

## UPDATE / NEWS

Hi. Well, here we are in Tier 2 and approaching the festive Christmas and New Year season. It's a pity we were in lockdown during Diwali. I hope the following information is useful!

### **Vaccines – how to decipher the information overload**

There is a lot about vaccines in the various media (social, online, TV, radio and print) not to forget what is being passed on by word of mouth. Sometimes an overload of different views can lead people to end up trusting nothing. How can we decipher what is likely to be accurate and what is rumour or deliberate disinformation?

In general how do we evaluate what we see and hear? As a reminder:

Firstly - be aware of our own preconceptions – why are we drawn to certain kinds of information while dismissing others? Are we unwittingly in an [echo chamber](#)?

Source – check the information comes from a reputable source;

Headline – always read beyond the headline;

Analyse – check the facts;

Think – before repeating something.

### **London at risk of going into Tier 3 unless people are very careful over the next few weeks**

Cases in London are still high and rising in some areas. Prof Kevin Fenton, London director for Public Health England, has warned that, unless people are very careful over the next few weeks, we risk being put in Tier 3.

For a reminder of what Tier 2 restrictions mean now and choices available to us over the Christmas period, [click here](#).

### **Royal Mail in Croydon**

It appears that there may be some issues again with Royal Mail. We have been told Croydon sorting office is full and overflowing. Nigel in Canning Road says, *'My postman just delivered a week's worth of post to me in one go. He said the sorting office is full & they have had to build a marquee to store cages with parcels in.'*

If you arrange to receive a Track and Trace delivery at a certain time, you may wish to save a screen shot of what you say you'd like to happen. Most screens show the date and time which will be captured on your screen shot. You may also wish to save

a screen shot of any message Royal Mail sends you through Trace and Trace. Again your screen will likely show the date and time.

Earlier in the year a little bird told us that Royal Mail prioritises Track and Trace items. If you are sending an item to someone and want to increase the chances of it arriving / arriving in a timely fashion, you may wish to consider [Royal Mail's Track and Trace](#) service. If you have a printer at home, you can do it from home. Royal Mail's site shows that, if the item can fit through a post box, we can use the ones at the top of Clyde Road and opposite the bottom of Canning Road. The slit in the box opposite the bottom of Canning Road is the larger of the two but not big enough to take large parcels. Bigger items can be dropped off at: the Post Office in High Street, central Croydon; the Post Office in Addiscombe inside the Co-op on the Lower Addiscombe Road; the Post Office in Morland Road; the Post Office in Wickham Road, Shirley - this one is further away but walkable for the averagely fit person and generally has either no or a very short queue.

If you would like to contact Royal Mail, their website sends you round and round in circles. An alternative is to use the following email address:

[customer.service@royalmail.com](mailto:customer.service@royalmail.com)

## **Creating some decorative cheer in our two roads**

Some of our neighbours in Clyde Road have made the suggestion people might like to consider decorating the front of their homes for the Christmas / New Year period in order to increase some cheer for everyone over the season.

We appreciate that not everyone wants to decorate their home at this time of year and of course that is absolutely fine!

If, however, you do fancy the idea, then please feel free to get out the lights, if you have any. If you don't have lights, then it is possible to create simple, effective decorations without spending any money. Please see our Hints and Tips section for ideas on making decorations from recycled or found objects.

## **HINTS AND TIPS**

### **How to make decorations from recycled or found objects**

Whether we have lots of imagination or think we have none, it is possible to make decorations for free. We can start with something simple, then (who knows) we might find we are able to let our inventiveness produce things we would not have expected.

One really easy decoration to make is a mobile using a twig and string/cotton/ribbon. Simply find a twig anywhere in the road or on a walk. Attach to it anything – can be pine cones, shapes made of cardboard that you decorate, wrapping paper you've kept, old earrings or beads, buttons.

Another is to collect some evergreen, like fir tree. Alert - yew grows both in our streets and in woodland in our area. Be careful with yew – all parts of the tree are [potentially poisonous](#) so best kept away from children. Holly dries out quite quickly indoors but would likely last longer outdoors or in a porch. Collect pine cones and / or acorns and / or anything you may have at home. Attach these together, with some recycled ribbon if you have it, and hang up.

Make a small Christmas Tree (flat or, if you're really handy, 3 D) out of twigs.

Collect large twigs to put in a vase, glass or mug and hang things on them.

Use toilet rolls or kitchen rolls to make characters: snowman, people, reindeer, angel.

There are plenty of flattish stones in our gardens and woodlands (Geek fact – Blackheath Pebble Beds are part of our local geology). If you have felt tip pens, paints or silver foil, you could decorate these. Attached is a picture of stones I've seen in Littleheath Woods over the past months.

What can you do with old bits of jewellery you no longer wear?

Can toys be put to use?

How about buttons? Hooks of various kinds? Jars or bottles? Paper? Corks? Cans? Something from your favourite football, rugby or cricket team? Or from a favourite programme or music?

What else do you have in your home, possibly hidden away in a drawer, bag or box?

For more ideas for people of all ages on free and easy decorations to make, click on the following links. Not all of what you see might be suitable but keep scrolling through for ideas.

Scroll through ideas on [this page](#), [this page](#) and [this page](#). There are of course many more ideas online.

If you make something, do please consider emailing it to us. Experiments are by their very nature hit and miss so don't hold back even if your decoration turns out differently from how you'd planned! It would be fun to put them all together in a jpeg and circulate with a weekly update.

## **TO MAKE YOU SMILE**

Alexa. Please see attached mpeg.

## **RELIABLE SOURCES OF ACCURATE INFORMATION**

**Croydon Council services**

<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/healthsocial/phealth/coronavirus-information/service-updates>

**Test and Trace and If you have to self-isolate in Croydon**

<https://new.croydon.gov.uk/coronavirus-information-and-service-updates/test-and-trace-keeping-croydon-safe/keeping-croydon-safe>

**National – furlough, self-employed, small businesses, benefits, housing**

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

**Job Help**

<https://jobhelp.campaign.gov.uk/>  
[Seven key tips for finding a job](#)

**Health**

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

**Money**

<https://new.croydon.gov.uk/coronavirus-information-and-service-updates/get-help-your-council-tax-and-benefits>

<https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en>

<https://www.turn2us.org.uk/>

<https://www.fca.org.uk/>

**Citizens Advice**

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/health/coronavirus-what-it-means-for-you/>

**Shelter**

[https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing\\_advice/coronavirus](https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/coronavirus)