

Gareth Johnson MP for Dartford

26th June 2020



Coronavirus update - further easing of lockdown



HM Government



| | |
|---|---|
| 5 | As level four and there is a material risk of healthcare services being overwhelmed |
| 4 | A COVID-19 epidemic is in general circulation; transmission is high or rising exponentially |
| 3 | A COVID-19 epidemic is in general circulation |
| 2 | COVID-19 is present in the UK, but the number of cases and transmission is low |
| 1 | COVID-19 is not known to be present in the UK |

Lockdown

Lockdown has continued to be eased, with non-essential retail, zoos, wildlife parks and drive-in cinemas all now open. On 19th June it was announced the COVID alert level in the UK has moved from 4 to 3. The spread of the virus is being contained

but we must keep going to keep the level down.

The Government also introduced 'support bubbles' which allows those living alone and single parents with children under 18 to form a support bubble with another household, meaning they can visit each others' homes and be within 2 metres of each other.

From Monday 6th July, those who have been shielding will be able to meet in a group of up to 6 outside in England. Social distancing guidance must be followed. More here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/plans-to-ease-guidance-for-over-2-million-shielding>



In England from 4 July, where it's not possible to stay 2 metres apart
keep a distance of 1 metre
+ precautions



Precautions such as

-  Wearing a face covering
-  Keeping interactions brief
-  Following the COVID-19 Secure guidelines wherever you are

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From 4th July we will move from 2 metres to '1 metre plus'. This means staying one metre apart, plus mitigations which reduce the risk of transmission. You and your household will be able to meet with one other household at a time, either indoors or

outdoors but you must follow social distancing measures. And of course, a whole host of businesses will now be permitted to open if they are Covid-19 secure, including pubs!

**MANY BUSINESSES AND VENUES IN ENGLAND
CAN REOPEN FROM SATURDAY 4 JULY IF THEY
ARE COVID-19 SECURE:**

- Hotels, B&Bs, holiday homes and campsites
- Restaurants, cafes, pubs and bars
- Cinemas, museums and galleries
- Hair salons and barbers
- Libraries and community centres
- Places of worship
- Outdoor playgrounds and gyms
- Funfairs, theme parks and amusement arcades

STAY ALERT ▶ CONTROL THE VIRUS ▶ SAVE LIVES



During the Prime Minister's statement recently, I was able to ask about the reopening of pubs. We have lost too many pubs in Dartford over recent years, so I hope people will support them, following what has been an incredibly difficult time for the sector. Pubs will be able to reopen from 4th July, albeit in a socially-distanced manner. Click on the photo above to play my question.



Opening of Universities

On 9th June, the Education Secretary made a statement to the House of Commons regarding the wider opening of nurseries, schools and colleges. I asked him about

universities reopening as lots of students have been receiving virtual lectures instead of face-to-face sessions and have missed out on practical teaching as well. Please click on the video above to hear his response.



Reopening of Bluewater

I was delighted to visit Bluewater prior to it reopening on 15th June, to see the measures that have been put in place. I was able to highlight the hard work and planning that has gone into reopening Bluewater when I spoke in the House of Commons during an urgent question on the economy.

To hear my question and the response, please click on the photo above to play the video.



Click on the photo above to hear Robert Goodman, Senior Centre Director, describe the measures that have been put in place at Bluewater.



Bluewater tunnel given the go-ahead

Kent County Council's planning committee recently approved plans for a tunnel linking Bluewater to Ebbsfleet Garden City. The 80-metre tunnel will be used by Fastrack, cyclists and pedestrians and is expected to be open from April 2022.

The tunnel will have a 3.5m wide single way Fastrack bus route linking Eastern Quarry and Bluewater. Emergency vehicles will also have access but cars will not. The plans also include a 2m wide footway on one side of the tunnel and a 3m wide shared cycle and pedestrian path on the other.



Essential gas works in Dartford from 27 July

SGN will be carrying out essential gas pipe maintenance in Victoria Road, Dartford which is due to start on Monday, 27th July for four weeks. This will mean the closure of Victoria Road from the junction of Hythe Street to the junction of Victoria Business Park for the duration of the work. A signed diversion will be in place.

The work is to install a new plastic pipe which has a minimum lifespan of 80 years.



Relocation of Barclays Bank, Dartford

Barclays Bank in Lowfield Street will be relocating to new premises at 1 Copperfields, Dartford, with the last day of business at the current branch being Friday 4th September. The new, 'state of the art' branch at Copperfields, will be open on Monday 14th September and will have a fresh, modern feel with better disability access and improved meeting rooms. There will also be a digital training area and a

small seminar room where events for customers will be hosted. All of the current staff will be moving to the new site and will be available to support customers.



Lower Thames Crossing

Highways England recently provided me with an update on the Lower Thames Crossing and I am pleased to say that the statutory consultations on the LTC have been progressing by virtual methods during the pandemic. This has ensured the timetable for completion of the LTC remains on course for 2027/8.



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