

Jeremy Hunt's Constituency Update 2 July 2020

Good afternoon and welcome to my regular South West Surrey email update. As of today, we have a total of 313,483 positive cases of COVID-19 with sadly 43,906 confirmed deaths in the UK. There are 3,041 confirmed cases in Surrey and **308 confirmed cases in Waverley**. All data is accurate as of 11am this morning. All this data and more can be found [here](#).

'Build, Build, Build' On Tuesday the Prime Minister laid out his plans to get Britain's economy going again. The first stage will be a £5 billion investment in the UK's infrastructure which is to be spent on improving roads and building new schools and hospitals (with the exact list published in the next few days). The Prime Minister is channelling his inner Franklin D. Roosevelt, who helped kick-start the USA economy with the 'new deal' in the 1930s. In this week's [Herald, I have written](#) about why I believe this is the right approach - and why it is right to take a different approach to policies implemented by the Conservative-LibDem coalition in 2010 (and which I was part of.) The full announcement can be found [here](#), and you can re-watch the Prime Minister's speech [here](#).

Leicester lockdown Today the city of Leicester has been put back into lockdown after a new massive outbreak of COVID-19 has occurred in the city. The Health Secretary updated the House on Tuesday about the situation when he announced that the city would be returning a full 'lockdown' with shops and schools told to close once again. This led to a rather fiery exchange at Prime Ministers Question time yesterday, with the Labour leader asking why it took 11 days for any action to be taken. The most concerning issue to come out of Tuesday's statement is how little 'ultra-local' data central government could give to Leicester City Council and their public health team. This is starting to be rectified with the street data now provided to the local health team to allow a more targeted response. I talked about this on the [Today programme with Martha Kearney](#), on [Channel 4 news with Cathy Newman](#) and asked the Health Secretary about it [here](#). As of yesterday, public health England has begun to publish weekly [local surveillance reports](#) which suggest that Barnsley, Bradford and Rochdale may be next on the list.

Hong Kong On Tuesday the Chinese government implemented its draconian 'National Security Laws' on Hong Kong – in what the Foreign Secretary described as a 'clear and serious' breach of the 1984 Joint Declaration signed by Margaret Thatcher. He told the House yesterday that he and the Home Secretary will bring forward plans [to give all Hong Kong residents](#) who have British Overseas passports (and their dependents) a path to British Citizenship. This is a very welcome step, but as I argued

in the House yesterday, we ought to take this moment to reflect on what more we can be doing to protect the free press and citizens' rights in Hong Kong and around the world. You can [see my exchange here](#).

Saturday is of course when restrictions around pubs, restaurants and hairdressers are lifted, and I am sure many of you are looking forward to getting out and enjoying some normality. There are also changes to what else you can do. For the most up to date rules, please consult this [FAQ](#).

The key number to remember remains 0300 200 1008 the Surrey Helpline run by Surrey County Council (Mon-Fri 8 am to 6 pm & Sat-Sun 10am to 12pm)

WHAT'S GOING ON IN WESTMINSTER

Sir Simon Stevens at the Health & Social Care Select Committee On Tuesday Sir Simon Stevens, the CEO of NHS England, and senior NHS staff appeared before the committee as part of our inquiry into how the NHS is going to resume 'normal' service. The overall message is that despite rising brilliantly to the COVID challenge, getting back on track with other treatment is going to be a big struggle. There was some good news with cancer treatment starts remaining at 96% of previous levels. However, much more worrying was that hospitals are only running at 55% capacity for elective care (hips, knees, ankles etc.) This was backed up by a NHS providers' survey saying only 37% of acute trusts feel able to meet the needs of all their patients.

The NHS itself. We also looked at lessons learned regarding the discharging of people into care homes without testing, a major mistake early on in the crisis. Reading between the lines, I think this was recognised by Sir Simon & Steve Powis who agreed local NHS trusts should do all they can to support care homes. Finally, I asked about the routine testing of NHS staff where the witnesses hid behind the line "we can only do what Chief Medical Officer recommends." As the man himself is coming before the committee in a few weeks we will ask Chris Whitty the same questions. It still puzzles me why everyone is so resistant to routine testing of NHS and care staff which is what staff overwhelmingly want. You can watch the session [here](#) and read more about what was said [here](#).

WHAT'S GOING ON IN SOUTH WEST SURREY

Good news from the Royal Surrey where Chief Executive Louise Stead told me this morning that since yesterday they have no confirmed COVID cases. They have three patients they are treating as COVID patients even though the tests were negative and

a further five awaiting test results so things may change but this is quite a landmark. She also confirmed that they have had an estimated 110 deaths overall from COVID and 228 people who got it and recovered.

Frimley Park numbers down to just four according to their CEO Neil Dardis which is also very encouraging - not least because none of them are in critical care. He says across both his sites (Frimley and Wexham Park) they have had 409 deaths and 961 recoveries - so similar proportions to the Royal Surrey. They still have 11 staff members off sick with the virus, but it sounds like things are definitely moving in the right direction.

South West Railways. I was updated this week on what SWR are doing to refund constituents' season tickets and there seems to be some good news. Over the past three months SWR has received more than 36,000 refund requests, 12,000 more than the whole year before. Processing these refund requests has been a significant challenge with a reduced workforce due to social distancing but all refunds have now been processed. They remain confident that, as any further refund requests come in over the coming months, they will be able to process them swiftly.

Age Space Surrey is a free online resource for carers of elderly relatives, guiding them through the sometimes complicated and challenging world of care. They have researched the support available across Surrey, and many are included on the site under the relevant section – Care, Finance, Legal, Health and Well-being, Enjoying Life, Dementia, End of Life. To access this support, please visit their [website](#).

I have been compiling a list of local groups working to support vulnerable residents. You can view them on this [link](#).

THE ECONOMY AND JOBS

V-shaped bounce back. Some promising news from the Bank of England, who's chief economist said that the [UK economy is rebounding faster than expected](#). He said that the country was already two months into the recovery and that the depth of the coronavirus recession was likely to be less than half as bad as the Bank had feared in May. Here's hoping.

WHAT ELSE IS GOING ON

Making TV in the time of Coronavirus When I was culture secretary I got to go on some brilliant visits to places such as TV studios. But the sector has been hurt hard by

coronavirus with filming stopping throughout the country because of social distancing. This week though EastEnders has returned [filming social distancing style](#).

And finally, Happy belated Canada Day to all Canadians out there especially my parliamentary assistant Sasha and former South West Surrey Conservatives Chairman Denise Le Gal who stepped down this week after two brilliant periods in office. We will be eating maple syrup pancakes in your honour (but please don't tell Boris on his anti-obesity drive...)

Any opinion expressed in this Email is not necessarily that of the Party and may be personal to the sender.

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