



Coronavirus update: parks and playgrounds

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Hertsmere residents are being urged to use our parks responsibly at this time of unprecedented public health emergency.

Our Street Scene team, which is responsible for parks, playgrounds, car parks and waste collections, has received a number of calls about people not adhering to social distancing in our parks and an increase in dog fouling across our open spaces. Officers are concerned as the warm weather continues combined with the Easter weekend, more people will be making unnecessary journeys to parks.

Residents are being urged to follow the governments guidelines and to stay at home, the only exceptions are for basic necessities or for one form of exercise a day. You should not be meeting up with friends or family members and to stay local, not making unnecessary journeys by car.

Councillor Seamus Quilty, Portfolio Holder for Environment, said: "It is important that we are considerate of others during this time whilst adhering to government guidelines, which are in place to keep us all safe.

"Our parks and open spaces are a haven at this time of isolation. Many people are escaping to green spaces for exercise, peace and for their mental health and wellbeing. Unfortunately, we have received reports that people are flouting the rules, so we are taking additional measures to help protect our local community.

"Following a request from police we are closing the car parks at Aberford Park, King George Recreation Ground, Salisbury Close for Oakmere Park and Furzeffield Leisure Centre to encourage people to stay within walking distance of their home. All play areas gates have been locked. Over the coming days swings will be chained out of reach and multi-play apparatus will be restricted.

"We have locked all our multi-use ball and tennis courts, however we have to weld shut the ball court gate at Meadow Park in Borehamwood after the padlock we installed following the lockdown was stolen. Given the gates were locked to keep people safe, we're very disappointed as this is putting our staff at risk and stretching our resources unnecessarily.

"Our officers have seen an increase in reports of dog fouling across our parks and open spaces. It is sad that some people have returned to not picking up their dog waste, especially at a time when our parks and open spaces are a vital resource for so many people. Please all dog owners, remember to bag it, bin it, any public bin will do. Pick up your dog waste, bag it and put it in one of the general waste bins provided across the borough. We are ensuring our waste bins in hotspot areas are checked and emptied more frequently during this period."

If you see a specific bin that needs to be emptied, or notice a playground or ball court in use, please report it to our customer service team on 020 8207 2277 or email: customer.services@hertsmere.gov.uk. This will help us to identify hotspots that may require more frequent checking and emptying, and allow us to respond quickly to ensure areas are made safe as soon as possible.

The police have been tasked to enforce the Health Protection (Coronavirus) Regulations, so if you see gatherings in our parks please contact the police by calling 101.

Cllr Quilty added: "Please remember - do not meet others, even friends or family. You can spread the virus even if you don't have

symptoms. Stay local and use open spaces near to your home where possible – do not travel unnecessarily - and adhere to the social distancing rules.

"Together we can help keep residents safe and protect our NHS."

For more information on how the council is dealing with the coronavirus outbreak, please visit our [coronavirus](#) page.

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