

# NEWS RELEASE



## Bracknell Forest local contact tracing system launched

Bracknell Forest Council has launched a local contact tracing system today as part of the borough's continued response to COVID-19 and to reduce the spread locally.

In Bracknell Forest, around 80 per cent of people identified as a close contact of someone who has tested positive for the virus are successfully contacted by the national NHS test and trace system. While this is much higher than other parts of the country, the council has set up a local system to try and contact as many of the remaining 20 per cent as possible.

Local contact tracers, who are all Bracknell Forest Council staff, will call people who have tested positive for COVID-19 to gather details of their close contacts, if national test and trace is unable to make contact after 24 hours.

This is another vital part of how the borough is responding to the pandemic as the system aims to obtain details of those who have been exposed to the virus so they can be contacted and advised to self-isolate.

Residents should not be alarmed if they receive a phone call from 01344 354321 as this is the number that official Bracknell Forest Council contact tracers will use.

All local contact tracers have undertaken a full training programme, including data security; children's and adult safeguarding and clinical information governance.

Cllr Paul Bettison OBE, Leader of Bracknell Forest Council and Chair of the Local Outbreak Engagement Board, said: "Bracknell Forest Council, like other councils, has launched a local test and trace system so that those people who have tested positive for the virus, but national NHS test and trace haven't been able to get hold of, do not slip through the cracks.

"We need to get hold of these people so they can be advised appropriately, officially told to self-isolate and be provided with any information relating to local services they may require whilst isolating.

"If you receive a call from 01344 354321 then it is one of our local contact tracers trying to get hold of you. We know that we continually tell people to never give out our personal details to strangers over the phone, but this is an exceptional circumstance and an additional step in our response to COVID-19, so please do speak to them if they call. A pre-text will be sent to mobile numbers in advance of the call."

Due to data protection regulations, local contact tracers will not leave a message or voicemail. They can however be called back on 01344 352000.