

# Bracknell Forest Community Response

# Support After Shielding



A guide to the support available for residents who have been shielding during the pandemic.



# Introduction

**The government has advised that shielding is to be paused nationally from 31 March 2021. This means that, as of 1 April, you no longer need to shield but you do need to continue to follow the rules in place for everyone under national restrictions to stay safe.**

We have produced this guidance booklet to help you in this transition to a more 'normal' way of life. We know this might be a daunting time for many of you, after months spent indoors, but we are here to help. The information in this booklet explains what these changes mean for you, and what local organisations can offer in terms of advice and support for your individual needs.

## **What these changes mean for you:**

You do not need to follow previous shielding advice, but you may still be at risk of severe illness if you catch coronavirus, even if you have received two doses of the vaccine, so please continue to follow all current guidance.

- Take precautions when you go out by following the current guidance about meeting outdoors. Keep two metres away from people outside of your household or support bubble wherever possible. See our section on support bubbles.
- Children on the Shielded Patient List (SPL) are advised to return to school or college. Households of school and college staff and pupils, including those who attend a nursery or childminder, should have regular lateral flow tests using home kits. These are available through a number of routes including Community Collect centres.
- You should still work from home if you can, but if that is not possible, you can return to the workplace.
- Your employer is required to take steps to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace and should be able to explain to you the measures they have put in place to keep you safe at work.
- You may be eligible for support through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (furlough), which has been extended until 30 September. If you are a self-employed individual or a member of a partnership, you may be eligible for support through the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS).
- From 1 April you will no longer be eligible for Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) or Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) on the basis of being advised to shield.
- You can visit supermarkets and pharmacies while keeping two metres away from others wherever possible and wearing a face covering unless exempt. You may wish to go at quieter times of the day.
- You should continue to wash your hands carefully and regularly and maintain thorough cleaning of frequently touched areas in your home and/or workspace.
- Please note, this guidance was correct as of 29 March and may change. The most up-to-date guidance can be found at: [bit.ly/extremelyvulnerable](https://bit.ly/extremelyvulnerable)

# Food and supplies

If you are struggling to get food and supplies we can help you with the following:

- online shopping
- telephone shopping
- arranging delivery of medical supplies
- volunteers shopping for or with you

Please note: you will need to pay for this shopping – the shopping will not be free, but the service itself is.

Contact Bracknell Forest Community Response:

- email: [community@theark.org.uk](mailto:community@theark.org.uk)
- phone: 01344 266911, between 8am and 8pm

The Ark will be open for part of the Easter weekend for urgent enquiries:

Opening hours:

- Good Friday - closed
- Saturday 10am - 4pm
- Easter Sunday - closed (as most supermarkets will be too)
- Easter Monday - 10am - 4pm

## Foodbank

If you or someone you know is struggling to access food because of financial difficulty, please contact one of the many referral agencies who will be able to issue a voucher on your behalf.

Referral agencies include: Bracknell Forest Council, CAB, Housing Association, your child's school, medical practitioner, community health care team and Children's Centres.

Bracknell Foodbank:

email: [foodbank@kerith.church](mailto:foodbank@kerith.church)

- phone: 01344 862699 or 07923 400138
- [www.bracknell.foodbank.org.uk](http://www.bracknell.foodbank.org.uk)

New opening hours from 6 April 2021:  
Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday,  
10.30am – 12pm.

Crowthorne Foodbank:

email: [info@crowthorne.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:info@crowthorne.foodbank.org.uk)

- phone: 01344 862699 or 07923 400138
- [www.crowthorne.foodbank.org.uk](http://www.crowthorne.foodbank.org.uk)

Opening hours: Monday and Thursday,  
12pm – 2pm.



## Anxiety and loneliness

### Community volunteers

Our team of community volunteers can support you as you start venturing outside more. Whether it's help with your first supermarket shop, getting your online shopping account set up, or providing you with extra confidence by joining you on a walk to meet your friends in the park.

Contact us for support:

- email: [community@theark.org.uk](mailto:community@theark.org.uk)
- phone: 01344 266911 between 8am and 8pm

### Social prescribers

The council's social prescribers can support people who are feeling lonely and socially isolated. They can help you to stay connected by helping you find community groups and activities to try. They can also give you information and guidance, support with practical issues including access to online resources, and help you to identify home based activities and goal setting.

To speak to a social prescriber:

- make an online self-referral by visiting: [bit.ly/socialprescriberreferral](https://bit.ly/socialprescriberreferral)
- phone: 01344 352000 Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm

## Age UK

Age UK offers a free confidential advice line for older people, their families, friends, carers and professionals.

Call Age UK on: 0800 055 6112 from 8am to 7pm, or visit:

[www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)

A befriending service is also available, which aims to provide companionship to help break the cycle of loneliness. Visit: [bit.ly/AgeUKbefriendingscheme](https://bit.ly/AgeUKbefriendingscheme).

## British Red Cross

British Red Cross provides information on the latest coronavirus updates or support if you just want to share your worries over the phone.

You can contact the British Red Cross by:

- email: [connectsouthampton@redcross.org.uk](mailto:connectsouthampton@redcross.org.uk)
- phone: 02392 894221 Monday - Friday, 9.30am - 5.30pm

You can also call 0808 196 3651 between 10am and 6pm daily for further support.

- web: [www.redcross.org.uk](http://www.redcross.org.uk)

## NHS Volunteer Responders

NHS Volunteer Responders offer help to people in need of support or who are avoiding public places during the coronavirus pandemic.

They can:

- collect and deliver shopping or medical supplies
- provide transport to patients who are medically fit to attend routine appointments
- provide telephone support to people who are lonely

Call NHS Volunteer Responders on 0808 196 3646 from 8am to 8pm.

Visit: [www.nhsvolunteerresponders.org.uk/services](http://www.nhsvolunteerresponders.org.uk/services)



## Mental health

### Talking Therapies

Talking Therapies is an NHS service offering support if you're coping with challenges like depression, stress, anxiety or phobias.

Contact Talking Therapies by:

- email: [talkingtherapies@berkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:talkingtherapies@berkshire.nhs.uk)
- phone: 0300 365 2000
- web: [talkingtherapies.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk](http://talkingtherapies.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk)

### The Silver Line

The Silver Line is a free confidential helpline providing information, friendship and advice to older people.

Call Silver Line for free anytime on: 0800 4 70 80 90 or visit:  
[www.thesilverline.org.uk](http://www.thesilverline.org.uk)

### Samaritans

Samaritans provides emotional support for people in crisis.

Call Samaritans for free anytime on 116 123 or visit:  
[www.samaritans.org/branches/bracknell](http://www.samaritans.org/branches/bracknell)

## Mind

Mind offers a wide range of information and practical suggestions for those living with poor mental health and for those supporting them.

Call Mind from 9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday on: 0300 123 3393 or visit: [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk).

## Community mental health team

If there is an emergency, please call: 999.

You can ask your GP to refer you to the community mental health team.

If you need urgent help, but it's not an emergency, you can contact the Mental Health Crisis Team by:

- phone: 111 and ask to speak to the Mental Health Crisis Team
- phone: 0300 365 2000
- web: [bit.ly/CMHTBF](http://bit.ly/CMHTBF)

## Bracknell Forest Community Network

The Bracknell Forest Community Network (BFCN) supports individuals and carers living with a variety of conditions including psychosis, personality disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, eating disorders, dementia, anxiety and depression.

You can contact BFCN by:

- email: [network@berkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:network@berkshire.nhs.uk)
- phone: 01344 823300
- web: [www.healthwatchbracknellforest.co.uk/bracknell-forest-community-network](http://www.healthwatchbracknellforest.co.uk/bracknell-forest-community-network)

## Do you have a carer?

SIGNAL provides free support, information, guidance, networking, advice and learning to all unpaid (non-professional) carers who care for someone in Bracknell Forest.

Contact:

- web: [www.signal4carers.org.uk](http://www.signal4carers.org.uk)
- phone: 01344 266088
- email: [info@signal4carers.org.uk](mailto:info@signal4carers.org.uk)



## Financial worries

### Citizens Advice

Citizens Advice Bracknell and District is a local charity providing free, independent, impartial and confidential advice on a range of issues, including finance, legal, employment and housing.

There are lots of ways to get in touch, including via the website:

[www.citizensadvicebracknell.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvicebracknell.org.uk) or by phone on: 03 444 111 306.

### Benefits

You can contact the council's benefits team by:

- email: [benefits@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)
- phone: 01344 352010
- web: [bit.ly/BFCWelfareAndBenefits](http://bit.ly/BFCWelfareAndBenefits)

### Housing

The council's welfare and housing team can help you with support and advice to help you keep your home or find another home. Get in touch as early as possible if you are struggling to pay your rent.

You can get in touch by:

- email: [housing.options@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:housing.options@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)
- phone: 01344 352010



# Mobility

## Bracknell Forest Council's adult social care team

The council's adult social care team can help provide support for older people with things like getting dressed, staying safe in your home or help with caring for someone.

You can contact the team by:

- using the online enquiry form (available at: [bit.ly/onlineenquiryform](https://bit.ly/onlineenquiryform))
- phone: 01344 351500

## Falls prevention advice

Anyone can fall, but older people may be more vulnerable than others as long-term health conditions can increase the chances of someone falling.

For advice on how to keep yourself safe and well at home, call the Bracknell Falls Clinic on 01344 351500.

Our team of community volunteers can also help with getting you more active.

Bracknell Forest Community Response:

- email: [community@theark.org.uk](mailto:community@theark.org.uk)
- phone: 01344 266911, between 8am and 8pm.





## Staying safe

The government advice on staying safe is being regularly updated. The latest guidance can be found at: [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

### Help control the virus

To protect yourself and others, you must:

- wash hands - keep washing your hands regularly
- cover face - wear a face covering over your nose and mouth in enclosed spaces (unless you are exempt)
- make space - stay two metres away from people not in your household
- If you are feeling unwell, get a test and do not leave home for at least 10 days (self-isolate).

One in three people who have the virus have no symptoms (asymptomatic) so could be spreading the virus without knowing it.

Regular lateral flow tests (LFT) can help identify asymptomatic people who need to self-isolate and help break the chain of transmission. Find out more about LFT in our area below and at: <http://bit.ly/testinginBracknell>

### Spending time with people you live with

You are no longer advised to observe social distancing with other members of your household, as long as they are well. Everyone in your household should regularly follow the advice on hand washing and respiratory hygiene. This includes regularly washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, avoiding touching their face and thoroughly cleaning frequently-touched surfaces.

## Support bubbles

You can form a support bubble with another household of any size if:

- you live by yourself – even if carers visit you to provide support
- you are the only adult in your household who does not need continuous care as a result of a disability
- your household includes a child who is under the age of one or was under that age on 2 December 2020
- your household includes a child with a disability who requires continuous care and is under the age of five, or was under that age on 2 December 2020
- you are aged 16 or 17 living with others of the same age and without any adults
- you are a single adult living with one or more children who are under the age of 18 or were under that age on 12 June 2020
- you should not form a support bubble with a household that is part of another support bubble

More information on support bubbles can be found at:

[www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-support-bubble-with-another-household](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-support-bubble-with-another-household)

## Hygiene

There are general principles you should follow to help prevent the spread of infections caused by respiratory viruses, including:

- washing your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using a hand sanitiser. Do this after you blow your nose, sneeze or cough before you eat or handle food and always immediately when you return home
- avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throwing the tissue safely in a bin and washing your hands
- cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces in the home

# Rapid testing in Bracknell Forest

One in three people who have coronavirus have no symptoms (also known as asymptomatic) and may be spreading it without realising.

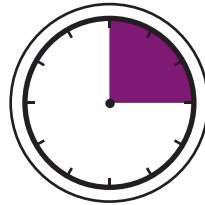
If you leave home for a permitted activity, and you are asymptomatic, you can get tested for COVID-19, for free, even if you have had the vaccine.



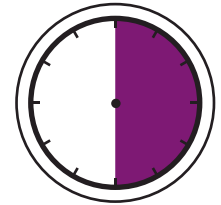
**The test is quick.**



**Takes under 15 minutes.**



**Results in 30 minutes.**



**There are currently six sites where you can get tested:**

- One Lexicon, Bracknell town centre
- Great Hollands Pavilion, Bracknell
- New Priestwood Community Centre, Bracknell
- Brownlow Hall, Warfield
- The Morgan Centre, Crowthorne
- Sandhurst Community Centre, Sandhurst

These sites also offer Community Collect for the households of nursery, childminder, school and college pupils and staff. Rapid testing is also offered by some work places and home test kits can also be ordered from [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

Further information on how to access rapid testing can be found at [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/coronavirus-information-and-support/rapid-testing-covid-19](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/coronavirus-information-and-support/rapid-testing-covid-19)

For information, or to book an appointment visit:

[www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/rapid-testing](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/rapid-testing)

If you have symptoms, you must not attend a rapid test site. You must self-isolate immediately and book a PCR test at GOV.UK or by calling 119.

# COVID-19 vaccinations

If you are aged 16 or older, you should already have been offered your first dose of the vaccine. If you have not yet received your first dose, please contact your GP.

For children aged 12 to 15 years, vaccination may be appropriate for those with severe neuro-disabilities. This option should be discussed between parents/guardians and the child's clinician or GP. For other children aged 15 and under, whilst further research is being done, vaccination is not yet recommended.

If you have received your first dose, you should still ensure you take up your second dose of the vaccine when it is offered to you. Having two doses should further increase your level of protection.

No vaccine is 100 per cent effective and therefore even if you have had both doses, there is still no absolute guarantee that you will not become ill from COVID-19. Therefore, you should continue to take the extra precautions set out in this guidance to help protect yourself.

## If you develop symptoms

If you have any of the main symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), get a PCR test as soon as possible. The PCR test is different to the test available at Community Test Centres. PCR tests should be booked via the National Test and Trace Service noted below. Stay at home until you get the result.

## Main symptoms

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:



- **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)



- **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)



- **a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

Most people with coronavirus have at least one of these symptoms. More information is available at: [www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus)

You can book a test at: [bit.ly/NHSbookatest](https://bit.ly/NHSbookatest) or call 119.

You can read the guidance about the NHS test and trace service, including what happens if you test positive for coronavirus at:

[bit.ly/TestandTraceguidance](https://bit.ly/TestandTraceguidance)

## Personal exercise programme: seated exercises

Complete these exercises at least twice a day - when you get up and before bedtime:

- try and move around after seated for two - three hours
- do little but often, challenge yourself
- pushing yourself too hard can increase your risk of injury
- pay attention to your body and stop when you're sick or in pain and is unbearable. If you take a break from exercise, ease back into it again
- drink plenty of water or fluid replacement drinks after exercises, be careful if you are on fluid restrictions
- take it easy when exercising in extreme weather
- progress to more repetition, standing exercises, a walk or stairs exercises once you feel more confident with the seated exercises
- keep an exercises diary to track your progress
- if you are worried that things don't feel right discuss your concerns with your GP.



Sit with your back straight and feet firmly on the floor. Pull your shoulder blades together while turning your thumbs and hands outwards. Repeat 10 times.



Sit. Bend and straighten your ankles. Repeat 10 times.



Tighten the muscles between your shoulder blades and push your chest forward. Press your hands against the chair. Hold five seconds. Repeat 10 times.



Sit. Tighten your pelvic floor muscles and gently draw your lower stomach in. Lift your knees in turn. Repeat 10 times.



Stand/sit. Bend your elbow and then straighten your elbow. Repeat 10 times.



Sit on a chair leaning back on your arms. Lift one knee towards your chest. Repeat 10 times.



Shoulder flexion. Stand up/Seated, Keep upper body straight with arms by your sides. Lift your arm forwards to 45 degrees with the thumb

leading the movement. Lower the arm back to the starting position. Repeat 10 times.



Chair squat. Stand tall with your feet approximately hip-width apart and weight distributed evenly on both feet.

Make sure the chair behind you is at a suitable distance from you. Bend your knees and hips and squat down onto the chair. Knees and toes should be pointing in the same direction. Sit down lightly and push back up to the starting position using your front thighs and buttock muscles. Repeat 10 times.

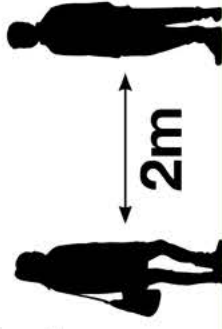
# Post shielding daily routine

## Leaving your home

Walk or cycle where possible.



If using public transport, wear a face covering (unless you are exempt\*).



1. Stay 2 metres away from others wherever possible.
2. Ensure you have everything you need with you e.g. medication and water.

## Out and about.



1. Wear a face covering in all mandatory settings e.g. shops, cinemas, beauty salons (a full list can be found at [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)).
2. Wash your hands or use hand sanitiser often.
3. Don't touch or adjust your face covering.
4. Avoid crowded spaces and if possible, avoid travelling at peak times.

## Going to work or school



1. Wash your hands as soon as you arrive for 20 seconds with warm water and soap.
2. You can go to work as long as your workplace is COVID-secure, but you should carry on working from home wherever possible.

## Home sweet home



1. Immediately wash your hands for 20 seconds with warm water and soap.
2. Dispose of your face covering in your general waste or wash it if it's reusable.

## Keeping yourself well

1. Have a healthy balanced diet, high in vitamins and minerals.
2. Exercise regularly, go for a walk or take part in a virtual class. Ensure you're not sat for too long.
3. Reduce your alcohol intake
4. Try to get 7-8 hours of good sleep as this will help maintain mental and physical health.



\*Children under 3 and people with breathing difficulties. A full list of exemption can be found here: <https://bit.ly/FaceCoveringexempt>

## Need more support?

Find help and useful contacts on our designated 'coming out of shielding' webpage: <https://bit.ly/SupportAfterShielding>

For advice on staying healthy visit: <https://bit.ly/BFPHPortal>

If you need this booklet in an alternative format,  
please call: 01344 351187.

All images are stock photos. Posed by models.