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## News and Features from Harborough District Council - Sept 2020

# Harborough District News



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**Councillor Phil King**  
Leader of Harborough  
District Council

### A chance to have your say

This month; we are encouraging residents to make their views known on a number of important consultations.

We know the issue of planning and new housing can be an emotive topic which is why we want people to engage with the Government on proposed future reforms to the planning system in England.

A parallel consultation is also running about Government proposals to improve the effectiveness to the current planning system.

There are many big issues to discuss so I implore people to take this opportunity to have their say.

We have also commissioned a survey into our parks and open spaces which have become so important particularly at this time when people are keen to get back to nature and take more opportunities for walking and physical exercise.

Your feedback is crucial and could help shape future policy both nationally and locally.

**Cllr Phil King**

### Stay safe and alert

You will be acutely aware that coronavirus has **not** gone away with a rise in Covid-19 cases reported in the Harborough district this week.

This is a stark reminder that we all need to do our bit and we remind people to continue to observe **social distancing**, **wear masks** in shops and indoor public spaces, and, if you experience any symptoms - **get tested**.

Anyone who visits The Symington Building in Market Harborough - where the Council is based - will be required to wear face masks / coverings in all public areas of the building.

This is following more services opening within the Library, and Insomnia cafe now offering a sit-down service.

## Calls to have your say on Government reforms to planning system



The public are being urged to have their say on Government plans to 'streamline and modernise' the planning process.

Proposals include reforms to the 'local plan' system and making greater use of digital technology in the planning process.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government said its 'Planning for the Future' reforms would allow local planning authorities to designate land into one of three categories: for growth, renewal or protection.

It is proposed that land identified for growth would be approved for development at the same time as plan preparations, allowing for new housing and other important infrastructure to be "built quickly and efficiently", providing plans meet local design standards.

Protected land – including the green belt – will continue to be safeguarded under the proposals.

Have your say before **29 October 2020** at [www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future](http://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future) or email [planningforthefuture@communities.gov.uk](mailto:planningforthefuture@communities.gov.uk)

Alongside this consultation, the Government is carrying out a technical consultation on 'Changes to the Current Planning System'. This focuses on changes to the current planning system ahead of proposals made in the Planning White paper

The consultation includes the following:

- changes to the standard method for assessing local housing need
- securing of First Homes through developer contributions
- temporarily lifting the small sites threshold
- extending the current Permission in Principle to major development

Have your say before **1 October 2020** at [www.gov.uk/government/consultations/changes-to-the-current-planning-system](http://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/changes-to-the-current-planning-system)

Alternatively you can email your response to the questions in this consultation to:

[TechnicalPlanningConsultation@communities.gov.uk](mailto:TechnicalPlanningConsultation@communities.gov.uk)  
You can also respond in writing. Further details can be found via the first link above.

## Have your say and help us protect parks and open spaces for the future

We have some of the most beautiful, well-used and tranquil parks and open spaces in the county and we need your views to help us protect them.

Harborough District Council has appointed The Environment Partnership (TEP) to produce an Open

Space Strategy and we're encouraging you to share your thoughts on parks and green spaces.

Harborough District spans 238 square miles across south and east Leicestershire and features some 1,500ha of open space sites of varying size and purpose. These open spaces form a valuable network of green space providing recreational opportunities for the community, as well as essential habitats for a range of species.

The Council owns and manage 300ha of open space across the District, with the remaining sites in private ownership.

Your comments will feed into the Local Plan and help us protect existing open spaces and how we can assess demand for more in the future.

Have your say before 13 October 2020

[www.tep.uk.com/project/harborough-district-open-space-strategy/](http://www.tep.uk.com/project/harborough-district-open-space-strategy/)



## Council Chairman uses pedal power to raise funds - and you can help!



Harborough District Council's Chairman, Cllr Stephen Bilbie, is getting on his [static] bike to raise money for charity – and he is asking you to kindly sponsor him.

Cllr Bilbie (pictured in training), a district councillor for the Fleckney ward since 2015, will take part in a sponsored back ride from his back garden on Saturday 19 September 2020 from 8:30am.

He will be travelling 61 miles 'virtually' around the Harborough District, starting from and finishing at The Old Grammar School, Market Harborough without ever leaving his garden.

Cllr Bilbie, who became Chairman in June, will be raising money for his chosen charity Vista, which works with people with sight loss and their families in Leicestershire.

His virtual journey will take him to Lutterworth, Ullesthorpe, Broughton Astley, Dunton Bassett, Fleckney, the Kibworths, Great Glen, Houghton on the Hill, Billesdon, and Hallaton.

Along the way he will virtually pass by Lubenham, Theddingworth, Husbands Bosworth, North Kilworth, Walcote, Bitteswell, Leire, Frolesworth, Ashby Magna, Willoughby Waterleys, Peatling Magna, Arnesby, Little Stretton, Great Stretton, and Tugby.

Please help spread the word and show your support by sponsoring the Chairman on his JustGiving page here:

[www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/chairman-harboroughdistrictcouncil-2](http://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/chairman-harboroughdistrictcouncil-2)

## Plans underway for a Christmas with a difference to help boost shops

Plans are underway to organise an 'alternative' Christmas – with a Victorian theme – to give local businesses a much-needed boost.

In what has been a hugely challenging year for shops and businesses, Harborough District Council will work with local businesses and retail groups with a view to staging a series of alternative Christmas events.

Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the traditional Christmas lights switch on in Market Harborough, which has attracted big crowds annually, cannot go ahead. However, the Christmas tree on The Square and festive lights for the town will be installed as usual to kick off the festive season from the 20 November 2020, as well as the small trees above shop fronts.

Proposals for a Victorian Christmas market are also being explored, as well as Late Night Shopping, children's Victorian trail, fancy dress and photography competition, window dressing competition, and a festive 'shop local' campaign, as a further boost to the local economy.

In addition to supporting Market Harborough's Victorian Christmas, Harborough District Council is also looking to support businesses in other towns and villages to help maximise the opportunities to encourage people to 'shop local' at this important time of year for the retail sector.

Full details of festive events will be shared as they are confirmed.



## Keep a 'warm home' during the cold weather with fully-funded heating



Does your home need extra insulation to keep out the chills as the weather gets colder?

If so, you could benefit from the Leicestershire Warm Homes Fund initiative run by Leicestershire County Council in partnership with E.ON and Age UK.

The project will primarily offer the installation of fully funded, first-time gas central heating for up to 500 homeowners and tenants.

Even if you're not connected to gas the initiative can help.

In addition, eligible residents may be able to receive free insulation measures for their homes, as well as benefit from free energy efficiency advice and support on how to better manage their income from Age UK.

Residents are encouraged to complete the simple contact form: [www.leicestershire.gov.uk/warm-homes-fund](http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/warm-homes-fund) or telephone 0116 305 4286 and an advisor will complete the form on your behalf.

## 'Thanks for shopping at indoor market - but please keep supporting us'

Traders at Harborough Indoor Market have thanked shoppers for supporting them through the lockdown period and are urging the public to continue that support.

The message from stallholders is that they are very much open for business and that the market is a safe, Covid-19 secure environment to shop.

The measures that felt strange at first; floor markings, queues, one-way systems and wearing masks, have become integral to shopping, with the processes at Harborough Market receiving overwhelming support from the public, many of which complimented the staff on how safe they felt inside the market, and how important it has been to them over the past few months.

"Totally great, quality food. I don't usually have time to visit the market when working, but I shall be changing my shopping habits when this is all over, market all the way," said one social media comment. "Thank you, Harborough Market. I breezed past the supermarkets and straight to the amazing butchers, deli, cleaning products and fresh veg. All done & back home in 30 mins," said another shopper.

Traders are also urging the public to show them some on-line support. Harborough District Council has organised two social media training sessions for stallholders in a bid to help them promote their business to a digital audience.

If you wish to keep up to date with the latest Harborough Market news and products follow them on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter.

Harborough Market is open Tuesday to Saturday 8am to 3pm in the Food Hall and 8am to 3pm in the General Hall.



## Chance to apply for funding if your local project meets the criteria



Do you know of a project that is aiming to promote a healthy, inclusive & engaged community - or a village hall, sports hall or community centre that needs support to reopen?

If so, there is funding available through Harborough District Council's Community Grant Fund.

The Community Grant Fund is an inclusive fund, open to all parishes, plus voluntary and community groups.

The amount available is £25,000 (grant limit between £1,000 and £5,000).

Projects must support one or more of the objectives below:

- Improvements or provision of outdoor facilities



- Youth related capital projects such as sports or arts, equipment or facilities
- Improving the environment

Please note: Groups that have previously received funding within the last 3 years will not be eligible.

The deadline for applications is **Friday 25 September 2020**.

People can also apply for a small grant that will help village halls, sports halls or community centres reopen.

Grants of up to £500 are available to fund signage, plastic screens for bars, line marking, outdoor seating, additional cleaning supplies, or PPE where deemed necessary.

The amount available is £13,000 (grant limit £500).

The deadline for applications is **Friday 18 September 2020**

Find out more at [www.harborough.gov.uk/grants](http://www.harborough.gov.uk/grants)

## Young resident's poster impresses so much it's turned into park signs

Following recent dog fouling issues in Little Bowden, a young resident named Cameron decided to write into the Council to highlight the problem.

Cameron also designed some signs (see below) for the park to help deter dog fouling.

We decided to have these designs made into Correx posters and placed around Little Bowden recreation ground.

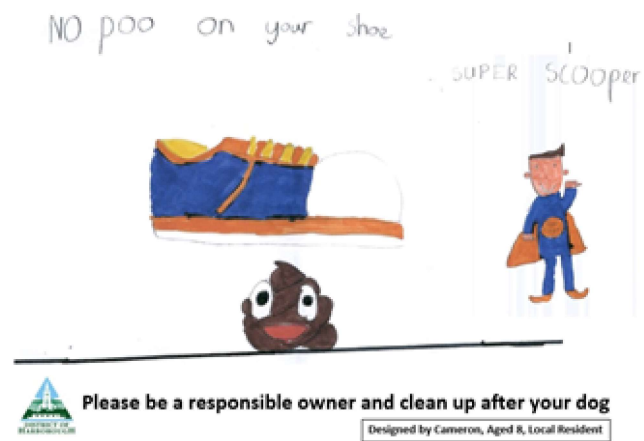
Our contractors at FCC have also put together a goodie bag for Cameron (pictured) as a show of thanks for his help and showing awareness towards environmental crime issues.

The goodie bag consisted of a 'hi-vis', a set of pens, a large box of bio-degradable dog bags that can be handed out to residents, an Amazon voucher and a copy of his poster.

This was delivered (socially distanced) to his doorstep by our Environmental Services Manager and Senior Environmental Services Officer.

Cameron was delighted and pleasantly surprised upon receiving this.





## More detail if building hours to be extended

Developers who request extensions to construction working hours, must provide much greater detail on why the extension is needed and how local disruption will be minimised under new measures.

In May 2020, the Government announced that construction working hours should be extended, in agreement with the local authority, to help progress building projects which had been halted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

It aims to promote safe working in line with social distancing guidance and stagger the number of workers on any building site at any time.

Now the Government has formalised the process requiring developers, who apply to extend working hours, to provide much greater detail to justify why the extension is needed and what will be done to minimise local disruption.

## Changes to parking permit discount

Changes to long stay permit charges in our Harborough district car parks come into effect on 4 September 2020.

This follows a decision made as part of the last review of the Parking Order in 2017 to reduce the discount for car park permits from 40% to 33% in 2020.

This still represents a considerable saving on the daily charge of £4.00, reducing the cost to £2.70 on a six-day annual permit.

No other fees are affected by this change and there will be no increase in the hourly or daily rate for parking.

More details are available on the Council website at [www.harborough.gov.uk/carpark-permit](http://www.harborough.gov.uk/carpark-permit)


## Chance to win holiday voucher with lotto

Buying a Harborough Lotto ticket could mean winning a voucher towards a family holiday surrounded by nature.

As well as supporting local charities, Harborough Lotto players will have a chance to win a £500 voucher towards a fantastic holiday, along with all the usual cash prizes up for grabs, including a possible £25,000 jackpot.

The winner, who can choose any Forest Holidays location, from Scotland to Cornwall, Snowdonia to Norfolk and more, will be revealed on the 31 October 2020 draw date.

To buy tickets, and be in with a chance of winning the forest staycation and other cash prizes, go to [www.harboroughlotto.co.uk](http://www.harboroughlotto.co.uk) or call 01858 40 50 50.



HM Government **NHS**

# CORONAVIRUS KEEP A SAFE DISTANCE

- Keep 2 metres apart where possible
- Limit contact with other people
- Wash your hands the moment you get home

For more ways to stay safe go to [gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

**STAY ALERT ▶ CONTROL THE VIRUS ▶ SAVE LIVES**

Read the latest **Coronavirus outbreak FAQs: what you can and can't do** at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do)

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