

your

croydon



www.croydon.gov.uk

**COVID-19 UPDATE FROM
CROYDON COUNCIL**

Your main source of community news



#CroydonTogether

**Croydon information and
support during Covid-19**

Delivering for Croydon

CROYDON
www.croydon.gov.uk

Dear resident

I want to update you on our response to the Covid-19 pandemic and how we are delivering vital public services at this most difficult time.

Firstly, I want to thank everyone who has followed government advice to stay at home. You are helping to save lives, and protect our wonderful NHS, so please keep going. A massive thank you to all those working in the NHS, for everything you are doing for us all.

In line with this, we have closed most council buildings to protect you and our staff. But we are very much still here and behind the scenes, we are working day and night to keep services running.

We have swiftly implemented a major shift in how we operate, prioritising our critical frontline services that keep everyone safe and protect our most vulnerable.

This means collecting your bins, keeping your streets clean, and caring for children, families and the elderly – all more important than ever with so many in need.

We are working as a whole council to respond to this challenge, strengthening these all-important service areas by redeploying staff to support the frontline.

Through our Covid-19 hubs, we are delivering vital support for thousands of our most vulnerable residents, delivering food, supplies and support to those on the government's shielded list.

And through our partnership with Croydon Voluntary Action, and organisations boroughwide, we are coordinating the fantastic effort from Croydon's army of volunteers, helping many thousands more in need.

We have also developed a comprehensive package of support for residents experiencing financial difficulties, from the option to defer council tax payments, to welfare advice and support.

And amidst the national shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) for care home staff, we have taken action locally to boost Croydon's supplies.

So in these dark times, there is much light in our community. So many are going above and beyond for others – thank you for all you are doing. Together, we will come through this. Find out about our #CroydonTogether campaign on the back page.

Finally, please stay in touch – the Covid-19 pages of our website, www.croydon.gov.uk/coronavirus, are constantly updated, and you can also subscribe to our weekly e-bulletin at www.croydon.gov.uk/news. If you're not online, there are some useful phone numbers on this page.

Take care.



Councillor Tony Newman
Leader of the council
[@cllrtony](https://twitter.com/cllrtony)

Useful contact numbers

Croydon Council Covid-19 helpline

For Covid-19 related help and support call **020 8604 7787** or email covid19support@croydon.gov.uk

Council buildings are closed, including Access Croydon, corporate reception and council offices in Bernard Weatherill House, the town hall and social care and family support services. Visit www.croydon.gov.uk to access council services or for very urgent enquiries call the contact centre on **020 8726 6000**.

Adult social care

Appointments with adult social care staff are now happening via telephone. If you had an appointment and haven't heard from your social worker, call **020 8726 6000**.

If you are concerned about a vulnerable adult, report it online or call **020 8726 6500**. If the person is in immediate danger call **999**.

Children's social care

If you are concerned about a child at risk call **020 8255 2888** or out of hours **020 8726 6400**. If the child is in immediate danger call **999**.

Domestic abuse support

Croydon FJC, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm and at weekends 10am – 4pm.

Drop in or call **020 8688 0100** for appointments.

Free 24-hour National Domestic Abuse Hotline: **0808 2000 247**.

In an emergency, call **999**.

Council tenants

All tenancy surgeries and all tenancy-related home visits are cancelled until further notice. If you have an urgent query, call us between 9am and 4pm Monday to Friday on **020 8726 6000**, extension: **88121**.

If you are a council tenant needing repairs, only emergencies will be attended during Covid-19 restrictions. Call **020 8726 6101** or email: croydonrepairs@axiseurope.com

Stay in touch via:



www.croydon.gov.uk/coronavirus



e-newsletter: www.croydon.gov.uk/news



I love Croydon



yourcroydon



@yourcroydon

HELP AND SUPPORT

Thousands of food parcels delivered in welfare drive

Thousands of the borough's most vulnerable residents continue to receive food parcels, supplies and targeted help and support as part of a community-wide response to Covid-19.

Through our new dedicated Covid-19 hubs, council staff and volunteers have delivered food parcels and other support to those identified by the NHS as being in greatest need of being shielded from exposure to coronavirus. We've also delivered emergency food parcels for people not on the shielded list but who were assessed as in need and have set up a special text message service to stay in touch.

If you don't meet the government medical criteria but are still struggling to access food, we still may be able to help, from supermarket e-vouchers and welfare advice to applying for help with your rent or bills.

Through our partnership with Croydon Voluntary Action, Croydon BME Forum, Asian Resource Centre Croydon and voluntary groups boroughwide, we've helped many more thousands in need, ensuring they have food and supplies.



For more information, visit the Covid-19 pages on the council website www.croydon.gov.uk/coronavirus, which includes service updates and advice for borough residents.

Residents needing urgent food or welfare advice can call the council's Covid-19 helpline on **020 8604 7787** or email covid19support@croydon.gov.uk

Do you want to volunteer? Find out more at www.croydon.gov.uk/cva or call Croydon Voluntary Action on 0208 253 7076

£4m package of council tax support

We have developed a package of support for people experiencing financial difficulties as a result of Covid-19 - including £4.4m of council tax support.

There are two schemes available to support residents:

- The council tax hardship fund gives residents of working age and in receipt of council tax support, a further reduction of up to £150 from their 2020/21 council tax bill. If you qualify for this fund, you do not need to apply and will receive revised council tax bills.
- If you are experiencing financial challenges in the wake of the

Covid-19 crisis, you can defer your council tax payments for up to two months. This will mean you pay over ten instalments from June 2020 to March 2021.

Residents on a low income or who claim benefits may also be eligible for council tax support. You may now be entitled if you weren't previously, if your income is reduced because of Covid-19, because you have been furloughed, are on a zero-hours contract or are self-employed. For enquiries about council tax support call **020 8726 7000** or visit www.croydon.gov.uk/coronavirus.

If you are experiencing hardship or financial difficulties

We offer a range of help and support for residents experiencing financial difficulties or struggling to pay rent or bills, from welfare and benefits advice, to employment and training support, and much more.

We also run four Food Stops with community partners in Fieldway, Selsdon, Thornton Heath and Purley -

if you're eligible, you can get £20 worth of fresh food and other groceries for £3.50 per week. For more information on Food Stops, email gcc@croydon.gov.uk.

Residents needing urgent food or welfare advice can call the council's Covid-19 helpline on **020 8604 7787** or email covid19support@croydon.gov.uk

ENVIRONMENT



Bin collections

Waste and recycling collections are still taking place with a reduced workforce and we are working hard with our partners to limit the impact on residents.

Help us to keep delivering this essential service by following these tips...

Please do

- **Try to reduce the amount of waste you create (including garden waste)** - and only put bins out if they are full.
- **Leave any missed bins at your normal point of collection** – your crew will return to collect as soon as they can. You can still report missed collections via My Account on our website.

Please don't

- **Have a big clear-out** - Household reuse and recycling centres, neighbourhood recycling centres and local charity shops are closed and the bulky waste service has been suspended.
- **Fly-tip** – Don't leave your recycling, waste or bulky household items on the street. This is fly-tipping and can incur a fine and/or prosecution.

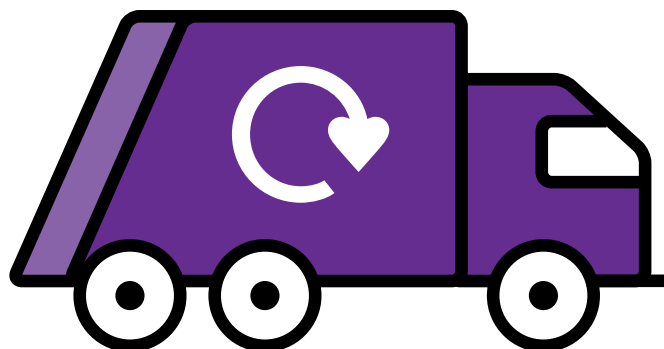
Keep an eye on our website and social media channels for the latest updates on our waste and recycling service.

www.croydon.gov.uk/coronavirus

Self-isolating households

Self-isolating households should follow government advice:

- Store personal waste (i.e. used tissues etc) in disposable rubbish bags.
- Place into a second bag, tie securely and keep separate from other waste.
- Put aside for at least 72 hours before putting it in your general waste bin.



Be a good neighbour – don't have bonfires

Our household reuse and recycling centres are closed but please don't burn waste or have bonfires. Coronavirus can affect the airways and cause some people to experience breathing difficulties, and the smoke from bonfires can make it worse. Bulky items, garden and other waste should be safely stored on your property until restrictions are lifted and the centres are able to open again.

More time for planning

Residents will have extra time to comment on new planning applications after the council extended the formal feedback period as a result of Covid-19.

The public usually has three weeks to comment after applications are submitted, but Croydon Council is retrospectively extending this to four weeks on all schemes validated since 16 March. All applications can be viewed via www.croydon.gov.uk

Parking

We've relaxed our parking restrictions to make it a little easier for you during this time, so you don't need to display a resident or visitor permit, or pay-and-display ticket when using parking bays in Croydon.

We do need to keep our streets safe and clear for emergency access though, so we will still be enforcing restrictions such as double yellow lines and disabled bays - you can find the full list on the parking pages at www.croydon.gov.uk

Please do park sensibly and considerately and do not block access for other road-users.

BUSINESSES AND JOBS

Claim your business support grant

Are you a small business-owner eligible for government support during coronavirus? If you haven't done so already, please contact us to verify your details, so we can make your grant payment.

We've contacted over 4,000 small businesses locally to ask them to take up the funding, and distributed around £17m to 1,200 businesses, but we're still waiting to hear from many more.

Two grants are available as part of the government support package and the council is making the payments on their behalf.

All small businesses in receipt of small business rate relief or rural rate relief as of 11 March, that have a rateable value

under £15k, can receive grant funding of £10,000.

Meanwhile retail, hospitality and leisure businesses with rateable value between:

- £0 and £15,000 will receive a grant of £10,000
- £15,000 and £51,000 will receive a grant of £25,000

Qualifying businesses need to verify their details with the council to enable grant payments to be made.

If you think you might be eligible for a grant but haven't heard from us, you can find the online form and information about all the support available on the Coronavirus – business support page on our website.

Alternatively contact us on **020 8726 7000, option 4** or email **croyndr@croydon.gov.uk**

Help's on hand for job-seekers

If you're looking for work, Croydon Works, the council's free job, training and recruitment service has a range of new roles created as a result of coronavirus.

Supermarket retail jobs, health and social care assistants, security officers and warehouse workers are among the roles the service is recruiting for.

Last month, Croydon Works helped John Hersey (pictured) and his son Callum to secure jobs in the warehouse at Waitrose Dotcom Fulfilment Centre in Coulsdon.

Call Croydon Works on **020 8255 2724** or **020 8255 2725**.



CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Schools supporting communities

As schools across the borough have stayed open for vulnerable children and those of key workers, many have gone above and beyond for their communities, also offering vital support to families in need.

Elmwood Infant School have provided struggling families – not just those eligible for the National Free School Meal Voucher scheme – with food parcels, organised through the school foodbank with support from Legacy Youth Zone.

Head teacher Zoe Harris, said: "We have been able to pick up a far wider group of families in need – whose finances are impacted because parents are now on reduced wages, or who may have no recourse to public funds."

Croydon schools have also supported all pupils learning at home, finding new ways to stay in touch.

Zoe said: "We have telephoned every family, every week, to check they have everything they need. We speak to the children, which is good for our staff's wellbeing too."

Pupils who receive benefit-related free school meals should be provided with food parcels, meals or supermarket vouchers by their school as part of the new National Free School Meal Voucher Scheme.

If your child is not registered for free school meals but you



Cypress Primary staff are among those delivering food parcels to families

believe they might be eligible, register at **www.croydon.gov.uk/education/schools-new/free-school-meals** or call **020 8407 1338**.

If this does not apply you may still be able to access support for your family – contact your school or visit **www.croydon.gov.uk/coronavirus**

For general education enquiries email **educationenquiries@croydon.gov.uk**

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Stay at home to stop coronavirus spreading

It's really important that we all follow the government advice to stay at home to help stop the spread of coronavirus.

This means everyone should only leave their home for very limited purposes:

- shopping for basic necessities, for example food and medicine, which must be as infrequent as possible
- one form of exercise a day, for example a run, walk, or cycle – alone or with members of your household
- any medical need, including to donate blood, to avoid or escape risk of injury or harm, or to provide care or to help a vulnerable person
- travelling for work purposes, but only where you cannot work from home

If you or a member of your household has symptoms of coronavirus (a high temperature and/or a new, continuous cough), you should follow the self-isolating advice at www.nhs.uk. If you have symptoms of coronavirus and need medical help, call the NHS 111 service.

There are some things you can do to help reduce the risk of you or people you live with getting ill with coronavirus, such as washing your hands regularly. Find out more at www.nhs.uk.



Getting medical help

If you or your family need help or advice not related to coronavirus:

- Health information and advice is available on the NHS website
- GP practices remain open – contact them online through their website or by telephone rather than visiting the surgery.

Many GP practices are able to offer telephone and video appointments so you can get the support you need.

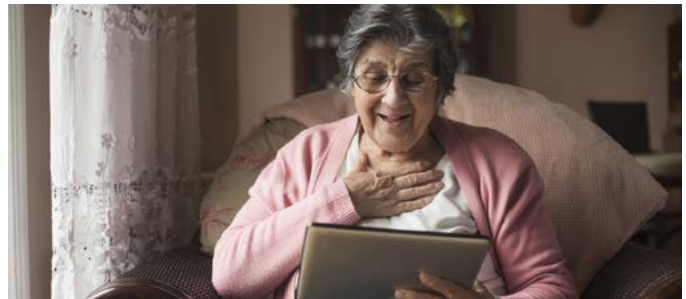
Ways to wellbeing during lockdown

How we live and work has changed dramatically during the past few weeks – here's five ways to look after your physical and mental health.

Connect – Enjoy virtual coffee breaks with family and friends, or talk to a neighbour from a safe distance.

If you're feeling isolated Age UK Croydon and CVA's new Telephone Befriending Service, pairs people with a volunteer for a regular chat and company - call **020 8686 0066**. You can also support others - contact CVA on **020 8253 7060** or www.croydon.gov.uk/cva

Keep learning - Join more than 52,000 members enjoying more than 40,000 eBooks and audio books, thousands of up-to-date newspapers and more than 700 magazines online from Croydon's libraries. Music videos and hundreds of films can be streamed, and library cards also offer access to online courses including languages, and children's stories, quizzes and games. Library card holders can access it all through the MyLibraryApp, available on the App Store and Google Play. Apply for a library card at www.croydon.gov.uk/leisure/libraries or contact croydoncentrallibrary@croydon.gov.uk



Be active - You can exercise outside once a day (just remember to keep a safe distance from others). Just 10 minutes of activity can make you feel better!

Take notice - pay attention to how you are feeling and check on those around you. If anyone is struggling with their mental health, seek help. Contact Mind on **020 8668 2210** or visit www.mindincroydon.org.uk.

Croydon's Talking Therapies service can connect you with an independent person, who can listen and help with issues and concerns. Search online for Croydon Talking Therapies, call **020 3228 4040** or ask your GP to refer you.

Give – be a good neighbour. Pop a letter next door to let them know you are there for them.

For more information on wellbeing visit:

www.croydon.gov.uk/wellbeing

www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters

STAYING SAFE

Using our parks responsibly

We know how important our parks and green spaces are for many of you during your once-daily exercise, but please use them responsibly during coronavirus.

Our neighbourhood safety officers are carrying out joint patrols in the parks with the police to keep everyone safe and make sure social distancing rules are being observed.

Here's how you can help:

To protect yourself and others:

Please do

- stay at least 2 metres away from anyone outside of your household
- keep your dog(s) on a lead at all times
- wash your hands before leaving home and as soon as you return
- use your garden, if you have one – people without gardens rely on parks more

Please don't

- visit parks and green spaces if you have any coronavirus symptoms
- travel unnecessarily – stay local and use open spaces near to your home
- meet people you do not live with – gatherings of more than two in parks or public spaces has been banned
- use the playgrounds, sports courts or outdoor gyms
- hang around – no picnics, no sunbathing, no BBQs



Covid-19 scams warning

The council's trading standards team is urging residents to beware online or door-to-door sellers of goods and services from people you don't know, or that don't feel right.

Scams include:

- Coronavirus testing kits or cleaning
- Taking cash to do shopping and not returning
- Emails or texts requesting personal or financial information.

Check visitors' ID – if you feel uncomfortable, don't let them in and contact someone you trust.

If you know someone vulnerable and at risk of scams, call Croydon Voluntary Action on **020 8253 7076** or Age UK Croydon on **020 8686 0066**.

Can you help with our PPE appeal?

As part of our efforts to overcome the national shortage in personal protective equipment (PPE) the council is asking local businesses if they can help boost supplies for frontline workers.

We have worked hard to secure PPE for our health and social care workers who are providing vital care and support to vulnerable residents, but still need to increase our supply for the weeks and months ahead. The following sealed equipment is being sought: water resistant face masks, disposable plastic or latex gloves, plastic aprons, eye protection, overshoes and sanitising gel. Any businesses able to donate or sell PPE to the council should email PPErequests@croydon.gov.uk

Domestic abuse support

Croydon's FJC is there to provide help and support for people living in fear of domestic violence during lockdown.

The service has extended its opening hours, and is now available weekdays from 9am – 5pm and weekends from 10am – 4pm.

Anyone needing help can drop in or make an appointment, either at the centre or by telephone.

The FJC team is there to listen and provide a safety plan to ensure vulnerable people are able to leave their homes if they are at risk.

If you need help, support or advice please call **020 8688 0100**. Further information is available at www.croydon.gov.uk/community/dabuse/fjc

Those needing support outside of these opening hours can call the free 24-hour National Domestic Abuse Hotline on **0800 2000 247**. In an emergency, call the police on **999**.

FJC

Care and support in Croydon for those experiencing domestic abuse

You can make an appointment by contacting us on: 020 8688 0100

Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm and weekends, 10am-4pm.

THANK YOU!

campaign met with huge response



We've set up the **#CroydonTogether** campaign to recognise and thank all those supporting their community during the Covid-19 pandemic. Residents across the borough have taken to social media to share their inspiring stories and pictures of how they are helping – or to thank others for their work – using the campaign hashtag **#CroydonTogether**. From notes of thanks left for bin crews on their rounds; to shout-outs for staff in the NHS; rainbows in windows and flowers in gardens, **@yourcroydon** has been inundated with expressions of gratitude for those on the frontline. Here are some of those we have celebrated... if you know of anyone who you would like to thank, let us know via Twitter, Facebook or Instagram using the hashtag **#CroydonTogether** or you can email us at press@croydon.gov.uk

Waste crews

Big thumbs up for George, Keith and Steve – one of many waste and recycling crews working to keep our streets safe and clean – and doing it all with a smile. Thank you!



THANKS!



London Mozart Players

Cultural organisations across Croydon have been helping to brighten up people's days indoors by making concerts available online. London Mozart Players were among the first to respond with more than 22,000 tuning in for some of their LMP At Home sessions. Enjoy at www.londonmozartplayers.com/athome

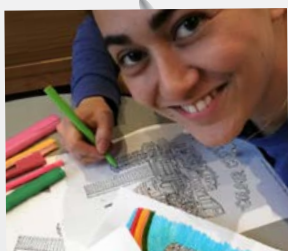


THANKS!



Scene in Croydon

Samantha Warren was among local artists from Scene in Croydon helped to brighten up everyone's days indoors by sketching some of Croydon's most popular landmarks and launching the **#ColourCroydon** competition.



THANKS!



Surrey Street

Businesses in Croydon came in for a **#CroydonTogether** thanks – including Mr Fox who teamed up with Surrey Street market traders to provide meals for NHS workers at Croydon University Hospital.



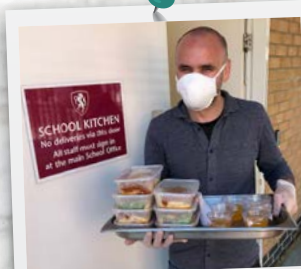
THANKS!



THANKS BERNICE!

Gateway

Bernice in the council's Gateway team has been doing emergency food shopping for vulnerable residents. She said: "The response has been overwhelming gratitude. One elderly resident said knowing that she 'mattered to someone' was equally important as the food I had delivered."



THANKS!



Pegasus Academy Trust

Six schools from Pegasus Academy Trust and caterers Harrison have provided around 90 takeaway hot meals daily, for children eligible for free school meals and their families, from a hub at Whitehorse Manor School. Whitgift School transport any excess meals to Wellington Road hostel.