business support programmes

OxLEP runs a range of business support programmes, including:

- The **eScalate programme**, which supports growing businesses that have scale-up potential. It also supports SMEs that are social enterprise, social entrepreneurs, enterprising charities and other businesses committed to enabling positive social and environmental impact. [Find out more about eScalate.](#)
- **Innovation Support for Business (ISfB)** - a programme designed to drive and commercialise the innovative business ideas of Oxfordshire's SMEs and entrepreneurs. [Find out more about ISfB.](#)
- **Skills for Business**, which provides practical support for small to medium-sized businesses to identify and evaluate their skills and learning needs, including upskilling current staff. [Find out more on Skills for Business.](#)

Place, Transport, Infrastructure

Science Vale Cycling Network routes open to the public



Oxfordshire County Council has finished work on five cycling routes, which make up the first phase of the Science Vale Cycling Network project – more

than 10km of improved cycle and pedestrian paths that are now open to the public.

The £5.8 million cycling and footpath network in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse, links three large employment centres with nearby towns. The routes link the science and research centres at Harwell Campus, Milton Park and Culham Science Centre with Abingdon, Wantage and Didcot, including Didcot Parkway railway station. To see the network in full, visit the [map](#) of the routes. Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic and the nature of the off-road routes, the work was completed three months before the funding deadline. Route 1 earned a Green Apple Environment Award for minimising carbon emissions and reducing environmental impact during construction.

Dr Bike pedals on

Cherwell District Council's bicycle maintenance scheme, offering free repairs to encourage more people onto two wheels, has resumed following an award of funding from Cycling UK. Two Dr Bike sessions took place during January, with 21 bikes being fixed for local residents and key workers including NHS staff. Four more sessions are planned for February and March – two in Kidlington and two for Banbury.

Transforming the Covered Market

Oxford City Council has begun a project that could see the Covered Market transformed for future generations of shoppers. During 2021 the council will develop a masterplan which will explore how:

- The market could be made more visible and attractive from the street, for example by improving entrances.
- People could be encouraged to spend more time in the market, for example by introducing seating and enabling events.

- Public facilities and market operations could be improved, for example by devising lower energy ways to heat, cool and light the market.



The regeneration will respect the unique character and history of the Grade II-listed market, which dates from 1774. The council will work with the market traders, Oxford residents and other stakeholders to draft the masterplan.

Children, Education, Families

Using young people's ideas to help tackle hate crime

West Oxfordshire Community Safety Partnership has launched a competition for young people designed to highlight issues around hate crime. The aim is to create a piece of creative work – from a song or short story to a video or live performance – to inspire and educate, with participants learning about the issues facing people who suffer hate crime and discrimination.

Participants must be aged between 11 and 16, and the themes focus on discrimination, experiencing and reporting hate crime, and accessing support. The competition will run until 21 February, and the winner will receive a £75 voucher for an organisation of their choice.

The West Oxfordshire Community Safety Partnership (WOCSP) brings together local organisations including Thames Valley Police, West Oxfordshire District Council, Oxfordshire County Council, and voluntary and community sector groups, with the aim of preventing and reducing crime, disorder and fear of crime.



And finally...

We hope this update is useful. Please email occq.media-team@nhs.net with any queries and we will endeavour to get back to you as soon as we can.

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Oxfordshire

NHS & Local Authorities Stakeholder Briefing

19 February 2021

Oxfordshire health and local authority partners are working together to respond to the pandemic and help the county restart, recover and renew after COVID-19.

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Outbreak Management

The number of new COVID-19 cases in Oxfordshire is continuing to decline, and the weekly rate in the county has now fallen to below 100 per 100,000 for the first time since early December. However, rates are coming down at a much slower rate than they went up and they still remain at a high level.

For the week ending 12 February, there were 557 new confirmed cases in Oxfordshire, compared with 931 the previous week. This equates to a weekly rate of 80.5 per 100,000 people. The latest COVID-19 figures can be viewed on the county council's [interactive dashboard](#), which is updated on a daily basis.



Symptom-free testing

Free rapid testing will shortly be available to public-facing workers and volunteers across Oxfordshire.

The county council is working in partnership with Oxfordshire's city and district councils to provide free rapid tests for public-facing workers to help stop the spread of the virus, protect the NHS and vital social care services, and save lives.

The symptom-free testing programme, which launched on 8 February, began with the police and fire service and was then expanded to include early years workers and childminders as well as council staff in public-facing roles. It will shortly expand further to include public-facing workers and volunteers across Oxfordshire, who cannot work from home and who do not have access to workplace testing through their employer.

Three symptom-free testing centres have been set up in the county:

- Spiceball Leisure Centre in Banbury
- The Beacon in Wantage
- King's Centre in Oxford.

The test takes just 15 minutes using a lateral flow device and involves taking a swab of the back of the throat and inside the nose. The swab is then given to trained staff at the test centre who processes the test on-site. Results are given within an hour by text message or by email. Anyone who tests positive is told to self-isolate and follow the national guidance. They are provided with detailed [information, advice and support on self-isolation](#).

Health, Wellbeing and Social Care

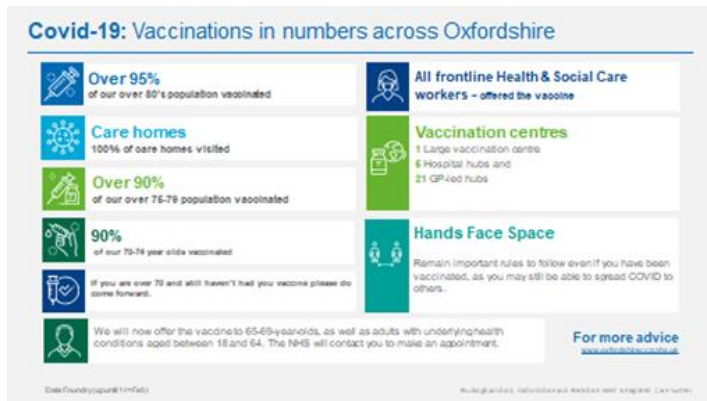
COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

Work continues to deliver the COVID-19 vaccination programme across the county. Huge progress has been made to ensure our most at-risk patient groups and staff will have been offered a first dose of the vaccine and thanks go to all the staff and volunteers involved.

In Oxfordshire we are pleased to confirm that all those in the [first four priority groups](#) have been offered a vaccination.

Across the county more than 95% of people aged over 80 and those aged 75-79 and more than 90%

of those aged 70-74 have had their first jab. All older adult care home residents and staff have been offered the vaccine and all our frontline health and social care staff have also been offered the vaccine. So far, over 150,000 people living or working in the county have now received their first dose of the vaccine.



There is a high take up of the vaccine for health and care staff and we are continuing to work directly with all health and social care providers to increase that on a rolling basis. The range of settings where staff are eligible for the vaccine has also recently increased.

Further efforts are also being made with the small proportion of people within cohorts 1-4 that have not yet accepted their invitation for the vaccine. Local authority staff will start to undertake direct contact (including home visits) to help and assist them, via the provision of information, help, advice and support and engagement with local community groups.

In line with the national roll-out, people in the next two priority groups (5 and 6) are now being offered the vaccine. This includes people aged 65 and over (group 5) and people aged 16 to 64 years with [certain underlying health conditions](#) (group 6).

People in these groups will be contacted and invited to book their vaccination. Patients should not contact their local GP, these two cohorts represent a large group of people and it will take some weeks to complete the task but you can be assured that the NHS staff and volunteers are working hard to vaccinate people as quickly as possible.

Vaccinations will be offered through the vaccination centre at the Kassam Stadium or at one of 21 GP-led local vaccination sites across the county.

First COVID-19 vaccinations in care homes

The first round of COVID-19 vaccinations has been carried out across Oxfordshire's care homes. GP practices, health care professionals and volunteers have worked together to ensure that care home staff and residents received their first jabs before the government's deadline of 31 January.

Across the 110 older peoples' care homes in the county, over 90 per cent of current residents and 72 per cent of staff have received their first jabs.

NHS chief praises staff on visit to Oxford Health's COVID vaccination centre:

The head of the NHS, Sir Simon Stevens, visited the COVID vaccination centre at the Kassam Stadium, Oxford, on Monday to witness first-hand the success of the delivery of the life-saving COVID jab at the site.

The centre is one of three large sites to be operated by Oxford Health (OHFT) and has the capacity to vaccinate up to 3,000 a day when at full capacity.



Sir Simon's tour coincided with the NHS milestone of vaccinating 15 million people in just 10 weeks. It also heralded a new phase of the vaccination programme, with people aged 65+ (cohort 5) together with an expanded group of clinically vulnerable people now able to receive their first dose.

He arrived at the Oxford vaccination centre to meet a range of staff.



He witnessed Prof Andrew Pollard, from the Oxford Vaccine Group which developed the Oxford/Astra Zeneca vaccine, vaccinate the 67-year-old CEO of Age UK Oxfordshire, Penny Thewlis, whose organisation has worked closely with NHS organisations, especially with the [Home First campaign](#).

Sir Simon also met Imam Monawar Hussain MBE , the Muslim chaplain at OUH, who has been so proactive in spreading the pro-vaccination message to BAME communities, using a range of videos in a variety of languages. These have been shared throughout the Oxfordshire health and social care system, and promoted widely on social media. with 30,000+ hits on Oxford Health sites alone.

The VIP visit was captured by Sky News and pooled footage shared across networks including BBC and ITV for lunchtime and evening news broadcasts. The visit made the front page of the Oxford Mail (see above) and featured in the Oxford Times.

Bookings mix up

The Kassam Vaccination Centre also made the news when nursery workers who were able to book slots (contrary to JCVI priority lists) were turned away from the centre as they are not eligible for vaccinations.

Staff at the centre are only provided with names of attendees from the national bookings system (NBS) and have to check eligibility when visitors arrive on site. This ensures they only administer doses to those entitled to them.

The NBS (via its website and 119) asked people to self-declare they were health and social care workers but did not differentiate between priority and non-priority staff. It is expected the bookings system will be updated shortly.

The list below clarifies who are prioritised as health and social care workers.

Annex A: The government "Green Book" for immunisation against infectious disease includes the following definition for frontline social workers:

Occupational Group	Example of roles in
Direct care – these roles involve directly working with people who need care and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care worker • Personal Assistant • Rehabilitation, reablement, enablement worker • Shared lives Carer
Frontline suppliers with direct contact with clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team leader or supervisor • Specialist coordinator, such as Dementia or end of life care coordinator
Social care support – these roles provide direct support functions to clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing support • Social care prescriber/Care Navigator • Welfare rights • Employment advisor
Ancillary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cook or Kitchen assistant • Housekeeping or domestic worker • Driver • Maintenance
Regulated professionals – these roles require the worker to hold relevant qualifications and to be registered with a regulated body to practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social worker • Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHP) • Occupational Therapist • Nurse including nursing associate • Counsellor

The following are, however, **not eligible** within this priority group as defined by the JCVI:

- Administrative staff who do not have any direct contact with clients.

- Social care workers working with children who are not considered priority within the context of the JCVI priority cohorts 1-9 (children under 16 who do not have underlying health conditions leading to greater risk of disease or mortality and children who have no underlying health conditions).
- Unpaid carers
- Teachers and teaching assistants

Oxfordshire CCG and Oxfordshire County Council promptly acted and issued briefings to cascade with early years providers to set the record straight.

And finally at the Kassam

On Saturday 14 February, a small fire in the floodlight room during a football match at the stadium resulted in the match being halted and the vaccination centre being evacuated as a precaution. All staff and members of the public were quickly and safely out of the building within three minutes.

Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue attended and quickly made the area safe. Vaccinations were able to resume shortly afterwards and continued until 8pm.

Lateral flow testing helps keep OUH staff and patients safe

New research published by Infection prevention and control clinicians and researchers at Oxford University Hospitals (OUH) demonstrates the impact of deploying self-administered home-based lateral flow device (LFD) COVID-19 testing for staff working in hospital.

In a letter published in the *Journal of Infection*, they said that 46,503 tests have so far been carried out by OUH staff who didn't have any symptoms of COVID – of these, 328 (0.7%) were positive.

LFD testing of nasal swabs was introduced for asymptomatic staff based on all OUH hospital sites. Staff are expected to test themselves with a home testing kit twice a week. Between 23 November 2020 and 9 January 2021, 8,657 staff carried out tests.

This is in addition to the Trust's existing asymptomatic staff PCR testing programme through

which a test is offered a maximum of every two weeks. While LFD tests are less sensitive than PCR tests, they were found to be effective at detecting cases with high viral loads.

The lateral flow testing system has been an important way for the OUH to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 in its hospitals. The use of LFDs identified asymptomatic infections that would not otherwise have been detected, has enabled the Trust to reduce staff-to-staff and staff-to-patient transmission. A big thank you to the thousands of staff who have participated and reported their results! For more information visit the OUH [website](#)

Military staff deployed at OUH

Members of the Armed Forces are now supporting teams at the OUH to help in the response against COVID-19.

Initially based at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford, 42 military personnel from the Ministry of Defence are supporting staff in both clinical and non-clinical roles. A total of 20 trained Combat Medical Technicians, who in their day job deploy on overseas operations and exercises as medics, are supporting the Cardiac and Thoracic Critical Care Unit (CTCCU) and Emergency Department.



Meanwhile, 16 military staff have joined the Trust in non-patient facing roles – their tasks include stock management and assisting with donning and doffing of PPE, as well as general logistical and administrative work – and a further six discharge planners are helping our teams to get patients home when they are well enough to be discharged from hospital.

The Trust and wider NHS in Oxfordshire are incredibly grateful for the support from our Armed Forces as we continue through what is a very challenging time for the NHS. For more information please see [here](#).

Exemption stickers for OUH patients, carers and visitors who cannot wear face coverings

It is a requirement for all outpatients, carers and visitors to wear face coverings on OUH hospital sites – and inpatients on our wards should also, if they are able to do so – but the Trust recognise that not everyone is able to wear a face covering.

And so the OUH has made exemption stickers available to those people who live with disabilities, hidden or otherwise, which mean they cannot wear a face covering.

These single-use stickers are available at the main reception desks on all four main OUH hospital site. They are for patients, carers and visitors only, not for staff. All staff working on our hospital sites, whether or not they are employed by OUH, must wear face masks (not face coverings) – and staff who are unable to do so cannot work on site.

The Patient Experience Team at OUH developed the exemption stickers in consultation with Melanie Wilkinson, from Carers Oxfordshire. More information is available on the OUH [website](#).

New COVID treatment breakthrough for RECOVERY trial

The Randomised Evaluation of COVID-19 Therapy (RECOVERY) trial, which is led by the University of Oxford, has found that [an anti-inflammatory treatment, tocilizumab reduces the risk of death when given to hospitalised patients with severe COVID-19](#).

The study also showed that tocilizumab shortens the time until patients are successfully discharged from hospital and reduces the need for a mechanical ventilator.

This is the second successful treatment that the RECOVERY trial has identified. In June 2020, researchers found that the [inexpensive and widely](#)

[available steroid dexamethasone reduces death for patients with severe COVID-19](#).

Trusts' ENO collaboration helps Long COVID sufferers to breathe more easily

A clinic that is helping Long COVID sufferers in Oxfordshire to recover from its debilitating effects has teamed up with the English National Opera (ENO) to help them to breathe more easily.

Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust has been working with Oxford University Hospitals (OUH) for some time to provide specialist help to patients suffering from Long COVID. The Trusts are running an assessment service which takes referrals from hospital consultants and GPs for people experiencing prolonged symptoms such as brain fog, anxiety, depression, breathlessness, fatigue and other debilitating symptoms.



And now they have now signed up to refer patients to the new [ENO Breathe](#) programme which has been specifically developed for people recovering from COVID-19, who are still suffering from breathlessness and its associated anxiety.

The programme is for participants aged 18 and over who take part in six sessions. There is no cost to take part in the programme. It is inclusive and open to all ethnicities, levels of spoken English, religious backgrounds and identities. No prior experience or interest in singing is required to take part.

Common asthma treatment reduces need for COVID hospital treatment

Early treatment with a medication commonly used to treat asthma appears to significantly reduce the need for urgent care and hospitalisation in people with COVID-19, researchers at the University of Oxford have found.

The [STOIC study](#) found that inhaled budesonide given to patients with COVID-19 within seven days of the onset of symptoms also reduced recovery time. Budesonide is used in the long-term management of asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

The trial was inspired by the fact that, in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, patients with chronic respiratory disease, who are often prescribed inhaled steroids, were significantly under-represented among those admitted to hospital with COVID-19. More information is available on the OUH [website](#).

A day of celebration for Mental Health Nurses

The work of mental health nurses across the UK is marked with a special day of celebration on Sunday 21 February.

The annual event highlights the excellent work done to support and care for people and, in this particularly challenging year, the day is being used to encourage staff to make sure they take time to care for themselves as well as others.

Hajrah Yousef, Ward Manager at Littlemore Health Centre, is one of the Oxford Health team who is keen to shout about the work of mental health nurses. To her the best thing about the job is "The pace and diversity of what you deal with or manage on a day to day basis."



She also has encouraging words for anyone wanting to join the profession: "If it's a challenge you're after with the most rewarding job satisfaction then this might be for you. It's for those who have professional curiosity, a desire to know more and push themselves to their optimum performance levels."

Oxford Health will be promoting the day on their own [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) accounts and you can follow #MHNursesday nationally on the day's own [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) pages.

New website launched to help those who are looking after others

Help is at hand for NHS and social care workers who are feeling stress, low mood, anxiety or tiredness as a result of the work they are doing during the COVID-19 pandemic.



A new service called You Matter, developed by Oxford Health, has been launched to make it easy for all health and social care employees to get quick, free and confidential access to help and support either online or on the phone.

The You Matter website can be found [here](#) and one click allows colleagues to quickly and easily access online, email or telephone support.

Could you become an Oxford Health governor?

Would you like to become part of the team that shapes Oxford Health's future?

The Trust has 18 seats coming up for election in this year's Council of Governors election with vacancies for service users, carers, members of the public and staff.

The elections are to be held this spring, with nominations opening in March. You can find out more about how to take part and the role of a governor [here](#).

The Trust is increasing service-user representation in its Council, and in Oxfordshire there are four service user vacancies and one public governor vacancy up for election. [Hannah-Louise Toomey](#),

who has been a Public governor for Oxfordshire, said: "It's been 100 percent worth it.

"We are led by our service users. They are the experts with lived experience. The Trust is just facilitators in their care and recovery. We need more of our service user voices in order to do the absolute best that we can." You can read more about Hannah-Louise's experiences [here](#).



Community resilience

Expansion to the shielded list



The government has announced a national expansion of the number of individuals being asked to shield because they are considered Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) to COVID-19.

This follows the development of a new model at Oxford University, which looks in detail at the medical and demographic factors of those previously most affected by the pandemic.

Individuals who have been added to the shielded list will now be prioritised for vaccination alongside those already considered CEV; they will also be eligible for statutory sick pay and prioritisation for online shopping slots.

Working closely with the community and voluntary sector, Oxfordshire councils have in place a framework to support all CEV individuals and will be contacting those new to the list in the coming days to outline the support available.

Volunteers win international COVID response award

Cherwell Collective, a Kidlington-based umbrella organisation for several not-for-profit community groups, has been awarded a European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) Civil Solidarity Prize at an online ceremony on 15 February.

With advice and support from Cherwell District Council's communities team, Cherwell Collective has flourished and now supports three key projects: Cherwell Larder, Climatedarian Kitchen, and Harvest at Home.

The groups' activities include the provision of food and other essential goods; supplies and guidance to grow food at home; and meal and recipe kits along with events and courses that empower people toward more sustainable lifestyles.



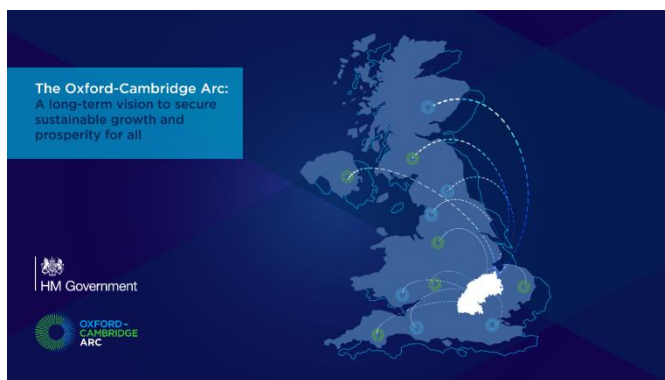
Cherwell Collective and the organisations it supports have so far received £8,850 in funding from the council via the Community Hub Emergency Relief Fund and the COVID-19 Councillor Priority Fund.

Oxford-Cambridge Arc

The government has this week [announced an ambitious plan](#) to transform the Oxford-Cambridge Arc into the UK's fastest-growing economic region.

The Arc is a globally significant area between Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge, made up of the five counties of Oxfordshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire and Cambridgeshire. It supports over two million jobs, adds over £110 billion to the economy every year, and houses one of the fastest-growing economies in England.

The aim is build a better economic, social and environmental future for the area, with high-quality, well-connected and sustainable communities. With the right interventions and investment, local analysis suggests that by 2050 economic output could double to over £200 billion.



To achieve this ambition, the government will work with local partners to:

- **Develop a spatial framework for the Arc – this is a long-term regional plan** to help coordinate the infrastructure, environment and new developments in the area, and help unlock the long-term potential of the area in a sustainable way. It will give communities a chance to shape the long-term future of their area and will help ensure the benefits of growth are felt across the region.
- **Explore the creation of an Arc Growth Body** – this would be a clear economic leadership voice for the Arc, championing its talent and assets internationally, supporting businesses, and fostering innovation.

A [policy paper](#) has been published, which sets out the intended approach for developing the spatial framework, including the high-level scope, timeline, and approach to engaging with local partners and communities.

Support for businesses post EU transition

The Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP) continues to offer businesses in the county a tailored support service from experienced business advisers. Its Post-EU Transition Service can help find answers to businesses' specific questions, as well as reviewing the impact the recent changes may have on companies, helping them to develop an action plan too.

The business advisers can provide businesses with one-to-one guidance and advice on challenges and opportunities in the following areas:

- Importing and exporting
- Regulations and standards
- Workforce and people
- Business and legal requirements
- Energy and climate
- Public procurement, IP and UK EU Funding

OxLEP held the first in a series of business support webinars earlier this month, introducing this Brexit support programme to the county's businesses. The webinar is available to watch at www.oxfordshirelep.com/uk-transition.

Two further webinars will be taking place next month

- 16 March at 10am: Keep Your Agricultural Business Moving – What Oxfordshire SMEs need to know about the EU exit
- 16 March at 2pm: Keep Your Supply Chain Moving – What Oxfordshire SMEs need to know about the EU exit

To request a space at either event, visit www.oxfordshirelep.com/uk-transition.

For more information about the Arc, visit www.gov.uk/guidance/oxford-cambridge-arc

Place, Transport, Infrastructure

Consultation on Oxfordshire's draft transport blueprint



Residents and organisations across Oxfordshire are being offered the chance to help shape the transformation of transport and digital connectivity across the county in a county council consultation on a draft blueprint for the future.

With the need for climate action, helping create healthy communities and addressing air quality at the heart of council thinking, the new local transport and connectivity plan (LTCP) sets out a vision for Oxfordshire that will contribute to developing a zero-carbon economy for the county and transform the health and wellbeing of residents.

The consultation runs from 15 February to 29 March. Find out how to get involved [on the county council's website](#).

Children, Education, Families

Laptops for young people

More than 50 laptops have been delivered to local project Educate 200 to help children who would otherwise struggle to access online learning in Oxford.

Oxford City Council is aiming to donate over 200 used laptops in total. The initial donation will be checked to ensure they are suitable for being refurbished for school learning before more are handed over to reach other schools in the city.

And finally...

We hope this update is useful. Please email occg.media-team@nhs.net with any queries and we will endeavour to get back to you as soon as we can.

E-scooter trial launches in Headington

A 12-month trial of a range of new electric scooters began in the Headington area on 18 February.

The trial, which is designed to support a green restart of local travel, is starting with 50 scooters that can be hired for short journeys with an app. The county council is working with Swedish e-scooter firm Voi Technology on the trial, which has been authorised by the Department for Transport.



The goal is to extend the trial area to cover the whole of Oxford during the 12-month period. It will offer residents and visitors a zero-emission form of transport and help reduce car use and pollution across the city. The scooters will also be exempt from the Oxford Zero Emission Zone charges which start this summer.

Oxfordshire

NHS & Local Authorities Stakeholder Briefing

5 March 2021

Oxfordshire health and local authority partners are working together to respond to the pandemic and help the county restart, recover and renew after COVID-19.

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Welcoming all pupils back to school

Oxfordshire schools will be reopening to all pupils from Monday 8 March.

Primary children must return to school on 8 March (unless parents have received a letter stating that their child is Clinically Extremely Vulnerable), while secondary and further education students will commence a staggered return from 8 March to enable rapid testing to be carried out.

Schools are following national guidance on COVID safety and have a suite of measures in place. Face masks will be required in all areas of secondary schools from 8 March; they must also be worn on school transport and public transport. Social distancing must be observed at school gates at drop-off and collection times.



A letter has been sent from the county council's Corporate Director for Children's Services, Kevin Gordon to all parents to advise them of the measures in place and to ask for their support in encouraging children to adhere to them.

Oxford Health's school nurses are there to make return to school easier for secondary pupils

There is a reassuring message for young people returning to schools this month from Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust's school nurses.

Schools will start a phased return from 8 March but school nurses have been working in a range of new and old ways throughout the lockdowns. The trust's team of caring nurses have been there for pupils whether in the school or on the end of a phone or web call for any young person that has been feeling stressed or worried.

Tikki Harrold, school health nurse said: "This has been a very strange school year and the school nurses have really been focussing on being available for pupils, especially when they are feeling the stress and strain of lockdown.

"We always say to young people that there's nothing so bad that they can't talk to us about it – and that's as true now as it has ever been."



See [here](#) for more information on the role of the school health nurse and how to contact them.

Secondary school places

Parents and children across Oxfordshire have been offered their first choice of secondary school for 2021/22 in the vast majority of cases.

90 per cent (6,371) of applications have been awarded their first choice, while 97 per cent (6,909) have been offered one of the four choices they listed on their application.



This first choice figure represents a slight improvement on last year's figures and is comfortably ahead of national averages in all recent previous years. The national average for this year will not be published until later in 2021.

Outbreak Management

The number of new COVID-19 cases in Oxfordshire is continuing to decline, with a reduction of 24 per cent for the week ending 26 February. The weekly rate currently stands at 58.8 per 100,000 people and is now at a comparable level with early October 2020. The rate shows an even sharper decline in the over 60s, with a reduction of 47 per cent over the past 7 days; it currently stands at 27.2 per 100,000.

The aim is to get cases as low as possible so that we can gradually emerge from lockdown with the confidence that COVID-19 will not restrict our lives in the same way. The latest COVID-19 figures can be viewed on the county council's **interactive dashboard**, which is updated on a daily basis.



Symptom-free testing for public-facing workers
Oxfordshire's symptom-free testing programme has expanded to include public-facing workers across the county who need to leave home to work or volunteer.

The county council programme, which is being run in partnership with the city and district councils, initially focused on those not already included in the national testing scheme, starting with the police and fire service. This was soon expanded to include early years staff and childminders, and council staff in a range of public-facing roles.

Now the programme has expanded further, with people who need to leave home to work or volunteer and who cannot access workplace testing through their employer invited to get tested on a weekly basis. This includes people who work for small businesses and the self-employed – for example taxi drivers, independent retailers, and tradespeople such as plumbers and electricians.

People can **book a test** online and go to one of three locations: Spiceball Leisure Centre in Banbury; The Beacon in Wantage; and the King's Centre in Oxford.

Health, Wellbeing and Social Care

Vaccination data

NHS England publish **vaccination data** which now includes local authority level (district and single tier authorities), Parliamentary constituency, and middle layer super output area. The data reveals the number of people vaccinated with at least one dose, broken down by age.

Great progress in the vaccine programme

Thanks to the hundreds of NHS workers and volunteers involved across the county, almost 220,000 people in Oxfordshire have now received a COVID-19 vaccination, with numbers rising every day.



This has been a huge logistical challenge being delivered at the same time as managing the increased pressures on health and care services caused by the pandemic.

Currently people being invited for vaccination are those aged 60 and over and patients of all ages who are particularly at risk of death or serious illness from COVID-19 due to a health condition or living with a learning disability.

Included in the Oxfordshire figures are nearly 7,000 people who have received their second vaccine dose and more will be coming forward as we head towards Easter.

Early signs suggest the success of the vaccination programme is contributing to the welcome fall in the number of people in hospital with coronavirus.

It is very important to a vaccine's effectiveness that we follow all the recommended guidelines for its administration and use. In the case of the COVID-19 vaccines, the first jab begins the immunological response and the second jab builds on this response significantly and offers longer lasting protection.

Those being called in for their second dose are being urged to go ahead and have it. Getting only one of two doses potentially weakens resistance to COVID-19. People are being told that it is important not to waste their second dose – 'it has your name on it and can't be used on anyone else at the moment.'

In the meantime we can all help to allow the roll out to continue at pace whilst protecting our GP practices so they can continue to look after patients who are unwell. Please help to share these important messages:

- unless you are in the groups being invited now, please don't contact the NHS to seek a vaccine, we will contact you when it is the right time;
- when we do contact you, please attend your booked appointments at exactly the time you're asked to;
- whether you have had your vaccine or not, please continue to follow all the guidance in place to control the virus and save lives.

Reaching out to people in priority groups who have yet to have their COVID vaccine

People in the priority groups for the COVID-19 vaccine, who have yet to respond to their invitation for a first dose, are the focus of a new scheme run by Oxfordshire councils, GPs and the NHS.

The service, which will be launched next week, is designed to help support people who want to have the jab but have not yet taken up their invitation. There are a range of reasons why people may have not arranged a vaccination – from difficulties in booking an appointment or arranging transport, to hesitancy or misunderstandings about the vaccine.

Outreach workers from the community hub teams of the city and district councils across the county will be visiting residents who have not had a vaccination and offering them support to get an appointment if they want one. The outreach workers are from experienced teams which have been visiting residents who are shielding or self-isolating throughout the pandemic. They will be dressed in clearly identifiable clothing, carry an ID, and follow all social distancing guidelines. Residents will be visited by teams from their local council.

Vaccination programme rollout: prioritisation

The next stage of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout across Oxfordshire has been outlined by the Government, in line with the rest of the UK. Once all the top [nine priority groups](#) have been offered at least one jab, it will continue to be offered to people according to age group, rather than profession or job role.

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) says the next people to be offered the jab, from around mid-April, will be, in descending order:

- All those aged 40-49 years
- All those aged 30-39 years
- All those aged 18-29 years

The JCVI has said the evidence suggests an age-based approach is the most effective way of reducing deaths and hospital admissions. The committee decided against giving priority to people in particular jobs, such as teachers or police

officers, because they said this would be more complex to deliver and might slow down the vaccine programme, leaving some more vulnerable people at higher risk unvaccinated for longer.

It also urged some groups who are at higher risk of needing hospital treatment from COVID-19 to take up the offer of vaccination promptly:

- Men
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities
- People with a BMI over 30
- Those living in deprived neighbourhoods

It is expected that everyone aged 18 and over will have been offered their first dose of the vaccination by mid-July.

Calling all over 60s and registered carers to book their first COVID jab

People aged 60 and over plus those who claim Carer's Allowance can now book their COVID vaccinations direct with the NHS via the [national booking service](#).



As the vaccination roll out makes excellent progress with more than 20 million now vaccinated across the country, new groups have been added to previous priority groups.

You can now book a vaccine if:

- you are aged 60 or over
- you have previously received a letter saying you are at [high risk from coronavirus](#) (these people are clinically extremely vulnerable and GP practices are also contacting patients in this group to offer a vaccination at a local GP led vaccination site)
- you are an eligible frontline health worker
- you are an eligible frontline social care worker
- you get Carer's Allowance – [Find out more about Carer's Allowance on GOV.UK](#)

The easiest way to arrange a vaccination is through the national booking service which can be accessed [here](#). Anyone unable to book online can call 119 free of charge, anytime between 7am and 11pm seven days a week.

For more information visit [this page](#).

New data show vaccines reduce severe COVID-19 in older adults

Public Health England (PHE) research shows that both the Oxford-AstraZeneca and Pfizer vaccines are highly effective in reducing COVID-19 infections among older people aged 70 years and over. Since January, protection against symptomatic COVID, four weeks after the first dose, ranged between 60 and 73% for the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine – it was between 57 and 61% for one dose of Pfizer.

In the over 80s, data suggest that a single dose of either vaccine is more than 80% effective at preventing hospitalisation, around 3 to 4 weeks after the jab.

Dr Mary Ramsay, PHE Head of Immunisation, said: "This adds to growing evidence showing that the vaccines are working to reduce infections and save lives. This is encouraging and we are increasingly confident that vaccines are making a real difference.

"It is important to remember that protection is not complete and we don't yet know how much these vaccines will reduce the risk of you passing COVID-19 on to others. Even if you have been vaccinated, it is really important that you continue to act like you have the virus, practise good hand hygiene and stay at home."

The new data come from a [pre-print of a real-world study](#).

Common asthma treatment helps prevent COVID-19 hospitalisations

Early treatment with a common asthma treatment appears to significantly reduce the need for urgent care and hospitalisation in people with COVID-19, according to University of Oxford researchers.

The STOIC study, led by Professor Mona Bafadhel of the University's Nuffield Department of Medicine, found that inhaled budesonide given to patients with COVID-19 within seven days of the onset of symptoms also reduced recovery time.

[The findings](#) suggest that inhaled budesonide reduced the relative risk of people requiring urgent care or hospitalisation by 90% in the 28-day study period.

Budesonide is used in the long-term management of asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Professor Bafadhel, who is also a Respiratory Consultant at Oxford University Hospitals (OUH), said:

"There have been important breakthroughs in hospitalised COVID-19 patients, but equally important is treating early disease to prevent clinical deterioration and the need for urgent care and hospitalisation.

"The vaccine programmes are really exciting, but we know that these will take some time to reach everyone across the world. I am heartened that a relatively safe, widely available and well studied medicine such as an inhaled steroid could have an impact on the pressures we are experiencing during the pandemic."

Professor Bafadhel is hosting a free online talk about the STOIC Study, organised by the NIHR Oxford Biomedical Research Centre (BRC), at 2pm on Tuesday 16 March. [Sign up to attend the talk and post a question in advance.](#)

Raymond Blanc thanks John Radcliffe Hospital staff for life-saving treatment

Celebrity chef Raymond Blanc OBE has written a deeply personal and moving piece for *The Times* praising the care he received for COVID-19 at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford.

In the article, he names individual members of staff who made a particular difference and praises the whole team for how they looked after him.

He said: "Of course I was scared — especially when I saw the scan of my lungs — and I realised I was seriously ill. But I also knew that I was in the best hands. Professor Pavord, who looks after my lungs (I have asthma), is Professor of Respiratory Medicine at the University of Oxford. Although he didn't look after me directly, the hospital has one of the most advanced coronavirus units in the country.

"I am completely humbled by what everyone did and how kind they were while still being totally professional. I was in awe at their care, their competence and the way they passed on knowledge to each other. However busy they were, they always made time for the patients.

"I can't wait to work with my team again and to welcome our guests once lockdown is over. I want to organise a huge thank-you party at Le Manoir and Brasserie Blanc for everyone who helped me at the hospital."

Improvements to Emergency Departments in Oxford and Banbury

[Works to improve the Emergency Departments](#) at both the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford and the Horton General Hospital in Banbury have been completed.

Work has continued throughout the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure these new facilities are available for patients.

The newly refurbished Majors area at the John Radcliffe Hospital, where patients who are seriously ill but not in a life-threatening condition are treated, includes five upgraded assessment bays and a new assessment room.

The Majors area at the Horton General Hospital has been expanded with separate areas for adults and children. Four additional patient cubicles have also been added, including a dedicated infection control bay.

Pedal power drives improved service and greener deliveries

A cycle courier service delivering medication to Oxford University Hospitals (OUH) hospital sites in

Oxford has halved delivery times of patient-specific products, such as chemotherapy and antibiotics, to the John Radcliffe and Churchill hospitals.

Around 25,000 products have been delivered since the first delivery was made at the start of August 2020, improving not only patient care but also environmental sustainability.

OUH joined forces with Baxter Healthcare, who produce cancer treatments and parenteral nutrition, to provide a more efficient way of getting key medical products from their compounding facility in Cowley to hospital sites and patients.



Local Oxford-based company [Pedal and Post](#) make the deliveries to wards, day treatment areas, and pharmacies at the JR and Churchill using cycle couriers. Goods will be delivered to the Horton General Hospital in Banbury in the future by using e-motorbikes.

Bhulesh Vadher, Chief Pharmacist at OUH, said: "The transport of chemotherapy from Baxter to our hospital sites in Oxford is no longer dependent on factors outside of the company's control, such as peak hour traffic, flow of traffic onto the hospital site and roadworks.

"That unpredictability was putting pressure on our staff to deliver chemotherapy treatments in a timely manner. The new bike courier service has taken away all that unnecessary extra pressure and has considerably reduced the delivery time. Using bikes instead of cars or vans is also better for the environment and the Oxfordshire community."

[More information is available on the OUH website.](#)

OUH patients can now view their appointment letters online

Oxford University Hospitals (OUH) has partnered with [DrDoctor](#) to give all patients the option to view their hospital appointment letters online – the new 'digital letters' scheme was launched and went live on Wednesday 3 March.

Digital letters are not only more convenient and timely for patients but also more environmentally friendly as they will reduce the number of letters being printed and posted out to patients.



David Walliker, Chief Digital and Partnerships Officer at OUH, said: "We are very excited to see this new system rolled out across our whole Trust. Aside from the convenience for our patients of being able to access their letters in digital form, there will be a significant environmental benefit, which contributes greatly to our aim to become a sustainable organisation for the future."

[More information is available on the OUH website.](#)

Remembering Dame Fiona Caldicott

Professor Sir Jonathan Montgomery, the current Chair of Oxford University Hospitals (OUH), paid tribute to Dame Fiona Caldicott, his predecessor as Trust Chairman from 2009 to 2019, after she passed away on Monday 15 February.

In his message to all staff at OUH, Sir Jonathan said: "Dame Fiona's achievements and accomplishments were many and varied – for example, she was the first ever female President of the Royal College of Psychiatrists and received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the College in November 2018.

"She was previously Principal of Somerville College at the University of Oxford and Chairman of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, and she

continued to influence national health policy after stepping down from her role at OUH as the National Data Guardian for Health and Social Care.

“Dame Fiona brought a wealth of experience and expertise to her role as Chairman of our Trust. Her judgement, passion for the NHS, and commitment to our aim of providing compassionate and excellent care for patients all guided her leadership of the Board.



“At this very sad time our thoughts are with Dame Fiona's family, friends and the many former colleagues here at OUH and throughout the NHS by whom she will be greatly missed.”

Oxford Health supports Eating Disorder Awareness Week

March 1 – 7 is national Eating Disorder Awareness Week and Oxford Health has been showcasing the work it does to help affected people.



Eating disorders are serious mental illnesses affecting people of all ages, genders, ethnicities and backgrounds. People with eating disorders use disordered eating behaviour as a way to cope with difficult situations or feelings.

This can include limiting the amount of food eaten, eating very large quantities of food at once, getting rid of food eaten through unhealthy means (e.g. making themselves sick, misusing laxatives, fasting, or excessive exercise), or a combination of these behaviours.

The pandemic has had a major impact on the number of people affected by eating disorders with Oxford Health seeing an increase in young people seeking treatment. Last year 474 children and young people aged under 19 started treatment for routine cases of eating disorders such as anorexia, bulimia and binge eating disorders. That was up from 346 in 2019 and the highest number since comparable records began in 2017, when 348 patients were seen.

Vikki Laakkonen, Oxford Health's Deputy Medical Director and a Medical Lead for the [CAMHS](#) Eating Disorder Service, has spoken this week to BBC radio and TV about eating disorders. Listen [here](#) from 2:54:35

Take a look at Oxford Health's [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) pages to learn more about eating disorders and how to spot them.

National pilot raises awareness of less well-known eating disorder

A trailblazing national initiative which could help young people with an eating disorder is being developed with help from Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust.

The Trust works hard all year round to support people experiencing an eating disorder and also to develop new ways to help. And now its contribution to national efforts to support people with a condition known as ARFID are starting to make a difference.

Avoidant Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID) is a condition where someone does not eat enough food or avoids certain types of food, like food with certain colours. There are a number of health risks associated with ARFID including weight loss, nutritional deficiencies and faltering growth.



Following the completion of the pilot Oxford Health staff across Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire, Oxfordshire, and Buckinghamshire are continuing to develop local ARFID pathways with NHS commissioners and clinical partners, including paediatricians, dieticians, speech and language therapists and occupational therapists, to ensure that young people with the condition will have access to treatment. Read more [here](#).

Every mind matters

With local places of worship, recreation and community centres remaining closed, many people have lost an important source of one-to-one contact and are experiencing mental health issues as a direct result of the pandemic.

Community resilience

Rough sleeping in Oxfordshire halves during the pandemic

The number of people estimated to be sleeping rough in Oxfordshire has nearly halved in a year, thanks to extraordinary efforts by councils and their partners to house vulnerable homeless people.

In November, Oxfordshire's five city and district councils undertook the annual estimates that contribute to English rough sleeping statistics. The

Leaders at Banbury Madni Mosque have joined forces with Oxfordshire County Council to back the Public Health England's Every Mind Matters campaign, and they are encouraging their members to stay connected online, keep to a routine, and support each other during these difficult times. Read the online [news story](#) for more information.

Long COVID opera course finds a radio audience

A clinic that is run by Oxford Health and Oxford University Hospitals to help Long COVID sufferers in Oxfordshire has been featured on BBC Radio Oxford. The clinic has started referring patients to a course run by the English National Opera that is designed to help them recover from its debilitating effects. Hear more about the course from a patient and representatives from OH and OUH [here](#) (listen from 2.12.30).

councils estimated that there were 45 people experiencing rough sleeping across the county – a 46 per cent decrease from the 2019 estimate of 83 people.

While the estimates are a snapshot taken on one night, the councils believe that this reduction illustrates their success in meeting a government directive to get 'everyone in' at the outbreak of the pandemic.

Economy

Restart Grants for businesses

In the Budget on Wednesday, the Chancellor announced that pubs, restaurants, shops and other businesses hit hardest by the COVID pandemic will be able to access a £5 billion grant scheme to help them reopen as lockdown is eased.

Restart Grants, worth up to £6,000 per premises, will help non-essential retailers reopen and trade safely. Hospitality, hotels, gyms, as well as personal care and leisure firms, will also be eligible for up to

£18,000 per premises as they are due to open later under the plans for easing lockdown.



Local authorities will be given responsibility for distributing the grants, together with an additional £425 million of discretionary grant funding to distribute to businesses.

Revitalising vacant shops

On behalf of all Oxfordshire Districts, the City Council has taken a lead and has teamed up with social enterprise Makespace to launch a £1.9m revitalisation of vacant shops across Oxfordshire and help the city recover from COVID-19 during 2021.

The project – called ‘Meanwhile in Oxfordshire...’ – will see vacant retail units in high streets across the county transformed into independent shops, cultural venues, creative studios and co-working spaces. The aim is to provide affordable premises to accommodate more than 100 organisations, which will create or secure at least 300 jobs across the county.

The city council worked with the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP) to make it happen, with OxLEP securing £1.9m from the government’s Getting Building Fund.

Business Investment Fund

OxLEP has launched a new capital investment fund this week, created to support Oxfordshire’s

innovative business community to move into an effective renewal phase following the COVID-19 pandemic and potential effects of Brexit.

The £2.1m capital fund aims to support scalable businesses from across the county through a variety of matched grants, ranging from £25,000 through to £100,000 per business.

Through funding, eligible Oxfordshire businesses will deliver outcomes for the county’s economy through several key areas including acceleration of investment plans, rebuilding operations and developing market opportunities, harnessing opportunities for technology adoption and innovation, as well as supporting a transition to net-zero.

Funding for this scheme was secured via the government’s Getting Building Fund, which aims to accelerate economic recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Expressions of interest for the fund must be received by 5pm on Friday 19 March. Further details are at <http://www.oxlepbusiness.co.uk/business-support/business-investment-fund> www.oxlepbusiness.co.uk/business-support/business-investment-fund.

Place, Transport, Infrastructure

New cycling and walking plan to start for Banbury

Officers at Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell District Council are starting work on a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Banbury. The work will be jointly funded and managed by both councils.

The goal of the LCWIP will be to identify infrastructure improvements needed to enable people to cycle and walk more within the town and from local villages. It also aims to help win funding for better cycling and walking infrastructure.

Work is currently being implemented on LCWIPs for Bicester and Witney – the experience of this work will inform plans for Banbury. Wider community engagement will follow in the late spring and summer.

Low traffic neighbourhoods in Cowley area

Residents in Oxford’s Temple Cowley, Church Cowley and Florence Park areas will soon see the implementation of a series of experimental measures to reduce traffic and make walking and cycling safer.



A low traffic neighbourhood is an area where motor traffic is prevented from taking short cuts through a residential area by traffic blocks. This creates quieter streets where residents can feel safer and

more comfortable when making local journeys by bus, bike or on foot.

New rail bridge to support active travel in Bicester

In a project led by Oxfordshire County Council in partnership with Cherwell District Council, residents of Bicester will soon benefit from a new bridge being installed this Easter.



The work is part of the first phase of the A4095 road realignment project, which will see two structures built to enable access both over (a new bridge) and under the railway (pedestrian underpass), connecting two sides of a new area of housing in north-west Bicester.

Webinar: Leading the Energy Revolution

The Oxford to Cambridge Arc is hosting a webinar on the energy revolution on Tuesday 23 March at 10am.

The online event will showcase energy innovations from across the Arc as well as highlighting challenges and opportunities that the energy revolution presents to the area. The aim of the webinar is to share knowledge about innovations and approaches that can be scaled-up across the Arc to support ambitious levels of growth without costing the earth.

Panellists will include Emma Southwell-Sander from EnergyTec Cluster, Harwell; Professor Phil Hart, Director Energy and Power at Cranfield University; and Dr Andy Gilchrist from The Energy Systems Accelerator (TESA) at Oxford University.

Registration is via [Eventbrite](#):



And finally...

We hope this update is useful. Please email occg.media-team@nhs.net with any queries and we will endeavour to get back to you as soon as we can.

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From: xxxx On Behalf Of Holthof Bruno (RTH) OUH
Sent: 05 March 2021 09:30
To: xxxx <[@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:xxxx@oxfordshire.gov.uk)>
Subject: An update on critical care at the John Radcliffe Hospital

Dear colleague

PLEASE SHARE THIS INFORMATION WITH HOSC

I am writing to share some exciting news about a major development in critical care at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford.

I am delighted to say that our Trust has been successful in our bid for funding a new 48-bed Critical Care Building. Not only will this project increase and improve COVID critical care in the South East, it will also have important longer-term benefits and allow us to address existing issues with capacity across our services and encourage better use of existing clinical space.

Other key benefits include:

- a new, custom-designed critical care building where we can treat patients in an improved clinical environment;
- we can alleviate the pressure on other wards and reduce pre-operative waits;
- improved infection prevention and control;
- it will help us to prepare and provide critical care for patients during future seasonal and epidemic pressures, and also strengthen our plans for any surges in the future.

The building will be adjacent to the Trauma Building and the OxStAR Centre. There will be five floors (three clinical, one for storage and plant, and one non-clinical), improved storage facilities, a seminar room, a staff room, and additional office space.

The first phase of the project is due for completion in the Spring, with full completion later in the year. The £29m building is supported by Department of Health and Social Care financing, and is part of a longer-term plan to expand and improve facilities at the John Radcliffe Hospital. Oxford Hospitals Charity will also be providing their support.

We hope that you will join us in our support of this significant investment in our hospital and services.

Thank you.

Best regards, Bruno

Dr. Bruno Holthof, MD, MBA, PhD
CEO Oxford University Hospitals
John Radcliffe Hospital
Headley Way
Headington, Oxford
OX3 9DU

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Oxfordshire

NHS & Local Authorities Stakeholder Briefing

19 March 2021

Oxfordshire health and local authority partners are working together to respond to the pandemic and help the county restart, recover and renew after COVID-19.

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Outbreak Management

COVID-19 rates in the county

Over the past two weeks, the weekly COVID-19 rate in Oxfordshire has stood at just below 35 per 100,000 residents, which means we are at a comparable level with early October 2020.

However, while cases continue to decline, the rate at which cases are falling is now slowing and we are starting to see a plateau both locally and nationally. We are therefore continuing to urge people to follow lockdown rules and public health guidance to make a difference and stop the spread. The aim is to get cases as low as possible so that we can gradually emerge from lockdown with the confidence that COVID-19 will not restrict our lives in the same way.

The latest COVID-19 figures can be viewed on the county council's [interactive dashboard](#), which is updated on a daily basis.

Health, Wellbeing and Social Care

COVID-19 Response – a year on

Nearly a year ago England entered the first of its three national lockdowns. The past year has been unprecedented; nothing could have prepared the country for the scale of the pandemic or challenges faced by the NHS and other public services over the past 12 months.

However, NHS organisations and the Local Authorities in Oxfordshire have worked successfully together alongside other partners, the voluntary sector and local communities to ensure our response has been effective and coordinated.

To mark a year on, a minute's silence and a national [doorstep vigil](#) will form part of a day of reflection to mark the anniversary of the UK's first COVID-19 lockdown on 23 March.

COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

Over 275,000 vaccines have been delivered to people in Oxfordshire since 7 December and second doses are now underway. This is well over one third of our local population. Uptake of the vaccine is 95% in over 80s, 75-79 and 70-74 year old population; 90% of our 65-69 year olds and

extremely clinically vulnerable population have been vaccinated and nearly 80% of our 60-64 year olds.

All older adult care home residents and staff have been offered the vaccine and work continues to vaccinate our frontline health and social care staff.

In line with the national roll-out, the vaccine is now being offered to [priority groups 1-9](#) which includes all those aged 50 and over, those who are clinically extremely vulnerable, carers of someone at high risk from coronavirus and adults with [underlying health condition](#).

People in these groups are being contacted by the NHS central booking system or by their GP practice to make an appointment at the Oxfordshire vaccination centre at the Kassam Stadium or at one of 21 GP-led local vaccination sites across the county.



Changes to vaccine supply in April

Earlier this week, the Secretary of State announced that the supply of the COVID-19 vaccine will become constrained during April.

In Oxfordshire we have sufficient vaccine to continue to offer first doses to any eligible patient in priority groups 1-9 who have not yet been vaccinated. Second doses (Pfizer and Oxford-AstraZeneca) will continue throughout April as planned; the vaccine supply for these appointments is not affected and these appointments will continue to be arranged and take place for our patients.

The national booking service will continue to take first dose bookings from priority groups 1-9; appointments will be offered at the Kassam and other sites until the end of March. There are appointments available until then at which point these services will pause for first doses for four weeks. GPs will continue to invite eligible patients for first dose vaccinations during this time.

All patients in priority groups 1-9 will be able to access a vaccination, it is really important that as many of our patients who are eligible receive their vaccination - the benefits of the vaccine in preventing COVID-19, with its associated risk of hospitalisation and death, are clear and we want as many of our patients protected as possible.

All booked appointments at any vaccination service or centre will continue to take place unless you hear directly from the service team to rearrange. Please make sure you or your family member attend your appointment.

Encouraging take up of the COVID-19 in Oxfordshire

The NHS and local authorities in Oxfordshire are keen to promote confidence in the vaccination programme and encourage people to come forward for their vaccination when it is their turn.

As Oxfordshire implemented the delivery of the COVID-19 vaccine to the first four priority groups there was little evidence of people choosing not to take up the vaccine offer. However, as we progress through the priority groups, we are seeing growing anxiety within the community which is being fuelled by misinformation and inaccurate news stories.

A joint task group was set up across the NHS, local authorities, Healthwatch Oxfordshire and other partners:

- to track, trace and encourage people who have not taken up the offer of a vaccine to get it
- to promote the benefits and safety of the vaccine to all
- to identify different groups where there may be barriers to uptake and work with them to encourage uptake

Members of the group have set up the outreach scheme described in the next item. Members of the group have also developed many short films in different languages which are being shared via social media; made available written material in different languages; supported community groups for online events with the provision of GP speakers and publicity and are planning two pop-up vaccine clinics at two local mosques in Oxford with the aim of setting up another in the mosques in Banbury.

Following feedback from attendees at community group sessions, the NHS developed an animation to try to dispel the misinformation circulating about the vaccine. It is available [here](#).

Reaching out to people in priority groups who have yet to have their COVID vaccine

A new outreach service set up by Oxfordshire councils, the NHS and GPs to support people who have yet to respond to their invitation for a COVID-19 vaccine has now been launched.

Outreach workers from the community hub teams of the city and district councils across the county have already visited 200 people offering them support to get an appointment if they want one.

The team are finding that there are a range of reasons why people have not arranged a vaccination - from difficulties in booking an appointment, arranging transport, hesitancy and / or misunderstandings about the vaccine.

The outreach workers are from experienced teams which have been visiting residents who are shielding or self-isolating throughout the pandemic. They will be dressed in clearly identifiable clothing, carry an ID, and follow all social distancing guidelines. Residents will be visited by teams from their local council.

Safety of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine

Several European countries have paused use of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine after reports that a small number of people who were recently given the jab also developed blood clots.

The UK's medicines watchdog, the independent [Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency](#) (MHRA), has said that evidence "does not suggest" the jab causes clots. Meanwhile European Union medicine regulator European Medicines Agency (EMA) has announced that the vaccine is 'safe and effective' and there is no indication of any link between the vaccine and reports of blood clots.

It's important to remember around 17 million people in the UK and the EU have received a dose of the AZ vaccine, with fewer than 40 cases of blood clots reported as of last week. Experts say the number of blood clots reported after the vaccine were no more than those typically reported within the general population.

Vaccination remains the best way to prevent serious illness and death from COVID-19 and offers the best hope for coming out of the pandemic. The message is that you should still get vaccinated when invited.



All the vaccines approved for use in the UK have met strict standards of safety, quality and effectiveness set out by the MRHA. Any vaccine that is approved must go through all the clinical trials and safety checks all other licensed medicines go through. The MHRA follows international standards of safety.

Other vaccines are being developed. They will only be available on the NHS once they have been thoroughly tested to make sure they are safe and effective.

So far, millions of people have been given a COVID-19 vaccine and reports of serious side effects, such as allergic reactions, have been very rare. No long-term complications have been reported.

'It's difficult to express my gratitude'

A patient treated for COVID-19 at the Horton General Hospital in Banbury has thanked staff for

helping him recover after what he called "the worst time" of his life. Rob Hutt, 38, spent five days in hospital and is now recovering at home with his young family. Rob thanked staff for being kind, compassionate and supportive.



Professor Meghana Pandit, Chief Medical Officer at OUH, praised and thanked staff at the Horton General Hospital, as well as those based on other sites across OUH, for their response and hard work during the COVID-19 pandemic. Read more about Rob's story [here](#).

New child-friendly emergency care at the Horton General

The Horton General Hospital in Banbury has a brand new area to look after children needing emergency care. The dedicated space has four cubicle spaces and a waiting room, created specifically for the needs of younger patients away from the main adult areas.



The new facilities, created with the support of Horton General Hospital Charity, [part of Oxford Hospitals Charity](#), will benefit around 11,000 young patients a year in North Oxfordshire and surrounding areas. The dedicated space will ensure children are able to be cared for in a secure and calm area. Read more [here](#).

Day case hip replacement service shortlisted for COVID service transformation award

An innovative service for patients at OUH needing planned hip replacements has been nominated for a prestigious national award. Launched last year at the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre (NOC) in Oxford, [the introduction of day case hip replacements means suitable patients can be operated on and return home the same day.](#)

Now the Orthopaedic team behind the service, which reduces the overall length of stay for these patients from around four days to a single day, is in contention to win the 'Post-COVID Sustainable Transformation Award' category at the *Health Service Journal (HSJ)* Value Awards later this year. Read more [here](#).

Home monitoring for patients with lung diseases during COVID-19

A new home monitoring service provided by the OUH during the COVID-19 pandemic has benefited more than 160 extremely vulnerable patients with interstitial lung diseases.

Spirometers have been distributed to patients at high risk of COVID-19 so their lung conditions can be monitored without leaving their home, therefore reducing their risk of contracting the virus.

Spirometers can inform how well the lungs are working by accurately measuring the largest breath a person can take and how quickly they can force that breath out. Spirometers have been sent to homes across Oxfordshire and surrounding areas so that patients can carry out their test at home and email results in.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, OUH staff have been working hard to adapt services to ensure they are delivered as safely as possible; distributing spirometers is an example of this. The Interstitial Lung Disease Service has helped to remove the anxiety of a hospital visit at this time for many OUH patients. Read more [here](#).



Visiting to be reintroduced at Oxford University Hospitals

Now that levels of COVID-19 in the community and in hospitals are dropping, from Monday 22 March 2021 OUH will be reintroducing the 'Rule of One' for inpatient visiting – one visitor, for one hour, per day, per patient. Ward staff will book slots in advance with visitors.

Visitors are **not** permitted in Emergency Departments, Emergency Assessment Units, and in outpatient departments – with limited exceptions including:

- **Maternity** – one birth partner only for labour and birth; 'Rule of One' visiting for other maternity inpatients; and one partner permitted for 12 week and 20 week scan appointments, fetal medicine appointments, and breech clinic appointments
- **Children** – one parent or guardian for as long as required, but no siblings
- **Patients in exceptional circumstances** – patients with mental health support needs, learning disabilities, communication support needs, patients who do not speak English as their first language, patients who require carers, and patients who are sadly at the end of their life.

Oxford Health has already reintroduced the 'Rule of One' for inpatient visiting at community hospitals and on mental health inpatients wards Monday to Friday.

New Critical Care Building is good news for patients



OUH is delighted to announce that work on a new 48-bed Critical Care Building at the John Radcliffe Hospital is now underway. The £29 million development is supported by Department of Health and Social Care financing. The new Critical Care building is part of a regional plan to manage critical care as the NHS makes preparations for the ongoing impact of COVID-19. The new building will

Year on year improvement in NHS Staff Survey results

Both Trusts saw a record level of employees taking part in the survey. More OUH and Oxford Health staff than ever would recommend working at their respective Trust or as a place to receive care despite the pressures of the pandemic.

Research suggests large numbers of COVID-19 survivors will experience mental health issues

The Oxfordshire post-COVID clinic, which is run in partnership by Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust (Oxford Health) and the OUH, has a multi-disciplinary team which includes psychologists and psychiatrists to support patients with mental health issues.

The clinic is already seeing the impact of COVID - 19 on the people's mental health. Patients are presenting with Long COVID syndrome which includes fatigue, cognitive problems and a range of psychiatric problems. It is estimated that these problems are experienced by 1 in 5 people who have had COVID-19. Read more [here](#).

Oxford Health vaccination centre welcomed Aled Jones and TV crew

Following on from recent MP and VIP visits, Oxford Health's vaccination centre at the Kassam Stadium welcomed TV presenter Aled Jones and the BBC Songs of Praise film crew on Thursday. The vaccination centre will form part of a programme representing the theme of hope to be broadcast on Palm Sunday on March 28.

The presenter met COVID Operations Director Tehmeena Ajmal, Oxford Health's head of spirituality and pastoral care, the Rev Dr Guy Harrison and Imam Monawar Hussain, who is the Muslim chaplain for OUH. He spoke on his work raising awareness of the vaccine among BAME



communities in the county.

Social workers in the spotlight

Oxford Health has shown its appreciation for its 150 social workers as part of worldwide celebrations. Social workers support adults, children, families and communities to improve their lives and, at Oxford Health, many are involved in supporting mental health services. And to show appreciation for the massive contribution they make, World Social Worker Day is held each year to promote the scale and range of talent they employ to help people live healthier and happier lives.

Social workers work with some of the most vulnerable people in our society and manage some of the most challenging and complex risks from homelessness to substance misuse. Find out more [here](#).

Oxford Health gives hope during National Eating Disorders Week

Oxford Health recently played its part in building understanding and spreading hope as part of National Eating Disorder Week.



Eating disorders are serious mental illnesses affecting people of all ages, genders, ethnicities and backgrounds. In Oxfordshire, Oxford Health runs the award-winning in-patient Cotswold House and has specialist teams working with and supporting service users in the community.

The Trust took to social media to help provide advice, access to support and also to tell the stories of some of the people who have suffered from eating disorders and their journeys to recovery. The stories, which you can [read here](#), hit home with a combined reach of almost 45,000 which was amplified with coverage on TV and radio.

Oxford Health Council of Governors – will you stand?

Nominations for Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust's Council of Governors elections will open on Thursday, March 25. This is a chance to stand for election and help shape the future of the Trust. There are opportunities across the Oxford Health geographical area including Oxfordshire. Only members of the Trust can stand for election, so if you are not a member, or want to join and find out more see [here](#).

Community resilience

Putting Cherwell residents on the map

An online 'story map' has been created for Cherwell District Council to help the council provide a more tailored approach to service provision.

[Cherwell District Council's Story Map](#)

has been created by digital specialists Press Red, using technology developed in partnership with organisations including Active Oxfordshire, Sport England and Public Health England. The story map uses data in the public domain, as well as specialist information from in-house studies, to create a more rounded picture of life for Cherwell residents living in specific locations.



The software enables the user to zoom into a specific area, showing a range of relevant data. This can be used by the council and its partners to understand more about different neighbourhoods and enable the delivery of more targeted help for those who need it most.

Economy

Oxford-Cambridge Arc sets out environment principles

The Oxford-Cambridge Arc Leadership Group has endorsed new environment principles, which seek to secure practical ways to increase nature and find innovative solutions to managing natural resources.

The principles set out the ambition to protect, restore, enhance and create new nature areas and natural capital assets across the region. They will embrace green spaces, housing standards, sustainable transport, energy generation and transmission and water management and conservation.

The UK Government has already set out its [intention](#) for the Arc to be the UK's fastest growing economic region and a world-leader in sustainability. These principles provide a clear statement of regional intent that embodies local

commitment to adopting an approach that results in environmentally sustainable economic growth.



Culture Fund to help boost Oxford city's cultural projects

Oxford City Council has opened a grant funding pot to help boost the city's cultural projects. The [Culture Fund](#), which awards grants from £500 to £1,000 to cultural organisations and artists in Oxford, opened for its first round for applications this week.

The fund was created to provide cultural groups with the ability to leverage income from other funding sources. Over the past year, the fund has awarded £29,247 to successful applicants, who have used this to secure £319,446 in cash and £113,196 in in-kind contributions.

Final call for Business Investment Fund expressions of interest

Expressions of interest for Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership's Business Investment Fund

Place, Transport, Infrastructure

Preparing Oxfordshire for the electric vehicle revolution

Oxfordshire will be one of the first places in the UK to put in place a comprehensive strategy to make it easier for motorists to join the electric vehicle (EV) revolution. On 16 March, the county council's Cabinet adopted the Oxfordshire EV infrastructure strategy, which sets out key actions to allow more drivers to go electric by 2025.

The government has proposed an end to the sale of petrol and diesel vehicles by 2030, and so comprehensive, accessible and efficient infrastructure is essential if we want people to ditch fossil fuels and move towards EVs. EV sales in Oxfordshire are expected to rise faster than the national average, with Oxford University researchers predicting that by 2025 there could be more than 25,000 EVs on the county's roads.

The strategy has been a collaboration involving the county, city and district councils, and is among the first of its kind in the country. It will put Oxfordshire in a strong position to ensure that anyone wishing to buy an EV will have access to convenient charging facilities – a vital factor for anyone considering switching from petrol or diesel.

One of the aims is to convert at least 7.5 per cent of council-managed car park spaces for EV charging by 2025. Other objectives for this period include:

- Enabling and delivering public EV charging strategically across Oxfordshire.
- Adopting a common approach to managing EV charging in council car parks.
- Enabling residents without access to private off-road parking to access a range of options for EV charging.
- Encouraging new developments to install high-quality EV charging infrastructure.
- Setting standards for the quality of public EV charging in Oxfordshire to make sure it is high quality, open, accessible and future-proofed.

must be received by 19 March. The £2.1million capital fund – created to support Oxfordshire's business community to move into an effective

renewal phase following the COVID-19 pandemic – aims to support scalable businesses from across the county through matched grants, ranging from £25,000 through to £100,000 per business. Details are available [here](#).

- Working with partners to encourage other landowners to install EV charging infrastructure for businesses, residents and other users.

Meanwhile, West Oxfordshire District Council has taken delivery of its first battery electric vehicle – a Renault Zoe R135 Iconic. The council's waste and recycling delivery partner **Ubico** will use the council-owned vehicle day-to-day. The Zoe's 52kWh battery has enough capacity for staff to undertake their work without the need to recharge during the day.

Oxford's Zero Emission Zone pilot approved



Oxford's Zero Emission Zone (ZEZ) pilot is due to launch in August after having been formally approved by the city council's Cabinet last week and the county council's Cabinet this week. Oxford will be one of the first places in Britain to introduce a ZEZ. The scheme aims to reduce toxic air pollution levels, help tackle the climate emergency and improve the health of residents, workers and visitors in Oxford and beyond.

The ZEZ pilot will restrict polluting vehicles from key city centre streets during the day. Those who drive polluting vehicles into the zone will be charged a fee, with the level of the charge dependent on how polluting the vehicle is.

The pilot is the first phase of the ZEZ. It will allow both councils to gain useful experience and information before introducing a larger ZEZ covering most of Oxford city centre in 2022, subject to further

public consultation. It is intended that the restrictions and exemptions applied within the pilot will be the same in the expanded ZEZ.

Developing innovative and sustainable community-led housing

Oxford City Council has been awarded funding to work with Transition by Design and Oxfordshire Community Land Trust to develop a blueprint for reclaiming disused land for innovative council housing.

An award of £19,994 from the Housing Advisers Programme (HAP) will help the council expand on a community-led [pilot project](#) to demolish a row of derelict garages and build four new zero carbon council homes in Champion Way.

Around 600 of the council's 2,000 garages are vacant. The HAP funding will be used to unlock the potential for building new homes on these sites and other unused pockets of land owned by the council. This will provide a pipeline of five sites, which could yield around 30 homes.

HAP funding will also enable the council to develop a range of approaches for working with communities to build sustainable homes on difficult brownfield sites. These could include using modular construction to build meanwhile homes as move-on accommodation before developing a site for permanent council housing.

Children, Education, Families

Symptom-free testing to support the return to school

The Government is encouraging all households with nursery, primary and secondary school and college-aged children and young people, including childcare and support bubbles, to undertake twice-weekly rapid lateral flow testing.



Adults in these households who are workers or volunteers in a public-facing role can get tested at one of Oxfordshire's three symptom-free testing sites: Spiceball Leisure Centre in Banbury, The King's Centre in Oxford and The Beacon in Wantage. A fourth site in West Oxfordshire is due to open shortly.

Parents and those in childcare and support bubbles can also order tests online for home delivery or collect up to two packs of home test kits (each contains seven tests) from one of Oxfordshire's COVID symptomatic sites between 1pm and 7pm. Testing will not be taking place at these sites during these times to avoid contact with anyone with COVID-19 symptoms. The sites are open seven days a week and residents do not need to book an appointment to collect home test kits.

Further information is available on [Oxfordshire County Council's website](https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/covidtest).

And finally...

New High Sheriff of Oxfordshire appointed

Theologian, Imam and former businessman, Monawar Hussain has been appointed as

Oxfordshire's new High Sheriff at a ceremony held at Buckingham Palace on 10 March. He will succeed the current High Sheriff, Mrs Amanda Ponsonby MBE, on 8 April.

The office of High Sheriff is an independent non-political royal appointment made by the Queen. While the role dates back to Saxon times, it has evolved to include a mix of ceremonial, charitable and community functions and is voluntary and unfunded. Supporting the crown (for example, attendance at royal visits) and judiciary remain central elements.



Monawar is a Muslim chaplain at Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, a tutor at Eton College and founded The Oxford Foundation – a charity that promotes religious and racial harmony through educational and arts-based activities. He has also devised, pioneered and successfully steered a unique programme that confronts violent extremist ideology, which has been used to train religious education teachers in the UK.

Monawar said: “During this very difficult year, I have witnessed first hand the acts of altruistic kindness, compassion and love that have been truly inspirational. Fellow citizens from all walks of life – faiths, cultures, professions and communities –

We hope this update is useful. Please email occg.media-team@nhs.net with any queries and we will endeavour to get back to you as soon as we can.

have come together looking out for the vulnerable and needy. I therefore will dedicate my year as High Sheriff to thanking and ‘celebrating Oxfordshire’s heroes’, individuals and voluntary groups, from all walks of life who have made exceptional contributions to their communities all across the county.”

21 March is Census Day

Households across Oxfordshire are being asked to take part in Census 2021, a national survey that takes place once every 10 years.

The census provides the most accurate estimate of all the people and households in England and Wales. It has been carried out every decade since 1801, apart from 1941.

One of the many things census data is used for is to help local councils underpin funding bids for community programmes. Examples include the Families Active, Sporting Together (FAST) programme in Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington, a four-year programme funded by a Sport England grant and partnership funding, which makes it easier for families to enjoy physical activity and sport together.

In advance of Census Day on 21 March, households have been receiving letters with online codes explaining how they can complete their forms. If you haven’t received a letter, or need some more help or information, please visit www.census.gov.uk or call the census contact centre on 0800 141 2021.

Oxfordshire

NHS & Local Authorities Stakeholder Briefing

9 April 2021

Oxfordshire health and local authority partners are working together to respond to the pandemic and help the county restart, recover and renew after COVID-19.

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The roadmap out of lockdown

The government has now confirmed that we are on track for COVID-19 restrictions to be eased further on 12 April in line with the next phase of the roadmap out of lockdown.



This is reflected in the number of new cases in Oxfordshire, which - although showing slight variations over the past fortnight - has now dropped to 33.1 per 100,000 of the population. Among residents aged 60 and over, the rate has now fallen to 8.5 per 100,000.

The latest COVID-19 figures can be viewed on the county council's [interactive dashboard](#), which is updated on a daily basis.



In Oxfordshire, preparations are underway to reopen a range of council services as part of the second step of the roadmap. This includes public leisure centres across the county, including gyms

and indoor pools, and the phased reopening of [Oxfordshire's libraries](#) - 30 of which will reopen on 12 April and a further 7 the following week.

As shops, hairdressers and outdoor hospitality venues get ready to open their doors on 12 April, the county's COVID-secure teams will be on hand to ensure that businesses are operating safely, while the councils will be encouraging residents to shop local and enjoy local attractions safely.

Symptom-free testing for everyone

Alongside the rollout of the vaccine, regular testing forms an essential part of the government's roadmap plan.

From 9 April, everyone in England will be able to access free, rapid lateral flow device (LFD) tests twice a week. This paves the way for businesses and society reopening.

One in three people with COVID-19 do not experience any symptoms and may be spreading the virus without knowing. Rapid testing detects cases quickly, meaning positive cases can isolate immediately and prevent the spread of infection.

Residents in Oxfordshire are being actively encouraged to make regular testing a habit. Getting into the habit of twice-weekly testing will help us all play our part in keeping our families and communities safe and enable the easing of lockdown to continue.

A range of options are available for people to access free regular testing as conveniently as possible:

- Community testing at council-run symptom-free testing sites in Banbury, Carterton, Oxford and Wantage, which are open Monday to Saturday
- Collection of home test kits from any local testing site
- A home ordering service so that people can order LFD tests online and have them delivered to their home

- Workplace testing programmes, on-site or at home
- Secondary school and college testing on-site or through home test kits provided

A new 'pharmacy collect' service is also launching, which will provide an additional route to regular testing. For further information, visit

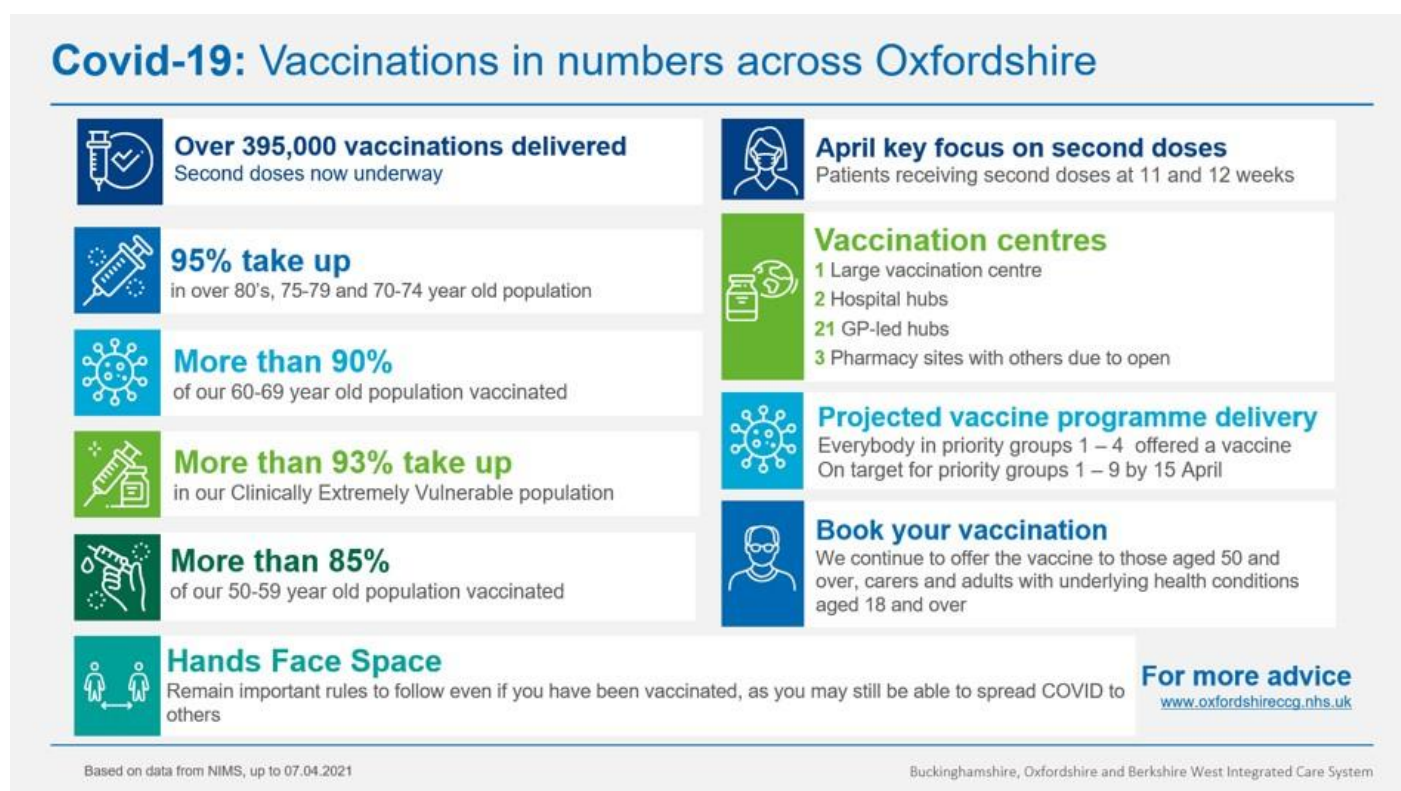
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/covidtest.



Health, Wellbeing and Social Care

Vaccination programme update

The summary below provides the position at 7 April 2021:



2nd dose of COVID-19 vaccinations

The NHS in Oxfordshire has now vaccinated more than 320,000 people against COVID-19; over 40,000 people in the county have also now had their second dose.

To ensure we continue to protect our community, the NHS are urging people in Oxfordshire to come for their second dose of the COVID-19 vaccination when they are invited to.

Dr Kiren Collison, GP and Clinical Chair at Oxfordshire CCG, said: "We all want our lives to get back to normal and to do this we know that by getting vaccinated we can protect not only ourselves but others around us. By having the second vaccine you will have the best long-term protection from the virus."

NHS staff are still working hard to deliver the largest vaccination drive in our history, at the same time as

providing care for everyone who needs it. The public can help in the following:

- unless you are in the groups being invited now, please don't contact the NHS to seek a vaccine, we will contact you when it is the right time;
- please attend your booked appointments at the time you're asked to, and make sure you come back for your second dose;
- whether you have had your vaccine or not, please continue to follow all the guidance in place to control the virus and save lives.

Everyone can help support by following the rules where they live to try to contain the virus and remembering hands, face, space at all times.

And if you have coronavirus symptoms – a high temperature, new continuous cough or loss or change to your sense of smell or taste, make sure you get tested and isolate for as long as is needed to help protect those you care for and others in your community.

COVID-19 vaccinations in Oxford Mosques

The NHS has been working with Oxford City Council and the Mosques in Oxford to offer COVID-19 vaccinations at the Madina Mosque and the Central Oxford Mosque on 7 and 8 April. This initiative was open to anyone in the cohorts 1-9 still needing their first vaccination. The walk-in clinics vaccinated 81 people over the two days.

Following the success of this initiative, other opportunities are being explored for delivering vaccinations in community settings including at a Mosque in Banbury and a church in Oxford popular with residents from the black African community.

COVID-19 vaccinations at Kassam

Oxford Health's vaccination centre at the Kassam Stadium in Oxford, is operating a skeleton service until Sunday, April 11 – providing first dose vaccination for over 50s and eligible cohorts who have booked via the online national bookings service or via 119. This is in line with the national drive to ensure that everyone in the most at-risk cohorts has had the chance to be vaccinated, ahead of the NHS target of offering all priority

groups their first vaccine by April 15 and when there is tighter supply of available doses.

From April 15, NHS staff will receive their second doses of the Oxford vaccine before appointments are opened up to the public for their second vaccines from April 19. COVID Operations Director Tehmeena Ajmal has been interviewed on BBC Radio Oxford about the next steps.

Oxford Health is also working with local authority and other health colleagues to run a series of pop-up clinics to improve access to the vaccine for people who are unable to travel to a vaccination site.

Vaccination milestone

Oxford Health celebrated a milestone on Friday, March 26, in administering 100,000 COVID-19 vaccinations as the lead provider of three mass vaccination centres for the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System (BOB ICS).



Vaccination staff at the Kassam Stadium, Oxford, at the Madejski Stadium in Reading and at the Bucks New University campus in Aylesbury, came together for a collective celebration. Thanks to the generosity of Oxford Health Charity, 250 celebratory cup cakes were quickly baked and iced and distributed to all three sites so that every member of staff involved in the roll-out could savour the milestone moment with sweet treat on their morning break.

Vaccines started being administered to the public at the Kassam on 1 February and in those 50 days, staff inoculated 50,000 people in priority groups – that's 1,000 people a day receiving a potentially life-saving Oxford vaccine.

The pace of the rollout significantly changed since those early few days and the centres in Oxford and in Reading both had capacity to see 3,500 people a day depending on vaccine supply and bookings.

Oxford AstraZeneca (AZ) COVID-19 vaccine

The latest guidance from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) on the use of the AZ vaccine can be found on the Government website [here](#).

The JCVI has weighed the relative balance of benefits and risks and advises that the benefits of prompt vaccination with the AZ vaccine far outweigh the risk of adverse events for people **aged 30 years and over and those who have underlying health conditions which put them at higher risk of severe COVID-19 disease**.

However, the JCVI has advised that it is preferable for adults younger than 30, without underlying health conditions, to be offered an alternative first dose of COVID-19 vaccine, if available, eg Pfizer Biontec or Moderna. People may make an informed choice to receive the AZ vaccine to receive earlier protection.

To date, there are no reports of the extremely rare side-effects following the second dose of the AZ vaccine. If you have received a first dose of the AZ vaccine you should continue to have your second dose, irrespective of age. The second dose will be important for longer lasting protection against COVID-19.

Oxford COVID treatment breakthrough saves one million lives worldwide

Oxford University researchers are leading the Randomised Evaluation of COVID-19 Therapy (RECOVERY) trial, the world's biggest trial looking at whether existing treatments can tackle the symptoms of COVID-19 – almost 40,000 people have taken part in the trial globally including many patients at Oxford University Hospitals (OUH).

In June 2020 they announced that one of the drugs they were testing, dexamethasone – a cheap and widely available steroid – reduced the risk of death

in COVID-19 patients on ventilators by a third, and by a fifth in those on oxygen.

New figures published on 23 March show that use of the drug has so far saved 22,000 lives in the UK and an estimated one million lives worldwide.

Professor Fiona Watt, Executive Chair of the Medical Research Council, said: "It's incredibly encouraging that doctors now have additional COVID-19 treatments that can save lives and reduce the length of hospital stays. This world-leading study shows the power of well-designed clinical trials to discover which drugs can help patients."

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said: "This global pandemic has proven that the UK is a world-class force in identifying and rolling out lifesaving treatments to NHS patients. Finding dexamethasone through the RECOVERY trial was a true success story for British research and it's fantastic to see the real impact it's having saving lives here and around the world."

Find out more about the RECOVERY trial at www.recoverytrial.net

New Osler Respiratory Unit improves care for respiratory patients

Patients with respiratory conditions at Oxford University Hospitals (OUH) are benefiting from enhanced inpatient care following the opening of a newly refurbished respiratory ward.



Based at the John Radcliffe Hospital, the new **Osler Respiratory Unit** welcomed its first patients on 16 March. The Respiratory team has moved several

times over the last year as part of the Trust's COVID-19 response, but is now based in a modern and refurbished clinical area.

Two wards have been completely renovated in order to provide a single Respiratory Unit with 24 beds, including 22 side rooms.

Staff on the Osler Respiratory Unit, who have adapted quickly and efficiently over the past year due to the pandemic, care for people with various breathing conditions, including [asthma](#), [interstitial lung diseases](#), and cystic fibrosis.

Sam Foster, Chief Nursing Officer at OUH, said: "The Respiratory Unit team have delivered outstanding care to patients throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. They expanded their capacity rapidly and welcomed staff from across our Trust to learn new skills and be part of the response required for our patients.

"This exciting new area has been completely transformed, and it will make a really positive difference to patients. I would like to thank colleagues for their understanding, teamwork, and dedication to ensuring the continuation of excellent patient care during the last year, as well as for their patience while work was carried out."

Letter to a loved one – helping friends and family to stay in touch with patients

While limited ward visiting is taking place, Oxford Health is continuing the successful "letters to a loved one" scheme to ensure families and friends can always keep in touch with patients and service users.



You can find out more about letters to a loved one [here](#).

170,000 digital consultations: making life easier for staff and patients during the pandemic

Oxford Health's digital consultations project has been shortlisted for the IT & Digital Innovation Award in the HSJ Value Awards.

The project was set up in March 2020 to support clinicians and patients to respond to the COVID crisis. Assembled in just one week in March 2020, the project team engineered a systematic and seamless transition from face-to-face appointments to a trust-wide digital offer.



The team's ambitious target was to achieve 100,000 digital consultations in a year, more than any NHS trust had done. This was already reached in November 2020, and by the one-year anniversary of the start of the first lockdown, the trust had surpassed 170,000 digital consultations. Read more about the project and the awards [here](#).

Horton hip fracture team among best in the country

The Horton General Hospital's hip fracture team has been named one of the best in the country for hip fracture treatment – for the eighth year in a row – following publication of the annual National Hip Fracture Audit, which compares the performance of 174 trauma units in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

The Horton team hospital met all best practice criteria in nearly **95%** of patients, compared with a national average of 58% – while more than **90%** of hip fracture patients underwent surgery either on the same day, or the day after, compared with a national average of 69%.

Mr Sam Anand, Orthopaedic Surgeon at the Horton General, said, said: " These results go to show the expertise and commitment of all our team, which is especially rewarding as our patient numbers have

gone up. We're so happy to be acknowledged for our continuation of excellent care.

"Hip fractures are very common and they're often suffered by elderly or frail people who need rapid care. We're really pleased we can help them in such an efficient and effective way."

Limited visiting resumes on pre-booked basis at Oxford Health wards

Oxford Health has resumed pre-booked limited visiting hours at its community hospitals on Mondays to Fridays.

The trust is allowing one designated visitor for each patient for the duration of their stay, meaning a dedicated family member can visit for one hour once a day via a booking system at its hospitals in Abingdon, Bicester, Oxford City, Didcot, Wallingford and Witney and at mental health wards in Oxford.



This is in line with national guidance, regarding social distance, good basic infection prevention and control measures and appropriate use of protective equipment, including face coverings and, in certain circumstances, gloves and apron. Read more [here](#).

UK first use of cutting-edge radiotherapy machine in Oxford

An NHS patient has received treatment using a cutting-edge radiotherapy machine for the first time, thanks to a new partnership between Oxford University Hospitals (OUH), the University of Oxford, and GenesisCare.

The new ViewRay MRIdian machine is the first of its kind in the UK and will help to improve challenging cancer treatment through faster, tailored radiotherapy.

The partners, with the support of the John Black Charitable Foundation, have collaborated to establish a 10-year programme of clinical treatment for NHS patients, with further research into

improving cancer treatment using the machine, based at GenesisCare's centre in Oxford.

Healthy tissue around a cancer tumour can be exposed to radiotherapy treatment, particularly when targeting soft tissue tumours deep within the body. It can be challenging to visualise these organs during radiotherapy with routine radiotherapy delivery.

The ViewRay MRIdian allows doctors to see the healthy soft tissue and the tumour in real time by combining MRI scanning with targeted radiotherapy. Incorporating MRI scans enables doctors to tailor doses in real time to the specific internal anatomy of the patient on the day of treatment.

Carol Scott, Lead Therapeutic Radiographer at OUH, said: "We are excited to be part of this collaboration offering NHS patients the opportunity to take part in these clinical trials. The use of daily advanced imaging that clearly shows us the tumour and normal soft tissue around it will enable us to take the next step in making our treatments even more personalised and effective."

[More information is available on the OUH website.](#)

New transatlantic partnership to transform research and clinical landscapes in mental health

A new agreement between Oxford Health, the University of Oxford, the University of Toronto and the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto, has been formalised with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the four organisations.



The transatlantic partnership will enhance existing relationships between the universities and the two healthcare providers. It will enable the development of key structures to facilitate collaboration and help realise the benefits of the complimentary

capabilities of the participating organisations. Read more about the partnership [here](#).

Mo Patel a finalist in National BAME Health & Care Awards

Oxford Health's Head of Inclusion Mohamed Patel has been shortlisted for the Compassionate and Inclusive Leader award in the National BAME Health & Care Awards.

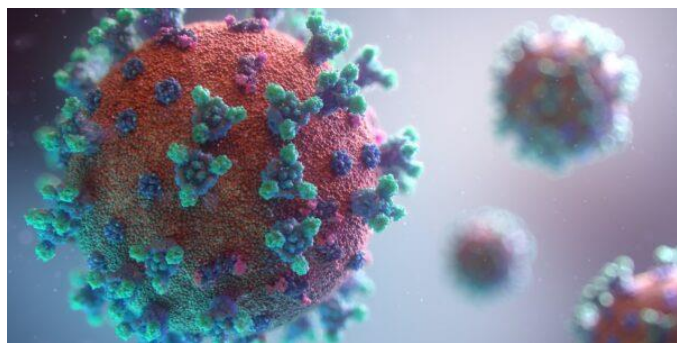
Mo, as he is known to everybody at Oxford Health, has been at the trust since December 2013. He, and the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Team, support staff, patients and communities in many practical ways, from policy development and cultural change programmes to providing the interpreting services and delivering training, conferences and staff network events, amongst many other areas.



The winners for the Compassionate and Inclusive Leader category will be revealed in a virtual ceremony on April 15. See more on the [BAME Awards website](#).

Research and development team keep achieving during the pandemic

Lockdown restrictions have not slowed the pace of the Oxford Health Research and Development Team. With it being more than a year since the pandemic began, the team has been looking back at its achievements over a very challenging 12 months.



From keeping existing trials on track and opening new pandemic related studies, to supporting the delivery of a vaccine trial and providing a staff vaccination hub, Research and Development (R&D) at the trust has gone from strength to strength over the last year.

Despite lockdown restrictions 47 new studies have been opened at the trust since March 2020, including ten related to the COVID pandemic. The new studies have spanned a range of specialties including mental health, dementia, young people's mental health, and public health.

As well as keeping regular studies running smoothly, R&D colleagues have risen to the challenge of supporting urgent public health studies around the development of vaccines.

In late 2020 R&D staff at the [NIHR cognitive health Clinical Research Facility](#) worked to an incredibly short timeline to set up the [Novavax](#) vaccine study in just four days. They went on to exceed recruitment targets in less than a month. Read more about the team's achievements [here](#).

Katharine House Hospice staff welcomed to OneTeamOneOUH

An exciting new partnership between Katharine House Hospice and Oxford University Hospitals (OUH) came to fruition on Thursday 1 April as the hospice's clinical services transferred to be under the management of OUH.

The hospice, which is based in Adderbury in north Oxfordshire, was formed almost 30 years ago and now supports more than 900 families every year.

Professor Sir Jonathan Montgomery, OUH Chair, and Dr Bruno Holthof, OUH Chief Executive Officer, wrote personally to all Katharine House Hospice staff to welcome them to our OneTeamOneOUH.

They said: "As you will know better than anyone, palliative care demonstrates some of the most admirable values that drive our work. We appreciate especially what we can learn from our palliative care colleagues about compassion and respect as you work with those at the end of their lives and those

who love and care for them, and as you enrich those final moments."

Angharad Orchard, Chief Executive of Katharine House Hospice, added: "By working in partnership with OUH, our hospice services that people living with a life-limiting illness rely upon, will be strengthened for the long-term, creating a positive impact on future end of life care needs."

Dr Bruno Holthof and Sam Foster, OUH Chief Nursing Officer, also recorded short video messages to welcome Katharine House Hospice staff to our OneTeamOneOUH:

- [Dr Bruno Holthof video message](#)
- [Sam Foster video message](#)

BBC Songs of Praise and Aled Jones find hope at Oxford vaccination centre

Oxford Health's vaccination centre in Oxford has featured in a Palm Sunday broadcast of the BBC's Songs of Praise television programme.



The episode is called Finding Hope and looks at the Oxford vaccine development and how it's being rolled out in the city of its inception and by a dedicated team from Oxford Health. You can watch it [here on BBC iPlayer](#)

Presenter Aled Jones meet Professor Andy Pollard, the scientist behind the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine and also interviewed Oxford Health COVID Operations Director Tehmeena Ajmal, the Trust's head of spiritual and pastoral care Rev Dr Guy Harrison and Imam Monawar Hussein MBE, the inspirational Muslim chaplain at Oxford University Hospitals Foundation Trust.

Read more [here](#).

COVID-19 survivors at risk of neurological and psychiatric disorders

A new study from Oxford Health's Biomedical Research Centre has shown 1 in 3 survivors of COVID-19 received a neurological or psychiatric diagnosis within six months.

Published in The Lancet Psychiatry, the study looked at health records of over 236,000 patients to reveal the scale of complications affecting the brain and nervous system after contracting COVID-19.

The risk was greater in people who had severe COVID-19, but 1 in 9 patients not requiring hospitalisation, also received a diagnosis of conditions including stroke, dementia, psychosis and neuromuscular disorders, as well as psychiatric disorders like anxiety. You can read more about the study [here](#).

Oxford Health family mark COVID-19 National Day of Reflection 2021

Oxford Health provides physical, mental health and social care for people of all ages across our communities in Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Swindon, Wiltshire, Bath and North East Somerset.

Its 7,000 staff work around the clock to provide high quality care – and throughout the pandemic they've worked harder than ever before.

As part of the National Day of Reflection, led by the charity Marie Curie, Oxford Health observed a minute's silence at noon across the trust to remember those lost during the pandemic. Board members, executives and service directors lit candles as a symbol of remembrance and unity, whilst offering condolences to those in our communities who have lost loved ones.



A staff webinar hosted by the Chief Executive Dr Nick Broughton gave staff the opportunity to share their reflections and thanks of the last year – a moment to reflect and look back.

Stop smoking service launches in Oxfordshire

Stop for Life Oxon launched across Oxfordshire on 1 April. Commissioned by Oxfordshire County Council, and operated by ICE Creates Ltd, it has increased the range of support options to those who are ready to quit and provides specialist stop smoking support and advice to increase people's chances of quitting.



The service is focused on achieving the priority outcomes for tobacco as agreed by the [Oxfordshire Tobacco Control Strategy 2020-25](#): reducing smoking amongst adults, cutting the number of pregnant women who smoke, and reducing the prevalence of smoking in workplaces where smoking rates are high.

People asked to think 111 First before attending Emergency Departments

People in Oxfordshire are asked to contact NHS 111 first via [111 online](#) or telephone if they are thinking of attending an Emergency Department, Minor Injury or First Aid Unit but aren't in a life-threatening emergency.

You will then be assessed and, if appropriate, booked into either a First Aid Unit, Minor Injury Unit or the John Radcliffe or Horton General Hospital Emergency Department for treatment.

Contacting NHS111 first means that you will get the most appropriate care for your needs, and enables hospitals to maintain vital social distancing in their Emergency Departments.

Launched in Oxfordshire in November 2020, the programme plays an important part in managing patient flow in healthcare settings and reducing overcrowding.

People should still call 999 and attend an Emergency Department if they are experiencing a medical emergency.

For more information, visit the [OUH NHS 111 First webpage](#).

New short film puts PTSD in the spotlight

Mental health has never been in the headlines more than at the moment with the pandemic focusing attention on recognising and helping people who may be experiencing problems.

To help build understanding Oxford Health has produced a range of videos focusing on depression, anxiety, psychosis, self-harm, personality disorders, neurodiversity, suicide prevention, good mental health, digital mental health and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

The latest, about PTSD, can be found on [Oxford Health's YouTube channel](#).



The videos are the result of a partnership between the trust's music therapy lead, Stuart Hobbs, trust clinical psychologist Hannah Stratford and trust consultant Tony James who, together with some of the young people who have used Oxford Health's Adolescent mental health services, have produced the series.

Become an Oxford Health member now to have your say in May

Oxford Health is calling on people to become a member of the trust by April 13 in order to vote in its Council of Governors elections 2021.

By becoming a member of Oxford Health, you can show your support and have a say in the trust's future. Trust members will elect 18 new governors in May.



Nominations for Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust Council of Governors elections are also open right now, and again the deadline for these is **5pm, Tuesday April 13.**

To find out more about becoming a Trust member and about the nomination process to stand as a prospective member of the board of governors, visit [this page](#).

A tree-mendous addition to Oxford Health's green spaces

Oxford Health marked NHS Sustainability Day recently with some special tree plantings at four of its sites.



The national day was held on 26 March to celebrate the importance of sustainable development and

Children, Education, Families

Mental wellbeing hub for young people

Young people suffering psychological challenges, made worse by COVID-19 lockdown restrictions, will have access to an information hub giving contact details of local professional support services and resources, thanks to a new scheme from Oxfordshire County Council.

champion green initiatives – something Oxford Health works very hard on.

Over 800 trees are already planted across the trust's sites, absorbing over 38 tons of carbon annually – helping to offset Oxford Health's overall carbon footprint.

The latest additions were funded by the Oxford Health Charity through NHS Charities Together. Read more about the tree planting and Oxford Health's commitment to sustainability [here](#) and [here](#).

Tom takes silver in Our Health Heroes Awards

Community support worker Thomas Gregory-Smith from Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust pocketed silver in the Our Health Heroes Awards 2021. He was a finalist in the Clinical Support Worker of the Year category.



Our Health Heroes are national awards, organised by Skills for Health, a not-for-profit organisation committed to the development of an improved and sustainable healthcare workforce across the UK, together with partners NHS Employers, UNISON and Bevan Brittan. The awards recognise the extraordinary people at the heart of the NHS and social care workforce.



Teenagers face daunting choices, such as deciding between continuing in education or entering the workplace. Disruption caused by the pandemic has increased fears that some might fall between the cracks when it comes to assistance and support.

The hub aims to help young people navigate a myriad of local and national services by conveniently signposting them to practical advice,

resources and help tools. Social media and websites will be central to the initiative, designed to offer a one-stop shop where advice is just a couple of clicks away.

Further information is available from the county council's young people website:

www.oxme.info/wellbeing

Community resilience

Support available to Oxfordshire residents most in need this spring

Financial and practical help continues for people struggling to feed their families or heat their homes this spring as a result of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Oxfordshire's local authorities and Citizens Advice services are working together to offer support to vulnerable residents through a number of schemes.

The families of 14,500 eligible children and young people will receive food vouchers or equivalent support worth £30 through their schools, college or nursery ahead of the Easter holiday.

Financial help is also being extended into the spring for support with the costs of food and essential utilities. A further £425,000 is being distributed by the county council to the city and district councils, working in partnership with Citizens Advice and other local advisory services. More than 5,000 families have already received emergency help through this scheme.

Details of how to apply are available from Oxfordshire County Council's website.

Young people illustrate the power of art in the battle against hate crime

An art competition designed to highlight and raise awareness of hate crime among young people has proved a real success.

Winner, 11-year-old Mya, produced a striking poster with the slogan 'Stop the Hate', urging people to report disability, racism and homophobia. While runner-up Maddy, 13, created a colourful artwork referencing the Black Lives Matter campaign and the number of hate crime offences reported to police last year.



Organised by the West Oxfordshire Community Safety Partnership (WOCSP) – which brings

together local organisations including Thames Valley Police, West Oxfordshire District Council, Oxfordshire County Council, voluntary and community sector groups and housing organisations – the competition was designed to create artwork that inspired and educated, with participants learning about the issues facing people who suffer hate crime and discrimination.

Clinically extremely vulnerable people

From 31 March, the restrictions for clinically extremely vulnerable individuals (CEV) – including

those already shielding and those recently added to the list by the government – have been lifted.

While the requirement to shield has been lifted, CEV individuals are still advised to take extra precautions and minimise social contacts, especially indoors. The district and city councils are continuing to offer ongoing practical support and guidance to CEV residents and can help address any non-medical concerns.

Economy

UK Community Renewal Fund

The UK Community Renewal Fund is a £220 million government fund which aims to support people and communities most in need across the UK, creating opportunities to trial new approaches and innovative ideas at the local level.

Oxfordshire County Council has been designated by the government as one of the lead authorities, and is responsible for receiving bids; working with local authority partners to review applications; and paying grants to successful projects and managing their performance. The fund is open to local business and the voluntary and education sectors, and bids must be submitted by 5pm on Friday 28 May. Further information is on the [county council's website](#).

OxLEP Skills launches new online experience to inspire young people

Young people from across Oxfordshire are set to benefit from a new online platform, giving an insight into some of the exciting career opportunities available in the county.

The Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP) Skills team – with the support of several partner organisations – have launched a 'Find Your

Future' platform, which aims to support young people to make informed choices about their future, as well as inspiring them about the opportunities that exist in the county across a range of sectors.

Over 70 Oxfordshire-based businesses are involved in Find Your Future, each benefiting from a virtual 'pod'. Participating companies include the Harwell Campus-based Diamond Light Source and Rebellion, one of Europe's biggest independent multimedia studios and a key part of Oxfordshire's creative industries sector. Find out more on [the OxLEP website](#).



Place, Transport, Infrastructure

New underbridge and underpass to support active travel in Bicester

A huge civil engineering project to build a bridge and underpass underneath the Marylebone to

Aynhoe railway line has been completed this Easter.

Led by Oxfordshire County Council, working in partnership with Cherwell District Council, the £14.7m project is part of the first phase of the

proposed A4095 realignment in Bicester Garden Town. The new road and enhanced walking, cycling and equestrian networks underneath the railway line are designed to help traffic and people move more easily around the town in the future and support the allocation of 6,000 homes in North West Bicester.



During a 100-hour railway closure between 2 and 5 April, the railway embankment was removed and two prefabricated structures - a steel underbridge and a concrete underpass with a combined weight of 2,200 tonnes - were inserted using remote-controlled transport.

The successful operation was the culmination of three years of planning, design and construction work involving highly effective collaboration between Oxfordshire County Council, Cherwell District Council, designers Stantec, Network Rail and their delivery contractor Story Contracting. The work is being funded by Homes England and the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal. You can watch a [time-lapse video of the build online](#).

Green Homes Grant will improve conditions for 150 households

At least 150 homes across Oxfordshire will be made more energy efficient thanks to a successful bid for £1.5 million of government funding.



Oxfordshire County Council was awarded the Green Homes Grant by the government. The council will be working together with expected delivery partner the National Energy Foundation (NEF) to help less well-off households retrofit their homes with energy saving equipment – cutting families' fuel bills while at the same time helping to reduce the county's carbon footprint.

In Oxfordshire, 20 per cent of properties fall into the worst energy efficiency categories, according to the Energy Saving Trust. 8.5% of Oxfordshire households were in fuel poverty in 2017, while respiratory conditions are estimated to affect 50,000 people.

As well as improving the quality of life of the individual households, the scheme will also help the council work towards its goal of enabling Oxfordshire to become zero carbon by 2050. Residential carbon emissions make up 25 per cent of emissions in the county.

Building affordable homes in Botley

Vale of White Horse District Council has agreed to allocate £344,000 to help build eight new affordable homes at Dean Court on Eynsham Road, Botley, which falls in Cumnor Parish area.

Members agreed to provide the funds to the Oxfordshire Community Land Trust (OCLT) using Section 106 contributions – money that developers have paid as part of agreements to build new developments in the district.

OCLT is seeking to use the money towards building eight energy efficient homes. The apartments could include high levels of insulation and PV solar panels to reduce carbon emissions and to help reduce the running costs for its occupants. The one and two bed apartments will be available for an affordable rent with priority given to residents living in or having connections with the local area. Read more on [Vale of White Horse website](#).

Funding award boosts Cherwell's climate action

Cherwell District Council has been awarded £6 million by the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to help the council achieve its aim of reaching a net zero carbon footprint by 2030.

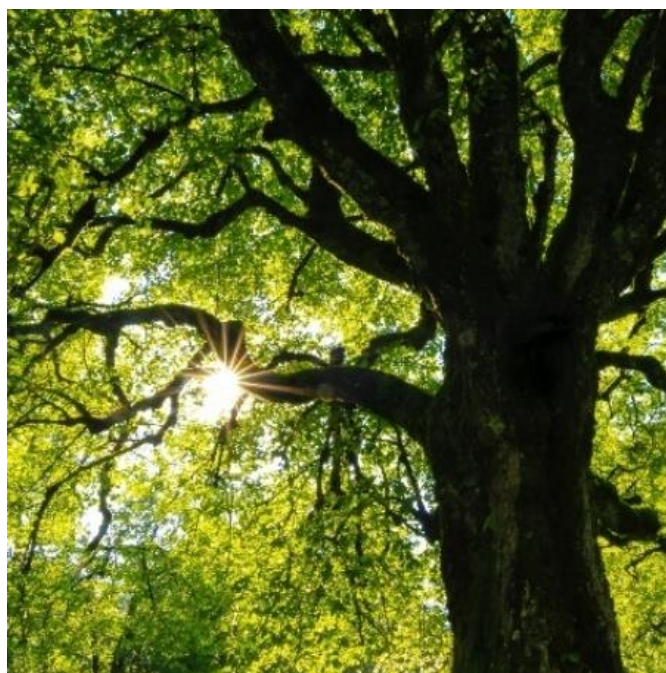
The funding will enable the council to refit ten of its buildings - including its four leisure centres, three sports pavilions and museum - with air source heat pumps and other cleaner, greener improvements. This will help slash the environmental impact of heating the buildings, cutting overall carbon emissions by up to 25 per cent.

Oxford City Council develops root and branch urban forest strategy

Oxford City Council is developing an Urban Forest Strategy to maximise the benefits trees have on the local environment and communities. This will play a part in helping the city achieve net zero carbon by 2030.

Anyone who lives or works in Oxford will be able to have their say on the proposals to develop the city's urban forest to help tackle climate change and the ecological emergency, build flood resilience,

promote sustainability and increase health and wellbeing for people and nature. Find out more on [Oxford City Council's website](#).



And finally...

We hope this update is useful. Please email occg.media-team@nhs.net with any queries and we will endeavour to get back to you as soon as we can.

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