

**For immediate release**

## **New walk-through coronavirus testing site now open**

A brand new walk-through coronavirus testing facility is set to open in Bridgwater this Sunday, as Somerset County Council makes testing more widely available and accessible.

Achieved with the co-operation of Bridgwater Town Council, Serco and Deloitte, the walk-through site will be the first of its kind in the County and is one of two new sites set up recently – with a drive-through facility in Yeovilton going live this week.

The opening of the site comes as the Government has implemented a new four-week national lockdown in a bid to “Contain the Autumn surge”.

Somerset’s Public Health is supportive of the new restrictions and say it comes at a critical time to help flatten the curve and bring the rising infection rates in the County down.

Trudi Grant, Somerset’s Director of Public Health today said: “All residents are being urged to follow the guidelines to help stop the spread of the virus by staying home, and following the HANDS FACE SPACE guidance if they need to leave home for one of the permitted reasons.

“It is now more important than ever that we **all** work together, and testing plays a key role in helping to reduce the spread of this highly infectious virus. If we know who is infected, we can isolate them accordingly and notify anyone that they may have been in close contact with.”

Testing is available only for those with coronavirus symptoms – a high temperature, a new continuous cough, or a loss or change to sense of smell or taste. Anyone with one or more of these symptoms should book a test at [nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus) or by calling 119.

The new site is situated so that people without transport can easily access it, and it will be open 7 days a week from 8am to 8pm. Those being tested will be required to follow public health measures, including social distancing, not travelling by taxi or public transport, practising good personal hygiene and wearing a face covering throughout, including while travelling to and from the testing centre.

The two new sites sit alongside the existing facilities at Taunton Racecourse and Frome Cricket Club and are important developments in the County’s bid to reduce the spread of coronavirus.

Councillor Clare Paul, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing at Somerset County

[WWW.SOMERSET.GOV.UK](http://WWW.SOMERSET.GOV.UK)



Council said: "We've been working hard to get more testing sites into Somerset. This new walk-through site is a first for the County and will make it much easier for people who don't have access to their own transport. I am thrilled that we have been able to set up a site with RNAS Yeovilton too."

There are also mobile testing sites across the border that are more accessible for some Somerset residents and currently these are in Trowbridge, Warminster, Weston-super-Mare, Tiverton, Barnstaple, Dorchester, Bridport, Exeter and Bristol.

#### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

- If you're in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland and have any of the symptoms of coronavirus, you are eligible for a test: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/everyone-in-the-united-kingdom-with-symptoms-now-eligible-for-coronavirus-tests>
- NHS test and trace: how it works: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works#people-who-have-had-close-contact-with-someone-who-has-coronavirus>
- Those unable to access the internet can call 119 in England and Wales or 0300 303 2713 in Scotland and Northern Ireland to book a test.
- Link to the NHS test booking route: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus/ask-for-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>

Link to the GOV.UK essential worker test portal: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-coronavirus-test-essential-workers>

#### **Ends**

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