

COVID-19 – The story so far

On 5th March it was announced that a hospital patient had become the first person in the UK to die after testing positive for Coronavirus.

On 11th March the World Health Organisation declared that COVID-19 was a global pandemic.

Here's a reminder of how Hartlepool Borough Council – working with partners across the town - responded to the COVID-19 crisis as events unfolded nationally.

Week 1 – 16-22 March

The Government advises everyone to avoid gatherings and crowded places and orders schools, colleges, nurseries, pubs and restaurants to close.

Week 2

The Government announces strict movement restrictions, orders shops selling non-essential goods to close, bans public gatherings and cancels all events apart from funerals.

Week 3

A million cases of Coronavirus are recorded around the world. The Queen addresses the nation.

Week 4

The number of people who have died in hospital after testing positive for Coronavirus in the UK rises above 5,000.

Week 5

The Government announces lockdown measures will continue for at least three more weeks.

Week 6

Millions of people become eligible for a Coronavirus test in an expansion of the Government testing programme for essential workers and their households.

We close a number of venues offering non-essential services, cancel all Council events to the end of June and postpone all Council meetings. Staff are redeployed to critical services. Frontline services continue.

Hartlepool Support Hub is launched to help anyone in Hartlepool who is self-isolating or otherwise unable to leave their home and takes almost 1,400 calls in its first week.

We step in to make sure care home staff and staff supporting people in their own homes have sufficient stocks of PPE.



We launch our new rainbow logo – We're all in this together.

We bring in new measures to protect our refuse collection staff from the virus.

We put special measures in place to help Hartlepool Enterprise Centre tenants who don't qualify for Government support.

We urge the town's frontline charities to apply for extra Government funding.

Hartlepool schools and colleges are praised for providing much-needed personal protective equipment to NHS and social care staff.

Hartlepool Support Hub backs a new good neighbours support scheme.

Hartlepool Mecca Bingo teams up with us to provide free hot meals to vulnerable residents.

Cleveland Local Resilience Forum declares a Major Incident

We rapidly increase our IT capacity to enable as many of our staff as possible to work from home.

We commission appropriate accommodation for the homeless to make sure any rough sleepers in Hartlepool are off the streets by the first weekend of lockdown.

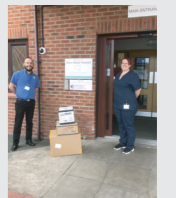


We again urge people to heed movement restrictions as we close beachfront car parks.

Residents in financial crisis are urged to call the Council's Local Welfare Support team for help.



Council Leader Councillor Shane Moore praises residents for staying at home over Easter.



Together with EDF Energy, we donate much-needed PPE to Alice House Hospice.

We outline national and local support for businesses and arrangements for people to apply for benefits online.

Week 7

Efforts continue nationally to increase the number of people being tested for Coronavirus.

Week 8

The UK now has the highest number of COVID-19 related deaths in Europe.

Week 9

Lockdown measures are eased in England, allowing people to spend more time outside.

Week 10

The Government faces further mounting pressure to reconsider its plans to reopen primary schools from 1st June.

Week 11

Boris Johnson says the Government's five tests have been met, and from 1st June groups of up to six people will be able to meet outdoors.

A phased return of neighbourhood and streetscene services is announced.

We announce that the Household Waste Recycling Centre is to open for pre-booked visits.



Visitors are asked to stay away from Hartlepool as the Coronavirus lockdown is eased in England.

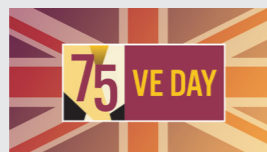


New measures are introduced at Seaton Carew to ensure pedestrians can safely observe social distancing.

Brown bin collections resume.



Hartlepool United Football Club is now supporting us by making its vehicles available to help with essential deliveries to those in need.



People across Hartlepool mark the 75th anniversary of VE Day.

A temporary COVID-19 mobile testing site is set up in Hartlepool.

As Coronavirus cases locally continue to rise, we take a collaborative approach with schools and academies and announce they will not reopen on Monday 1st June.

A fresh "stay away" appeal is issued ahead of the Bank Holiday weekend.

A new discretionary grant fund is launched to help small businesses and charities.

Since the crisis began:

- We have so far paid out over £17m in grants to about 1,500 local businesses which are eligible for support under the Government-funded grant support scheme.
- Hartlepool Support Hub has to date helped almost 4,000 people, including delivering over 1,600 food parcels, more than 1,200 prescriptions and over 1,500 hot meals.
- We have co-ordinated voluntary and community efforts with more than 150 DBS checked volunteers.
- We are working in partnership with organisations such as Hartlepool Foodbank, Hartlepool Carers, Mecca Bingo, Hartlepool United Football Club, Hartlepower and Poolie Time Exchange.
- We are working jointly with Cleveland Police around encouragement and enforcement of social distancing in public spaces.
- On a daily basis we have worked at a national and regional level to influence policy and systems where they are not working.