

# MALVERN HILLS

DISTRICT COUNCIL

EMAIL NEWS



The end is close, let's not wreck it now



## Latest update

The situation looks a lot brighter than since our last update and we have hope that this lockdown and restrictions on our way of life may soon be at an end.

Cases continue to fall across our district and our infection rate is now down to 106 per 100,000 for the first time since Boxing Day 2020. You can view the figures on the [Worcestershire Coronavirus dashboard](#).

While that is good news, we all still need to keep going and get our infection rate down even further. Every day we stay at home and stay apart from others is making a difference and will help ensure we can get back to normal in the near future.



The Prime Minister has set out his lockdown easing roadmap. But this will only take place as planned if we all continue to pull together and drive down the number of cases to the lowest possible level.

**You can play your part by:**

- Continuing to stay at home - even if you have had your vaccine
- Following the rules at each stage of lockdown easing. Don't be tempted to put the roadmap at risk by doing more than allowed
- Washing your hands regularly for 20 seconds
- Wearing your face covering indoors
- Keeping a safe distance from others when you do go outside

Let's not throw away our hard work and everything we have sacrificed when we are so close to the end.

Better days are ahead, we just need to hold on for a little while longer.

**Cllr Sarah Rouse, Leader of Malvern Hills District Council**

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## Lockdown easing - step one

The first step of the Prime Minister's lockdown easing roadmap begins on 8 March when schools will be allowed to reopen.

The Government has published a blog explaining what you can expect.

[Read students returning to school and college, what you need to know.](#)

Please make sure when dropping children off that you keep 2 metres from others – if you can't imagine a bath or sofa between you and the other person you are probably too close.

Please follow any other guidance you are given by your school and avoid gathering in groups on the street to talk to others, as tempting as it may be after so long apart from each other. Although the risk of passing the virus on is lower outside, the risk is not zero. Let's not give this virus any chance to spread.

Dr Kathryn Cobain, Director of Public Health for Worcestershire, has published a video message to parents on [how to keep safe on the school run.](#)

You will also be able to enjoy recreation or exercise outside with your household/support bubble or on your own with one other person.

The next phase of step 1 takes place on 29 March when either two households will be allowed to meet up outdoors or groups up to a maximum of six people (the Rule

of 6). People from other households must still socially distance. Outdoors includes private gardens. Indoor mixing is still not allowed.

Read the full details of the [lockdown easing roadmap](#) including changes proposed in later months. All this depends on certain tests and criteria being met including keeping the infection rate low.

You can also watch this [lockdown easing explainer video](#).

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## Covid-19 vaccine rollout



The Covid-19 vaccine rollout continues at pace.

So far 34,333 people across Malvern Hills District have received at least their first dose of the vaccine.

A new mass vaccination site has opened at the Three Counties Showground to support the work being done by various GP surgeries across the area.

The NHS is currently working through the [official prioritisation list](#).

People aged 40 and over should start to be called from mid-April as part of [phase 2 of the vaccine rollout](#). All adults are expected to be offered their first dose of the vaccine by July.

You can play your part in helping us get back to normal by having your vaccine when you are called for it.

More information about the vaccine and vaccination sites is available on the [Herefordshire and Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group](#) website.

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## Get a test without symptoms



Every week we will send an email to those signed up to our health and wellbeing e-newsletter on a different theme including stress, sleep, eat, move, connect and balance.

A link to our first e-newsletter can be found below and you can receive the others by [signing up to our e-newsletter](#) directly.

[Wellbeing Wednesdays – How to cope with stress](#)

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## Apply for a winter fuel grant

Through our partner Act on Energy, you may be able to get help with paying your fuel bills.

[Find out who qualifies for help, and how to claim, on the Act on Energy website.](#)

If this does not apply to you then the Government has produced [a guide for people struggling to pay essential bills](#) because of the pandemic.

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## Elections and Covid-19



On 6 May, elections will take place for the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner and Worcestershire County Council.

Efforts are being made to make sure people can vote in person on the day in a safe way. This includes putting in Covid-19 Secure measures at polling stations, such as one-way systems and sanitising common touchpoints regularly.

If you wish to vote in person on polling day then you will be asked to take simple safety measures such as bringing your own pen or pencil. You will also need to wear a face covering inside the polling station and maintain social distancing.

Polling cards will be going out in the next couple of weeks. There may be changes to some polling stations so please check your card carefully.

You may decide you would rather stay at home on this occasion. If so, you do not have to lose your voice. You can apply to vote by post or to send someone to vote on your behalf, known as voting by proxy.

The deadline for postal votes for this election is 5pm on 20 April and 27 April for proxy votes. If you are thinking of voting in this way, then we strongly recommend you apply early.

You can find out more about [how to vote in 2021 elections](#) on our website.

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## Census 2021 - lookout for your invitation to take part



This year's Census takes place on 21 March and for the first time will be mainly online.

Households will shortly receive a letter through the post containing a unique online code. This can then be entered into the dedicated website allowing you to fill in the survey.

It is important you take part. Not only is it a legal requirement and failure to fill it in could result in a fine, but it is also used by the Government, the NHS and councils and other organisations to decide on future funding allocations and the need for new investment (new schools, roads, hospitals etc).

Here are some interesting facts from the last Census carried out in 2011:

- 74,631 people lived in the Malvern Hills District
- 33,487 people were married or in a registered same-sex civil partnership
- 652 of you were farmers, 127 people were information technology and telecommunications directors and there were 16 water and sewerage plant operatives
- 18.6% (6,450 residents) worked mainly at or from home and 2,497 of you walked to work
- Other than the UK, Germany was the top country of birth
- The top language (other than English or Welsh) spoken was Polish
- Malvern Hills was made up of 161 different ethnicities
- There were 1,212 families with 3 or more dependent children

Find out more at [www.census.gov.uk](http://www.census.gov.uk)

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## Share your experiences with our Covid-19 Memory Bank

We set-up our Covid-19 memory bank as a way of marking our experiences during the pandemic so we could preserve and share them for future generations to learn and reflect on.

So far we have had pictures of artwork, poems, blogs, videos and photos capturing everything from outdoor garden exercise and Zoom calls with friends to people sharing how the pandemic has affected them mentally and emotionally.

We'd like to encourage all of you to contribute something to that memory bank. Some things you could try:

- Provide a tribute to a loved one or friend lost to the virus
- If you have had the virus share your experience
- Share a picture of you having the vaccine and describe how you felt receiving it
- Write down how you are feeling now as we experience the hardship of our third lockdown but look ahead with hope to the end of this pandemic
- Tell us what you are planning to do when normal life returns? Is there anything that has changed due to Covid-19 that you would like to see become permanent?

You can upload your experiences on our [Covid-19 Memory Bank page](#).