

An update from Hannah Blythyn MS

 **HANNAH BLYTHYN MS**
From Flintshire, For Flintshire

NEW MEASURES ARE NOW IN PLACE ACROSS
WALES

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT
gov.wales/coronavirus-regulations-guidance



ONLY TWO HOUSEHOLDS MAY
NOW FORM A "BUBBLE" OR
EXTENDED HOUSEHOLD



BUSINESSES WHICH
CLOSED DURING THE FIRE
BREAK CAN REOPEN



UPTO FOUR PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT
HOUSEHOLDS CAN MEET INSIDE
ONLY AT PUBS, CAFES,
AND RESTAURANTS



YOU SHOULD STILL
WORK FROM HOME
WHEREVER POSSIBLE

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Post fire-break

Now that the fire-break period has come to an end, the First Minister has introduced new guidance for the foreseeable, some of which can be seen in the graphic above.

These new measures are designed to cover the whole of Wales and be easily understood, helping to reduce the spread of the virus as much as possible. These measures will also be reviewed on a fortnightly basis.

It's for all of us to continue to play our part to keep our communities and our country safe, asking ourselves not what can I do but what should I do?



Support for workers and workplaces

Although employment rights remains a responsibility of the Westminster Government, the Welsh Government is taking the steps it can to support workers here in Wales. Those who are asked to self-isolate by Test, Trace, Protect, will be entitled to apply for a £500 payment.

Those who are advised to self-isolate, but cannot work from home and would lose income, will be able to apply for the payment through the Flintshire County Council website. The Welsh Government are also topping up the Statutory Sick Pay of social care staff to their normal wages, if they are asked to self-isolate.

Self-isolation is a key part of preventing the further spread of the virus, which is why the Welsh Government are expanding the regulations to ensure this takes place. This will include a duty for people to self-isolate when they are advised to by Test, Trace, Protect, and a duty on employers meaning they cannot prevent employees from self-isolating.

Like the Welsh Government, I am keen to see the good businesses that served our communities in 2019, continuing to serve our communities in 2021.

Since the beginning of the pandemic I have helped signpost over 70 businesses in the constituency to access financial support which has been available to them. By August over £45 million of grant support had been distributed to businesses across Flintshire, with much more distributed in recent weeks.

I will continue to do all I can, not just to sign post business owners to support available to them, but to sign post constituents to our fantastic businesses.



Changes to Qualifications in 2021

Earlier today the Minister for Education confirmed the arrangements for GCSEs, AS and A Level, qualifications in Summer 2021 – there will be no examinations.

The Minister explained that she is keen to ensure there is a level playing field for all learners, and this would not be possible, as the amount of time spent in school may vary from learner to learner.

This decision, following a review which engaged with learners, teachers, exam boards and universities, will allow teachers and learners to focus on quality education whilst learners are in school and not dedicate the majority of their time to preparing for assessments.

As always if you have any questions then please get in touch.



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Unpaid carers in Flintshire to benefit from £1 million Welsh Government fund

Further funding for Flintshire

In the last month the Welsh Government has announced a number of funds which will benefit and support residents here in Flintshire.

A **£1 million carers' fund** has been established which will support our unpaid carers in purchasing items such as white goods and other furniture. Here in Flintshire there are over 2000 people in receipt of carer's allowance and nationally around 40% of carers are concerned about their future finances.

Betsi Cadwaladr UHB will also receive additional funding for the next three and a half years, to support them in planning longer term improvements to their services, as well as addressing immediate concerns. Back in August I joined with colleagues here in North Wales to ask the Minister for Health, to consider additional further support for Betsi and I very much welcome this investment from the Welsh Government.

Over **1000 children** here in Delyn will be given free school meals throughout school holidays until Easter 2021, thanks to over £13 million being invested by the Welsh Government. The work of Marcus Rashford MBE just over the border has highlighted how emotive this issue is and I am proud that here in Wales, the support is already in place.

Tackling local issues

Although the pandemic has impacted many aspects of our lives I have continued to represent constituents on other matters, from traffic concerns and health issues, to access to broadband and environmental issues.

I know how important our communities are to all of us and do my best to work with residents to address concerns and champion investment and improvements on our doorsteps.

Remaining on hand

It has always been important to me that I am available to constituents as much as possible and this year has been no different. Direct letters, emails, social media posts and regular columns are some of the methods which I have used to connect with constituents. Hopefully you will have also received a copy of my annual update newsletter, but if you did not please contact me on 01352 762102 or at Hannah.Blythyn@senedd.wales.

With changes to guidance at the start of the fire break period and the new Wales-wide rules, I hosted a live Q&A session on my Facebook page – Hannah Blythyn MS – to answer constituents questions about what the changes would mean for them. It is important that I do all I can as your Member of the Senedd to offer you support and clarity where I am able to. If you have any questions please do contact me on the details above.

Finally, I would again like to reiterate my thanks to everyone who is playing their bit to prevent the spread of coronavirus as much as possible.

Take care,
Hannah



