



Coronavirus (COVID-19)

There are three simple actions we must all do to keep on protecting each other



Wash hands

keep washing your hands regularly



Cover face

wear a face covering in enclosed spaces



Make space

stay at least 2 metres apart - or 1 metre with a face covering or other precautions

In the first instance parishioners should refer to www.gov.uk/coronavirus as this has the most up to date information.

[Update for Town and Parish Councils - Major Incident declared in Buckinghamshire – 30/12/2020](#)

Buckinghamshire Council, in consultation with NHS partners, has declared a 'Major Incident', amid fears the number of COVID-19 cases could overwhelm our local health and social care services. At this time of year we would usually expect some added pressure to hospitals, but cases of Covid-19 locally are now at 514 per 100,000 people, and expected to increase to closer to 800 per 100,000 by next week. We need to act now to ensure our hospitals do not become overwhelmed in coming weeks.

What does this mean for Buckinghamshire?

The intention with declaring a Major Incident is to help protect our local healthcare services now, ensuring care is still available for those who need it most. This means;

- **Keeping our hospitals for those that need them most and are seriously ill.** NHS111 is available 24/7 for advice; they will make sure that anyone unwell or injured is seen by the right people, in the right place, as quickly as possible (whether it's a GP, the Urgent Treatment Centre, or A&E).
- **Protecting the most vulnerable** to limit their risk of exposure to Covid-19, as well as other seasonal illnesses or injuries due to slips, trips and falls during this cold weather. [Our Support Hub](#) can help ensure the most vulnerable can get help with supplies like food or medication. Lots of other health and wellbeing information, including advice on self-care and looking after your mental health, is available via the Buckinghamshire [Ready for Winter](#) page.
- **Continuing to adhere closely to [tier 4 guidance](#)**; stay home where possible, avoid mixing with other households completely, and [remember hands, face, space](#). This has possibly never been more



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important. Anyone with Covid-19 symptoms should [book a test](#) by phone or online, **and not just turn up at hospital.**

What we're doing to help strain on hospitals

Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust has put in some temporary changes to ensure safe and appropriate staffing levels at all times, and that there are enough beds to meet current and anticipated demand. The NHS is still here for those who need it. Anyone who is concerned about their health and doesn't know where to go must **call 111**. They will ensure the right path of treatment, including booking appointments.

What you can do to help

The most important message we need to broadcast is about how people should be accessing health care if they need it. There is some text below which we would be grateful if you would share, whether via your email channels or social media, and an image you can download to support it:

[Update from Martin Tett, Leader of Buckinghamshire Council – 21st December 2020](#)

Dear Resident

You will almost certainly have seen, heard or read about Saturday's announcement by the Prime Minister that **Buckinghamshire has been placed under even tighter 'Tier 4' restrictions**, along with many other parts of east and south east England. **These new rules took effect at one minute past midnight yesterday morning** and replace the Tier 3 restrictions we previously had been put into.

These new rules for Buckinghamshire also mean that, very sadly, **'Christmas bubbles' are now not allowed** and **people in Bucks should spend Christmas within their own household or support bubble only**. Non-essential retail is also closed.

This development is a shock to us all and is certainly a nasty sting in the tail at the end of a terrible year. Frankly, I did not expect this, although the figures I see regularly were clearly heading in the wrong direction across the whole council area, in all former District Council areas. I had thought that we might have additional restrictions after Christmas but did not expect the problem to escalate so rapidly. It's clear that the pandemic has, unfortunately, entered a new phase especially due to the risk posed by the new variant strain of the COVID-19 virus, which government scientists tell us makes the coronavirus spread more easily.

Because we have seen the number of cases in Buckinghamshire increase rapidly in recent weeks, the situation is one of urgency as we try to contain the spread of the virus. You can see our latest data on the Council's website via our [COVID-19 dashboard](#) and via [information published by the Government](#). The Government also has an [interactive map](#) where you can find the latest case numbers in your postcode area.

I am aware from emails I receive that some people are not supportive of the new Tier 4 restrictions. I fully understand that. Personally, I am very concerned for our Buckinghamshire businesses and the real threat to their future and the jobs they create. Nevertheless, whatever one's own private opinions, this is now the law and we should follow the new rules. If we do not, we risk spreading the new Covid strain further across the UK.

On a positive note, this past week saw our first vaccination centre open and next week should hopefully see two more open. I am also expecting more sites either before or just after New Year. These are run by the NHS and they will contact people to advise them when and where to attend. Please wait to be contacted,



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although I understand that can be frustrating. 2020 has been a horrible year but there is hope on the horizon and we need to keep ourselves and our loved ones safe until then.

The new 'Tier 4' rules for Buckinghamshire

These are the main rules now in place. **Please carefully read the link at the bottom which gives the full Government advice.**

- You must **stay at home** other than for the following essential reasons:
 - Exercise with people you live with or who are in your support bubble
 - Shopping for essential supplies like food and medicine
 - Work and volunteering that you cannot do at home
 - Education during term time and childcare
 - To visit some public outdoor spaces such as parks and the countryside for exercise or recreation
 - Medical reasons, including to get a COVID-19 test if you have symptoms
 - Communal worship within the guidelines for places of worship
 - For one person to meet one other person separately in a permitted outdoor place

- You should work from home if possible and in agreement with your employer
- You should not travel outside your Tier 4 area unless for work or another legally permitted reason
- You cannot stay away from home unless permitted by law
- You cannot form a 'Christmas bubble' and must spend Christmas within your own household or support bubble
- Non-essential retail is closed
- Pubs, cafes, bars and restaurants are closed other than for takeaway/click and collect
- Leisure centres and gyms must close; outdoor gyms can remain open
- Hotels and other accommodation must close
- Personal care like hairdressers, barbers and nail salons must close
- Community Centres and halls must close except for a limited number of exempt activities
- Our libraries will close from now and over Christmas and some sites will reopen from Monday 28 Dec for essential IT access and click and collect services only
- Household Recycling Centres remain open

This is a short summary of the main points of the Tier 4 restrictions but it's impossible to include all the detail plus the exemptions, so [please read the Tier 4 guidance in full on the Government's website](#).

Remember – Hands, Face, Space

We must all remember the main defences we have against this virus are the basics:

- Wash your hands thoroughly and regularly
- Keep a distance from people you don't live with or who you're not in a support bubble with
- Wear a face covering where required

If you or anyone you live with develops symptoms of coronavirus your whole household must isolate and anyone with symptoms must [book a test either online](#), via the [NHS COVID-19 app](#) or by calling 119.

Outdoor events



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Unfortunately, any planned outdoor events such as carol singing **should not take place in Buckinghamshire and should be cancelled**, as these aren't classed as a 'reasonable reason' to leave home in a Tier 4 area.

Support for businesses

I know this news brings fresh misery for our local businesses already struggling after this awful year. Government support remains available via the **furlough** and other schemes. Locally we offer the **Local Restrictions Support Grant**. In addition, we have been urgently working over the weekend on a new scheme to support businesses impacted by the changes and hope to release details within the next few days. The finances available for this are limited but our aim is to support as many businesses as possible impacted by the new restrictions. Please keep checking the '[support for businesses](#)' section of our website and the [information for businesses](#) on the Government's website. (Please note some of these pages are still being updated to reflect the new Tier 4 restrictions, so please keep checking back for the latest information).

People who are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable

The 'shielding' programme will come back into effect for areas in Tier 4, including Buckinghamshire. This means there is [special advice for people who are classed as 'Clinically Extremely Vulnerable'](#). This is the same advice as was applied during the national November lockdown. Please note, the guidance is not the same as it was back in the spring during the first lockdown. As before, people who are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable will get letters and texts and emails where the national programme has their contact details. Please call us on **01296 395 000** if you have any questions about the 'shielding' programme.

Our NHS

Our colleagues in the NHS are facing high demand on their services now, caused by the usual winter illnesses and rising COVID cases. These services are there for you if you need them urgently and the best thing we can do to support our frontline workers is to stay at home and reduce the spread of the virus.

Stay safe, protect Bucks

At the end of an incredibly difficult year, these latest developments hurt us all, especially with so many of us now having to change plans for Christmas at the last minute. It is undoubtedly a testing time and if you're struggling, please reach out as our local support services are ready to help. You can find out more via the '[Health and Wellbeing Bucks](#)' website which has details of all the organisations that can help you if you need.

This makes us all feel more vulnerable and comes at a difficult time of year for many so let's check in on each other in a safe way, maybe just by picking up the phone or dropping our friends and neighbours a text message to see if they're ok and whether they need anything.

I am so proud of our strong communities here in Buckinghamshire and my main message today is to remember those strengths, and how much stronger we are together. If we all take collective responsibility, following the rules as individuals, we can turn this situation around together. I know it's hard, but this year is nearly behind us and while we face a very serious immediate challenge in the present, the future will be better and we will get through this.

Stay at home, stay safe, and protect Bucks and each other,

Martin Tett,
Leader,



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Buckinghamshire Council

Bucks CC have an online community support hub

This will help people to find ways to get involved or find support www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/coronavirus/

People without internet access

Bucks CC fully appreciate the community hub relies heavily on internet access. They are working on developing support through libraries and council receptions (the new council access points). We are also asking any vulnerable or older person who is self-isolating and needs support, or anyone concerned about them, to call the council on **01296 383 204**.

Advice for elderly or potentially vulnerable residents and Coronavirus

The link for people to register with the government as vulnerable and needing help is www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable and there is also a helpline on 0800 0288327.

- **EPC requests that dogs are kept on leads on Edlesborough Green to help reduce the risk of breaches in Social Distance Guidelines.**



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Doorstep Scamming

Please find below information and advice issued by Buckinghamshire Council regarding doorstep scamming of the elderly and vulnerable during the corona virus isolation of such groups.

To report scams in the Buckinghamshire area please use the following link trading.standards@bucksandsurreytradingstandards.gov.uk or call on 01296 388788.

Doorstep scammers are taking advantage of the coronavirus emergency to con elderly and vulnerable people.

There has been a rise in the number of scam complaints related to the coronavirus outbreak, according to Buckinghamshire and Surrey Trading Standards team, who are urging members of the public to be aware. Since the beginning of the month the total number of scam complaints has increased by 40%.

Residents are also being urged to be especially wary of people offering or selling:

- Virus testing kits – these are only offered by the NHS.
- Vaccines or miracle cures – there is currently no vaccine or cure.
- Shopping or medication collection services that require payment upfront.
- Home cleaning services.
- Overpriced or counterfeit products.

Residents must also be wary of emails, texts, telephone calls and messages via social media from scammers offering refunds on taxes or bills, as these are highly prevalent.

Trading Standards have provided some helpful tips to help prevent people from becoming victims of scams:

- Don't be pressurised into making a decision. If someone is trying to rush you or panic you, they are probably trying to scam you.
- Only purchase goods from trusted retailers.
- Be suspicious of requests for money upfront.
- Do not give your bank card or bank details to a stranger. Never write your PIN number down.
- Know who you're dealing with – if you don't know the person who's offering you help then ask to be introduced by someone that you know and trust.

If you have information or are worried about coronavirus related scams please contact Trading Standards. You can email

trading.standards@bucksandsurreytradingstandards.gov.uk or call on 01296 388788.

The Pastoral Team at St Mary's, Eaton Bray and The Eaton Bray Good Neighbours Scheme also cover Edlesborough and Northall.



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CORONAVIRUS

In light of the current Coronavirus situation the Pastoral Care Team at St. Mary's, Eaton Bray welcomes your assistance in identifying any of our parishioners who might be sick or otherwise benefit from their support during this challenging time.

Please contact Gaye Soule on 07807924218 (m) or send an email to admin@stmaryseatonbray.org.uk in this regard.

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The Eaton Bray Good Neighbours scheme will continue to operate and the details of what they do can be seen in FOCUS.

Call them on 07930 987064 if you need assistance and they may be able to help. The line is manned from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. At other times you can leave a message.

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If you know anyone living close to you who is not online or "internet savvy" please contact the Edlesborough Parish Clerk (01525 29358) for a printed version of this information.