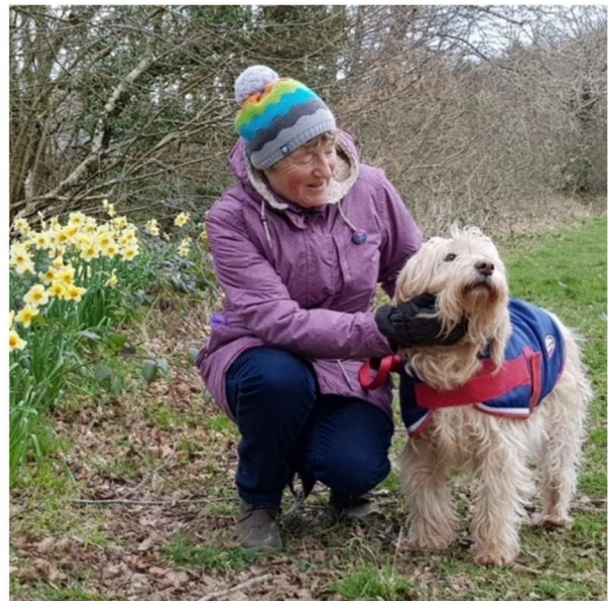


Coronavirus (COVID:19) in Cumbria

Information for Community Leaders

January 2021

(Version 3)



About Us

This pack has been produced by the organisations involved in the Cumbria Community Resilience Group, and other key partner organisations.

Cumbria Community Resilience Group was established as part of the Cumbria LRF coordination structures for the response to Coronavirus.

If you've got any feedback on the pack, for example, ideas of information you'd like to see included in future versions, please contact Carolyn Otley, Chair of Cumbria Community Resilience Group:

CarolynO@cumbriacvs.org.uk



Introduction

This pack is designed to help community leaders to support people in their communities. It aims to give you information on the key messages and where people can access support, with a little more detail and background information than it is possible to include in short press releases and other public information.

Community leaders may be informal (someone who's set up a local support group) or formal (local councillors); the pack might also be useful to other people, including the staff of local voluntary sector organisations.

We have seen a huge community response to support people affected by Coronavirus and the lockdown restrictions in Cumbria. There have been over 300 new community groups established, and existing voluntary and community organisations, and Parish Councils, have played equally important roles.

Some community leaders will have played a very hands-on role during the response to Coronavirus (for example, helping with food and prescription deliveries), some will have taken on a coordination role in their community and others will have given more remote support (such as phone calls to those who are lonely) because their own medical conditions or age mean that they have had to be particularly careful about staying apart from people they do not live with. All these different kinds of roles have been important in helping to support people in communities across Cumbria.

We're now seeing infection rates rise and restrictions tighten again; this is the third version of this booklet, which contains information on the current guidance and restrictions. The section headings identify where there have been significant changes (or a new section added) to make it easier for you to spot the changes.

Coronavirus has changed many things in our everyday lives, and it has been easier for some people to adapt to those changes than others.

We're seeing far more complex problems as some people struggle to cope with a reduction in their income, and many people are finding it hard to maintain their mental wellbeing as they face a winter of restrictions. This pack also contains information on where people can find support around these issues and more.

We'd like to thank you for everything you've done so far to support people in communities across Cumbria, and for all the support we know you'll continue to give them over the coming months.



Councillor Deborah Earl
Cabinet Member for
Public Health and Community Services
Cumbria County Council



Carolyn Otley
Community Resilience Coordinator
Cumbria CVS/
Cumbria Local Resilience Forum



Contents

Staying Safe	5
Basic Principles (updated)	5
New Coronavirus variant (new section)	6
When to self-isolate and how to get a test (updated)	7
Vaccination (updated)	9
Lateral Flow Testing (updated)	10
NHS COVID-19 App	10
National and Local Restrictions (updated)	11
Support Bubbles	14
Clinically Extremely Vulnerable people (updated)	15
Information on Coronavirus cases in Cumbria	16
Keeping up to date with the latest information	16
Good neighbours	17
Community Support	18
Information and guidance for Community Groups	18
Support from your local Councils	19
Cumbria County Council: Coronavirus Support Line	19
District Councils	20
Supporting people with financial worries	21
Good sources of support	21
Claiming benefits	22
Housing problems	22
Encouraging people to get support with financial worries	23
Credit Unions	23
Food projects	24
Supporting people who are stressed and anxious	25
Good sources of support	25
Encouraging people to talk about their worries	26
Worried about someone?	27
Mental Health	27
Domestic Abuse	27
Worried about a child or young person?	27
Keeping adults safe in Cumbria	28
Staying Safe through Winter	29
Keeping Healthy	29
Winter Warmth	31
Supporting your community through the winter	31
Keeping up to date	32
Coronavirus Resources (new section)	32
National Information Sources	32
Cumbrian Information Sources	33
What comes next?	34

Staying Safe

Basic Principles (updated)

Whilst the rules have changed a number of times, there are a few basic principles that underpin them, and understanding these can help people to make sense of the rules.

Coronavirus spreads most easily when people are in close contact with each other, particularly indoors. It is mainly spread in small water droplets in the air, generated by coughing and talking.

Most people have now adapted how they behave, but it is worth a reminder that it is important to:

- Stay a safe distance (2m) from people you don't live with (as the droplets don't travel a long way before falling to the ground)
- Cover your face, in indoor spaces where it is not possible to stay apart from others (it is now compulsory to wear a face covering in many indoor spaces like shops, cafes and restaurants)
- Wash your hands frequently and avoid touching your face (as your hands can easily pick up the virus from surfaces, particularly frequently used surfaces that droplets might have landed on)

These basic rules can be remembered as “Hands, Face, Space”



We can also help limit the spread of Coronavirus by limiting the number of different people outside our household that we have close contact with.

We can't stop all mixing of households; many of us have to go to work or school, and it can seem illogical to be meeting many different people in these settings, but to be asked to cut back meeting people for social activities. But by cutting back on close contact where we can, or arranging to in safer ways (for example, meeting outdoors rather than indoors, and ensuring indoor spaces are well ventilated), we can reduce the overall opportunities for the virus to spread.

Whilst many of these might feel like very small things, they can have a big impact on the spread of Coronavirus if we all do them carefully and consistently – as so many of us have been careful to do since March.

Of course, you also need to follow all the restrictions that are currently in place, and you can find out how to check these on page 9.

New Coronavirus variant (new section)

During December, a new variant of Coronavirus was reported, initially in the South East of England, which is thought to spread more easily than other types of the virus.

It isn't at all unusual for viruses to mutate and form new variants, and this isn't the first variant of Coronavirus that has been reported. However, the current evidence suggests that this new variant is more transmissible, meaning that someone infected with the new variant is more likely to pass Coronavirus on to the people they are in contact with, and the virus is able to spread more quickly through the population.

The new variant has now become the most common variant of Coronavirus in London and SE England, and concerns about the speed at which it was spreading, and the pressure that that was putting on NHS services, were one of the main reasons that government introduced Tier 4, and re-tightened restrictions over most of Christmas period.

We know that the new variant has been present in Cumbria from the end of November, as it can be detected by analysing samples taken for PCR testing. The analysis of variant type takes time, and so we don't know quite how widespread the new variant currently is in the county. However, some genetic indicators suggest that at the beginning of January, the new strain already accounted for at least 75% of new cases in Allerdale, Carlisle and Eden, and at least 50% of new cases in Copeland, Barrow and South Lakeland. It is rapidly becoming the dominant strain in Cumbria.

The new variant:

- Causes the same symptoms as other variants, and doesn't appear to cause more severe disease
- Can be detected by the standard Coronavirus tests (PCR and Lateral Flow Testing)

It is very likely that the currently available vaccines will also provide protection against the new variant (as the vaccines target multiple parts of the virus, most of which are unchanged in the new variant.)

The precautions we all need to take to help control the spread of the new variant are the same as for any other variant of Coronavirus described in the previous section: "Hands, Face, Space."

However, it is worth being extra careful about all of these measures given it seems likely that the new variant spreads more easily.

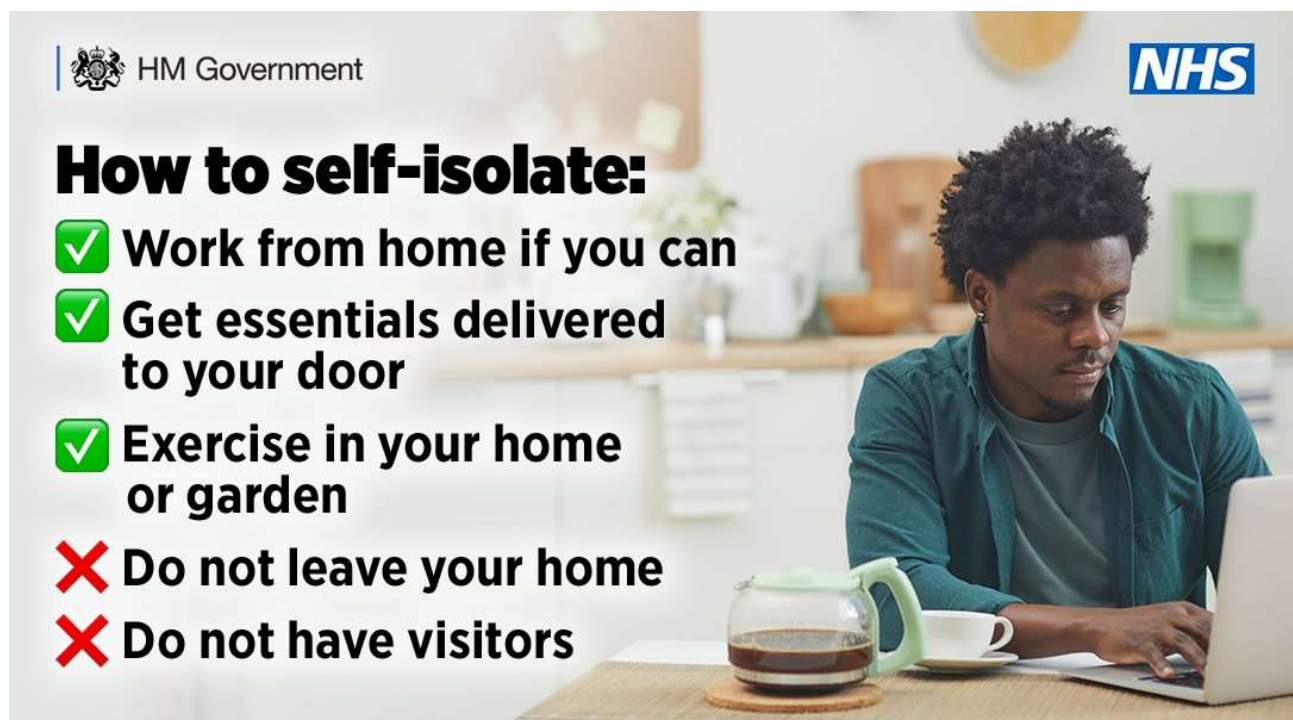
When to self-isolate and how to get a test (updated)

One of the most important ways to stop the spread of Coronavirus is to self-isolate (stay at home) for 10 days and get a test if you experience any of the main symptoms: a continuous cough, a high temperature, or a loss or change in taste or smell.

Other people in your household should also self-isolate (now also for 10 days), but they do not need to book a test unless they develop symptoms themselves.

You can find the full guidance on self-isolation here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>



HM Government

NHS

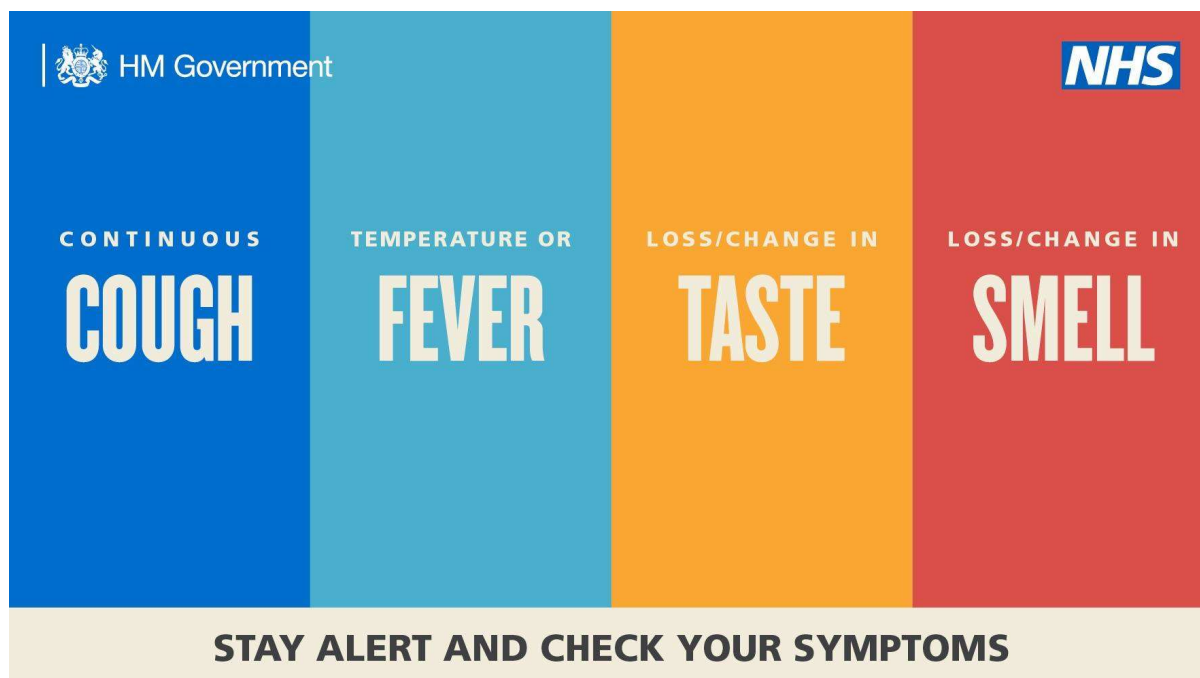
How to self-isolate:

- ✓ Work from home if you can
- ✓ Get essentials delivered to your door
- ✓ Exercise in your home or garden
- ✗ Do not leave your home
- ✗ Do not have visitors

You can find a more detailed explanation of the symptoms (for example, when is a cough considered to be “continuous”?) on the NHS website:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>

There are many common symptoms such as a stuffy nose or a headache that may be associated with Coronavirus infection (as well as many other infections such as a cold or flu), but if you have these without any of the four main symptoms in the graphic below then you do not need to self-isolate or get a test.



You can book a Coronavirus test on the NHS website:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/get-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>

If people are unable to access the internet, they can book a test by calling **119**

You can find out the location of test centres across Cumbria (some fixed sites, some mobile testing units) on the North Cumbria NHS website, but tests still need to be booked via the NHS website or 119.

<https://northcumbriaccg.nhs.uk/covidtesting>

People on low incomes who need to self-isolate may be able to get a £500 grant from their District costs to cover the loss in their income if they are unable to work from home. You can find more information on your local District Council website (links on page 13).

Vaccination (updated)

The Coronavirus vaccination programme got underway in Cumbria on 8 December when West Cumberland Hospital in Whitehaven became one of the first hospitals in the UK to deliver the vaccine.

A number of Primary Care Networks (PCNs) – groups of GP practices working together in a local area – have also begun to vaccinate patients, with the rest due to start early in January. Each PCN will offer the vaccine from one local hub, so people might have to go to a different building to their usual GP practice.

The primary care teams have started with their patients aged over 80s, and the feedback from them has been very positive about being called for the vaccine. Hospital sites have been concentrating on over 80s patients and health and care workers. Furness General Hospital has also started vaccinations, with Cumberland Infirmary due to start early in the New Year.

Patients are urged not to contact their practice to ask when they will be vaccinated; people will be contacted when it is their turn.

We know many people are keen to find out when they'll be vaccinated, by calling the practice is adding pressure and causing delays for those seeking medical support. Primary care teams are still seeing their patients as usual while delivering the vaccine and they appreciate people's patience and support.

Many of these GP-led sites have used local volunteers to help with car parking and to direct people around the site. Their support has been invaluable. If existing community groups are interested in helping in this way over the next few months, we suggest that they get in touch with their local GP practice to offer their support.

So far, vaccination has been with Pfizer vaccine (which needs to be stored at ultra-low temperatures), but the Oxford/Astra Zeneca vaccine has now also been approved. The vaccination programme will be adapted to use both vaccines.

This second vaccine is easier to store and transport, and may make it possible to vaccinate people in a wider range of settings. Despite being developed quickly, both vaccines have been through the normal clinical trial and regulatory approval processes to ensure they are safe.

There will also be a very small number of larger vaccination sites in Cumbria, run by the regional NHS with support from our local NHS. They are expected to begin operating in January. These are also likely to need support from volunteers.

In South Cumbria, individuals who are interested in volunteering at the larger sites can register on the LVP website:

<https://lancsvp.org.uk/opportunities/covid-vaccination-internal-marshall-3/>

In North Cumbria, arrangements for volunteering at the larger vaccination sites are still developing, and we'll keep you updated.

You can find more information about the part vaccines are expected to play in controlling the spread of Coronavirus in the government's winter plan:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-winter-plan>

The development of vaccines that protect against Coronavirus is a hugely important step towards things being able to return back towards "normal". As we see with the annual flu vaccine, it will take time to work through everyone eligible and this will be true of the covid-19 vaccines. It will be a marathon not a sprint.

Unfortunately, that means that for the next few months it's still really important that we continue to take all the precautions (hands, face, space) that we've become used to reduce the spread of Coronavirus.

Lateral Flow Testing (updated)

You may also have seen information in the news around lateral flow testing – a new type of test that gives a much quicker initial result than the PCR test that has been widely used so far.

Both tests involve taking swabs from a person’s nose and throat, but whilst PCR analysis needs to take place in a laboratory (meaning it often takes several days to get a result), lateral flow tests can be done “on the spot” and give an initial result in around 30 minutes. However, a positive result on a lateral flow test will need to be confirmed by a follow up PCR test.

Lateral flow testing is beginning to be used in Cumbria – for example, amongst NHS staff in hospital and ambulance service settings (allowing more frequent testing), and amongst University students (before they travel home for Christmas and when they return).

There will be lateral flow testing taking place in secondary schools across Cumbria during January. Around 16 secondary schools in Cumbria have chosen to be part of a lateral flow testing programme supported by Cumbria County Council; the other secondary schools in the county will be part of the national testing programme that has been announced more recently. This means that arrangements will vary between schools; schools will be in touch with parents directly as details become clearer.

Discussions are underway to identify other situations where lateral flow testing is likely to be of benefit in Cumbria; possibilities include an expansion of routine weekly screening to other “high risk” staff groups, and as an additional tool to control local outbreaks. It is possible that “community screening” (offering tests to members of the public without symptoms) will become available in parts of Cumbria over the coming weeks.

NHS COVID-19 App

Don’t forget that if you have a compatible smartphone, you can download the NHS COVID-19 App, which allows you to:

- **Trace:** find out when you've been near other app users who have tested positive for coronavirus.
- **Alert:** lets you know the level of coronavirus risk in your postcode district.
- **Check-in:** get alerted if you've visited a venue where you may have come into contact with coronavirus, using a simple QR code scanner. No more form filling.
- **Symptoms:** check if you have coronavirus symptoms and see if you need to order a test.
- **Test:** helps you order a test if you need to.
- **Isolate:** keep track of your self-isolation countdown and access relevant advice.

The app is available in a number of languages; you can find out more here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/nhs-covid-19/>

National and Local Restrictions (updated)

As we exited the second national lockdown on 2 December, each area of England entered one of three “tiers” of restrictions. A fourth, more restrictive, tier was added in late December as infection rates began to rise rapidly again.

The whole of Cumbria is currently in “Tier 4 – Stay at Home”, but this will be reviewed every couple of weeks, and could change in the future.

The guidance for all tiers now advises people to “stay local” in order to help limit the spread of the virus: *“You should stay local and avoid travelling outside of your local area, meaning your village or town, or part of a city, where possible.”*

You can check which tier an area is in by entering a postcode here:

<https://www.gov.uk/find-coronavirus-local-restrictions>

The full restrictions for each tier can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-restriction-tiers-what-you-need-to-know>

And the key points are summarised in the graphics on the following pages.

In a **Tier 1 (Medium Alert)** area, people can meet indoors and outdoors in groups of up to 6 people – the “Rule of 6”. Pubs and restaurants can open, but must be table service only, with last orders at 10pm.

In **Tier 2 (High Alert)** area, you cannot meet people from other households indoors (if you live alone and have formed a “support bubble”, you can still meet indoors within your bubble), but can still meet in a group of up to 6 outdoors. Restaurants can remain open (as can pubs that are operating as restaurants and serving “substantial meals”), but you can only visit with members of your own household.

In a **Tier 3 (Very High Alert)** area, all pubs and restaurants will close. You cannot meet people from other households indoors or in many outdoor spaces. People are advised not to travel in or out of Tier 3 areas.

In a **Tier 4 (Stay at Home)** area, non-essential retail will close. You can only meet one person from another household outdoors (i.e., as a group of 2) with a few exceptions (for example, young children do not count in the numbers)

If you do travel out of a higher tier area to a lower tier, the rules from the higher Tier you live in still apply to you. In other words, if you live in a Tier 2 area (where you are not allowed to meet other households indoors) and travel to Tier 1 area, you still cannot meet other households indoors.

There are a number of exemptions to the rules that apply in all Tiers – including to assist a vulnerable person, and for organised voluntary activity (which will have been risk assessed and precautions put in place to ensure that it is “COVID-secure”). You can find the full set of exemptions by using the link above.

There are **additional exemptions to the rules that are specific to the Tier**; if you follow the link to “Find out more” that is at the bottom of the section for each Tier, you will find this information.

The webpage linked to above also contains links to the restrictions in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.



HM Government

NHS

CORONAVIRUS TIER 1

MEDIUM ALERT

Around 1 in 3 people with Covid-19 have no symptoms, so will be spreading the virus without realising.

To protect each other and our hospital capacity, you must:

- ▶ Only meet people socially in groups of up to six
- ▶ Follow social distancing when you meet
- ▶ Work from home if possible

For local restrictions, go to [gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

STAY ALERT ▶ CONTROL THE VIRUS ▶ SAVE LIVES



HM Government

NHS

CORONAVIRUS TIER 2

HIGH ALERT

Around 1 in 3 people with Covid-19 have no symptoms, so will be spreading the virus without realising. To protect each other and our hospital capacity, you must:

- ▶ Not mix with other households indoors
- ▶ Only meet people outdoors in groups of up to six
- ▶ Work from home if possible
- ▶ Reduce the number of journeys you make

For local restrictions, go to [gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

STAY ALERT ▶ CONTROL THE VIRUS ▶ SAVE LIVES

CORONAVIRUS TIER 3

VERY HIGH ALERT

Around 1 in 3 people with Covid-19 have no symptoms, so will be spreading the virus without realising. To protect each other and our hospital capacity, you must:

- ▶ Not mix with other households indoors
- ▶ Only meet people outdoors in open public spaces in groups of up to six
- ▶ Reduce your number of journeys, avoid travel outside the area unless needed
- ▶ Work from home if possible

For local restrictions, go to [gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

STAY ALERT ▶ CONTROL THE VIRUS ▶ SAVE LIVES

CORONAVIRUS TIER 4

STAY HOME

THERE IS A NEW STRAIN OF COVID-19 WHICH SPREADS EVEN FASTER

- ▶ Around 1 in 3 people have no symptoms, so will be spreading it without realising
- ▶ You must not leave home except for specific purposes: food, medical reasons or work
- ▶ Do not travel unless necessary
- ▶ Work from home if you can
- ▶ ONLY up to two people can meet in public outdoor spaces

For further details, go to [gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

STAY ALERT ▶ CONTROL THE VIRUS ▶ SAVE LIVES

Support Bubbles

Some groups of people are able to form a “support bubble” with another household:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-support-bubble-with-another-household>

You can currently form a support bubble if:

- you live by yourself – even if carers visit you to provide support
- you are the only adult in your household who does not need continuous care as a result of a disability
- your household includes a child who is under the age of one
- your household includes a child with a disability who requires continuous care and is under the age of 5
- you are a child aged 16 or over living alone or with other children and without any adults
- you are a single adult living with one or more children who are under the age of 18

The webpage above also includes information on other types of “bubble”, for example, childcare bubbles.

Clinically Extremely Vulnerable people (updated)

In March 2020, government advised those who were believed to be the most clinically vulnerable to Coronavirus to “shield” during the first national lockdown.

Shielding has currently been re-introduced in Tier 4 areas

The current advice for Clinically Extremely Vulnerable people is here, with specific information for those in Tier 4 areas at the end:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

People in the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable group should get a text message, email or letter advising them of the extra precautions they should take in a Tier 4 area, and of the support available.

Many people who were shielding will now have arrangements in place for online shopping or for support from friends, neighbours and community groups. However, if people are unable to find local support, they can contact the Cumbria Coronavirus Support Line: **0800 783 1966**

As we continue to learn more about Coronavirus, people with some medical conditions may be advised they are no longer considered to be “clinically extremely vulnerable”, whilst people with other medical conditions may be advised to take extra precautions.

Information on Coronavirus cases in Cumbria

You can find weekly reports from Cumbria's Health Protection Board on the Cumbria County Council website; these contain information on the number of cases in each District of Cumbria:

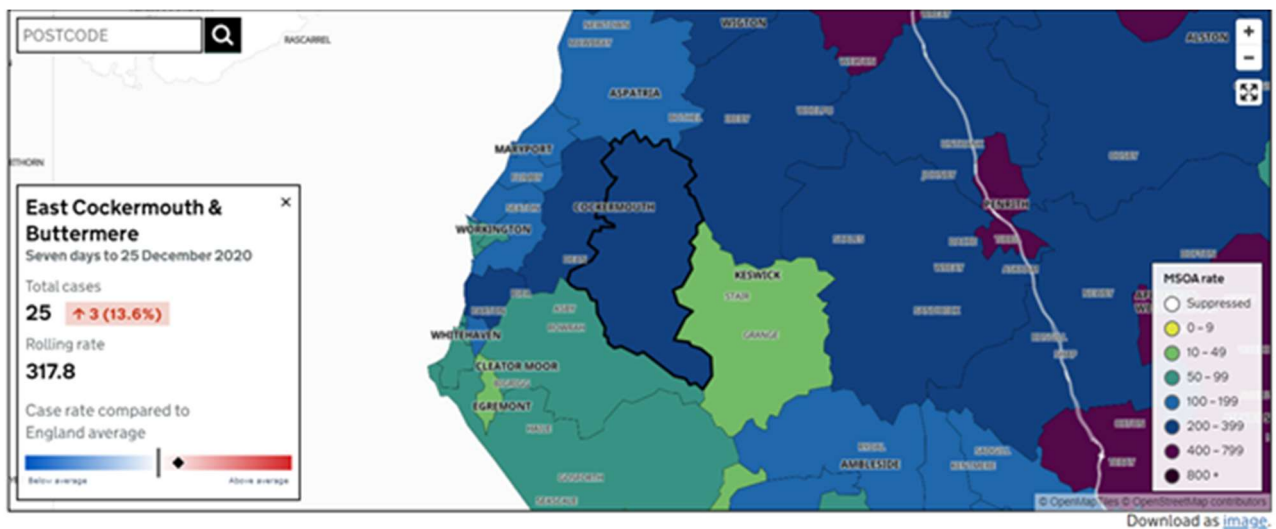
<https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/stopthespread>

You can also find useful information on the government website:

<https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/>

The interactive map that is linked to from the webpage above gives recent data on local infection rates – if you zoom in, you can localised information like the screenshot below:

<https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/details/interactive-map>



Keeping up to date with the latest information

The information on Coronavirus, particularly information on the local alert levels, inevitably changes frequently. It's best to check the gov.uk website for the latest national information:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Good neighbours

Just like when we went into lockdown in March, many people will need a bit of extra help and support from friends and neighbours throughout this winter. Some people might need practical help with shopping (for example, if they have to self-isolate because they've developed Coronavirus symptoms), some might welcome a weekly chat on the phone, and others might need advice on where to get help with anxiety or debt problems.

Most people want to help their neighbours, but they often need a bit of encouragement and some practical ideas to get them started. There are some ideas in the picture below; many areas will now have support networks in place, but it might be a good time to recheck everyone's connected in, particularly if any new people have moved in over the last few months.

COMMUNITY ACTION RESPONSE: COVID-19

5 things you can do to make a positive difference in your community

 <p>Think of others, consider your actions & be kind</p> <p>People in every community will face the challenges of Covid-19 in some way – from needing basic provisions to help while they are unwell.</p>	 <p>Connect and reach out to your neighbours</p> <p>As self-isolation increases, we need to find new ways to stay connected and check in on one another for our physical and mental wellbeing. Share phone numbers and stay in touch.</p>	 <p>Make the most of local online groups</p> <p>Keep up to date, share information and be a positive part of your local community conversations.</p>	 <p>Support vulnerable or isolated people</p> <p>Different groups in our communities are at increased risk and social isolation and loneliness are key concerns for all ages. There are things you can do like volunteering for local support services or donating to food banks to help.</p>	 <p>Share accurate information and advice</p> <p>Support anyone who may be anxious about Covid-19. Sign post them to the correct advice from Public Health England and encourage people to follow the correct hygiene practices.</p>
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It's also a good opportunity to encourage people to prepare in case they're asked to self-isolate, perhaps by having a few days food in the house, or by making sure they've got the phone number of a friend or neighbour who would be able to help them with shopping.

There are more tips on getting prepared during the winter in a later section of the booklet.

Community Support

You probably already know what local support groups were set up in our local area during the first lockdown; we know there were more than 300 across Cumbria, and between them they've helped with things including prescription deliveries, shopping, hot meals, craft packs, and phone calls to people who needed a friendly chat.

Many of these groups are still very active, and are a great place to direct people who need a bit of extra help with simple tasks like shopping this winter.

The Cumbria County Council Area Teams are in contact with all the groups they know about, and are offering them support (for example, where they are worried that they may not have enough volunteers now that many people are back at work).

If you're aware of groups who aren't connected to the CCC Area Teams, need some support setting up a new group, or need to find out more about the groups in your area then you can contact the relevant Area Team – their email address are on the next page.

Information and guidance for Community Groups

The government has published information on safe volunteering during Coronavirus; this includes section for both larger organisations working with volunteers and informal mutual aid groups:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/enabling-safe-and-effective-volunteering-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

If you need more help or advice, you can contact the County Council Area teams on the email addresses above, or get in touch with the following organisations:

ACTion with Communities in Cumbria

<https://www.cumbriaaction.org.uk/> info@cumbriaaction.org.uk / 01768 425666

Cumbria CVS (support for voluntary and community groups, and advice around volunteering and funding)

<https://cumbriacvs.org.uk/> info@cumbriacvs.org.uk / 01768 800350

Cumbria Community Foundation have supported local groups with grant funding; whilst their Covid-19 response fund has now closed, groups can still apply to their normal grant programmes:

<https://www.cumbriafoundation.org/>

You might also find the information about the projects they have already funded interesting, and gives you some more ideas about activities you could try locally:

<https://www.cumbriafoundation.org/covid-19-funded-projects/>

Some voluntary and community organisations might be eligible to apply for **business support grants**; you can find out more here:

<https://www.thecumbrialep.co.uk/news-detail/2020/new-grants-available-to-support-businesses-affected-by-covid-19/>

Support from your local Councils

Cumbria County Council: Coronavirus Support Line

Cumbria County Council are running the Cumbria Coronavirus Support Line: **0800 783 1966**

This was originally set up to support people in shielding group, but became much broader. It is now also supporting the Test and Trace service, people asked to self-isolate, people with financial problems and people who want to find mental health support.

The support line is currently operating Monday – Friday.

There's also information on the Cumbria County Council webpage on many of these topics if people prefer to browse online rather than make a phone call: <https://cumbria.gov.uk/>



Struggling?

Don't wait for problems to get worse, there are organisations that can help.

Find support now at cumbria.gov.uk

Cumbria County Council NHS Cumbria CVS THE MAYOR OF FURNESS CARLISLE CITY COUNCIL Eden District Council Copeland Borough Council Allerdale Borough Council SOUTH LAKELAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cumbria County Council also leads on public health issues across Cumbria, including the management of local Coronavirus outbreaks.

You can find out more about the full range of Cumbria County Council services here: <https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/>

The Cumbria County Council Area Teams have been connecting and supporting local community groups and voluntary sector organisations involved in the response to Coronavirus, including supporting the Local Community Resilience Groups (along with colleagues from District Councils and other organisations).

If you need to contact the Area Teams, you can use the emails below:

Alledale.AreaSupport@cumbria.gov.uk

Barrow.AreaSupport@cumbria.gov.uk

Carlisle.AreaSupport@cumbria.gov.uk

Copeland.AreaSupport@cumbria.gov.uk

Eden.AreaSupport@cumbria.gov.uk

SouthLakeland.AreaSupport@cumbria.gov.uk

District Councils

There are six District Councils within Cumbria, each of which can help with a range of issues related to Coronavirus, including:

- Help with housing problems and homelessness
- Grants for businesses affect by Coronavirus
- Grants for those who are asked to self-isolate (some Districts may also have other hardship funds)

Some Districts may also be able to help community groups to find local funding opportunities.



You can find out more about the support available on each District Council's webpage.

Allerdale: <https://www.allerdale.gov.uk/>

Barrow: <https://barrowbc.gov.uk/>

Carlisle: <https://www.carlisle.gov.uk/>

Copeland: <https://www.copeland.gov.uk/>

Eden: <https://www.eden.gov.uk/>

South Lakeland: <https://www.southlakeland.gov.uk/>

District Councils are working with the Cumbria County Council Public Health team to deliver the local contact tracing service.

Supporting people with financial worries

The economic downturn associated with coronavirus means that many people who've always worked are now having to claim benefits, because they've lost their job or had their hours reduced. Unfortunately, we anticipate more people will be affected over the next few months, particularly as the Furlough scheme comes to an end, and extra costs such as winter heating bills begin to build up.

It is better to get advice on money problems sooner rather than later, and getting advice from a reliable source can help people to borrow money safely – for example, from a local Credit Union rather than from Loan Sharks and other high interest rate lenders.

Good sources of support

People who are struggling to buy food or essentials because of financial difficulties can contact the **Ways to Welfare** community support team (<https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/welfare/support.asp>) via the Cumbria Support Line: **0800 783 1966**

Citizens Advice (<http://citizensadvicecumbria.org.uk/>) can also provide advice around applying for benefits (and around accessing the additional support available to those on benefits, such as free school meals and support with utility costs/bills), debts, and housing problems. They can also help even if people are simply worried about reduced hours or redundancy as the furlough scheme comes to an end. The local phone numbers are:

Allerdale: 01900 604735.

Barrow: 03444 889624

Carlisle & Eden: 03300 563037

Copeland: Whitehaven 01946 693321 or Millom 01229 772395.

South Lakes: 03444 111444 (for debt & ongoing enquiries) or 01539 446464 (for new enquiries)

Cumbria Law Centre may be able to provide advice about employment, housing, debt and benefits. You can call 01228 515129 or email reception@cumbria-law.org.uk You can find out more here www.cumbrialawcentre.org.uk/

People can also get in touch with the **National Debtline** – online, with webchat and email support options (<https://www.nationaldebtline.org/>) or by phoning 0808 808 4000. Advisors available Monday to Friday 9am - 8pm, and they have a specific webpage for Coronavirus information: <https://www.nationaldebtline.org/Pages/coronavirus-and-your-money.aspx>

Claiming benefits

People might be able to claim benefits or get more money on their current benefits if their work has been affected by coronavirus.

This might be because they:

- are earning less than usual - including if they're self-employed
- have lost their job, been made redundant or stopped being self-employed
- are self-isolating or shielding

Working out what you can claim can be complicated, because different benefits have different rules. Some benefits are dependent upon having made National Insurance contributions, whilst others are related to your income and/or savings.

People can check what they might be eligible for using online tools by visiting <https://www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators> or if they prefer to talk to someone, they can contact their local Citizens Advice (details above).

If someone hasn't claimed means-tested benefits before, they can find out more about Universal Credit (and make their claim) online <https://www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/>

They can also contact the Citizens Advice "Help to Claim" service on 0800 144 8 444

Housing problems

People who are having difficulties paying for housing, should contact their landlord, housing association or mortgage company, or get advice from Citizens Advice.

If people are struggling to pay their Council Tax, are at risk of eviction or are homeless, they should contact their local district council:

- Allerdale Borough Council 0303 123 1702
- Barrow Borough Council 01229 876543
- Carlisle City Council 01228 817200
- Copeland Borough Council 01946 598300
- Eden District Council 01768 817817
- South Lakeland District Council 0845 050 4434

Further information is available on the District Council webpages – links on page 14.

Encouraging people to get support with financial worries

We're finding that many people who have always worked are reluctant to claim benefits. Sometimes this is because they simply don't know how, but it is often because they feel they should be able to provide for their family without help.

It might be helpful to reassure people that the economic downturn caused by Coronavirus means that this is a common position for people to be in, and it's not their fault or something they should be ashamed of; there are now around twice the number of people on benefits in Cumbria as there were a year ago.

Benefits are designed to help in exactly this kind of situation – as a short term fix to support people whilst they find another job. Claiming benefits can help prevent people building up large debts, and so make it easier for them to “get back on their feet” when they find a new job.

It's also worth letting people know that there's lots of extra financial help available once you are claiming benefits; this can include access to grant schemes, help with heating and utility bills, access to cheaper broadband packages, and free school meals. Citizens Advice will be able to help people work out what's available to them.

For people who already have significant debts, knowing that it can be possible to have these written off with a Debt Relief Order can encourage them to seek advice (again, Citizens Advice is a good source of further information):

<https://www.gov.uk/options-for-paying-off-your-debts/debt-relief-orders>

There is also support available to those in financial difficulties who may not be eligible for benefits.

Many older people will be eligible to claim Pension Credits that will increase their income (and Citizens Advice or Age UK will be able to help with this)

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/money-legal/benefits-entitlements/pension-credit/>

Credit Unions

Credit Unions help people to save money and can also provide loans at low interest rates. Anyone who lives or works in the area a Credit Union serves can use them. They are an alternative to payday lenders and 'loan sharks' and can help you avoid getting into problem debt – we know that people across Cumbria are already beginning to receive leaflets and phone calls from lenders offering loans at extremely high interest rates.

There are 4 Credit Unions in Cumbria

Affinity Credit Union covers the whole of Cumbria and has (part time) offices in Cleator Moor, Workington, Penrith and Kendal. There's more info on their website: <https://www.affinitycu.co.uk>

Carlisle and District Credit Union also covers the whole of Cumbria: www.carlislecu.com

Barrow & District Credit Union operates south west Cumbria: www.barrowdistrictcu.co.uk

Whitehaven, Egremont and District Credit Union operates in West Cumbria: www.wedcu.co.uk

Food projects

When people are struggling financially, buying food is often the most immediate problem that they face, and there are many food projects across Cumbria that can help.

In a crisis, people can access emergency food parcels from a Foodbank; they usually need to have been referred by another organisation, such as Citizens Advice or their Housing Association.

You can find a list of Foodbanks in Cumbria on the Cumbria County Council website; many new Foodbanks have opened over the last 6 months, so it's worth checking what's available in your area:

<https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/welfare/foodbank.asp>

The Cumbria County Council's Ways to Welfare Team can help people to get a referral to a Foodbank, and in some circumstances may also be able to provide direct financial help. They can be contacted on 01228 221100, with full details on: <https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/welfare/support.asp>

There are also many other food projects (including food pantries and FareShare) in Cumbria that don't require a formal referral. Many of these redistribute surplus food, for example, from the supermarket supply chain, either as packs of food, or made into cooked meals. Some operate as cooperatives, bulk buying food for their members to achieve a better price.

You can search for food projects in the search function at the top of the Cumbria County Council foodbanks webpage (this gives information on all types of food project):

<https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/welfare/foodbank.asp>

If you need more information on projects in your area, you can contact your local County Council Area Team on the generic team email addresses in the earlier "Community Support" section of this pack.



Supporting people who are stressed and anxious

It's very common for people to be feeling stressed and anxious at the moment – sometimes because of financial difficulties, sometimes because of the challenges caused by the lockdown restrictions, and sometimes just because it's been a very odd few months. Once again, people often need a little reassurance that this is not unusual to feel like this at the moment and it's OK to ask for help; it's a very common reaction to a very unusual situation.

Many people may only need to talk about their worries with a family member, friend or someone they trust, and there is information on how to start these conversations in a later section.

However, a few people will need professional help, from voluntary sector organisations or the NHS, and there are links to some good sources of this support in the next section.

Good sources of support

Togetherall is a service offering free online support to anyone aged 16 and over 24/7 you just need a Cumbrian postcode to register. It provides online peer-peer support, access to an anonymous community and lots of information, as well as courses and resources covering a range of mental health and wellbeing topics <https://togetherall.com/>

Kooth is an online service for young people aged 11-18 <https://www.kooth.com/>

Mindline Cumbria (<http://www.mindlinecumbria.org/>) offers support and guidance about mental health over the phone, via text or email. They will listen to your concerns and help to empower you to feel more in control of your mental health or support someone else.



There is more useful information from **Every Life Matters**: <https://www.every-life-matters.org.uk/>

Including a Wellbeing and Mental Health in Covid-19 booklet which is full of tips and links

<https://www.every-life-matters.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/ELM006-COVID-19-public-info-a5-booklet-AW-online-1.pdf>

If people need to talk to someone urgently the **Samaritans** are available 24/7 on **116 123** (<https://www.samaritans.org/>)



Encouraging people to talk about their worries

We often worry about asking people how they're feeling because we're not really sure how to start the conversation, or if we'll be help them if they are experiencing mental health problems.

But in reality, people are often just waiting for someone to start the conversation; to ask how they are, and to be willing to listen to an honest answer. Although sometimes you might need to "ask twice", as we're so used to automatically saying "I'm fine"!

There are some websites that give good basic advice on how to start conversations about mental health, and to support other people with mental health concerns, including:

<https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/coronavirus>

<https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/if-youre-worried-about-someone-else/>

Listening carefully is often good enough - be non-judgemental, take their feelings seriously, and give them time to talk – and try not to let your own thoughts and worries take over.

It's OK to have silences, and you don't need to be able to fix all of people's problems.

You might be able to open up conversations about how people are feeling and their mental wellbeing with questions like these:

- Things are making us all so anxious at the moment, I'm just wondering how you are feeling?
- Everyone has been thinking about practical things over the last few weeks but it's important not to forget about our emotions and mental well-being – would it be helpful for us to chat about that for a while?
- I hope you don't mind me asking but I just wanted to check how you are feeling at the moment and wondered if you wanted to share any worries?
- We have talked about x but it is also important to share feelings of stress or any worries with others – are you managing to do that or is there anything else you would like to talk about at the moment?
- Some people find it hard to talk about their feelings but if there is anything else you would like to talk about before we finish chatting, I am happy to listen.

If you want to learn more about how to help people cope with the emotional impacts of Coronavirus, you could do the online Public Health England Psychological First Aid Training Course. The course doesn't require any background knowledge; it takes about 3 hours, but you can do it at your own pace:

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/psychological-first-aid-covid-19>

Every Life Matters offer a free online Suicide Awareness training course that lasts 60 minutes:

<https://www.every-life-matters.org.uk/training/>

You might also find the FACE framework useful; this encourages people to identify and focus on what they can control, and then to build on those things:

http://www.commpsy.com/wp-content/uploads/FACE_COVID-1.pdf

Worried about someone?

Mental Health

If you're concerned about someone's mental health, and worried that they might harm themselves, then the Samaritans website has good advice:

<https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/if-youre-worried-about-someone-else/>

Domestic Abuse

Spending more time at home with the family isn't a good thing if you're in an abusive relationship. For some people, it's a time when stress levels rise, abusive behaviour can escalate, and it's much harder to find an opportunity to reach out and get help. There are many kinds of domestic abuse; it might involve physical violence, controlling behaviour, financial control, and/or isolating people from friends and family.

The levels of domestic abuse have risen during the Coronavirus pandemic, but it is often a hidden problem. There are many organisations that can help, but if people are in danger, they should call 999.

There's more information on the Cumbria Police website:

<https://www.cumbria.police.uk/Advice-Centre/Personal-Safety/Domestic-Abuse.aspx>

Worried about a child or young person?

If you have concerns about a child being neglected or abused, please report them and help keep children safe.

People can report concerns in the following ways:

- Call the Cumbria Safeguarding Hub on 0333 240 1727
- Call the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000
- If a child is at immediate risk of harm call 999.
- Children can contact [childline.org.uk](https://www.childline.org.uk) if they do not feel safe on 0800 1111

Find out more at <https://www.cumbriasafeguardingchildren.co.uk/LSCB/covid19.asp>.



Keeping adults safe in Cumbria

This is a worrying time for everyone but particularly for the older and more vulnerable members of our communities. If you are concerned that an adult is at risk of abuse or neglect, please see the contact options below and report your concerns.

Find out more at <http://www.cumbriasab.org.uk/AdultSafeguarding/covid-19.asp>.



Safeguarding Adults for Covid-19 Mutual Aid Groups

safeguarding adults at risk
a cumbria partnership

 **Safeguarding adults means protecting the most vulnerable from abuse and neglect.**

Abuse and neglect can happen in different ways and be perpetrated by anyone. Abuse can be a crime.

 **If you see something, are told something or something doesn't feel right you need to report it.**

 **If you see something, are told something or something doesn't feel right you need to report it.**

Contact us
If you are concerned that an adult is at risk of abuse or neglect please call:
Copeland and Allerdale - 0300 303 3589 Carlisle and Eden - 0300 303 3249
Furness and South Lakes - 0300 303 2704 Out of Hours 01228 526690
In an emergency, call 999

For concerns about a child, report to: cumbriasafeguardingchildren.co.uk

 @cumbriasab  cumbriasab.org.uk

Staying Safe through Winter

There's more to winter than Coronavirus!

As always, winter can be a more challenging time, and there are a number of topics it's worth being aware of.

Keeping Healthy

It's more important than ever that people who are at risk of serious complications from flu get a vaccination this year; it protects them, and also helps to reduce the demands on the NHS. Many pharmacies and GP practices are arranging "pop up" or "drive through" flu clinics, so it's worth looking at what's available locally.



The flu virus kills thousands every year.
The flu vaccine is the best protection
for you and those around you.

JUST GET YOUR FREE FLU JAB

Ask your pharmacist or GP if you're eligible.



It's also important to remember that despite the pressures, most NHS services are still running; people shouldn't put off making an appointment if they are experiencing worrying symptoms or need care for existing medical conditions. Many GP appointments will be taking place by telephone or video call, but patients will still be seen in person when necessary.

The new measures in place at GP Practices, clinics and hospitals to allow face to face appointments to happen safely include:

- One-way systems and colour coded areas to help with social distancing
- Hand sanitiser
- Use of face coverings
- Temperature checks being offered in some settings



If people need urgent support with your mental or physical health, then they can contact NHS111 online at <https://111.nhs.uk/> who will direct them to appropriate services.

A blue NHS poster titled "Choose Wisely...". It features a thermometer icon and the text: "Help to keep pressure off A&E by choosing the right service level for what you need. #HelpUsHelpYou". Below this are five service options with icons: 1. Home care (first aid kit icon): "Common ailments, such as stomach upsets & headaches can't be treated with antibiotics & are best dealt with at home with rest and a well-stocked medicine cabinet." 2. Pharmacist (green cross icon): "Your local pharmacist is a trained healthcare professional & can give you advice on common illnesses without the need to go to your GP." 3. NHS 111 (blue triangle with 'CALL 111' icon): "Call 111 or visit: 111.nhs.uk when you need medical advice fast but it is not an emergency." 4. GP (green stethoscope icon): "If you have a persistent illness that won't go away, make an appointment with your GP." 5. A&E (red circle with 'A&E' icon): "A & E is for serious and life-threatening injuries and conditions only." The NHS logo is in the top right corner.

Winter Warmth

There are a range of grants and schemes available to help people with winter heating costs, including:

Cumbria Community Foundation's Winter Warmth Fund for over 60s:

<https://www.cumbriafoundation.org/winter-warmth-fund/>

The government's warm home discount scheme:

<https://www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme>

It's also worth people talking to Citizens Advice (they can be aware of schemes that aren't widely advertised) and looking at their District Council website for local information.

Supporting your community through the winter

Few people in Cumbria need a reminder that we seem to experience more than our fair share of severe weather, particularly floods and snow. Coping with these during the Coronavirus pandemic will be harder than ever, and communities are likely to continue to play a major role.

Cumbria Local Resilience Forum has been updating Cumbria's main emergency plans to reflect the changes needed during Coronavirus, and you might want to think about how you and other in your community would cope.

If you want to help your community prepare for this winter, here are some ideas on how. You could encourage people to think about:

- Writing a household emergency plan - this might help them to be able to safely stay in their own home during some emergencies, rather than have to go to a crowded reception centre. You can find a template to print here: <https://www.cumbriaaction.org.uk/resources/research-other/pub024a2020-02householdepleafletto-print-a4.pdf>
- Who could help them with shopping if they need to self-isolate (because they test positive, or are contacted by NHS Track and Trace)
- Having some basic food supplies in their house in case they're asked to self-isolate, or if they're stuck at home in bad weather.
- What they'd need to take with them if they needed to leave home in a hurry – and making a list of this (or packing a grab bag). Phone chargers and power banks can be particularly useful!
- Signing up for the priority customer registers that many utility companies maintain if they are eligible and are likely to need a bit of extra help in a power cut, etc – for example
 - Electricity North West: <https://www.enwl.co.uk/power-cuts/priority-services-register>
 - Cold Weather Priority Initiative (Oil): <https://ukifda.org/cold-weather-priority-initiative/>
 - United Utilities: <https://www.unitedutilities.com/help-and-support/priority-services/>
- Signing up for assisted bin collections (see your District Council website) if they are eligible and worried about moving bins and recycling in slippery winter conditions
- Checking the Cumbria County Council "Winter Ready" website for lots of information, including winter travel and gritting routes: <https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/winterready/>

If your community already has an emergency plan, there's advice on the ACT website on updating it for Coronavirus: <https://www.cumbriaaction.org.uk/resources/guidance-sheets/updating-your-community-emergency-plan-for-coronavirus.pdf>

And if you don't already have a community emergency plan but are interested in writing one, look at: <https://www.cumbriaaction.org.uk/what-we-do/community-emergency-planning>

Keeping up to date

It's hard to keep up with the latest information, because it changes so rapidly.

Throughout this pack we've tried to give you links to some of the most useful websites where you can check for updated information.

If you're thinking of sharing information on social media, it's worth thinking about if it comes from a trustworthy source. The **SHARE** guidelines can help you decide if it's reliable information:

- **Source:** Make sure the story is written by a source that you trust, with a reputation for accuracy. If it's an unfamiliar source, try checking the website's "About Us" section for more information.
- **Headline:** Always read beyond the headline. If it sounds too good to be true, it might very well be! Be wary if something doesn't seem to add up.
- **Analyse:** Make sure you check the facts; just because you've seen a story several times doesn't mean it's true. If you're not sure, look at fact-checking websites and other reliable sources to double check.
- **Retouched:** Check if images look like they might have been retouched or altered. False news stories often contain altered photographs or reedited video clips. Or sometimes images may be authentic, but taken out of context.
- **Errors:** Many false news stories use "lookalike" web addresses – look out for misspellings! Poor grammar and bad layout are other signs that a website might not be genuine.

Coronavirus Resources (new section)

You can find the Public Health England resources on the Coronavirus vaccine here if you want to share them locally and on social media; this is where many of the images in this pack have come from:

<https://coronavirusresources.phe.gov.uk/covid-19-vaccine/>

National Information Sources

The latest information on local COVID alert levels, restrictions and guidance is available on the government website: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

The latest health information is available on the NHS website:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Cumbrian Information Sources

Information is available from a range of local organisations. The list below gives some suggested websites, and most of these organisations will have Facebook pages and Twitter accounts, which can be a good way to keep up to date with the latest information.

Cumbria County Council: <https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/>

District Councils:

Allerdale Borough Council: <https://www.allerdale.gov.uk/>

Barrow Borough Council: <https://barrowbc.gov.uk/>

Carlisle City Council: <https://www.carlisle.gov.uk/>

Copeland Borough Council: <https://www.copeland.gov.uk/>

Eden District Council: <https://www.eden.gov.uk/>

South Lakeland District Council: <https://www.southlakeland.gov.uk/>

North Cumbria NHS:

North Cumbria CCG: <https://northcumbriaccg.nhs.uk/>

North Cumbria Integrated Care: <https://www.ncic.nhs.uk/>

South Cumbria NHS:

Morecambe Bay CCG: <https://www.morecambebayccg.nhs.uk/>

University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay: <https://www.uhmb.nhs.uk/>

Cumbria Police: <https://www.cumbria.police.uk/>

Cumbria CVS (support for voluntary and community organisations): <https://cumbriacvs.org.uk/>

ACTion with Communities in Cumbria (support for communities and community groups):
<https://www.cumbriaaction.org.uk/>



What comes next?

Many communities have already started to think how things might look as restrictions begin to ease, and we start to return to “normal” following Coronavirus.

We’ve heard about good things that people want to build on – discovering local walks and cycle rides, using local food shops, working from home and avoiding a long commute every day, and a more flexible and collaborative relationship between communities and public sector organisations.

And we’re aware of lots of negative impacts that mean we will need to find new ways to support people – job losses, loneliness, delays in treatment for physical health conditions, and an increase in mental health conditions.

Many of these issues are already being addressed on a day-to-day basis, and Cumbria’s Strategic Recovery Coordination Group has been developing a long-term recovery strategy.

This strategy will be based on Cumbria’s existing Public Health Strategy, and based around 5 themes: People, Participation, Prosperity, Place and Planet.

Public consultation on the recovery strategy is due to start in January, and we’ll circulate more information then.

Please do let us know if you think it’s the right approach, and if it includes all the things that are important to you as we begin to recover from the pandemic, and have the opportunity to reimagine a new Cumbria.



There are also a couple of surveys running to capture people’s experiences of Coronavirus – both of these will help inform the recovery strategy, so please consider completing one or both of them so that we know how you’ve been affected by the pandemic.

The Healthwatch Cumbria survey can be found here:

<https://healthwatchcumbria.co.uk/coronavirus/coronavirus-share-your-experience-with-our-survey/>

The University of Cumbria survey can be found here:

<https://cumbria.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/covid19-impact-survey>