

WELCOME FROM **Richard Flinton, Chief Executive**

We find ourselves in a bit of an odd place this week. With the road map out of lockdown before us and an extremely successful vaccination programme on our side, we should all be looking forward to a return to those freedoms for which we have made so many sacrifices. To seeing our loved ones, booking our staycations, eating out and exploring again.

On the one hand, we are seeing Covid-19 transmission rates continue to reduce slowly across North Yorkshire – which is clearly good news. However, on the other, we have seen the number of fines the county's police have had to issue to people breaching the lockdown rules rocket by almost a third over the last week. As a result, this week a record 255 fines have been issued in the force area, 119 to local residents and 136 to visitors. Of those, 127 were issued on the coast. In a single incident last weekend each of the 20 people attending a house party was handed an £800 fine! And I am sure many of us felt complete disbelief at the pictures of the family camped precariously on the cliff edge near Staithes.

So what's going on we may rightly ask ourselves! Two days of a taste of spring last weekend saw some truly awful behaviour by some people who clearly knew better, and increased numbers of other people interpreting the road map not as something to aspire to, but a route to drive down now.

Many of you will know that at the forefront of the fight against Covid here is North Yorkshire Local Resilience Forum (NYLRF), of which I am chair. Each week, the NYLRF hosts a media briefing at which the NHS and police join our director of public health, health and adult services and education leads to outline where we are and appeal for help in sharing important messages. These are very well supported by the press in North Yorkshire and today we were joined by a safer neighbourhoods sergeant from the front line in Scarborough. The sergeant spoke of the apparent mix of misinterpretation of the lockdown rules and road map out, some genuine misunderstanding and some plain disregard in some instances. In one incident, a group of six people from Leeds travelled to the coast for fish and chips, in another nine people travelled from Hull to Filey for a barbecue in a car park and in another a police safety camera clocked a car being driven at 126mph. When this sergeant stopped the car, he was told the male driver had travelled from Harrogate to York to collect a friend before they headed – at some considerable speed – to the coast! I am sure you will agree all of these examples are completely unacceptable and they put in jeopardy the incredible hard work the vast majority of the people of North Yorkshire have put in.

So, to be clear to all those flouting the rules and risking our route out, we remain in LOCKDOWN. Stay at Home is still the message – the gradual and cautious easing of some restrictions is not an instant free for all. We want desperately to see the data allow us to hit those date milestones so we can welcome the world back to North Yorkshire's fantastic hospitality sector and see our loved ones again. But the situation remains delicate, so I implore you to do the right thing for your friends and family and keep going, keep sticking to the rules. Because hard though it is... every day at home, every hand washed, every face covered, every trip not taken... is making a difference. As an LRF we will continue to do everything within our reach and powers to support the county back to recovery and to respond appropriately to those whose behaviour puts that at risk.

The first major milestone is the reopening of schools to all pupils and our schools are hugely excited to welcome everyone back. They have been open throughout the pandemic for the children

of key workers and vulnerable youngsters, but there is a real sense of joy among staff and pupils to all be together again. As you would expect and hope, very detailed safety plans have been put in place including lateral flow testing (where appropriate), staggered start and break times, one-way systems and so on. This week, I was hugely impressed with the passion of Matthew Kelley, the head of Hutton Rudby Primary School. He describes children as “the heartbeat of all schools” and his passion and commitment are typical of all our school staff, teachers and support teams. You can hear more from Matthew here and I am sure you will find him both reassuring and inspiring <https://youtu.be/hs4H8x-Vq0>

I share the delight at seeing all pupils back, as I am sure many parents who have been supporting young people through this difficult time while they have been learning at home do! So, on behalf of everyone at the county council, I thank every parent, every pupil, every teacher, every member of the schools support teams and every volunteer making all this possible. Team North Yorkshire spirit through and through – we are immensely proud of your collective efforts.

Before I go today, I also wanted to say thank you to 17-year-old Jasmin Brown from Hawes, who has become the youngest person to give evidence to North Yorkshire’s Rural Commissioners. Jasmin spoke eloquently about the challenges facing young people in very rural communities around access to transport, further education and work experience. You can read more about the latest evidence session and the work of the Rural Commission here <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/news/article/north-yorkshires-rural-communities-opportunities-and-challenges>

As I sign off, I just want to mention the national Government consultation, which is under way, on how local government services might be delivered in the future here. There are two proposals before the Secretary of State and you can read both and have your say if you would like to here <https://consult.communities.gov.uk/governance-reform-and-democracy/northyorkshire/>

That’s it from me for this week. Please do stay safe.

## Keeping in touch

NYCC’s website has a dedicated area for all the latest news, see links below:

- Covid-19 related news: <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice-and-information>

**Follow us** on social media: @northyorksc on Facebook and Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram.

## Public health and social care

### North Yorkshire Coronavirus Data

At 28 February 2021, there have been 28,118 positive tests since 3 March 2020, with 835 new cases reported in the past two weeks. The weekly rolling average of new cases is 69 per day, allowing for incomplete data in the most recent days. The seven-day rate for North Yorkshire is 62.3 per 100,000 people, which remains below the England seven-day rate. Work continues to ensure effective monitoring of all areas, with support for incidents being provided across a range of settings, which are reviewed daily.

Further information on North Yorkshire data provided at county, district and local area level can be found here: <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/coronavirus-data>.

## Coronavirus Update

About 1 in 3 people with coronavirus do not have symptoms but can still pass it on to others. Regular testing of people without symptoms is important to help stop the virus spreading and protect your loved ones. As lockdown restrictions gradually ease we all need to play our part to help protect each other. As our schools head back on 8 March, the following people in England will have access to regular rapid lateral flow testing made available to them:

- secondary school pupils
- primary and secondary school staff
- households, childcare and support bubbles of primary and secondary-age pupils
- households, childcare and support bubbles of primary and secondary staff

Primary school pupils will not be asked to test at this time.

### How to get a rapid lateral flow test: Community Collect

In order to support wider access to routine lateral flow testing, the government has introduced a new component of the community testing programme called Community Collect. This is a service by which people will be able to collect batches of test kits from designated sites to use to test at home twice a week.

For North Yorkshire we have had confirmation that all of our local test sites have been part of this roll-out and essentially are now sites with dual testing functions – **in the mornings up until 12 noon they will continue to be symptomatic testing facilities, whereas in the afternoons from 1.30pm to 7pm they will instead function as collection points for lateral flow kits.**

In terms of current eligibility for community collect, households with primary school, secondary school and college age children, including childcare and support bubbles, can test themselves twice every week at home. Households, childcare and support bubbles of primary, secondary and college staff can also be tested. Twice-weekly testing will also be offered to adults working in the wider school community, such as bus drivers and after school club leaders.

For people in these groups who are unable to access rapid testing through Community Collect or any other existing route (such as through their employers) there is a new government portal for requesting lateral flow tests that can be delivered to your home.

At the moment, both Community Collect and the home delivery route are only open to the above groups. However, we understand that as we progress with the national road map access to Community Collect sites will be broadened to include wider cohorts of people, too. We also expect more collection sites will be developed over the next month, with a national ambition to deliver through pharmacies as well by the end of March.

Further information about the use of lateral flow testing of households and bubbles of school pupils and staff can be found [here](#).

Although our schools and colleges are returning on 8 March, we are not yet back to normal. England is still in a national lockdown and we all need to stay at home and follow the “hands, face, space” guidance as much as possible. Further information about the current lockdown guidance can be found [here](#).

## Working together towards recovery

### Testing

Testing sites in North Yorkshire, as elsewhere in England, are operated and managed by the Department of Health and Social Care and private contractors employed by them. We try to help

the department by promoting the mobile testing site locations and hosting information on how people with symptoms can book a test via the national government portal.

**We do not manage the national booking system or laboratory testing process.**

Indications are that lab testing capacity is improving but, if you are unable to book a test at a local site straight away, please keep checking as availability varies during the day.

We are also supporting the Department in asking the public only to get a test if they are directed to do so by NHS Test and Trace or other NHS services – OR – if they have symptoms, to ensure that those people who need tests the most can be prioritised.

Before you attend you must book a test. Tests can be booked from 8pm the night before.

Testing sites operated and managed by the Department of Health and Social Care will be running at the following locations over the coming days between 11am and 3pm:

- **Every day - Harrogate** - Dragon Road Car Park, Dragon Road, Harrogate, HG1 5DB
- **Every day - Scarborough** - William Street Car Park, Scarborough. YO12 7PL
- **Every day - Northallerton** – The Forum, Bullamore Road, Northallerton, DL6 1LP
- **Every day - Selby** – Portholme Crescent Car Park, Selby, YO8 4YR
- **Every day - Skipton** - Cavendish Street Car Park, Skipton, BD23 1RP
- **Thursday 4 March - Whitby** - Whitby Marina Car Park, Langbourne Road, Whitby, YO21 1YW
- **Thursday 4 March - Malton** - Wentworth Street Car Park, Smithson Ct, Malton, YO17 7BQ
- **Thursday 4 March - Leyburn** - Harmby Road, Car Park, Leyburn, DL8 5EE
- **Friday 5 March - Sherburn in Elmet** - Pasture Way Car Park, Sherburn in Elmet, LS25 6LY
- **Friday 5 March - Stokesley** - Stokesley Sports Club, Broughton Road, Stokesley, Middlesbrough, TS9 5JG
- **Friday 5 March - Richmond** - Round Howe Car Park, Reeth Road, Richmond, DL10 4TL
- **Saturday 6 March - Selby** - South Entrance, DRAX Power Station, New Road, Selby, YO8 8PH
- **Saturday 6 March - Settle** - Greenfoot Car Park, Settle, BD24 9RW
- **Saturday 6 March - Filey** - Filey Country Park, Church Cliff Drive, Filey, YO14 9ET
- **Saturday 6 March - Thornton Le Dale** - North York Moors National Park Authority car park, No.5. Chestnut Avenue, Thornton Le Dale, Pickering, YO18 7RR
- **Sunday 7 March - Scarborough** - Scarborough Park and Ride, Seamer Road, Scarborough, YO12 4LW
- **Sunday 7 March - Richmond** - Round Howe Car Park, Reeth Road, Richmond, DL10 4TL
- **Sunday 7 March - Thirsk** - Millgate Car Park, Marage Road, Thirsk, YO7 1PE

Watch this video to find out what to expect and how to prepare for the test:

<https://youtu.be/QawyKwllfKQ>

See the latest dates and locations, find out more and how to book at

[www.northyorks.gov.uk/testing](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/testing)

## Supporting our schools and childcare

Secondary and special schools and colleges now all have arrangements in place for swab testing pupils for coronavirus before they all fully return to school on March 15. How, and when, the tests happens will vary from school to school and parents will hear directly from their school about the date their child will be tested and can return to the classroom for face-to-face teaching.

Early years and nursery staff have now been added to the Department for Education testing programme directly and are being provided with home testing kits for rapid swab testing.

The national swab testing programme does not include younger children and primary schools are on course to provide all pupils with a warm welcome back to the classroom from March 8.

Hygiene measures, such as hand washing, bubble arrangements and social distancing remain in place. In line with the latest Government guidance, face coverings will also be worn in the classroom. Although they are not mandatory, wearing masks is now strongly recommended.

We would like to thank schools for all their work in recent weeks and over the course of the last year in keeping schools open and making sure they are places where students feel safe and happy. It has involved a lot of planning and hard work and we are very grateful for their co-operation.

We will soon be letting people know the timeline for engagement on the future of North Yorkshire's Outdoor Learning Service. The pandemic has had a significant financial impact on our two residential sites at Bewerley Park and East Barnby, which has resulted in the service losing the majority of its £2.25m annual income since March 2020, when the Government issued guidance to close outdoor activity centres.

Now the service has forecast a deficit of £984,000 by the end of the financial year for 2020-21. This situation, coupled with a need for significant re-investment in the building facilities, means we will be taking this opportunity to review outdoor residential education.

The review will determine what the requirements and benefits are for children and young people in North Yorkshire and match this to a model designed to meet those needs in the long-term.

We are establishing a number of consultations with different organisations and individuals involved, including schools, outdoor learning staff, individual members of the public and other stakeholders. They include a user group who will come together as part of the review, a project board, including the chair of the user group.

A questionnaire will also be sent to all schools in North Yorkshire, include primary, secondary, special schools and pupil referral services to establish if and how they use the Outdoor Learning Service, any barriers to providing outdoor learning and how important it is for different Key Stage groups, child development and the curriculum.

## Teamwork to support our residents

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Community support organisations and the voluntary sector partners they are working alongside continue to help North Yorkshire residents in a variety of ways.

Jill Burdis volunteers through Reeth and District Community Transport, carrying out shopping runs and working in the office to co-ordinate calls and their response. Her initial offer had been to step in for two or three weeks, but the tally is now approaching 50 and Jill has no expectation of stepping back anytime soon.

A new job for the minibus has been transporting residents for coronavirus vaccinations and other medical appointments – with the vehicle able to safely carry two passengers at a time under current restrictions. A range of “buddy” teams have also been established, with “house buddies” on standby to help with simple necessities like changing light bulbs and smoke alarm batteries, “back yard buddies” for the outdoor jobs like shoveling coal or de-icing paths.

Jill said: “We have such good volunteers, now there are over 50 of them clocking up about 170 hours per week, this is keeping things going and they step up to offer assistance as and when we need them and never turn down a request. What I have really liked is that as time has gone by, we have got to know people so well they have become friends and you care for them as you would your own family.”

The service has been highly praised by Joan Graveson, 88, who was widowed last year and was approached with the offer of help.

“They asked what I needed for shopping and everything else, it was a very positive approach,” she said. “They have expanded their services magnificently.”

Between lockdowns she attended meals organised through the group and said: “A stroke of genius was them asking me to make soup.

“They had the imagination to know that the way of pulling me in was to give me something to do. They are exceptional. They have been an important part in my recovery, because they have shown I can make a contribution.”

North Yorkshire residents without local support networks who need help with shopping and other essentials, or anyone concerned about the welfare of someone else, can contact North Yorkshire County Council’s customer service centre on 01609 780780 seven days a week 8am to 5.30pm. People can also complete an online form to let us know what help they need at [www.northyorks.gov.uk/covidhelp](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/covidhelp).

To find local businesses offering food deliveries and takeaways, go to the Buy Local directory at [www.northyorks.gov.uk/buy-local](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/buy-local). People can also find details of other local voluntary and community groups offering support at [www.northyorkshireconnect.org.uk](http://www.northyorkshireconnect.org.uk).

Find advice on how to help others safely and information about volunteering with a local organisation in your community at [www.northyorks.gov.uk/helpingduringcovid](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/helpingduringcovid).

## Growing our local economy

### **Buy local: Settle for nothing but the best for local businesses**

When estate agents crunched information from more than 1,000 locations in England to find the best, Settle was number eight in their national top ten.

One detail researchers may not have realised is the benefit of the Buy Local website, which is a boost to both shoppers and those running independent businesses in the area.

While that is not limited to Settle – it was set up across North Yorkshire as part of the response to the coronavirus pandemic – the town has embraced the idea with enthusiasm, with a baker’s dozen of businesses signed up.

**Buy Local** makes life easier for shoppers who can put in orders in the knowledge they are getting high-quality goods and services from trusted businesses – while helping to ensure those traders are able to endure the financial pressures lockdowns have brought for many.

The County Council launched the scheme as the pandemic began to unfold early last year and it has proved to be an enormous success. There are now nearly 900 businesses registered on the site.

While vaccinations and reducing infection rates for coronavirus are providing real hope that a return to normal life could be on the horizon, Buy Local could have longer-term benefits.

It will have helped to ensure businesses have survived, maintaining choice for customers and helping to secure the economic prosperity of communities.

One Settle business that signed up to Buy Local is Settle Country Store, which sells goods ranging from outdoor clothing to hardware, pet food and equestrian products.

Manager David Elms said: “We try and cater for our customers’ individual needs and we’ve always done that, even before Covid.”

The shop is part of the Settle Coal Company and has been trading for around three years. David believes the Buy Local website helps to alert potential customers to what they have to offer.

“I think it’s a benefit because a lot of people don’t know that businesses exist,” he said. “It amazes me the amount of people who don’t know the companies that are in their area.

“That’s where the Buy Local site works really well, because it’s just literally local businesses.”

One of North Yorkshire County Council’s public health consultants, Dr Victoria Turner, grew up in Settle and said: “This is a wonderful area for many, many reasons but many of the features which make the area so appealing are shared with other communities across the county.

“That is very true of Buy Local, which has been a real success both here in Settle and across the wider community.

“On a practical level, it benefits both customers and businesses, but it also demonstrates that Team North Yorkshire spirit, people coming together and showing responsibility and kindness for each other.”

North Yorkshire leader Cllr Carl Les said: “Introducing Buy Local was one of our many responses to the pandemic and the problems it created. The fact that so many businesses have signed up demonstrates the desire among our traders to serve their communities.

“It is encouraging that residents have supported the scheme and, while it may have provided a real assistance to them during the coronavirus period, the hope is that it will have also made some people more aware of the fantastic businesses in their neighbourhoods.”

Buy Local (<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/buy-local>) allows customers to find businesses and place orders online and the website has been widely praised by companies that have signed up.

Hear from David about how registering on Buy Local has provided a boost here [https://youtu.be/fD\\_vpyNSWe4](https://youtu.be/fD_vpyNSWe4)

### **Have your say on £31m plans to improve travel in Skipton, Selby and Harrogate**

Brand new entrances to railway stations, new public spaces linking the station to the town centre and better access to education and employment sites are all included in detailed proposals to transform the area around the railway station in three North Yorkshire towns.

North Yorkshire County Council, Harrogate Borough Council, Craven District Council, Selby District Council and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) have succeeded in a bid to secure a total of £31m for three separate projects in Harrogate, Selby and Skipton town centres from the Department for Transport’s Transforming Cities Fund (TCF).

In each town, a major package of investment will improve opportunities for sustainable travel and link transport hubs with centres of education and employment – all essential to getting back on track after the Covid-19 pandemic. This is a once in a generation chance to totally redesign parts of the town centres, with investment that will help to fire up the engine on the journey to recovery.

These transformational projects are scheduled to be completed by 2023.

We want to know what you think about the early stage proposals and we’d like as many people, businesses and organisations as possible to take part.

Read more here: <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/news/article/public-invited-give-views-ps31m-plans-improve-travel-towns>

Read the proposals, attend an event, and complete the online survey about Skipton, Selby or Harrogate at [www.yourvoice.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/northyorkshire](http://www.yourvoice.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/northyorkshire)

**Join an online event:** Online events about the schemes are taking place next week as follows:

- Harrogate project: 10 March
- Skipton project: 11 March
- Selby project: 12 March.

All will start at 6pm. Find out how to join at [www.yourvoice.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/northyorkshire](http://www.yourvoice.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/northyorkshire)

### **LEP News: Budget announcement**

Today's budget announcement included several measures to extend the COVID business support as well as a few key headline investments in our region. The full document can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/budget-2021-documents>

### **Kickstart Scheme update**

It is now easier for employers of all sizes to benefit from joining the [Kickstart Scheme](#) - the limit which previously required employers to create a minimum of 30 vacancies in order to apply directly has now been removed.

Additional resources from employers are available on [gov.uk](http://gov.uk):

- [Guide for employers](#)
- [Tips for making a successful Kickstart Scheme application](#)
- [Guidance on choosing a Kickstart Gateway](#)
- [Toolkit for employers who have signed up](#)

### **Upcoming business webinars:**

#### **Celebrating the work of entrepreneurial female leaders: The future of our city, our region**

**8 March, 1pm**

In partnership with the University of York on International Women's Day, this free webinar will showcase the stories and experience of five inspirational women, their entrepreneurial journey and their reflections on how times of economic and social change could make entrepreneurship more accessible for the next generation of women.

Booking link: <https://www.ynygrowthhub.com/events/celebrating-the-work-of-entrepreneurial-female-leaders-the-future-of-our-city-our-region/>

#### **Leadership Series: Building resilience and supporting team wellbeing, 9 March, noon**

Ideal for business leaders and HR professionals, this online session with Michelle Mook will provide tools and techniques to build resilience and increase positivity within teams.

Booking link: <https://www.ynygrowthhub.com/events/leadership-series-building-resilience-and-supporting-team-wellbeing/>

#### **Start-Up Business Basics Series: How much? - The Art and Science of Pricing Your Product, 10 March, noon**

In partnership with business coach Gareth Allen, this webinar will provide guidance on cost-based pricing, calculating costs before deciding an appropriate margin and how to price during a recession.



Booking link: <https://www.ynygrowthhub.com/events/a-guide-to-setting-your-prices-at-the-right-level/>

### **Social Media Series – Planning and creating great content, 11 March, noon**

In this webinar, digital marketing experts Intandem Communications will focus on how you can create and plan great social media content for your business. This webinar is ideal for those who are looking to further their social media skills.

Booking link: <https://www.ynygrowthhub.com/events/social-media-planning-and-creating-great-content/>

### **Local Highlights**

- [West Yorkshire Innovation Festival, 15–19 March 2021](#)
- [1000 fully-funded places available in a three-day eLearning course in understanding domestic retrofit](#)

### **National Highlights: Trading with the EU**

- Exporting: what you need to do to keep your goods moving  
<https://register.gotowebinar.com/rt/307162178772281358>
- What are customs import declarations?  
<https://register.gotowebinar.com/rt/3183722091041218574>

### **E-Commerce Elevenses**

The Department for International Trade (DIT) are running virtual ‘meet-ups’ with experts in website development, digital marketing and e-marketplaces.

The events for York businesses are taking place on the following dates:

- 16 March 2021 @ 11am – Website Development
- 17 March 2021 @ 11am – Digital Advertising and Marketplaces

To register, visit:

<https://eu.eventscLOUD.com/ehome/index.php?eventid=200217002&?&reference=flyer%0D>

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