

COVID News from our Neighbours @ Huntingdonshire



Dear Resident,

On Monday, the Prime Minister set out how we will continue to fight back against the resurgent virus, protecting our NHS and saving lives whilst keeping the economy running to safeguard jobs and livelihoods.

The number of cases of Coronavirus per 100,000 of the population here in Huntingdonshire has risen nearly tenfold in just a few short weeks. I must therefore stress the importance of everybody playing their part and following the guidance to control the spread of the virus and protect our local economy, local jobs and the livelihoods of our residents.

The vast majority of the residents of Huntingdonshire are being responsible, doing the right thing, following guidance and helping to prevent the spread of the virus. However, we are still seeing too many examples locally of people not understanding or not accepting that some of the measures in place are there to protect our most vulnerable residents.

I appreciate that the current restrictions impact on our way of life, but we must act in a spirit of togetherness to suppress this virus now to save lives and to enable us to avoid tougher measures later. I do not want to see another national lockdown, and nor do I want Huntingdonshire's alert level to rise to the point that we have to endure a local lockdown – a situation that many of our local businesses are saying they would not be able to survive.

Whether or not you agree with the Government's approach to tackling the virus or with the restrictions that are in place, I would urge you to consider the consequences for our town centres and businesses if the number of cases

continues to rise and Huntingdonshire's alert level is raised to the point that additional restrictions are imposed on us by Government. We can all make a difference in supporting our town centres and helping local businesses get through these difficult times, but in a way that is safe and does not lead to further transmission of the virus.

With that in mind, this week saw the launch of HDC's Think Local campaign that will run until January and will build upon the success of the Reopening Huntingdonshire campaign in promoting what our local high streets have to offer. Working closely with our independent businesses we will be highlighting how they are working to give people confidence to safely return to our town centres.

The weeks and months ahead will continue to test us all, but if we can harness the same spirit that has helped us through the year so far then I am confident that our community will overcome these challenges and continue to prosper.

Yours sincerely,

CLlr Ryan Fuller

Executive Leader of Huntingdonshire District Council



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New Restrictions: What has changed

The Government has introduced a new three-tiered system, which came into effect on Wednesday 14 October, to continue the fight nationally against the spread of coronavirus. This followed the introduction of the '10pm Curfew' for pubs, bars and restaurants on 22 September.

The new system sees **Huntingdonshire in the Medium tier**, this is the lowest tier that has been introduced and means that the guidance and current restrictions are the same as those that were announced on 22 September, a run down of which can be found below.

We want to be very clear on what Huntingdonshire can do within the Medium tier, however we must be wary that if positive case continue to rise, the threat of being moved into the High tier is a possibility, which will impose greater restrictions, particularly to mixing outside of a household.

Key differences between tiers in alert system

MEDIUM

Follow the rule of six if meeting indoors or outdoors

Pubs and restaurants to shut at 10pm

HIGH

No household mixing indoors

Rule of six will apply outdoors

Pubs and restaurants to shut at 10pm

VERY HIGH

Further measures may be agreed locally

No household mixing indoors or outdoors in hospitality venues or private gardens

Rule of six applies in outdoor public spaces like parks

Pubs and bars not serving meals will be closed

Guidance against travelling in and out of the area

New restrictions have been announced to help control the spread of coronavirus, here we have compiled the headline main changes that have been implemented and below is a link to the full GOV.uk guidance.

- **Pubs, bars and restaurants to close at 22:00 BST (restricted to table service only)**
 - **People should work from home wherever possible**
 - **Face masks compulsory for bar staff and non-seated customers, shop workers and waiters**
 - **Limit on guests at weddings reduced from 30 to 15**
 - **Plans to allow fans to return to sporting events paused**
 - **"Rule of six" now applies to indoor team sports**
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- **Fines for not wearing masks or following rules increased to £200 for first offence**

The new restrictions in place include changes to the following; **face coverings, working from home, businesses and meeting people safely**. Please familiarise yourself with the changes if you have not done so already, a full explanation of each change can be found by clicking below.

[New Restrictions Explained - Find Out More](#)

NHS COVID-19 App Launch

The new NHS COVID-19 app has been launched to help combat the spread of coronavirus and allow people to better look after their friends, family and colleagues. We would encourage you to sign up and use it. It gives you quick access to the latest advice, ensuring you know exactly what the current position is, and also enables action to be taken where patterns in infections begin to be seen. It has several new features to help protect you and your loved ones, including:

- **Alerts based on your postcode district**
- **QR check-in at venues**
- **Symptom checker**
- **Test booking**

The NHS COVID-19 App is part of the large scale coronavirus testing and contact tracing programme and will be used, alongside traditional contact tracing, to notify users if they come into contact with someone who later tests positive for coronavirus – helping to keep us all safer. The NHS COVID-19 App alerts people at risk of coronavirus, asking them to isolate before they potentially pass the virus on to others as well as providing local area alerts and QR venue check-in. The app will help the NHS understand if the virus is spreading in a particular area, and so local authorities can respond quickly to

stop it spreading further and save lives. **The app does this while protecting a user's anonymity. Nobody, including the government, will know who or where a particular user is.**

[NHS COVID-19 App - Find Out More](#)



NHS
Test and Trace

Test & Trace Support Payment Scheme

The government has [announced](#) that a support payment is available for those suffering financial hardship as a result of self-isolation due to a positive coronavirus test or being in close contact with someone who has tested positive.

From 28 September 2020, you will be entitled to a Test and Trace Support Payment of £500 if you:

- have been told to stay at home and self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, either because you have tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive
- are employed or self-employed
- are unable to work from home and will lose income as a result
- are currently receiving at least one of the following:
 - Universal Credit
 - Working Tax Credit
 - Income-based Employment and Support Allowance
 - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
 - Income Support

- Housing Benefit
- Pension Credit.

Due to the guidance set out by Government, you are only eligible for a Test and Trace Support Payment if you meet all of the criteria listed above.

[Please view full criteria and apply here](#)

Health & Wellbeing

Health and wellbeing comes in various shapes and sizes, which is why we are proud of the open spaces that we have available throughout the District. Our parks and open spaces remain open and are a great place to spend some much needed outdoor time. One of the key lessons from the current situation is the need for people to be able to stay fit and healthy.

Last month, in aid of the 'Great British September Clean' organised by Keep Britain Tidy, 111 bags of litter were collected by volunteers across Huntingdonshire's open spaces. Thank you to the following locations who organised community litter picks:

- St Ives
 - Fenstanton
 - St Neots
 - Sawtry
 - Hemingford Grey
 - Hinchingsbrooke Country Park
 - Wistow
 - Elton
 - Houghton
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It has been a busy few months at One Leisure, with the centres now open following their closure under Government guidance. The facilities are now back up and running and offering a wide variety of options for members and non-members alike throughout the Autumn and Winter period.

[More information on One Leisure](#)

[Face Covering Guidance](#)

Please be aware that the Government's face covering guidance has recently been updated. You can find a full list of when the use of a face covering is and isn't required below.

[When to wear a face covering](#)

[Community Chest Criteria: Revised](#)

Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) has revised its existing [Community Chest Grant Scheme criteria](#), with a focus on pandemic recovery for new applications, for up to £1,000 in funding. Having already awarded more than £30,000 of grants to local community groups over the last few months there is now less than £20,000 remaining in the Community Chest fund.

The fund is open for applications with immediate effect, has no closing date for applications (until all funding has been allocated) and welcomes applications that demonstrate how the project aims to address one or more of the issues identified in the Huntingdonshire Recovery Report. All key information and revisions can be found on our [website](#).

If you know of or are part of a community-led resilience initiative, you can apply for Community Chest funding from the District Council by visiting:

www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/communitychestfund

1. Open for applications now	4. The maximum amount of funding that can be applied for is £1,000.
2. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application within 7 days of its receipt	You can apply for Community Chest funding from the District Council by visiting: www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/communitychestfund
3. There is no closing date for applications, once the funding has been allocated, the Community Chest will close, and this will be confirmed on our website.	

Annual Canvass - Still time to return your forms

Canvass form communications were sent out to all households in the District in July, followed by reminder letters in September prompting residents to complete their forms and not to lose out on their opportunity to vote in future elections.

Nearly 60% of households have responded so far, but we are still waiting for the remaining households to respond which they are required to do every year by law. Apart from being a legal requirement, completing the form is essential for anyone who wants to vote in the forthcoming elections as well as assisting anyone wanting to apply for credit such as a mortgage, personal loan or even a mobile phone.

Residents can either return their forms in the envelopes provided or respond by telephone, online or text. It only takes a few minutes to complete.

Door-to-door canvassers will be out and about from mid-October, visiting

households in the District where no response has been received. The canvass this year is taking place during a challenging public health situation. We are working to ensure that we take account of public health guidelines, including the continued importance of social distancing. Where a canvasser is required to visit a property, they will always be given and required to wear the correct PPE.

Any residents who have questions can contact the elections team at elections@huntingdonshire.gov.uk or by telephoning (01480) 388017.

Elections - May 2021

Elections will be held on 6 May 2021 for the Police and Crime Commissioner postponed poll, together with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Mayoral election and Cambridgeshire County Council elections. We will also be holding by-elections for any vacant District and parish councillor positions as well as two Neighbourhood Planning Referendums.

As the impact of Covid-19 on next year's election is unknown, we are asking electors to give some consideration to applying for a postal vote. The benefit of postal voting is that it allows electors to vote in the safety of their own home, rather than visiting a polling station.

If you still wish to vote in person at a polling station, please be assured that Huntingdonshire District Council will be implementing the highest standards of health and safety as advised by Public Health England.

If you would prefer to vote by post during these uncertain times, and do not already have a postal vote in place, please visit our website to download an application form below, or alternatively contact the elections team at elections@huntingdonshire.gov.uk or by telephoning (01480) 388017.

Useful Links:

[Government Guidance: Coronavirus](#)

[NHS COVID-19 App](#)

[What Has Changed? \(22 September - 10pm Curfew/Rule of 6\)](#)

[Meeting With Others Safely \(Updated 7 October\)](#)

[NHS Advice for Everyone](#)

[NHS Test and Trace Guidance \(Updated 8 October\)](#)

[NHS Test and Trace - Testing for coronavirus](#)

[Face Coverings - GOV.uk](#)

[We Are Huntingdonshire Portal](#)
