

Weekly news update - Friday 10 December

COVID-19 and the Omicron variant



The government has announced that England will move to Plan B in response to the risks of the Omicron variant.

This means:

- From Friday 10 December, the government will further extend the legal requirement to wear a face mask to most public indoor venues, including theatres and cinemas. There will be exemptions in venues where it is not practical to wear one, such as when you are eating, drinking or exercising.
- From Monday 13 December, those who can will be advised to work from home. Employers should use the rest of this week to discuss working arrangements with their employees
- From Wednesday 15 December, and subject to parliamentary approval, the NHS COVID Pass on the NHS App will become mandatory for entry into nightclubs and settings where large crowds gather – including unseated indoor events with 500 or more attendees, unseated outdoor events with 4,000 or more attendees and any event with 10,000 or more attendees.
- People will be able to demonstrate proof of two vaccine doses via the app. Having considered the evidence since the emergence of Omicron, proof of a negative lateral flow test will also be accepted.
- As Omicron spreads in the community, the government also intends to introduce daily contact tests for contacts of confirmed positive Omicron cases instead of the ten-day self-isolation period.

[Find out how to stay safe and help prevent the spread](#)

EU award-winning climate project

An international project to reduce the impact of climate change, of which we are a key player, has beaten hundreds of contenders to win an EU award.

[Interreg BEGIN](#) has won both the 'Green Europe: Green and Resilient Communities in Rural and Urban Settings' award – voted for by the public - and the Overall public vote award of all the categories at the European Commission's [Regiostars Awards](#). Winners were selected by a top level jury, chaired by Michel Barnier, the former European Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms.

Interreg BEGIN is a programme which creates Blue Green Infrastructures (BGI) through Social Innovation, i.e. changes to improve the wellbeing and welfare of individuals or communities. It brings together ten cities and six research institutes across the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Sweden, Norway and the UK, to develop Blue (drainage and water) and Green (planting and landscaping) infrastructure solutions to help reduce the impact of the changing climate by working with communities and stakeholders to find nature based solutions.

Blue Green Infrastructure helps to address risks from climate change - such as increased local flooding, urban heat stress, reduced air quality and the loss in biodiversity - by improving the health and wellbeing and quality of life in neighbourhoods.

[Read more](#)

Another fly-tipping conviction secured by Bradford Council



Our Environmental Enforcement Team had another great result in court recently, securing another fly-tipping conviction.

Mr Dwain Williams of Rawling Street, Keighley was convicted at Bradford Magistrates Court of fly-tipping at several locations throughout the Bradford district.

The fly-tipping was of multiple loads of waste including tyres at locations in both the Low Moor and Clayton areas of the district.

The fly-tipping from his distinctive blue and grey Mercedes van was caught on camera by both council CCTV and footage from a member of the public.

Officers carried out an investigation and police and council wardens were alerted to look for the vehicle.

Mr Williams' van was spotted by Council Neighbourhood Wardens and was seized in a joint operation with officers from West Yorkshire Police's Operation Steerside and Bradford Council's Environmental Enforcement Team.

[Read more](#)

Two more vehicles seized by Bradford Council after being used for fly tipping



We have seized two more vehicles after they were used to carry out environmental crime.

A white Ford Transit vehicle that was seized by us earlier this year has been crushed. The van was seized by the Council's Environmental Enforcement Team in a joint operation with West Yorkshire Police in relation to multiple fly tipping offences carried out in the Allerton and Thornton areas of the district.

Using powers which came into force in 2015, the Council can seize vehicles if there is evidence that it has been used for fly-tipping and there is a suspicion that it may be used again.

The owner had over 15 days to come forward to claim the vehicle which was unregistered. After an examination the seized vehicle was seen to be worthless and un-roadworthy - as is often the case – so it has been crushed and later recycled.

You can [see the vehicle being crushed](#) on our YouTube channel.

[Read more](#)

Bradford Council seeks residents' views on its proposed budget plans for 2022-23

Consultation with local people, community groups and organisations, businesses, Council staff and trade unions has started, following the agreement of budget proposals for 2022-23 at Bradford Council's Executive meeting on 7 December.

The initial Proposed Financial Plan and Budget proposals for 2022-23 were published on Bradford Council's website on 29 November.

The consultation and full information about the proposals are available online on Bradford Council's website www.bradford.gov.uk/budget.

Paper copies are available on request by calling 01274 431000. Consultation sessions will be held and details of these will be advertised soon.

Consultation will continue until 19 January 2022, to enable the feedback to be reflected in the papers that are published for the Executive meeting on 15 February 2022. Our budget will be set at Full Council on Thursday, 17 February 2022.

[Read more](#)

Authority secures £5.3m grant to homes insulation

We have successfully bid for millions of pounds of funding to improve domestic energy efficiency for local householders.

The authority has been awarded £5.3m from the Sustainable Warmth Local Area Delivery fund, which will be used to install energy saving upgrades in 472 homes across the Bradford District.

Funded by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, the programme will dramatically reduce carbon emissions and reduce energy bills in some of the district's most deprived areas.

It will fund 'room in the roof' insulation measures for stone built 'hard to treat' properties with an inhabitable attic bedroom and will start in March 2022.

The upgrade takes around two weeks to complete and involves fully insulating attic space, plastering and redecorating the area, installing insulation vats in the windows for air flow and, if needed providing mechanical insulation to bathrooms, such as an extractor fan.

On average, the insulation measures can reduce a household's annual energy bills by £482.26 at current prices and save over 75 tonnes of carbon during a property's lifetime.

The enhancements can also add value to properties by improving EPC ratings - the measure of a building's energy efficiency.

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