

Today's update contains information about the developments with the vaccination programme nationally, and our actions locally to get the vaccine out to as many eligible people as possible, plus information about the pausing of shielding, and the fortnightly economic briefing note.

Latest Position - Overall infection rate is 109.9 cases per 100,000, so still quite stable, still partly driven by cases in two prisons and working age adults. The outbreaks in the prisons are being well managed and figures now coming down, but cases are now rising in senior school age children and young people as expected with the full return to education. Test positivity is stable at 4.9%

- The over 60s rate is 42.2 per 100,000, which is down again on last week and which is really positive because this reduced rate is also leading to fewer hospital admissions and reduced Covid cases in critical care.

- The number of Covid patients in hospital is down to 44, a much improving picture.

- 1,568 Covid-related deaths have been registered up to 18 March. Of these, 1,522 (97%) were Leeds residents, 1,035 (66%) were in hospitals, 400 (26%) were in care homes, 49 (3%) in a hospice, and 84 (5%) in their own home. To date, 20% of all deaths registered have been Covid-related.

- Only three care homes have cases, with only one Covid-positive care home resident in the city, which is very encouraging.

- Education settings are reporting more cases, with more than 80 settings reporting cases, about 60 "bubbles" have collapsed and about 3000 children and young people are self-isolating.

- Workplace outbreaks continue, with 13 workplaces are reporting a total of 97 active cases, and support being provided by Environmental Health as required.

- Two outbreaks at HMP sites are continuing to be managed and supported.

National Vaccine Developments Here is a summary of the information contained within the NHS letter on **vaccine supply** that I shared with you on Wednesday, which is due to a delay in shipments from India and the need to retest a batch in the UK. There has been an assurance that this will not impact on second doses or the timeframe of offering the first jab to all adults by the end of July, or on the national roadmap.

- From 29 March, there will be a "significant reduction" in weekly vaccine supply from manufacturers. This is expected to last for four weeks.

- As a result, the NHS have asked local systems to focus on maximising uptake in JCVI priority cohorts 1-9 and delivering second doses. Except in exceptional circumstances, people aged 49 years or younger should not be offered vaccination unless they are eligible via a higher cohort (e.g. because they are clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable, an unpaid carer or frontline health and care worker).

- Vaccination sites have been told to close unfilled bookings from w/c 29 March and ensure no further appointments are uploaded to the national booking system for the period of 1-30 April.

- There is likely to be a reduced workforce demand so systems are asked to plan to deploy staff to alternative settings to help to maximise uptake in cohorts 1-9, for example, stewarding and non-clinical roles to support drive-through/community/pop-up vaccination sites, and delivering vaccine confidence conversations for populations with low uptake.

The [MHRA has confirmed](#) that the available evidence indicates that **blood clots are not caused by the Astra Zeneca vaccine**, and their advice remains that the public should continue to receive the jab. The European Medicines Agency and WHO have confirmed the same advice. Leeds CCG have issued a [statement](#) on their website and addressed concerns about blood clots in their [vaccine FAQs](#).

Vaccination Key Message for Residents In light of the above our focus is on getting as many Leeds residents in JCVI cohorts 1-9 vaccinated as possible. People who are [eligible](#) **don't need to wait for a letter or to be contacted by their GP**- you can **book now** via the [national booking system](#) or by calling 119. The booking system will tell you whether you're eligible or not. It's very straight forward to use and gives you lots of options for venues and times.

You may be eligible for the vaccine immediately if you fall into **one** of these groups:

- you are aged 50 or over

- you are at high risk from coronavirus ([clinically extremely vulnerable](#))
- you are an eligible frontline health or social care worker
- you have a condition that puts you at higher risk (clinically vulnerable)
- you have a learning disability
- you are a main carer for someone at high risk from coronavirus

If you are unsure of your NHS number go [here](#). Lots of information about Covid vaccines is available on the [Leeds CCG website](#).

Local Vaccine Developments

- The second week of **vaccinations at Bilal Centre** has gone very well, with 277 jabs given on Wednesday. Staff at the centre are influencing family take-up through conversations with people coming in, and word of mouth in the area appears to be working. Feedback from local residents has been that the centre is easy to get to and people appreciate being able to bring their family. Lots of work is being planned to keep up the momentum and make sure people are able to come back for second doses easily.
- On Thursday 25 March (6-7pm), LTHT are hosting a Facebook Live session on **Covid vaccines during Ramadan**. Details shared on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). The [British Islamic Medical Association](#). Our **Covid Vaccine Inequalities Plan** on a Page (led by PH colleagues working across a wide range of partners) is attached for you. The plan sets out three main programmes of: developing bespoke health inequality plans with 8 primary care networks in the most deprived areas; improving equitable access to vaccination through roving and pop-up vaccine models; and community engagement activity to enable a lot of peer to peer conversations to build confidence.
- The NHS in Leeds would like to hear from people about their experience of having the Covid-19 vaccine. The feedback will be shared with vaccination teams to inform others about what to expect when going for their vaccination, and to help improve the vaccination experience for everyone in Leeds. The survey is available [here](#).

Other Local Developments

- The latest **Economic Briefing Note** is attached, which covers a range of national and local data and as always provides comprehensive information.
- This week's [coronavirus gov.delivery bulletin](#) for residents has information about asymptomatic testing for those who can't work from home, who is eligible for a vaccine and how to book, business grants, and an invitation to join the National Day of Reflection on 23 March.
- Since the start of the pandemic, **Environmental Health** have served 23 x £1000 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs), 2 x £2000 FPNs, 1 x £4000 FPN, 28 x Prohibition Notices, 1 X Coronavirus Immediate Restriction Notice and 5 x Direction Orders. Four prosecutions are being pursued.
- Leeds is to receive **£45.8m** from the Government's [£3.3bn public health grant](#) for councils to improve the health of the population and reduce health inequalities in 2021-22.
- The council has secured **£25.3m** from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme to [decarbonise 38 publicly owned buildings](#) including civic buildings, leisure centres, primary schools, homes and offices. A range of low carbon heat and energy upgrades carried out by the council and partners will cut the city's carbon emissions by nearly 4000 tonnes.
- Two positive pieces of news for the city this week as the DfT announce a [new northern hub](#) to be created in Leeds and the BBC share plans to [relocate a number of its national journalism roles](#) from London to Leeds.
- A reminder that the [Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy](#) consultation is open until 11 April.
- This Sunday is **Census Day**- [Leeds residents are encouraged](#) to take ten minutes to complete the survey and help us improve our services and infrastructure for the city.
- Coinciding with the end of the Brexit transition period, we have launched the **Global Leeds** campaign to promote Leeds as an international, open and welcoming city and support a number of objectives around soft power, investment and economic development. This will include a national and international media campaign to highlight Leeds' international connections and position the city as being well placed to support and attract businesses linked to key sectors such as digital and financial services post-Brexit. A social media campaign will run through March, April and May

with key messages that underline why Leeds is an international city including: international investment & business, culture & sport, international partnerships, international communities and world-class higher education. More information can be found at www.globalleeds.com and on the Global Leeds Twitter page [here](#).

Pause to Shielding The Government has announced that their advice to clinically extremely vulnerable to shield at home can once again be [paused from 1 April](#). This is possible as infection rates across the country have continued to fall and now that over 9 in 10 CEV people have received their first vaccine dose.

The advice from 1 April is for clinically extremely vulnerable people to:

- **Work from home** if possible, but if not, then return to work. CEV people are advised to talk to employers about reducing risk in the work place (HSE has issued new [guidance](#)). Where this is not possible, employers may still agree to furlough CEV workers.
- **Return to school** or other educational setting from 1 April for CEV pupils and students.
- **Shops and Pharmacies** – people are advised to continue shopping online where possible, or avoid busy times if they wish to go into shops or pharmacies in person. Pharmacies will no longer automatically deliver prescriptions free of charge – so people are advised to check with their own pharmacy on deliveries.

A summary of the advice is attached – and letters will be sent to all CEVs informing them of the updated government advice. A small number of people will be medically advised to continue to shield at home – this will usually be where they are undergoing chemotherapy or awaiting a solid organ transplant. These people will require a fit note from a clinician from 1 We recognise in Leeds that for many people, the pause in shielding advice will be a welcome relief – and that for many, they will remain anxious about the risk this virus poses to their health. Practical and emotional support will continue to be available in Leeds to ensure that everyone can manage as independently as possible – with help and assistance where needed. Projects to support people to rebuild confidence are being developed, and a wide range of community led options are also available. Anyone who has questions about shielding or the support that is available can call the helpline on 0113 376 0330 or email covid.partners@leeds.gov.uk

Upcoming Mobile Testing Unit deployments – please visit [NHS Leeds](#) for all the information about testing either with or without symptoms.

- **Sat 20· Mon 22:** Rowland Rd WMC | Kippax Leisure Centre
- **Tues 23:** Armley Leisure Centre | Bramley Housing Office
- **Wed 24 & Thurs 25:** Bramley Housing Office | Rowland Rd WMC
- **Fri 26:** Kippax Leisure Centre | Rowland Road WMC
- **Sat 27 and Sun 28:** Rowland Road WMC | St George's Medical Centre, Middleton | Armley Leisure Centre
- **Mon 29:** Rowland Rd WMC | Kippax Leisure Centre

National Developments

- The [Contain Framework](#) has been updated, setting out the roles and responsibilities of councils and local partners in responding to Covid-19. There will be a full briefing about this in an update next week, together with our updated Local Outbreak Management Plan
- Working households receiving tax credits may be eligible for a [one-off payment of £500](#) to provide extra support when the temporary increase in working tax credit ends on 5 April. HMRC will contact those who are eligible.
- A two-week [consultation](#) has started on how an autumn exam series for GCSEs, AS and A levels should run this year.
- There is updated [guidance for parents and carers](#) of young people in education.
- The Government has launched a procurement exercise for contractors to [undertake compliance visits](#) to individuals required to quarantine at home following international travel.

- New findings from PHE have shown that around three-quarters of 70 to 84 year old blood donors had antibodies against Covid-19 by early March. Just 5.6% were from natural infection, suggesting that the findings are largely attributable to vaccination.
- The latest national [flu and coronavirus surveillance report](#) suggests Covid-19 cases decreased between 8 and 14 March. Cases in those aged 0-19 increased, but fell in the over 20s.
- Councils are invited to bid for a share of £212 million funding to provide safe, long-term, stable and supported [housing for rough sleepers](#) as part of a pledge to deliver 6000 new homes by the end of this Parliament.
- £25m funding announced for [nursing training](#) and other healthcare students.

Social Media Messages to Share

- Even if you've had a Covid-19 vaccine, you still need to stay at home to help stop the spread of the virus – shared on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).
 - A big thank you to the volunteers, the hand washers, the social distancers, the self-isolators, the shielders, the home workers and the key workers. Together, we can help stop the spread of the virus – shared on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).
 - By signing up to our coronavirus newsletter, you'll receive weekly updates on changes to our services and support for communities – shared on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).
- In terms of the notification about schools, we have been alerting local ward members to all bubbles collapsing, but from next week we will only send an alert when there is a school closure to reduce email traffic.

Join the National Day of Reflection

We're supporting the National Day of Reflection on 23 March, the first anniversary of the UK lockdown, to commemorate the tragic loss of life over the last year and to stand together with everyone who is grieving. We're asking people to tag @leedscouncil on their Instagram stories from 23-25 March with images, videos or words of what lockdown has meant to them. These could then be featured on our Instagram story and may be selected to be part of a video to commemorate the National Day of Reflection for Leeds. #TogetherLeeds

We will be in touch with another update next week.

Best wishes

James

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Chief Officer – Strategy and Improvement

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