

Helping you through the Covid-19 pandemic

Advice and support
for residents and
businesses



Together K&C



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

Message from Cllr Elizabeth Campbell Leader of the Council

These are extraordinary times we find ourselves in as we face the biggest national crisis of a generation.

I know these are anxious and uncertain days for many of our residents and businesses and we are doing all that we can to support you through this pandemic.

I'm really pleased that our residents are listening to government advice and are staying home and staying safe.

To the many local voluntary and community groups who are playing their part in the community, to our NHS staff who are working tirelessly to tend to the sick, to the volunteers who have given their time for free and to local people who are helping neighbours with shopping and medical supplies, I want to say thank you. By working together we will ensure our borough comes through these extremely worrying times.

In this leaflet you'll find information on how we too are supporting residents and businesses.

We have set up a **Covid-19 hub** to support our clinically vulnerable residents to ensure they have access to food and essential medical supplies and you can read more about that in this leaflet.

I want to assure you that the Council, alongside the NHS, government and of course our exceptional community groups and volunteers, is working tirelessly to ensure services adapt to changing regulations, and that residents are informed and supported.



Stay at home to stop Coronavirus spreading

We know this is a worrying time for everyone, so we are trying to make it as easy as possible for you to access the important information you need and to know how to contact us during these tough times.

#StayHomeSaveLives



Stay at home

- ▶ Reduce the spread of Coronavirus and stay at home.
- ▶ We can all do our part to help save lives and one vital way is staying home.



Shop responsibly

- ▶ When you do need to shop, please remember to only get the items you need.
- ▶ We're all in this together and you can help others by being responsible.

2m

Social distancing

- ▶ It's great to stay active but please **remember to keep at least two metres away from other people if you need to go outside.**



Virtually connect

- ▶ Keeping in contact with your friends, family and neighbours is one great thing you can do to keep spirits high.
- ▶ You can do so via call, texting or a virtual hangout.

What to do if you have Coronavirus symptoms

Do not leave your home if you have either:

- **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)

Please read the **NHS advice on self-isolation** if you or someone you live with has symptoms or call **NHS 111** which is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Covid-19 Hub supports the vulnerable

The Council has set up a Covid-19 Hub to support vulnerable residents who have been affected by the pandemic.

The hub is part of the Government's Local Support Scheme to support the 1.5 million people identified by the NHS nationally as being at highest risk of severe illness and for whom self-isolation is most critical.

The main focus of the hub has been to support those identified by the NHS as extremely vulnerable who have to be shielded at home for 12 weeks and may not have support networks in place.

The hub has been reaching out to this group and ensuring that any urgent needs are met, including delivering food packages to those who don't have someone who can get shopping or medical supplies for them. We are now contacting them individually to ensure they receive the support they need.

We are also working with our partners, including the Government, the NHS and the voluntary and community sector, to support other potentially vulnerable residents, including those who are not on the NHS list but who do not have families or friends to support them.

If you or someone you know is vulnerable and needs urgent support, you can contact the Covid-19 Hub by email at C19Hub@rbkc.gov.uk or call our dedicated line on **020 7361 4326**.



Helping residents through these challenging times

These are some of the ways the Council is adapting services to support residents during this time.

- **Hardship Fund:** We have boosted our Hardship Fund by £500k and expanded it for those who need emergency financial support due to Covid-19.
- **Special Rent Payment Fund:** We are making £100k each month available for the next four months for Council tenants struggling to pay their rent and service charges including heating costs.
- **Rent:** We won't be taking tenancy enforcement action for three months if you are struggling to pay your rent.
- **Council Tax:** We are providing up to £150 extra relief for households that already receive a Council Tax reduction.
- **Parking:** We have issued more than 2,000 virtual permits to key workers and are keeping streets clear of obstructions for emergency vehicles and key workers.
- **Food banks:** We are replenishing food bank stocks until we benefit from a new London-wide partnership, called the London Food Alliance.
- **Home library Service:** We are relaunching our Home Library Service to help tackle isolation and loneliness. Our libraries are also offering free online resources.
- **Action against fraud:** We are warning residents to be vigilant against people pretending to be government and charities asking for donations and bank details.
- **Children:** We are providing activity packs for children including craft resources, musical instruments and key contacts.
- **Staying home:** Our online library and cultural services are offering activities from researching your family tree to watching a live musical of Wind in the Willows.
- **Staying active:** We are promoting a series of online activities for all ages to keep residents active.

Our business support package

We know it is a really tough time for business owners and self-employed people, who are so valuable to our community and local economy in Kensington and Chelsea.

In a borough of over 20,000 businesses and self-employed people, we know this time will be particularly difficult.

It is a priority for the Council to do what we can to help you retain your livelihoods during the Coronavirus pandemic and we want to make sure that you know about, and are able to access, the support that is out there for you.

What the Council is doing:

- Delivered around £1 million in Government business rates grants to eligible businesses with around £41 million in total to be provided through the dedicated Covid-19 grants.
- Delivering the 2020/21 business rates holiday promised by the Government, meaning around 2,700 eligible businesses in retail, leisure and hospitality will not have to pay business rates for the year
- Suspended rents invoicing for businesses in Council owned commercial property and storage units for three months.
- Suspended invoicing for those using the Council's commercial waste service.
- Given permanent market traders a rent holiday for 12 weeks.
- Given temporary traders a guarantee that they won't need to maintain their attendance record during lockdown.
- Continued to run our Council-funded business support including:
 - Portobello Business Centre: offering business advice in virtual one-to-one sessions. Visit pbc.co.uk or call 020 7460 5050 to find out more.
 - RBKC Supply Chain: supporting small local businesses and suppliers to get tender ready and to access opportunities with local buyers. Visit rbkcsupplychain.co.uk or call 07891 165207 for more information.
- All pubs, restaurants and cafes across the UK can operate as food takeaways without the necessary planning permission for 12 months, just contact the Council to let us know at planning@rbkc.gov.uk

Other support through the Government:

- Self-Employment Income Support Scheme.
- Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme delivered through the British Business Bank.
- Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

Visit our online business portal for more information www.rbkc.gov.uk and click on the support for businesses and self-employed tab.

Contact:

Business rates and related grants: if you haven't received a letter or can't access your business address contact covid19businessrates@rbkc.gov.uk

Council-owned commercial property queries: propertyinformation@rbkc.gov.uk

Council commercial waste service queries: commercial.waste@rbkc.gov.uk

Market trader queries: street.trading@rbkc.gov.uk

Become a volunteer – play your part

The Council has joined up with the NHS and key local voluntary sector organisations to create a partnership group focusing on making sure the voluntary and community sector are equipped to help residents meet their basic needs, while contributing their knowledge and skills to the response of the Council and local NHS.

To ensure the needs of our most vulnerable are met, existing local organisations rely on the support of volunteers in the community. There are many areas that you could support – for example making contact with people who are isolated, providing practical help with food delivery or responding to queries.

You can register at www.voluntarywork.org.uk or call or text 07903 518396.

This number is available from 10am to 12 noon and 2pm to 3pm.



How to contact us if you're not online

To help reduce the spread of Coronavirus, all public Council reception areas in the borough have been closed until further notice. To continue to access Council services, please use the following details:

Switchboard (8.30am to 5.30pm, Monday to Friday)

For all general enquiries not listed. They will signpost you to someone who can help
020 7361 3000 or email covid-19enquiry@rbkc.gov.uk

Covid-19 Hub (9am to 5pm, seven days a week)

For those residents who are clinically vulnerable who need access to food and medicine
020 7361 4326 or email C19Hub@rbkc.gov.uk

Local Support Payment Line

To apply for assistance from the Council's Hardship Fund
020 7745 6464 or visit www.rbkc.gov.uk and search Local Support Payment

Council Tax Line

For information and advice on all aspects of Council Tax
020 7361 3005 or email counciltax@rbkc.gov.uk

Housing Line

For housing advice, homelessness concerns and to report urgent repairs
020 7361 3008 or email housing@rbkc.gov.uk or email HHAT@rbkc.gov.uk for homelessness.

Rent

We will not be taking enforcement action for rent arrears at this time. For support and help, call
0800 137 111 or 020 3617 7080 or email HM-CustomerServices@rbkc.gov.uk

If you are online

You can receive the latest information, help and support during the Coronavirus Pandemic by signing up for our **Important Updates or Emergency Updates newsletters**: visit www.rbkc.gov.uk, scroll to the bottom and click 'sign up to newsletters'.

For the latest information from the Council on Coronavirus, visit our website:
www.rbkc.gov.uk/coronavirus

Call NHS 111 if you or anyone in your family believes they may have Coronavirus symptoms and would like advice you have not found online.