



COVID-19 Outbreak Control Communications Plan [DRAFT]

Introduction and overall aims

This Communications Strategy is designed to support the objectives of the Local COVID-19 Outbreak Control Plan for Southampton. It is arranged around three core themes:

- **Prevention** – proactive communications to help prevent the spread of infection of Covid-19 in Southampton and enable partners and settings to take actions they need to keep us all safe.
- **Managing Outbreaks** – reactive communications to ensure timely notification of local outbreaks and robust messaging that supports the containment and management of the outbreak, including compliance with advised public health measures.
- **Transparency, Clarity and Context** – to ensure the Outbreak Control Plan, and the process for decision making and governance, is communicated and that Southampton data is presented with consistency, clarity and context to key stakeholders and the public.

The plan will evolve over time with the Local Outbreak Plan and as our understanding of the virus increases and the local picture changes. Working with partners in the NHS, Police, community, voluntary and business sectors will be key to its success.

It is accompanied by the Comms Matrix which includes more detailed tactics and stakeholder mapping. This plan does not cover the wider recovery work taking place.

This plan should be read in conjunction with the COVID-19 Engagement Plan, which sets out how key stakeholders across the city will be engaged in supporting the OCP.

Where are we now

- At the outset of the pandemic, and beginning in earnest with the lockdown measures that came into force in March 2020, we quickly redeployed communications resource to work on the urgent response to this virus. Our activity has focused on four key areas:
 - Preventing the Spread of Infection
 - Public Confidence
 - Protecting Critical Services
 - Restore and Recover
- We have carried out extensive work to communicate about guidance and changes to services across the board, setting up new processes and channels that put us in a strong position to communicate with stakeholders going forward.
- From July 2020 communications will be informed by and refreshed in response to local insight from the Health Protection Board and the Outbreak Engagement Board, as well as intelligence and behavioural insights more broadly.
- This plan will seek to support the delivery of the Local Outbreak Plan, and in doing so define our approach to communications to prevent local outbreaks, manage them if they take place, maintain the support of residents to follow public health advice, and support those that need additional help to enable them to do so.



Stay connected

Coronavirus (COVID-19) update



Councillor Christopher Hammond, Leader of the Council, gave a short speech at council earlier today outlining our priorities for responding to the COVID-19 pandemic as a council and as a city.

You can [watch a summary video](#) and [read the speech in full on our website](#).

You will find below links to all the latest national guidance from the government and information on changes to local services.



Southampton City Council is sharing a COVID-19 Update.

Published by Southampton City Council · Yesterday at 12:06 PM

A second walk-through COVID-19 testing site is now open in Southampton at Woolsey Road Car Park, Woolston.

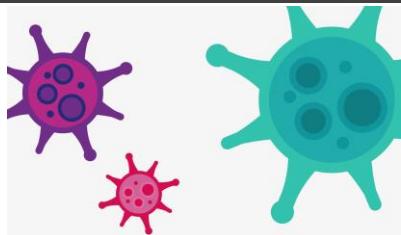
You must book ahead at nhs.uk/coronavirus or by calling 119. Both this site and the site already in operation at Marlborough Road in Shirley will not be accepting people that turn up without an appointment.

The site is being run by Mitie on behalf of the Department for Health and Social Care as part of the Government's UK-wide drive to increase testing for coronavirus... See More



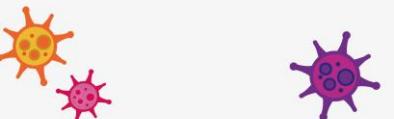
Get More Likes, Comments and Shares
When you boost this post, you'll show it to more people.

44,008 People Reached 7,941 Engagements [Boost Post](#)



Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Please read the latest advice and updates on our services at southampton.gov.uk/coronavirus



southampton.gov.uk/coronavirus



Coronavirus (COVID-19): Please read the latest advice and updates on our services

Home > Coronavirus

Southampton COVID19 Outbreak Control Plan

Foreword to the plan from Dr Debbie Chase – Director of Public Health

On current evidence, new coronavirus COVID-19 cases and deaths in Southampton are on the decline. This puts partners in the city in a stronger place to ease lockdown measures in line with national guidance and move into a 'new normal'. This is a safer position than we were in, but it is not without risk.

It is critically important that we all continue to take precautions to reduce our risk and that of our families and communities. Social distancing, regular handwashing and isolating if we are symptomatic or contacted by the NHS Test and Trace service are all vital. It is also important that the places where we live, go to school, work and enjoy time together are as 'COVID-secure' as possible.



southamptoncitycouncil • Following ...

southamptoncitycouncil Good morning from a sunny Watts Park, Southampton ☀️

Enjoy our parks and open spaces in this beautiful weather but make sure you keep your distance #StaySafe #StayApart #Southampton

5w

southampton.guide

5w Reply

Liked by lidwick10 and 49 others

AUGUST 11

Add a comment...

Post



Objectives

1. Raise awareness of the actions people can take to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in Southampton and amplify national NHS Test & Trace messaging on how and when to isolate and get tested
2. Ensure rapid response in the event of Local Outbreaks through robust reactive communication with public, settings and stakeholders on how they can support the containment of the outbreak through compliance with public health measures, and what to do if they need support to enable them to self-isolate.
3. Provide an accurate and up-to-date weekly picture of the prevalence of Covid-19 and the latest local guidance to key stakeholders, the media and residents.

Across these three objectives we will use:

- A. All available channels to ensure maximum reach but crucially tailor messaging and tactics to reach communities, settings and locations at high risk or that may be less engaged or aware of how to protect themselves and others.
- B. Public health surveillance, behavioural insights and engagement activities to both inform messaging and channels and identify gaps and barriers

Stakeholders and core audiences



All residents
Vulnerable Residents
BAME
'Digitally Excluded'

See Comms Matrix for full picture

*See Table 7 pg 35
Outbreak Control Plan

Audience insights

- Southampton has a population of approx 250,000 people. Visitors and commuters have reduced over normal levels but as lockdown measures continue to ease this is expected to increase significantly.
- ‘Shielded’ - there are 10,488 people on the Shielded list in Southampton. These are people of all ages – with specific medical conditions identified by the NHS – who are at greater risk of severe illness from coronavirus. Shielding restrictions have been relaxed with further relaxation from 1st August. We will need a distinct approach to formerly shielded people, specifically if we need them to re-shield as part of local control measures
- Under the NHS Test and Trace system a list of people identified as “vulnerable” will not be provided directly to local authorities daily, and so proactive communications in relation to support and services across the city will remain important.
- Intelligence from the City (saliva swab) Testing Pilot with the University of Southampton shows some significant barriers to adherence with test and trace guidance - workplaces not being able to afford high levels of absence and fearing positive results, individuals being reluctant to take tests for reasons including impact on life insurance and mortgage applications.
- Lack of trust among some demographics on official guidance on face coverings and other guidance can be a challenge. Feedback from our informal community discussion groups has suggested using trusted voices within communities and local experts are seen as more trustworthy than national figures

Audience insights continued

- According to Southampton Ward Profiles (2018), the city average of residents whose first language is not English is 11.85%. The concentrations of those whose first language is not English in specific wards:

Bevois	32.51%	Shirley	13.05%	Peartree	4.79%
Bargate	20.21%	Millbrook	9.11%	Redbridge	4.64%
Freemantle	19.05%	Bitterne Park	7.29%	Harefield	4.18%
Swaythling	18.39%	Coxford	6.36%	Bitterne	3.39%
Bassett	15.34%	Woolston	4.79%	Sholing	2.94%
Portswood	14.97%				

- This highlights a need for a tailored approach, potentially including translation and/or easy read versions of key information. While translations may be helpful in some instances, just as important is the framing of messages for certain communities and how they are delivered. Two way community engagement will be key to this.
- Through the Southampton Covid-19 Engagement plan we will engage with local populations, working with the NHS CCG, community partners, faith organisations and the voluntary sector to inform our communications work.
- Southampton has a large student population – communicating with them on how to reduce risk on their return in the Autumn will be key. Both the major universities in the city are represented on the Health Protection Board
- 'Digitally excluded' - The council has documented in its [Digital Strategy 2018-2022](#) the importance of reaching those excluded from digital communications channels. We must consider options to reach those who may not have immediate access to, or lack fluency using the Internet via smartphones, laptops and other digital devices.

Objective 1. Raise awareness of the actions people in Southampton can take to prevent the spread of Covid-19 and amplify NHS Test & Trace messaging

Actions

City-wide marketing campaign encouraging population to follow guidance to stay safe

Targeted communications to those identified as vulnerable and who were formerly on the shielded list with latest guidance and support available

Share national resources on Test & Trace through all council owned channels, persistently and consistently

Work through Future Communities group to ensure BAME communities are reached with targeted messages about preventing the spread of infection – including tailoring of resources and translations where required

Deliver regular updates to the business community and employers in the city on latest guidance and provide communications toolkit for business

Work with LRF Comms Group to develop comms toolkits on preventing the spread for workplaces and other settings

Establish regular communications with key settings such as schools, colleges and care homes advising on steps they need to take to prevent spread

Promote Covid Community Champions programme to recruit new champions and develop communications assets using champions and other trusted voices to reach and engage communities

Inform local population and stakeholders about operation of testing sites for Southampton residents

Objective 2. Ensure rapid response in the event of Local Outbreaks through robust reactive communication with public, settings and stakeholders on how they can support containment through compliance with public health measures, and what to do if they need support to enable them to self-isolate

Actions*

Prompt notification to local and regional media outlets as required about local outbreak and any lockdown measures and urgent guidance

Posts on social media, asking LRF partners to amplify reach where appropriate and using paid for posts to target specific impacted geographical areas

Targeted communications to those identified as vulnerable and who were formerly on the shielded list with latest guidance and support available:

Think need to break down vulnerable people/communities into:

1. Those that are clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable (shielding)
2. Those that are vulnerable for other reasons i.e. socio-economic.
3. Those that are vulnerable due to a combination of the above i.e. BAME

Updates to businesses via local business networks and council channels

Where an Outbreak Control Team has been convened, engagement with partners on the OCT including PHE and the setting/community where the outbreak has taken place

Engagement and coordination with local LRF partners to ensure consistent messaging.

*Actions will need to be flexible and change dependent on nature of the outbreak

Objective 3. Provide an accurate and up-to-date weekly picture of the prevalence of Covid-19 and the latest local guidance to key stakeholders, the media and residents

Tactics	By when	By who
Develop simple to understand dashboard for public release on current Covid-19 infection rates which can be updated regularly with latest figures	Weekly – to be reviewed on an ongoing basis	Comms, design, intelligence
Email to council members and Southampton MPs		Comms
Email to partners and business networks		Comms
Email to all Stay Connected subscribers		Comms
Post on SCC social media channels		Comms

Key messages

Key messages will be defined by intelligence contained within the H&IW Compendium, test and trace data, early warning indicators, vulnerability indices, and behavioural insights, and adapt to the local situation and changes in national guidance. The top level key messages to understand are:

What are the symptoms or coronavirus COVID-19?

- a high temperature/fever
- a new, continuous cough
- a change to, your sense of smell or taste

If you have any of these symptoms of COVID-19 it is very important that you stay at home and arrange to have a test. This can be done by phoning 119 or visiting the NHS website.

To protect yourself and your family

- Whenever possible keep 2 metres away from people you do not live with.
- Wash your hands well and more often than usual with soap and water or a hand sanitiser for at least 20 seconds.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with tissues or your clothes. Throw away your tissue after it's used and wash or use hand sanitizer gel to clean your hands.
- Wear face coverings on public transport in shops and other enclosed places where you are in contact with people you would not normally be.

Key messages

If you need help

- If you think you might have the virus, phone 111 for use NHS 11 online for advice. Do not try to visit your GP practice.
- If you, or someone with you, feel very ill with COVID-19 symptoms, or are having breathing difficulties, call 999 and tell them you have symptoms of the virus.
- If you need to get a test for COVID-19 visit the NHS website call 111 for advice
- If you can't get help from friends or family and you need emergency food parcels, you can contact:

Community Support Hub

Tel: 023 80 83 48 00

www.southampton.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid19/

They can also help with enquiries about paying the rent, council tax and water, electricity and gas bills.

You can also call the Community Support Hub if you need up to date advice on COVID-19 Testing.

- You can also contact your local Mutual Aid group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/southampton.covid19.support>

Tel: Hotline 07923 353 365

Channels

Stay connected – regular weekly bulletin to 40k+ subscribers to SCC database

Print letters/flyers – blanket or targeted approach possible

Social media – significant reach of SCC channels across Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube. Option also for paid for activity to boost reach and target specific demographics

Outdoor - can be targeted by area, both on council owned sites, ad sites and posters

Video – Leaders weekly video, video from other leaders within authority and animations as required

Press - Local, regional and national media contacts. Key relationships with Daily Echo, local BBC, commercial radio stations and community stations

Stakeholder email and letters - for MPs, members, partners and others

Website – online home of up-to-date local information on guidance and impact on services at southampton.gov.uk/coronavirus

Partner channels – communicate with partners so they are able to share through their own channels