

Town and Parish Councils

New National Restrictions

As outlined in the Prime Minister's statement on 31 October, from today (Thursday, 5 November) new national restrictions will apply in England in an effort to reduce the rapid increase in COVID-19 infections across the country, hospitalisations and loss of life.

The new restrictions will be in place until 2 December and are aimed at reducing day-to-day contact between people - therefore closing certain businesses and venues and encouraging people to stay at home wherever possible, except for specific reasons.

The Government has said it is taking the action now to prevent the NHS from being overwhelmed, while ensuring that schools, colleges and universities stay open and that as many people as possible continue to work in sectors which do not have to close.

At the end of the four weeks, on Wednesday, 2 December, the Government has said it will seek to ease restrictions by going back into the local and regional tiered, based on the latest data and trends.

Councils and the Local Government Association are asking the Government for a clear and transparent framework for de-escalation in December.

More detailed information about the national restrictions is outlined in a separate document accompanying this message.

East Riding of Yorkshire Council's response to the national restrictions

The council has quickly been responding to the announcement in a number of ways, including preparation for service delivery changes, liaising with Government and partners, planning local support for residents and businesses and communicating with staff and the public to inform them of the latest news.

We will again be administering grants and support to businesses and further details of how and when this will happen will be made available as soon as we are able to.

All council meetings involving members will be held completely virtually during the national restrictions period.

Customer Service Centres will remain open but all customers entering the centres will continue to be required to wear a face covering (unless exempt) and it will continue to only be possible to visit a centre, to talk to a customer advisor, by appointment and only for services which cannot be completed via the council website or by telephone on (01482) 393939. Likewise, the front door of County Hall will remain open to the public but this will also be by appointment only.

As you know, we have already been planning the future of the East Riding Community Response Hub (see the email sent last week) and will be seeking to assess need in a way that supports independence. We will aim to provide appropriate assistance and advice, where needed, to enable people to access food, medication and other essentials and we will seek to draw on existing provision within the community and voluntary sector, including food banks, where necessary.

Unlike the start of the national lockdown in March, the Government has said it wants more public services to be maintained and we are already geared up for that and providing a wide range of services successfully in a COVID-secure manner.

However, some of our services will have to cease operation as mandated by the new, national restrictions.

Managers of those services have been quickly responding and organising this and these changes have been communicated to residents and customers this week. The changes include:

East Riding Leisure Centres are closing completely from close of business today (Wednesday, 4 November) until further notice. All payments for memberships and swimming lessons paid for by direct debit will be automatically suspended until the leisure centres reopen.

Bridlington Spa will be closed completely from today. The box office team will contact customers who are affected by the cancellation of November shows, offering a credit to customer accounts or a full refund. It will still be possible to book future events online at www.bridspa.com

The house, zoo, holiday cottages and café at **Sewerby Hall and Gardens** will all be closed from today. The grounds and play area will remain open for people to take exercise but people must maintain social distancing and adhere to other restrictions relating to meeting people from other households.

South Cliff Holiday Park will close from today to all users and all holidays have had to be cancelled until 2 December. The **land trains** at Bridlington ceased operating for the 2020 season on 2 November.

As of Thursday, 5 November **libraries** will be closed however they will offer an Order and Collect service, which was successfully and safely introduced after the first lockdown.

This means:

- Customers cannot go into libraries or mobile libraries to browse books however they can search an online catalogue at <https://library.eastriding.gov.uk/web/arena> or telephone to speak to a member of staff for reading recommendations.
- Fines have been suspended since the March lockdown and will continue for the foreseeable future. Customers can take their borrowed books back when it is safe for them to do so. Books can be renewed online, on the East Riding Libraries app or by telephone.
- Collection times will be available during normal opening hours.
- Returned items will continue to be quarantined for 72 hours before being cleaning and redistributed.

East Riding Museums (Beverley Art Gallery, Beverley Guildhall, Goole Museum and Skidby Mill) closed at 4pm yesterday and the **Treasure House** (including the café) and **East Riding Archives** will also be closed from today.

All East Riding **Local Nature Reserves** will remain open, for people to take their daily exercise, but people must maintain social distancing and adhere to other restrictions relating to meeting people from other households. Details of walks in the East Riding can be found at <http://walkingtheriding.eastriding.gov.uk/>

All winter let and annual let council **chalets** will be closed from today.

Beaches and promenades will remain open but all users must observe social distancing and adhere to other restrictions relating to meeting people from other households.

Public toilets and **car parks** run by the council and **household waste recycling centres** are remaining open and traders selling essential items such as food and pet supplies at **outside markets** can continue to trade.

Adult learning centres remain open, as do **business centres**, which are also continuing to offer a COVID-19-secure reception service during normal weekday hours.

Our **children's services** teams continue to support young children and families and we continue to operate a 24/7 helpline for schools to help deal with any COVID-19 issues.

The restrictions mean that all but essential visits into **care homes** will have to stop and will only be permitted inside of an enclosed space for exceptional reasons, described in the national guidance as to see those residents who are the end of their life.

Our view in the East Riding is that it is also reasonable to try to support visiting for very rare and special occasions like major birthdays or significant anniversaries.

Neither the council nor our providers are comfortable with the restriction, particularly as so many homes in the East Riding have invested in visiting spaces which have a physical barrier to prevent the spread of the virus.

However, unless the guidance changes or we are given permission by Public Health England and the Department of Health to run a local visiting pilot, we have no alternative but to adhere to the guidance.

Our local public health team is lobbying Government very hard to ease the restriction to allow visiting in safe spaces and we will continue to press for this to happen. We know many care providers across East Riding are doing so too. Further national guidance on care home visiting is still awaited and we will update you if there are any changes once this is received.

In the meantime, virtual contact will be maintained using whatever technology works best and “window visits” are still allowed if there is a safe space in the home with good access from outside to allow that.

We remain absolutely committed to protecting residents and ensuring relatives can have as much contact with their loved ones as we are able to safely facilitate during these difficult and challenging times.

Public protection officers will be giving advice and checking on business compliance with the new regulations. Both the council and the police can enforce closures of non-compliant businesses and any reports of non-compliance can be sent to the public protection email account public.protection@eastriding.gov.uk

Finally, in relation to service delivery changes, we’re delighted to share a good news story with you!

With the news that weddings would not be allowed during the national restrictions, our **registration and celebratory services** pulled out the stops to bring nearly 30 weddings forward at short notice.

These had been booked to take place during the lockdown but staff contacted all the couples who had weddings booked, to let them know weddings couldn't be held during the national restrictions period, and to offer them the opportunity to bring their weddings forward.

Staff then worked extra hours and did everything they could to enable the weddings to take place instead on Monday, yesterday and today –making the couples very happy indeed.

Schools Update

As of Wednesday, one primary school was closed in the East Riding as a result of COVID-19.

Overall, there are currently 952 pupils self-isolating across the East Riding as a result of being identified as a close contact of a positive test from a ‘bubble’ member in their school – this could be a pupil or member of staff.

This represents 2.1% of the total pupil population. The parents and carers of these pupils have received a letter from their school to direct them to self-isolate after consultation with the council’s education and public health outbreak management team.

A total of 82 schools (54.7% of the total number of East Riding schools and academies) have been affected by confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 in their school community at some point during the pandemic.

COVID-19 infections update

As of 3 November, there have been 139,060 confirmed cases across the Yorkshire and Humber area. This includes 5,463 cases in the East Riding.

As of 2 November, there have been 394 hospital deaths due to COVID-19 across the Humber area. This includes 237 deaths registered by HUTH, 141 deaths registered by NLAG, 15 deaths registered by CHCP (East Riding Community Hospital) and one death registered by HTFT.

Yorkshire and Humber Update:

UK Government Daily Coronavirus Figures – Case numbers as of 03 November 2020		
Area	Cumulative cases to date (pillar 1 and pillar 2)	Rate per 100,000
East Riding of Yorkshire	5,463	1604.2
Yorkshire and the Humber	139,060	2,527
England	912,236	1,620.7
Source: UK Government		

Remembrance Sunday

There is an exemption to the restrictions on gatherings for Remembrance Sunday (8 November) and the Government updated the guidance on this yesterday, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-preparations-for-remembrance-sunday>

However the only service which is allowed to take place on Armistice Day itself (11 November) is at Westminster Abbey.

Face-to-face meetings – town and parish councils

We are advising town and parish councils that meetings should be held remotely unless councils are not able to do so, in which case the factors to consider are the national restrictions on travel and gatherings.

Detailed guidance has been provided separately to you about this so you can determine whether it is “reasonably necessary” to meet face-to-face.

Crematoriums and burial grounds

The issue of whether burial grounds should be closed was something that caused some confusion during the national lockdown which started in March. We are advising town and parish councils that you do not have to close burial grounds as the regulations state that they can be open for funerals, burials, commemorative events and to allow people to pay their respects to a deceased family member or friend.

How you can continue to help!

Please continue to promote the council’s **3 Steps To Safety** public health campaign, which encourages everyone to follow basic prevention measures such as handwashing, social distancing and the wearing of face coverings; to notice COVID-19 symptoms; and to immediately act if they have symptoms by requesting a test and self-isolating.

Also, please also encourage everyone you know to stay at home if they have tested positive, are showing symptoms or are awaiting a test result. The importance of this cannot be stressed enough if we are to suppress the spread of COVID-19.

To help you promote this crucial message, please make use of the assets library on the council’s website which has a range of artwork and other materials which you can use as posters, on social media and in other ways such as sharing with your own networks on email or WhatsApp, for example.

The materials are available at https://emergency.eastriding.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/downloads/?utm_source=www.eastriding.gov.uk&utm_medium=covid19_panel&utm_campaign=covid19

Please spread the word, not the virus, so that we can keep the East Riding as safe a place as possible to live, work, shop, learn, play, invest and visit.

As a reminder, if you do have any COVID-19 symptoms, you can **request a test** at www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test or by **calling 119**.

You can read more about 3 Steps To Safety, and the East Riding Outbreak Management Plan which the campaign supports, at www.eastriding.gov.uk/3stepstosafety

You can also help by downloading and using the **NHS Covid-19 app** and we encourage you all to do this if you haven’t already.

Questions and further information

We can assure you that we will be continuing to do our best to keep delivering services to the highest standard wherever possible however we may need to prioritise essential services at different times as we deal with the pandemic. If we do need to significantly change any service delivery at short notice, we will endeavour to keep you informed.

We are experiencing increasing levels of staff sickness and services are revisiting their business continuity plans in light of the current situation.

The council's website at www.eastriding.gov.uk continues to have up-to-date information and guidance relating to COVID-19 and council services so we encourage you to check online if you have any questions yourselves or questions on behalf of local residents and businesses.

Thank you for your continued support.

#TogetherEastRiding