

ESSEX ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

Weekly Walk Through

Covid19



November 2020

Issue No. 26

Dear Chairman, Councillors, Clerks, Members and Affiliates,

I hope you are well and that today's Weekly Walk Through finds you in good stead. As the Covid-19 situation develops and the new Government lockdown looms I hope you are able to remain safe, and are now familiar with what the restrictions mean for you as individuals, Parish & Town Councils as well as local businesses.

Stay Safe and Best Wishes

Charles Stode

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New National Restrictions from 5 November

COVID-19 case numbers are rising rapidly across the whole of the UK and in other countries. We must act now to control the spread of the virus. The single most important action we can all take, in fighting coronavirus, is to **stay at home, to protect the NHS and save lives.**

That is why, from Thursday 5 November until Wednesday 2 December, the Government is taking the following action:

- Requiring people to stay at home, except for specific purposes.
- Preventing gathering with people you do not live with, except for specific purposes.
- Closing certain businesses and venues.

Until Thursday 5 November, the relevant Local Covid Alert Level measures will continue to apply in the area where you live. From Thursday the national restrictions replace the local restrictions in your area.

STAY AT HOME

This means you must not leave or be outside of your home except for specific purposes. These include:

- for childcare or education, where this is not provided online
- for work purposes, where your place of work remains open and where you cannot work from home (including if your job involves working in other people's homes)
- to exercise outdoors or visit an outdoor public place - with the people you live with, with your support bubble or, when on your own, with 1 person from another household (children under school age, as well as those dependent on round-the-clock care, such as those with severe disabilities, who are with their parents will not count towards the limit on two people meeting outside).
- for any medical concerns, reasons, appointments and emergencies, or to avoid or escape risk of injury or harm - such as domestic abuse
- shopping for basic necessities, for example food and medicine, which should be as infrequent as possible
- to visit members of your support bubble or provide care for vulnerable people, or as a volunteer

Legal Information

MEETING FAMILY AND FRIENDS

You must not meet socially indoors with family or friends unless they are part of your household - meaning the people you live with - or support bubble.

You can exercise or visit outdoor public places with the people you live with, your support bubble, or 1 person from another household (children under school age, as well as those dependent on round-the-clock care, such as those with severe disabilities, who are with their parents will not count towards the limit on two people meeting outside).

You cannot meet in a private garden.

BUSINESSES AND VENUES

To reduce social contact, the Government has ordered certain businesses and venues to close. These include:

- all non-essential retail, including, but not limited to clothing and electronics stores, vehicle showrooms, travel agents, betting shops, auction houses, tailors, car washes, tobacco and vape shops.
- indoor and outdoor leisure facilities such as bowling alleys, leisure centres and gyms, sports facilities including swimming pools, golf courses and driving ranges, dance studios, stables and riding centres, soft play facilities, climbing walls and climbing centres, archery and shooting ranges, water and theme parks,
- entertainment venues such as theatres, concert halls, cinemas, museums and galleries, casinos, adult gaming centres and arcades, bingo halls, bowling alleys, concert halls, zoos and other animal attractions, botanical gardens;
- personal care facilities such as hair, beauty and nail salons, tattoo parlours, spas, massage parlours, body and skin piercing services, non-medical acupuncture, and tanning salons.

Playgrounds can remain open.

Multi-purpose community facilities



The Government has produced **guidance for the safe use of multi-purpose community facilities** and **guidance for the safe use of council buildings** which include what activities can take place and what practical steps can be taken to manage risks.

Hospitality venues like restaurants, bars and pubs must close, but can still provide takeaway and delivery services. However, takeaway of alcohol will not be allowed.

Hotels, hostels and other accommodation should only open for those who have to travel for work purposes and for a limited number of other exemptions which will be set out in law.

Legal Information

WEDDINGS, CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS, RELIGIOUS SERVICES AND FUNERALS

Funerals can be attended by a maximum of 30 people, and it is advised that only close friends and family attend. Linked ceremonial events such as stone settings and ash scatterings can also continue with up to 15 people in attendance. Anyone working is not included. Social distancing should be maintained between people who do not live together or share a support bubble.

Weddings, civil partnership ceremonies will not be permitted to take place except in exceptional circumstances.

Places of Worship will be closed, unless they are being used for:

- Funerals
- To broadcast acts of worship
- Individual prayer
- Formal childcare or where part of a school
- Essential voluntary and public services, such as blood donation or food banks
- Other exempted activities such as some support groups

GOING TO WORK

To help contain the virus, everyone who can work effectively from home must do so.

GOING TO SCHOOL, COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY

The Government will continue to prioritise the wellbeing and long-term futures of our young people and will not be closing schools, colleges or universities. It remains very important for children and young people to attend.

TRAVEL

You should avoid travelling in or out of your local area, and you should look to reduce the number of journeys you make. However you can and should still travel for a number of reasons, including:

- travelling to work where this cannot be done from home
- travelling to education and for caring responsibilities
- hospital GP and other medical appointments or visits where you have had an accident or are concerned about your health
- visiting venues that are open, including essential retail
- exercise, if you need to make a short journey to do so

LOCKDOWN LOO

Lockdown loo is a free website that encourages organisations and members of the public to provide information on which public loos are open. Do have a check of your local area and update or add information to help people find local facilities.

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme is being extended until December 2020

To use the scheme, the steps you'll need to take are:

- Check if you can claim.
- Check which employees you can put on furlough.
- Steps to take before calculating your claim.
- Calculate how much you should claim.
- Claim for your employees' wages online – the service should be simple to use and any support you need available on GOV.UK.
- Report a payment in PAYE Real Time Information.

More information can be found [here](#) 



NHS Test and Trace in the Workplace

Guidance on NHS Test and Trace for employers, businesses and workers.

Guidance for employers

It is critical that employers take steps to keep workers and visitors safe. By following the 5 steps for working safely, along with sector-specific guidance, employers can reduce the risk of co-workers having to self-isolate if a member of staff tests positive for COVID-19. NHS Test and Trace does not change existing guidance that employees should work from home wherever possible.

It is vital that employers play their part by:

making their workplaces as safe as possible (where working from home is not possible)
supporting their workers when in isolation

It is a legal requirement for employers to not knowingly allow an employee who has been told to self-isolate to come into work or work anywhere other than their own home for the duration of their self-isolation period. Failure to do so could result in a fine starting from £1,000.

Employers in local COVID alert areas will need to adhere to further requirements.

NHS Test and Trace will support businesses and economic recovery by:

- providing free testing for anyone who has symptoms of coronavirus
- asking those that test positive and their close contacts to self-isolate to stop the spread of the virus in the workplace
- enabling the Government to safely lift lockdown measures
- Employers (and the self-employed) must continue to ensure the health, safety and welfare of their employees. They also have similar obligations in respect of other people, for example agency workers, contractors, volunteers, customers, suppliers and other visitors.
- Workplace risk

Employers must review risk assessments to ensure they remain suitable and sufficient. Where COVID-19 is a risk in the workplace, it must form part of the risk assessment.

The Health and Safety Executive has published [guidance to help you conduct a risk assessment](#).



NHS COVID-19 app and QR code poster

Designated venues must display an official NHS QR code poster to enable customers and visitors to scan the NHS QR code when they arrive by using the NHS COVID-19 app. The information stays on the user's phone. As you are likely to already have a record of your employees and staff, they do not need to scan the NHS QR code. However, staff can scan the QR code, in addition, if they wish.

Find out more about these requirements. 

On 18 September 2020, new regulations came into force making it a legal requirement for venues to log details of visitors, customers, and staff. Local Council venues and buildings that allow public access or bookings must:

- Have a system in place to request and record contact details of their customers, visitors and staff

Register for an official NHS QR code and display the official NHS QR poster from 24 September 2020

The NHS has provided more information on the QR code and posters for organisations, as well as further information on the NHS COVID-19 app.

Collecting contact details and maintaining records for NHS Test and Trace is a legal requirement and failure to comply is punishable by a fine.



An Update from our Hospitals



Mid and South Essex
NHS Foundation Trust

This [issue features](#) an update on our preparations for rising number of patients testing positive for COVID-19, as well as the winter period. It also includes exciting news about our innovative use of drones, a local MP's visit, and awards for our Chief Nursing Officer, a student nurse and our maternity antenatal diabetes team.



Government Hotlines

HMRC	0800 015 9559
Universal Credit	0800 328 5644
School Closures	0800 046 8687
NHS	111.nhs.uk or 111

Essex County Council

Covid-19 updates	www.essex.gov.uk/coronavirus
Essex Coronavirus Action	Facebook page, gives useful and legitimate advice
Essex Welfare Service	0300 303 9988
Essex Highways	www.essex.gov.uk/highways
Domestic Abuse	www.essexcompass.org.uk or 0330 333 7 444
Births Deaths and Marriages	https://www.essex.gov.uk/topic/births-ceremonies-deaths
Healthwatch Essex	www.healthwatchessex.org.uk

EALC

Half Term Emergency Fund

Essex County Council are committed to supporting the Communities most in need, which have been adversely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. This funding is primarily for the provision of food and essentials; however, we recognise that we also need to support the costs to you as an organisation in terms of storage, volunteer expenses and PPE.

Last week we received 52 applications and awarded a grand total of £87,721 out in grants.



Health & Wellbeing Conference 2020

Thursday 26th November 2020
Online Conference Via Zoom



Please see the attached Flyer & Agenda



New Clerk's Zoom Course

Tuesday 24th November 2020
please see the attached flyer



New Councillor's Briefing Webinars

Councillor Training Day 1 Flyer
Councillor Training Day 2 Flyer



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