

# Oxfordshire

## NHS & Local Authorities Stakeholder Briefing

19 November 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.

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## Outbreak Management

COVID-19 cases in the county have continued to fluctuate over the past month, in line with the regional and national picture. The week ending 12 November saw a 16 per cent increase to a weekly rate of 382.1 per 100,000 residents, whereas the previous week saw a 15 per cent decrease.

The impact of the vaccination programme for 12 to 15 year-olds can clearly be seen, with the high rates of cases among secondary school-aged children falling back and cases becoming more evenly spread across all age groups.



Vaccination and testing remain key tools in the fight against the virus. People with symptoms of COVID-19 are being reminded to self-isolate and to get tested as soon as possible. A self-isolation information support pack is available for advice and sources of support.

This week saw the launch of a communications campaign for children and their families, designed to raise awareness around the four main winter viruses – COVID, flu, norovirus and RSV. Developed jointly by the NHS and Oxfordshire County Council, the communications material – including posters, bookmarks and stickers – has been sent to schools and early years settings across the county. An [animation](#) is also available online.

## Health, Wellbeing and Social Care

### Covid-19 Vaccinations in numbers Oxfordshire



**1,205,854 vaccinations delivered across the county**



**83.2% take up**  
in people aged 18 and over and 79% are fully vaccinated



**66.1% take up**  
in 16 and 17 year olds



**69.9% take up**  
in 12-15 year olds



**95.6% take up**  
in Clinically Extremely Vulnerable people and 75.3% having had their booster vaccination



**66.6% take up**  
of booster vaccination for those eligible



**All immunosuppressed offered third primary dose**

Vaccinations being delivered by GPs and mass vaccination centre



**Care Homes and housebound**

All care homes have been visited to offer boosters and housebound patients will also be offered booster.



**Latest position**

The National Booking Service for COVID-19 vaccinations is open to parents wanting to book a jab for their child aged 12-15.

The Kassam Stadium is offering walk-in appointments for boosters from 9.30am to 7pm daily and to those who are immuno-suppressed from 11am until 4pm Monday to Friday

## COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

The NHS has delivered more than 1.2 million vaccinations in Oxfordshire and has delivered 66.6 per cent of booster vaccines since the booster programme began seven weeks ago, including to people who are clinically vulnerable, those aged 50 and above, or who work in health and social care. The Joint Committee for Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) recommended this week that people aged 40-49 should also get a booster jab and they will be contacted when they are eligible to book appointments or go to walk-in clinics. Invitations are expected to begin from Monday 22 November. In addition, the NHS plans to open the [National Booking Service](#) to make second doses available to 16 -17 year olds. Young people this age group will also be able to book by calling 119, and use the NHS online vaccine walk-in finder

The vaccination programme for 12 to 15-year-olds with 69.9% coverage in Oxfordshire is one of the highest rates in the country. However, we would be grateful for any support you can give to help encourage further uptake. Parents are able to find local sites through the online walk-in finder to search for their nearest centre. They can also continue to use the national booking service to book their child's jab or through the ongoing programme in schools.

### Oxfordshire vaccination sites

The large-scale vaccination centre for Oxfordshire is at the Kassam Stadium. Appointments are available through [NHS national booking system](#) or by calling 119. The centre is also open to walk-ins, including booster jabs. For opening times see [here](#)

Walk-in appointments at the Kassam Stadium are available to people who are immuno-suppressed and have received a letter from their consultant advising them to receive their third jab. These appointments are available from Monday to Friday, 11am - 4pm. Patients are asked to bring their letter with them.

A number of Oxfordshire pharmacies are also offering vaccination appointments which must be booked [here](#).

- Boots, Oxford
- Cleggs Pharmacy, Wantage
- Jardines Pharmacy, Kidlington

- Jardines Pharmacy, Launton Football Club
- Lloyds Pharmacy, Carterton
- Superdrug Pharmacy, Banbury
- Boots, Cowley Road, Oxford
- Tesco Pharmacy, Didcot
- Henley Pharmacy
- Roundway Pharmacy, Oxford

GP-led local vaccination sites across Oxfordshire have successfully delivered hundreds of thousands of jabs since the programme started in December 2020. However, it is expected that the number of GP practices offering vaccinations will continue to reduce as they focus on increasing patient access to primary care during the winter months.

The vaccination programme board is working to ensure good coverage through local pharmacy sites and will look to target delivery to seldom heard groups through the Health on the Move van.



GP practices are delivering appointments at pre-pandemic levels of performance across the county. In the period April – September 2021, GP practices delivered 1,966,244 appointments and 354,131 vaccinations, compared with 1,913,382 appointments in the same pre-pandemic period in 2019.

### Winter campaign

As we move into the busy winter months our message to the public is that health and social care professionals across the system will be building on their experience of working together throughout the year and in previous winters to deliver services.

Staff from hospitals, GPs, social care services, community health services, ambulance services, mental health services, and third sector partners are working together to provide safe, effective, and sustainable care for people across Oxfordshire.

Winter is a high-pressure season for health and social care services, with the colder temperatures and harsher weather conditions leading to increased demands on GPs and Emergency Departments as flu season begins. This, paired with the ongoing impact of COVID-19, means that health and social care staff working as ‘Team Oxfordshire’ is especially important.

	Minor cuts and grazes Colds Bruises Minor sprains	<b>Self care</b> Stock up on medicines
	Minor illnesses Headaches Bites and stings Stomach upsets	<b>Pharmacy</b>
	Feeling unwell? Anxious or unsure? Need help?	<b>NHS 111</b> You can contact us 24/7
	Long term conditions Chronic pain Persistent symptoms	<b>GP Advice</b>
	Dislocated fingers and toes Minor scalds and burns Nose bleeds	<b>Minor Injuries Unit</b> Contact 111
	Serious bleeding Blacking out Choking Chest pain	<b>A&amp;E or 999</b> Emergencies only

We launched our winter campaign to the public in a [media release](#) and a panel of representatives from OCCG, Oxford University Hospitals NHS FT, Oxford Health NHS FT and Oxfordshire County Council were live on BBC Radio Oxford on 21 October discussing how to take care of yourself and others over the winter period.

We have since promoted NHS 111 online, in the media and on social media across the system and have also focussed on promoting the flu nasal spray for 2 and 3-year-old children in the weekly focus.

This week (19-21 November) is national ‘Self Care Week’ which we are supporting with activity across the system, including media releases on how to self-care for minor illnesses at home and how to look after poorly children to prevent hospital admission.

The ‘choose well this winter’ videos produced by OUH ([Andrea](#) and [Sachin](#)) have been launched and are being promoted through all of our channels including on social media. The accompanying ‘choose well’ graphic (left) is already online and being sent to all adults in Oxfordshire through social media advertising. We are also promoting this digitally, which is expected to increase the reach by 166,666 people. The social media advertising has reached 86,536 people to date.

### Developing community health and care services in the county

Oxfordshire’s health organisations and councils are working together with voluntary and community sector groups to modernise our community services. We want to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for everyone in Oxfordshire and increase independence for older people. During September we undertook engagement with people in Oxfordshire to seek views on draft principles to help shape how we design and develop services for our ageing population. We are most grateful for the input we received in both written form and for those who attended the three public events, asked questions, and gave their views. A copy of the engagement report is available [here](#) and includes an overview of the process and key themes, as well as an analysis of the responses.

We are currently reviewing the feedback to identify where we need to make changes to clarify or refine the principles. Work continues to develop the community services strategy and there will be more opportunity for people to get involved as it progresses. More information is available [here](#).

### 100,000 Genomes Project research reveals benefits to NHS

A world-first scientific study has shown that whole genome sequencing (WGS) can uncover new diagnoses for people across the broadest range of rare diseases investigated to date and could deliver enormous benefits across the NHS.

The pilot study of rare undiagnosed diseases, published on 11 November in the [New England Journal of Medicine](#), involved analysing the genes of 4,660 people from 2,183 families - all of whom were early participants in the [100,000 Genomes Project](#).

This groundbreaking project, led by Genomics England and NHS England, was established in 2013 to sequence 100,000 whole genomes from NHS patients and their families.

University of Oxford genomics researchers, supported by the NIHR Oxford Biomedical Research Centre (BRC), were among the authors on the study and Oxford University Hospitals (OUH) was one of the centres which recruited patients to the 100,000 Genomes Project.

Rare disease is a global health challenge, with approximately 10,000 disorders affecting 6% of the population in Western societies. More than 80% of rare diseases have a genetic component, and a third of children with a rare disease die before their fifth birthday.

The pilot study, led by Genomics England and Queen Mary University of London (QMUL) and undertaken in partnership with the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) BioResource, found that using WGS led to a new diagnosis for 25% of the participants, 14% of which were found in regions of the genome that would be missed by other tests.

It shows that WGS can effectively secure a diagnosis for patients, save the NHS vital resources and pave the way for other interventions.

### **Oxford Vaccine Team receive Pride of Britain Award**

Congratulations to the Oxford Vaccine Team, pictured below, who received a special recognition award at the *Daily Mirror's* Pride of Britain Awards on 30 October. Members of the team were presented with their award by Stephen Fry at the televised awards ceremony in London.



The Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine first dose (after approval) was delivered at the Churchill Hospital in Oxford in January 2021. The vaccine is estimated to have saved more than 100,000 lives in the UK alone and more than one billion doses have been delivered worldwide.

### **OUH Children's Diabetes service featured on The One Show**

An [innovative new treatment](#) for children with type 1 diabetes offered at the Oxford Children's Hospital on the John Radcliffe Hospital site was put under the TV microscope.



**Paediatric Diabetes Consultant Dr Rachel Besser with six-year-old patient Maebh.**

The One Show report featured OUH's Children's Diabetes team and six-year-old patient Maebh who has been fitted with a hybrid closed-loop system, also known as an artificial pancreas, which continually monitors blood glucose and automatically adjusts the amount of insulin given through a pump.

[The One Show from Monday 15 November is available to watch on BBC iPlayer.](#)

### **Outpatients return to the Trauma Building at the John Radcliffe Hospital**

Following an extensive refurbishment project, Trauma outpatients returned to the Trauma Building at the John Radcliffe Hospital on Monday 15 November.

Trauma inpatients moved out of the building following a review by the Fire Service in 2017. Over the past few months, there has been a rigorous programme of fire safety works which is now complete so the building can be brought back into full clinical use.

Outpatients, who were temporarily relocated to the main John Radcliffe building during the works, have now returned to the Trauma Building. Preparations are now underway for Trauma inpatients to return to the Trauma Building.

The £4.6m project – including the removal and replacement of cladding – has been made possible by a combination of Trust budget and NHS England & NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) funding.

### **OUH winter vaccinations campaign to keep staff and patients safe**

All #OneTeamOneOUH staff are being encouraged to have their annual flu vaccination and their COVID-19 booster vaccination to protect themselves, their colleagues, and patients.

The staff flu vaccination programme was launched on 27 September and the COVID-19 booster vaccination programme was launched a week later on 4 October.

An army of staff have been trained as 'peer vaccinators' to provide the flu vaccination in their areas of the Trust and the central team is led by Professor Meghana Pandit, Chief Medical Officer, and Sam Foster, Chief Nursing Officer.

OUH is also working with colleagues across the Oxfordshire health and care system – and the wider Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System (BOB ICS) – to promote the benefits of vaccination for everyone.

The COVID-19 booster vaccination will increase the protection which people have from their first two doses and give longer term protection. As is the case with some other vaccines, levels of protection may begin to reduce over time so getting a COVID-19 booster is the best way for people to protect themselves, their family and friends this winter.

### **Give a virtual gift this Christmas**

OUH and Oxford Hospitals Charity are calling on the local community to 'give a virtual gift' this Christmas.

In previous years community groups and individuals across Oxfordshire have generously donated toys and gifts at Christmas for patients of all ages. However, due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions

festive toy and gift drops cannot take place. So Oxford Hospitals Charity has created a special way for the public to continue to help spread festive joy across our hospitals by donating online which funds toys, gift bags and festive fun for patients in hospital over Christmas.



**Carrie Hayle, Play Specialist at the Oxford Children's Hospital.**

Gemma Cole, Community Fundraising Manager at Oxford Hospitals Charity, is encouraging people to visit [www.hospitalcharity.co.uk/giveagift](http://www.hospitalcharity.co.uk/giveagift) where they can choose to fund a gift for a child or an older patient. All toys and gifts purchased as part of the Give a Gift initiative have been carefully chosen by the team of play specialists and staff working with older patients, so donations will be making a real difference to patients who need them most.

Jo Pinney, Senior Play Specialist at the Oxford Children's Hospital, said the Trust was grateful for the continued support of the community. By donating towards a gift online, people will be helping make a difference to the patients treated across the Trust's hospitals this Christmas and throughout next year.

For more information about the charity appeal [visit the Oxford Hospitals Charity website](http://www.hospitalcharity.co.uk).

### **Thousands of #OneTeamOneOUH staff take part in national NHS survey**

Thousands of staff working OUH have had their say and made their voices heard by taking part in this year's NHS Staff Survey.



In a personal message to all OUH staff to launch the annual survey in September, OUH Chief People Officer, Terry Roberts said 2021 had been another hugely challenging year for everyone due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey is the chance for staff to say how it feels to work at OUH and enable positive changes to be made in response to feedback.

The Trust Board is committed to learning from colleagues' experiences to shape further improvements so that OUH is a great place to work

More than 6,700 OUH staff have already completed the survey which closes on Friday 26 November – results will be published in the new year and an action plan developed in response to what staff say.

The Trust aims to continue the improvements seen in recent years in not only the number of staff taking the opportunity to complete the survey but also the percentage of staff who would recommend OUH to their friends and family:

- The OUH Staff Survey response rate has increased from 38.8% in 2017 to 53.1% in 2020
- In the 2020 survey, 83% of staff said they would recommend OUH as a place to be treated – up from 78% in 2019
- Also in the 2020 survey, 70% of staff said they would recommend OUH as a place to work – up from 64% in 2019

**Our Greener OUH – pedal piwer and sustainable orthotics**

A cycle courier service delivering medication to Oxford University Hospitals (OUH), which is improving patient care and delivering sustainability benefits, was singled out by the NHS Chief Executive as delegates from around the world gathered in Glasgow for COP26.



**Pedal and Post riders Rich, Dani, Toby and Chris.**

This innovative project was highlighted in Amanda Pritchard's video message ahead of COP26.

OUH has teamed up with private healthcare firm Baxter Healthcare, which produces cancer treatments and parenteral nutrition from its Oxford site, to provide a more efficient way of getting key medical products to hospital sites and patients.

The scheme involves products being delivered to wards, day treatment areas, and pharmacies at the John Radcliffe and Churchill hospitals in Oxford by bicycle.

Patient-specific chemotherapy, antibiotics, and intravenous nutrition products are made at Baxter's Cowley compounding facility in sterile conditions, ready to be used within a short timeframe between the product being ordered and then received by the hospital, and local Oxford company [Pedal and Post](#) makes the deliveries using cycle couriers.

By introducing this service, the time it takes for products to be delivered to hospital sites has been halved.

Another example of building *Our Greener OUH* is how the [Orthotics team based at the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre in Oxford, which makes orthotic devices such as insoles and splints, is delivering significant sustainability improvements while improving patient care.](#)

The team, pictured below, is reducing, re-using, and recycling many of its materials, decreasing OUH's carbon footprint, lessening the impact on the environment, and lowering costs.



Speaking ahead of COP26, David Walliker, OUH Chief Digital and Partnership Officer, said it was excellent that people are taking action at a local level to make a difference.

He praised the Orthotics team for leading by example and the great job they have done in becoming more sustainable and improving patient care at the same time.

### Marking Armistice Day at OUH

On Armistice Day, Thursday 11 November, OUH staff, patients and visitors came together to remember the service and sacrifice of all who have given their lives protecting others – including OUH and NHS staff.

Reverend Sarah Sewell, Lead Chaplain at OUH, and Imam Monawar Hussain, Muslim Chaplain at OUH and The High Sheriff of Oxfordshire, led a moment of reflection at 11am outside the main entrance at the John Radcliffe Hospital.



Reverend Sarah Sewell and Imam Monawar Hussain, Muslim Chaplain on Armistice Day at the John Radcliffe Hospital.

Staff working on all OUH hospital sites were invited to observe the two minutes' silence, where their duties allowed, and to accommodate the wishes of patients and visitors to do likewise.

### Celebrating International Day of Medical Physics and World Radiography Day

[International Day of Medical Physics](#) on 7 November and [World Radiography Day](#) on 8 November were opportunities to shine the spotlight on key members of the #OneTeamOneOUH.

International Day of Medical Physics Day marks the birthday of Marie Sklodowska-Curie, a pioneering researcher of radioactivity and the first woman to be awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics.

The OUH Medical Physics team is 60-strong and used the opportunity to help people learn a little more about what they do through [this animation via theTrust Twitter feed @OUHospitals](#).



International Day of Medical Physics at OUH World Radiography Day is celebrated on 8 November each year to mark the anniversary of the discovery of X-rays in 1895. Radiographers play a vital role in modern healthcare and this awareness day is an opportunity to increase public understanding of diagnostic imaging and radiation therapy.

### OUH palliative care doctor appointed to NICE Board

Professor Bee Wee, (pictured below) a Consultant in Palliative Care at Sobell House – the hospice based on the Churchill Hospital site in Oxford – [has been appointed as a Non-Executive Director of the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence \(NICE\)](#).



Bee is also NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I) National Clinical Director for Palliative and End of Life Care, and has previously [received a CBE for her contribution to palliative care](#).

Professor Gillian Leng, NICE Chief Executive, said: she was delighted to welcome Professor Bee Wee to the NICE Board, and looked forward to working alongside her. Her wealth of experience and knowledge will support the implementation of the new strategy and make the most of innovation, while maintaining patient safety and clinical standards.

### **Internal staff recognition schemes celebrate successes of OUH people**

Recognising the excellence of staff, and celebrating successes as #OneTeamOneOUH, has never been more important than during the COVID-19 pandemic.

OUH has a number of internal staff recognition schemes which create a culture of thanking individuals and teams for going the extra mile.

Incident reporting has been a way of learning from errors in the NHS for many years – the Reporting Excellence initiative is a way of learning from positive experiences, from the many moments of excellent care and service which happen every day.

OUH Chief Medical Officer, Professor Meghana Pandit, recently presented the latest Reporting Excellence award to Sharon Bowerman, an Outpatients Administrator at the John Radcliffe Hospital, to recognise her hard work and dedication. [You can read more in this Facebook post](#).

The DAISY Awards for registered nurses and midwives enable patients, their families, and staff to nominate a nurse or midwife who has made a real difference through outstanding clinical care.



OUH Chief Nursing Officer Sam Foster recently presented a DAISY Award to Lucy Wood, pictured above, the leader of the Haemophilia team at the Churchill Hospital, who was nominated in recognition of the “outstanding work she does, always going above and beyond for her team and her patients”. [See OUH Facebook for information about the nomination and some lovely comments on the award](#).

### **Congratulations to award-winning #OneTeamOneOUH staff**

- Bereavement Midwife Support Worker **Candice Noonan**, pictured below, won the [Maternity Support Worker of the Year category at the Royal College of Midwives \(RCM\) Awards](#) on 27 October – Consultant Midwife **Heidi Ottosen** was shortlisted in the **RCM Leadership Award category**



- Consultant Spinal Surgeon **Mr Jeremy Reynolds**, won the [Dedication Award – Research and Healthcare Professional at the Bone Cancer Research Trust’s Bone Idols Awards](#) on 6 November
- The **Dermatology team** based at the Churchill Hospital in Oxford won the [Emotional Support Programme Initiatives for People with Skin Conditions category at the Quality in Care Dermatology Awards](#) for the vital care and support provided to young patients with skin conditions
- **Ariel Lanada**, a senior nurse who also chairs the OUH BAME Staff Network, was shortlisted in the [Nurse of the Year category of the Nursing Times Awards](#) on 27 October
- Medical Secretary **Ros Charlett** was shortlisted in the [Admin & Clerical category of the Unsung Hero Awards](#) on 12 November

### Pulse oximeters distributed to vulnerable communities through unique partnership

A collaboration between Oxfordshire CCG, community leaders, researchers and the Oxford Academic Health Science Network [supported groups at greater risk from COVID-19](#). Pulse oximeters were made freely available at a foodbank, mosque and a homeless shelter linked to a GP practice. This initiative supports equity of access and complements wider research into the remote monitoring of patients with coronavirus symptoms. The lessons learned from this initiative are being applied to disseminating health education through other community networks.

### Digital transformation of high volume surgical care pathways wins £400,000 national funding

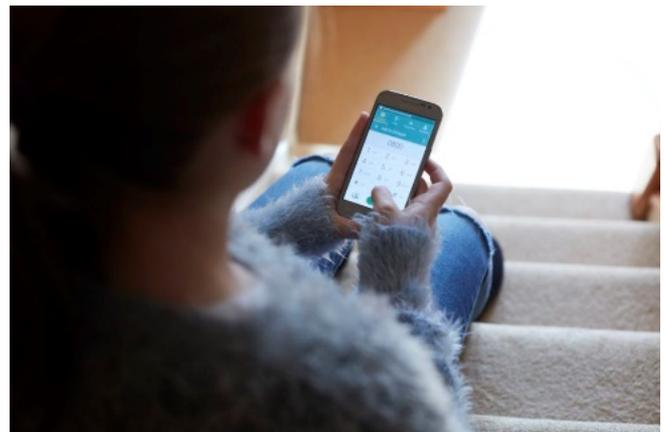
A collaboration harnessing digital innovations has won [national funding to develop new care pathways](#) which are better for patients and save valuable time. This programme will play a key part in helping to get NHS elective services back on track following COVID-related disruption.

Most people on waiting lists need relatively straightforward surgery such as cataract removal or joint replacements which are carried out in large numbers - known as ‘high volume, low complexity’ services.

The initiative led by BOB ICS with the Oxford Academic Health Science Network and industry partners has won more than £400,000 from the £6.5 million [NHSX Adoption Fund](#).

### Oxfordshire young people involved in Childline research project

New research conducted by the Neuroscience, Ethics and Society group and NeurOX Young People’s Advisory Group in the University of Oxford Department of Psychiatry and Oxford Health BRC and the NSPCC, has looked at how Childline’s message boards help support young people. The research found that using the Childline message boards could reduce young people’s emotional distress and increase their willingness to seek outside help. [Read more here.](#)



### Vaccination team honoured by the High Sheriff

Oxford Health’s former COVID Operations Director Tehmeena Ajmal and Workforce Lead Joe Smart (pictured below) accepted an Oxfordshire Covid Heroes award in recognition of the work done by the Trust and its vaccination team during the pandemic.



The High Sheriff of Oxfordshire Imam Monawar Hussain presented 21 awards to a range of teams and individuals across Oxfordshire for their sterling work since COVID-19 hit.

Tehmeena said she and Joe were humbled and moved to hear what all the other award winners contributed to their local communities over the past year and are incredibly proud that the Trust's vaccination teams were recognised alongside them.

### **Diabetes, anxiety and depression: Help is available**

Oxford Health used World Diabetes Day to raise awareness of free advice from TalkingSpace Plus for people experiencing the emotional impact of the condition. People living with a long-term physical health condition like diabetes are up to three times more likely to experience anxiety and/or depression.

TalkingSpace Plus offers a range of **FREE** talking therapies to more than 14,000 people a year across Oxfordshire. Read more [here](#).

### **Celebrating the work of our occupational therapists**

Oxford Health has been celebrating the work of its 230 Occupational Health therapists as part of a national day to highlight the work of the profession. Occupational Health is a science-driven, evidence-based profession that enables people of all ages to live life to its fullest by helping them promote health and prevent – or live better with – illness, injury or disability.

Occupational therapists help people of all ages who have physical, mental or social problems – as a result of accident, illness or ageing – to do the things they want to do. Find out more [here](#).

### **Updated strategy for carers now online**

The second edition of Oxford Health's carers' strategy which looks at the needs of our carers, friends and family and how the Trust can continue to improve services for them and put them at the heart of everything we do, has just been published.

Find out more about the strategy [here](#).

### **Telephone and video appointments – Oxford Health wants to hear experiences**

Researchers at Oxford Health are asking for help to understand patient and clinician experiences with telephone and video appointments in mental health care during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Trust is inviting patients and carers to share their experiences by completing a 10 minute survey. By understanding patient and carer experiences, the Trust aims to improve telephone and video appointments, including how these types of appointment can be offered most safely and effectively

Participants will not be asked for any personally identifiable information about themselves or the person they care for. Find out more [here](#).

### **Peer support worker opportunities with Oxford Health**

Oxford Health is now recruiting for the third trainee cohort to become peer support workers in Oxfordshire. Peer support workers have lived experience of mental health and use these experiences and empathy to support other people and their families receiving mental health services, working alongside our multidisciplinary care team.

*Applications close at 5pm on Monday November 29.* Find out more [here](#).

### **National surveys helping to improve services**

Oxford Health is urging people to take part in two national surveys to help it to develop its community mental health services.

The Trust is encouraging people to complete a questionnaire if they are randomly selected via post or SMS text message.

Both surveys are commissioned by the Care Quality Commission. Taking part is voluntary, all responses

are confidential, and the results do not allow any individuals to be identified.

There is support available for completing the survey which is detailed in the information that will come with the survey. Find out more [here](#).

### Patients remember the fallen

Oxford Health patients created an array of poppies to help mark Remembrance Day and pay their own tributes to all those across the generations who served in the Armed Forces and made the ultimate sacrifice.



People being cared for on wards at Oxfordshire Stroke Rehabilitation Unit (OSRU) and Wallingford Community Hospital shared memories and worked on poppy themed displays as part of Oxford Health Arts Partnership project.

A stunning field of poppies was created outside OSRU at Abingdon Community Hospital in time for Remembrance Sunday. Find out more [here](#).

### Have your say on pharmaceutical services in Oxfordshire

Residents are being invited to comment on Oxfordshire County Council's new pharmaceutical needs assessment (PNA). The NHS will use the PNA to work out if any changes are needed to pharmacy services in Oxfordshire. The PNA is a report on all the NHS community pharmacies in the county. It also includes those family doctors who are permitted to dispense medicines as a pharmacist would.



You can read and [respond](#) to the initial draft until 9 January 2022 on the county council's website. The final PNA will be published later in 2022 and will cover the period 2022 to 2025 inclusive.

### Better homes, better health housing support service



A support service is available to Oxfordshire residents with underlying health conditions to reduce housing-related health issues. Better Housing, Better Health aims to ensure safer, more suitable housing conditions; signpost support for other social and health problems; and promote independent living for those with existing health issues. A partnership project between Oxfordshire's local authorities and the voluntary and community sector, it is coordinated by the National Energy Foundation.

The countywide service will target communities with high health inequalities and will prioritise requests for support from residents living in poor-quality private sector homes. You can learn more about the work it does, including how to access support, by visiting [bhbh.org.uk](http://bhbh.org.uk)

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## Children, Education, Families

### Oxford foster carer encourages families to help give children the best start in life

People across Oxfordshire are being encouraged to consider becoming foster carers. The appeal comes from Oxford resident Samantha Allen, who talks with pride about the babies – and babies with their mothers – she has welcomed into her home over the last 12 years.



Samantha, pictured left, is helping raise awareness of a £1,500 welcome payment introduced for new Oxfordshire foster carers by the county council.

Oxfordshire County Council foster carers receive:

- Generous fees, paid in addition to the child's allowance, based on experience and skills.
- Dedicated social worker support.
- Access to professionals involved with the child/children, linked with support groups and specialised training.
- Welcome payment of £1,500, introduced to new foster carers at the start of November.

For further information about becoming a foster carer, visit [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/fostering](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/fostering), email [fostering@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:fostering@oxfordshire.gov.uk) or phone 0800 783572.

## Community resilience

### Help with winter essentials

Oxfordshire has received £3.4m of funding from the Government's Household Support Fund to support vulnerable residents, including support for food, utility costs and other household essentials. The funding is to be spent by 31 March 2022.

Part of the funding is being used by the county council to fund free school meal equivalent support for children and young people in schools, colleges and early years settings during school holidays. An element will also be used to extend the operating periods of the Holiday Activity Fund, which provides active childcare during school holidays for those qualifying for free school meals.

£1 million of the national funding stream has been delegated to the city and district councils to establish local emergency welfare schemes, in partnership with the local voluntary and community sector. The funding will help pay for food, energy and water bills of vulnerable households - but other costs can be

covered too, including clothing and replacements or repairs for white goods or essential transport costs. [Details of these emergency welfare schemes](#) are available online.

### Help for those struggling to pay rent because of COVID

Cherwell District Council has been awarded £102,000 of additional Government grant funding to ramp up help for private sector tenants. It will mean the council can help people affected by COVID to clear rent arrears or secure alternative accommodation. The funding will also allow the council to dedicate more resources to providing assistance and advice to prevent homelessness.

For people worried they will lose their home due to rent arrears, the council can work with landlords to put repayment plans in place and, for anyone eligible, discuss discretionary housing payments to prevent eviction. There are also incentives for private

landlords to work with the council to place those at risk of homelessness into accommodation.

### **Firefighters and Oxford United FC team up to tackle discrimination**

Oxfordshire County Council's Fire and Rescue Service and Oxford United Football Club have teamed up to unite against discrimination.

Professional footballers and firefighters are considered community role models, particularly in terms of professionalism and teamwork. The aim of the partnership is to raise awareness and promote anti-discrimination, equality, diversity, and inclusion throughout the county.

Karl Robinson, Oxford United Manager, said it was a fantastic initiative and the club is proud to be working with the fire service.



Rob MacDougall, Chief Fire Officer, said the Fire and Rescue Service and Oxford United will bring firefighters and footballers closer together, to understand each other's role and discuss the benefits of tolerance, showing how diverse communities can thrive, and taking a strong stance against discrimination.

## **Place, Transport, Infrastructure**

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### **Reducing carbon emissions in innovative ways**

As part of its commitment to tackling the climate emergency, Oxfordshire County Council is working with contractor Milestone Infrastructure to deliver the council's [first diesel-free construction project](#).

Milestone has been using hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) at the council's A40 north Oxford site, between the A34 overbridge and the Wolvercote roundabout since construction work began in the summer. This means that all construction plant and welfare facilities are now powered entirely by HVO.

On average, HVO reduces carbon by around 90 per cent, therefore saving 875 tonnes of carbon in one year\* on the north Oxford scheme. This is the equivalent of 1,073 direct flights from London to New York.

### **Have your say on traffic proposals for Witney town centre**

People's views are being sought about proposals to prohibit motor vehicles from using High Street and Market Place in Witney.

## **Economy**

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### **Over 99 percent of West Oxfordshire homes and businesses now able to access superfast broadband**

An innovative project to provide broadband to West

The consultation - open until 2 December - seeks views about whether to make the current temporary traffic restrictions permanent. The restrictions were brought in as part of COVID-19 regulations to encourage social distancing and will expire on 3 January 2022. Exemptions to the traffic ban would include buses, taxis, vehicle loading/unloading, and those displaying a valid blue badge.

People can take part in the consultation by visiting the county council's digital consultation and engagement platform [Let's Talk Oxfordshire](#).

### **Oxford's Urban Forest**

Oxford City Council has published a strategy for how it aims to protect, manage and enhance the trees and hedgerows in the city – also known as Oxford's Urban Forest.

The [Urban Forest Strategy](#) celebrates the environmental and social benefits of Oxford's forest resource and aims to safeguard them for future generations. The strategy provides a framework for action on public and private land across the city between now and 2050.

Oxfordshire has now been completed, meaning 99 per cent of households and businesses can now access superfast broadband.

The project, which is jointly run by West Oxfordshire District Council and broadband provider Gigaclear, has achieved national recognition by securing a place on the Local Government Chronicle Awards' shortlist in the 'Future Places' category. The award recognises councils using emerging technologies to work with partners and the public to make their areas more

### Oxford in Wonderland

Oxford City Council has launched a marketing campaign to attract people to the city centre in the run-up to Christmas. The multi-partner campaign is designed to increase footfall and spend in the city to give local businesses a boost at a crucial time of year following a challenging trading period.



The Christmas campaign, which has an Alice in Wonderland theme, will promote Oxford as an excellent shopping, hospitality and tourism destination. It will include digital adverts on bus shelters across the county and on board Thames Travel buses in the south of the county. There will also be advertising on JACK FM, in the Oxford Mail and Oxfordshire Live, plus posters across leisure and community centres.

### Helping people to shop local this Christmas

Shoppers in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse are being given a helping hand to buy local this Christmas, with [free parking available in district council car parks](#).



The annual tradition of free parking by both councils is designed to encourage people to shop locally for their Christmas presents – which is even more important this year following the economic impact of the pandemic.

Free parking will be available on nominated days in Abingdon, Didcot, Faringdon, Goring, Henley, Thame, Wallingford and Wantage. Maximum stay times will apply in some car parks.

### COP26: OxLEP hosts official event on 'science and innovation'

As key officials from across the globe held critical discussions in Glasgow at COP26, the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP) hosted an official COP26 event during the second week of the major climate change conference.



Called 'The Billion Tonne Drop – How Oxfordshire leads the global charge to address the climate emergency', the event showcased how the county's world-leading innovation ecosystem can generate major global carbon emission savings through the significant capabilities generated within Oxfordshire, including in the fields of fusion energy, solar power, construction, electric vehicles and aviation.

You can [read more](#) on OxLEP's website and watch the [accompanying video](#) on YouTube.

### **New hospitality and catering facilities at City of Oxford College**

New hospitality and catering facilities have opened at Activate Learning's City of Oxford College thanks to £2.17m in funding secured by OxLEP through the Government's Local Growth Fund.

The new facilities, which include state-of-the-art training kitchens, were officially opened on 4 November by Nigel Huddleston MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Sport, Heritage and Tourism, pictured below.



The investment in the new facilities is in line with both local and national demands for highly skilled and work-ready staff to take on roles within a sector that is vitally important for the local economy.

### **Oxfordshire Apprenticeship Awards 2022 launched**

OxLEP has this week launched the nominations process for the [2022 Oxfordshire Apprenticeship Awards](#). The awards celebrate the value of apprenticeships in the county and provide an opportunity for apprentices and businesses alike – from across all sectors – to be recognised for their work in this important field. The awards ceremony will take place on 19 May next year.



We hope this update is useful. Please email [occg.media-team@nhs.net](mailto:occg.media-team@nhs.net) with any queries and we will try to get back to you as soon as we can.