

Important Information for Tenants



Issue 8 2nd November 2020

Throughout the Coronavirus Crisis, Gatesbiel will periodically issue these information sheets (in addition to information included in the regular monthly Bulletin) to bring you the latest advice from the Government and other authoritative sources such as the World Health Organization.

The Government announced on Saturday 31st October that from Thursday 5th November, much stricter restrictions will apply in England. This sheet summarises how they will apply to Tenants at Gatesbiel.

Summary of the announcement by HM Government

Faced with projections that show that the NHS could be overwhelmed with patients in a matter of weeks, the government has decided that much tougher restrictions will need to be in place from Thursday 5th November until at least 2nd December. This means that from Thursday 5th November, all non-essential shops, cafes, pubs, restaurants and leisure facilities will close and the official advice is to remain at home except for the following reasons:

- 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 one person from another household.
- 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

This list is not exhaustive and there are other limited circumstances where you may be permitted to leave or be outside of your home. These will be set out in law and further detailed guidance will be provided.

This is similar to the 'lockdown' in March and April, except that:

- schools will remain open
- you may take exercise outside with one person from another household.

What does this mean for Gatesbiel?

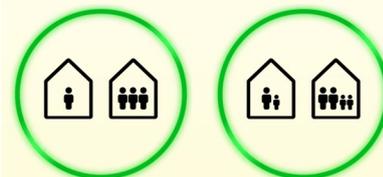
At Gatesbiel, this means that:

- regretfully, the Common Room and all communal facilities except the laundry will have to close.
- you must not enter any other tenant's flat (unless you have formed a Support Bubble with them)
- you may take exercise in the gardens (or other outdoor public spaces) alone, with someone with whom you share your flat, with other members of your Support Bubble, or with one other person you do not live with (but in this case maintaining social distancing).

Tenant Support will continue to be provided. Care Agency staff and anyone providing care for you may still enter your flat as may someone carrying out an essential repair (e.g. to repair the central heating).

We understand that this will be a difficult time for all our Tenants. Do get in touch with our staff if you have questions or need help (e.g. with shopping). Staff will remain on duty as normal throughout this period and as always are here to help you.

'Support bubbles' are allowed



between 1 solo or single-parent household and 1 other household of any size

If you have not done so already, you might want to consider forming a 'Support Bubble' - more information on Page 2

The 'Clinically Extremely Vulnerable'

The NHS will be writing again to everyone classed as 'clinically extremely vulnerable' (i.e. those who were asked to shield during the first 'lockdown'). You should follow the advice given in that letter.

Making a support bubble with another household

In England, if you live by yourself or are a single parent with dependent children – in other words, if there is only one adult in your home – you can expand your support network so that it includes one other household of any size. This is called making a ‘support bubble’ and means you are able to meet indoors or out, be less than 2 metres apart and stay overnight as you could if they were members of your own household. Once you are in a support bubble, you can think of yourself as in a single household. You should continue to adhere to social distancing guidelines in full with other households.

There are key principles for how you can form a support bubble safely:

- Support bubbles should be exclusive – you should not change who is in your bubble or have close contact with anyone else you do not live with. This is critical to keeping you, and your family and friends, safe.
- If you or someone in your support bubble is showing coronavirus symptoms, or otherwise self-isolating, everyone in your support bubble should stay home and self-isolate. If you or a member of your support bubble is contacted as part of the test and trace programme, the individual contacted must stay at home. If the individual becomes symptomatic, everyone in the support bubble must then isolate.

You must not gather indoors or stay overnight with anyone outside of this bubble and should not change your bubble. If you are in a single adult household, you may want to consider making a bubble with another smaller household where possible. Everyone in a support bubble should isolate when one member of the bubble becomes symptomatic or tests positive for coronavirus.

Who can form a support bubble

If you live in a single adult household – either you live alone or are a single parent living only with dependent children – you are allowed to form a support bubble. You can choose

to do so with any other household. This should be used to help those most in need.

Physical contact with members of your support bubble

Support bubbles are intended to help people who may be lonely and therefore at greatest risk of isolation. You do not need to stay more than 2 metres from people in your bubble, but good hand hygiene and other measures can help to keep you and the people you meet safe.

Support bubbles and isolation

If any member of your support bubble – either someone in your own household or one that you have formed a bubble with – develops symptoms or tests positive for coronavirus you should follow advice on household isolation. If you share custody of your child, and you and your child’s other parent are both in separate bubbles, all households would need to isolate if someone becomes symptomatic in the group.

If you are over 60 or have a higher risk of catching coronavirus (such as a frontline healthcare worker)

If you are over 60 or otherwise clinically vulnerable, you should continue to take particular care to minimise contact with others. You should bear this in mind when deciding to form a support bubble. If you are at a higher risk of exposure to those with coronavirus (for example, if someone in your house is a healthcare or care worker that interacts with patients that have coronavirus), you should take particular care when deciding whether to form a support bubble and who with.

Travelling to form a support bubble

There is no limit on how far you can travel in England to meet members of your support bubble but we recommend that you form a support bubble with someone who lives locally wherever possible. You cannot form a bubble with someone who lives in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.



HANDS

DO wash your hands thoroughly for twenty seconds, regularly.



FACE

DO wear a face covering in public, indoor spaces.



SPACE

DO keep at least 6 feet away from anyone you don’t live with.

DO cough/sneeze into the crook of your arm or use a tissue (disposing of it straight away).

DO get tested if you have coronavirus symptoms and self-isolate.

Detailed Official Advice from HM Government

This is the detailed advice issued by the Government on Saturday 31st October. It is abridged to exclude areas that are unlikely to apply to Gateshead Tenants. If you would like the full, unabridged copy, please ask a member of staff.

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.

When we reduce our day-to-day contact with other people, we will reduce the spread of the infection. 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.

These new measures have been carefully judged to achieve the maximum reduction in growth in the number of cases, preventing the NHS from being overwhelmed, whilst ensuring that schools, colleges and universities stay open and that as many people as possible continue to work.

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. No new areas will move in the LCAL Very High restrictions between now and Thursday.

The new measures will apply nationally for four weeks up to Wednesday 2 December. At the end of the period, we will look to return to a regional approach, based on the latest data.

Complying with the new measures will help limit the spread of coronavirus, reduce the impact on the NHS and save lives. They will be underpinned by law which will make clear about what you must and must not do from 5 November. The relevant authorities, including the police, will have powers to enforce the law – including through fines and dispersing gatherings.

There is separate additional guidance for households with a possible or confirmed coronavirus infection

1. 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

This list is not exhaustive and there are other limited circumstances where you may be permitted to leave or be outside of your home. These will be set out in law and further detailed guidance will be provided.

2. Staying safe outside the home (Social Distancing)

You should minimise time spent outside your home and when around other people ensure that you are two metres apart from anyone not in your household or support bubble.

Remember - 'Hands. Face. Space':

- hands – wash your hands regularly and for 20 seconds
- face – wear a face covering in indoor settings where social distancing may be difficult, and where you will come into contact with people you do not normally meet
- space – stay 2 metres apart from people you do not live with where possible, or 1 metre with extra precautions in place (such as wearing face coverings or increasing ventilation indoors)

3. Meeting with 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.

A support bubble is where a household with one adult joins with another household. Households in that support bubble can still visit each other, stay overnight, and visit outdoor public places together.

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).

Outdoor public places include:

- parks, beaches, countryside,
- public gardens (whether or not you pay to enter them), allotments
- playgrounds

You cannot meet in a private garden.

4. 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.
- Food shops, supermarkets, garden centres and certain other retailers providing essential goods and services can remain open. Essential retail should follow COVID-secure guidelines to protect customers, visitors and workers.
- Non-essential retail can remain open for delivery to customers and click-and-collect.
- Playgrounds can remain open.
- 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.

A full list of the business closures will be published and set out in law.

Some venues will be allowed to remain open for specific exempt activities, like childcare and support groups.

Support groups that are essential to deliver in person can continue with up to 15 participants where formally organised to provide mutual aid, therapy or any other form of support. This includes support to victims of crime, people in drug and alcohol recovery, new parents and guardians, people with long-term illnesses, people facing issues relating to their sexuality or gender, and those who have suffered bereavement.

A number of public services will also stay open and you will be able to leave home to visit them. These include:

- the NHS and medical services like GPs. We are supporting the NHS to safely carry out urgent and non-urgent services and it is vital anyone who thinks they need any kind of medical care comes forward and seeks help.
- Jobcentre Plus sites
- Courts
- Civil Registrations Offices

5. 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

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9. Protecting people more at risk from coronavirus

If you are over 60 or clinically vulnerable, you could be at higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. You:

- should be especially careful to follow the rules and minimise your contacts with others
- should continue to wash your hands carefully and more frequently than usual and maintain thorough cleaning of frequently touched areas in your home and/or workspace

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There is a further group of people who are defined, also on medical grounds, as clinically extremely vulnerable to coronavirus – that is, people with specific serious health conditions. ... You are encouraged to stay at home as much as possible, but are encouraged to go outside for exercise. The full new guidance will be published on Monday 2 November and the Government will write to everybody who is clinically extremely vulnerable to set out detailed advice while the new restrictions are in place. Current advice is in place at each local COVID alert level.

10. Visiting relatives in care homes

Guidance on care home visits will be published ahead of Thursday. For now, you should follow existing guidance

11. 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
If you need to travel we encourage you to walk or cycle where possible, and to plan ahead and avoid busy times and routes on public transport. This will allow you to practise social distancing while you travel.

Overnight stays and holidays away from primary residences will not be allowed. This includes holidays abroad and in the UK. It also means you cannot stay in a second home, if you own one, or staying with anyone you do not live with or are in a support bubble with. There are specific exceptions, for example if you need to stay away from home (including in a second home) for work purposes, but this means people cannot travel overseas or within the UK, unless for work, education or other legally permitted reasons.

You must not travel if you are experiencing any coronavirus symptoms, are self-isolating as a result of coronavirus symptoms, are sharing a household or support bubble with somebody with symptoms, or have been told to self-isolate after being contacted by NHS Test and Trace.

If you need to use public transport - to travel to work for example - you should follow the safer travel guidance. This includes the rules on wearing face masks and advice on car sharing.

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