

Raynham Parish Council

27th July 2021

Update from County Councillor Tom FitzPatrick

Covid-19 Trusted sources of information

The most recent **verified data on cases in the UK and Norfolk** is available from Public Health England and the Norfolk Insights website.

Everyone has a key role in promoting www.nhs.uk/coronavirus and www.gov.uk/coronavirus as trusted sources of information to the public. It is important to ensure people go to the right sources of information and keep up to date with how to look after themselves.

Keep up to date: We have [a dedicated webpage for coronavirus updates](#) in Norfolk and impact on Norfolk County Council services. This is updated regularly so please do re-visit this page.

Service updates: The most up to date information on council services can be found at [Norfolk County Council services disruptions](#). The council will continue to monitor its services and, if regulations and circumstances change, it will review its current plans.

Covid-19 Advice

Restrictions: The Prime Minister confirmed on 12 July that all legal restrictions on Covid-19 would end, as England moves into step 4 of the roadmap, which happened yesterday. The latest data shows that the Government's 4 tests for easing Covid-19 restrictions have been met. The four tests are as follows:

- The vaccine deployment programme continues successfully
- Evidence shows vaccines are sufficiently effective in reducing hospitalisations and deaths in those vaccinated.
- Infection rates do not risk a surge in hospitalisations which would put unsustainable pressure on the NHS.
- Our assessment of the risks is not fundamentally changed by new Variants of Concern.

NCC's Advice:

The council has launched its new campaign IChoose, which encourages people to follow measures designed to keep us safe.

The council's advice is:

- Continue familiar prevention behaviours such as hand washing and wearing a face covering in public indoor spaces
- Continue to meet outdoors where possible and ensure indoor places are well ventilated
- Carry out symptom-free testing two times per week, including for secondary school aged children. Free test kits are available from libraries and pharmacies

Particularly as cases are rising across Norfolk, it is important to bear in mind safety when going about daily business.

Enhanced testing

Enhanced testing has been deployed in the East of Norfolk, following a rapid rise in cases there. The testing is being conducted in the parishes of Hemsby, Ormesby, Somerton, and Winterton. Everyone aged over 16 is being strongly encouraged to participate in the testing to identify cases which otherwise might not be found and help stop the spread of the virus.

Latest National Announcements

Post-16 Education

Government reforms are expected to make it easier for young people and adults to identify the right courses for them following their GCSEs.

Young people and adults will have clearer qualification and training routes, as part of a shake-up of the post-16 system to remove low-quality qualifications which lack job prospects.

The new system will create two clearly defined paths for people who have completed GCSEs or similar courses: academic, meaning qualifications that primarily lead to further study, and technical, those qualifications that primarily lead to skilled employment. This will mean everyone can see more easily how their studies support their future training or job aspirations.

Holiday Activities for Children

Big Norfolk Holiday Fun:

Bookings are now [open for Big Norfolk Holiday Fun](#) which provides hundreds of free activities for children and young people.

After a successful Easter programme the Big Norfolk Holiday Fun is back for summer, for children eligible for means-tested free school meals. There will be a wide range of free activities for 5-16 year olds taking place during the holidays, with events across the county available to bookonline..

Education and Schools

Schools

There has been a significant increase in the number of education settings with a positive COVID-19 case in the last 28 days. As a result, there are more young people experiencing disruption at the end of term due to staff or pupils self-isolating.

During the week 11th to 16th July 2021, two primary schools were closed, for one day each, last week due to coronavirus related reasons. Two secondary schools were closed for one day each last week, due to non-coronavirus related reasons

Attendance of pupils in Norfolk remains in-line with the national averages:

- Overall last week, attendance was 89% in primary schools, compared to 91% the week before, and compared to 83% nationally
- Attendance in secondary schools was 77%, compared to 84% the week before and 67% nationally. These figures have been adjusted for Y11-13 not expected to attend
- Attendance in state-funded special schools was 82%, compared to 85% the week before and 74% nationally. These figures have been adjusted for Y11-13 not expected to attend

Post 16's

September Guarantee offers have increased from 84.5% to 86.7% year 11 and from 60% to 63.2% Year 12 in the past week.

The Summer 21 Transition Challenge communications campaign is ready for launch this week. The campaign directs young people in years 11 and 12 who are unsure of their next steps to council services.

Early Years

This week there were 671 settings open with 15,097 children attending. Of those 4,733 are children of critical workers, and 791 are vulnerable.

Duke of Lancaster School

I take a real pride in the delivery of this school to meet local needs and the building of this school continues to run to schedule, with the opening due in January 2022. I was very pleased to be part of the topping out for the building recently, led by John Fisher, Norfolk County Council Cabinet Members for Children, with the Town Mayor and Deputy also taking part.

Broadband and Digital

I continue to be the County lead councillor regarding improved Broadband and mobile phones. We are now at 95% coverage for Superfast Broadband and work with the mobile operators to push for better coverage and suggest areas which would benefit from alternative solutions. Full details and how to check what is available in any area is on the county website at

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/campaigns/digital-connectivity>

Our Digital Inclusion Strategy is aimed at Giving Norfolk residents the ability to take full advantage of the opportunities and benefits of accessing online services and harnessing internet technology

Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service:

The service is joining a national #KnowExactlyWhere campaign next week to highlight the benefits of using the app What3Words – which helps them to locate emergency incidents quickly and easily.

What3Words divides the world up into 3m x 3m squares and if emergency callers are able to give such a location, rescue teams can target resources to the exact spot quickly- particularly helpful with rural incidents.

You can watch a short video here about it <https://youtu.be/NHEjeUj-IXE>

Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service would encourage you to download the app and spread the word.

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