

Dear resident

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We are sending emails like this one to residents of the New Forest with information about our services, and updates as we respond to coronavirus (COVID-19). You can unsubscribe at any time – see the end of this email.

Over 70s vaccinations

People aged 70 and over who have not yet received their first COVID vaccination and would like one, are being asked to contact the NHS to arrange a jab.

More than 12 million people have already received a first dose of coronavirus vaccine and many who have not yet booked an appointment are receiving follow up letters and phone calls to encourage them to take up the offer of a vaccine.

In our region:

- 91% of over 80s have had the vaccine, and 93% of care home residents
- 95% of people aged 75-79 have had it
- around 75% of people aged 70-74 have received a first dose

Until now the NHS has asked people to wait until they are contacted to help ensure that those who are most vulnerable are protected first – and that remains the case for most people.

However, to ensure absolutely everyone is offered the vaccine, people aged 70 and over can now contact the NHS so they can be vaccinated.

The easiest way to arrange a vaccination is through the national booking service at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/>

The system allows patients to choose a time slot and location that suits them.

Anyone unable to book online can call 119 free of charge, any time between 7am and 11pm seven days a week.

If a suitable and convenient slot is not available people can also call their GP practice.

Read the announcement: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/2021/02/call-for-people-aged-70-and-over-to-contact-nhs-for-a-covid-jab/>

Ask us your waste and recycling questions

Our waste and recycling experts will be taking over Facebook and Twitter for a question and answer session on Tuesday 23 February, 1pm to 3pm.

It's part of the New Forest Awakening Festival, a series of online events exploring ways we can all help to protect the New Forest area and address the climate and

nature emergencies.

Talk to our waste and recycling experts, ask us your questions, and hear about some simple actions you can take to make a real difference for our planet and our climate.

Send your waste and recycling questions in advance to communications@nfdc.gov.uk with the subject line 'Waste and recycling question' or comment on our posts on Tuesday 23 February to join the conversation.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/newforestgov>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/newforestdc>

See the full Awakening Festival programme at <https://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/todo/>

May 2021 elections voting options

There are three ways to vote in the UK:

- in person at a polling station
- by postal vote
- by appointing a proxy to vote for you.

We are working to make polling stations safe for this year's elections.

If you think you may prefer not to visit a polling station, please apply for a postal vote sooner rather than later so we have time to process your application.

You can download the application form to vote by post from our website. Once completed, including your signature and date of birth, email or post it to us to process. <https://www.newforest.gov.uk/article/1083/Vote-by-post-or-proxy>

If you are already registered to vote by post you do not need to reapply.

The elections scheduled to take place on 6 May 2021 are:

- Hampshire County Council
- Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire
- Ringwood Town Council, Ringwood North Ward by-election
- Hythe and Dibden Parish Council, Butts Ash Ward by-election
- Milford on Sea Parish Council by-election.

Solent Freeport bid to boost the region's economy

We're supporting an exciting proposal, from the Local Enterprise Partnership, for a Solent-wide project to support jobs and the economy locally.

If successful, the bid for a 'Freeport', as it is called, would provide an opportunity for the region to create around 50,000 jobs, attract £2 billion in extra investment and help us rebuild our region's economy after COVID-19.

Within the New Forest district, tax reliefs and simplified customs procedures by Freeport status would all combine to make our underdeveloped 'Waterside' area a highly attractive place for investors and developers, and breathe new life into our coastal communities.

Successful areas will benefit from generous tax reliefs, simplified customs procedures, streamlined planning processes and a promise of continued government support offered to promote regeneration and innovation.

Government is expected to announce which areas have been successful later this year.

Find out more at <https://newforest.gov.uk/article/2132/NFDC-supports-LEP-s-2billion-Solent-Freeport-bid>

Do the right thing Hampshire

Hampshire residents are being reminded to 'do the right thing' by continuing to follow COVID rules.

- stay home and stay local – only make essential journeys
- keep a 2m distance where possible, if you need to go out
- wear a face covering in shops and enclosed spaces
- get tested if you have COVID symptoms (high temperature, persistent cough, loss of taste/smell)
- wash hands frequently
- always answer a call from NHS Test and Trace, and the Hampshire Local Tracing Service (01962 826982).

Posters on bus stops and billboards will remind people that these are still the best actions we can take to help keep ourselves and our loved ones safe from COVID-19.

Further information on what you can and cannot do at <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Cabinet meeting, Wednesday 17 February, 10am

Our next cabinet meeting is on Wednesday 17 February at 10am.

Council members will be discussing items including COVID-19 response and recovery, the annual budget 2021/22 and the Health and Leisure review preferred bidder.

Watch the meeting live on our YouTube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCY5ng2quINNQPcqQeQ4uf4g>

Census 2021

Census day is 21 March. Households across the New Forest will soon receive letters explaining how to take part.

The census, run by the Office for National Statistics, is a once-in-a-decade survey that gives us the most accurate estimate of all the people and households in England and Wales.

Census 2021 will be the first run mainly online. Households will receive a letter with a unique access code, allowing you to complete the questionnaire on your computer, phone, or tablet.

The census will include questions about your sex, age, work, health, education, household size and ethnicity. And, for the first time, there will be a question asking people whether they have served in the armed forces, as well as voluntary questions for those aged 16 and over on sexual orientation and gender identity.

For more information and advice on how to answer the questions, visit <https://census.gov.uk/>

A message from Jackie Weaver

Today we shared a video on social media to encourage other people to sign up to receive these emails.

The 30 second video features Jackie Weaver who became well known last week after a Zoom video of a parish council meeting hit the headlines.

You can watch our video at <https://youtu.be/HqBbeRDNGyU> and please do share it with your family and friends who aren't signed up to these emails

Make a change, become a councillor

Local councils and councillors make a massive difference to the quality of life of local people. They are passionate about their communities and seek to make a change to help improve the lives of their residents. Communities need people from all backgrounds and experiences to put themselves forward for election.

Find out more about how you can make a change and become a councillor at <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/local-elections>

Water for Life

Southern Water are consulting on plans to help keep rivers and taps flowing in Hampshire.

The Water for Life Hampshire programme is looking at the way water is sourced, treated and supplied across the county.

Central to Southern Water's plans is a desalination plant (the process of removing salt from seawater) in the Fawley area. The plant will produce up to 75 million litres of water per day to be used to supply water to the Hampshire region during periods of drought.

Southern Water are consulting on their plans (until 23 March). Find out more about the proposals and help shape the plans at <https://www.southernwater.co.uk/our-story/water-for-life-hampshire>

Missed an email? Read previous residents emails at:

<https://newforest.gov.uk/article/1610/Residents-email-archive>

- Latest information from NFDC: <https://www.newforest.gov.uk/coronavirus>
- Information on coronavirus from Hampshire County Council: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/coronavirus>
- Latest information from central government: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

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