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| Date: 18 August 2021 |



As we reach the end of the road map on Covid restrictions, North Yorkshire’s community support organisations have this week described being ‘staggered’ by people’s generosity and acts of kindness as they look back at the great volunteering effort during the pandemic.

We saw an immense volunteer taskforce take shape in North Yorkshire from March last year when the first lockdown restrictions began and 23 of our voluntary groups took on the momentous role of working with us to coordinate support for the thousands of people isolated by Covid.

For many of these groups the task of coordinating the support of hundreds of extra volunteers who had come forward to offer their time was a new experience. But all of them have risen brilliantly to the challenge.

Statistics collected by our Stronger Communities team tell of tens of thousands of shopping trips, food deliveries, befriending phone calls and wellbeing checks made by people volunteering in North Yorkshire. And there were countless other acts of kindness carried out as people looked out for friends, family and neighbours.

At our press conference today Neil Bradbury, CEO of the Scarborough division of Age UK said: “We weren’t expecting the outpouring of support from the community. I don’t know why – we know the community are supportive and positive – but it still knocks you out to see how much the community are willing to give.”

Chris Hailey-Norris, chief officer of Selby District Association of Voluntary Service, said he had been “staggered” at the level of kindness and generosity from people coming forward and the scale of the response, describing it as the district’s “finest hour”.

It is indeed an episode in North Yorkshire’s history which we can all be very proud of and we are confident that our long tradition of volunteering in this county will go on.

Government guidelines on self-isolating have now changed with people who have been fully vaccinated no longer needing to self-isolate 14 days after their second dose.

Despite the lifting of some restrictions on self-isolating, we ask that people are still mindful of others and remember the guidance that is still in place. This includes self-isolating and getting a PCR test if you have any covid symptoms – even if you have had both doses of the vaccine - and continuing with basic but important hygiene measures such as hand washing.

In North Yorkshire, 514,000 people have now had their second dose of the vaccine and 75 per cent of 18 to 29 year olds have had their first dose of the vaccine. The vaccination of 16 and 17 year olds has also now begun with 18% in the county already vaccinated with their first dose. This is great progress and we hope to see this number climb even higher as weeks go on.



**North Yorkshire Coronavirus Data**

At 15th August 2021, there have been 46,811 positive tests since 3rd March 2020, with 1,501 new cases reported in the past week. The weekly rolling average of new cases is 214 cases per day, allowing for incomplete data in the most recent days. The 7-day rate for North Yorkshire is 266.6 cases per 100,000 people, lower than the England 7-day rate of 307.1. 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>.

### Testing Update

If anyone has symptoms, they must book a PCR test. Testing sites across 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 testing site locations and hosting information on how people with symptoms can book a test via the national government portal.

[Find information about where you can get a PCR test on our website](https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/book-coronavirus-covid-19-test-if-youve-got-symptoms).

Everyone is encouraged to test themselves twice a week with home testing kits and report the results to NHS Test and Trace. You can order rapid lateral flow device (LFD) tests online or collect them from participating pharmacies.

[Find out how to order or collect free LFD tests](https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-covid-19-test-if-you-dont-have-symptoms).

**It remains vitally important that we continue with the key messages:**

* Get your first and second dose of the jab
* Continue to think about the vulnerability of loved ones.
* Outdoors is always safer than indoors.
* Keep getting tested regularly, even without symptoms.
* Continue to follow social distancing where possible, when out with friends and family, including work places, pubs, restaurants etc.
* Hands. Face. Space. Fresh Air**.**

**Teamwork to support our residents**

Some people are more at risk of becoming seriously ill from Covid-19 than others, and not everyone is confident about being out and about as restrictions ease.

Government advice for people who are clinically extremely vulnerable is to continue taking extra precautions to protect themselves, such as meeting friends and family outside, using online deliveries for shopping or going at quieter times of the day. Lots of residents are nervous about going shopping or being around lots of people, and are still being supported by friends and family or in some cases volunteers.

For the last 18 months, we’ve been working alongside our partners with 23 community support organisations and the voluntary sector to provide a safety net of support during the pandemic. Thousands of volunteers have helped with shopping, collecting medication, walking pets, taking people to medical appointments and being there for a friendly chat.

It's staggering to reflect on what’s been achieved, with volunteers giving over 137,000 hours over their time to help and support people across the county. 19,800 prescriptions have been delivered, 18,000 phone check-ins and 32,000 befriending calls made, almost 30,000 shopping trips completed and 1,800 pets looked after.

Neil Bradbury, CEO at AGE UK Scarborough and District said: “There’s so much we’ve learned in what’s been an amazingly difficult year, I would pay tribute to all of my colleagues and the volunteers who, despite worries and concerns and difficulties of their own, stepped up and were counted and got stuck in. Many of them are able to look back at this as their finest hour and a time when they can be really proud of themselves and what they did.”

Chris Hailey-Norris, Chief Officer Selby District AVS, added: “It’s continued to keep my faith in what people are able to do in times of great adversity. It’s been staggering to see the kindness and generosity of spirit and energy. The flexibility I’ve seen from people, our staff team and volunteer team and other people in the community. That can do attitude. Being able to work through the pandemic in such a positive way to make North Yorkshire shine. What a great team to be a part of.”

If you need help with things like shopping, collecting medication or other essentials while you’re self-isolating please contact family, friends, neighbours or groups you belong to and let them know how they can support you. If you don’t have anyone to lean on, you can contact our customer service centre on 01609 780780 seven days a week 8am-5:30pm. Find information about the help available, including self-isolation support payments, at [www.northyorks.gov.uk/covidhelp](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/covidhelp)



The Department for Education (DfE) has updated its Covid guidance for schools, colleges and early years settings with suggestions on how and when to tackle outbreaks. We will continue to work with schools in North Yorkshire on their risk assessments and appropriate safety measures.

Following a Government announcement, the school bubble system will no longer be required when schools return in September, meaning children and young people can mix again at break times and school assemblies can resume.

However, school risk assessments still remain a legal requirement and appropriate safety measures are expected to remain in place in schools, which includes hygiene measures such as regular hand washing, cleaning regimes in school buildings and good ventilation in classrooms.

Schools will also have outbreak management plans and can reinstate face masks and the bubble system for short periods in the event of an outbreak.



**LEP News: Watch now: 10 questions to ask yourself when starting a business**

If you’re about to embark on your new venture, have you asked yourself some important questions? Watch our new video to find out what you should think about and download our handy toolkit that includes planning resources, finance templates and a check list to get you started. [Watch the video and download your pack here.](https://www.ynygrowthhub.com/resources/10-questions-to-ask-yourself-when-starting-a-business/?utm_campaign=Intermediaries&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--wE-s5xjCqNd0ntfJ8gH2A5tIZH4-Z5DLk3cO20ogV3r1-sXNgbVSoTGDB3Fp-mxU53iij)

**Register today: Free webinar - Is starting a business right for you?**

Tuesday 7 September, 10am

Thinking of starting a business but not sure if now is the right time or whether you have a viable idea? Want to get an understanding of what it takes to run your own enterprise?

This webinar with start-up experts Blue Orchid aims to answer your questions, help you think about where to start and understand some of the nuts and bolts of getting started. [You can find out more and book your place here](https://www.ynygrowthhub.com/events/is-starting-a-business-right-for-you/?utm_campaign=Intermediaries&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--wE-s5xjCqNd0ntfJ8gH2A5tIZH4-Z5DLk3cO20ogV3r1-sXNgbVSoTGDB3Fp-mxU53iij)

**Enrol for September or November: 10-day award winning start-up course with Rebel Business School**

Run over two weeks, this practical workshop explores a new topic every day including how to start with no money, sales and marketing, legal, networking, and keeping motivated, as well as provides live business coaching. The following dates are available to book via our website now:

* [6-17 September 2021](https://www.ynygrowthhub.com/events/start-your-business-course-september/?utm_campaign=Intermediaries&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--wE-s5xjCqNd0ntfJ8gH2A5tIZH4-Z5DLk3cO20ogV3r1-sXNgbVSoTGDB3Fp-mxU53iij)
* [15-26 November 2021](https://www.ynygrowthhub.com/events/start-your-business-course-november/?utm_campaign=Intermediaries&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--wE-s5xjCqNd0ntfJ8gH2A5tIZH4-Z5DLk3cO20ogV3r1-sXNgbVSoTGDB3Fp-mxU53iij)



[Keep up to date with Covid-19 news for North Yorkshire](https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice-and-information).

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