

## **COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions – updated 20.4.20**

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### **Where can I get the latest Leeds City Council advice about Coronavirus?**

Visit <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/coronavirus> for all service changes and updates, health advice and guidance, and how to get or offer support in the community  
Visit <https://news.leeds.gov.uk/> for all the latest official media releases from the council.

### **Where can I read the latest progress update?**

Please see the report to the April Executive Board meeting:

<https://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/documents/s205007/Update%20on%20Coronavirus%20COVID19%20pandemic%20Response%20and%20Recovery%20Plan%20cover%20report%20170420.pdf>

### **How do I sign up for email updates from Government about Coronavirus advice?**

You can sign up via the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/email-signup?link=/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

### **How many cases of Coronavirus are in Leeds?**

Information on the number of cases can currently be accessed on [this page](#).

### **What should someone do if they need think they need medical help for Coronavirus?**

Please check the official NHS guidance on the [NHS COVID-19 webpages](#).

### **Can people still go to see their GP?**

Face to face appointments are being reduced. If someone needs to contact a GP, they should not go into the surgery in person. Instead they should go through the surgery's website, or by phone. The GP surgery will then give advice about what to do. A phone or video call with a GP, nurse or healthcare professional may be booked. People will only be asked to visit the surgery if absolutely necessary.

### **Where can I find the latest guidance for Local Government?**

Here is a link to all the national government [guidance for local government](#).

### **Where can I get advice about stopping the spread of Coronavirus?**

The official NHS advice is available on the [NHS COVID-19 webpages](#).

### **How long does someone with Coronavirus symptoms have to stay at home for?**

The official Government guidance is available here: [Staying at home, for households with possible COVID-19 infection](#).

### **When are people allowed to leave their home?**

The Government has published the following [frequently asked questions](#) to help you understand and answer questions from other people about what they can and can't do.

In short, individuals are only allowed to leave their home for the following, very limited, purposes:

- shopping for basic necessities, as infrequently as possible
- one form of exercise a day - for example, a run, walk or cycle - alone or with members of their household
- any medical need, to provide care or to help a vulnerable person
- travelling to and from work, but only where they cannot work from home

### **Update**

The government has amended an aspect of the [guidance](#) on what you can and can't do during the lockdown if you need to exercise more than once because of a specific health need. This follows a legal challenge from two families with children with autism. Section 15 of the guidance now states: You can leave your home for medical need. If you (or a person in your care) have a specific health condition that requires you to leave the home to maintain your health - including if that involves travel beyond your local area - then you can do so. This could, for example, include where individuals with learning disabilities or autism require specific exercise in an open space two or three times each day - ideally in line with a care plan agreed with a medical professional.

### **How to report a breach of the coronavirus restrictions:**

The police have been granted additional powers to enforce new Government rules designed to help prevent the spread of coronavirus. To report anything which contravenes those rules the public are being encouraged [use the WYP online Breach of Coronavirus Restrictions reporting form](#), and have reiterated that 999 should only be used if a crime is in progress or there is a threat to life.

### **Where can I get advice about social distancing and the most vulnerable groups?**

The official Government guidance is available here: [Social distancing to protect vulnerable groups](#).

### **What advice is there for unpaid carers?**

The Government has published detailed guidance for anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who cannot cope without their support during the coronavirus outbreak. The guidance builds on the previous guidance for households on staying at home with possible coronavirus and the guidance on social distancing. Carers are advised to create an emergency plan with the person they care for, to use in circumstances where help from other people to deliver care may be needed. The full guidance can be found [here](#).

### **Who can I contact if I have any concerns over Domestic Violence?**

In an emergency ring 999. Ring 101 at other times.

<https://www.westyorkshire.police.uk/domestic-abuse-contacts> has a range of number, both local and national, as well as other useful links.

### **Who should people contact if they need care support or help during social isolation?**

Leeds City Council has joined forces with Voluntary Action Leeds and a network of other local charities to deliver care to anyone in need across the city. Call **0113 378 1877** to be matched with a Volunteer who can help.

### **Who should people contact if they want to volunteer to help?**

Leeds City Council has partnered with Voluntary Action Leeds to introduce a coordinated approach to volunteering during COVID-19. Anyone wishing to help is asked to email [volunteering@val.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@val.org.uk) or call 0113 297 7920. Training will be provided so volunteers meet safeguarding standards.

### **Who do I contact if businesses are not adhering to Government advice?**

- To report a licensed premise that is still open (excluding takeaways as they can continue to function) email [entertainment.licensing@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:entertainment.licensing@leeds.gov.uk)
- To report any retail shops still open when they shouldn't be email: [epteam@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:epteam@leeds.gov.uk).
- To report ice cream vendors who are still operating: [markets@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:markets@leeds.gov.uk)
- Further useful guidance can be found at: [further-businesses-and-premises-to-close-guidance](#)

### **Can residents still call the Contact Centre?**

The Contact Centre is operating normal office hours, weekdays 9am to 5pm, except Wednesdays when we're open from 10am. This excludes bank holidays. However, a number of services are no longer operating, or are operating reduced services, so please be aware this is a changing situation. For the latest service position please see [www.leeds.gov.uk](http://www.leeds.gov.uk). Here is a list of contact numbers for specific services so you can channel customers to them during this difficult time: [Contact Numbers](#)

### **How can residents contact their local councillor?**

We recommend residents contact their councillor through email, by phone or through social media. Councillor contact details can be found here:

<http://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/mgMemberIndex.aspx?FN=WARD&VW=LIST&PIC=0>

In addition ward level Council Facebook groups have been created solely to respond to the virus for every ward in the city. These are easy to search for and locate on Facebook.

### **Can leaflets still be delivered?**

There is no specific government guidance on this in relation to COVID-19. Our Public Health and Health and Safety colleagues have considered this. The evidence suggests a theoretical risk but how contagious this is to the individual handling the leaflet is not known. This means leaflet distribution becomes a calculated risk between potential transmission from a leaflet and the benefit of informing those most in need of the essential services and support available. In the circumstances, you should err on the side of caution and only do leaflet dropping where you believe it to be essential and the only option, for example for people who do not have regular internet/social media access. If you do choose to use leaflets, the main thing is handwashing and this guidance decontamination in non healthcare settings, combined with social distancing. Elected members should also follow the normal guidance for their own safety.

### **Do Members need a Letter of Identification when assisting their constituents?**

Letters for volunteers (with VAL) will be produced as a means of identification. However, Councillors should carry their photographic LCC ID, which we understand from WYP would be sufficient should they be challenged. This could of course change should additional stringent measures come into play.

### **Where can I get advice for people who have lost work and are struggling with debt?**

The best single place for up to date advice about who to contact is Leeds Money Information Centre. This lists the latest position for all the services in the city and has a range of useful phone numbers

### **What information can I access on benefits and wider financial support?**

A benefits calculator is available here: Benefits Calculator this reflects the recent changes to Universal Credit and Employment and Support. In addition the following link provides useful information on employment and benefits: Coronavirus pandemic response and key information for people concerned about how it will affect their benefits and job income.

### **What support is there for residents struggling to pay their Council Tax bill?**

The Council is delivering a supportive approach to Council Tax payers financially affected, encouraging them to contact the Council at the earliest opportunity if there are any issues which may impact on ability to pay. We will discuss their circumstances and where appropriate agree a payment plan. If the impact on their income is such that they have eligibility for Local Council Tax Support we will advise/support their claim as required to ensure that people are getting the support they are entitled to before arranging payment breaks etc. Residents should be encouraged to use these contact details: [www.leeds.gov.uk/contact-us](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/contact-us) or 0113 222 4404 (please note that there may be longer waiting times at this time).

### **What support is available for Businesses during the COVID-19 Pandemic?**

Please signpost any business looking for advice to the LEP in the first instance. As well as providing a wide range of links and information on its website, businesses in Leeds City Region concerned or affected by Coronavirus can contact the LEP business support team directly. Full details of the range of support available to businesses and how they can access advice can be found on their website <https://www.the-lep.com/business-support/covid-19-support-for-businesses/> Their contact details are: email: [businessgrowth@the-lep.com](mailto:businessgrowth@the-lep.com) or telephone: 0113 348 1818

In addition to this we also have dedicated pages on our own website which provides information specifically relating to Leeds. This is being updated on a regular basis and covers a broad range of issues including support for the self-employed and small and medium sized businesses, along with links to further sources of information and support. Communication with key business representative groups is regular and ongoing, and we are aiming to collate information in specific sectors within the local economy with a view to delivering targeted support.

There is also a dedicated national helpline to help businesses and self-employed individuals - 0800 0159 559.

Grants of £10,000 are available to businesses in receipt of small business rate relief and up to £25,000 for those in receipt of the expanded retail relief. These will also be awarded to those eligible without the need for an application and the process of issuing the grants has begun.

Businesses do not have to apply for the grants however completing the online form for BACS transfer may speed up the process this link takes residents to the page they need to complete the form: <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/coronavirus/business>

The council has no discretion on either Covid-19 rate relief or business grants. The use of the Rates System to determine eligibility for assistance has created many anomalies and large numbers of businesses who have been severely impacted by Covid-19 will not receive this assistance, despite the extensive support package put in place by the government.

For information on Business Rates email [Business.rates@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:Business.rates@leeds.gov.uk). However, please be aware that the business rates team is extremely busy implementing the above measures and is therefore struggling to respond to individual enquiries at the moment.

### **Can businesses such as domestic cleaners continue to operate in people's homes?**

Individuals are only allowed to leave their home for the following, very limited, purposes:

- Shopping for basic necessities, as infrequently as possible
- One form of exercise a day - for example, a run, walk or cycle - alone or with members of their household
- Any medical need, to provide care or to help a vulnerable person
- Travelling to and from work, but only where they cannot work from home

The householders and the cleaner may wish to consider:

- Do they feel that continuing to clean the house could be considered an essential reason for the cleaner to leave their home under social distancing guidelines?
- If there is agreement that the cleaner is to continue it will be important to ensure that social distancing (staying 2 meters away from other people) and strict hand hygiene procedures are followed. These include –  
handwashing with soap/gel before entering and after leaving the home.

There is very specific guidance available for businesses on the Public Health England website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-businesses-and-premises-to-close/further-businesses-and-premises-to-close-guidance#work-carried-out-in-peoples-homes>. Domestic cleaning services are not included in the list of businesses that must close.

2. A recently released Frequently Asked Questions document covers what 'What you can and can't do'. This can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do#im-not-a-critical-worker-and-i-cant-work-from-home-what-should-i-do>

3. Social distancing guidance states that individuals should only leave their home for the following very limited purposes

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others>

- shopping for basic necessities, as infrequently as possible
- one form of exercise a day - for example, a run, walk or cycle - alone or with members of their household
- any medical need, to provide care or to help a vulnerable person
- travelling to and from work, but only where they cannot work from home

### **What support is available for self-employed people, including taxi/private hire drivers?**

- The government has introduced a new self-employed income support scheme in the form of a taxable grant worth 80% of your average earnings over the last three years, up to £2,500 a month. This scheme will be in action for at least three months and will be extended if needed. You can access it if you earn up to £50,000 and the majority of your income is from self-employed work.
- Details about this scheme can be found at [www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-a-grant-through-the-coronavirus-covid-19-self-employment-income-support-scheme](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-a-grant-through-the-coronavirus-covid-19-self-employment-income-support-scheme).
- They say if you are eligible, HMRC will get in touch with you so there is no need to call them.
- As a council, we are working hard to further ease the financial difficulties for self-employed people where possible. We have automatically extended all taxi and private hire driver, vehicle and operator licences that are due to expire before the end of June. If we need to, we will extend this further.
- We have also asked the government for permission to delay the implementation of the Clean Air Charging Zone until further notice and we have suspended repayments for taxi and private hire owners who have

received an interest-free loan. We are still accepting and continuing to pay grant payments for those vehicle owners switching to cleaner vehicles.

- Things are changing on a daily basis, and as the government develops its response to the pandemic, the following contacts for businesses and self-employed people in Leeds are in place:
  - For more information regarding business support we are directing businesses to:  
<https://www.leeds.gov.uk/coronavirus/business>  
<https://www.the-lep.com/business-support/covid-19-support-for-businesses/>
  - Enquiries to Leeds City Council regarding business rates should be sent to [Business.rates@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:Business.rates@leeds.gov.uk)
  - A dedicated national helpline has also been set up to help businesses and self-employed individuals - 0800 0159 559.
- If someone needs work straightaway, many supermarkets and care providers are in great need of additional staff to make an immediate start. For information about care vacancies email [wecareacademy@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:wecareacademy@leeds.gov.uk). Most major supermarkets are recruiting too, so visit their individual websites for information on how to apply.

### **What support is there for someone sleeping rough or homeless?**

If no other options are available, alternative emergency accommodation will be sourced to support and limit the further spread of COVID 19. If housing assistance is required 'here and now' please contact: Emergency Accommodation Team for support and advice via Leeds Housing Options 0113 222 4412 or Out of hours service 07891 273939.

If you are concerned about someone who appears to be living on the street then this should be reported through street link through the following link:

<https://www.streetlink.org.uk/>

### **Can residents still access the Choice Based Lettings system?**

Housing Leeds has made the decision to suspend lettings to Council homes via the Choice Based Letting system.

- All Council homes advertised on the Leeds Homes website on 25 March will be withdrawn and will no longer be available for bidding.
- Where an applicant has already been offered a Council home in a previous bidding cycle, this offer will be honoured, but there may be some delays in the home becoming available. If applicants have been offered a home, an officer will make contact with them to discuss their individual circumstances and will offer further advice and support. In most cases we will encourage applicants to delay their move if the applicant does not very urgently need to move. We will support any applicants affected by self-isolation and delay viewings and sign up until an applicant is no longer self-isolating and strict social distancing measures have been lifted. Where it is agreed to delay the tenancy start date, the applicant will not be expected to pay rent until the delayed tenancy start date.
- There will be no bidding cycle for the next few weeks. The Leeds Homes website will be updated with any changes and all applicants with a live application will be contacted to advise when the next bidding cycle will start.



- Only in very exceptional, critical circumstances will new allocations and lettings be made, where there is a serious risk to personal health and safety. All allocations and lettings will be made via an urgent referral from another service – hospital, social worker, support agency – and considered via a Direct Let Panel.

### **What will happen to Council housing repairs?**

The Council has moved to an 'essential' only repairs service. For the foreseeable future the council will only deliver repairs and maintenance that if not done, are likely to jeopardise the health or safety of tenants and/or other householders. The individual needs of tenants and any vulnerability issues will be factored into determining the repair priority. Tenants can continue to report non-essential repairs to the Council online, so that once restrictions on social distancing are lifted, they will not have to report their repair again. Tenants can also report non-essential repairs through the telephone Contact Centre if they do not have internet access.

### **Is there any advice for Landlords and Tenants?**

MHCLG has published non-statutory guidance for landlords and tenants. The Home Office has also confirmed that landlords and employers will not be required to see original documents during the coronavirus outbreak. Instead, scanned documents will be accepted to prove someone has a right to rent or a right to work.

### **What is happening with Asylum Accommodation?**

It has been announced that individuals and families will not have to leave asylum accommodation once their claim or appeal has been decided for the next three months, with a review in June. Reporting requirements and interviews have also been postponed.

### **What support is there for key workers' childcare?**

Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be.

It is really important that we all work together to stop the Covid-19 virus from spreading, and children staying at home helps to do this. For the majority of children this is the safest place to be.

The city's schools are still open and in the main are providing schooling for key worker children and young people.

Emergency childcare support needed as a result of the pandemic can be requested via the following link: <https://forms.leeds.gov.uk/RequestForSupport/>

The Government has provided guidance on Maintaining educational provision and Closure of educational settings - guidance for parents and carers.

### **What is happening with Free School Meals in Leeds?**

Yes the Council has a plan in place to deliver 14,000 meals every day for means tested free school meal children. These will be available through 28 hubs across the city with established distribution points for each school to have their allocation collected from these sites or delivered directly where this is proving hard to arrange. The provision includes catering for all children who may have a special dietary requirement. The Government has also launched a voucher scheme for schools

providing free school meals with weekly shopping vouchers worth £15 to spend at supermarkets while schools are closed due to coronavirus

### **Has public transport been affected by the Covid-19 outbreak?**

Yes, as a result of the measures introduced by Government to restrict movement and encourage social isolation, public transport services have been substantially reduced. We are strongly urging people to consider whether their journey is essential and to follow the Government's guidelines to stay at home unless:

- you are travelling to and from work, but only where this is absolutely necessary and cannot be done from home
- for medical reasons
- shopping for basic necessities

Bus and rail operators are running emergency timetables focused on ensuring key workers can get where they need to go as reliably and safely as possible.

For regular updates to bus and rail services and emergency timetables see: [wymetro.com/plan-a-journey/travel-news/bus-travel-alerts/service-updates/](https://www.wymetro.com/plan-a-journey/travel-news/bus-travel-alerts/service-updates/)

### **Are Park and Ride sites open?**

In line with the significant reduction in the number of people travelling into Leeds, it is with regret that both Park & Ride sites are closed. The Council has however suspended charges in its car parks and for on street parking bays to give priority to key workers.

### **Are Community Hubs open?**

Community Hubs and Libraries are closed for normal business. Merrion, Armley, Dewsbury Road and Compton remain open for prearranged collection of food parcels and for Credit Union. Credit Union are open Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Any other enquiries should be made via the Contact Centre where the face to face team are ringing residents back to answer their enquiries. Residents can use borrow box to download on line books.

### **What has happened to Community Centres?**

Community centre bookings have been cancelled and are being refunded. Consideration is being given locally to whether the centres can provide useful space, for example for feeding locally.

### **Are parks still open?**

Car parks at parks and open spaces have been closed. Playgrounds and outdoor exercise equipment have also been closed off. Parks themselves are currently open.

### **Are Museums and Galleries still open?**

All museums and galleries in Leeds have been closed since 17<sup>th</sup> March. The Museum's Service is providing content about artefacts on social media.

### **Are Leisure Centres open?**

All Leisure Centres have been closed since 17<sup>th</sup> March.

### **What is happening with Weddings at Leeds Town Hall?**

All weddings booked up to the end of April have been cancelled with a refund. The option to cancel with a refund is being offered to weddings booked after the end of April.

### **Can I attend a graveside burial during the lockdown period?**

Due to the need to protect public health and our health and care services during the COVID-19 pandemic, we sadly must set limits on the attendance of burials.

There must be no more than ten mourners at graveside burials at one time. All mourners must observe social distancing of 2 metres at all times. Mourners should be limited to people living in the same household as the deceased, or close family members. Where there are no close family members in attendance, close family friends may attend.

No individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 should attend, and should self-isolate in line with government advice. Mourners should not make contact with the body of the person who has died from or with symptoms of COVID-19.

We ask that all graveside committals last no more than 15 mins to allow grave digging staff suitable time to backfill the grave and move on. If any mourners wish to assist in the filling of the grave as is custom in some faiths they must bring their own tools.

### **Are cemeteries and crematoria open to the general public?**

Yes, cemeteries and crematoria grounds are open to the general public subject to social distancing guidelines being observed. There are social distancing restrictions in place for funerals and some buildings (e.g. crematoria chapels) are closed to the public - please see separate FAQs on attending a burial or cremation.

### **Can I attend a cremation during the lockdown period?**

Due to the need to protect public health during the COVID-19 pandemic, we sadly must set limits on the operation and attendance of cremations.

Whilst those attending a cremation can access the crematoria grounds, mourners are not permitted to enter crematorium chapel buildings. There must be no more than ten mourners per cremation in the crematoria grounds at any one time. All mourners must observe social distancing of 2 metres at all times. Mourners should be limited to people living in the same household as the deceased, or close family members. Where there are no close family members in attendance, close family friends may attend. No individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 should attend and should self-isolate in line with government advice. There are a number of options available for families in the absence of holding a service in the crematoria chapel, please see separate FAQ below.

### **Are there other options in the absence of being able to have a service in the crematorium chapel?**

Yes there are a number of options for people to consider and we are working closely with funeral directors and bereaved families so that they can decide what option is

best for them. For example, families may wish to make alternative arrangements for services either through their own chapels or through a local church or funeral director. Some families may wish to defer the date on which it is held until sometime after the actual funeral, when the lock-down and social distancing rules have been lifted. This could allow vulnerable family members and friends who are currently unable to attend due to self-isolation or being shielded under the current restrictions, to attend. Some families may wish to attend the crematorium grounds and view the coffin being moved from the hearse into the chapel building. A religious officiant may deliver a short blessing outside of the chapel in view of the family. There must be no more than ten mourners per cremation in the crematoria grounds at one time. All mourners must observe social distancing of 2 metres at all times. Mourners should be limited to people living in the same household as the deceased, or close family members. Where there are no close family members in attendance, close family friends may attend. No individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 should attend and should self-isolate in line with government advice.

### **The government has not set a particular limit on the number of people attending a burial or cremation – why is there a limit of 10 mourners in Leeds?**

In common with many other local authorities we have set a limit so that social distancing requirements can be met to ensure the health and safety of mourners, funeral directors and staff. We have a small team of qualified crematorium technicians, and if a small number of our technicians became ill or had to self-isolate, Leeds City Council's ability to proceed with cremations would be severely affected.

### **Why are grass verges still being cut?**

- Grass cutting is undertaken under contract by an external organisation rather than directly by LCC so decisions are not solely for the council. Under current Government guidance it is able to continue.
- The Government have specifically identified businesses that should not operate. These are businesses which fall under specific categories and are principally businesses which facilitate mass gatherings of members of the public or personal contact with people e.g. clubs, restaurants, bars, hair dressers, gyms etc. The overwhelming majority of businesses do not fall under these categories and the guidance therefore indicates that these businesses should continue to operate but on the following basis:
  - Where staff can work from home they should do so
  - If staff are themselves vulnerable or they live with a vulnerable person they should be sent home
  - All other people should attend their normal work where it is safe to do so and as long as social distancing can be implemented.
- Grass cutting can't be done from home, however, it can be done by operating social distancing.
- From a grounds maintenance perspective if this activity was stopped we would have a number of challenges to deal with in the future e.g. long grass that will become increasingly difficult to maintain when we resume as we are now entering the peak growing season; it will create opportunities for fires; and it will create site issues for drivers

### **What is the position with infant feeding and Coronavirus?**

The following link provides details from UNICEF on infant feeding: infant [UNICEF factsheet](#).

**Where can I obtain a copy of the Stay at Home message in a language other than English?**

The [migrant info hub](#) has translations of the Stay at Home messages, as well as lots of other useful information and resources to help migrants, and those supporting them.

In addition, the council leaflet sent to all households with key information about the Coronavirus response has been translated into the main community languages used in the city. The languages are: Polish, Punjabi, Bengali, Romanian, Urdu, Czech, Slovak, Kurdish Sorani, Lithuanian, Tigrinya, Farsi and Arabic. The leaflet has been shared with elected members.

**Is the Stay at Home message available in sign language?**

Home isolation resources in British Sign Language are now available on the [NHS Campaign Resource Centre](#).

**Is there any guidance relating to dentist practices and COVID-19?**

The NHS issued guidance on 25<sup>th</sup> March to general dental practices and community dental services regarding the emerging COVID-19 situation. This guidance can be found in the following link: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/primary-care/dental-practice/>

The Dental Commissioning Team, NHS England & NHS Improvement (North East & Yorkshire) have provided the following email for those requiring further information [England.yhdentalreturns@nhs.net](mailto:England.yhdentalreturns@nhs.net)

With regard to current Dental service provision in Leeds we have been advised by NHS England that Dental practices should be open and accessible to regular patients with a triage system in place to support any need for treatment. It is recognised PPE is a challenge and NHS England hope to have access to enhanced PPE sometime during w/c 13/4/20. To support resilience NHS England are working with practices to support clustering within small localities so we can ensure some provision for all patients but not necessarily on the site of your regular dentist.

Where required practices are signposting urgent cases to NHS 111.

Patients requiring urgent treatment who cannot access this through their regular dentist should call 111 (NHS24) which will connect them to the usual Urgent Dental Care System. Patients are triaged by a Clinical advisor and offered appointments if they have an urgent need (within 24 hours). There are fewer appointments available because of the time taken for cross infection control procedures

The Unplanned Care team at NHS Leeds CCG are coordinating the establishment of Leeds Urgent Care Centres . One centre has now been established and the development of further centres is an ongoing piece of work. Patients can only gain access to Leeds Urgent Care Centre by calling NHS 111 as it is operating as part of the Urgent Dental Care System Provision.

Work is also underway to establish an urgent facility at Leeds Dental Institute for Covid 19 positive patients, which the Leeds Dental Committee are hoping will be available w/c 13/4/20.

### **How is the Council supporting childcare/early year providers who have to furlough staff?**

*In Leeds, our early years providers are all paid in advance each month – with payments reaching providers at the beginning of the month. Our payments for April have already been made, and our intention is to continue with our monthly payments at the beginning of May, June and July. We pay all providers in Leeds in the same way, and would have concern about the capacity for smaller providers and childminders to budget and manage their cash flow if we were to pay the full term in April, leaving some settings to manage with no further income until September – the summer period has always been a challenge for those settings to manage their cash flow and we don't want to add to this. The benefits of monthly payments to support regular income for providers was evidenced two years ago when we consulted with providers on our methods of payment - there was overwhelming support for monthly payments over termly (albeit this was in 'normal' times).*

*We understand that the staff retention (furlough) scheme is expected to provide funding to businesses by the end of April, and would expect that this, combined with the April FEEE payment LCC have already made, plus the May payment which will reach providers the first week in May, should support nurseries and all settings to manage their cash flow.*

### **Are public litter bins in use?**

- Litter bins should not be used – people should take their litter home with them and put it in either their green (litter) or black bin (dog poo/food left overs);
- The Council tried to seal bins to stop them being used but people have been removing the seals and using them anyway, thus leading to confusion in which bins are in use or not (when in fact none are);
- Bins near parks and open spaces have been filled with dog-poo bags and LCC is having to empty them to respond to public health/nuisance concerns;
- So we will cease/not be sending key workers around the city resealing bins (but those that are will stay sealed), but instead will put polite notices on every bin making clear they should not be used
- We will be proactive in patrolling known hotspots and emptying bins from now on and explaining that we need to put liners in them because we need to reduce the risk of contact by staff should they need to empty. This message should not be publicly given and we hope members understand why and see our dilemma;
- Members and key community contacts can report bins that need emptying to us direct

### **Why aren't Household Waste and Recycling Sites open?**

In common with many other local authorities, our Household Waste and Recycling sites are extremely busy in normal times and it is very difficult to adhere to social distancing. We also anticipate that if they were open they would be even busier than

normal under current circumstances. So they remain closed for the time being in order to protect the health and well being of our citizens as well as our staff. We are keeping this decision under review.

### **What is happening with Brown Bins?**

The brown bin collection service is currently suspended, so that the refuse service can manage staff self isolation numbers in a way that enables us to continue to collect black and green bins.

The Household Waste and Recycling Sites have been closed as we are unable to adequately protect people's health and wellbeing at this time.

Green and black bins are being collected as usual at the moment, as are medical collections. Glass banks are also being emptied as usual.

### **What is the position regarding burning of garden waste?**

We're aware there has been an increase in domestic bonfires as residents seek ways to manage their garden waste whilst the brown bin collection service is suspended. We would ask instead that this waste is composted or used otherwise in the garden rather than being burned and creating problems with smoke. This is particularly an issue now with many more people at home and unable to get much respite from what may be regarded by some as a harmless activity. For more guidance on bonfires, see <https://www.gov.uk/garden-bonfires-rules>.

It has always been against the law to create a nuisance through smoke from bonfires and the Council will continue to contact those residents involved. In these challenging times, it feels ever more important to understand the impact of our actions on others and we will continue to intervene where such problems exist and are reported to us. Reports can be made to <https://my.leeds.gov.uk/Pages/Form%20Pages/ReportAirQualityPollutionOrOdour.aspx>

### **Is there any advice on the leaving of painted stones for children to find in parks?**

Whilst such activities are a positive way in which to promote community spirit and wellbeing, based on the available evidence, the Leeds City Council position is that we should err on the side of caution. Everyone should be taking as much care as possible in order to reduce transmission risk. This includes reducing possible points of contact between families/groups, such as the painted stones.

Social distancing guidance remains important when people are outside of the home and everyone should wash their hands on returning.

### **What support is there for charities?**

Most charities who are liable for business rates currently receive an 80% reduction through Charitable Rate Relief. In these circumstances, they are not eligible for a Small Business grant as the Government has only provided this for businesses that qualify for Small Business Rate Relief. However, registered charities that fall under

the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grants Fund criteria (ie. work within those sectors) could qualify for a grant under this separate scheme.

It is also possible for charities to furlough their staff, if they have a PAYE scheme, as they would be eligible for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. Through this scheme the Government would pay 80% of staff salaries, up to £2,500 a month.

This is of course a very difficult time for organisations. We are awaiting an announcement from the Chancellor on further support for charitable organisations; however there may be other support available outlined on the following sites which could be shared:

- [The LCC Business Support page](#)
- [The Local Enterprise partnership](#)
- [Doing Good Leeds](#)
- [Leeds Community Foundation](#)
- [National Lottery Community Fund](#)
- [Key Fund](#)
- [Coronavirus Business Support website](#)
- [Corona Business Interruption Loan Scheme \(CBILS\)](#)

### **What is the current position regarding markets?**

- **Indoor traders** – The Government instruction is that all indoor and outdoor market stalls should be closed except for stalls selling food and grocery. This is the current position at Kirkgate Market. The Government has also announced a series of support measures to businesses including businesses based at Kirkgate Market. This support includes 100% rates relief for 2020/21, individual grants to businesses of between £10,000 and £25,000 and the ability to furlough staff with 80% of salary (up to a maximum level) paid by Government. Based upon this level of business support being available the position at the Market is that Rent and Service Charge invoices continue to be issued however the Council has placed a 3 month moratorium on debt recovery should individual businesses still be unable to pay. This position will be reviewed at the end of the three month period.
- **Outdoor traders** – Market traders on the outdoor markets (both at Kirkgate and the District markets) were not eligible for the initial Government support outlined above as they do not operate from a premise and do not incur rates. They are now however eligible for a second tranche of Government support specifically aimed at the self-employed and freelancers, this support however is subject to a lag in payment with support expected to be reach businesses in June. Given this situation traders on the open market have been in receipt of a 100% discount on licence fees from 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020. This is being reviewed on a month by month basis and has just been extended for a further month. It is worth noting that outdoor traders work on a daily licence agreement, so they could give seven days' notice and terminate their stalls unlike traders occupying stalls on the indoor market.

### **Is there a virus test facility in Leeds?**



Leeds City Council alongside key health organisations working closely together over to establish staff testing in Leeds. As a city we have responded fast to ensure testing is initiated quickly to enable key staff to return to work.

On Friday (10/04/20) a drive-in coronavirus testing site opened at Leeds Temple Green as part of the Government's UK-wide drive to increase testing for thousands more NHS and frontline workers.

The site is part of a rapidly expanding network of testing centres being set up around the UK, and will operate on an appointment basis for self-isolating key NHS workers, or the symptomatic member of their family.

This site is additional to onsite testing at the Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust who initiated staff testing a couple of weeks ago to assist key staff to return to work.

There are no current plans for additional sites in Leeds, but the position remains under constant review.

Access to EV charging points on the site has been raised as a concern and assurance has been given that a re-design of the test centre layout now means that LCC vehicles can access the site from 5.30pm to charge overnight, as long as vehicles are then collected before 9am. LCC must wear ID badges to access the site to reach the charging points.

### **What are the implications for school admission appeals?**

The Department for Education has published guidance on the coronavirus impact on school admission appeals. The coronavirus outbreak will impact on the ability of admission authorities to carry out admission appeals in the usual way. However, parents must continue to have the right to appeal to any school which has refused their child a place. Regulatory changes will be made that will relax some of the current requirements set out in the School Admission Appeals Code 2012 and enable admission authorities to proceed with their admission appeals. The regulations are subject to legislation being made but the DfE expects them to come into force on 24 April 2020. The regulations will be time-limited and will expire on 31 January 2021. DfE will publish guidance to support admission authorities and local authorities in carrying out admission appeals over the coming months to provide further details on these regulations.

### **Are Construction sites allowed to continue operating during the current restrictions?**

The Government guidance on this is as follows:

Construction work plays an important role in ensuring public safety and the provision of public services. It can continue if done in accordance with the social distancing guidelines wherever possible.

Where it is not possible to follow the social distancing guidelines in full in relation to a particular activity, you should consider whether that activity needs to continue for the site to continue to operate, and, if so, take all the mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission.

If you decide the work should go ahead, you should advise staff to wash their hands frequently using soap and water for 20 seconds, and especially after blowing their nose, sneezing or coughing, on arrival at work, before and after eating, after using public transport, and when they arrive home. Where facilities to wash hands are not available, hand sanitiser should be used.

You should still advise staff to keep 2 metres apart as much as possible. You should plan work to minimise contact between workers and avoid skin-to-skin and face-to-face contact. Where face-to-face contact is essential, this should be kept to 15 minutes or less wherever possible.

As much as possible, keep groups of workers working together in teams that are as small as possible (cohorting). For example, you keep vehicle crews working together, rather than mixing crew members on different shifts.

Staff should also wash their hands each time before getting into enclosed machinery (such as diggers) with others, and wash their hands every time they get out. To help with this, you should consider adding additional pop-up handwashing stations or facilities, providing soap, water and/or hand sanitiser. Employees should keep the windows of enclosed machinery or enclosed spaces open for ventilation and be careful to avoid touching their face at all times. The inside of cabs should be regularly cleaned, particularly between use by different operators.

You should try to use stairs in preference to lifts or hoists. Where lifts or hoists must be used, you should lower their capacity to reduce congestion and contact at all times, and regularly clean touchpoints, such as doors and buttons.

To protect your staff, you should remind colleagues daily to only come into work if they are well and no one in their household is self-isolating.

The Construction Leadership Council has published more [detailed advice](#) on how you might carry out government guidance.

Additional useful information for firms can be accessed on [BuildUK's website](#).

### **Is provision available to assist with rent payments for council tenants on reduced income due to the outbreak of Covid-19?**

The following page provides contact information and a brief outline of support that may be available to tenants <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/housing/council-housing-information-for-tenants/rent-and-money/problems-paying-your-rent>