

COVID community update – 13 January 2022

Dear volunteer coordinators and parish councillors,

A belated Happy New Year to you! I hope you all managed to take a well-deserved break over the festive season. Please see below the first few items which relate to COVID-19 updates, followed by some information about green bin collections, which have resumed this week; flooding preparation; and changes to the ways we are asking you to contact our team.

Confirmatory PCR tests to be temporarily suspended for positive lateral flow test results

From 11 January in England, [asymptomatic people who receive positive lateral flow test \(LFT\) results for COVID-19 are no longer required to take a confirmatory PCR test](#). They should report their LFT result online at www.gov.uk/coronavirus and self-isolate immediately. This is because, whilst levels of COVID-19 remain so high, the vast majority of people who test positive on a lateral flow test can be confident that they do have COVID-19. **People with COVID-19 symptoms should still take a PCR test in the first instance, rather than a LFT.**

Please note, however, that there are exceptions to this revised approach and people who are eligible for the £500 Test and Trace Support Payment will still be asked to take a confirmatory PCR if they receive a positive LFT result, to enable them to access financial support.

Stay at home guidance for households with possible COVID-19 infection

The self-isolation advice for people with COVID-19 has changed. It is now possible to end self-isolation seven days after the date of their initial positive test if they receive two negative LFT tests, taken 24 hours apart, on days six and seven. The first LFT test should not be taken before the sixth day. [See: COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection.](#)

Supply of Lateral Flow Tests

Demand for lateral flow tests is currently outstripping supply. The UK Health Security Agency has said that by the end of next week it is expected that there will be significantly increased numbers of test kits available by post and via pharmacies; the general public, including key workers, should obtain tests using these routes. A note with more details was sent to you on Friday but if you need this information to be re-sent, please just respond to this email.

[COVID-19: guidance for people whose immune system means they are at higher risk](#)
On 24 December, the UK Health Security Agency and Department of Health and Social Care updated the [guidance for people aged 12 and over whose immune system means they are at higher risk of serious illness if they become infected with COVID-19](#). The guidance includes new information on keeping safe, eligibility for additional vaccine doses, and eligibility for new NHS COVID-19 treatments if they become infected.

Find help and support if you have long COVID

On 24 December, the Department of Health and Social Care also updated the [guidance for those who have long COVID](#). The guidance has been updated with advice for those who have signs and symptoms of long COVID, those who have long COVID and are unable to

work, those who have long COVID and need support to find, return to or stay in work, and for those who have a child with long COVID.

[Update from the local NHS Clinical Commissioning Group: “Help us help you and your family stay well”](#)

The NHS is there for everyone. Whatever your healthcare needs, the NHS wants to make sure you receive the right care, in the right place, at the right time. There are simple steps you can also take, that will not only help you to stay well, but will help to ease pressures on your local NHS services. Locally, a new “[Help us to help you and your family stay well” booklet](#) is now available that explains what you can do to look after yourself and your family, what local services are available and how to contact the NHS if you need to. The booklet is also available to [download](#) in the following languages - Polish, Romanian, Lithuanian, Portuguese, Urdu and Punjabi. You can see a copy of the booklet attached, as well as graphics which you’re welcome to use on your social media if helpful.

[Changes in the way we will structure officer support](#)

Earlier in the pandemic, you may remember that we had a number of different ‘Patch Officers’ who were responsible for supporting the COVID-19 response in particular areas within the district and we encouraged you to contact your relevant patch officer direct. The level of demand is now much lower than it was during the height of the pandemic and so we are no longer operating this system. Instead, we will coordinate any enquiries centrally through our duty.communities@scamb.gov.uk inbox (while our ‘Patch Officers’ will focus on their ‘business as usual’ roles). Please use the duty.communitie@scamb.gov.uk going forward for any support you need in your work in the community.

[Resumption of green bin collections](#)

By now, you may have seen the update that [green bin collections have resumed](#) in South Cambridgeshire, from yesterday (Wednesday 12 January). Waste crews will empty as many bins as possible but, depending on staff availability, may not be able to reach every home. Check your collection date or [read the Council’s FAQs for more info on our website](#). Or if you are able to, please share our posts on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) within your communities.

[Flood Action Campaign](#)

The Flood Action Campaign is based on the Environment Agency’s ‘Prepare. Act. Survive.’ flood guide, which helps people in flood risk areas to know what to do in a flood and plan to help reduce the impact of flooding. The Environment Agency is urging people to check their flood risk online, [sign up for flood warnings](#) and, if they are at risk, [know what to do if flooding hits](#).

Bill

Bill Handley

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