

## Stakeholders Briefing - 17 September 2021

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Our current seven-day infection rate stands at 429.7 cases per 100,000 which is higher than the England average of 322.2 cases per 100,000. Although the number of infections has increased in County Durham, as mentioned last week this has been expected as students return to schools and colleges. We continue to ask that people take up the offer of the vaccine and remain to be cautious when out and about, applying control measures such as Hands, Face, Space, Fresh Air. As always, for the latest data in County Durham and your local area, visit our [Covid dashboard](#).

This week, the Prime Minister shared the Covid Winter Plan which aims to sustain the progress made and prepare the country for future challenges, while ensuring the National Health Service (NHS) does not come under unsustainable pressure.

To support businesses through the autumn and winter period, the Government will continue to provide up-to-date Working Safely guidance on how employers can reduce the risks in their workplace. In addition, the Government will support improved ventilation in key settings. The full Covid Winter Plan is available at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-autumn-and-winter-plan-2021](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-autumn-and-winter-plan-2021).

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### Adult social care

Our Adults Commissioning team is continuing to support local care providers with workforce pressures, and a new recruitment and retention webpage has been launched promoting a range of online sessions on recruitment delivered by national and regional experts. This can be found at online at [www.durham.gov.uk/article/26135/Recruitment-and-retention](http://www.durham.gov.uk/article/26135/Recruitment-and-retention).

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### Other news

The council's payroll service has been shortlisted for two categories in the CIPP Annual Excellence Awards. We are the only council in the UK to be shortlisted for the Best Coronavirus Crisis Response award and Payroll Service Provider of the Year.

The new Northern Saints Trails have now been officially launched by Visit County Durham. The six new walking trails bring to life the stories of the northern saints, set against a backdrop of the best of the North East's landscapes, heritage and attractions, providing a compelling new visitor offer and providing vital business support at a time when economic recovery from the pandemic is ongoing.

And Bishop Auckland Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) and the Stockton and Darlington Railway HAZ have joined forces to deliver an extensive programme of events and activities this month. The festival runs until Monday 27 September with the theme of 'Our Heritage' and includes Heritage Open Days events taking place in the area. You can find out more at [www.durham.gov.uk/haz](http://www.durham.gov.uk/haz).

I will continue to keep everyone up to date throughout these changing and challenging times. Information is available on the council's website at [www.durham.gov.uk](http://www.durham.gov.uk) and our social media channels [www.facebook.com/DurhamCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/DurhamCouncil) and [www.twitter.com/DurhamCouncil](https://www.twitter.com/DurhamCouncil).

**Cllr Amanda Hopgood**

**Leader**

**Durham County Council**

For the latest government advice on the coronavirus pandemic, visit ([www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)). Updates on changes that may affect our area can be found at [www.durham.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.durham.gov.uk/coronavirus).

Public Health England communication materials (posters and social media images) are available for all partners and can be accessed at <https://coronavirusresources.phe.gov.uk/>.

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