

# Covid-19 Update

Coronavirus Emergency Committee

8 January 2021

# UK Covid-19 Position

- Cases have seen a significant increase throughout England as a whole in the last few weeks. Cases in the South & East of England, including Hertfordshire, have continued to rise to unprecedented levels.
- In England the number of patients in hospital has exceeded 30,000 and has increased by a third since Boxing Day
- The 7 day rolling daily average hospital admission rate for Covid-19 patients is increasing - 2,569 on 29 December compared to 2,145 on 23 December.
- 7 day rolling daily average Coronavirus-related deaths figure was 551 on 30 December, up from 544 on 23 December.
- The latest UK & England 'R' rate (23 Dec) has significantly increased and is now between 1.1-1.3. The East of England 'R' rate is slightly higher at 1.2-1.5.

*Cases, Deaths & Admissions update daily (4pm) <https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk>*

*R rate updates every Friday afternoon [www.gov.uk/guidance/the-r-number-in-the-uk](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-r-number-in-the-uk)*

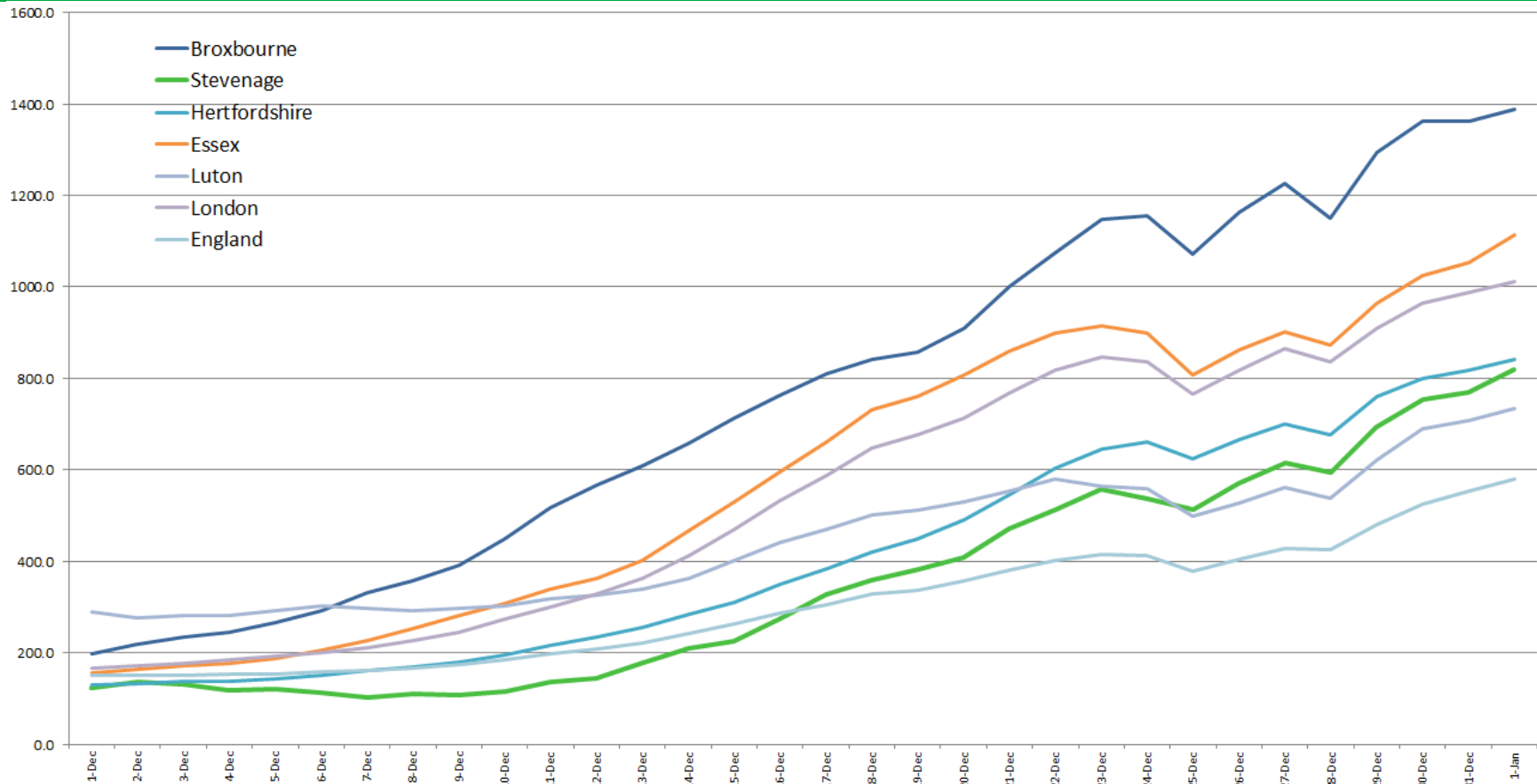
# Local & National Epidemiology

*provisional	Broxbourne	Hertsmere	Watford	Three River	Stevenage	Welwyn H	St Albans	East Herts	Dacorum	North Herts	Hertfordshire	England	Central Beds	Luton	Bedford	London	Essex
week change	307	140	208	163	270	378	319	311	290	195	2,581	113,194	488	505	409	22,102	4,574
26/12 - 01/01 Rate & Cases	1,387.8 1,350	1,036.0 1,087	1,008.5 974	968.7 904	819.6 720	796.5 980	757.1 1,124	749.9 1,123	699.1 1,082	486.6 650	946.4 9,994	579.8 326,333	637.1 1,839	734.6 1,565	848.3 1,470	1,012.1 90,707	1,113.2 16,577
week change	224	316	275	269	135	228	251	292	295	118	2,403	28,962	181	-6	343	10,549	1,121
19/12 - 25/12 Rate & Cases	1,072.2 1,043	902.6 947	793.1 766	794.0 741	512.3 450	489.3 602	542.3 805	542.2 812	511.8 792	340.6 455	702.0 7,413	378.7 213,139	468.0 1,351	497.5 1,060	612.3 1,061	765.5 68,605	806.0 12,003
12/12 - 18/12 Rate & Cases	841.9 819	601.4 631	508.4 491	505.8 472	358.6 315	304.0 374	373.2 554	347.3 520	321.1 497	252.3 337	474.5 5,010	327.2 184,177	405.3 1,170	500.3 1,066	414.3 718	647.8 58,056	730.7 10,882
05/12 - 11/12 Rate & Cases	518.1 504	279.3 293	311.7 301	217.5 203	135.5 119	149.5 184	146.8 218	175.0 262	204.2 316	122.0 163	242.7 2,563	197.4 111,135	244.9 707	318.2 678	224.5 389	300.8 26,959	339.5 5,056
28/11 - 04/12 Rate & Cases	243.6 237	154.4 162	180.2 174	130.7 122	118.4 104	114.6 141	116.5 173	148.9 223	113.1 175	101.1 135	155.9 1,646	151.9 85,494	103.2 298	282.1 601	125.2 217	184.8 16,558	177.1 2,637
21/11 - 20/12 Rate & Cases	186.1 181	139.2 146	156.4 151	132.9 124	88.8 78	89.4 110	107.1 159	126.2 183	93.7 145	95.1 127	133.5 1,410	158.8 89,377	80.4 232	256.3 546	109.6 190	156.0 13,985	139.0 2,070
14/11 - 20/11 Rate & Cases	203.5 198	143.9 151	168.8 163	143.6 134	120.7 106	136.5 168	114.5 170	150.9 226	125.4 194	101.8 136	155.9 1,646	217.9 122,671	89.7 259	290.1 618	142.0 246	179.4 16,079	149.5 2,226
07/11 - 13/11 Rate & Cases	233.3 227	155.4 163	187.4 181	207.9 194	182.1 160	160.1 197	165.0 245	190.3 285	126.0 195	148.2 198	174.9 1,847	275.9 155,233	137.2 396	288.2 614	163.9 284	196.7 17,632	146.3 2,179
31/10 - 06/11 Rate & Cases	193.3 188	117.2 123	175.0 169	125.4 117	130.9 115	165.0 203	109.1 162	125.5 188	113.1 175	107.1 143	136.4 1,440	249.3 140,305	106.7 308	254.9 543	122.9 213	154.6 13,857	107.7 1,604

- Since the last CEC meeting, cases throughout Hertfordshire have significantly increased.
- Broxbourne continues to be the district in Hertfordshire with the highest case rate.
- The average rate in Hertfordshire is only just below at **1,000/100,000** only slightly behind that of Essex and London.

- Stevenage is now just behind the four highest case rate districts in Hertfordshire at just over **800/100,000**. North Hertfordshire is the only remaining district in Hertfordshire lower than **500/100,000**.
- Looking beyond this reporting week, this rose to as high as **850/100,000** on 3<sup>rd</sup> January.
- Cases appear to be continuing to trend upwards, even when factoring the most provisional data.

# Local & National Epidemiology



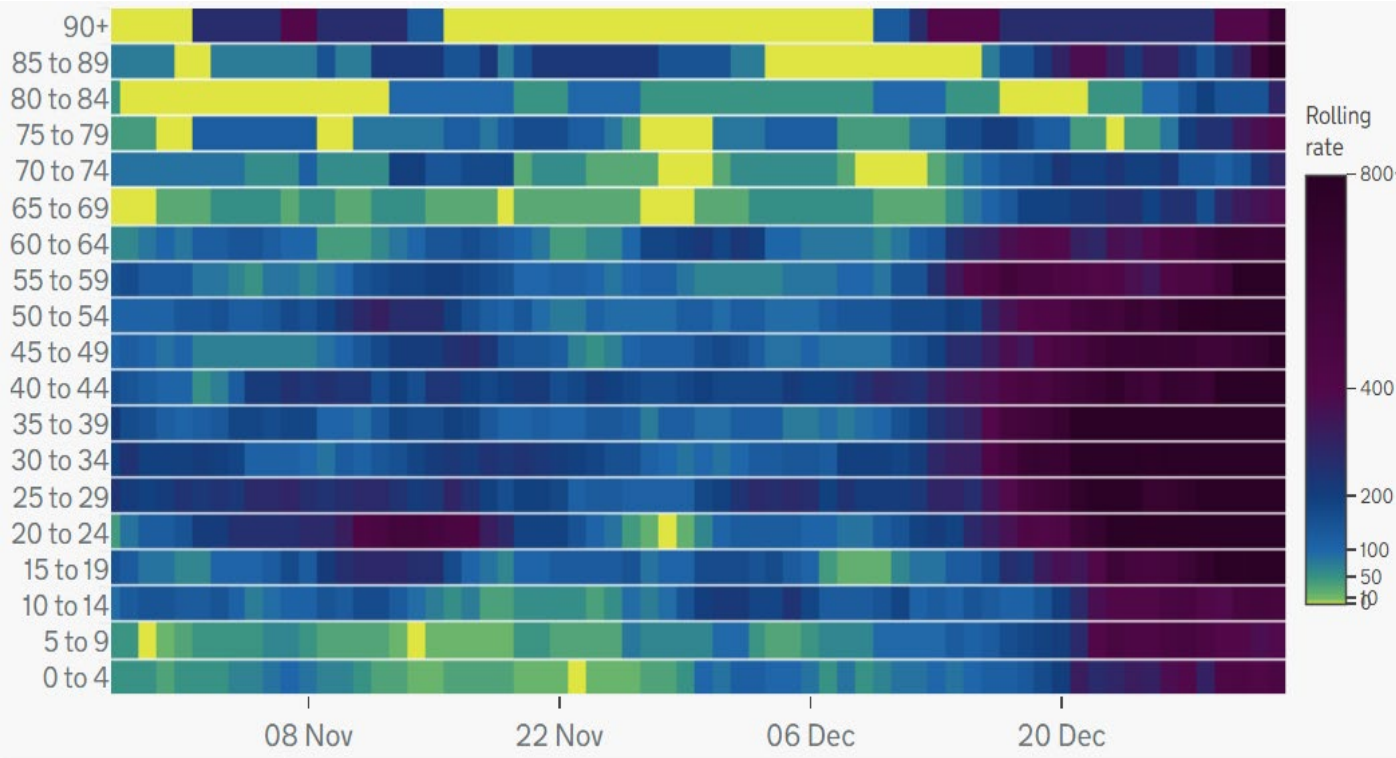
# Stevenage confirmed cases by MSOA

[https://hcc-phei.shinyapps.io/covid19\\_public\\_dashboard](https://hcc-phei.shinyapps.io/covid19_public_dashboard)

	Symonds Green	Bandley Hill	Shephall	St Nicholas	Woodfield + Old Town	Longmeadow	Bedwell	Pin Green + Old Town	Roebuck	Chells	Martins Wood	Manor	Stevenage
11/11 - 01/01 (6 weeks) Average Rate & Total Cases	497.9 150	464.7 155	457.3 175	452.8 173	437.8 269	433.2 127	427.4 170	404.7 178	387.1 134	384.4 131	372.2 118	364.4 112	430.8 1892
26/12 - 01/01 Rate & Cases	1,394 84	659.6 44	878.0 56	968.3 74	756.8 93	784.6 46	817.1 65	886.7 78	664.5 46	806.9 55	630.9 40	634.5 39	819.6 720
19/12 - 25/12 Rate & Cases	431.5 26	419.7 28	721.2 46	654.3 50	618.5 76	494.6 29	465.1 37	477.4 42	361.1 25	513.5 35	425.9 27	471.8 29	512.3 450
12/12 - 18/12 Rate & Cases	249.0 15	509.7 34	674.2 43	274.8 21	398.8 49	409.3 24	226.3 18	284.2 25	274.4 19	264.1 18	457.4 29	325.4 20	358.6 315
05/12 - 11/12 Rate & Cases	83.0 5	194.9 13	188.1 12	117.8 9	170.9 21	153.5 9	163.4 13	102.3 9	187.8 13	58.7 4	63.1 4	113.9 7	135.5 119
28/11 - 04/12 Rate & Cases	99.6 6	179.9 12	156.8 10	91.6 7	138.3 17	153.5 9	113.1 9	56.8 5	173.3 12	44.0 3	63.1 4	162.7 10	118.4 104
21/11 - 27/11 Rate & Cases	116.2 7	134.9 9	78.4 5	91.6 7	32.6 4	68.2 4	125.7 10	68.2 6	158.9 11	102.7 7	78.9 5	48.8 3	88.8 78
11/11 - 17/11 Rate & Cases	116.2 7	224.9 15	47.0 3	65.4 5	73.2 9	102.3 6	226.3 18	147.8 13	115.6 8	132.0 9	142.0 9	65.1 4	120.7 106

- Cases have significantly increased in all wards with Symonds Green having a particularly high spike in confirmed cases last week and Shephall over the last 3 weeks.
- The last 6 weeks has seen a relatively even spread across the town with the average rate ranging from just below **400/100,000** in Manor, Martins Wood & Chells, to just under **500/100,000** in Symonds Green.
- It is clear that as with the rest of Hertfordshire the significant increase we are seeing in cases, is occurring in all areas in Stevenage.

# Stevenage confirmed cases by Age



- This heat graph from the PHE daily data update shows rate by 5 year age group from the start of Nov to 1 Jan in Stevenage.
- It is clear that throughout December rates in all age groups have risen significantly.
- The darkest areas tend to be from 20 to 59 with all groups exceeding a case rate of **850/100,000** and peaking in the 35-39 group at **1392.3/100,000** as of 1 Jan.

- Of particular concern are the rates among 90+, 85-89 and 75-79 which have seen a sharp increase to almost **850/100,000**.

# Hertfordshire Covid-19 Related Deaths

Week	Hertsmere	Watford	Three Rivers	St Albans	Broxbourne	Dacorum	Welwyn Hatfield	North Hertfordshire	Stevenage	East Hertfordshire	Total
Total last 14 weeks	<b>34</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>285</b>
19/12 - 25/12	5	2	6	10	3	6	4	5	<b>3</b>	4	<b>48</b>
12/12 - 18/12	3	3	4	3	2	7	2	2	<b>3</b>	2	<b>31</b>
05/12 - 11/12	1	2	5	5	3	3	0	2	<b>4</b>	1	<b>26</b>
28/11 - 04/12	2	2	2	6	6	5	0	3	<b>2</b>	6	<b>34</b>
21/11 - 27/11	3	1	5	6	1	1	5	2	<b>1</b>	6	<b>31</b>
14/11 - 20/11	3	3	7	7	1	4	1	1	<b>1</b>	3	<b>31</b>
07/11 - 13/11	4	2	1	3	5	1	0	1	<b>0</b>	0	<b>17</b>
31/10 - 6/11	3	2	0	0	2	2	0	1	<b>1</b>	1	<b>12</b>
24/10 - 30/10	2	0	1	1	0	2	0	1	<b>1</b>	0	<b>8</b>
17/10 - 23/10	3	5	1	1	1	3	0	1	<b>0</b>	0	<b>15</b>
10/10 - 16/10	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	0	<b>0</b>	0	<b>9</b>
03/10 - 09/10	1	1	2	1	2	3	0	0	<b>0</b>	1	<b>11</b>
Rate per 100,000	<b>206.8</b>	<b>158.4</b>	<b>133.9</b>	<b>125.3</b>	<b>107.9</b>	<b>107.3</b>	<b>102.4</b>	<b>87.6</b>	<b>86.5</b>	<b>84.1</b>	<b>108.5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>1,291</b>

- There has been a >50% increase in Covid-19 related deaths in Hertfordshire
- This includes 3 Stevenage residents, bringing the total for the town to 76 and a rate per 100,000 of 86.5, now the second lowest in the county.
- Stevenage has now had 16 cases since the start of October, which is the second lowest figure in the county.
- The positive impact of the vaccination programme and national restrictions on mortality is unlikely to be seen until February 2021 at the earliest

# New Lockdown restrictions

- UK Coronavirus alert level raised from 4 to 5 for the first time. This means there is a “material risk of healthcare services being overwhelmed”
- Stay at home message, except for:
  - work if you cannot work from home
  - shopping for necessities such as food and medicine
  - exercise – this can include with one other person outside of you household or support bubble. Ideally keep exercise to once a day or local.
  - Providing care or help to a vulnerable person
  - Attending medical appointments, seeking medical care or fleeing the threat of harm or domestic abuse
- All schools to close except for key worker and vulnerable children
- University students should not return to campus
- Nurseries and early years settings can remain open
- Parents can still form a childcare bubble with one other household for essential childcare
- Those who are CEV should shield again and should receive a MHCLG letter



# New Lockdown restrictions

- Non essential retail and hospitality must remain closed
- Restaurants can continue delivery or takeaway but alcohol will no longer be permitted for takeaway or click and collect.
- Outdoor team sports are not permitted but professional sports can continue
- Outdoor sports venues, tennis courts and golf courses must close
- Places of worship can stay open
- Playgrounds can stay open but outdoor gym sites must close
- Household Waste Centres can remain open
- Moving home is allowed
- Visits to care homes can take place with arrangements such as substantial screens, visiting pods, or behind windows. Close-contact indoor visits are not allowed

# New Lockdown Restrictions

- Crematorium and burial grounds can remain open
- Funerals can be attended by a maximum of 30 people. Linked religious, belief-based or commemorative events, such as stone settings and ash scatterings can also continue with up to 6 people in attendance.
- Weddings to only be held under special circumstances
- Car parks and public toilets can remain open
- Elections still expected to go ahead in May 2021

# Hertfordshire Resilience update

## Op Hypnos

- Rising number of deaths are now Covid-related, but good mortuary capacity remains in the system.
- Mortuary staffing levels are being impacted due to Covid

## Communications

- Focus on lockdown and enforcement communications. Aiming to simplify messages – to focus on the need to stay at home

## Care Homes

- Increase in cases amongst residents and staff leading to staffing pressures. Vaccination programme is progressing

## School Testing

- All schools with secondary-age pupils and further education colleges, will receive an initial delivery of lateral flow device test kits to support asymptomatic testing from the start of the spring term

# East and North Herts Health Trust Update

- Declared OPEL 4 (Operational Pressure Escalation Level – declared when a hospital is “unable to deliver comprehensive care’)
- Symptomatic 111 call demand continues to rise along with case rate and percentage of positive cases
- Covid bed occupancy number and number of people on ventilation continues to increase.
- Increase in the number of deaths over last 6 weeks
- Meeting organised with District Council Chief Executives and Leaders and SCG Chair to talk about what assistance may be provided to NHS

# Covid 19 Vaccinations

- Over 1 million people have now received their first dose of vaccine
- Oxford/Astra Zeneca vaccine has been approved and is now being rolled out
- Vaccines will be prioritised as per the Government's vaccine prioritisation plan
- The Government has set a target of vaccinating all those in the first four categories by mid February (care home residents and their carers, frontline health and social care workers, the clinically extremely vulnerable, and over-70s)
- Seven mass vaccination centres to open next week, including the vaccination centre at Robertson House, Stevenage
- Pilot scheme involving local pharmacies has commenced this week
- The UK has ordered 30m doses of a single-shot vaccine developed by Johnson & Johnson, which uses similar technology to the Oxford jab

# Herts Covid-19 Vaccination Programme

- Vaccinations are now being carried out in hospitals in Hertfordshire and through some Primary Care Networks.
- Within Stevenage a couple of GP surgeries are being used as immunisation centres and vaccines will start to be administered to those over 80 years this week.
- A mass vaccination pod in Stevenage based at Robertson House was confirmed by the Government on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January
- Continuing to work with NHS (including Primary Care Trusts) Hertfordshire County Council and other Districts and Boroughs to roll out vaccine pods in response to the mass vaccination programme
- Over 40 SBC staff trained to support non-clinical roles to date

# Covid testing

- Primett Road South Car Park to be LTS
- Formal approval from DHSC Mobilisation Team 04/01/21
- Site survey by DHSC 07/01/21
- Pilot date proposed is 13/01/21 with full operation from 18/01/21



# Outbreak management

- Contact tracing cases showing an increase this week as new-variant cases feed through the test and trace system
- Notable increase in numbers of workplace related outbreaks
- Self-report arrangements for employers now live and being promoted





# Compliance and enforcement



- Enforcement No.3 Regulations extended by 6 months to 17 July 2021
- Covid marshalling continues in tandem with police Operation Sunrise
- SBC’s primary focus remains on essential retail
- Play areas, skate parks and other amenity areas will receive monitoring attention now that schools are closed

# Community Support

- Volunteering People and Assistance Cell
  - Increase in calls to Herts Helps since lockdown but manageable at present.
  - Working on getting volunteers into care providers to increase capacity.
  - Shielding support to remain in place until 21<sup>st</sup> February and MHCLG will be writing to all shielded persons
  - VPAC meeting twice weekly to review support arrangements, Herts Help capacity and additional support for vulnerable groups.
- Stevenage Helps continues to offer support locally as required.
- Ongoing support being offered to Community Associations
- The Government has announced £7.5 million in funding to tackle loneliness during winter
- National Leisure Recovery Fund bid to be submitted. Limited losses eligible. Deadline extended to 15 January 2021.

# Housing

- Outbreaks have occurred within 2 Independent Living Schemes but less than 10 cases each
- 166 households currently in Emergency, Temporary and B&B accommodation
- Housing Options case worker team operating around 50% capacity due to staff sickness and vacancies - impact on OOH service
- Major works programmes remain operational and contractors are following Covid safe rules
- Arrears currently total £1,032,000
- Urgent and essential visits only being undertaken
- Updated Government guidance for providers of supported living settings has been received and necessary actions are being planned

# Business support

## UK national data

- Aug to Oct 2020, UK unemployment rate for all people 4.9%
- 1.69m unemployed, 411,000 more than a year earlier & 241,000 more than the previous quarter
- UK Redundancies - June to Aug 227,000 – Aug to Oct a record high of 370,000
- Nov 2020 – 28.2m pay-rolled employees, decline of 781,000 over 12 month period, decrease 0.1% by previous month
- 547,000 vacancies Sep to Nov 2020, quarterly increase of 110,000 vacancies 31.5% less than a year ago

# Business Support

- **LRSG (addendum)** businesses mandated to close during 2<sup>nd</sup> lockdown (5 Nov to 1 Dec 20) – grants of £1334/£2000/£3000 per 28 days determined by RV - and closing date for applications is 31 Jan 2021
- **ARG** discretionary grant funding for businesses with or without business rates (1<sup>st</sup> tranche closed 3 Jan 2021, grants to be paid 11 Jan onwards)
- **LRSG open live soon** - funding targeted at **hospitality, hotel, bed & breakfast and leisure businesses** & sectors which demonstrate direct impact from the restrictions

# Business support - useful links

- Growth Hub's COVID-19 Business Resource Page <https://r1.dotdigital-pages.com/p/4OQI-9KW/hgh-covid19>
- Employment support for those facing Redundancy <https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/business-and-licensing/covid-19-support-for-businesses/redundancy-support>
- Details of grant funding, business support measures and regulatory easements include Business Rates and Vat holidays can be found <https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/business-and-licensing/covid-19-support-for-businesses/summary-of-covid-19-business-support-and-easement-measures>

# Continuity, wellbeing and resilience

## Oversight

Continued focus on resource levels for key services, implementing service changes, redeployment for key services, reviewing working practices, continuing to provide wellbeing support and prepare for changes related to childcare

## Status

The spread of the pandemic is presenting challenges to parts of the organisation, for example with increased absences in:

- waste and recycling (22%) and also limits on agency staff availability
- housing options and independent living services experiencing high demand and challenging circumstances
- predicting increased demand in environmental health contact tracing.

## Wellbeing and resilience

Support is available via the Employee Assistance Programme, a resilience, mental health and wellbeing support package, counselling and dedicated bereavement support

# Continuity, wellbeing and resilience

## Newly suspended services

In addition to the services that were suspended earlier in the year, the changes required by the national lockdown now also include:

- Golf centre
- Outdoor gyms

Given the escalation to Alert level 5 has also led to further service changes:

- Customer contact centre to provide face to face services for urgent cases only
- Housing repairs and housing services face to face contact to move to urgent and emergency only

## Capacity and prioritisation

The overall service provision position is reviewed daily, with priority redeployment in place and steps prepared should further non-essential services need to be suspended to support vital services



# Essential services update

Service area	Operational status
<b>Housing</b>	Operational, experiencing pressures in housing options based on both volume of demand and vacant posts, and Independent Living
<b>Customer Service Centre and OOH</b>	Operational with urgent only face to face services operational
<b>Communities and Neighbourhood</b>	Services operational with redeployments from key services to other frontline
<b>Environment services</b>	Operational and supporting waste and recycling front line via redeployment. May require temporarily pausing non-discretionary services
<b>ICT and Digital</b>	Operational
<b>Payroll and payments</b>	Operational with particular capacity challenges
<b>Planning, Housing Development, Regeneration</b>	Operational. Pressures on Environmental Health related to outbreak management and contact tracing
<b>Safeguarding, No More, ASB</b>	Operational with significant demand
<b>Repairs, caretaking</b>	Operational but essential repairs only
<b>Revs and Bens</b>	Operational and with significant demand related to additional grants payments

# Closed services

## Suspended services

- Community Transport
- Museum
- Events
- Play Services
- Visitor Centre
- Leisure and Theatre Services
- Golf Centre
- Indoor Market (essential only stalls open)
- Outdoor gyms
- Most forms of face to face customer contact

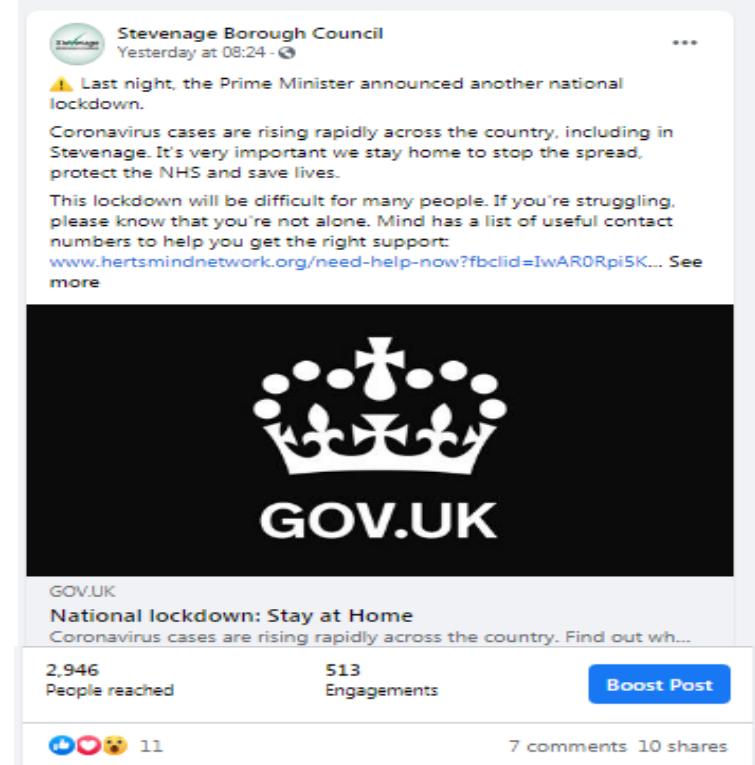
It is proposed that a 4 week temporary closure of play areas whilst infection rates remain high, in an effort to help to mitigate community transmission

# Finance update

- Projections for costs before Christmas lockdown was £6M- now likely to be higher
- Grant projected to end of 2020/21 = £3.8M
- Government grant received in the finance settlement. SBC has been allocated an additional £500K to cover additional homeless and election costs and £118K for the increased cost of council tax support.
- Waiting the allocation for tier 4 grants for businesses and the £9K new grant guidance and allocation

# Communications update

- #StaySafeStevenage Campaign ongoing - digital/online/print
- Focus on **Stay at Home / Lockdown** messages
- Moving away from use of Tiers
- Working with Stevenage FC, targeted campaign 'Don't Let It Slip' - football quiz
- Digital screens/boards: In progress following Director of Public Health support and approval
- Frequently Asked Questions updated and shared on the council's website




Stevenage Borough Council  
Yesterday at 08:24

⚠️ Last night, the Prime Minister announced another national lockdown.

Coronavirus cases are rising rapidly across the country, including in Stevenage. It's very important we stay home to stop the spread, protect the NHS and save lives.


This lockdown will be difficult for many people. If you're struggling, please know that you're not alone. Mind has a list of useful contact numbers to help you get the right support: [www.hertsmindnetwork.org/need-help-now?fbclid=IwAR0Rpi5K...](http://www.hertsmindnetwork.org/need-help-now?fbclid=IwAR0Rpi5K...) See more



GOV.UK  
**National lockdown: Stay at Home**  
Coronavirus cases are rising rapidly across the country. Find out wh...

2,946 People reached      513 Engagements      [Boost Post](#)

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News

[New lockdown statement from Councillor Sharon Taylor](#)

Statement from Councillor Sharon Taylor, Leader, Stevenage Borough Council