



Greater Manchester under Tier 3 covid-19 restrictions

The Prime Minister has announced that Greater Manchester will be entering Tier 3 restrictions. Therefore, Wigan Borough will be designated as a 'very high' covid alert level area from Friday.

It means closures of pubs and bars unless they serve substantial meals and households will not be able to mix in indoor or outdoor settings (including private gardens).

[Further detail about the restrictions can be found here](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-covid-alert-level-very-high)

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-covid-alert-level-very-high>

An infographic with a colorful header bar. It contains three main sections: "Remember the 3W's" with icons for wearing a mask, washing hands, and watching distance; "If you have any of the following symptoms:" with icons for loss of taste/smell, persistent cough, and high temperature, followed by instructions to self-isolate and book a test; and "Help and support available for residents" with contact information for financial support, NHS, and the NHS COVID-19 app. A footer bar contains the website URL.

Remember the 3W's

- Wear your mask
- Wash your hands
- Watch your distance

If you have any of the following symptoms:

- Loss of taste or smell
- Persistent new cough
- High temperature

Self-isolate immediately and book a test.

To book a test visit www.wigan.gov.uk/covidtest

If you don't self-isolate you could be fined up to £10,000.

Help and support available for residents

If you're struggling financially or need additional support please contact our helpline on 01942 489 018

If your symptoms worsen or are no better after 7 days contact NHS 111 online: [111.NHS.uk](https://111.nhs.uk) if you do not have internet access call 111.

Search and download the **NHSCOV19 app** on your smartphone, to get up to date information about your local area and for venue check-in when you're out and about.

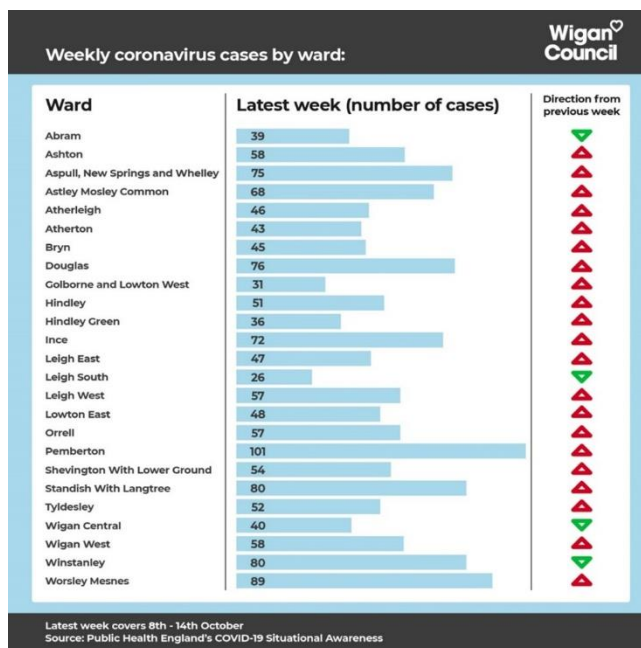
For up to date information visit www.gov.uk/coronavirus

www.wigan.gov.uk/coronavirus

Covid-19 tracker

This week's Covid-19 tracker has been published. It shows:

- The number of new cases has increased compared to this time last week but there are signs the rate of increase has slowed
- Wigan has the second highest rate of new cases in Greater Manchester for the latest complete week (10th October – 16th October).
- Wigan Borough along with all authorities in Greater Manchester, is currently classed as a 'very high risk' area.



[View the full tracker here](https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Crime-Emergencies/Coronavirus/Coronavirus-update-and-advice.aspx)

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Wigan Council to offer free school meals over half-term

Thousands of children will receive free school meals during the half-term holiday as part of an initiative funded by Wigan Council.

The vouchers for £15 per child per week are available for children aged four and upward who attend schools in the borough.

Around 8,500 children are eligible for free school meals across the borough, costing in the region of £127,000.

Eligible families will be contacted directly

The move follows a campaign led by footballer Marcus Rashford and a motion calling for government to provide free school meals during holidays until Easter 2021 was voted down in parliament earlier this week. The local authority has used emergency grant funding to ensure children and families will be supported at this challenging time.

We are aware that many businesses and organisations across the borough had started their own campaigns in the last few days to help out children eligible for free school meals over this October half-term. It is that sense of community spirit that typifies our borough and we would like to thank them for their efforts.

We hope families use their vouchers to support local businesses and food pantries.

For more information about welfare support offers for families across the borough visit <https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Benefit-Grants/Welfare-Reform/Local-Welfare-Support.aspx>

Stay safe this Halloween and Bonfire Night

We're urging families and young people to stay safe this Halloween and Bonfire Night by celebrating at home.

The government has confirmed that Greater Manchester's local covid-19 restrictions prevent groups from going door to door as it counts as different households mixing which is not allowed.

That means the act of trick or treating, where groups of young people knock on doors in search of sweets and other treats, should not happen.

In light of rising infection rates across our borough, please protect yourself and others by celebrating the season at home with your own household.

There will be no organised public firework displays this year across the region due to covid-19 restrictions.

The advice from the fire service is to not have fireworks and bonfires at home, but if people are planning to celebrate at home, do so only with your own household and stay safe by following the Fireworks Code.

There is Halloween, Bonfire and firework safety advice available from the fire service at Safe4Autumm.com

[Safety advice available from the fire service here](#)

<https://www.manchesterfire.gov.uk/news/take-extra-care-this-autumn-stay-at-home-stay-safe-and-protect-our-emergency-services-is-the-message-from-greater-manchester-fire-and-rescue-service/>



Virtual health festival launching next week

Wellfest – our festival celebrating all things health and happiness is coming next week.

Wellfest is back with a brand-new online platform making it easier than ever for you to get involved and do something which keeps your body and mind healthy this winter.

The event which will focus on mental health in line with the council's Be Kind campaign. The online festival site will go live on Monday 26th October [here](#).

There will also be a main stage line-up running from Wednesday 28th – Sunday 1st November which we'll be streaming on This is Wigan Facebook and YouTube pages. This is Wigan is our new events channel bringing you live events you can enjoy from the comfort of your own home. Search @ThisisWigan on Facebook, twitter, Instagram and YouTube to follow.



Community libraries update

In similar fashion to earlier this year, the council will adapt its way of working from this week to reflect a second wave of the coronavirus pandemic.

Community libraries will close from next week to allow staff to help support the test and trace programme and other critical services until the new year.

Since reopening in September, visitor numbers to the borough's community libraries have reduced on a week-to-week basis, a trend seen both regionally and nationally.

The Wigan and Leigh central libraries will remain open Monday to Friday, 10am to 2pm, offering access to network computers and council services.

[Find out more here](https://www.wigan.gov.uk/News/Articles/2020/Oct/Wigan-Council-to-adapt-its-service-delivery-in-response-to-second-wave.aspx)

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Domestic abuse helpline

Trained staff working for a dedicated domestic abuse helpline have spent 650 hours on the phone offering support to victims, concerned family members and other professionals in the space of six months.

The large influx in calls comes after the helpline was relaunched earlier this year to manage a rising number of people impacted by the pandemic with victims potentially feeling trapped in their homes.

Anyone wishing to ring the dedicated domestic abuse helpline can call 01942 311365 between 7am- 7pm, Monday to Friday for support.

[There's more information here](https://www.wigan.gov.uk/News/Articles/2020/Oct/Wigan's-domestic-abuse-helpline-makes-sure-no-one-suffers-in-silence.aspx)

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Test and Trace support payment

Residents on a low income that cannot work during self-isolation, may be able to access a lump sum Test and Trace Support Payment of £500.

This is a Government scheme that Local Authorities have been asked to administer.

This scheme will run from the 28th September 2020 to the 31st January 2021.

It has limited funding and strict criteria. There is a lot of confusion about entitlement to this payment and we are experiencing contact from many disappointed residents who expected to qualify for the support whilst self-isolating.

We are looking to support residents as far as possible through our established wider welfare offer helping with food, fuel vouchers and links to other support where applicable.

Please help us to support our residents by signposting them to the wider welfare offer that's available if they don't meet the strict criteria for the one-off payment.

Residents can access further information and apply for the Track and Trace Support Payment [here](https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Benefit-Grants/Welfare-Reform/Test-and-Trace-support-payment.aspx). <https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Benefit-Grants/Welfare-Reform/Test-and-Trace-support-payment.aspx>

Residents can also access further support through our local welfare support offer online or by contacting our self-isolation [here](https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Benefit-Grants/Welfare-Reform/Local-Welfare-Support.aspx). <https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Benefit-Grants/Welfare-Reform/Local-Welfare-Support.aspx>

Rugby League World Cup 2021 ballot opens

The public ticket ballot - the first in Rugby League World Cup history - opened at 9am today and will remain open for applications until 16th November 2020 at 20:21.

Fans will be able to apply for tickets for each of the 61 matches across all three tournaments, with tickets in each price band at every game available.

The borough synonymous with Rugby League and next year's tournament will be a key event in our calendar as we get to showcase everything we have to offer on a global stage.

There's more information [here](https://www.wigan.gov.uk/News/Articles/2020/Oct/RLWC-2021-public-ballot-opens-to-residents.aspx). <https://www.wigan.gov.uk/News/Articles/2020/Oct/RLWC-2021-public-ballot-opens-to-residents.aspx>

Yvonne, Susan, and Gena.

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