

26<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Dear members of the community,

The easing of many restrictions from Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May was welcome news for Haringey with most of us excited about the opportunity to meet up with friends and family again.

Cases of COVID-19 are very low in Haringey at the moment, but there has been a significant increase in cases in other parts of London. This increase is mainly due to the new B.1.617.2 variant of COVID, the so-called "Indian variant", and it is very concerning as it shows how quickly the virus can spread. Luckily, there is mounting evidence to show that those who have been vaccinated do have good protection against this variant and are not getting seriously ill, which is why it is so important to get vaccinated if you are eligible and have not yet done so. The vaccine is currently being offered to anyone over the age of 30, go to [www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination](http://www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination) to book an appointment.

As we know, around one in three people infected with COVID-19 do not have any symptoms but can still pass the infection on to others. Those who have been vaccinated may still catch and pass the virus onto others without getting sick themselves.

With the upcoming half term break for schools next week, some of you will be taking time off to be with your children, friends and family. This is a reminder to please continue to be careful and ensure that you test yourself regularly, either through collecting a test kit at your school, by picking up a test kit from any of the test sites in the borough, from a large number of community pharmacies, or by ordering a test kit online to be delivered to you. Full details of all these options are available on our website: [www.haringey.gov.uk/COVID-testing](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/COVID-testing).

For parents and secondary school children, it's good to get into the habit of testing yourself twice a week especially if you are catching up with friends or family or going into work. We recommend testing yourself on the same days each week, so you don't forget. **It is especially important that children get tested if they attend secondary school prior to returning to school after the half term break on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June.** With the so-called "Indian variant" being potentially more contagious, this will give us all peace of mind to know we are reducing the chances of bringing the virus into school and spreading it to children, young people, education staff and their families.

The current low rates of COVID-19 are a result of the sacrifices we have all made and continue to make to protect ourselves, our families and our community. None of us want a return to lockdown, so thank you for your efforts in keeping Haringey Safe.

With Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Maimaris".

Dr Will Maimaris, Interim Director of Public Health, Haringey Council