

COVID-19 update

Testing and self-isolating more important than ever

The easing of COVID-19 restrictions these last few weeks is welcome news in West Sussex.

To keep us on track with the roadmap, regular testing and self-isolating if positive is more important than ever.



Testing for COVID-19 twice a week is now easy as you can order kits to your home, collect them for home use, or book a supervised test at your [nearest pharmacy](#).

If you're concerned about having to self-isolate support is at hand.

Self-isolation means you mustn't leave your house for 10 days. Even if you don't have symptoms, it could take up to 10 days for them to appear. So if you're not self-isolating, you could be passing the virus on to family, friends, your co-workers and community.

Support to self-isolate

The [West Sussex Community Hub](#) is available on 033 022 27980.

You may be eligible for a Test and Trace Support Payment. See the [GOV.UK website](#) for details.

Free delivery from [your local pharmacy](#) is available if you have no other way to get your medicines.

[NHS volunteer responders](#) can help with grocery shopping, prescription collections, or be there for a chat.

COVID-19 Mutual Aid Local Groups are small, independent community groups set up across the UK to support local people through the outbreak. [Find your nearest group in West Sussex.](#)

[See our COVID-19 safe and healthy webpage for tips.](#)

[See our list of local food suppliers and organisations able to deliver.](#)

Keep West Sussex Safe

In the seven days to Saturday 17 April, there were 135 new confirmed cases of coronavirus. Compared to the previous week, confirmed cases are falling.

Check infection rates in your area by visiting [our Data Dashboard](#). If you think you may have any coronavirus symptoms, isolate immediately and [book a test](#) or call 119 to get an appointment to visit a test site.

New cases are still being reported and everyone should continue to follow the sensible measures in place to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

As shops start to reopen, Neil Williamson from Arun District Council has advice for shoppers in our latest podcast: "The virus is still there. Wear your face covering, maintain hand hygiene and be patient. Look after yourself and others."

[Listen to the full interview on SoundCloud.](#)

FIND OUT MORE

Vaccination programme update



Progress continues to be made across West Sussex as the roll out of the vaccination programme continues. First dose appointments are being arranged daily for anyone in the initial priority groups who is yet to receive their vaccine and for those most recently eligible - people aged 45-49.

In addition, second dose appointments have been taking place, and thousands more are expected next week. The majority of the most vulnerable care home residents in Sussex and staff working to look after them have received their second doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, giving them maximum protection.

To date, more than 70% of those aged 75 and over have now received their second vaccination, and more than 300,000 second doses have been provided to people across our communities.

This week the first Moderna jabs have started to be offered at the Brighton Centre. In addition to first doses at the vaccination centre, for those aged 18-29 who are eligible for their vaccination, the Moderna vaccine provides another alternative to the AstraZeneca vaccine, in line with the latest updated MHRA guidance.

New small grants scheme

To help support the increase of the vaccination uptake, a new small grants scheme has opened with groups and organisations able to apply for up to £5,000 to assist with neighbourhood-based activity, across communities in Sussex. The aim is to help reach and increase the numbers of people who are particularly at risk of serious illness if they contract COVID-19 to get their vaccination.

[Find out more.](#)

World Immunisation Week

'Vaccines bring us together' is the theme of World Immunisation Week, which runs from 24 to 30 April.

World Immunisation Week, which is supported by international bodies like the World Health Organisation and UNICEF, aims to promote the use and global importance of vaccines, which now help to protect us against more than 20 diseases including polio and smallpox, as well as COVID-19.

Find out more on the [World Immunisation Week website](#).

If you are eligible and have not yet had your vaccine please book it and don't forget, please follow government guidance around 'hands, face, space and fresh air' once you've had your vaccination.

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Keeping others safe during the pandemic

People with learning disabilities in Horsham have created a COVID-19 booklet full of useful information and reminders which they hope might help keep others safe during the pandemic.

The group from Hobbs Field residential home created the guide to help them follow coronavirus guidelines when they are out in the community. It includes pictures and clear instructions that offer reminders about social distancing, wearing a mask and remembering to wash our hands.

James, who lives at Hobbs Field, said: "I loved making the booklet about the virus because I know it'll help keep me and my friends safe."



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Look after your mental health



If you are worried about your mental health you can find help by calling the [NHS Sussex Mental Health line](#), which continues to operate 24-hours a day during the pandemic.

You can call 0800 0309 500 to speak to someone who will be able to offer you support, advice and information.

It is available to anyone concerned about their own mental health or that of a relative or friend and this includes carers and healthcare professionals.

The [Preventing Suicide In Sussex](#) website also has a comprehensive list of national and local organisations and charities which offer mental health advice and support for those who are suffering themselves, or people who are worried about others.

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West Sussex Record Office has reopened to the public



West Sussex Record Office Searchroom has now re-opened for pre-booked appointments on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. There are two and a half hour slots available either in the morning (9.30am-12pm) or afternoon (2pm-4.30pm). You can find out more information on their [‘Visiting the Record Office’](#) page.

For those of you who can't make it to the Record Office, you can explore the archives virtually with series two of [West Sussex Unwrapped](#). You can catch up on series one [here](#).

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Put your best foot forward in May

Walking has been a lifeline during the past year, helping people stay active and to cope with stress.

The benefits of physical activity and getting out into nature are proven. Walking is good for our minds and our bodies. A daily brisk walk can boost energy, lift mood, and make everyday activities easier. There are lots of ways you can fit ten minutes of brisk walking into your life, whether you're walking to work, stepping out at lunchtime, walking to the shops or local park, or taking the dog for a walk. Why not download the free [Active 10 app](#) to track your walking progress?



Now, with the easing of Government restrictions, we can get together outside in groups of six, or two households, and West Sussex offers a beautiful and varied landscape with walks for everyone to enjoy, including the [South Downs National Park](#). The Easy Countryside Trails booklet, on the [West Sussex County Council website](#), features routes that are suitable for all, including wheelchair and pushchair users, families and the less mobile.

Contact your [local Wellbeing team](#) for the latest information about current walking programmes and for advice and support about generally becoming more active.

Visit the [NHS website](#) for more information about the health benefits of walking and the [Living Streets website](#) to find out more about National Walking Month.