

Dear Resident,

I'd like to start with a thank you. The enormous commitment, support and effort made by residents across the county to observe lockdown and social distancing, has reduced the spread of Covid-19 in Herefordshire. Herefordshire has so far experienced the sad loss of 122 lives to Covid-19. Of these, 59 died in hospitals, 58 died in the county's care homes, and 5 died in our community. Our thoughts are with all those who have lost loved ones, and we continue to do all we can to prevent more people and families from suffering.

With the latest unlocking, we are now able to move more freely and government has recognised that there is an increased risk of uncontained outbreaks, unless there are measures to control them. We are well-placed to move into the next phase – living, learning and working with Covid-19 still present, but we must now continue to work together to prevent the infection from spreading once again. Herefordshire Council, along with councils across the country, has established an Outbreak Control Plan (which you can view online at www.Herefordshire.gov.uk/outbreakplan).

Where there are local outbreaks of Covid-19, we will need to act promptly and effectively to contain them – or the infection will spread, putting lives at risk. If those outbreaks involve large numbers of people, it may be necessary to close down buildings or wider locations to limit the spread of the infection. It is really important that you, our residents, understand that this will only be done where it is absolutely necessary- and we will need your full support when these situations occur. We will be using our own communication channels to issue updates and alerts, as well as the local media, so if you are on social media, please follow our @HfdsCouncil Facebook and Twitter pages.

Our plan will only work if all our residents and communities continue to play their part, as they have previously done so well. Please continue to observe the public health advice, which helps protect yourself and others and includes:

- Many people who are Covid-19 positive do not show symptoms, or will experience only mild symptoms. However every Covid-19 positive person who carries the disease can spread the disease to people who could become extremely ill or even die from it. This places a great deal of responsibility on us all to protect others as well as ourselves.
- Wash your hands thoroughly and regularly during each day – this remains the most reliable way of avoiding catching or spreading the disease.
- Follow social distancing requirements – they are important for your own and other people's safety, especially as pubs, restaurants and cafes welcome us back. Please do socialise, but remember to keep your distance and take extra measures when a 2 metre distance can't be kept.
- If you feel unwell with symptoms – fever, persistent dry cough, loss of taste or smell – you should self-isolate and get tested. If you are contacted and find out you are positive, you must self-isolate for 7 days and longer if some symptoms remain- follow the advice given.
- If you are contacted by the NHS Test and Trace team, and told you have been in close contact with a Covid-19 positive person, you must also self-isolate for 14 days. If you

become symptomatic you will need to arrange for a test. The Test and Trace team will never ask for payment or for personal details.

- Continue to work from home wherever that is possible.
- It is now a requirement to wear face coverings on public transport in England, and they are recommended when social distancing is simply not possible. Face coverings play a significant role in preventing the spread of infection. They may also help in creating a barrier to catching the infection. Please consider wider use of a face covering, along with ensuring you wash your hands thoroughly and frequently, and maintain social distancing.
- If you do go out, please take your litter home with you and help protect the beauty of Herefordshire. This helps prevent the spread to others - especially those key workers who clean up our public spaces.

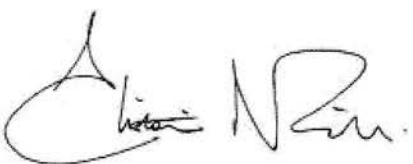
In my previous letter, as we went into Lockdown, I asked you to prepare a plan. I would like to ask you again to plan ahead. You may be asked to self-isolate, you may experience symptoms, or a local lockdown may be put in place. Please think about what support you might need, and if there is a gap in your plan, call our Talk Community team on 01432 260027, who can find support in your area.

There is also a range of information and advice on our website, visit www.herefordshire.gov.uk/coronavirus

There is additional work underway to ensure our city and town centres are enjoyable in a safe way, with extra measures to allow space for walking and cycling. Please do continue to support our local businesses and help our local economy get back on its feet.

Finally, I'd like to thank all the volunteers in our communities, helping many thousands of our vulnerable residents in this extraordinary time. Our local community has rallied together throughout the pandemic and I know that we can work together to protect ourselves and each other, to help prevent more lives being lost.

Stay **safe Herefordshire**,



Alistair Neill GM
Chief Executive



Karen Wright
Director of Public Health

SAFE **HEREFORDSHIRE**

Be scam aware:

- Do not give your bank details to anyone claiming to be able to help you
- The Test and Trace teams will never ask for payment or personal details

If you have any concerns about a group or individual asking you for money, please call 101.