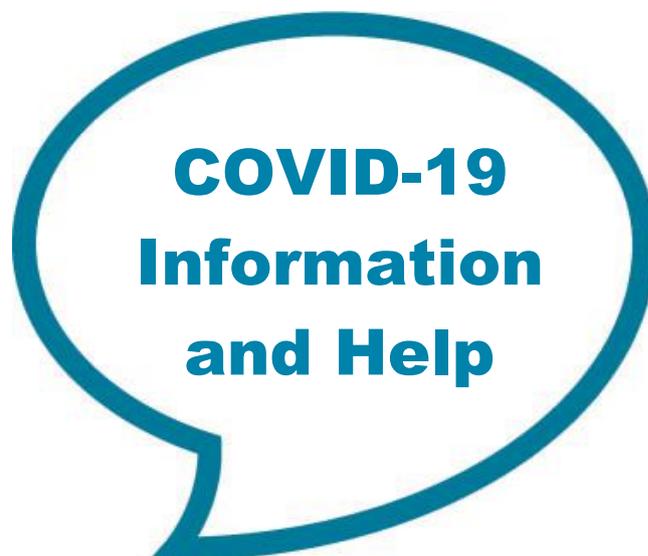


Issue 1
24 March 2020



Newsletter for the Allerdale Area

This is the first edition of a weekly newsletter aiming to give information, advice, guidance and details of useful contacts during these challenging times. Daily updated information is available on the Cumbria County Council website:
<https://cumbria.gov.uk/coronavirus/>

Local Government information

School and nursery closure

Information regarding closure of schools and nurseries to all except essential workforce

Parents/carers with children of school age

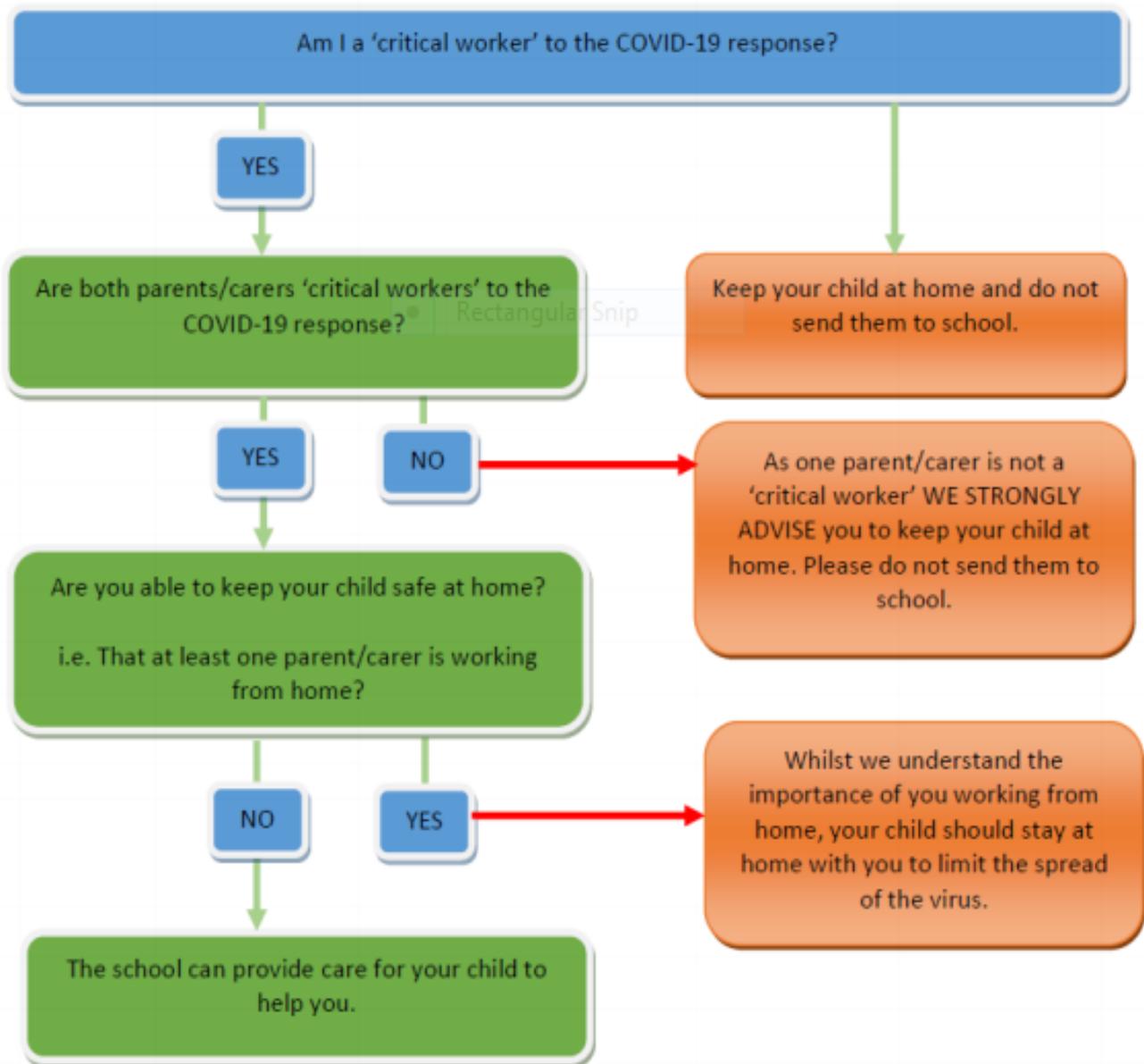
Parents will have been contacted by their child's school to inform them if the school will be open for children of parents who are essential workers. If the school is unable to open, parents who are essential workers will be asked to take their child to another local school. There will be no school transport provision. Uniforms should be worn as usual.

Parents who are not essential workforce should make alternative childcare arrangements.

Parents/carers of children in nurseries and early year’s settings

We asked nurseries and early years settings to close from Monday 23 March to all except children of parents who are essential workers and who cannot make alternative childcare arrangements. This is in line with Government guidance. Parents have been contacted by their child's setting to inform them if they will be open for children of essential workforce, and if not where the nearest alternative is.

This is only available where there are no other childcare options for essential workers. Parents who are not essential workforce should make alternative childcare arrangements.



An explanation of 'essential workforce' can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

Stay at home if you have coronavirus symptoms

Stay at home if you have either:

- a high temperature - you feel hot to touch on your chest or back
- a new, continuous cough - this means you've started coughing repeatedly

Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital. You do not need to contact 111 to tell them you're staying at home. Testing for coronavirus is not needed if you're staying at home.

How long to stay at home

- if you have symptoms, stay at home for 7 days
- if you live with other people, they should stay at home for 14 days from the day the first person got symptoms

If you live with someone who is 70 or over, has a long-term condition, is pregnant or has a weakened immune system, try to find somewhere else for them to stay for 14 days.

If you have to stay at home together, try to keep away from each other as much as possible.

How you can help

We are urging children and adults to take further steps to protect themselves and their communities from coronavirus, including:

- Everyone to stay at home unless they need to get essential supplies such as food and medicines
- All those able to work from home to do so, unless their work is essential
- Only traveling if absolutely necessary - while public transport won't stop, this should only be used for essential travel - for example by key workers to travel to and from work
- Essential travel does not include visits to second homes, camp sites, caravan parks or similar

Not taking these steps puts additional pressure on communities and services that are already at risk.

Read more at **Government announces further measures on social distancing here:**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-announces-further-measures-on-social-distancing>

Further Information and Guidance

- **Advice on how people can protect themselves can be found online at**
www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/
- **Coronavirus (COVID-19): UK government response** - including stay at home guidance, travel advice and other guidance.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

- **Guidance - Coronavirus (COVID-19): latest information and advice** - The Department of Health and Social Care will be publishing updated data every day at 2pm until further notice.
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>
- **Gov.uk Coronavirus (COVID-19)** - Guidance collection for health professionals and other organisations.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance>

Allerdale Borough Council

Allerdale Borough Council are constantly reviewing their services and may announce alterations as the situation changes. These will be posted on the web allerdale.gov.uk website, and via their Twitter and Facebook accounts.

Some of the key measures are:

- Suspension of garden waste collections from March 23rd 2020 to free up resources to allow the other services to continue as normal
<https://www.allerdale.gov.uk/en/news-and-blog/coronavirus-update-allerdale-suspends-garden-waste-collections/>
- Leisure partners, GLL announced they would be closing our leisure centres in accordance with government advice from Friday 20 March 2020
<https://www.better.org.uk/leisure-centre/allerdale>
- The introduction of cashless payments in car parks to avoid the risk of infection from cash
- The postponement of our official meetings
<https://www.allerdale.gov.uk/en/news-and-blog/coronavirus-update-on-council-meetings-and-events/>
- The deferment of payments via the festivals and events fund
<https://www.allerdale.gov.uk/en/news-and-blog/coronavirus-update-on-council-meetings-and-events/>
- The introduction of home working by staff with the use of teleconference facilities for meetings to avoid social contact

Customers are being encouraged to use the digital services rather than visiting the customer contact centres. You can do this in a number of ways including online forms, webchat and our 'myAllerdale' app. You can pay over the phone at 0303 123 1702 or use the same number to speak to a customer service advisor. More details on all of this is available on the Allerdale Borough Council contact us page: <https://www.allerdale.gov.uk/en/contact-us/>

Council Tax, benefits and financial support:

The Chancellor announced in the Budget on March 11 and later on March 17, a range of measures related to Covid-19.

This package of measures is intended to provide support for public services, individuals and businesses to ensure the impact of Covid-19 is minimised.

It includes additional funding of £500 million (nationwide) for Council Tax relief through existing Local Council Tax Support schemes.

We do not have the details of how this money will be allocated, however, more information on council tax support can be found at <https://www.allerdale.gov.uk/en/council-tax/council-tax-discounts/>

Housing Benefit and Council Tax reduction:

If you find yourself in financial difficulties due to the coronavirus outbreak, we may be able to help.

- You may be entitled to Housing Benefit. Find out more about applying for Housing Benefit:
<https://www.allerdale.gov.uk/en/benefits/housing-benefit/>
- You may be able to reduce the amount you pay on your council tax. Find out more about applying for Council Tax Reduction.
<https://www.allerdale.gov.uk/en/council-tax/council-tax-discounts/council-tax-reduction-low-income/>
- It could be that you would be entitled to the new benefit, Universal Credit. However, we do not administer this benefit. It is done online and through the JobCentre Plus. Find out more about Universal Credit.
<https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit>

You can also give our customer service team a call on 0303 123 1702 if you need any further advice.

How to safely handle waste potentially contaminated by coronavirus:

Waste from possible cases and cleaning of areas where possible cases have been (including disposable cloths and tissues):

1. Should be put in a plastic rubbish bag and tied when full.
2. The plastic bag should then be placed in a second bin bag and tied.
3. It should be put in a suitable and secure place and marked for storage until the individual's test results are known or at least 72 hours has passed.

Waste should be stored safely and kept away from children. You should not put your waste in communal waste areas until negative test results are known or the waste has been stored for at least 72 hours.

- if the individual tests negative, this can be put in with the normal waste
- if the individual tests positive, then store it for at least 72 hours and put in with the normal waste

If storage for at least 72 hours is not appropriate, arrange for collection as a Category B infectious waste by a specialist clinical waste contractor. We do not offer a clinical waste collection service. They will supply you with orange clinical waste bags for you to place your bags into so the waste can be sent for appropriate treatment.

Go to the government website for more advice on how to deal with potentially infected waste and laundry

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

Trading Standards – Scams

Scams related to COVID-19

Unfortunately, scammers are taking advantage of the spread of Coronavirus to exploit and play on the fears of consumers across the country.

There have been an increasing number of reports of potential scams which could affect you. We want to make sure that whilst you may be self-isolating and spending more time at home, you do not become a victim.

To report a scam please contact **Action Fraud** on 0300 123 2040.

For all consumer advice please contact the **Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline** on 0808 223 1133

Cumbria Library Service

Cumbria Library Service offers a wide range of online resources. Including an online reference library and Cumbria Image Bank.

- **Cumbria Image Bank** - is a collection of digital images created using original material from Cumbria County Council Libraries and Archives. You can view 25,000 images dating back to the mid eighteenth century covering the whole of Cumbria.
- **Borrowbox** - Cumbria Library Service members can borrow up to 6 eBooks and 6 eAudiobooks at any one time, from a range of fiction, non-fiction, children's and young adult titles for up to 3 weeks - all for free, by using the secure Borrowbox service.
<http://library.bolindigital.com/cumbria>
- **Pressreader** - offers unlimited access to local and international publications - 2,000 newspapers and magazines. 100 Countries. 60 Languages. Download your favourite newspapers and magazines to your personal tablet or smartphone. Unlimited access to local and international publications - 2,000 newspapers and magazines. 100 Countries. 60 Languages. Download your favourite newspapers and magazines to your personal tablet or smartphone.

Information can be found at www.Cumbria.gov.uk/libraries Borrowbox and Pressreader will require members to have their library card and pin number. **If members do not have their PIN number to access these resources, they can email workington.library@cumbria.gov.uk with their Library membership number.**

Local Support Groups

Social media groups

A number of social media groups are offering help and support at a local level; you may wish to search for and follow on Facebook:

Cockermouth Covid-19 Mutual Aid Group
Cockermouth Emergency Response Group
Covid-19 Support Group (Allerdale Area)
Flimby Covid-19 Mutual Aid Group
Keswick Community Emergency Recovery Partnership
Plumbland and surrounding areas coronavirus support
Seaton Community Help – Covid-19
West Cumbria Covid-19 Mutual Aid Group
Wigton Covid-19 Mutual Aid
Workington Community Emergency Response Group

Cockermouth Emergency Response Group

CERG were established in 2016 and will assist residents and businesses in the Cockermouth area to plan, prepare and recover from an emergency, by working in partnership with local voluntary organisations and statutory authorities. For more information please visit www.cerg.org.uk, email admin@cerg.org.uk or telephone 07852 599794.

Keswick Community Emergency Recovery Partnership

KCERP is an established response group who work closely with the statutory and voluntary services in the event of an emergency to support individuals or households who do not have other help and support. For more information please visit

<http://keswicktowncouncil.gov.uk/community/community-emergency-plan/>, email keswickvolunteers@gmail.com or telephone 017687 80826.

Workington Community Emergency Response Group

WCERG is an established response group set up to support the vulnerable within the Workington community during the event of an emergency. For more information please contact WCERG@outlook.com or telephone 01900 64040.

Information for local support groups

ACTION with Communities in Cumbria

Please visit our website for updated 'Coronavirus (COVID-19), Communities and Community Buildings' guidance.

Visit: www.cumbriaaction.org.uk/News-Events/News

In response to the current COVID-19 pandemic, we've made some changes to how we're operating with all staff now working remotely from home. We have IT systems in place so you can continue to contact us as usual by phone and email.

Visit: www.cumbriaaction.org.uk/Contact-Us for details.

Cumbria Community Foundation

Cumbria Community Foundation is promoting a new Cumbria Covid-19 Response fund and can be contacted at <https://www.cumbriafoundation.org/2020/03/17/community-foundation-launches-cumbria-covid-19-response-fund/> For further information please contact Cumbria Community Foundation on **01900 825760**.

Cumbria CVS can help people fill in application forms and can be contacted on **01758 800350**.

Third Sector Organisations and Volunteer Groups

Cumbria CVS has created a resource page to help support the third sector organisations in Cumbria access information around the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Currently limited information around the needs of local third sector organisations from national government around the needs of small, local third sector organisations (it has been focused on businesses and individuals). This webpage aims to direct you to the information that is available, and to fill some of the gaps, bringing together information from the TSNE, Cumbria County Council, Public Health along with national government and charities advice.

You can access the resource here at www.cumbriacvs.org.uk/coronavirus

Cumbria CVS Health and Care Project Funding Officers will be supporting groups to apply for funding for support needs around Coronavirus. www.cumbriacvs.org.uk

Transport

Changes to Bus Services across Cumbria

We have been advised by Stagecoach of some changes to their bus services across Cumbria during the current health emergency. This is due to fewer drivers being available, and also significant falls in bus usage. A summary of the Monday to Friday changes in each District can

be found from links at the top of the County Council's website page for bus services:
www.cumbria.gov.uk/buses

This information will be updated and refreshed as extra information becomes available, including for Saturdays, Sundays and for other operators services. As the new timetables become available, they will be added to the website, but with the likely high volume of change, this may take some time.

Services are maintained to all areas. On routes with low frequencies existing timetables have been maintained, whilst more frequent services may run less often. All the normal Summer timetable enhancements have been postponed until the end of the isolation period

The revised timetables will come into effect from today **Monday 23rd March**

Funding and financial support

Affinity Credit Union

A credit union is a financial co-operative owned and run by its members offering an accessible saving facility and affordable interest loans. For more information please contact: **01900 65723**, Email: info@wedcu.co.uk or visit the website <https://www.affinitycu.co.uk/About-us>

Citizens Advice Allerdale

Citizens Advice Allerdale are still offering a service to clients but will be using telephone and email appointments. Face to face appointments will not be delivered until further notice.

If you require support please telephone **01900 604735**

Support for businesses

Government help

The Chancellor announced in the Budget on March 11 and later on March 17, a range of measures related to Covid-19. This package is intended to provide support for public services, individuals and businesses to ensure the impact of the disease is minimised.

- Small business grant funding of up to £10,000 for all business in receipt of small business rate relief or rural rate relief will be available and grant funding of up to £25,000 will be available for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses with property with a rateable value between £15,000 and £51,000.
- A new temporary Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, delivered by the British Business Bank, will launch this week to support primarily SMEs to access bank lending and overdrafts. The government will provide lenders with a guarantee of 80 per cent on each loan (subject to a per-lender cap on claims) to give lenders further confidence in continuing to provide finance to SMEs. The government will not charge businesses or banks for this guarantee and the scheme will support loans of up to £5

million in value. Businesses can access the first six months of that finance interest free, as government will cover the first six months of interest payments. Further details, including on the lenders providing access to this scheme will be announced in the coming days.

- The government is introducing a business rates holiday for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses in England for the 2020 to 2021 tax year.

More information on the schemes above can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-employees-employers-and-businesses>

DWP - Coronavirus support for employees, benefit claimants and businesses

A range of extra support and measures will be in place to help workers, benefit claimants and businesses affected by coronavirus.

Following announcements in the Budget, the Department for Work and Pensions is making temporary arrangements to support those impacted by coronavirus.

Changes to jobcentre appointments

People receiving benefits do not have to attend jobcentre appointments for at least 3 months, from Thursday 19 March 2020. People will continue to receive their benefits as normal, but all requirements to attend the jobcentre in person are suspended.

People can still make applications for benefits online if they are eligible.

Jobcentres remain open, and will continue to support people who are not able to use phones and online, including homeless people.

For people already claiming support

Special arrangements will be in place for people in receipt of benefits who cannot attend reassessments or jobcentre appointments because they are required to stay at home or are infected by coronavirus.

The arrangements are:

- disabled and sick claimants who cannot attend a reassessment for Personal Independence Payment (PIP), Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit will continue to receive their payments while their assessment is rearranged
- people who need to claim ESA or Universal Credit because of coronavirus
- will not be required to produce a fit note.

- when claimants tell us in good time that they are staying at home or that they have been diagnosed with coronavirus, they will not be sanctioned – we will review their conditionality requirements in their claimant commitment, to ensure they are reasonable
- claimants who are staying at home as a result of coronavirus will have their mandatory work search and work availability requirements removed to
- account for a period of sickness

For people who need to make a new claim for financial support

We understand people who are required to stay at home or are infected by coronavirus may need financial support, and quickly.

It has been announced that:

- those affected by coronavirus will be able to apply for Universal Credit and can receive up to a month's advance up front without physically attending a jobcentre
- the 7 waiting days for ESA for new claimants will not apply if they are suffering from coronavirus or are required to stay at home – so it will be payable from day one

Employees and self-employed people

To make sure people in work can take the necessary time off to stay at home if they are suffering from coronavirus or to prevent its spread, changes have been made to Statutory Sick Pay and how Universal Credit supports self-employed claimants.

This includes:

- people who cannot work due to coronavirus and are eligible for Statutory Sick Pay will get it from day one, rather than from the fourth day of their illness – we intend to legislate so this measure applies retrospectively from 13 March 2020
- Statutory Sick Pay will be payable to people who are staying at home on government advice, not just those who are infected, from 13 March 2020 after regulations were laid on 12 March 2020 – employers are urged to use their discretion about what evidence, if any, they ask for
- if employees need to provide evidence to their employer that they need to stay at home due to coronavirus, they will be able to get it from the NHS 111 Online instead of having to get a fit note from their doctor – this is currently under development and will be made available soon
- self-employed claimants on Universal Credit who are required to stay at home or are ill as a result of coronavirus will not have a Minimum Income Floor (an assumed level of income) applied for a period of time while affected

Businesses

The government wants to ensure businesses are supported to deal with the temporary economic impacts of an outbreak of coronavirus.

Employers with fewer than 250 employees will be able to reclaim Statutory Sick Pay for employees unable to work because of coronavirus. This refund will be for up to 2 weeks per employee.

Find out about other government support for businesses

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-employees-employers-and-businesses>

More information

Read more information about **coronavirus and claiming benefits**.

<https://www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/coronavirus/>

Follow DWP on:

- Twitter – www.twitter.com/dwppressoffice
- Facebook – www.facebook.com/dwp
- LinkedIn – www.linkedin.com/company/dwp

YouTube – www.youtube.com/dwp

Electricity North West

Self-isolating households may be unable to top up pre-pay electricity or gas meters, so the Department of Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy have made a press announcement outlining the commitment of suppliers to ensure people are not left off-supply.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-agrees-measures-with-energy-industry-to-support-vulnerable-people-through-covid-19>

Food and shopping advice

North Lakes Foodbank

North Lakes Foodbank centres are open as normal in Allerdale. Details can be found at:

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

This week's appeal is for:

- 1ltr UHT Fruit Juice
- Tinned Custard
- Tinned Fruit

- **Sponge Pudding**
- **Tinned Tuna**

Collection points can be found participating supermarkets including: Asda, Booths, Co-op, Morrison's, Sainsbury's, SPAR and Tesco. (Please note - you can deposit food from any supermarket at these collection points, the food does not have to be purchased from that particular store)

Supermarket times for vulnerable people

- **Sainsbury's**
 - Thursday- the first hour of opening
- **Tesco**
 - Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9am-10am (Except Express Stores)
- **Asda**
 - Friday- from store opening until 9am
- **M&S**
 - Monday and Thursday- the first hour of opening
- **Iceland**
 - Monday-Saturday
 - 9am-10am elderly and vulnerable only
 - 10am-5pm general public
 - 5pm-6pm NHS staff only
 - Sunday 10am-4pm general public
- **Morrisons**
 - Monday-Saturday 9am-10am



HM Government



CORONAVIRUS

WASH YOUR HANDS MORE OFTEN FOR 20 SECONDS

**Use soap and water or a
hand sanitiser when you:**

Get home or into work

Blow your nose, sneeze or cough

Eat or handle food



For more information and the Government's
Action Plan go to **[nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus)**