

Comms Briefing

New national restrictions - November 2020

People's behaviour is central to the spread of coronavirus. Guidance and regulations set out by the government, including the new restrictions from 5th November, are designed to slow the rate of the spread.

There is a much higher likelihood of people engaging in any required behaviour if they understand why they are being asked to do it and can see the benefit of it. This briefing is designed to give more detail and context to the desired behaviours that are being promoted by the current campaign. This information will help those who are prominent in giving messages (e.g. via media interviews) or are influential within communities (e.g. group leaders, councillors, faith leaders) to talk around the messages to enhance the public's understanding.

The key messages of the campaign are:

- Stay home as much as possible
- Don't meet indoors
- Only meet with one other person from another household
- Follow the Hands, Face, Space guidance
- Only make essential journeys
- Just buy what you need (don't panic buy)
- Minimise contact with others (aimed at those considered to be vulnerable)

The campaign wording highlights that we have lived under lockdown before, so this time we know what to do and have better systems in place (ads shown at the end of this briefing).

1. Stay at home & Essential Travel

Even though more businesses are staying open than in the first lockdown, the key advice is to stay at home as much as possible.

Using online shopping and working from home where possible helps us to reduce the number of journeys being made which in turn reduces the number of face-to-face interactions and reduces exposure to shared touchpoints. Since we did full lockdown earlier in the year, many more people are now set up to function in remote ways. Many people learned how to use video calling to stay in touch with friends and family, and online community groups helped people to support each other.

More shops have remained open this time, but the main message is still to stay home as much as possible and only go out for essentials. Anything non-essential should be purchased online. It can be confusing that some shops remain open but the message is not to go; the reason for seemingly non-essential stores being open is because they may be linked to trades such as furnishing new buildings for the construction trade, and are intended for trade or essential purchases, not for general public browsing. There is a reliance on the public to determine whether their need is essential, e.g. shopping for a replacement kitchen or carpet because of a need following damage from a flood or fire vs shopping for these items because the current one is looking a bit tired.

Try not make journeys that you don't need to, because every trip out brings potential for increased contact between people. Staying local will reduce the need for refuelling the car or potentially calling for breakdown services.

2. No indoor mixing & Only 1 other person outside

The current lockdown has been referred to as a 'circuit-breaker', as it is designed to slow transmission of the virus by reducing contact between people. The only mixing with someone from another household (outside of the support bubble arrangement) is to meet one person and then only in a public outdoor space. Children under the age of 5 are not included for this regulation, so one person can meet with another person outdoors even if one of them has a small child with them. Having contact with other people and getting out and about are both good for mental wellbeing. These rules help us to continue to do these things in a way that keeps risk of infection lower. Keeping contact between different households in public spaces increases the likelihood of social distancing being maintained and lowers the risk of larger social gatherings happening.

Support bubbles (where a single-adult household links with another) are classed as just one household for the purposes of these new regulations. Also, childcare bubbles are now allowed, so a child under the age of 13 can be in a 'bubble' with one other household – so the child can go there for childcare purposes.

Children obviously mix indoors when at school (although the degree of mixing is controlled by sorting into smaller groups or bubbles). Minimising further disruption to education has been made a priority by the government. If the overall community risk is minimised by people following the guidance, then the risk posed by children attending school will remain manageable.

3. Hands, Face, Space

Coronaviruses are known to be spread by one person either being close to another infected person or picking up the virus from a surface that an infected person has contaminated. The main prevention actions of keeping hands clean, wearing face coverings in settings that require them and social distancing (Hands, Face, Space), will, when done properly, prevent virus spread. They will also help to prevent other common winter illnesses such as colds and flu, and sickness bugs like norovirus.

4. Just buy what you need

The past months have shown that when people shop 'normally', things are available for everyone. This means that there is no need for anyone to stock-up any more than usual.

5. Minimise contact / use support if vulnerable

With the first lockdown, not only was it a huge culture shock, but new support systems had to be designed and put in place. This time around, we've had months of living under some degree of restriction, we have the Furlough scheme and support systems for our most vulnerable residents to get essential food and medicines. These things will help our communities to cope with this next phase.

Social Media ads for the campaign:

