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News and Features from Harborough District Council - June 2020

Harborough District News



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

We salute you!

It would be hard to disagree that the last few weeks and months have been some of the most testing in our lifetime.

The coronavirus pandemic has impacted on all our lives and brought with it challenges on a scale unseen since the Second World War. But what is most striking is that this crisis has generated huge community spirit and generosity. This spirit is exemplified in those volunteers who have put themselves forward when it mattered. Those people who have reached out across our communities to lend a hand when it was desperately needed.

This week is National Volunteers Week, and whilst volunteers can make a difference in so many different ways and so many walks of life, it is timely to recognise and thank – not just our amazing NHS heroes – but also those people from the Harborough district who are selflessly helping deliver food parcels, collecting prescriptions, or contacting people who may be feeling vulnerable or lonely.

I thank everyone who has gone above and beyond at this critical time; your efforts are something that everyone in this district

Do you need support from our local hub?

If you, or someone you know, is vulnerable or self-isolating, and does not have a local support network, you can contact Harborough District Council's Community Hub if you:

- need immediate help with supplies of essential food
- are feeling lonely or would like a friendly phone call or text message
- would like to connect with a local community group
- need transport to medical appointments
- would like advice about staying active and exercising

To refer yourself or someone you are concerned about please visit:
www.harborough.gov.uk/hd-community-hub

If you cannot use the online forms please email:
communityhub@harborough.gov.uk
including contact details and

should be extremely proud of. Thank you.

support required or call
01858 821 232 from 9am-5pm.

Councillor Phil King

Hundreds being helped locally as we look towards the road to recovery



Across the district; we are all doing our bit to rise to the challenges faced by the coronavirus pandemic - and really **good progress** is being made.

Our primary focus as a Council is moving from the coronavirus response phase to the **recovery phase** as we look to support communities and businesses going forward and get them back on track.

With the help of volunteers, as mentioned above, and redeployed council staff, our **community hub** continues to support those who are self-isolating or who need assistance in some way.

So far approximately 900 residents and families have been helped by our hub, and across the county, thousands more people are being given vital support thanks to community hubs. We are also working with the NHS to help bring **mobile testing units** to the district so people with coronavirus symptoms, via an online booking system, can get tested and return to work if they test negative.

Recently, due to the Government's lifting of restrictions, the Council has **reopened the tennis courts** at Welland Park in Market Harborough, with social distancing measures and signage in place. All Council-owned play areas and skate parks remain closed, with signage, for the safety of the public.

With a lot more people out walking; the Council has been encouraging residents to report dog fouling hotspots to us. As a result we have seen a small increase in reports and our **environmental crime** team has responded by targeting patrols accordingly.

We have stopped over 400 people with dogs since 20 April 2020 to check if they have a means to pick up dog fouling; all stopped had dog bags with them. We have also actively patrolled areas of concern and not witnessed anyone not picking up dog fouling, which was good to see. Dog fouling will not be tolerated in the district and anyone who is caught, or is found not to be carrying bags to pick up after their dogs, can be fined £100 or up to £1,000 if the case goes to court.

If anyone has a location they would like patrolling please report this to envirocrime@harborough.gov.uk

The County Council also reopened **Market Harborough recycling and household waste site** for the disposal of waste, [via appointment only](#), which is unsafe to be stored at home.

Contact your local councillor

Remember you can contact your local ward councillor if you need to ask them anything. But please do **not**



contact councillors if you require support from the coronavirus community hub (those details are above).

Councillors can assist and support with a number of issues.

[Councillor's wards and contact details are available on the Council website here](#)

Virtual meetings, and new grant pot, to offer further business boost

Harborough District Council has now shared out all of its allocated Government funding to local businesses – a total of over £19.5m – but is continuing to provide further **grants** which are needed from its own funds.

The Government recently published an [updated list of all local authority distributions](#) and Harborough District Council was ranked **4th best performing local authority** in England, out of 314 Councils, in terms of getting grants to businesses.

A Lutterworth business said: "I'm glad to say that the speed in which the Council managed to forward us our grant in the middle of all this chaos was amazingly fast and truly appreciated. Coming at a time when many businesses are very concerned about how they are going to deal with this unprecedented situation. Their communications with our company was exceptional; we had our payment within five days of filling out the application. A huge thank you to HDC for the great effort they have put into this mammoth task."

The Government's **Discretionary Business Grants Scheme** which aims to help businesses which may not have been eligible for previous financial support is now launched - [view more details here](#).

This week, businesses are being asked how the Council can provide further support as part its continued drive to boost the local economy during the coronavirus pandemic.

We are hosting two invite-only **virtual business meetings** to ask how we can provide further support to boost the local economy during the coronavirus pandemic.

We will be talking to a number of small, medium, and large businesses which have been invited from different sectors including retail, rural, food and drink and tourism.

The meetings will pose questions to businesses such as; 'What innovations or diversification has your business considered' and 'What is the one non-financial intervention the Council could do to assist or enable your business into recovery'.

A **poster for shop owners** has also been created by the Council to give shops practical advice on social distancing and keeping customers safe in readiness for the town centre 'reopening' later this month.



Garden transformed at hospital to benefit NHS heroes and patients



Harborough District Council, in partnership with FCC Environment has restored the garden at St Luke's Hospital in Market Harborough to its former glory. St Luke's put out an appeal on Facebook, asking for help to breathe some life back into the rundown garden. A member of FCC Environment's staff saw the appeal, and with the help of Harborough District Council decided to step in.

The garden, which is used by both patients and staff, has since been transformed. Old turf has been replaced with gravel, benches have been repaired and re-painted, and new self-watering planters and plants have been installed, all creating a mindful environment for patients and staff to enjoy as we move into the summer months.

The project also captured the imagination of local plant and machinery business Harborough Hire, who kindly lent the project team a mini-digger free of charge.

Test and trace service to stop virus spread

The new NHS Test and Trace service has been officially launched across England.

The Government [has published an overview of the new service](#), including what happens if you test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or have had close contact with someone who has tested positive.

The new programme brings together four tools to control the virus:

- **Test:** increasing availability and speed of testing
- **Trace:** when someone tests positive for Coronavirus, identify any close recent contacts they've had
- **Contain:** identify any localised outbreaks and support effective local responses, including plans to quickly deploy testing facilities to particular locations.
- **Enable:** the Government will learn more about the virus, including as the science develops, to explore how to go further in

Improve your balance and strength online

The current lockdown situation has meant we've all been spending a lot more time in house than before, but keeping active and mobile is crucial at this challenging time.

With this in mind; we have been working with one of our physical activity instructors Vanessa, who helps run our Steady Steps programme around the district, to produce a video to improve mobility, strength and balance.

The video is primarily aimed at older adults and, if you think a member of your family could benefit from the online sessions, please pass it on to them.

We are also looking at producing a handbook for those not online, including screen shots from the video.

You can view the video via the link and also subscribe to our Active Harborough District channel on YouTube.

[Strength and Balance Video for adults](#)
[Active Harborough YouTube Channel](#)

Site working hours could be extended

Construction working hours could be extended, under new Government guidance, to allow building projects to progress safely – but only if agreed by the Council.

In line with new Government guidance and to encourage safer working on building sites where social distancing might be challenging during the Covid-19 pandemic, Harborough District Council will consider requests by developers to extend construction hours to 9pm Mondays to Saturdays only (not public or bank holidays).

Longer hours can be considered in circumstances where there are no residential properties nearby.

This will aim to stagger the number of workers on any building site at once and encourage social distancing.

Current permitted construction working hours are 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday, and 8am until 1pm on Saturdays, with no construction work permitted on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

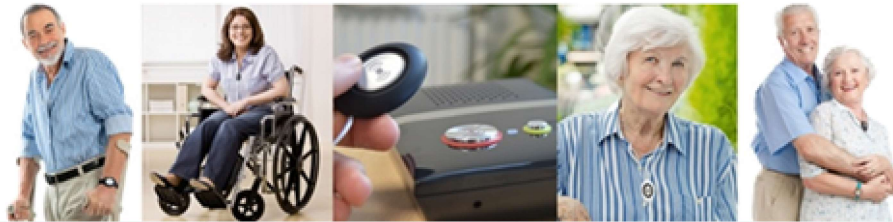
[Read more here](#)

easing infection control measures.

Harborough Lifeline

For anyone who feels vulnerable or alone, whatever their age or needs

Visit www.harborough.gov.uk/harboroughlifeline



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Harborough District Community Lottery

www.harboroughlotto.co.uk

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