

COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions – Updated 10 June 2020

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1. Where can I get the latest Leeds City Council advice about Coronavirus?

Visit <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/coronavirus> for all service changes and updates, health advice and guidance, and how to get or offer support in the community

Visit <https://news.leeds.gov.uk/> for all the latest official media releases from the council.

2. Where can I read the latest progress update?

Please see the report to the May Executive Board meeting:

[Update on Coronavirus \(COVID19\) pandemic – Response and Recovery Plan](#)

3. How do I sign up for email updates from Government about Coronavirus advice?

You can sign up via the following link: [https://www.gov.uk/email-](https://www.gov.uk/email-signup?link=/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response)

[signup?link=/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response](https://www.gov.uk/email-signup?link=/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response)

4. How many cases of Coronavirus are in Leeds?

Information on the number of cases nationally and in Leeds can currently be accessed [here](#)

5. What should someone do if they need think they need medical help for Coronavirus?

Please check the official NHS guidance on the [NHS COVID-19 webpages](#).

6. Can people still go to see their GP?

Face to face appointments are being reduced and some GP surgeries are closed. If someone needs to contact a GP, they should not go into the surgery in person. Instead they should go through the surgery's website, or by phone. The GP surgery will then give advice about what to do, or direct you to NHS 111. If the surgery is open a phone or video call with a GP, nurse or healthcare professional may be booked. People will only be asked to visit a surgery if absolutely necessary.

7. Advice for parents of young children

The NHS has sent out [this press release](#) asking parents and carers of babies/young children to access health support quickly when their child is unwell as any delay could be dangerous

8. Where can I find the latest guidance for Local Government?

Here is a link to all the national government [guidance for local government](#).

9. Where can I get advice about stopping the spread of Coronavirus?

The official NHS advice is available on the [NHS COVID-19 webpages](#).

10. How long does someone with Coronavirus symptoms have to stay at home for?

The official Government guidance is available here: [Staying at home, for households with possible COVID-19 infection](#).

11. When are people allowed to leave their home?

The Government has published the following [frequently asked questions](#) to help you understand and answer questions from other people about what they can and can't do.

From Monday 1 June, there are a limited number of things you will be able to do in England that you could not do before:

- Spend time outdoors, including private gardens and other outdoor spaces, in groups of up to six people from different households, following social distancing guidelines
- visit car showrooms and outdoor markets
- in line with the arrangements made by your school, send your child to school or nursery if they are in early years, reception, year 1 or year 6, if you could not before
- if you are an elite athlete as defined by this [guidance](#), train and compete using the specified gyms, pools and sports facilities you need - which will, in the coming weeks, we hope enable others to watch live sport on TV

At all times, you should continue to adhere to strict social distancing guidelines when you are outside your home, particularly ensuring you are two metres away from anyone outside your household.

12. How to report a breach of the coronavirus restrictions:

The police have been granted additional powers to enforce new Government rules designed to help prevent the spread of coronavirus. To report anything which contravenes those rules the public are being encouraged [use the WYP online Breach of Coronavirus Restrictions reporting form](#), and have reiterated that 999 should only be used if a crime is in progress or there is a threat to life.

13. Where can I get advice about social distancing and the most vulnerable groups?

The official Government guidance is available here: [Staying alert and safe \(social distancing\)](#).

14. What advice is there for unpaid carers?

The Government has published detailed guidance for anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who cannot cope without their support during the coronavirus outbreak. The guidance builds on the previous guidance for households on staying at home with possible coronavirus and the guidance on social distancing. Carers are advised to create an emergency plan with the person they care for, to use in circumstances where help from other people to deliver care may be needed. The full guidance can be found [here](#).

15. What advice is there for people purchasing care through direct payments?

Department for Health and Social Care recently (7 May) published updated guidance for people who buy care and support through a direct payment, as well as local authorities, clinical commissioning groups and providers who support and deliver care via direct payments. [The Guidance](#) includes steps that councils and Clinical Commissioning Groups should take to support people who use direct payments to purchase care and support, and is accompanied by a Q&A that directly responds to questions and concerns previously raised

by direct payment holders, personal assistants, and charities and organisations that support them.

16. What help is there for vulnerable people trying to keep their independence at home?

Take a look at the council's Leeds Directory which is designed to help vulnerable people keep their independence at home. At this time, two aspects are worth highlighting: Access to vetted and rated tradespeople if urgent and necessary repairs are needed in the home, and help connecting isolated people safely to social and support groups that have now moved on line or to telephone contact. With over 1500 listings there is a good chance Leeds Directory can offer a solution. Information can be found at [Leeds Directory](#) or residents can call the helpline 9-5 weekdays 0113 378 4610.

17. What help is there for people who feel isolated to safely connect to others?

The council Leeds Directory has over 1500 listings including support and social groups many of which are now on line or have moved to telephone support. You can search the Leeds Directory Website Leedsdirectory.org or call the helpline weekdays 9-5 on 0113 3784610. Our helpline staff will be happy to talk through how clients can make the connections that work for them.

18. Who can I contact if I have any concerns over Domestic Violence?

In an emergency ring 999. Ring 101 at other times.

<https://www.westyorkshire.police.uk/domestic-abuse-contacts> has a range of numbers, both local and national, as well as other useful links.

19. Who should people contact if they need care support or help during social isolation?

Leeds City Council has joined forces with Voluntary Action Leeds and a network of other local charities to deliver care to anyone in need across the city. Call **0113 378 1877** to be matched with a Volunteer who can help.

20. Who should people contact if they want to volunteer to help?

Leeds City Council has partnered with Voluntary Action Leeds to introduce a coordinated approach to volunteering during COVID-19. Anyone wishing to help is asked to email volunteering@val.org.uk or call 0113 297 7920. Training will be provided so volunteers meet safeguarding standards. More information can be found at <https://doinggoodleeds.org.uk/covid-19-care-volunteering.html>

21. Who do I contact if businesses are not adhering to Government advice?

- To report a licensed premise that is still open (excluding takeaways as they can continue to function) email entertainment.licensing@leeds.gov.uk
- To report any retail shops still open when they shouldn't be email: epteam@leeds.gov.uk.
- Further useful guidance can be found at: [further-businesses-and-premises-to-close-guidance](#)

22. Can residents still call the Contact Centre?

The Contact Centre is operating normal office hours, weekdays 9am to 5pm, except Wednesdays when we're open from 10am. This excludes bank holidays. However, a number of services are no longer operating, or are operating reduced services, so please be aware this is a changing situation. For the latest service position please see www.leeds.gov.uk . Here is a list of contact numbers for specific services so you can channel customers to them during this difficult time: [Contact Numbers](#)

23. How can residents contact their local councillor?

We recommend residents contact their councillor through email, by phone or through social media. Councillor contact details can be found here:

<http://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/mgMemberIndex.aspx?FN=WARD&VW=LIST&PIC=0>

In addition ward level Council Facebook groups have been created solely to respond to the virus for every ward in the city. These are easy to search for and locate on Facebook.

24. Can leaflets still be delivered?

There is no specific government guidance on this in relation to COVID-19. Our Public Health and Health and Safety colleagues have considered this. The evidence suggests a theoretical risk but how contagious this is to the individual handling the leaflet is not known. This means leaflet distribution becomes a calculated risk between potential transmission from a leaflet and the benefit of informing those most in need of the essential services and support available. In the circumstances, you should err on the side of caution and only do leaflet dropping where you believe it to be essential and the only option, for example for people who do not have regular internet/social media access. If you do choose to use leaflets, the main thing is handwashing and this guidance [decontamination in non healthcare settings](#), combined with [social distancing](#). Elected members should also follow the normal guidance for their own safety.

25. Where can I get advice for people who have lost work and are struggling with debt?

The best single place for up to date advice about who to contact is [Leeds Money Information Centre](#). This lists the latest position for all the services in the city and has a range of useful phone numbers.

26. What information can I access on benefits and wider financial support?

A benefits calculator is available here: [Benefits Calculator](#) this reflects the recent changes to Universal Credit and Employment and Support. In addition the following link provides useful information on employment and benefits: [Coronavirus pandemic response and key information](#) for people concerned about how it will affect their benefits and job income.

27. What Employment and Skills support is there?

Given the significant increase in Universal Credit claimants and DWP's redeployment of work coaches to process claims, claimants will receive a twice weekly text notification that support is available from the [Leeds Employment Hub](#) or via e-mail on employmenthub@leeds.gov.uk. Alternatively they can call **Tel: 0113 378 4576** if they require support to re-enter the labour market and/or advice about which businesses are currently recruiting.

Since lockdown and the cessation of face to face support, Employment and Skills services have moved to telephone and on-line support and staff are continuing to place people in employment. The Council also continues to deliver its levy funded apprenticeship programme through both in-house delivery and with external providers with training and learning resources moved on-line. 25% of Adult Learning provision has been moved on-line and we anticipate this will increase.

Skills provision for the 2020/21 academic year is currently being specified for tender in June and delivery from September 2020 to July 2021. This is alongside our current work to prepare for Devolution of the Adult Education Budget in 2021/22. This will allow work to be undertaken to incrementally change and flex provision to better meet local labour market needs post Covid 19 and in alignment with other city providers. We continue to support people into work, apprenticeships and other learning and training opportunities. Support can

be tailored to meet the needs of individual and is available from the [Leeds Employment Hub](#) or via e-mail on employmenthub@leeds.gov.uk or by calling Tel: 0113 378 4576.

We also provide support to employers by providing a named account manager to assist with meeting local recruitment, skills training and apprenticeships. We continue work to make best use of the Apprenticeship Levy by matching large levy payers with unused funds to SME businesses wishing to employ apprentices.

During term 3, we were unable to deliver Adult Learning courses that are usually delivered in community settings with only 25% of our providers having the capability to deliver on-line learning. We are supporting our providers to use our Google Classroom to deliver on-line and are now training over 200 tutors to deliver in this way. While this will not meet the needs of all learners, all our providers will be in position to deliver in this way from September as the new academic year begins

Under the Leeds Careers Charter, we continue to develop the [Start in Leeds](#), the on-line careers guidance platform and [Start to Apply](#) enabling students to make their post 16 choices and applications. We have posted a number of home learning activities on the site for students to undertake and are working to connect a number of businesses that can engage in 'world of work' activities. In July, we will offer our new ESIF funded 3 year programme providing mental health support to over 1,100 young people and work with them to improve their skills and significantly increase their prospects of moving into sustained employment. The project will be aligned with existing services and programmes delivered by the council and its' partners to ensure any Leeds resident not in employment, aged 15 and over can be supported.

28. What support is there for residents struggling to pay their Council Tax bill?

The Council is delivering a supportive approach to Council Tax payers financially affected, encouraging them to contact the Council at the earliest opportunity if there are any issues which may impact on ability to pay. We will discuss their circumstances and where appropriate agree a payment plan. If the impact on their income is such that they have eligibility for Local Council Tax Support we will advise/support their claim as required to ensure that people are getting the support they are entitled to before arranging payment breaks etc. Residents should be encouraged to use these contact details: www.leeds.gov.uk/contact-us or 0113 222 4404 (please note that there may be longer waiting times at this time).

29. What support is available for Businesses during the COVID-19 Pandemic?

Please signpost any business looking for advice to the LEP in the first instance. As well as providing a wide range of links and information on its website, businesses in Leeds City Region concerned or affected by Coronavirus can contact the LEP business support team directly. Full details of the range of support available to businesses and how they can access advice can be found on their website

<https://www.the-lep.com/business-support/covid-19-support-for-businesses/>

Their contact details are: email: businessgrowth@the-lep.com or telephone: 0113 348 1818

In addition to this we also have [dedicated pages on our own website](#) which provides information specifically relating to Leeds. This is being updated on a regular basis and covers a broad range of issues including support for the self-employed and small and medium sized businesses, along with links to further sources of information and support. Communication with key business representative groups is regular and ongoing, and we are aiming to collate information in specific sectors within the local economy with a view to delivering targeted support.

Grants of £10,000 are available to businesses in receipt of small business rate relief and up to £25,000 for those in receipt of the expanded retail relief. These will also be awarded to those eligible without the need for an application and the process of issuing the grants has begun. **The vast majority of these have now been paid.** Businesses do not have to apply for the grants however completing the online form for BACS transfer may speed up the process this link takes residents to the page they need to complete the form:

<https://www.leeds.gov.uk/coronavirus/business>

A new Discretionary Grant Scheme for small businesses and charities launched on 1st June 2020. This fund will see LCC awarding grants to businesses and charities across the city who have not already benefited from COVID-19 funding, capped at £10,000 per grant to allow the Council to support a larger number of businesses across the city. The scheme will see £7.795m made available, which equates to 5% of the original amount the Council was given for the initial business grant scheme. 10% of the funds available will be ring-fenced for applications from local charities who occupy one property with a rateable value up to £15,000.

There is an eligibility criteria to be met by applicants and a business or charity can apply for a grant if:

- It has not received any other coronavirus funding
- It was trading on 11th March 2020
- It has less than 50 employees
- It occupies all or part of a non-domestic property
- The property has a rateable value of less than £51,000, or annual rent or mortgage payments are less than £51,000
- It has yearly fixed property costs of £8,000 or more
- It is expecting to lose 25% or revenue between March 2020 and September 2020 due to coronavirus

Businesses and charities will be able to apply for up to 50% of their fixed property costs, from £2,000 up to a maximum of £10,000, over a six-month period starting from 11th March 2020. All businesses and charities wanting to make an application to the scheme should do so via the following link: <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/coronavirus/apply-for-a-discretionary-grant>.

Nationally, Bounce Back Loans Scheme will bolster the existing package of support available to the smallest businesses affected by the coronavirus pandemic by providing loans of up to £50,000. They will benefit from [a new fast track finance scheme](#) providing loans with a 100% government-backed guarantee for lenders. The scheme has been designed to ensure that small firms who need vital cash injections to keep operating can get finance in a matter of days. The government will provide lenders with a 100% guarantee for the loan and pay any fees and interest for the first 12 months. No repayments will be due during the first 12 months.

30. What support is available for self-employed people, including taxi/private hire drivers?

The government introduced a self-employed income support scheme in the form of a taxable grant worth 80% of your average earnings over the last three years, up to £2,500 a month. This scheme was initially in action for three months, but has now been extended with people able to make a claim for a second and final grant in August 2020

Details about this scheme, including eligibility and how to apply, can be found at:

www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-a-grant-through-the-coronavirus-covid-19-self-employment-income-support-scheme.

As a council, we are working hard to further ease the financial difficulties for self-employed people where possible. We have automatically extended all taxi and private hire driver,

vehicle and operator licences that are due to expire before the end of June. If we need to, we will extend this further.

We have also asked the government for permission to delay the implementation of the Clean Air Charging Zone until further notice and we have suspended repayments for taxi and private hire owners who have received an interest-free loan. We are still accepting and continuing to pay grant payments for those vehicle owners switching to cleaner vehicles. Things are changing on a daily basis, and as the government develops its response to the pandemic, the following contacts for businesses and self-employed people in Leeds are in place:

- a. For more information regarding business support we are directing businesses to:
<https://www.leeds.gov.uk/coronavirus/business>
<https://www.the-lep.com/business-support/covid-19-support-for-businesses/>
- b. Enquiries to Leeds City Council regarding business rates should be sent to Business.rates@leeds.gov.uk
- c. A dedicated national helpline has also been set up to help businesses and self-employed individuals - 0800 0159 559.

If someone needs work straightaway, many supermarkets and care providers are in great need of additional staff to make an immediate start. For information about care vacancies email wecareacademy@leeds.gov.uk. Most major supermarkets are recruiting too, so visit their individual websites for information on how to apply.

31. Are Taxis allowed to operate?

Taxi and private hire drivers are very much allowed to continue to work. Although they are not classed as 'key workers' they are providing essential services transporting key workers to and from work, especially where other public transport has reduced, and some are helping to deliver supplies including essential food, medical supplies and prescriptions to vulnerable people.

Obviously social distancing is a challenge and largely impractical in standard vehicles, but we have provided advice to licensed drivers for passengers to sit in the back seat of the taxi/private hire vehicle and diagonally opposite the driver, to maximise the distance as much as possible. Government guidance is clear that groups over two people are not permitted and this applies to travelling in vehicles as well, so unless the driver and passengers are from the same household there should not be more than one passenger per vehicle. Private hire vehicles need to be booked in advance by the passenger contacting the private hire operator. The council is aware of a small number of Leeds private hire operators who have temporarily ceased to take bookings. Of course any such journey booked in a taxi or private hire vehicle must be essential travel as defined in the government's guidance. We are referring drivers to the Government's guidance and we have also collated relevant information from PHE, the Department for Transport, the Institute of Licensing and, of course, the Council and have shared that in a regular email to all our licence holders.

The Councils has now allowed taxi and private hire drivers to install temporary safety screens more details on this are available through this link:

<https://news.leeds.gov.uk/news/council-allows-temporary-safety-screens-to-be-installed-in-taxis-in-response-to-pandemic>

32. What support is there for someone sleeping rough or homeless?

If no other options are available, alternative emergency accommodation will be sourced to support and limit the further spread of COVID 19. If housing assistance is required 'here and

now' please contact: Emergency Accommodation Team for support and advice via Leeds Housing Options 0113 222 4412 or out of hours service 07891 273939.

If you are concerned about someone who appears to be living on the street then this should be reported through street link through the following link: <https://www.streetlink.org.uk/>

33. Can residents still access the Choice Based Lettings system?

Update 12th May: In light of the announcement from the Housing Minister on 12 May Housing Leeds is currently looking at how it can resume the allocation and letting of Council homes in accordance with social distancing guidance, but this may take some time. If you have already been allocated a home, this offer will remain in place and we will contact you to discuss your move in due course. You do not need to contact us about your move at this point. Choice Based Lettings will not resume straight away. Please keep checking your emails and the website for the most up to date information. Regular updates on the allocation and lettings of Council homes will be shared on the website:

<https://www.leedshomes.org.uk/>

All Council homes advertised on the Leeds Homes website on 25 March will be withdrawn and will no longer be available for bidding.

Where an applicant has already been offered a Council home in a previous bidding cycle, this offer will be honoured, but there may be some delays in the home becoming available. If applicants have been offered a home, an officer will make contact with them to discuss their individual circumstances and will offer further advice and support. In most cases we will encourage applicants to delay their move if the applicant does not very urgently need to move. We will support any applicants affected by self-isolation and delay viewings and sign up until an applicant is no longer self-isolating and strict social distancing measures have been lifted. Where it is agreed to delay the tenancy start date, the applicant will not be expected to pay rent until the delayed tenancy start date.

There will be no bidding cycle for the next few weeks. The Leeds Homes website will be updated with any changes and all applicants with a live application will be contacted to advise when the next bidding cycle will start.

Only in very exceptional, critical circumstances will new allocations and lettings be made, where there is a serious risk to personal health and safety. All allocations and lettings will be made via an urgent referral from another service – hospital, social worker, support agency – and considered via a Direct Let Panel.

34. What will happen to Council housing repairs?

The Council has moved to an 'essential' only repairs service. For the foreseeable future the council will only deliver repairs and maintenance that if not done, are likely to jeopardise the health or safety of tenants and/or other householders. The individual needs of tenants and any vulnerability issues will be factored into determining the repair priority. Tenants can continue to report non-essential repairs to the Council online, so that once restrictions on social distancing are lifted, they will not have to report their repair again. Tenants can also report non-essential repairs through the telephone Contact Centre if they do not have internet access.

35. Is there any advice for Landlords and Tenants?

MHCLG has published [non-statutory guidance for landlords and tenants](#). The Home Office has also confirmed that landlords and employers will not be required to see original documents during the coronavirus outbreak. Instead, scanned documents will be accepted to prove someone has a right to rent or a right to work.

36. What help is there for vulnerable owner occupiers who need urgent repairs to their homes?

The councils Leeds Directory has 'Green Tick' vetted and rated tradespeople including locksmiths, plumbers, electricians, white goods repair companies etc. You can search on their website Leedsdirectory.org or call their helpline weekdays 9-5 0113 3784610. All traders have received the most recent advice on social distancing and minimising risk where repairs are necessary and urgent.

37. What is happening with Asylum Accommodation?

It has been announced that individuals and families will not have to leave asylum accommodation once their claim or appeal has been decided for the next three months, with a review in June. Reporting requirements and interviews have also been postponed.

38. What support is there for key workers' childcare?

Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be.

It is really important that we all work together to stop the Covid-19 virus from spreading, and children staying at home helps to do this. For the majority of children this is the safest place to be.

The city's schools are still open and in the main are providing schooling for key worker children and young people. Leeds City Council will support schools to work towards gradually increasing pupil numbers at a pace their individual circumstances allow. Leeds schools are now beginning to admit more pupils in line with revised Government guidance, more details can be found [here](#)

Emergency childcare support needed as a result of the pandemic can be requested via this [link](#)

39. What is happening with Free School Meals in Leeds?

The Council has a plan in place to deliver 14,000 meals every day for means tested free school meal children. These will be available through 28 hubs across the city with established distribution points for each school to have their allocation collected from these sites or delivered directly where this is proving hard to arrange. The provision includes catering for all children who may have a special dietary requirement. The Government has also launched a voucher scheme for schools providing free school meals with weekly shopping vouchers worth £15 to spend at supermarkets while schools are closed due to coronavirus

40. Has public transport been affected by the Covid-19 outbreak?

As a result of the measures introduced by Government to restrict movement and encourage social isolation, public transport services have been substantially reduced. We are strongly urging people to consider whether their journey is essential and to follow the Government's guidelines to stay at home unless:

- you are travelling to and from work, but only where this is absolutely necessary and cannot be done from home
- for medical reasons
- shopping for basic necessities

Bus and rail operators are running emergency timetables focused on ensuring key workers can get where they need to go as reliably and safely as possible.

Social distancing measures have been introduced on buses, including:

- Cleaning / hygiene- higher standard of cleaning especially touchpoints , drivers issued with hand sanitiser

- Driver protection/ PPE – bus companies that didn't have "assault screens" are fitting them and are sealing where necessary to reduce air flow. All WY buses are single door so no opportunity to use middle/ end doors as in London.
- Some companies giving drivers gloves, no masks in use (as per WHO/ PHE guidance for non-clinical use of masks however Mayor of London pushing for mask use by public transport workers)
- Social Distancing – operators putting signs / floor markings etc to promote and restrict the numbers of passengers per vehicle.
- Duplicate buses put on busy trips. Specific guidance on social distancing and buses awaited from DfT
- Cash – promoting contactless payment but have not withdrawn cash due to concerns about social exclusion implications of this. Nationally Arriva introduced exact fare only from this week- monitoring the impact of this.
- As of 15th June, the Government has announced that face coverings will be mandatory on public transport.

For regular updates to bus and rail services and emergency timetables see: wymetro.com/plan-a-journey/travel-news/bus-travel-alerts/service-updates/

41. Are Park and Ride sites open?

In line with the significant reduction in the number of people travelling into Leeds, it is with regret that both Park & Ride sites are closed. The Council has however suspended charges in its car parks and for on street parking bays to give priority to key workers.

42. Are Community Hubs open?

Community Hubs and Libraries are closed for normal business. Merrion, Armley, Dewsbury Road and Compton remain open for prearranged collection of food parcels and for Credit Union. Credit Union are open Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Any other enquiries should be made via the Contact Centre where the face to face team are ringing residents back to answer their enquiries. Residents can use borrow box to download on line books.

43. What has happened to Community Centres?

Community centre bookings have been cancelled and are being refunded. Consideration is being given locally to whether the centres can provide useful space, for example for feeding locally.

44. Are parks still open?

Parks themselves are currently open to use in a socially distanced manner. Car parks at parks are open and available to use. Playgrounds and outdoor exercise equipment remain closed off.

45. Are Museums and Galleries still open?

All museums and galleries in Leeds have been closed since 17th March. The Museum's Service is providing content about artefacts on social media.

46. Are Leisure Centres open?

All Leisure Centres have been closed since 17th March.

47. What is happening with Weddings at Leeds Town Hall?

All weddings booked up to the end of June have been cancelled. Whilst still under review, some ceremonies are being rescheduled for after October 1st although it is expected that some restrictions may still limit numbers of attendees.

48. What is the latest in relation to Cemeteries, Churches, Burials and Cremations?

Cemeteries and crematoria grounds are open to the general public subject to social distancing guidelines being observed. Cremation services in chapels will be able to take place from 8th June subject to strict limits on time (40 minutes per service) and numbers of mourners (10 people from the same household or close relatives). Burials and committals of ashes are restricted to 15 minutes at the graveside with up to 10 mourners (people from the same household or close relatives) in attendance. For either type of funeral, where there are no close family members, close family friends may attend. No individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 should attend and should self-isolate in line with government advice. Funeral directors may be able to give more details to bereaved families of what options are available including deferring the date of a ceremony until after restrictions have been eased

In common with many other local authorities we have set a limit so that social distancing requirements can be met to ensure the health and safety of mourners, funeral directors and staff. We have a small team of qualified crematorium technicians, and if a small number of our technicians became ill or had to self-isolate, Leeds City Council's ability to proceed with cremations would be severely affected.

The Government has now announcement that places of worship can re-open for individual prayer from 15 June, more details are available through this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/places-of-worship-to-re-open-for-individual-prayer>

49. Where can I obtain a copy of the lockdown guidance and messaging in a language other than English?

The [migrant info hub](#) has translations of the updated lockdown rules, as well as lots of other useful information and resources to help migrants, and those supporting them.

In addition, the council leaflet sent to all households with key information about the Coronavirus response has been translated into the main community languages used in the city. The languages are: Polish, Punjabi, Bengali, Romanian, Urdu, Czech, Slovak, Kurdish Sorani, Lithuanian, Tigrinya, Farsi and Arabic. The leaflet has been shared with elected members.

50. Is the latest information and government guidance on Covid-19 available in sign language?

A host of information, including the new Stay Alert messaging, is available in BSL at:

<https://signhealth.org.uk/resources/coronavirus/>

51. What is the position with dental services?

Routine dentistry during COVID-19 requires the correct social distancing measures and personal protective equipment to be in place. That's why, routine dentistry was suspended with the outbreak of coronavirus.

In England, dentists can return to work from 8 June. Practices will be working hard to source protective equipment and put measures in place to maintain social distancing measures. In England, many will not be able to offer all treatments from 8 June, but practices will need to prioritise their patients based upon their needs.

52. What is the latest position with regard to litter bins and litter picking?

When the lockdown was announced we immediately took the step to suspend emptying of litter bins. With over 4,000 bins, it was not practical nor a good use of limited resources to tape up every bin. We did try and do some though, mainly on high streets. This was a bit rough and ready and soon many of those taping ups came loose or were part removed by the public. We initially relied on people getting the message through social media and press

that litter bins should not be used. This had some success but many bins still got used – often people stuffing them full of dog-poo bags even when there was no bin liner in. At this challenging time we needed to encourage everyone to take greater personal responsibility for their rubbish. We then added a sticker to every litter bin to make clear they should not be used and asking people to take their litter home with them. Unfortunately, not everyone did this of course, and so we ensured bins that become full and a potential nuisance for nearby residents were emptied as often as we could. As we are now in “step 1” of the Government’s road-map out of “lockdown”, the public are leaving their homes more frequently and for more time. Unlimited exercise is permitted and household picnics in parks are allowed. More shops and businesses are open. Ice cream vans can operate! So we are now in the process of removing all covering/taping up of litter bins. We will operate an increased team of litter bin crews citywide that will focus mainly on the known streets/locations where the litter bins are being filled most often, as well as responding as promptly as possible to any reports we get. The message to the public is please take your litter home with you if at all possible, but we will empty bins as required. Please refer any “hotspot”/problem litter bins to your Cleaner Neighbourhood Team contact for a response.

The Cleaner Neighbourhoods Team is restarting litter picking, at locations where footfall seems to be highest and litter is unfortunately starting to be an issue again. The resource will continue to be limited and targeted. A priority for litter picking and mechanical street sweeping will be to support town centres/main streets as step 2 of the move out of lockdown sees more shops open to the public and with the importance of supporting the local economic recovery.

53. What is the latest position regarding Household Waste and Recycling Sites, Bulky Waste and Brown Bin Collections?

Brown bin collections and bulky waste collections resumed from the 25th May. There is more information at this [link](#)

All HWRC have now reopened and a booking system went live for residents of Leeds to book a visit.

The Otley (Ellar Ghyll site) is open with very limited number of slots available to book due to its size, layout and road safety issues, and is for garden waste only initially.

The “booking only” system will stay in place to at least 20th June, during which time a decision will be made whether to extend further. It has been enthusiastically received by the public and has helped ensure the sites have been safely managed and controlled, for both the public and staff. A customer survey is being undertaken which will help inform decision making.

The site rules are:

- No booking, no entry;
- More than one person is now allowed in a vehicle;
- There is strict social distancing on site at all times;
- Staff cannot physically help customers unload their vehicles;
- Only one person should ordinarily get out the vehicle to unload, but a further person will be allowed out to help with heavy items with the permission of a site attendant;
- Vans and trailers will be allowed (strictly with a valid vehicle permit only)
- Two bookings a week max per household.
- Up to 5 bags or equivalent of inert waste allowed per booking – temporarily free of charge to help reduce contact.

The normal summer opening hours of 8am-6pm are in place.

The Kirkstall site is open for trade waste, no booking is required but payment is by card or Account only.

Further information is available from this link: www.leeds.gov.uk/residents/bins-and-recycling/recycling-sites

All food waste collections are suspended until further notice. Dispose of food waste in your black bin or home composter.

Household bulky items collections service has started taking bookings again. As before Covid19, the service has a limited number of slots each day citywide. These get booked up quickly and residents need to keep checking the booking site should they need to. To recognise that there are more people unable to make the journey to the HWRCs than normal at the moment, this service is temporarily free of charge. People should:

- Only use this service where they genuinely cannot attend a HWRC to dispose of their items; or
- They cannot wait any longer to store the items;
- The items are put outside at least 3 days (72 hours) before collection is due.

54. Is fly tipping on the increase in Leeds because of the changes?

No. In fact it has decreased. We record all reports and complaints relating to fly tipping across the city and the figures as at 25/5/20 show:

Month	No of Fly tip reported	No of Fly tip reported	% change
	2019	2020	
March	841	718	15% reduction
April	899	681	24% reduction
May (to 25 th)	693	468	33% reduction
Total	2433	1867	23% reduction

55. Can I have a bonfire in my garden?

Garden bonfires to get rid of waste should be avoided wherever possible. Whatever is being burnt adds to the pollutants in the air and contributes towards carbon emissions. Smoke from bonfires can cause people with respiratory and other health conditions to suffer. Bonfires may also be a nuisance and an inconvenience to those who wish to sit in their gardens or dry washing.

This is particularly relevant at the current time where people are likely to be spending more time at home and in their gardens due to the restrictions and self-isolations in place due to COVID-19. It may also be the case that some households may even be experiencing the symptoms of the virus and could be adversely affected by smoke.

If you do have a fire, it must only be dry, garden waste and must NOT be household waste that will give off illegal, noxious and harmful fumes/smoke. It must also not be creating smoke that blows over the highway/street, this would be illegal and you could face a fine.

You should not be having frequent fires either, even if garden waste. This could be seen as creating a nuisance for your neighbours, in which case you could be fined up to £5,000.

There are plenty of ways to reduce the amount of waste you are producing in the first place and avoid burning what waste you do have. Whether that be leaving your grass cuttings on the lawn, pruning and cutting hedges less for now, composting or creating nature piles of logs/twigs/hedge cuttings.

56. What is the current position regarding markets?

Government guidance on markets has changed in recent weeks. The announcement they made is available [here](#) – it stated that outdoor markets are able to reopen from 1st June 2020, provided they are able to meet the COVID-19 secure guidelines to protect shoppers and workers. Guidance has been provided for Shops and Branches opening, which includes markets, and is available [here](#).

Indoor markets will be able to reopen from 15 June 2020.

57. Is there a virus test facility in Leeds?

The national Covid-19 testing programme is now well established in the city and eligibility criteria has been expanded. Testing is available for everyone in the city who is symptomatic and people of any age can be tested

There are a number of locations where people can have a test:

- A drive through site is available at Temple Green.
- Leeds has a mobile testing unit. To ensure geographical and equitable access across the city, the mobile unit is currently sited at Morley but is likely to change over time.
- You can also obtain a home testing kit

All the above options can be accessed by logging on to the government website <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>

There is also a walk –to site at Bridge Street Church. This is a pilot site and can be booked 0113 3760472.

To note you can now access the drive through testing centres if you don't have an email. You must phone 119 to register first.

58. What are the implications for school admission appeals?

The Department for Education has [published guidance on the coronavirus impact on school admission appeals](#). The coronavirus outbreak will impact on the ability of admission authorities to carry out admission appeals in the usual way. However, parents must continue to have the right to appeal to any school which has refused their child a place. Regulatory changes will be made that will relax some of the current requirements set out in the School Admission Appeals Code 2012 and enable admission authorities to proceed with their admission appeals. The regulations are subject to legislation being made but the DfE expects them to come into force on 24 April 2020. The regulations will be time-limited and will expire on 31 January 2021. DfE will publish guidance to support admission authorities and local authorities in carrying out admission appeals over the coming months to provide further details on these regulations.

59. Is provision available to assist with rent payments for council tenants on reduced income due to the outbreak of Covid-19?

The following page provides contact information and a brief outline of support that may be available to tenants <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/housing/council-housinginformation-for-tenants/rent-and-money/problems-paying-your-rent>

60. Where can I find advice about schools re-opening?

From 1 June 2020 the Government has relaxed guidance on schools re-opening with a particular focus on Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. As a result some schools in Leeds are now teaching pre pupils in these year groups.

More details and the official Government guidance can be found [here](#)

Please note – this Guidance is currently under review following the Prime Minister’s announcement of 28th May and will be updated as soon as possible

61. How does the track and trace system work?

An overview of the NHS track and trace service can be found at the following [link](#)

This provides information on:

- [How test and trace helps fight the virus](#)
- [How NHS test and trace service works](#)
- [People who develop symptoms of coronavirus](#)
- [The NHS coronavirus app](#)
- [People who have had close contact with someone who has coronavirus](#)
- [Support for people who are self-isolating](#)