



Dear Forum Member

I hope that you have stayed safe and coped well during lockdown. As rules change again, it can be very confusing, especially for people who have been shielding - what can I do and should I go out?

Celia Steventon, Forum Chairperson.

Over the page:

Going Shopping

Fire Risk Warning

Forum Support

We need your help

What's re-opening?



Should I go out or not? The government says:

From 6 July:

Extremely vulnerable people who are most at risk from becoming ill from coronavirus and live alone can create a support bubble with one other household of any size, as was introduced for everyone else in June.

People shielding can also meet in groups of up to six outdoors while maintaining social distancing rules.

For those who don't have any underlying medical conditions, two households of any size can meet indoors or outside and it is possible to stay overnight. This does not have to be the same set of households. However, meetings of multiple households indoors is not recommended because of the risk of infection.

From 1 August:

Extremely vulnerable people will no longer need to shield in England. That means they can mix with others and return to work, as long as their workplace is COVID secure.

Free essential food boxes will stop being delivered, but vulnerable people will continue to qualify for priority slots for online shopping. Support from NHS volunteers, local councils and charities will still be available.

Everyone should still follow social distancing guidelines when outside their homes and wash their hands regularly to reduce the risk of being infected.

As pubs, cafes, restaurants, hairdressers and holiday accommodation start to re-open in July, the 2 metre social distancing guidance will change to "one metre plus" – this means staying at least one metre apart, while observing precautions to reduce the risk of transmission.

Will I be safe? Is it too early?

If you are concerned, continue to stay at home as much as you can, as long as you can get your food and medications. However, you may welcome being able to get out and about again, or feel that you'd like to become accustomed to doing so gradually. Going out will feel strange at first, but stick to the 2 metre rule where you can, start with a short outing and remember it's understandable to feel anxious.

Face coverings

The government has announced that face coverings should be worn in all shops from Friday 24th July. They are currently only essential on public transport. You should be able to buy masks at Boots, Superdrug, Lloyds as well as online, eg Ebay or Amazon.

Wearing face coverings correctly - Make sure you wear your face covering properly (or there's no point). It should cover your nose, mouth and chin. The top of the mask (you can also use a scarf) should be against the bridge of your nose. If your glasses get steamed up, putting a folded tissue under the mask, right at the top, might help absorb the vapour from your breath.

[A user's guide to wearing a face mask to the shops.](#)

Beware of any callers offering to sell you face masks or any other protective items. It's predicted that fraudsters will target people who have been shielding and are now starting to venture out.

Going Shopping

Unless you're extremely vulnerable or over 70 with an underlying condition, you may wish to start venturing out to the shops again, which will feel strange. Age UK STW have put together a few tips to help you, here are a few points from their guide.

Supermarkets still have special shopping hours for older people.

Shops will allow so many people in at a time and some request only one person at a time, but if you need someone to support you, that should be OK. In some shops there are arrows on the floor to keep everyone flowing in the same direction. Try to keep 1 - 2m apart from other people.

There will be sanitiser and paper towels available by the doors. Toilets will be open in the stores but there may be some restrictions.

Shops ask for card payments where possible but most will still take cash. The limit for contactless payments is now around £45.

Remember to take a face covering with you.

Warning - car fire risk

There have been a number of reports about alcohol-based hand sanitiser being the cause of fires when left in vehicles in hot weather. The alcohol hand sanitiser is becoming heated resulting in flammable vapours being released. These vapours are reaching their 'Flashpoint' and then ignite in normal air conditions, setting fire to flammable components within the car.

So remember to remove any alcohol-based hand sanitiser products from vehicles when they are not occupied, or ensure you buy products that don't contain alcohol.

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Forum Telephone Chat Service

The Forum is continuing to support people with regular calls to chat and make sure they are coping. The service is free and available to anyone. If you would like to have a regular chat, or you would like to volunteer to be one of our callers, call or text:

07932 828333 or 07552 975676

Monday to Friday, 10am - 4pm

or email: enquiries@twseniors.org.uk

Leave a message outside of these hours, we'll call you back. (Email and messaging support available too.)

IT Support

Do you need help to solve a problem with your computer, tablet or smartphone? Would you like to find out how you to do a specific task on your device? We are offering telephone or email support from one of our computer tutors. They may not be able to solve every problem this way, but they'll have a good try. Contact details above.

We need your help

A big thank you to our current team of volunteers supporting people with regular calls. As our support service continues, we need more help to meet an increased demand. Could you spare a little time to ring someone on a regular basis for a friendly chat?

Frequency ranges from twice a week to once a fortnight. We take measures to protect your number so that the client calls the Forum number if they need assistance in between your calls and we'll help with any extra phone costs that you might incur. Telephone Chris on 07932 828333 to find out more.

What's re-opening in July?

(As well as pubs, hair salons and non-essential shops.)

Telford Libraries - you will only be able to return, browse & borrow books. The use of public computers, printing, photocopying and all Council First Point services will NOT be available. A limited number of people will be allowed to enter at one time - to ensure social distancing. Please keep your visit to around 15 min, to ensure everyone has a chance to access the service.

Bulky waste collection service - you may have to wait longer than normal for a collection slot. There will also be fewer collections slots a day due to additional safety measures.

Outdoor gyms - in Hartshill Park, Dawley Park and Bowring Park. Leisure centres are still awaiting an announcement to permit re-opening, but have been working to ensure they are safe and ready.

Make sure you are receiving your free Forum magazine either by post or email. If not, or you would like to change how you receive it, please get in touch. If you would prefer not to receive any more correspondence from the Forum, please contact 07932 828333/07552 975676, email: enquiries@twseniors.org.uk, website: twseniors.org.uk