



Briefing

RUTLAND COUNTY COUNCIL WEEKLY ROUNDUP

4 December 2020

Good afternoon,

We emerged from lockdown this week and Rutland has subsequently been placed in Tier 2 for England's local COVID restrictions. After a significant drop towards the end of lockdown, we've seen some fluctuation in our confirmed case numbers this week and now await a government review of the Tier system on 16 December, which may see some areas change ranking.

Regardless of the outcome of this review, it's important that we all continue to follow the very latest guidance for our area, details of which can be found further on in this briefing.

This week has also seen a change to colder, wintry weather, which brings extra demands and complexity – not just for the Council but also for residents. In the midst of an ongoing pandemic, it's easy to forget that winter can be a serious health risk for older residents, people with pre-existing health conditions and those on a low income who may be forced to choose between heating and other necessities as the temperature drops.

The Council is on hand to provide help and support to anyone who is struggling this winter, including through the Winter Grants Scheme, which has been launched in response to COVID-19.

Each of us can also play a role in helping others this winter. Although there are restrictions in place and guidelines to follow, COVID shouldn't stop us playing an active role in our communities and checking on vulnerable people to make sure they're safe and well.

Regards,
Mark

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1. COVID-19

a. Latest situation

As of 4.00pm on Thursday 3 December, 1,674,134 people have tested positive for coronavirus in the UK.

As of 4.00pm on Thursday 3 December, of those tested positive for coronavirus in the UK, 60,113 people have died across all settings within 28 days of a positive test.

These figures will also be published on the daily dashboard: coronavirus.data.gov.uk.

In Rutland, 29 people have tested positive for COVID-19 in the latest week (24 to 30 Nov). This equates to 73 cases per 100,000 people. The average area in England had 129.

A total of 29 coronavirus-related deaths have been registered in Rutland up to 20 Nov.

b. Tier 2 (High Alert) restrictions

As of Wednesday 2 December, Rutland has been placed into Tier 2 of the government's local COVID-19 restrictions. This means Rutland is currently considered a 'High Risk' area.

Full details of the guidance and rules that apply to people living and working in Tier 2 areas can be found on the government's website: www.gov.uk/guidance/tier-2-high-alert. It is extremely important that we continue to follow the rules for our area.

A reminder that 'Hands, Face, Space' guidance continues to apply throughout the UK following lockdown. In addition to washing hands regularly and wearing a face covering in enclosed spaces, guidance requires us all to stay 2 metres apart from anyone we don't live with, or 1 metre with extra precautions in place.

c. COVID-19 vaccination centres

In anticipation of successful trials and final approval of a COVID-19 vaccine, the government has been looking for suitable sites throughout the country to support vaccination efforts.

The government is expected to confirm which sites and locations have been selected to serve as vaccination centres very soon. In the meantime, we are continuing to work extremely closely with local NHS services to protect Rutland residents and communities from the virus.

d. Mobile Testing Unit (MTU)

A NHS Mobile Testing Unit (MTU) is returning to the Rutland Showground, just off the A606 (Burley Park Way), as part of ongoing efforts to combat coronavirus in the local area.

The site will be in operation from Monday 7 to Thursday 10 December, between 10.00am and 4.00pm, and will return again later in December.

Anyone with coronavirus symptoms can get a test for free but must first book a visit to a test site. You cannot attend the site without booking in advance.

Coronavirus symptoms are:

- A high temperature
- A new, continuous cough
- A loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

Further information about how to book a free COVID-19 test can be found online at: www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test or calling: 119.

e. Winter Grants Scheme

The Covid-19 winter grant scheme has been set up to support households that are struggling financially over the winter during the pandemic.

This is a national scheme to give financial support to households struggling to make ends meet over the winter during the pandemic. It is designed to help with the cost of food, energy (including heating, cooking, lighting), water bills (including sewage) and other essentials.

The application process is now live in Rutland and can be found here:

www.rutland.gov.uk/wintergrants

f. Guidance on under-65s joining bubbles

Guidance has been released on planning for care home residents joining family bubbles during the festive period. Given that spending time with others outside the care home will increase risk of exposure to coronavirus for the resident and the other residents in their home on their return, visits out of care homes should only be considered for care home residents of working age (i.e. under 65 years old).

Some residents of working age may be able to leave their care home to form a bubble, in agreement with the home and subject to individual risk assessments. A care home resident may form a bubble with one other household, and should not form a three-household Christmas bubble at any point.

If a care home resident does join a household for Christmas they should maintain social distance, wash hands regularly, and let plenty of fresh air into rooms by opening windows and doors.

Others in the household should take steps to minimise the risk to the care home resident and others in the care home, recognising that introducing coronavirus to a care home puts all those who live and work there at risk. All members of the bubble should:

- Minimise their potential exposure to coronavirus by limiting the number of people they meet for two weeks prior to allowing a care home resident into their household
- Talk to the care home about getting tested prior to meeting the care home resident outside the care home. In order to safely return to the care home, the resident will need to be tested and isolated.

Further guidance is available online at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/arrangements-for-visiting-out-of-the-care-home/visits-out-of-care-homes

g. COVID-19 Support Officers (CSOs)

A new team of COVID Support Officers has now been introduced in Rutland to offer help and assistance to shoppers and businesses.

COVID Support Officers (CSOs) were deployed for the first time in Oakham this week, following consultation with Oakham and Uppingham Town Councils. Uppingham Town Council is continuing to review whether the CSOs are also needed in Uppingham.

The CSOs will be active during the daytime and in the evenings, to support both the daytime and night time economies. They will support businesses and visitors to the town on a wide range of COVID-19 matters, including:

- Acting as an information point, signposting members of the public to government guidance
- Offering advice and promoting awareness of public health measures, such as wearing face coverings in enclosed spaces and meeting safely
- Observing areas for potential breaches of any government measures that are in place
- Checking the visibility of COVID-19 messages and signs
- Offering support to businesses that may be struggling to understand the latest guidelines

The officers will not have an enforcement role or issue any form of fixed penalty notices.

h. Update on Oakham Library

Oakham Library has reopened this week, following the end of the second national COVID-19 lockdown.

All Rutland libraries were closed after the government announced that tighter COVID-19 restrictions would come into effect throughout England from Thursday 5 November to Wednesday 2 December.

Oakham Library has returned to its pre-lockdown operating hours, opening on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9.30am to 2.00pm and Saturday from 9.30am to 1.00pm.

Branch libraries in Uppingham, Ketton and Ryhall, as well as Rutland County Museum and Oakham Castle, will all remain closed, subject to further changes to the government's COVID restrictions in England.

Staff who normally run these services have been redeployed to support the Council's wider pandemic response.

Oakham Library is offering collections of pre-ordered books and DVDs, as well as a limited number of bookable slots for computer use. Rutland Library Service also offers a home delivery service for registered library users who cannot travel to the library.

More information about these services can be found online by visiting: www.rutland.gov.uk/libraries, calling Oakham Library on: 01572 722 918, or emailing: libraries@rutland.gov.uk.

2. WIDER COUNCIL OPERATIONS

a. Avian Influenza biosecurity measures

Due to the risk of avian influenza, new housing measures to protect poultry and captive birds will come into force on 14 December in England, Scotland and Wales.

From 14 December, it will be a legal requirement for all bird keepers to keep their birds indoors and to follow strict biosecurity measures.

Further details can be found on the GOV.UK website, which is being updated regularly: www.gov.uk/government/news/avian-influenza-bird-flu-national-prevention-zone-declared.

b. Christmas free parking offer

A reminder that Rutland County Council has introduced two hours free parking in council-run public car parks, to support local shops and businesses in the run-up to Christmas.

The two-hour window for free parking applies to council-run public car parks in Uppingham and Oakham that normally offer pay-and-display parking.

The offer is due to cease after Thursday 31 December. All on-street parking restrictions and resident parking permit schemes remain unchanged.

c. Action Fraud: Christmas scams warning

Action Fraud is reminding consumers to be vigilant and look out for online scams linked to Christmas and the festive period.

A list of 12 common scams to be aware of accompanies this briefing. They include refund scams, look-a-like websites, phishing emails, gift card scams and fake charities.

If you suspect fraud or have been the victim of a scam, report it to Action Fraud online at: www.actionfraud.police.uk.

Businesses, charities or organisations that suffer a live cyber-attack can call Action Fraud on: 0300 123 2040

To find out more advice and guidance on cyber security, visit the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) at: www.ncsc.gov.uk.

d. Winter weather

Winter weather isn't just disruptive, it's also a health risk. Some people are more vulnerable to the effects of cold weather. This includes:

- People aged 65 and older
- People on a low income (so cannot afford heating)
- People who have a long-term health condition
- People with a disability
- Pregnant women
- People who have a mental health condition

Every year, we encourage people to check on older neighbours and relatives, and those who may be vulnerable to the cold, to make sure they:

- Are safe and well
- Are warm enough, especially at night
- Have stocks of food and medicines so they do not need to go out during very cold weather

Anyone who is worried about a relative or elderly neighbour can report their concerns by [contacting our Adult Social Care Team](#) or by calling the national Age UK helpline on 0800 678 1602 (8am to 7pm every day).

e. Local Energy Advice Partnership (LEAP)

The Local Energy Advice Partnership (LEAP) is a free energy and money saving service for anyone who has a long term illness or disability, as well as households on a low income.

The LEAP service is provided by Rutland County Council and can check energy tariffs to make sure you are getting the cheapest possible deal, which could lead to savings of more than £280 a year.

In addition, the services offers free, simple energy saving measures and useful tips that can help cut household energy bills even further. It can also help with benefits, debt and other money problems via a free telephone advice service, and refer service users for further energy efficiency improvements, such as loft insulation or a new boiler.

More information about this free service for Rutland residents can be found online at: applyforleap.org.uk. You can also call LEAP for free on 0800 060 7567 to book an appointment.

f. RALSS performance

Rutland Adult Learning and Skills Service (RALSS) has just completed a full day's audit of provision as part of the Matrix Approval process. This is a national standard / award relating to processes and systems with emphasis on Information Advice and Guidance.

We are pleased to report that the service continues to meet and exceed the quality standards and has maintained the Quality kitemark for Information Advice and Guidance.

The auditor looked at all aspects of our provision, met with staff, learners and partners and listed the following strengths:

- Clarity of leadership and professional integrity
- Strong and effective teamwork both internally and with partners
- Effective recruitment and engagement processes
- Influencing strategic ambitions of the authority and sub-region
- Valued by all learners who gave high praise for the service they received
- Positive developments in the use of the website and social media
- Strong connectivity across all aspects of the provision
- Clear and effective use of IAG

Area for development:

- Ongoing development of blended learning strategy post-Covid to build upon strengths gained during the pandemic.

Actions arising: None

This is the fourth year running that RALSS has received no actions and is a testament to the strength of the staff team and processes at the service.

g. Virtual launch of new CAMHS facility

Monday 23 November saw the virtual launch of Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust's (LPT) new Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) inpatient facility.

LPT have share a virtual tour film of the new facility on its website:

www.leicspart.nhs.uk/CAMHSinpatient.

Situated on the Glenfield Hospital site in Leicester, the purpose-built unit will provide care for young people with acute mental health needs. It has 15 inpatient beds - an increase on our current 10 bed provision - and will enable LPT to support young people who require hospitalisation for eating disorders in the future. As you will see from the film, there are dedicated sensory and treatment rooms, lounge areas, and individual bedrooms, as well as facilities for the hospital school.

LPT are looking forward to holding an official opening event which will be scheduled in the New Year - further details to follow.

h. NHS 111

This week, NHS England and NHS Improvement launched the next phase of the latest 'Help Us, Help You' campaign which focuses on the NHS 111 service as a new way to access A&E/Emergency Departments.

The aim of this campaign will be to direct people to use NHS 111 first when they have an urgent but not life-threatening medical need, rather than going straight to A&E. If the patient needs urgent care, NHS 111 can now book them in to be seen quickly and safely in A&E/Emergency Departments.

Further information about NHS 111 can be found here: www.england.nhs.uk/urgent-emergency-care/nhs-111

3. GOVERNANCE AND DECISION MAKING

a. Look ahead

The following Council meetings are due to take place next week (w/c Monday 7 December):

- [Schools' Forum - Thursday 10 December at 4.00pm](#)

The latest version of the RCC Forward Plan [can be viewed online, here](#).

4. STAFF NEWS

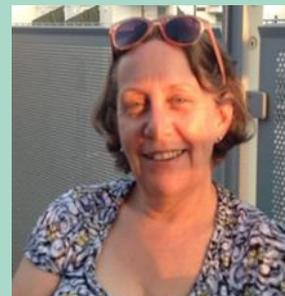
a. Introducing one of our Occupational Therapists (OTs), Linda Goddard

I love being an Occupational Therapist because every day is different and every person I work with has different needs.

I see myself as a people person, trying to understand what people want to do in their everyday lives, what is important to them and what motivates them and then working with them to achieve their goals. This person centred approach is key to occupational therapy core values.

I work in the community visiting people and their families at home. They may have both physical and mental health needs and we look at ways to maximise people's independence at home and reduce any risks, very often due to falls. My work involves liaising closely with other colleagues in the community or in hospitals e.g. social workers, Physiotherapists, community nurses and home care agencies.

My aim as an OT is to enable people to remain in their own homes, if that is what they want to do. We are also involved in supporting discharges from hospital.



During the pandemic, we have faced the challenges of trying to assess people at home using technology as well as home visits, but this is something else that OT's have to do, to be innovative at times of great challenges. My personal motto: problems are there to be solved in order to reach the best possible outcome.

b. Starters

The following staff have joined RCC this week:

- Emma Tomblin, Casual School Transport Passenger Assistant
- Emma Foley, Assistant Care Manager, Prevention & Safeguarding

c. Leavers

We have said goodbye to the following colleagues in the past week:

- Maria CondieSystem, Support Officer

5. RCC IN THE NEWS

a. Press releases issued this week

- [COVID Support Officers to offer assistance to shoppers](#)
- [Mobile COVID-19 testing unit returning to Rutland](#)
- [Oakham Library reopens following lockdown](#)

b. Other media coverage

- [Tier 3 residents told not to travel to Rutland unless absolutely necessary](#)
- [Residents urged to aim for Tier 1](#)

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