

## Update on fighting coronavirus in Buckinghamshire



**Dear Resident,**

I know many people will find the Easter weekend especially hard during lockdown. We will all miss family and friends particularly in the coming days but the wonders of modern technology are a saviour to us all. We should all take heart in how we are doing our bit to stop the spread of the coronavirus, and can I urge you all please to keep up the good work and **stay at home**. Now is the time to make use of this fantastic technology and to catch up with loved ones remotely – or even in the old fashioned way on the phone!

There are also lots of imaginative ways to still enjoy some Easter fun especially for any children in the household, more on that below. So please stay safe and enjoy the Easter weekend.

### **Social distancing**

Can I just remind you too that if you do have to leave the house for one of the essential reasons – perhaps to get food or medicine or for your once daily exercise – then please make sure you are keeping 2 metres (that's 6ft 6 inches in old money) away from anyone else. It's about the length of a standard single or double bed.

Please [use our website](#) for up to date information on Buckinghamshire Council's response to the coronavirus outbreak and importantly, how to get help and support if you need it. The website also has the latest information on our services and any changes we've had to make because of the current situation.

Please also keep checking our social media channels for the very latest advice and information. Follow us on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) or like us on [Facebook](#).

And finally, for a more personal touch, please take a look at my [daily video update](#) where guests and I can tell you directly about what is going on locally to protect, inform and support our communities here in Buckinghamshire.

### **GP practices and pharmacies to open on Good Friday and Easter Monday**

GP practices will be open for phone appointments on Good Friday and Easter Monday. This is to ease pressure on the healthcare system over what is expected to be a very busy period for the NHS. Pharmacies will also be open but may have different opening hours to normal. You can see

pharmacy opening times on their individual websites or on the [NHS Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group website](#).

If you have a medical problem NOT related to coronavirus, please contact your GP on the phone or via the AskNHS app. All GP appointments will initially be on the phone – please do not go to your GP surgery without prior agreement.

If you do have coronavirus symptoms, please stay at home and self-isolate for seven days; anyone else in your household should self-isolate for 14 days. Use NHS online and the [online 111 coronavirus service](#) for support and advice. Only call 111 if you cannot cope with your symptoms at home and can't access the internet.

You can call NHS 111 for local health advice if your GP and pharmacy are closed, or go to [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk).

### **Garden waste collections**

At the moment we have reduced numbers of staff operating our household waste collections so we have had to suspend garden waste collections for now. The best thing is to compost it where possible, or hold onto it for disposal when the current emergency is over.

Please think twice about lighting garden fires during the current coronavirus pandemic. Whilst they are not illegal, they can be anti-social. As well as the danger of the fire spreading uncontrollably, it creates a lot of smoke that can aggravate breathing problems for people with asthma and other respiratory conditions. Consider the impact of what you do on other people, particularly at a time when people are unable to leave their houses or flats.

**Bin collections will operate a revised timetable over the Easter Bank Holiday – please [see this section of the website](#) for the details.**

### **Local foodbanks still need extra supplies**

Since the outbreak of coronavirus we know that there are unfortunately many residents who are struggling to access the food and supplies that they need. Foodbanks in Buckinghamshire are doing a fantastic job of supporting more vulnerable members of our communities, but they still need your help.

If you're out doing your essential shop, please consider donating some additional items into the foodbank donation collection box in your local supermarket. Items in particular need are:

- Tinned tomatoes, vegetables, fruit and meat
- Rice
- UHT milk
- Pasta sauce
- Toiletries (including toilet roll, sanitary towels and tampons)

You can also make a financial donation to your local foodbank online if you wish to. Find out more via clicking on the links for each area: [Aylesbury](#), [Aylesbury Vineyard](#), [High Wycombe](#), [Chesham](#), [Slough and South Bucks](#).

## **Fun things to do over Easter**

Spending Easter in lockdown was not what any of us would have imagined a few weeks ago – but we are all finding ways to adapt and it certainly doesn't mean Easter can't still be a time of fun and celebration for all the family. We've put together some [ideas of how to spend your time over Easter](#) with a focus on activities for children. Also our Family Information Service has a great section on its website about on spending [Easter at Home](#)! And you can even take part in the 'Big Bucks Easter Egg Hunt' – find out more on the [Clare Foundation's website](#). Design your own eggs, display them in your windows then see how many you can spot on your daily exercise walk.

## **#ProudoofBucks...**

We continue to be so heartened by the massive community effort going on right across Buckinghamshire with so many local support groups being set up and run by volunteers, helping people in their local area in so many ways, especially the most vulnerable who really need that extra support. Keep telling us about what's happening in your local area using the **#ProudoofBucks** hashtag on social media. **You can find out what support is available in your local area via our [online community support hub](#).**

And if you are worried that a vulnerable person is at risk because they are not receiving care please contact [adultearlyhelpteam@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:adultearlyhelpteam@buckinghamshire.gov.uk) or call 01296 383 204. Especially during the current crisis it would be great if we all do our bit to be alert to neighbours who might need more help.

## **...and a big thanks to local businesses**

We would like to say a huge thank you to all the businesses and organisations around Buckinghamshire who have helped Buckinghamshire Council deliver vital services by giving their time and resources. **Over 120 businesses** have come forward and registered their details with the council, offering everything from staff to PPE. Many businesses have repurposed themselves for this unique time, such as using distilleries to make hand sanitiser, or switching from a restaurant to a home delivery service.

Resources that are offered by businesses will be used to deliver the council's vital services, like caring for vulnerable people and making sure our workers are safe.

We are currently still processing and matching those that have registered to areas where their resources are needed, so if you have already registered, but not heard back from us, you will do

soon. Businesses that would like to register to potentially donate resources can do so [on the Buckinghamshire Council website](#).

### **Today's mental health top tip!**

It's so important during this crisis that we all pay extra attention to how we're feeling. This situation is affecting people in lots of different ways, including emotionally. So we want to give you a different tip in each of these emails on how you can look after your mental health and wellbeing.

Today's tip...

#### **LOOK AFTER YOUR BODY**

Our physical health can have a big impact on how we feel. Not everyone is able to go outside for their exercise especially if you are self-isolating or shielding. However, you can still exercise at home.

Here are some [easy exercises](#) to get you started.

Please just take it slowly.



#### **Thanks to our frontline staff**

I want again to thank all our staff here at Buckinghamshire Council for the immense job they are doing to keep frontline services running in these most challenging times. We have carers still going out every day to see vulnerable people who rely on them – and staff who are coordinating that effort. Our highways teams are continuing road maintenance and repairs so we can make sure the roads are kept safe especially for key workers who still have to make their journeys to work. And I have received many messages of thanks from the public in particular for our teams working on household bin collections. I know that all our staff really appreciate your thanks and appreciation.

#### **Finally**

I know many of you have so kindly emailed back to thank us for the information we are providing in these emails. We aren't able to reply to everyone, but I wanted to let you know that your positive comments are very much appreciated by everyone working here at Buckinghamshire Council as we carry on providing the services I know you all rely on.

As ever, stay safe and stay well,

**Martin Tett**

Leader of Buckinghamshire Council

To keep up to date with the latest news from Buckinghamshire Council, please follow us on social media:



Buckinghamshire Council  
The Gateway, Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury, HP19 8FF  
[buckinghamshire.gov.uk](http://buckinghamshire.gov.uk)