

Joint statement regarding Raksha Bandhan 2020

This period of extended lockdown has been a considerable challenge to residents and businesses, forcing us to explore different ways of doing things. Workplaces have changed, how we communicate with each other has changed, and the way we celebrate the things that are important to residents across Leicester and Leicestershire have changed too.

As we continue our efforts to do all that we can to prevent the spread of COVID19 in our areas, we have to focus the minds of our communities on the very simple things as we currently understand them and that will help us to continue to reduce the level and transmission of COVID19 in Leicester and Leicestershire.

Over the last few months, celebrations and community events that normally take pride of place in the festivals calendar have changed or not taken place at all. With Raksha Bandhan coming up, another important religious event for a number of communities in Leicester and Leicestershire, once again things will no doubt take place very differently.

Meeting other families or members of the extended family network is an essential part of the Raksha Bandhan festival. Sisters will meet brothers and cousins to tie the symbolic string around the male relative's wrist.

Under the current enhanced lockdown arrangements, when people do come together outside, they must limit numbers to no more than six people and of course still apply the expected strict social distancing measures, staying two metres apart. Particularly for sisters and brothers from different households, Rakhdhis may have to be tied by a member within the brother's household.

Following the most recent review of the lockdown arrangements, we wish to remind you of the government's instructions that in Leicester you cannot mix with people who you don't live with, either in the home, any other indoor space or private garden. This will obviously affect how you celebrate Raksha Bandhan this year, either inside or outside. Government advice around limiting social contact, travel and gatherings apply to the city of Leicester and its residents.

In the Borough of Oadby and Wigston, only - this does not apply to Leicester, from Monday 3 August more than one household can now meet but we urge you to maintain social distancing of two metres at all times.

Finally, we wish you all an early Raksha Bandhan and look forward once again to sharing stories of how our residents have responded to this crisis, particularly as we continue to find new ways to celebrate safely together.

