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[Islanders urged not to be complacent to Covid threat](#)

As the government announces a new three-tier system of local Covid alert levels - with the Island in the 'medium' category - Islanders have been urged not to let their guard down in the continuing fight against coronavirus.

Council leader Dave Stewart has called on residents to make a renewed effort to follow national guidance to #KeepTheIslandSafe and avoid tightened restrictions under the new alert system outlined by the Prime Minister Boris Johnson yesterday (12 October).

The new system, which is intended to simplify the process by which local restrictions are imposed, would label areas as being on medium, high or very high alert. Each level would have different lockdown rules but details of the criteria for moving between each level is still to be published.

The 'medium' alert level, the lowest current option which covers most of the country, will consist of the current national measures. This includes the Rule of Six and the closure of hospitality venues at 10pm.

Thanking Islanders for responding positively to the Covid-19 threat so far, Councillor Stewart said the vital message, Hands-Face-Space, continued to hold the key to protecting the community.

He said: "There is no doubt that as a whole community we are working hard to ensure that we #KeepTheIslandSafe.

"Our infection rates are currently the lowest in the UK mainland and we need to keep it that way. We will do so if everyone continues as they are and do not take unnecessary risks.

"I want to thank you all for the way you have responded to Covid and the changing government guidance and local messages – there is no doubt that this has helped us keep the rate of infection low on the Island.

"However, there is no room for complacency; the number of cases is increasing and as we head into what is sure to be a very challenging winter — including the half-term break coming up and tackling winter flu — we must redouble our efforts and remain vigilant to the Covid-19 threat.

"Preventing the transmission of the virus is our best form of defence and to achieve that we must all continue to play our part in taking preventative measures to protect our friends, family, colleagues and fellow Islanders."

These include:

- Keep a safe distance from others — two metres is preferable.
- Wash your hands regularly and thoroughly with soap and water and use hand sanitiser where it is provided.
- Wear a face covering when you are indoors in public spaces and on public transport.
- And if you have symptoms — a high temperature, new and continuous cough, or a change in your sense of smell or taste — you must self-isolate straight away. Do that, then get a test.

Addressing the Commons, the Prime Minister outlined the three alert levels.

The 'high' alert level reflects the interventions in many local areas at the moment. This primarily aims to reduce household to household transmission, by preventing all mixing between different households or support bubbles indoors.

In these areas, the Rule of Six will continue to apply outdoors, where it is harder for the virus to spread, in public spaces as well as private gardens.

The 'very high' alert will apply where transmission rates are rising most rapidly, and where the NHS could be under "unbearable pressure" without further restrictions.

In these areas, the government will set a baseline of prohibiting social mixing indoors and in private gardens, closing pubs and bars.

Simon Bryant, the Island's director of public health, added: "I want to thank all residents for what they are doing to prevent the spread of Covid-19.

"We still need to remember to social distance, to wash our hands and to wear a face covering where required and to keep in line with the Rule of Six guidance. All these things are really important to prevent the spread of Covid and to #KeepOurIslandSafe."

The council is awaiting further details of the new alert system as well as the £1 billion of new financial support announced by government to deliver local services.

The council has released a new video highlighting the Island's response to coronavirus so far. It is available to view on the authority's YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/ZrtOyK8yWb0>