

Dear Councillor,

We have continued to see a reduction in Covid-19 rates in the past week in South Cambridgeshire. The number of people infected remains high, but our rates remain below the East of England and England average

At the time of writing, the rate in South Cambridgeshire is 278 cases per 100,000 population, for the week ending 16th January, which is a 32% reduction on the previous week. Hospital admissions for Covid-19 remain above the numbers seen in the first wave and there is very significant pressure on our local NHS.

You can view the latest case rates for South Cambridgeshire on a daily basis using the Government data website. You can access the website here -

<https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/details/cases?areaType=ltla&areaName=South%20Cambridgeshire>

Vaccination is key to preventing the worse outcomes from Covid-19 and protecting vulnerable people. This week we saw more vaccination sites open across Cambridgeshire. You can see the latest list [here](#). People who have been vaccinated should continue to follow Covid-safety guidance including social distancing, and observe the lockdown rules.

This week we have also continued to move at pace with our plans for Community Rapid Testing Service using lateral flow tests across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, learning from a recent pilot in Peterborough. We are hoping to launch the county-wide service in early February. With around a third of people infected not showing any signs of the virus, it's important that we ramp up our testing of people who are symptom-free to break the chain of transmission. It's also important to understand that rapid tests will not identify all infectious cases, so people with a negative test must still observe social distancing and other Covid safety precautions.

We continue to share messages with our communities in as many different ways as possible so that the majority understand and follow the rules. In the past week we have continued to deliver our communications plan which reflects the current lockdown period, returning to the message 'stay home, save lives'.

Linked to this plan, this week we have:

- Issued an updated locally developed toolkit to our partners so that key messages from the comms plan can be shared – we are also using them across our own social media platforms. The toolkit continues to be developed, with updates including static and animated materials regarding Covid prevention, signposting to support during the lockdown and statistics.
- Published weekly stat slides for each area which shows the number of new cases, deaths and the case rate per 100,000 and whether this is going up or down. These are issued on a Friday.
- Published further video translations of the important lockdown messages on our social media.
- Continued to share national PHE messages on social media about the national lockdown and what this means for residents.
- Recorded case studies of people who have had Covid and can give personal accounts of what it is like and the lasting effects for a campaign due to launch next week. We are still looking for more personal experiences, particularly from different communities across Cambridgeshire. So if you have any contacts please let us know.
- Continued to share messages around mental health and domestic violence.

- Booked advertising with Cambs News to support messages around get a test and self-isolate, as well as messages around the vaccine roll-out. This will include in-paper advertorials and online messages.
- Worked with East Cambridgeshire District Council, providing support to develop a training video for taxi drivers, voluntary car schemes and car sharing on how to be Covid safe.
- Planned for the launch of a video with key messages aimed at the 15 to 19 age group, jointly produced with Cambridge City Council, Altered Ego and the Cambridge Youth Forum. Initially on social media and then for secondary schools and sixth form colleges.
- Issued a press release to media about CCC Chairman, Councillor Mac McGuire, receiving his vaccination plus an update on the vaccination programme. Also issued a video blog from Cllr McGuire to reinforce the message about the need for people to have theirs when they are offered it.
- Issued an update on grant funding awarded by the county council to local organisations in Cambridgeshire who are supporting specific mental health initiatives.

Public health staff continue to work closely with colleagues across the council, the NHS and Public Health England to prevent and manage outbreaks in care homes, workplaces, vulnerable population groups and other settings across South Cambridgeshire, and this workload remains very busy.

However, we know that our efforts to support people to follow the rules and with the vaccination programme progressing rapidly, there are brighter times to come.

As usual, we are sharing messages with the public about all of this and more. Please support us by sharing information with your family, friends and people in your ward. By doing so, you will be helping to reduce the spread of the virus.

We post information on our social media channels daily and there is a wealth of information that can be shared at www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Together we can reduce rates of Coronavirus in the county and ensure that our health service can cope with the demands being placed upon it.

Kind regards,

Dr Liz Robin
Director of Public Health – Cambridgeshire and Peterborough