



Stay safe as restrictions are lifted

From Monday 19 July most legal restrictions introduced to help control the spread of coronavirus will be lifted.

This does not mean the pandemic is over though. In our district infection rates are high and now at levels we have not seen since late January/early February this year. You can view the figures on the [Worcestershire coronavirus dashboard](#).

It is important you continue to take precautions to protect yourself and others, even if they are no longer required by law.

The Government has issued the following advice:

- You are no longer instructed to work from home, but it is recommended you continue to do so if you can. The Government has recommended businesses gradually return staff to offices and buildings over the summer.
- It is still expected, and recommended people will wear face coverings in crowded areas such as on public transport. Some shops and businesses will still ask you to wear them as well.

- Continue to meet friends and family outside where it is safer. If meeting indoors open windows and let fresh air.
- Continue to limit the number of people you mix with, how long you mix with them for and how close you get to them.

Read [how to stay safe and limit the spread of coronavirus from 19 July](#) for the full guidance.

Join the millions already vaccinated



Anyone over 18 can now get their Covid-19 jab.

Getting the Covid-19 vaccine will help protect you and others. The best protection is offered after two doses so please make sure you go back for your second appointment if you've already had your first dose.

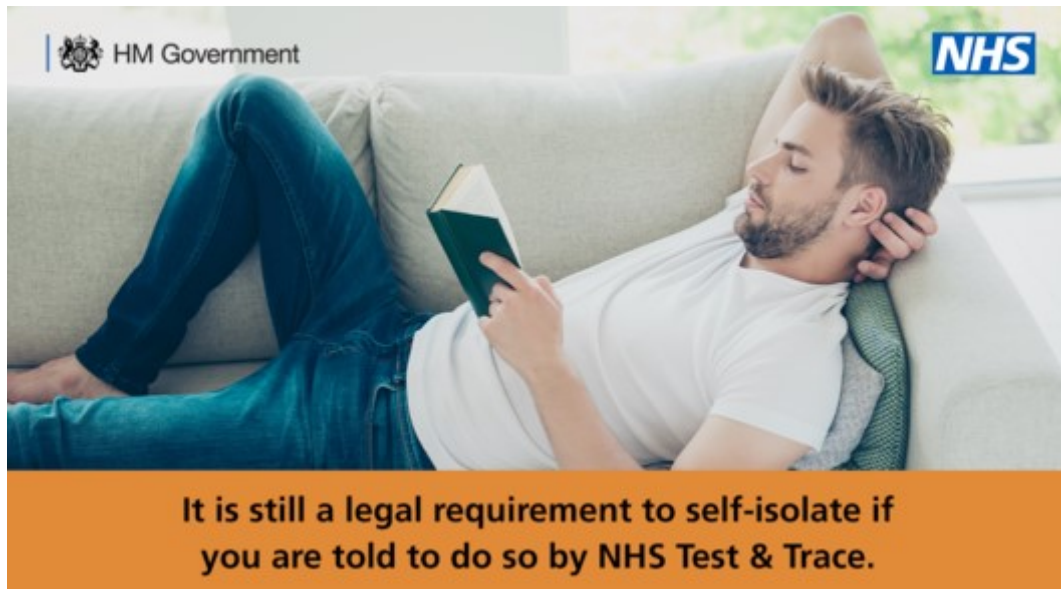
If you haven't had your jab yet then you can [book your Covid-19 vaccine online](#) or during July you can [visit one of the county's walk-in vaccination clinics](#). The walk-in service is only for people who have not yet had their first dose.

We've seen huge amounts of young adults come forward for their jab but we know questions remain.

In her latest podcast, Dr Kathryn Cobain, Director of Public Health for Worcestershire, talks to Joe and Leon about how they feel about the vaccine and what it means to them.

[Listen to Kath's Covid Catchup.](#)

Testing and self-isolation



If you have symptoms of Covid-19, even if they are mild, then you must self-isolate immediately and get a PCR test.

If your test is positive, then you must continue to self-isolate. You must also self-isolate if you are told to do so by the NHS Covid-19 app or the NHS Test and Trace service.

You may be able to apply to us for a [self-isolation support payment](#) if you meet the criteria.

If you need help self-isolating then the [Worcestershire Here 2 Help service](#) is still available to support people who are unable to get help from family, friends or neighbours.

It is also recommended people without symptoms get a rapid (lateral flow) test twice a week.

Find out more about [booking a test for Covid-19 if you have symptoms](#).

Find out [how to get a rapid \(lateral flow\) test if you do not have symptoms](#).

[Advice on self-isolation](#).

From 16 August, if you're fully vaccinated or under 18, you will not need to self-isolate following close contact with someone who has Covid-19. You will still need to take a PCR test and self-isolate if it's positive.

Wood of Thanks to mark Covid-19 pandemic



A deal has been agreed to create a community woodland in Malvern to mark the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Madresfield Estate will provide to Malvern Hills District Council an area of woodland next to Goodson Road, by the retail park in Malvern, for an initial 10 year period.

The aim will be to create an enhanced green space for the community to enjoy as well as provide a quiet space for contemplation and reflection.

The Wood of Thanks will act as a natural tribute to the amazing community response to support people through the pandemic, as well as include a memorial area to those who have lost their lives to the virus.

[Read more about the Covid-19 Wood of Thanks](#) or [watch our Wood of Thanks explainer video](#).

Looking after your mental health as restrictions are lifted



We know the lifting of restrictions may be causing difficult feelings.

If this is happening to you then it's okay. There isn't a right or wrong way to feel about this situation. The important thing is you do something about it.

The mental health charity Mind has produced some good information and self-help support on [managing feelings about lockdown easing](#).

The pandemic has also disrupted our sleep patterns and increased our stress levels as we have adapted to a new way of living.

The [Every Mind Matters website](#) has a range of information on things you can try to help tackle some of these issues.

You are also encouraged to make your own free NHS online plan, with simple steps to help manage anxiety, sleep and to boost your mood.

[Create your Mental Health Action Plan](#)