



## How to support businesses

### Why we are urging you to shop local

Local business is essential for our economy. They bring growth and innovation to our communities. They provide employment and create entrepreneurship opportunities and support the local economies, communities, and neighbourhoods. They also care about their community and help make our town centres so special and unique. During these worrying times, many independent businesses in the borough will suffer greatly as the public take the government's advice to stay indoors.

We have pulled together some simple ways that we can all help support these places, while still keeping our distance.

### **Order from a takeaway from local restaurants and cafes**

Ordering from your local restaurants or cafes online is one of the easiest ways you can support local businesses, whilst keeping yourself safe. Many restaurants already have an online delivery service in place - including ones that did not provide this service previously. Visit their website, find them on delivery platforms such as Deliveroo, Just Eat or Uber Eats or visit local community websites such as [Tooting Newsie](#) and [Balham Newsie](#). [My Virtual neighbourhood](#) Some third-party apps can charge local restaurants fees, so if you can order directly, do so.

### **Order from your favourite local shops online**

There are a number of local businesses that are still managing to trade during covid-19, and they need your support. Many local bookshops, gift shops or boutiques are just a few of the businesses offering online purchases, delivery or click and collect services. Visit their website or Instagram page for details or find them on platforms such as [My virtual neighbourhood.com](#), [ShopAppy](#) and [Hive](#), an online platform for independent bookshops.

### **Purchase gift Cards or vouchers to use at a later date**

Why not purchase a gift card or voucher from a local business to use when you get to visit these shops in person again? Several shops, hair salons, spas and restaurants in the borough sell gift cards and vouchers, and this is a great way to support local cafes, bars and shops that are unable to provide delivery, but still need your help.

### **Avoid refunds and postpone instead of cancelling**

Another way to support a local business during the coronavirus outbreak is to see what other options they can offer. To prevent being left out of pocket, some music and theatre venues are giving customers the opportunity to put their ticket price towards a different event at a later date when the crisis is over. If you had a reservation and paid a deposit, consider moving your reservation

back to a random date in later in the year rather than immediately demanding your deposit back. If this is something a local business is unable to provide, you could consider offering the price of your ticket as a donation.

### **Sign up to an online class**

With facilities having to temporarily close, many business owners are now streaming sessions online. From yoga workouts and dance classes to creative writing and music classes for kids, there are a number of classes you can opt to take part in online, so if a local business offers this option, take it.

### **Upload the details of your favourite businesses onto an online platform**

ShopAppy, Hive and My Virtual neighbourhood.com are just a few of the platforms showcasing local independent businesses that are still able to trade during covid-19. In addition to businesses owners uploading their information, members of the public can also submit details of business that they know are still trading.

### **Social media**

You do not even have to make a purchase to show your support to local businesses. Small gestures such as sharing a delivery menu of a local restaurant, sharing/liking the post of a business still trading are great ways help spread the message that they are still open for business.

If you are a website designer, developer, or a social media expert, why not offer your services to local businesses that don't have an online presence to help them sell and promote online?