



Dear Herefordshire resident,

Herefordshire has moved into a national lockdown along with all areas in England – effective from 5th November to 2nd December.

The main reason for writing is to say thank you for following the Covid-19 restrictions and rules, and to underline how important it is for us to stop the transmission of the Covid-19 virus in Herefordshire. To do this, requires each one of us, each citizen, everyone in our communities to stop the spread of infection by doing the right thing: by following the Covid-19 rules. If we all do this, we will stop the virus spreading. It really is that simple.

The lockdown period will end and be replaced by a period in which there are likely to be reduced but important restrictions.....either Tier1, Tier2 or Tier3. If people do not follow the Covid-19 rules and protocols responsibly during and after the lockdown period, infections will rise again and the country will be heading for another lockdown. Nobody wants this, and we can avoid this happening by recognising that we all have a responsibility to stop infections spreading.

If we all do the right thing, we can stop the spread of infection, and eliminate Covid-19.

Across the UK in recent months, too many people have not self-isolated when required to do so, and others have simply ignored the really important rules of social distancing, wearing face-masks, and handwashing. This is what has driven up the levels of infection, and a few weeks later we are seeing hospitals around the country filling up with very ill people, and tragically deaths now running into hundreds per day. Tragically, over 130 of our Herefordshire residents have so far died due to Covid-19. In recent weeks it is estimated that only around 20% of those who needed to self-isolate have actually been doing so. This means that 80% of people who are known to have tested positive, or to be a contact of someone who has tested positive, are actually moving around, spreading the virus. In Herefordshire, we need to ensure the highest possible level of compliance – which will stop the virus in our county.

This is a very dangerous virus, invisible, and harmless to many, but fatal to tens of thousands. For a great many others of all ages, the disease has longer term effects, known as 'long-covid'. These symptoms can be extremely debilitating and even fatal, months after the initial illness.

One of the biggest challenges with Covid-19 is that most people feel only mild symptoms or no symptoms at all, and yet you can still carry the virus and be passing it on. This is why social distancing and the Covid-19 rules are so important – they will reduce the likelihood of passing on the virus if you are positive but simply don't know it.

If you are Covid-19 positive, with or without symptoms, you can infect friends, family, co-workers and vulnerable strangers. Infection is then likely to reach someone who will become ill, possibly seriously or even fatally so. As a county we must not let this happen.

If we all do the right thing, we can stop the spread of infection, and eliminate Covid-19.

Whether you live in the market towns of Kington, Leominster, Bromyard, Ledbury, Ross-on-Wye, in Hereford city itself, in our rural villages, or in the open countryside - if everyone follows the Covid-19 rules, we will stop spreading the virus.

If we all do the right thing, we can turn around the rising spread of infection. We will save businesses, save jobs and above all – save lives.

Please bear in mind:

- If you need support and don't have friends or family, you can contact Talk Community on: 01432 260027.
- The NHS website advises on reducing the risk of infection spread at home - go to <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions> - and then follow coronavirus-covid19/self-isolation.
- Fresh air is important – it helps to remove the virus in the air. So open windows, wear warmer clothes.
- Wear a face-covering in indoor places if not at home, and in busy outdoor places. This link explains why this is so important: <https://english.elpais.com/society/2020-10-28/a-room-a-bar-and-a-class-how-the-coronavirus-is-spread-through-the-air.html>

We know you have read this so many times, but please be sure to:

WASH HANDS OFTEN; WEAR A FACE-COVERING; MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING.

**Thank you
Please Stay Safe Herefordshire**

**Alistair Neill
Chief Executive**

**Jo-Anne Alner
MD Clinical Commissioning Group**

**Karen Wright
Director of Public Health**

**Dr Mike Hearne, MD Taurus Healthcare Ltd
(representing Herefordshire general practice)**

Lockdown Restrictions:

The government has introduced national restrictions to limit our contact with other people and control the spread of coronavirus.

From Thursday 5 November until Wednesday 2 December, you must:

- **Stay at home** except for specific purposes, such as for childcare and education, or to shop for food and medicine. You must work from home where possible.
- **Avoid meeting people you do not live with.** You must not meet socially indoors with family or friends unless they are part of your household or support bubble, or to provide informal childcare for children aged 13 and under.

If you experience **any one** of the following symptoms, you must book a test and self-isolate with your household until you receive the result:

- A persistent, dry cough
- A high temperature
- A loss or changed sense of taste or smell

Book a test by calling 119 or online at www.gov.uk/coronavirus

Think about the support you may need on a daily basis, especially if you need to self-isolate, and whether family friends or neighbours can help you. Your plan might include support with things that you usually take for granted, such as shopping, collecting medicine or pet care. If you need additional support, call the Herefordshire Council Talk Community Helpdesk on 01432 260027 or email talkcommunitycovidresponse@herefordshire.gov.uk