

COVID UPDATE

The Director of Public Health for Cumbria, Colin Cox issued the following advice: “From [Thursday 24th February], self isolation if you test positive for Covid is no longer a legal requirement. But that doesn't mean it's ok to spread it! Some people are still vulnerable... So if you have symptoms, please get tested. And if you test positive, please isolate as best you can.”

What does this mean at Gatesbielld?

AT GATESBIELD, we note that although people are no longer legally required to follow Covid precautions, Public Health Advice has not changed.

So, until at least the 1st April we continue to:

- Ask all staff to take a Lateral Flow Test each day they are on duty (preferably before arrival at Gatesbielld).
- Ask all visitors (i.e. people not resident at Gatesbielld) coming to the communal areas (e.g. for lunch or other reasons) to take a lateral flow test.
- Continue to encourage (and facilitate) all tenants to take lateral flow tests at least twice per week.
- Encourage tenants to ask their visitors (i.e. people not resident at Gatesbielld) coming to their flats to take a lateral flow test ahead of the visit.

Tenants are also strongly encouraged to wear face-coverings for all other communal activities in the Common Room or Craft Room (Film Club, Scrabble, Healing Group, Bible Study, Music Club, Happy Crafters etc) except when eating at meal times or for Saturday Morning Coffee.

The changes announced by the Government from 24th February

The Government will remove remaining domestic restrictions in England, subject to appropriate parliamentary scrutiny. From 24 February, the Government will:

1. Remove the legal requirement to self-isolate following a positive test. Adults and children who test positive will continue to be advised to stay at home and avoid contact with other people. After 5 days, they may choose to take a Lateral Flow Device (LFD) followed by another the next day - if both are negative, and they do not have a temperature, they can safely return to their normal routine. Those who test positive should avoid contact with anyone in an at risk group, including if they live in the same household.
There will be specific guidance for staff in particularly vulnerable services, such as adult social care, healthcare, and prisons and places of detention.
2. No longer ask fully vaccinated close contacts and those under the age of 18 to test daily for 7 days, and remove the legal requirement for close contacts who are not fully vaccinated to self-isolate. Guidance will set out the precautions that those who live in the same household as someone who has COVID-19, or who have stayed overnight in the same household, are advised to take to reduce risk to other people. Other contacts of people with COVID-19 will be advised to take extra care in following general guidance for the public on safer behaviours.
3. End self-isolation support payments and national funding for practical support. The medicine delivery service will no longer be available. People who were instructed to self-isolate before this date will still be able to claim support payments within the next 42 days.
4. Revoke The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (No. 3) Regulations. Local authorities will continue to manage local outbreaks of COVID-19 in high risk settings as they do with other infectious diseases.

From 24 March, the COVID-19 provisions within Statutory Sick Pay and Employment and Support Allowance regulations will end. People with COVID-19 may still be eligible, subject to the normal conditions of entitlement.

From 1 April, the Government will update guidance setting out the ongoing steps that people with COVID-19 should take to minimise contact with other people.