

Oxfordshire

NHS & Local Authorities

Stakeholder Briefing

14 May 2021

Oxfordshire health and local authority partners are working together to respond to the pandemic and help the county restart, recover and renew after COVID-19.

Table of contents

Outbreak Management	2
Health, Wellbeing and Social Care	3
Children, Education, Families	12
Community resilience	13
Economy	13
Place, Transport, Infrastructure.....	14
And finally.....	14

Outbreak Management

The roadmap out of lockdown

The government has confirmed that we are on track for national restrictions to be eased further on 17 May in line with step three of the roadmap out of lockdown.

This is reflected in the number of new cases in Oxfordshire, which has now dropped to a weekly rate of 17.1 per 100,000 of the population. Among residents aged 60 and over, the rate has fallen to 3.6 per 100,000. The latest COVID-19 figures can be viewed on the county council's [interactive dashboard](#), which is updated on a daily basis.



As the county continues to open up, residents are being reminded about the [importance of following the rules](#) and adhering to public health guidance. A countywide communications campaign is encouraging people to play it safe in order to keep Oxfordshire open; while Oxfordshire's Director of

Public Health is asking residents to stay vigilant as we move into the next phase of the roadmap:

"There are good reasons for welcoming these step three changes, while at the same time reminding everyone that 17 May is not finale day. COVID still presents a real risk, particularly with the emergence of new variants, so we need to do everything we can to control the virus."

The new rules from 17 May

- You can socialise indoors in a group of up to six people or two households, including for overnight stays. Each household can include a support bubble, if eligible.
- Up to 30 people can meet outside.
- Indoor hospitality venues such as restaurants, pubs, bars and cafes can open.
- Indoor entertainment and attractions such as cinemas, theatres, concert halls, bowling alleys, casinos, amusement arcades, museums and children's indoor play areas can open.
- Hotels, hostels and B&Bs can open for groups of up to six people or two households (each household can include a support bubble, if eligible).
- [New guidance on social distancing](#) when meeting friends and family will encourage you to exercise caution and take personal responsibility to keep you and your loved ones safe.
- People will be able to attend indoor and outdoor events, including live performances, sporting and business events. Attendance will be capped.
- Organised indoor sport will be able to take place for all (this includes gym classes).
- Funeral attendance will no longer be limited to 30 people, but instead will be determined by how many people the COVID-secure venue can safely accommodate with social distancing.
- Weddings, wakes, bar/bat mitzvahs, christenings and other commemorative events can take place with up to 30 people.

- Up to five named visitors (two at any one time) can visit care home residents, providing visitors test negative for COVID-19.
- All higher education students will be able to access in-person teaching.
- Support groups and parent and child group gathering limits will increase to 30 people (not including under 5s)
- There will no longer be a legal restriction or permitted reason required to travel internationally. There will be a traffic light system for international travel, and you must **follow the rules** when returning to England depending on whether you return from a red, amber or green list country.

Health, Wellbeing and Social Care

Vaccination programme update

The summary below provides the position at 11 May 2021:



The COVID-19 vaccination programme continues across Oxfordshire with more than half a million doses having been delivered. This week the invitation was extended to anyone aged 38 and 39. More local options are available on the national booking service with several local pharmacies as well as the Kassam in Oxford being available to book. Anyone living close to the county border might also find a local vaccination site across the border is closer.

There have been some technical challenges with the national booking service but these have been resolved. More appointments are made available every week as vaccine supply is confirmed so people are encouraged to try again if they don't get through or don't find a convenient appointment on their first attempt

The guidance has also been updated so that anyone aged 40 and under and anyone pregnant will now be offered an alternative to the Oxford

AstraZeneca vaccine. In Oxfordshire, this is currently the Pfizer vaccine.

The national campaign stresses how the COVID-19 vaccine is safe and effective – it provides the best protection against coronavirus. The first dose will give good protection from 3-4 weeks after having it. The second dose gives longer lasting protection and it is important that all attend appointments for second jabs.

Further evidence of success from COVID-19 vaccine as new trial launched

New Public Health England [analysis shows](#) that individuals who receive a single dose of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine have approximately 80% lower risk of death with COVID-19 compared with unvaccinated individuals.

In another new development, Oxford-based researchers have launched a human challenge trial to study the immune response to COVID-19. The researchers are led by Professor Helen McShane, Director of the NIHR Oxford Biomedical Research Centre (BRC) which is hosted by Oxford University Hospitals (OUH). More information is available on the [OUH website](#).

Major vaccination milestone in reach

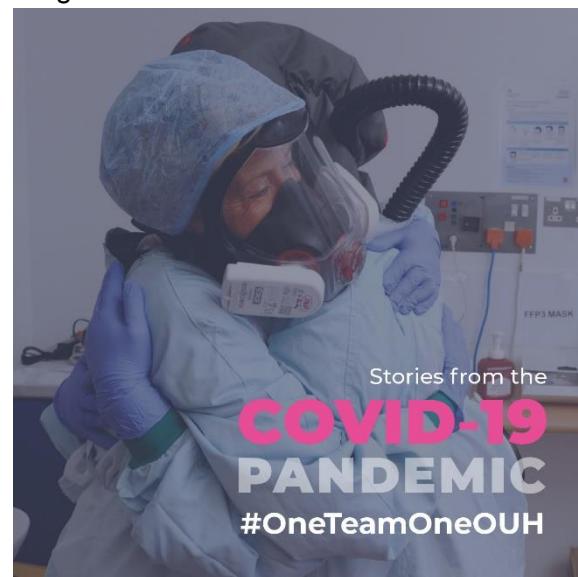
As vaccinations open to 38-39 year-olds, Oxford Health is set to administer its 200,000th vaccination at one of its large-scale vaccination centres this week (w/c May 10). The Trust gives its thanks and congratulations to all the teams who have supported this programme, from all those who have worked tirelessly at its sites, to those in support roles who have helped with training, logistics, HR support and much, much more.



Thousands read *Stories from the COVID pandemic #OneTeamOneOUH* e-Book

More than 5,000 people have read [Stories from the COVID pandemic #OneTeamOneOUH](#) – an e-Book which tells the stories of a year like no other through the words of Oxford University Hospitals' (OUH) staff – following its launch on 23 April.

It has been read online by people as far afield as the US, Australia, Malaysia, India, and the Philippines as well as, closer to home in Spain, Belgium and the Netherlands.



The e-Book has also attracted plenty of interest from local media in Oxfordshire who interviewed OUH staff who wrote about their COVID-19 experiences in the e-Book – BBC Radio Oxford spoke to Sarah Kilcoyne (Speech and Language Therapist in the Craniofacial Unit) while JACKfm interviewed Stella Hornby (Clinical Lead for Consultant Ophthalmology), Denise O'Donnell (Hepatology Team), and Lindley Nevers (Co Vice-Chair of the OUH BAME Staff Network).

Dr Bruno Holthof, Chief Executive Officer of Oxford University Hospitals (OUH), says: "This e-Book was an opportunity for everyone to share their reflections on our OneTeamOneOUH response to COVID-19 – we invited all staff to submit their contributions for inclusion in order to truly reflect the experiences of our people."

The e-Book was made possible thanks to the generous support of Oxford Hospitals Charity.

New campaign to support patients to get the best from primary care

As we emerge from the pandemic GP practices across Oxfordshire (in common with elsewhere) are experiencing increasing demand for services. 56% of consultations are now once more face to face, with 40% by telephone and 4% "other" including video or online, according to NHS Digital.

We are developing an Oxfordshire communications campaign to focus on a number of issues which have become apparent as demand increases:

- **#Be Kind** to encourage courtesy and kindness from the public towards GP practice staff who are working under pressure to manage business as usual services, together with the vaccination roll-out.
- **#Help us help you** to encourage patients to manage minor conditions through self-care or by seeking advice from pharmacies or NHS online services, before contacting their GP practice for an appointment or other advice.
- **#When should I worry?** To encourage patients with worrying 'red flag' symptoms themselves or with serious concerns about a child's health to contact their GP practice for an appointment as soon as possible.

OUH Chair elected as a Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences

Professor Sir Jonathan Montgomery, Chair of Oxford University Hospitals (OUH) NHS Foundation Trust, was elected as a Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences this week.

Jonathan, who is also Professor of Healthcare Law at University College London, is one of 50 "outstanding" biomedical and health scientists to be elected – 12 of the 50 Fellows are Oxford-based which demonstrates its key role in health research.

They include Professor Sarah Gilbert, who helped lead the team developing the Oxford-AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine, as well as Professor Martin Landray and Professor Peter Horby who are Chief

Investigators of the RECOVERY trial, the world's largest COVID-19 treatment trial.

The new Fellows have been selected for their exceptional contributions to the advancement of medical science through innovative research discoveries and translating scientific developments into benefits for patients and the wider society. More information is available on [the Academy of Medical Sciences website](#).

Oxford Health joins international nursing celebration

Oxford Health raised the profile of the hard work done by its workforce as part of International Nurses Day #IND2021 (May 12). Chief Nurse Marie Crofts (pictured) recorded [a special video message](#) to the Trust's c2,000 nurses. She was also one of three Oxford Health guests on BBC Radio Oxford.

**Celebrating
International
Nurses Day
Weds May 12**

#IND2021



Marie had an extended slot on the Kat Orman show talk about her pride in the nursing staff; the impact of COVID on teams and the Trust's apprenticeship schemes to foster homegrown talent, as well as an international workforce recruitment programme – which has seen some new experienced nurses from around the world take up roles in our community hospitals. You can [listen to her interview here](#) from 50mins.

- Becca Collacott, emergency nursing assistant, from the Abingdon Community Hospital's Emergency Multidisciplinary Unit (EMU) used her passion for photography to document some evocative and historic moments. BBC Radio Oxford breakfast show talked to her about her work and nursing here [BBC Sounds](#) 1:19:20
- OHFT's Head of Research Delivery Dr Cathy Henshall also spoke on the breakfast bulletin about the contribution student nurses have

made to [clinical trials](#) at [Oxford](#) Health during the pandemic. [BBC Sounds](#) 1:27

New Nursing, Midwifery & Allied Health Professionals Strategy launched on International Nurses Day at OUH

International Nurses Day is celebrated around the world each year on 12 May to mark the anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birth.

In a personal message to all nursing staff working at Oxford University Hospitals (OUH), Chief Nursing Officer Sam Foster said: "I would like to take the opportunity to say thank you for all the amazing things you do – and to look to the future with you.

"It is our combined compassionate strength and exceptional individual efforts that have helped those at their most vulnerable and brought us through the toughest challenge of our professional lives.

"The way you have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic has been truly inspirational. In the face of an unprecedented global health crisis, you have continued to do all you can to care for patients. It has not been easy, but our teamwork, commitment, and resilience have helped us through – together – and will take us forward into the future.

"And so today I am delighted to share our five-year strategy, which will have you at the heart of new models of care, ensuring that OUH is a great place to work and always delivering compassionate care to all our patients."



Sam Foster (Chief Nursing Officer, Oxford University Hospitals) and senior nursing colleagues recorded a [special video message](#) to celebrate International Nurses Day

The new OUH [Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professionals Strategy](#) is on the Trust website.

Wednesday 5 May marked International Day of the Midwife and so OUH Chief Nursing Officer Sam Foster and Director of Midwifery Ali Cuthbertson wrote to all midwifery staff to share their gratitude – you can read their [message on the OUH website](#), as well as see the social media posts on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)

The DAISY Award: For Extraordinary Nurses

An award to recognise the contribution of nurses who go above and beyond to help patients was officially launched on International Nurses Day at Oxford Health.



The DAISY Awards is an international recognition programme that honours and celebrates the skilful and compassionate care provided by nurses each day. The public is now being invited to make their nominations on [this page](#). OUH also have DAISY Awards and more details are available on their website [here](#).

Special Eid message from Monawar

Imam Monawar Hussain, the Muslim Chaplain at Oxford University Hospitals (OUH) and High Sheriff of Oxfordshire for 2021-22, has recorded a special video message wishing everyone celebrating Eid ul Fitr this week a happy and blessed time with family & friends. You can watch [Monawar's video](#) via the OUH Twitter feed.

Ariel named as joint winner of national BAME Nurse of the Year award

Ariel Lanada, a senior nurse who chairs the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Staff Network at Oxford University Hospitals (OUH), was announced

as joint winner of the BAME Nurse of the Year award in the National Health & Care BAME Awards on 6 May.



Ariel, who is a Divisional Lead for Practice Development and Education at OUH and Chairman of the Filipino Community of Oxford (FilCom Oxford), says: "I am incredibly honoured to receive this award. This has been an incredibly challenging year for everyone, and the teamwork demonstrated both in our hospitals and across the community has been wonderful to see."

Sam Foster, Chief Nursing Officer at OUH, adds: "This is really wonderful news – congratulations, Ariel. The past year has been like no other for everyone – including our staff and the BAME community.

"The support that Ariel and others in our Trust have been able to give is so vital, and such an essential part of wellbeing and care during this time. We are incredibly proud of everything that Ariel and all of our staff do as part of our #OneTeamOneOUH."

Oxfordshire Health & Social Care Awards finalists announced



Members of staff and teams from Oxford University Hospitals (OUH) and Oxford Health (OH) are finalists in the Oxfordshire Health &

Social Care Awards. The shortlisted nominees are featured on the [awards website](#) and winners will be announced in a virtual awards ceremony on Facebook at 7pm on Friday 21 May.

OUH finalists include:

- **Tamara Davidson**, Specialist Palliative Care Nurse – Good Nurse Award and Care Hero Award
- **Amy Bancroft**, Registered Nursing Associate – Good Nurse Award and Care Hero Award
- **Courtney Hughes**, Trainee Nursing Associate – Unsung Hero Award and Care Hero Award
- **Clare Trussler**, Cancer Support Specialist – Mental Health Award
- **May Quarmby**, Consultant Clinical Psychologist – Mental Health Award
- **Jo-Anne Ellis**, Specialist Paediatric Diabetes Nurse – Adolescent & Child Care Award
- **Linen Team** – Health Care Team Award

OH finalists include:

- **Fiona Johns** – Good Nurse Award,
- **Luther Street Medical Centre** – finalist for GP Practice of the Year
- **The Ox & Bucks 24/7 Mental Health Helpline** – Finalists for Mental Health Award.

You can read more about these outstanding staff on the [OUH website](#) and OH website [here](#).

In addition, nurse **Marianne Reyes**, Manager of OUH's Wycombe Renal Unit, is a finalist in the Buckinghamshire Health & Social Care Awards – virtual awards ceremony also taking place at 7pm on Friday 21 May

Congratulations to all our finalists and good luck to everyone on 21 May!

Oxford Health NHS worker takes apprenticeship award

An Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust worker has taken a top prize for her work to encourage more apprentices to start a career in health. Becky Elsworth, Oxford Health's Apprenticeship Manager, outshone tough competition to secure the

Apprenticeship Champion Award which recognises individuals who have gone the extra to keep learners in their apprenticeships and to champion apprenticeships as a fantastic career choice.



The Oxfordshire Apprenticeship Awards is run by OxLEP – the county's local enterprise partnership. More on the story [here](#)

Personality disorder training programme wins medical education award

An Oxford Health team has been awarded the 2021 Denis O'Leary medical educator award for the Personality Disorder Positive Outcome Programme (PDPOP), a personality disorder training programme for general practice teams.

The award, made by the Oxford Centre for Medical Education, recognises excellence in medical/clinical education with an emphasis on patient-centeredness.



The PDPOP programme drew on the experience of two Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust services – Complex Needs and Luther Street Medical Practice, which provides services for the homeless – and was developed by a team including trainers with lived experience of personality disorder. More [here](#).

Special comic helps prepare children going into hospital for operations

Children coming into hospital have a new way to help them understand what to expect before having an operation, thanks to the support of Oxford Hospitals Charity.

A special version of the popular children's comic, *The Phoenix*, has been created for young patients coming in for surgery at the Oxford Children's Hospital – on the John Radcliffe Hospital site in Oxford – and the Horton General Hospital in Banbury.



Zoe Pooley (Specialist Matron, Oxford Children's Hospital) with a copy of *The Phoenix*

The Incredible Hospital Comic is a 34-page magazine that was carefully planned with input from many young patients, as well key hospital staff. It includes stories that answer questions children often ask and has jokes, puzzles and even a gallery of the cuddly toys which youngsters take into hospital with them.

The different stories take children through what to expect at various stages of their hospital journey and familiarises them with procedures and the staff they will meet. More information is available at www.hospitalcharity.co.uk/phoenixcomic.

Making a difference through Shared Lives

Harris Ponen is one of Oxfordshire's shared lives carers, providing support to two adults who need additional emotional and psychological support. He is encouraging others to give it a go and has shared [his story here](#).

Shared Lives is funded by Oxfordshire County Council and part of the council's commitment to help people live safe, healthy lives and play an active part in their community.



There are currently 80 Shared Lives carer households providing support to around 130 adults in the county. They provide anything from occasional short breaks or daytime support through to longer-term, full-time arrangements.

Mental health help for mothers in the spotlight

Oxford Health has given its support to Maternal Mental Health week to help get the message out to mothers that help is out there if they are suffering from mental health problems.

Perinatal mood and anxiety disorders can develop at any time during pregnancy and the first 12 months after childbirth.

Posts on social media have been used to publicise Oxford Health's services including perinatal teams based in Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire which provide assessment and treatment for women with complex and severe mental health problems during and after pregnancy. Find out more [here](#).



Nature plays a part in better mental health
Oxford Health has been marking National Mental Health Week - which this year has a theme of 'nature' - with a range of events including a special Health Matters webinar hosted by Trust Chair, David Walker. It can be watched on catch up [here](#)



The Trust has also been promoting the way people can access Oxford Health help via its [website](#) and on social media; including the 24/7 mental health helpline via NHS111 and nhs111.uk, Healthy Minds and TalkingSpace Plus.



Dr Catriona Mellor, Specialty Doctor and Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, has also been giving an insight into how nature can boost your mental health. Read it [here](#)

Oxford Health appoints new Wellbeing Guardian
Oxford Health has appointed its first Wellbeing Guardian to further demonstrate the Trust's commitment to our workforce through the Health and Wellbeing programme.

Bernard Galton, who has been a non-executive director for three years, will continue his work with Trust Board colleagues and the H&W team to ensure a far-reaching and ambitious programme of

work is embedded within the organisation. Read more [here](#).

Co-SPACE Children and Adolescents' Mental Health: a year of lockdowns

The Co-SPACE study, which is supported by the NIHR Oxford Health Biomedical Research Centre, has reported that children and young people have experienced varying degrees of emotional and attentional difficulties during the pandemic.



Parents and carers have reported that their children's difficulties have increased in line with tightening of restrictions and decreased when restrictions have been eased. Read more [here](#).

Can you help to entertain Oxford Health patients?

The Trust's 'Small Screen, Big Entertainment' project is helping patients to relax in their rooms and settle down to watch a movie. Now help is needed in creating a library of suitable DVDs that they can choose from.



So, if you have any unwanted box sets, classic films or comedies you no longer want, Oxford Health Charity is appealing for donations.

Every DVD will need to have a British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) rating of U, PG, 12A, 12, 15 or 18, but please no horror or graphic scenes of violence. Each one will be checked by Oxford Health volunteers for suitability and cleaned before being allowed to be loaned out. Find out more [here](#).

Visitors to community hospitals and mental health wards

New arrangements for visiting patients at Oxford Health hospitals are now in place. Patients can now be visited by a different person each day including children under 16.



The visit booking system remains in place and all sessions must be by prior arrangement. Pre-booked visiting hours are available at our community hospitals and mental health wards on Mondays to Fridays.

For more information on the current visiting rules, including visits taking place in hospital gardens, take a look at [this page](#).

Immunisation week highlights protecting the health of the young

Oxford Health recently showcased the work it does to protect childhood health through immunisation. World Immunisation Week is an annual campaign by the World Health Organization held each April. And while the world's attention has been focussed on Covid vaccines, Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust shone a light on the work it does to deliver routine childhood immunisations, too. A series of features generated a lot of interest on the Trust's social media accounts and was picked up by the local media too. More [here](#).

Home First helps people get back into family life

Home First is an innovative approach, which aims to achieve greater levels of independence for people in their own home following a period of illness.



Set up by a countywide partnership comprising Oxfordshire County Council, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Age UK, Oxford University Hospitals and Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trusts, Home First was established in June last year. To date, it has supported around 1,500 people.

Among them is Norman Haynes, a retired firm manager in his eighties from Witney, who was in hospital for five weeks before being supported home by Home First. When he was first discharged home, he needed support from two reablement support workers four times a day. But with the help of one of Home First's occupational therapists, this level of support was gradually stepped down as his independence and strength increased. And within the space of just three weeks, he no longer needed any support. You can read more about [Norman's story here](#).

Oxfordshire's director of adult social care becomes ADASS president



Oxfordshire's Director of Adult Social Care, Stephen Chandler, will be a leading face for social care nationally as he takes up the role of president of national social care charity, the Association of

Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS).

The position, which is held for one year, heads up the charity's board of trustees, which in turn represents current and former directors of adult social services, and other senior staff across England.

Ex-Royal Pharmaceutical Society President appointed to OUH Trust Board

Professor Ashok 'Ash' Soni has joined the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Board as a Non-Executive Director for an initial term of three years. He was appointed by the Trust's Council of Governors, which includes elected representatives of the public and staff.

Ash Soni is a community pharmacist who graduated from the Portsmouth School of Pharmacy in

1983. In 2004, he was one of the first pharmacists to qualify as a supplementary prescriber and in 2007 he qualified as an independent prescriber. He is a past President of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society and is currently a Vice President of the International Pharmacy Federation.



[More information is available on the OUH website.](#)

New Chief Medical Officer joins Oxford Health

Dr Karl Marlowe has joined Oxford Health (May 10) as the new Chief Medical Officer. Karl has already set out his intention to focus on clinical excellence, quality improvement and ensuring the Trust's research and development work receives international acclaim.

He said: "I am delighted to have joined Oxford Health. There is much expectation that, as we emerge to the new post-pandemic normal, our NHS will also need to change significantly. NHS



providers such as Oxford Health occupy a unique position in our local health and care system and is a vital link to

our population and communities.

"We, as a service provider, and most importantly as NHS staff, are an 'anchor' around which we can collectively shape the transformation required over the summer months."

Children, Education, Families

Catering team 'steps up to the plate' with 500,000 meals for Oxfordshire pupils

School children in Oxfordshire have eaten over half a million meals prepared by the county council's catering team during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 150-strong team of Oxfordshire County Council Catering Services (OCCCS) has adapted its service and found imaginative ways to provide both hot and cold offers that fit with the arrangements of each of the 60 schools it serves.



The team have also provided lunches for schools not within its service, where they had been unable to source meals through their normal provider. You can find out more on the [county council's website](#).

Supporting families in need

Further funding is being provided by the county council to schools and early years settings to cover the costs of free school meal equivalent support over the May half-term holiday. This funding is enabled by an extension to the national COVID Winter Support Grant by the Department for Work and Pensions. Funding will also be distributed to the city and district councils to allow them to further extend their emergency welfare schemes through to 20 June. Local councils are working closely with

Citizens Advice and other voluntary sector organisations to maximise the impact of this emergency support.

Thame couple become foster care ambassadors

This week marks the start of Foster Care Fortnight (10-23 May), and a couple from Thame have been chosen as this year's regional ambassadors.

Louise and Colin Day have been foster carers for two years. Last year, Louise received Oxfordshire County Council's foster carer of the year award, in recognition of her and husband's commitment to caring for children.

"The joy of watching a foster child grow in confidence is almost indescribable."

Louise and Colin Day
Foster carers for two years

#WhyWeCare

FOSTERING IN OXFORDSHIRE OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

They were recognised for transforming the confidence of the first child they cared for, a shy young boy who was partially sighted and non-verbal. Louise and Colin patiently coaxed out his personality and grew his confidence. They took him on exciting trips, including holidays to Spain and

Dartmouth, and he thrived in a range of activities, such as touch-sensory classes and singing groups.

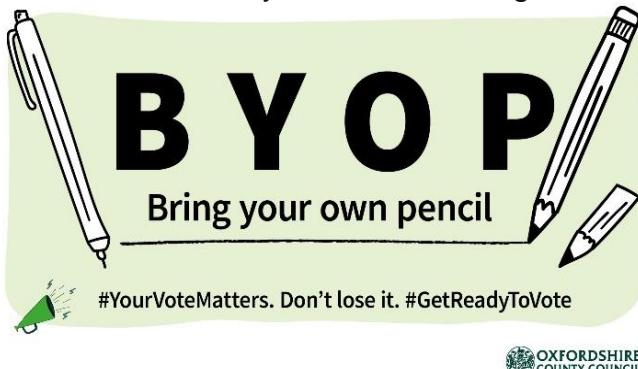
The theme of Foster Care Fortnight is ‘why we care’. The Days encapsulate this perfectly.

Thousands of new foster families are needed every year to care for children, with the greatest need

Community resilience

COVID-safe elections

Extra steps were taken by Oxfordshire councils in last week’s local elections to make sure that residents could stay safe whilst voting.



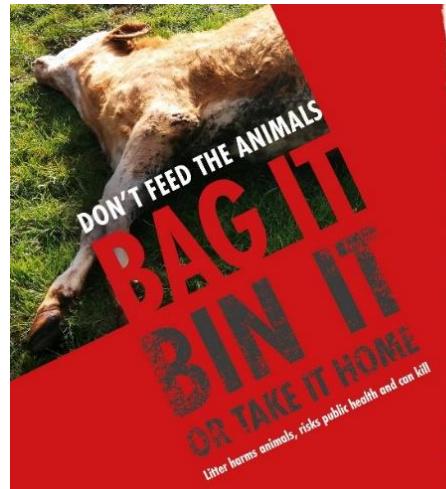
COVID-secure measures were put in place across the county’s polling stations, from floor markings and one-way systems, to safety screens and face coverings, while residents were encouraged to bring their own pencil or pen.

Don’t feed the animals

As the weather warms up and restrictions on outdoor gatherings ease, Oxfordshire councils are anticipating a bigger problem with littering in the county’s parks and green spaces. They are therefore

urging residents to do their bit to keep public places safe and clean.

Oxford City Council has launched a hard-hitting anti-littering campaign ‘Don’t feed the animals’, which highlights the danger of litter to pets, livestock and wildlife. Only recently a horse cut open its hoof on broken glass on Port Meadow, while a cow suffered an intestinal blockage thought to be caused by eating litter.



Economy

Showcasing Oxfordshire’s world-class innovators

The county’s world-class innovation was subject to royal scrutiny as His Royal Highness The Earl of Wessex met with business leaders, entrepreneurs and apprentices from across Oxfordshire at a special virtual meeting on 5 May.

The event – which was hosted and convened by the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP) – saw the Earl discuss topics as diverse as quantum computing through to how the county has led the global response in creating a COVID-19 vaccine.

The Earl discussed the county’s innovation strengths with Ilana Wisby, CEO of Oxford University spin-out [Oxford Quantum Circuits](#); Professor Sarah

Gilbert, who heads-up the COVID-19 vaccine programme for the University of Oxford; and Jason Kingsley, owner and CEO of the Didcot-based production company **Rebellion**.

His Royal Highness then spoke with some of the



county's leading apprentices and entrepreneurs, each in their own way inspired by the significant opportunities and businesses who call Oxfordshire 'home'.

The virtual visit comes almost two years after the launch of the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy, an OxLEP-led strategy supported by over 300 leaders from across business, academia and the county's local authorities.

Showcasing Oxford's partnership response to homelessness

The Earl was also in Oxford in person on 13 May, meeting partners involved in tackling homelessness,

Place, Transport, Infrastructure

A40 public engagement exhibitions

Residents in the Witney area and users of the nearby A40 are set to benefit from £180 million of major road and infrastructure improvements.



in a series of meetings convened by the Oxford Homeless Movement (OHM) across different accommodation facilities in the city. The Earl was hosted by OHM Chair Jayne Cranston, and met teams from Oxford City Council, St Mungo's, Aspire and the Gatehouse to see how assistance has been provided to rough sleepers under the 'Everyone in' initiative during the pandemic.

His Royal Highness heard how new partnerships had been forged, also involving both universities to provide COVID-safe accommodation in hotels and student rooms, and how the Floyds Row Homelessness Hub was and continues to be an integral part of the recovery from the pandemic.

OxLEP Business Growth Hub 21/22 launch event – 27 May

The OxLEP Business Growth Hub is here to help businesses start up, grow and diversify by connecting them with the right support. Join a special, online launch event on 27 May to find out about the new business support that is now available:

www.oxfordshirelep.com/events/event/growth-hub-launch-breakfast-session

The county council is asking for the views of residents and roads users in two online exhibitions on the plans, which run until 30 May.

The delivery of infrastructure is key to supporting sustainable development in Witney, Eynsham and related new developments in West Oxfordshire.

The first exhibition covers the details of the access to Witney road improvement scheme at Shores Green. The second covers the A40 HIF2 smart corridor plans, which include the A40 dual carriageway extension, integrated bus lanes and work at Dukes Cut. Further information is available on the [county council's website](#).

And finally...

We hope this update is useful. Please email occg.media-team@nhs.net with any queries and we will endeavour to get back to you as soon as we can.