



3 July 2020

Further businesses set to reopen this weekend as lockdown measures are eased

Visitors to Basingstoke town centre and other areas of the borough are being encouraged to follow safety measures while supporting businesses that are able to reopen this weekend.

On 23 June, Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced plans for the next phase of lockdown restrictions being eased to allow further non-essential retail and hospitality premises, such as hairdressers, restaurants and pubs, to reopen from Saturday 4 July.

Following the announcement, officers from Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council have been supporting businesses that are able to reopen from Saturday to ensure they have the appropriate safety measures in place.

Visitors are being encouraged to plan ahead of their visit as individual businesses, particularly bars, pubs and restaurants are likely to have new measures in place such as booking systems.

A number of measures will remain in place in the Top of The Town, Festival Place and The Malls such as walking on the left hand side of walkways, an increased cleaning schedule of public areas, hand sanitising stations and extensive signage reminding shoppers what they need to do to keep safe.

Play areas and outdoor gyms are set to reopen in the borough from Saturday 4 July

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council will start reopening its 150 play areas and 50 play areas belonging to parish and town councils from this Saturday and is encouraging people to follow government guidance to reduce the risk of spreading the virus when using the equipment.

Before each play area and outdoor gym can be safely reopened it must be inspected and residents are asked not to use the equipment until the council's team has carried out this work and declared it fit for use.

Signage will be placed at each location asking people to follow government guidance including:

- giving other people space in line with the current social distancing guidance
- washing hands before and after visiting
- using hand sanitiser gel or wipes to clean hands

- putting tissues or rubbish in the bins provided.

No food or drink should be consumed in the play areas and people are asked not to use busy facilities to help keep themselves and others safe.

Play areas and outdoor gyms in the borough were closed in March due to the pandemic. Their reopening has been announced as part of the latest set of COVID-19 recovery guidance issued by the Government.

Bidding on socially rented properties to restart

People on the council's housing register in Basingstoke and Deane are able to start bidding for social rented homes again.

In line with the Government's guidance following the COVID-19 outbreak, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council's choice based lettings bidding system Homebid was temporarily paused in March.

But following careful consideration of Government advice and extensive work by the council and housing associations in the area, the advertising and letting of social housing properties to those people on the council's housing register started again from Thursday 2 July. The first bidding cycle runs from midnight on Thursday 2 July to midnight on Monday 6 July and will resume weekly.

Last year almost 1,000 properties were advertised to applicants who are on the council's housing register.

For more information contact the council on 01256 844844.