



Dear resident

On Monday 4 January, the Prime Minister announced a national lockdown in England to help curb the dangerous increase in coronavirus (COVID-19) cases that currently risks overwhelming the NHS.

This follows confirmation from scientists that there is a new variant of the virus that is between 50 and 70 per cent more transmissible.

A new lockdown will no doubt come as worrying news to everyone in Hillingdon and beyond, particularly those who are most at risk of becoming seriously ill from the virus, as well as those running local businesses.

However, despite the fatigue we all feel, it is vital – now more than ever – that we redouble our efforts to follow public health advice and play our part by staying at home, protecting the NHS and saving lives.

You may now only leave home for limited reasons permitted in law, such as to shop for necessities, to work if you absolutely cannot work from home, to exercise alone or with your household/bubble or one other person, to seek medical assistance, including getting a COVID-19 test or receiving your vaccination, or to escape domestic abuse.

You must not leave your home to meet socially with anyone you do not live with or are not in a [legally permitted support bubble or childcare bubble](#) with.

You should limit your exercise to once per day and you should not travel outside your local area.

It is vital that you strictly adhere to the simple but effective principles of hands, face, space – wash your hands regularly, wear a face covering in indoor public spaces and keep at least two metres apart from anyone you do not live with.

If you are clinically extremely vulnerable, the government is advising you to begin shielding again and you will shortly receive a letter from the NHS about what this means for you.

Primary schools, secondary schools and colleges are now providing lessons remotely, except for vulnerable children and the children of critical workers.

Full details on what you can and can't do are available at [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus).

While some council facilities have unfortunately had to close due to the lockdown, I would like to reassure you that the council continues to provide essential services, plus additional support to those most in need. Full details can be found at [www.hillingdon.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/coronavirus).

The rollout of the NHS vaccination programme brings us much hope that we will see an easing of restrictions as this new year progresses. However, until that is possible, I urge everyone to pull together during the coming weeks and months, stick to the rules and do your bit to keep your loved ones and Hillingdon safe.



+ KEEP HILLINGDON SAFE +

# NATIONAL RESTRICTIONS: STAY AT HOME

What this means:

## ✘ You must not:

- Leave your home unless for a permitted reason
- Meet socially with anyone you don't live with, except your legally permitted support bubble
- Travel outside your local area unless for a permitted reason (e.g. for work)

## ✔ You can still:

- Shop for basic necessities
- Go to work, or provide voluntary or charitable services, if you cannot reasonably do so from home
- Exercise in your local area once a day alone, with your household or support bubble, or with one other person
- Attend education or childcare - if eligible
- Seek medical assistance or leave home to avoid injury/harm

[Find out more](#)

## Support for high risk residents

If you are defined as clinically extremely vulnerable, you are at very high risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

If this applies to you, you should not attend work, school, college or university, and you should limit the time you spend outside your home - only go out if it is essential, for medical appointments or to exercise.

The government has issued advice for those who are shielding and you will shortly receive a letter from the NHS explaining what the new lockdown means for you.

The council's Community Hub is available to provide additional support. It is open from Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, and can be contacted on the phone at 020 3949 5786 or via email at [COVID19hub@hillington.gov.uk](mailto:COVID19hub@hillington.gov.uk).

Please contact the hub if you are experiencing financial difficulties and are unable to purchase food - they can refer you to a local food bank or signpost you to other support services.

[Read more](#)



## Hillingdon launches asymptomatic testing

Residents without COVID-19 symptoms can now get tested for coronavirus using rapid tests supplied by NHS Test and Trace.

Around one in three people have COVID-19 without any symptoms and could be spreading the disease without knowing it. The rapid lateral flow swab tests provide results within an hour, enabling those who test positive and their contacts to immediately self-isolate, which can help drive down the R rate locally and save lives.

Hillingdon's first community testing site opened in December at the council's Civic Centre in Uxbridge and is offering tests to council employees and their families, and other non-council key workers such as GPs and supermarket staff.

The second site in Hayes is offering tests to all residents.

Anyone without symptoms can book a test on the council's website or by calling the Community Hub on 020 3949 5786.

However, if you have symptoms of COVID-19 (a new, continuous cough, high temperature, or loss or change to sense of smell or taste) it is vital that you self-isolate immediately and book a test at a local testing site by visiting the government website or calling 119.

[Find out more and book an asymptomatic test](#)



## Support for businesses

We are providing a range of targeted support and guidance to businesses throughout the pandemic, ensuring that financial assistance is given to those that are eligible.

In light of the new national lockdown, further grant schemes have been made available by the government.

Visit [www.hillingdon.gov.uk/support-for-businesses](http://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/support-for-businesses) for more information and updates.

Workplaces that are currently allowed to stay open should be following COVID-19 secure guidelines to keep customers visits and workers safe. If you have any concerns about a Hillingdon business, email [COVID19hub@hillington.gov.uk](mailto:COVID19hub@hillington.gov.uk) or call 020 3949 5786.

[Read more](#)



## Open and closed facilities

To keep Hillingdon safe, some council facilities are now temporarily closed, while others are operating slightly differently.

Our parks and outdoor playgrounds remain open. However, grassroots sports have been suspended until further notice.

Our libraries remain open for 'reserve and collect' services and essential computer use only.

Golf courses, tennis and ball courts, outdoor gyms, museums, theatres, the Rural Activities Garden Centre and leisure centres are temporarily closed.

All birth registrations, notices of marriage, citizenship ceremonies and weddings are cancelled until further notice. Death registrations can be made via telephone.

Some services, including adult education courses, music lessons and activities for young people and residents with dementia are being provided online where possible. Our museums and theatres are also offering online activities.



[Find out more](#)

## Parking update

The council has reintroduced free emergency residential permits to accommodate the higher than normal number of residents' vehicles that will be parked in residential streets in response to the new lockdown.

Residents with permits or visitor vouchers in parking management schemes (PMS) are permitted to park in bays or on single yellow lines within their zone and without penalty, provided they display a permit or visitor voucher for that PMS and are not parked dangerously or obstructively. For example corners of junctions, on footways, across dropped kerbs and on double yellow lines.



[Read more](#)

