



COVID-19 response – update 10.09.20

New restrictions on groups

From Monday 14 September, there will be a ban on meeting socially in groups of more than six people. This will apply in any setting, indoors or outdoors, across England. The ban will be set out in law and will be enforced by the police. This single measure replaces both the existing ban on gatherings of more than 30 and the current guidance on allowing two households to meet indoors.

COVID-secure venues, such as places of worship, gyms, restaurants and hospitality venues, can still hold more than six people in total. However, within those venues, there must not be individual groups larger than six, and groups must not mix socially or form larger groups. Government guidance is available [here](#).

Testing

Testing is a crucial part of limiting the spread of the virus. It protects communities and provides the opportunity to create a full picture of how the virus is spreading within communities.

Public health directors and teams across the country are continuing to highlight this problem to central Government and we are hoping that action will be taken to resolve current issues as soon as possible.

We would like to assure you that the rate of testing in Oxfordshire is the second highest in the south-east region and we are doing all we can to maintain this level going forwards. To supplement regional resources, we have established a Local Testing Site (LTS) in Oxford. We are actively looking to secure an additional LTS in Oxford as well as further sites across the county.

Local Testing Sites are walk-through sites which people can access on foot or by bike. The Oxford site is in addition to existing regional and mobile testing units, and is designed to improve local access to testing.

The new facility, which is now fully operational, is located at the Oxford Brookes campus site in Headington (the Fuller Building Restaurant). It is open to the local community as well as to Brookes' students and staff. Advance bookings are strongly recommended – people showing coronavirus symptoms should call 119 to book a test or register online at www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test.

We know there is an issue with rising demand and so **we are actively urging people not to order or book tests if they are not symptomatic.**

Booking slots are made available the evening before for morning appointments, and on the morning for afternoon appointments. There are times during the day where booking slots may not be available. However, slots are released continuously and so anyone who has not been able to make a booking should call back or visit the website later.

Please be aware of the following:

- The main symptoms of coronavirus are a high temperature, a new, continuous cough and a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste. Most people with coronavirus have at least one of these symptoms.
- If you have at least one of these symptoms, you should book a test by calling 119 or registering online at www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test.
- If you do not have COVID-19 symptoms, please do not book a test - **you could be taking a test away from someone who really needs it**. This is increasingly important as we head into Autumn and Winter, when more people will get colds and the flu.
- Please do not stockpile home test kits – there is plenty of stock and, if you develop symptoms in the future, you will be able to book a test. There is no need to order a test in case of future use.
- If someone in your household starts to have symptoms, then that person must get tested and the rest of the household must self-isolate with them whilst they wait for the results.
- If you are self-isolating or in quarantine, then a negative test result does not mean you can end isolation early. The virus can take time to develop and so a test early on does not prove that you will not then go on to develop the virus. You could still be at risk of spreading the virus to other people.
- Further information is available at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stopthespread.