

Forward Mid

Continuing to provide up-to-date useful information to resource, support and connect disabled citizens across Midlothian throughout the time of COVID-19.

Coronavirus (COVID-19): Scotland's route map

What has lockdown been like for you?

Disabled People

Facebook Fun

To Mask or not to Mask

Local hero's in our Community



Coronavirus (COVID-19): Scotland's route map indicative dates for the remainder of Phase 2 and early Phase 3

Guide to re-opening and scaling up over the rest of Phase 2 and early Phase 3.

Indicative dates: confirmation subject to relevant evidence reviews and phase criteria being met. Not all detail is shown below. Please refer to any relevant guidance.

Monday 29 June

Indoor (non-office) workplaces resume once relevant guidance is implemented.

Includes: factories, warehouses, labs and research facilities.

Excludes: indoor workplaces due to open in Phase 3 (e.g. non-essential offices and call-centres).

Street-access retail can re-open once guidance is implemented. Interiors of shopping centres/malls remain closed for non-essential shops until Phase 3.

- Outdoor markets can re-open once guidance is implemented.
- Relaxation on restrictions on housing moves.
- Outdoor sports courts can re-open.
- Playgrounds can re-open.
- Registration offices open for high priority tasks.
- Marriages & civil partnerships allowed with minimal attendees - out doors only.
- Zoos and garden attractions can open for local access only (broadly within 5 miles) in this phase

Phase 2 - Indicative Dates

Travel distance restriction relaxed - **3 July**

Self-catering accommodation and second homes (without shared facilities) permitted - **3 July**

Outdoor hospitality (subject to physical distancing rules and public health advice) - **6 July**

Phase 3 - Indicative Dates

Routemap: We are now in Phase Three of the Scottish Government's Routemap, and may remain here for some time.

People can meet in extended groups **outdoors** (with physical distancing)
- **10 July**

Households can meet **indoors** with up to a maximum of two other households (with physical distancing) - **10 July**

Changes from Friday 10 July:

- Mandatory face coverings in shops and other retail.
- Outdoors – a household can meet up to 4 other households at a time – up to 15 people in total.
- Indoors – a household can meet up to 2 other households at a time – up to 8 people in total. This includes overnight stays. A household can meet up to 4 other households per day in total.
- The limit on the number of other households you can meet per day (indoors or outdoors) does not apply to young people who are under 18. Children aged 11 or under no longer need to physically distance indoors. Young people aged 12-17 must continue to physically distance.
- Extended Households: All non cohabiting partners (and any children under 18 in the household) can form extended households without physical distancing.

FACTS: Scottish Government Guidance says ‘To prevent spread of the virus we should all follow the FACTS. It is the sum of our individual actions, our collective endeavour, that is suppressing the virus. FACTS: Face coverings. Avoid crowded places. Clean hands regularly. Two metre distance. Self isolate and book a test if you have symptoms.’

Facemasks: In a very timely move, we have been given a donation of 1500 facemasks for use by Third Sector staff and volunteers. They will be available for collection from the Aim High shop, 14 Woodburn Avenue Dalkeith, EH22 2BP, Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm. Deaf Action are currently fundraising to develop deaf-friendly face masks with windows for lipreading. www.deafaction.org/clear-face-masks-for-all/

Organised **outdoor** contact sports can resume for children and young people (subject to guidance) - **13 July**

All dental practices begin to see registered patients for non-aerosol routine care. Work will begin to return aerosol generating procedures to practice safely - **13 July**

Increasing capacity within community optometry practices for emergency and essential eye care - **13 July**

Non-essential shops **inside** shopping centres can re-open (following guidance and with physical distancing) - **13 July**

All holiday accommodation permitted (following relevant guidance) - **15 July**

Indoor hospitality (subject to physical distancing rules and public health advice) - **15 July**

Hairdressers and barbers - with enhanced hygiene measures - **15 July**

Museums, galleries, cinemas, monuments, libraries - with physical distancing and other measures (e.g. ticketing in advance) - **15 July**

All childcare providers can open subject to individual provider arrangements - **15 July**

Phase 3 - Advice on dates at 9 July Review (unlikely to be before 23 July)

Non-essential offices and call centres can re-open following implementation of relevant guidance (including on physical distancing). Working from home and working flexibly remain the default.

Universities and colleges - phased return with blended model of remote learning and limited on campus learning where a priority. Public health measures (including physical distancing) in place.

Places of worship can re-open for Congregational services, **communal** prayer and contemplation with physical distancing and limited numbers
Easing of restrictions on attendance at funerals, marriages, civil partnerships, with physical distancing (limited numbers).

Following will be subject to further public health advice:

Live events (**outdoors**) - with physical distancing and restricted numbers.

Live events (**indoors**) - with physical distancing and restricted numbers.
Indoor gyms - with physical distancing.

Other personal retail services - with enhanced hygiene measures.

Other indoor entertainment venues (e.g. nightclubs, bingo, theatres, music venues).

Public services continue to scale up and re-open safely

Schools: 11 August: Schools should be preparing for children to be able to return to school full time in August (conditional upon ongoing scientific and health advice). This date may fall in Phase 3 or Phase 4, depending on broader progress. The blended model of schooling remains a contingency plan.

Shielding: The changes set out here **do not** apply to people who have been advised to shield. Their advice is to continue to shield until **31 July**, although outdoor exercise and meeting people from another household in groups of up to 8 people is allowed, provided people follow strict physical distancing.

Current Shielding advice from 10th July:

- Stop physically from people you live with
- Go indoors to use a toilet in someone else's house, when visiting them outdoors
- Meet up to 8 people outdoors, from two other households, in a single day- it does not have to be the same 2 households every day
- Travel further than 5 miles from your house.
- Book self-catering accommodation (without shared facilities), Travel to a second home- Try only to stay with the people you live with at home.

**What has lockdown been like for you? -
Tell part of your story!**

A new project called Lothian Voices project run by Edinburgh University is hoping to capture people's experience of Covid and lockdown, using audio and video recordings, as the person chooses.

Some info:

- They are asking people in Lothian to send in their video or audio "diary" recordings about what lockdown life has been like for them.
- People can talk about whatever they want, so it will capture all the random and mundane things that have been happening
- People get £15 for participating (which they can donate to charity)
- The findings will be used to inform Scottish Government policy.
- The recordings could also be stored in the National Records of Scotland as a record of Covid if the person gives their permission.

The website content is maybe a little bit complex – the language is OK but there are a few steps to the process, so people might need support to take part.

Forward mid would be willing to assist, if that felt helpful.

This feel like a great opportunity for local people to say what the last three months have been like for them and even better if the recordings they receive could reflect a diverse range of experiences.

If enough people from Midlothian take part, we ask to can receive feedback about the specific issues they raise. This could be useful for our future planning, in Midlothian, what went well, what needs improving?

Some other key points are:

- Audio-only is absolutely fine if people don't want to do video
- All contributions will be kept totally private and anonymous unless someone gives permission to share
- It doesn't have to be about all of lockdown, it can just be about one little thing that's changed, or just the daily routine
- More than one person can be in the video as long as it's clear who the main respondent is
- The project ends on 31 July

Here is the website - <https://lothianlockdown.org/participate/> for a full sense of what it is about / what is being asked of people. Hopefully it's of interest to some people.

If you are interested, please check out the website and if it would feel helpful, contact us and we can assist where possible.

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Disabled People

According to analysis of the Scottish Health Survey in 2017 32% of adults in Scotland have a disability and 10% of children have a disability. The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic is likely to disproportionately affect these individuals, putting them at risk of increased morbidity and mortality.

At risk, vulnerable disabled people will have to shield because of health conditions which may result in a drop in income if they cannot work from home and some people will be struggling to get food and other supplies

depending on where they live and how connected they are to family, friends or volunteers in their local area.

Access to additional financial aid is vital to reduce the risk of Disabled People and their families falling into greater vulnerability or poverty. Many Disabled People depend on services that have been suspended and may not have enough money to stockpile food and medicine or afford the extra cost of home deliveries.

People living with disabilities have a range of general concerns alongside specific vulnerability, including access to care and medication, social isolation, potential loss of carer support due to COVID-19 and carers having to isolate, difficulty accessing information in appropriate formats, and the possibility of more expensive costs for food and other supplies because they have to shop locally in more expensive shops, or have to travel by taxi to shops because public transport is reduced and presents a higher risk of infection. There is a fear of de-prioritisation for access to treatment of complications of COVID-19 if NHS intensive care services are overwhelmed.

Containment measures, such as social distancing and self-isolation, may be impossible for those who rely on the support of others to eat, dress and bathe. There are difficult decisions to be made by those with disabilities and their carers in regard to the provision of personal care, with carers/personal assistants running the risk of bringing the virus into the homes of the people they care for. There is also a lack of personal protective equipment for the social care sector.

On top of these challenges the introduction of new Scottish Disability benefits has been postponed. They will continue to be provided by the UK Government and many of the requirements have been relaxed, but this will be a disappointment to many.

Key recommendations from the International Disability Alliance are set out here www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/content/covid-19-and-disability-movement

[www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667\(20\)30076-1/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667(20)30076-1/fulltext)

www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25725&LangID=E

www.signhealth.org.uk/coronavirus/

Facebook Fun

Hi Everyone from Stuart, Carrie, Catherine and Sue at the Midlothian Local Area Co-ordinators (LAC) Team. We hope that you are all keeping well during this difficult time.

We are delighted to be asked to write something in the newsletter about how things have been going for us during lockdown.

Catherine: I started lockdown thinking it might be an over-reaction, but this soon turned to a sense of foreboding – what was in front of us? It was a relief knowing friends and family were in their own home – with gratitude that we had comfortable homes to shelter us.



Work has taken a very different route to usual, however the LAC community has been amazing – everyone has had to come to terms with the changes in their own way, but they have made room for concern and communication between each other through text, phone calls, What's App or Facebook. That's not to ignore the sense of loss sometimes experienced through not being able to be together and missing routine activities. Nor does it ignore that people have faced difficulties and uncertainty, however, strong networks have been invaluable.

Now, I'm getting impatient for a return to usual – hope to see you soon!

Sue: My job has changed quite a bit. I would usually be supporting groups, like the bowling and football as well as meeting people on their own. Since lockdown I spend a large amount of my time making phone calls to people. We have settled into a routine with regular calls with some, and occasional chats with others, depending on what works best for them. I am often asked how I am doing too, which I really appreciate.

I am really enjoying getting to know more about what people are doing in their lives, not just during lockdown but generally. I'm pleased that folk have adjusted so well and seem to be coping with these restrictions. During the phone chats I have also had the opportunity to speak with some family members and carers for the first time, which has been fantastic.



The Facebook Group has been really fun to get involved in and another great way to connect. I was unaware of how many of the people already use this, so that was an eye-opener for me.

Look forward to catching up again and meantime stay safe!

Carrie: My work role has also changed considerably. I'm used to meeting a wide range of people face to face, either one to one or in groups in Midlothian. It also involves meeting new people, home visits, accompanying people to appointments, and meetings with other services. Due to the lockdown, I have been working from home and keeping in touch with the people I work with by telephone, daily, weekly,



fortnightly or monthly .I have been so impressed with the way in which people have met the challenges of this pandemic and how it has enabled a great deal of resilience, creativity and ingenuity to adhere to all the rules whilst managing to try to lead a “good life” despite the restrictions. I am really looking forward to meeting up with the 16.45 monthly meal group members when it is possible to do so again. I have learnt how to use my laptop for zoom type meetings and my LAC colleagues have been a great source of support to me. Fingers crossed we will soon get back to a more normal life, meeting people again.

Stuart: Lockdown has been a large learning curve for me and the individuals I work with. I am now an expert on Zoom calls, What's App and Facebook. I have kept in regular contact with many people and for others it is been a catch up now and then. I must say I am totally overwhelmed with how people have coped and would like to congratulate each one of the people involved with LACs. Having regular contact with people has kept me strong too, hearing what they have been up to and about new hobbies being picked up on the way. I've helped people to join What's App and Facebook and they are connecting to more people than ever and building up new relationships in new ways. As lockdown is easing I am hoping that it won't be long until I am back working face to face with the people I have the pleasure to work with and am able to thank them for keeping me sane in all of this. Thank you.



To Mask or not to Mask

RETIRED SURGEON Sam Laucks, has this to say about wearing a mask:

“I have spent the past 39 years working in the field of surgery. For a significant part of that time, I have worn a mask. I have worked with hundreds (probably thousands) of colleagues during those years, who have also worn masks. Not a single one of us became ill, passed out or died from lack of oxygen. Not a single one of us became ill, passed out or died from breathing too much carbon dioxide. Not a single one of us became ill, passed out or died from re-breathing a little of our own exhaled air. Let's begin here by putting those scare tactics to rest!

(It is true that some people, with advanced lung diseases, may be so fragile that a mask could make their already-tenuous breathing more difficult. If your lungs are that bad, you probably shouldn't be going out in



public at the present time anyway; the consequences if you are exposed to Covid-19 would likely be devastating).

Recommendations around mask usage are confusing. The science isn't. Evidence shows that masks are extremely effective to slow the coronavirus and may be the best tool available right now to fight it."

Q and As

Question 1

"Can't viruses go right through the mask, because they are so small?"

Answer 1

("Masks keep viruses out just as well as a chain link fence keeps mosquitoes out," some tell us.) It is true that individual virus particles can pass through the pores of a mask; however, viruses don't move on their own. They do not fly across the room like a mosquito, wiggle through your mask like a worm, or fly up your nose like a gnat. The virus is essentially nothing more than a tiny blob of genetic material. Covid-19 travels in a CARRIER – the carrier is a fluid droplet- fluid droplets that you expel when you cough, sneeze, sing, laugh, talk or simply exhale. Most of your fluid droplets will be stopped from entering the air in the room if you are wearing a mask. Wearing a mask is a very efficient way to protect others if you are carrying the virus (even if you don't know that you are infected). In addition, if someone else's fluid droplets happen to land on your mask, many of them will not pass through. This gives the wearer some additional protection, too. But, the main reason to wear a mask is to PROTECT OTHERS. Even if you don't care about yourself, wear your mask to protect your neighbours, co-workers and friends!

Question 2

"Is a mask 100% protective?"

Answer 2

It appears that the severity of Covid-19 infection is at least partially "dose-dependent." In other words, the more virus particles that enter your body, the sicker you are likely to become. Why not decrease that volume if you can? "What have you got to lose?!"

Question 3

"But doesn't a requirement or a request to wear a mask violate my constitutional rights?"

Answer 3

You're also not allowed to go into the grocery store if you are not wearing pants. You can't yell "fire" in the Produce Department. You're not allowed

to urinate on the floor in the Frozen Food Section. Do you object to those restrictions? Rules, established for the common good, are component of a civilized society.

Question 4

“But aren’t masks uncomfortable?”

Answer 4

Some would say that underwear or shoes can be uncomfortable, but we still wear them. (Actually, being on a ventilator is pretty darned uncomfortable, too!) Are masks really so bad that you can’t tolerate them, even if they will help keep others healthy?

Question 5

“But won’t people think I’m a snowflake or a wimp if I wear a mask?”

Answer 5

I hope you have enough self-confidence to overcome that.

Question 6

“But won’t I look stupid if I wear a mask?”

Answer 6

I’ve decided not to dignify that question with an answer!!

Question 7

“But I never get sick; I’m not worried.”

Answer 7

Well, then, wear a mask for the sake of the rest of us who are not so perfect!

There is good evidence that masks make a real difference in diminishing the transmission of Covid-19. Please, for the sake of others (and for the sake of yourself), wear your mask when in public. It won’t kill you!

P.S. - And, by the way, please be sure that BOTH your nose and mouth are covered!

Local hero’s in our Community

This is Mark Wells, founder of Food Fact Friends, based in Penicuik and Woodburn. The charity was set up in 2017.

Mark was living in Aberdeen but moved to Edinburgh. He has arthritis in the whole of his left arm and has been in and out of hospital with this painful condition. When he did this move all of his benefits were stopped.

He then had to refer to the local food bank for help and was given a 6 week time scale for food packages.

Mark has a background of doing volunteer work and was asked to join Edinburgh City Mission Food Bank.

From there Mark moved to Dalkeith and continued his work volunteering at the food bank in Edinburgh. He was approached again and started working as project co-ordinator at the Oasis Church in Penicuik.

Unfortunately after a year the food project closed down and Mark decided to take some much needed rest.

Mark decided to set up Food Fact Friends back in 2017 in Penicuik and this went so well that in March 2019 he was able to open another food bank in Woodburn – Dalkeith.

Then lockdown came and just like everyone Covid-19 hit the world hard. Most of Marks staff of volunteers are mostly over the age of 70 and his team were all told to self isolate as per government guidelines. Mark had to act quick to try get a new team together within a few days of posting on social media he had created a new team and was thankful of these local people willing to put themselves at risk to help our local community. The food bank only had a stock level of food to a few weeks. Fortunately because of lockdown everything was shut down and local shops and businesses donated to the food bank.

TK MAXX at Straiton got in touch and gave them £10,000 worth of stock.

Also **McDonald's** Straiton along with **Morrisons** Dalkeith, **JB Foods** Loanhead, **Asda** Straiton, **Fair Share Depot** at Bilston, **Lidl** Penicuik and Dalkeith, **Tesco** Penicuik and Dalkeith all donated to the food bank. **Clarks** van hire donated a van so they could deliver to families in isolation.

Arnold Clark have now taken over this and have donated a van to use for the near future. Mark said all local businesses have been so generous with there donations and wanted to give them a special thanks.



How the food bank normally works is different services will do a referral to the food bank , this includes Social Work, Melville Housing, Penicuik High School, Beeslack High School, Women's Aid, Midlothian Council, Children First, CAB, Mount Esk Nursery and Aim High. A family will then be given a 8 week slot for food packages, this gives the client time



to get benefits sorted and other financial solutions. The food package is once a week and around 3 days worth of food, the package will include :-

- Fresh meat and vegetables
- Tinned foods
- A cooked ready meal
- Desserts
- Toiletries

This is covered by donations from local shops plus Food Fact Friends have funding and grants that they get from Midlothian Council, Foundation Scotland and Cash for Kids. With this funding they will put orders in to Lidl, local butchers, Pie shop's and Carllops-Alan Ramseys, that way Food Fact Friends is contributing back to local businesses and keeping it within the local community.

Since Covid-19, Mark said that in one week they handed out 2700 food packages and this had tripled from what a normal week would be like. As Mark is the co-ordinator he works Monday – Friday 7.30am-4pm and every morning he will have a huddle with his team to check how everyone is doing and a brief of the day ahead.

At the weekend Mark then heads to the M&S at the Gyle to collect weekly donations.

Due to Covid-19 the food bank had to change how they did collections . PPE was donated to them and they set up one person at a time to collect there food package. It would be someone from a family or agency staff would collect and deliver to there clients that had been referred to them. Collection times are:-

- Penicuik 10am-1pm on Mondays
- Woodburn 3.30pm-5pm Mondays
- Woodburn 11am-2pm Thursdays.

Normal collection was more social so the clients could collect their food packages but also have a tea or coffee, chat with other people and be sign posted to organisations. Now for the foreseeable future it follows government guidelines of social distancing.

Mark also said that with his staff that were isolating he has kept in touch with everyone.

Volunteer week was 1-7 June and he still wanted to mark this occasion and thank his team so he posted out their awards to them. Normally each year someone will be nominated to win an award but this was cancelled this year. In 2019 Mark won Manager of the year and he said this was one of his highlights of continuing all the hard work he does every day.



Covid-19 has had a positive impact for the food bank. They are now moving premises and will open at the end of August at the old Royal Bank of Scotland in Penicuik. They have grown so much bigger than Mark ever imagined and they have also had more new services move over to use the food bank.

With the help of his team of volunteers and all Mark's hard work they have had to work very hard but they have made an amazing contribution to helping those in need at a very unsettling world, but their work will continue once we get back to some kind of normal.

I think it's clear to say Mark is clearly an amazing hero and all his hard work is paid off.

Forward Mid thank you and your team for helping in a time of need and continuing into the future.