

24 December 2020

Together We're Better Stakeholder Update

Last weekend the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, announced that the planned five-day relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions planned for Christmas will now be for **Christmas Day only**. This replaces the guidance previously issued by the government. That means that you can now only meet with two other households on Christmas day. Your 'Christmas bubble' cannot extend past Christmas day. Until 25 December and after that date you can only meet with a maximum of six people in outdoor public spaces, such as public parks. You cannot meet people outside your household/support bubble in any indoor setting or private outdoor space (such as private gardens).

The Prime Minister also outlined a new local COVID Alert Level. Tier 4 COVID-19 restrictions are now in place across large parts of the UK, including London, the south-east and south-west of the country.

This is in response to the spread of a new strain of the virus which is being transmitted at a greater rate (70%) than the original strain of the virus.

The new Tier 4 restrictions are similar to the lockdown experienced by the whole of England last month and non-essential retail will close, people should stay at home, and work from where possible. A full list of areas under Tier 4 restrictions can be found [here](#). Only essential travel to and from these areas is allowed. Scottish First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, has announced that Scotland will go into Tier 4 restrictions for three weeks, starting on Boxing Day (26 December). Wales has been in Tier 4 restrictions since 20 December.

The Prime Minister also announced that the 'Christmas bubble' rules for Christmas day can no longer take place in Tier 4 areas. Families will not be able to mix unless in a support bubble and all other social interaction is regulated by law.

More locally, neighbouring Cheshire will also go into Tier 3 as of 00.01am on Boxing Day (26 December). Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent are staying in Tier 3 – Very High COVID alert level.

Now, more than ever, we need to be sensible about our interactions with other people from outside our households or support bubbles. Rules may be being relaxed for one day, and we may not have gone into Tier 4, but we would urge local people to seriously consider plans for Christmas day and to not put loved ones at unnecessary risk.

The latest seven-day rate figures show that Staffordshire has an average rate of 232.2 per 100,000, with variations across the districts and boroughs. Stoke-on-Trent is at 322 per 100,000. The virus is still rife locally and, as Boris Johnson previously mentioned, a smaller Christmas is a safer Christmas.

We are seeing a fantastic uptake of the COVID-19 vaccine across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent for those in the eligible vulnerable groups. If you are included in the eligible vulnerable groups, you will be contacted to arrange your vaccination appointment. Please do not call your GP or local hospital to try to arrange this.

More community vaccination sites are going live every week, with Furlong Medical Centre in Tunstall being the latest to begin vaccinations this week. We are expecting more community vaccination sites to go live in the New Year. This is a fantastic step towards protecting our most vulnerable residents, but we are a long way off being able to get back to normal life.

That's why we must all do our bit to help stop the spread of the virus. You will have received an updated toolkit for the 'Do it for what matters' campaign on Monday this week, with updated messaging following the announcements at the weekend. Please help us to spread these messages far and wide and encourage your local community groups, friends and family to do their bit – and to do it for what matters.

Useful Resources

National lockdown restriction resources can be found [here](#).

Materials are available for the following campaigns; please can we ask for your help to promote them across your networks:

- [Tiering](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccine](#)
- [Local Alert Level resources](#)
- [Hands. Face. Space resources](#)
- [Stay Alert to Stay Safe](#): new youth messaging focusing on 'consequences' - social animations
- [Stay Alert to Stay Safe posters](#): White background easy print for face coverings and distance
- [NHS Test and Trace posters](#): White background easy print for drive through testing and self-isolate
- [Symptoms posters](#): Symptoms posters: White background easy print for taste and smell
- [NHS COVID-19 App resources](#)
- [Wearing a face mask – translations](#) (Arabic/French/Kurdish/Lithuanian/Pashto/Polish/Portuguese/Romanian/Russian/Spanish/Tigrinya)
- [Test and Trace materials](#) are available to use on the Public Health England Campaign Resource Centre. This includes BSL, easy read and large print formats [here](#).
- [Signposting materials](#) with useful information on how people can contact their GP, order repeat prescriptions and manage wellbeing and existing conditions at home: <https://coronavirusresources.phe.gov.uk/nhs-resources-facilities/resources/health-at-home/>
- [Public Health England guide on how older adults can stay active at home during coronavirus to maintain strength and balance](#)
- [Translated information leaflets for parents with new-borns during coronavirus](#)

- [Mental wellbeing whilst staying at home](#)
- [North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust mental health support and advice guide](#)
- [Guidance on shielding](#)
- [Blood donation materials](#)

Public Health England has updated its coronavirus guidance in light of changes to the government's advice and continue to ensure guidance for the public is timely and up to date. All guidance for members of the public, as well as for people in clinical and non-clinical settings, is published and updated regularly on the GOV.UK collection page.

For the latest information on coronavirus, please visit the [NHS](#) and [government](#) websites.

Together We're Better is the partnership of NHS and local government organisations, alongside independent and voluntary sector groups, that is working together to transform health and care services. You can find out more about us on our website: <https://www.twbstaffsandstoke.org.uk/>