



# NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

Thursday 17 December

## **Bracknell Forest placed in tier 3**

Due to a significant rise in the number of positive COVID-19 cases within the borough, Bracknell Forest has now been placed in tier 3 'very high' risk.

Since the borough entered tier 2 just two weeks ago, the rate has risen from 87.3 per 100,000 to 222 per 100,000.

Tier 3 restrictions will come into force 00:01am on Saturday, 19 December. Now, more than ever, the residents of Bracknell Forest are being urged to play their part and adhere to the regulations to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

From Saturday residents will face restrictions including:

- No mixing of households indoors, or in most outdoor places including private gardens, apart from support bubbles, meetings in groups of up to six can take place in some public outdoor places such as parks and public gardens
- Entertainment venues will be closed
- Pubs and restaurants will be closed except for takeaways/deliveries
- Group exercise activities and indoor sports should not take place unless with your household
- Avoid travelling out of the area and reduce the number of journeys
- No overnight stays except within household or support bubbles

Residents will be able to:

- Visit personal care businesses like hairdressers and beauty salons
- Visit essential and non-essential shops
- Visit places of worship but not interact with others outside of your household
- Attend exercise classes and organised adult sport outside but high-risk contact activity should be avoided

Residents must only socialise indoors at home with people who they live with or who are in their support bubble.

Residents should continue to work from home where possible and should avoid travelling between tiers unless absolutely necessary for work, education, youth services, for medical treatment or for caring responsibilities.

Cllr Paul Bettison OBE, Leader of Bracknell Forest Council and Chairman of the Local Outbreak Engagement Board, said:

“The rise in numbers is incredibly disappointing and concerning. We know the rise has occurred somewhat due to outbreaks within schools and care homes but sadly our local rate has also risen due to transmission both within and between households. This means some people haven’t been following rules and are putting themselves and their loved ones at risk. The impact that this will have on our residents and our NHS is the reason we all need to do all we can to reduce the spread.

“I know that this will be frustrating for many of our residents and we understand that frustration. The Christmas Bubble restrictions will still apply between 23 and 27 December but this time should not be seen as a chance to socialise with whoever people want. The Christmas Bubble is just three households for the whole period and those three households must not mix indoors with anyone from outside this bubble. Please make sure you give nothing more than festive cheer this year or else the consequences could be devastating for your family – particularly older relatives.

“While the vaccine is being rolled out, there is still a great need to be vigilant and abide by the rules. It will be some time before the wider community receives the vaccine and until this time the risks are still present. Therefore, it is essential that anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 isolates and gets tested. Also, anyone who has been in contact with someone who has tested positive must self-isolate as advised. Self-isolation means staying at home and not leaving for food or other essentials. If you do not have anyone who is able to deliver these essentials there is help available through our wonderful team of volunteers at our partners, The Ark. We know that people who are having to self-isolate may not be able to work from home, if this is the case, financial support is available, detail of which are on our website.

“The hands, face, space message is still key, if we all do our bit, we can help to protect our family, friends and our community.”

To help reduce the spread it is important for all residents to follow the hands, face space, ventilate and isolate rules:

- hands – wash your hands regularly and for 20 seconds
- face – wear a [face covering](#) in indoor settings where social distancing may be difficult, and where you will come into contact with people you do not normally meet
- space – stay two metres apart from people you do not live with where possible, or one metre with extra precautions in place (such as wearing face coverings or increasing ventilation indoors)
- ventilate – open windows to maintain a flow of fresh air indoors
- isolate – if you have symptoms or have been in close contact with somebody who has tested positive, isolate and arrange for a test
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It is also important to follow the rule of six when outside.

When seeing friends and family you do not live with (or who are not part of your [support bubble](#)), you must only meet outdoors and in a group of no more than six. In England, this limit of six includes children of any age.

Find out more about the [tier system](#) on GOV.UK.

You can find the latest statistics for Bracknell Forest at: [www.berkshirepublichealth.co.uk/covid-19-dashboard](http://www.berkshirepublichealth.co.uk/covid-19-dashboard)

Guidance on self-isolation can be found at [Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection)

## **ENDS**

### Notes

Tier placement is directed by the Government based on:

- the number of cases locally;
- the rate at which cases are rising or falling;
- the proportion of positive cases detected from all tests taken;
- the pressure on the NHS.

Other considerations such as the broader economic and practical implications like movement between areas are also taken into account. Tier allocation is not subject to local negotiation.