

Restrictions lifted in parts of Greater Manchester, Lancashire and West Yorkshire

- Positive progress means 2 households can mix again in areas including Bolton, Stockport, Trafford, Hyndburn and Burnley
- Some improvements in Leicester, with current restrictions remaining in place for a further 2 weeks as cases remain high

Following discussions with local leaders, the Health and Social Care Secretary, NHS Test and Trace, the Joint Biosecurity Centre (JBC), and the Chief Medical Officer for England have agreed this week's changes to local restrictions in some parts of England.

From Wednesday 2 September restrictions on 2 households mixing introduced last month will be lifted in:

- Bolton
- Stockport
- Trafford
- Burnley
- Hyndburn
- parts of Bradford excluding Bradford city and Keighley town
- parts of Calderdale excluding Halifax
- parts of Kirklees excluding Dewsbury and Batley

It means next week over 1 million people will be able to mix with family and friends outside their household, in line with national social distancing rules, for the first time since restrictions were announced on 30 July.

Businesses and organisations that opened elsewhere in England on 15 August, including bowling alleys and indoor play areas, will also be permitted to reopen in the areas listed above, bringing these areas in line with the rest of the country.

The easements have been agreed thanks to the outstanding local efforts to halt spikes in the virus, through local interventions, increased targeted testing and avoiding mixing with other households indoors.

Data shows cases per 100,000 decreased during the week ending 20 August in Burnley, where cases have more than halved from 52 to 24.6, and cases in Bolton and Stockport fell from 25.6 to 18.9, and 23 to 15.1 respectively, and Trafford fell from 27.1 to 17.8.

To maintain this good progress, it is important local residents continue to wear face coverings where necessary, practise good hygiene and adhere to national social distancing rules.

This week local areas have been encouraged to take a new, collaborative

approach to advise on the geographical boundaries of local restrictions, with councils, public health leaders and MPs making proposals to the Gold Local Action committee based on the latest data available.

It means restrictions in some areas will only apply to certain wards, rather than the entire local authority area. This is a key part of the government's enhanced Contain Strategy, which was [announced last week](#), and will deliver more targeted action to drive down rates of COVID-19 at a hyper-local level.

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

We brought in measures to protect people in these parts of Northern England, and I want to thank residents who have worked so hard to get on top of this virus.

We're seeing the positive results of our local approach, and are able to bring in increasingly targeted measures.

It is vital we can maintain this good progress. I have every faith people across the county, especially in areas where we are seeing higher numbers of cases, will continue to play their part by following local rules, and self-isolating and requesting a free test as soon as they get any symptoms.

The weekly Local Action Gold Committee, chaired by the Health and Social Care Secretary, agreed local restrictions will continue in the following areas.

Greater Manchester:

- a ban on 2 households mixing indoors will continue in City of Manchester, Salford, Rochdale, Bury and Tameside
- in Oldham, in addition to a household mixing ban indoors, residents will continue to be advised to avoid mixing with anyone from another household anywhere. Cases per 100,000 in Oldham reached 67.1 during the week ending 20 August, the second highest in England

Lancashire:

- in Pendle and Blackburn residents will continue to be advised to avoid mixing with anyone from another household anywhere. Some businesses and organisations remain closed in Blackburn and Darwen. Pendle had the highest number of cases per 100,000 anywhere in England during the week ending 20 August, reaching 67.8
- the ban on 2 households mixing indoors will continue in Preston

Leicester:

- on top of the indoor gatherings restrictions, some leisure sector businesses will continue to remain closed
- the next review of these measures will take place by 11 September

West Yorkshire:

- in urban areas of Bradford, the ban on indoor household gatherings remains in place and some businesses and organisations remain closed
- in Kirklees, the ban on indoor household gatherings will continue in Dewsbury and Batley
- the ban will also continue in parts of Calderdale

Shielding advice for clinical extremely vulnerable individuals remains in place across all of Blackburn with Darwen, and Leicester.

The announcement on this week's changes to local restrictions comes as the Health and Social Care Secretary has signed new national regulations formalising penalties for people who repeatably do not wear face coverings on public transport, shops and other areas where it is mandatory.

Fines for not wearing face coverings start at £100, which can be reduced if paid within 14 days. Repeat offenders on public transport or in indoor settings will now have their fines doubled at each offence. After the first offence, there will be no discount. This means a second fine will amount to £200 and a third fine will be £400, up to a maximum value of £3,200.

The full changes will be published on GOV.UK at [Local restrictions: areas with an outbreak of coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).

PHE's [weekly surveillance report](#) includes changes to the watchlist of local authority areas with higher-than-average incidences of COVID-19.

The changes are:

- Sandwell and Swindon move up the list and become 'areas of enhanced support'
- Luton becomes an 'area of concern' following a drop in cases
- Trafford, Bolton, Stockport, Burnley, Hyndburn, Burnley, parts of Bradford, parts of Kirklees and parts of Calderdale are moved down the list, becoming areas of 'enhanced support'
- Stoke-on-Trent is being added to the list for the first time as an 'area of concern'

This week's PHE surveillance report also included data on rates of COVID-19 by ethnicity and age in each major region in England. This will allow the public and local leaders to more easily see how the pandemic is affecting different ethnic groups across the country, and to inform action to protect our most vulnerable communities

The 3 definitions for JBC and PHE's watchlist are 'areas of concern', 'areas of enhanced support' and 'areas of intervention':

- for 'areas of concern', upper tier local authorities will work with partners, supported by regional PHE and NHS Test and Trace resource, to take additional actions to manage outbreaks and reduce community spread of the virus to more normal levels. Actions taken may include additional targeted testing at high-risk areas or groups, for example care homes,

enhanced communications around the importance of social distancing, hand hygiene and other preventative measures, and more detailed epidemiological work to understand where clusters of the virus are occurring so that appropriate action can be taken

- areas deemed for 'enhanced support' will be provided with increased national support, capacity and oversight, including additional resources deployed to augment the local teams where this is necessary. Actions taken may include significant additional widespread testing deployed to the upper tier local authorities, national support for local recommendations put in place to manage outbreaks, and detailed engagement with high-risk groups and sectors to help increase the effectiveness of testing and tracing in these areas
- 'areas of intervention' are defined where there is divergence from the lockdown measures in place in the rest of England because of the significance of the spread of COVID-19. There are a range of non-pharmaceutical interventions available to local and national leaders, from extensive communications and expanded testing, to restrictions on businesses and gatherings

See the [Contain Framework](#) for more information.

Area-specific changes

Areas in Bradford where restrictions are being lifted:

- Worth Valley
- Craven
- Ilkley
- Baildon
- Bingley
- Bingley Rural
- Shipley
- Wharfedale
- Windhill and Wrose

Areas in Calderdale where restrictions are being lifted:

- Brighouse
- Calder
- Elland
- Greenland and Stainland
- Hipperholme and Lightcliffe
- Luddendenfoot
- Rastrick
- Ryburn
- Todmorden

Areas in Kirklees where restrictions are being lifted:

- Golcar
- Greenhead
- Heckmondwike

- Holme Valley South
- Lindley
- Liversedge and Gomersal
- Mirfield
- Newsome
- Cleckheaton
- Dalton
- Denby Dale
- Almondbury
- Colne Valley
- Crosland Moor and Netherton
- Holme Valley North
- Kirkburton
- Ashbrow
- Birstall and Birkenshaw