



**SUBJECT:** Vehicles and Covid-19

**RECIPIENTS:** All Council Services (including schools)

**ISSUE DATE:** April 2020      **REF:** HSB 162

## How clean is your vehicle?

We all know how important it is to follow government guidelines and stay at home, apart from, for example, if we are classed as an essential worker and must drive to, or for, work. For those still using their cars, the need for good hygiene within our vehicles has never been more important.

If using a vehicle, you may be washing your hands when you get back home, but have you ever considered how you could be contaminating the interior of your car? According to research, cars are dirtier than we realise, with the average car harbouring over 3862 units of bacteria per square inch. In simpler terms, that's 19 times more bacteria than the average toilet seat.

To make sure we're doing our bit and keeping our vehicles safe and clean to reduce the chances of spreading the Coronavirus, follow these simple car cleaning hints and tips:-



- **Wear appropriate clothing-** before cleaning, make sure you've wearing suitable clothing, and if possible, protected from potential germs, by wearing an apron and rubber gloves, for example.
- **Hoover and remove all rubbish-** hoover all the dirt and hairs from the interior of your car, remove your mats and soak them for approx. 30 minutes in well mixed hot water and detergent. Don't forget the boot- this is where most foreign objects such as shopping and shopping bags will be placed, and these could have germs on.
- **Clean every surface-** Wipe all surfaces with a damp cloth to remove excess heavy deposits of dirt and grime
- **Clean and prioritise areas that are frequently touched by yourself or passengers-** This includes door handles, inside and out of the car, the steering wheel, seatbelts and seatbelt holders, buttons and dials on the dashboard, the ignition button, the gearstick, arm rests, window switches, the handbrake, and your keys, then work your way through the rest of the vehicle.
- **Clean your surfaces with interior car cleaner-** Use a shop bought cleaning product, many of which suit all surfaces (if you are struggling to find suitable cleaner at present, you can make your own with equal parts water and white vinegar) If you have leather upholstery, a specialist leather cleaner is recommended
- **Disinfect your car-** Take an alcohol-based disinfectant and a sponge and rub down the inside of your car, focusing on the previously mentioned most touched parts, and allow this to dry. If you don't have an alcohol-based disinfectant, you can use a bleach-free household disinfectant.

**Don't forget-** wash or disinfect your hands prior to re-entering your car, as you don't want to bring new germs back into your now clean, germ free vehicle

**If you require further assistance or clarification on the subject please contact:**

**Corporate Health & Safety Advisers (see George section: Corporate > Information for Working > Risk Management > H&S Advisers)**