

Protect yourself, others and the NHS

Dear Resident,

Since I last wrote to you the government has made more announcements about face coverings and other services and activities restarting. From this week, some close contact establishments like nail bars and spas can reopen. Some outdoor team sports can also start up again subject to their governing bodies issuing guidance on how these activities can take place safely.

It all means continuing to get used to 'the new normal' as we start doing more of the things we have missed out on for many months, and I know everyone will be taking this at their own pace.

For up to date information on how the coronavirus guidance impacts Buckinghamshire Council services please keep [checking our website](#) and follow @BucksCouncil on our social media channels ([Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#)).

As these places reopen I need to stress again that it's vital we all take individual responsibility as lockdown restrictions ease. I know most people are making big changes to the way they do things and thank you for staying alert, keeping a distance and regularly washing hands.

We know that outbreaks of the virus are being managed and contained in many parts of the country, and we all have to continue to play our part to keep the virus at bay here in Buckinghamshire.

It is essential that if you or another person you live with develops symptoms of coronavirus that you **book a test as soon as possible**. Testing is most effective as soon as symptoms emerge and it also gives the maximum amount of time to trace close contacts so that they can isolate too. We have mobile testing facilities in Aylesbury at the moment and in Buckingham later in the week.

[Find out more about testing and how to book a test on the NHS website.](#)

As you'll probably be aware, the government has announced that face coverings will be compulsory in shops in England from Friday 24 July.

We must already all wear them by law on public transport and in health settings like hospitals and doctors surgeries.

I know lots of people have already been wearing face coverings in public places and thank you for doing so.

Hopefully this will give even more people the confidence to return to shop in our town and village centres. It is important that together, we safely restore our economy and retain local jobs. We have some great and lovely shopping centres, let's give them our custom otherwise we will lose them for ever.

I want to stress that even when wearing a face mask it's still essential to **carry on with social distancing measures and regular handwashing too**. Look out for the signs and guidance around our town centres.

Please try to walk or cycle if possible when you have to go somewhere. We are making lots of improvements across the county to make it easier to get around by walking, running, cycling or even scooting – watch this space!

Littering

It's brilliant to see children playing in local playparks again and thank you to everyone for following the guidance about how to use these facilities safely. One disappointing note though has been a big increase in littering around some of these areas. Please either put your litter in a bin when you're out or take it home with you and throw it away there. If the bin is full, please don't leave litter beside it as this is also a risk to wildlife – please just take it home with you instead. Thank you for doing this and helping to protect our local environment.

Adult learning – back in the classroom

I'm delighted that we're now able to resume safe face- to-face teaching of our adult learning courses, following strict COVID-19 guidance. Adult learning courses have been taking place online for the last few months but with social distancing in place, course venues are opening their doors again.

We have a broad programme of more than 1,500 courses and workshops all being delivered online and from multiple locations across the county. You can find out more at www.adultlearningbc.ac.uk.

Tell us how the coronavirus pandemic has impacted your health and wellbeing

For most of us, life has significantly changed in recent months with the coronavirus pandemic dominating everyday living.

It's incredibly important that we understand how the crisis has impacted peoples' health and wellbeing. Whether you've been directly affected by coronavirus or not, the changes to our lives and lifestyles in recent months may still have affected your physical and mental health and how you feel.

We want to gather information about the effects the pandemic and lockdown have had on the people of Buckinghamshire to help us tailor our local recovery plans.

Our Public Health team has launched a new survey to ask residents how their daily lives have been impacted and we would really like as many people as possible to take part.

You can click on this link to access the new [Buckinghamshire Coronavirus Health and Wellbeing Survey](#).

Please do take part and encourage your friends and family in Buckinghamshire to do the same. It will help us to target support in our communities where it's most needed in the coming months.

STAY IN CONTACT WITH YOUR EMPLOYERS

If you're working you may have been based at home for some time now. And even if that's not the case, nearly all workers will have found their working life has had to change or adapt in some way.

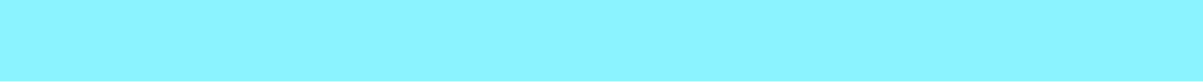
Some employers will have employee assistance programmes which can offer advice and practical support as well as counselling which you may find helpful in these unsettling times.



Worried about a vulnerable friend, relative or neighbour?

Our Adult Social Care team is checking in with all vulnerable residents we are aware of by making many regular phone calls and by supporting in other ways too. Please tell us if you know of someone who might need our help by calling the Adult Social Care team on **01296 383 204**.

Please also carry on using our [online community hub](#) for details of how to find support in your local area.



Stay safe and protect Bucks,

Martin Tett

Leader of Buckinghamshire Council

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