



Dear resident,

Last week it was with great sadness that the council learned of the death of His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, and our sadness is shared by residents and employees across the borough. We offer our sincere condolences to the Royal Family at this difficult time. The Union Flag is flying at half-mast at the Civic Centre and Battle of Britain Bunker Exhibition and Visitor Centre in Uxbridge and at the Polish Air Force Memorial in Ruislip, to honour and remember Prince Philip. An online Book of Condolence is available at [www.royal.uk](http://www.royal.uk), and the council has also opened a [local online Book of Condolence](#) for residents and businesses to sign.

Last month, national restrictions started to ease as part of the government's roadmap out of lockdown.

At the end of March, just in time for Easter, the government gave the green light for the first step, with six people from different households being able to meet outside, including in private gardens, and outdoor sports were permitted to resume.

From Monday 12 April, restrictions continued to ease, with the second step allowing the reopening of non-essential retail; personal care premises such as hairdressers and beauty salons; and community centres and libraries. Other venues permitted to reopen include gyms (only for use by people on their own or in household groups) and outdoor attractions, outdoor hospitality venues, zoos, theme parks and self-contained accommodation such as campsites and holiday lets. The number of people able to attend weddings, receptions and commemorative events has also risen to 15.

This is an important step towards normality, particularly for our business community. We are encouraging residents to support our high streets to boost the local economy but to continue to follow 'hands, face, space and fresh air' guidelines. We are also assisting hospitality businesses as some reopen this month and others follow from 17 May by offering a range of support, including free pavement licences.

COVID-19 infection rates in Hillingdon are continuing to fall, but unfortunately in west London they still aren't falling as quickly as other parts of the capital. It is important that residents across the borough remain vigilant and continue to adhere to the rules as society reopens. By working together, we can help to drive down infections even further and keep Hillingdon safe.

In partnership with Public Health England and NHS Test and Trace, we are currently carrying out enhanced testing in a targeted area within the UB3 postcode following the discovery of a single case of the variant first discovered in South Africa. We are asking every person aged over 16 living and working in the targeted area to take a PCR COVID-19 test whether they are showing symptoms or not.

There is currently no evidence to suggest this variant is more serious than others, or that the regulated vaccines would not protect against it. Testing will, in combination with measures such as hands, face, space and fresh air, and following national guidance, help to suppress and control the spread of the virus, while enabling a better understanding of the extent of this variant in the community. You can read more about this below.

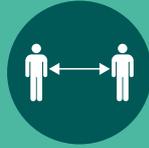
# PLEASE CONTINUE TO



Wash your hands



Cover your face



Keep a safe distance



Let fresh air in



Get tested regularly



Take the vaccine when eligible



HILLINGDON  
LONDON

[www.hillingdon.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/coronavirus)

## Twice-weekly tests offered to all

The government's COVID-19 testing programme has been expanded and everyone in England without symptoms is now able to take a free rapid coronavirus test twice a week.

People are encouraged to take regular tests to help to prevent outbreaks and reclaim a more normal way of life. One in three people with COVID-19 do not experience any symptoms and may be spreading the virus unwittingly. Rapid testing detects cases quickly, meaning positive cases can isolate immediately.

Since rapid testing was introduced, more than 120,000 positive cases that would not have been found otherwise have been identified. By making these tests available to everyone, more cases will be detected, breaking chains of transmission and saving lives.

If you do not have symptoms you can choose one of the following ways to get tested:

- 1) Community testing** We have seven local community testing sites across the borough where you swab yourself under the supervision of a trained operator.
- 2) 'Community Collect' home-test service** If you're not showing any COVID-19 symptoms, you can get a twice-weekly home test, which can be ordered and collected from one of our community testing sites or delivered to your home.
- 3) Workplace testing** This includes testing sites, where you can take a supervised test, and 'workplace collect', where you can pick up a box of tests to use at home. Speak with your employer to check if this is available and to find out more.
- 4) Education** Secondary school and college students will continue to be provided with tests to use at home twice a week, throughout term-time and the holidays.

If you have any COVID-19 symptoms (a continuous cough, high temperature, or loss or change to your sense of smell or taste), you should self-isolate and book a test by visiting the government website or calling 119.



[Read more](#)

## Enhanced COVID-19 testing in some UB3 postcodes

Extensive tracking of COVID-19 has identified a single case of the variant first discovered in South Africa in Hayes. This case cannot be traced back to international travel.

The infected person has completed self-isolation in line with government guidance and robust contact tracing has taken place to trace their contacts and ask them to self-isolate.

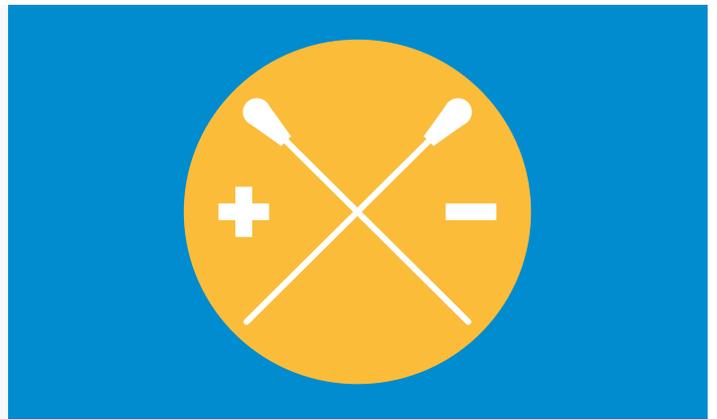
Working in partnership with Public Health England and NHS Test and Trace, every person aged over 16 living and working in a targeted area within the UB3 postcode is being asked to take a PCR COVID-19 test this week, whether they are showing symptoms or not. Even those who have been vaccinated are being asked to take a test.

People with symptoms should book a test in the usual way by visiting the government website or calling 119.

The council is offering additional testing for people without symptoms living or working in a targeted area. 7,000 PCR testing kits are being delivered to homes and businesses in the targeted area. Testing will also be available for people without symptoms at the existing Mobile Testing Unit (MTU) at the Central Avenue Car Park in Hayes (opposite Botwell Green Sports and Leisure Centre) daily between 8am and 6pm. This site will temporarily be unavailable for people with symptoms. Anyone wishing to get tested at the MTU will be required to book an appointment in advance on the council's website.

All positive test results in the targeted area will be sequenced to identify any further spread of the variant. The testing will help to suppress and control the spread of the virus, while enabling a better understanding of it.

If someone tests positive, they must self-isolate immediately and pass on details of their contacts to NHS Test and Trace. The council continues to provide a range of support for residents who are self-isolating, including financial advice and support, emotional wellbeing and befriending services, priority online shopping slots and food bank referrals for those who meet eligibility criteria.



[Find out more and view map of the targeted area](#)

## COVID-19 vaccination update

As of Thursday 8 April, 140,326 residents had been vaccinated in Hillingdon. There continues to be an impressive uptake across the borough and this is all thanks to eligible residents choosing to take the vaccine and the great work carried out by our partners the NHS, Hillingdon CCG and volunteers.

If you are 45 and over or eligible for a vaccination, we would like to encourage you to book your appointment as soon as possible.

Both the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency and the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation advised last week that adults aged over 30 and those with underlying health conditions can still be vaccinated with the AstraZeneca vaccine, as the benefits far outweigh the risks.

Adults aged under 30, including those with underlying health conditions who have yet to receive their vaccine, should be offered an alternative vaccine (Pfizer or Moderna) when eligible.

All those who have received a first dose of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine should continue to be offered a second dose of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine, irrespective of age. Only individuals with a history of certain types of blood clotting are being advised not to have the second dose.

Many of you have told us that you have had the vaccine to protect yourself and your local community, and we'd still like to hear more of your stories for our publicity campaign.

[Find out more](#)

## More of our leisure services reopen

As restrictions continue to ease, more of our leisure services have reopened and are looking forward to welcoming you back. This includes our libraries, which you can now visit once again and browse and borrow books, collect reserved items, use a computer, request recycling bags, pick up hearing aid batteries (selected libraries) and purchase visitor parking vouchers (participating libraries).

Our leisure centres (Botwell Green Sports and Leisure Centre, Highgrove Pool and Fitness Centre, Hillingdon Sports and Leisure Complex and Queensmead Sports Centre) have also reopened for indoor activities. The council's contractor, Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL), which operates the centres under its Better brand, has introduced a range of COVID-19 safety measures to help keep visitors and staff safe, including pre-booked time slots and one-way systems.

A range of outdoor activities are also on offer at each site. All activity sessions need to be pre-booked on the Better website or app ahead of your visit. The Better website also includes detail on the COVID-19 secure measures in place at the sites.

[Find out more](#)



## Supporting the borough's businesses

The council is encouraging residents to support local shops and traders as they start to reopen.

Non-essential businesses including pubs, cafes, restaurants, gyms and hair salons can reopen providing they are safe for customers. Restaurants, cafes and pubs can only serve food and drink outdoors for the time being.



To support businesses in the hospitality sector, and to make the reopening of the borough's high streets as easy as possible, the council is:

- offering free pavement licences for 12 months (from the date your licence starts) to accommodate outdoor customer seating areas
- relaxing some rules on licensing applications, such as no longer requiring original documents (these will be checked after the licence is granted)
- suspending pre-application inspections for existing businesses (inspections will be booked after the licence is granted)
- allowing licence fees to be paid in instalments where it may be challenging for the business to pay a full year upfront
- allowing a period of grace for non-payment of annual fees

It remains a legal requirement for venues to display an NHS QR code poster. New posters have been created for venues to download, and venues must now ask every visitor to check in via the NHS app or provide their contact details.

Traders can also register their business on our free online business directory. It's a great way for businesses to promote that they are open, what they offer and explain the safety measures they have in place to keep customers safe.

The council's COVID marshals will continue to direct people to socially distance and help guide them through one-way systems on their patrols across the borough to ensure queues are safe.

A range of grants continue to be offered to local businesses to support them and the local economy, this includes grants to help businesses reopen and other support grants.

[Find out more](#)

## Early May Bank Holiday waste and recycling collection dates

To minimise disruption to waste and recycling collections over the early May Bank Holiday, we will be working on Saturday 8 May.

Normal collection day	Revised collection day
Monday 3 May (Bank Holiday)	Tuesday 4 May
Tuesday 4 May	Wednesday 5 May
Wednesday 5 May	Thursday 6 May
Thursday 6 May	Friday 7 May
Friday 7 May	Saturday 8 May

Please leave your rubbish out for collection by 6am, near your front gate, but not on the pavement. Separate arrangements are in place for flats and business premises.

[Read more](#)

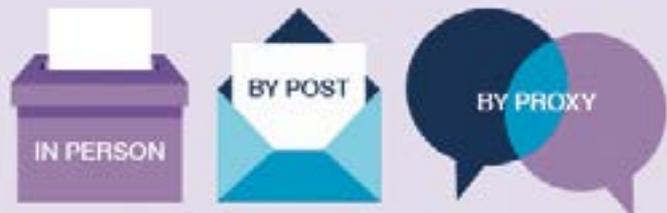
In the coming weeks, you will start to notice our new food waste vehicles. Food waste will be collected separately from garden waste as part of our drive to increase recycling.

Garden waste will be collected and processed as normal, whereas food waste will be broken down into renewable energy to generate electricity, fuel for transport and fertiliser for farmers.

All you need to do is use your kitchen and outdoor caddy, and we'll do the rest via our free weekly collections. If you haven't already, sign up for our food waste service today at [www.hillingdon.gov.uk/food-waste](http://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/food-waste).

**Polling stations will be safe places to vote in May, but there are other ways to vote.**

Want to vote by post? Apply early



The Electoral Commission

YOUR VOTE MATTERS  
DON'T LOSE IT