**MDC Parish Briefing**



**Issue 3**

**18th April, 2020**

**Latest News**

**Mendip paid out 14million in grants to local businesses**

Mendip District Council has issued more than £14 million in grants to over 1,000 organisations affected by the Coronavirus crisis – offering a lifeline to Mendip businesses and the local economy. Some 3,500 companies across the district will be assisted through the government’s measures (additional reliefs and/or grants), and small businesses are being encouraged to apply online to access the help.  Application forms are easy to navigate and can be found on Mendip District Council’s website: [www.mendip.gov.uk/businessrates](https://www.mendip.gov.uk/businessrates)

**An urgent appeal to Mendip businesses – do you have PPE stock?**

With high demand for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) across the country and supply chains under significant pressure, support is being requested from local PPE suppliers or any businesses that has stock which could be used. The key items required are:

* Water repellent surgical face masks
* Non-latex gloves
* Disposable plastic aprons
* Eye protection
* Hand sanitizers (minimum 60% alcohol content)

Businesses that can help with the supply of these essential PPE items are asked to e-mail [**COVIDdonations@avonandsomerset.police.uk**](mailto:COVIDdonations@avonandsomerset.police.uk)**.**

**Bonfire ban**

With everyone staying at home during these difficult times, the Council is asking Mendip residents to be considerate to their neighbours and avoid having bonfires.

Smoke from fires can aggravate the symptoms of vulnerable people and cause people stress when they are staying at home to shield, isolate or social distance. Additionally, the risk of uncontrolled fires places unnecessary demand on the Fire Service.

Our advice is to compost your garden waste or if it is not suitable to compost, store it, as well as any other waste, until it can be collected or taken to one of our household recycling centres once they reopen.

We realise this is not ideal, but your cooperation during this time will help you and your neighbours to stay at home, protect the NHS and save lives.

More information can be found on our website:

[www.mendip.gov.uk/article/7521/Smoke-Nuisance-and-Dark-Smoke](http://www.mendip.gov.uk/article/7521/Smoke-Nuisance-and-Dark-Smoke)

**Empty properties to become homes again?**

Mendip’s Housing Team has been mailshotting owners of empty homes to encourage them to be used to house people at risk of homelessness.  More than 600 letters have been issued.

Clear instructions are given on who to contact if they want to let their homes, highlighting the current issues we are having.  Any enquires can come to [housing.admin@mendip.gov.uk](mailto:housing.admin@mendip.gov.uk) or [privatesectorhousing@mendip.gov.uk](mailto:privatesectorhousing@mendip.gov.uk)

**Fly-tipping reports – we’re watching**

**This is a national story but it’s not happening in our backyard, or that of the other Somerset districts, who also report no real uplift. Increases in fly-tipping appear to be anecdotal stories, so far as Somerset is concerned. Here is Mendip’s official response:**

Comparing March 2019 and March 2020, there is about a 10% uplift on the number of fly tipping incidents, however when taking into account the snow last March, would account for the uplift on fly tips. At present, we do not believe the statistics show any perceived problems with increased fly-tipping from our experience in Mendip.

**Somerset’s Coronavirus helpline receives hundreds of calls**

Available for anyone in the county who needs Coronavirus-related support from their council. It’s open seven days a week from 8am-6pm**.** It’s received more than 700 calls since its launch on the 6th April. Some 173 calls were taken over the bank holiday weekend alone. Frequently raised topics by callers include the provision of personal care and support and financial queries. The Helpline is a partnership of the Districts and County Council and is working with a range of other partners including Mindline. The focus of the Helpline is now to do over 1000 call outs to residents to ensure they have not been overlooked and to offer support should it be required.

**Somerset’s Coronavirus helpline:** 0300 790 6275

**Missing Mendip Markets?**

Our wonderful markets are shut, but did you know we have a virtual market operating online! So you can continue to support local Mendip Market traders while you stay home, and stay safe. Browse here: [**www.mendip.gov.uk/markets**](http://www.mendip.gov.uk/markets)

**Domestic Violence awareness campaign launched**

A Government campaign has been launched to highlight that anyone is at risk of, or experiencing, domestic abuse, is still able leave and seek refuge. They want to start a social media movement using the hashtag #YouAreNotAlone. Please spread the message using the hashtag #YouAreNotAlone in your post. Please also link to:

[**www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help**](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fguidance%2Fdomestic-abuse-how-to-get-help%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR0Sv6Bu2NaPpfaUDo4bqJAHoq5uKtiwa8MDy2x_tR58w8WPRhM2fjXNb1U&h=AT2R1IsXNWNePxaUhK8M-jVNIozRP9rULtkLT5uWfcL1B5wDR4uieorXQjQl26egyODfj_DtRlXJYDChwFwDKfs-Ov0J2YXTLrVi7P22pHAUOpP1mgV0SheZWgDDRVMTj5AR77kIkIpKya-5BM7WX-FGgMJYR3yL7bvZqivyDpITh2rNo8voekHVl_t8TW_14EDXqbTN8LkURx0ONrJpN-Q3ILRmK7R8hHnmZqxbDknen-D40es9qh8qbXdRIc97_UplWC6bHqJcNbURbk3RTzRuDeoTvaTKfvPhqntY_klX0rldypKNCzwVHMURoKcIOmtKiBSa1tx5OgL4AMNsmC509YQhrPeOEQZRJ8pxuyO4W4wCeF7tYlmbZ8yuKVsq_cQnEQozVGXWfhfxkpbe_llnov8x5k4k3GoMJhLFDKBTcs3Rbr16P-NER6DhH5oYLqXbeAR6w7wD9w8_leAOxX8z7mwKQFaGhkd2Z950Wn4D3C3NO0sgTMvW4DKtX9Rz4G51BOZmwo2QZCEM0sF2FzYJsRXriiS8mm30TrL6tLMk3WTJdG-IzRWkITL5haMnNkcGEVW8yCLNa7nCjH1WMgZn-RK8GWJAbfxhLstf9UEd31ab6W0Ze62Uqf-nIQ)

**Council financial relief against cash flow pressures**

The Government has announced new measures to help ease immediate financial pressures faced by councils in England due to the coronavirus outbreak.

Councils will be able to defer £2.6 billion of payments they are due to make to central government over the next three months as part of the business rates retention scheme.

Councils are doing crucial work to support vulnerable people and the wider communities get through this crisis. This includes delivering essential supplies to the vulnerable, paying out financial relief to local businesses and getting rough sleepers into accommodation.

The government will continue to work with councils over the coming weeks to monitor their financial situation.

[www.gov.uk/government/news/councils-given-greater-financial-relief-against-cash-flow-pressures](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/councils-given-greater-financial-relief-against-cash-flow-pressures)

**Keep Mendip connected**

Mendip District Council has a corporate Facebook page. Please follow us for the latest news, commentary and campaigns. [**MDC Official Facebook Page**](https://www.facebook.com/mendipcouncil/?__tn__=%2Cd%2CP-R&eid=ARCw4WgBFLv0u19cGkdjrzHTT2NChSrhTnKnKI7QY76Zp0JYa7fS69gH1GROyzy26r3amgoP0SvcDvwI).

We are also on Twitter twitter.com/MendipCouncil and LinkedIn [www.linkedin.com/company/mendip-district-council](http://www.linkedin.com/company/mendip-district-council)

**Grant help**

**Rural Response Emergency Grants Programme**

The Prince’s Countryside Fund is inviting applications for emergency funding from farming and rural community support groups, who are providing assistance to counter the effects of isolation during the Coronavirus pandemic.

[www.princescountrysidefund.org.uk/grant-giving-programme/grant-programme](https://www.princescountrysidefund.org.uk/grant-giving-programme/grant-programme)

**Western Power Distribution (WPD) has just launched a fund**

Cash is available for registered charities or community groups, parish and town councils and local authorities. This £500k fund intends to support communities affected by the coronavirus outbreak within WPD’s operating region, by helping local organisations to deliver vital support and services directly people in vulnerable situations.

[www.westernpower.co.uk/customers-and-community/in-this-together-community-matters-fund](http://www.westernpower.co.uk/customers-and-community/in-this-together-community-matters-fund)

The BBC is holding a ‘[Big Night In Charity Appeal](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMjQsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMDA0MDkuMTk5ODIzNDEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy5iYmMuY28udWsvbWVkaWFjZW50cmUvbGF0ZXN0bmV3cy8yMDIwL3RoZS1iaWctbmlnaHQtaW4ifQ.g0CegkKNuptwbIBpBw836o-PMoDpGR5jeli3SlZs_hw/br/77245858065-l)’ on 23 April, which the Government will be match funding.

**Health Matters**

**Help the Government increase its testing capacity**

The Department of Health and Social Care has wants to hear from companies who can manufacture and supply: consumables and equipment for coronavirus testing, in particular test kits (such as nose and throat swabs, transport media and vials) and RNA extraction lab consumables (such as reagents, plates and pipette tips) new or existing types of coronavirus tests for antigens or antibodies. These must meet the requirement set out by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). They also want to hear from organisations that can offer laboratory capacity.

More information on how to help: [www.gov.uk/guidance/help-the-government-increase-coronavirus-covid-19-testing-capacity](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-the-government-increase-coronavirus-covid-19-testing-capacity)

**10-minute workout links**

From our colleagues at the Local Government Information Unit about the importance of exercise during the Covid-19 outbreak: [**click here to get active!**](https://lgiu.org/briefing/swift-read-staying-active-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/)

**Mendip Meetings**

**Planning Board Meeting – remote due to COVID-19**

The agenda for the 22 April 2020 meeting of the Planning Board is now available via the Council’s [**website**](https://www.mendip.gov.uk/article/7682/Planning-Board-Wednesday-22-April-2020)**.**  Please note that this meeting will be conducted remotely, and further information about how to participate in, or view the proceedings, will follow in due course.

**Where to find the latest information and guidance**

**Here for you**

Social distancing can make things all the more difficult for people who are lesbian, gay, bi or trans, as they already often experience high levels of isolation.

The southwest-based LBGT charity, [**The Intercom Trust**](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDksInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMDA0MDkuMTk5NzkwMjEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy5pbnRlcmNvbXRydXN0Lm9yZy51ay9pdGVtLzIxNC13ZS1hcmUtaGVyZS1mb3IteW91In0.uEV__NMoFNM79r-2789d7nrCvweV15Qyp2Sjr6jB04U/br/77242668137-l), is putting more resource into their helpline and counselling services. Their motto is ‘here for you’, so do please contact them if needed.

**Mental Health**

COVID-19 Mindline, Mind in Somerset. There to listen and support on 01823 276 892. [**Mindline.**](https://www.mindinsomerset.org.uk/our-services/adult-one-to-one-support/mindline/)

**Domestic Abuse**

As much as we want you to stay at home, we also want you to be safe [www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fguidance%2Fdomestic-abuse-how-to-get-help%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR0Sv6Bu2NaPpfaUDo4bqJAHoq5uKtiwa8MDy2x_tR58w8WPRhM2fjXNb1U&h=AT2R1IsXNWNePxaUhK8M-jVNIozRP9rULtkLT5uWfcL1B5wDR4uieorXQjQl26egyODfj_DtRlXJYDChwFwDKfs-Ov0J2YXTLrVi7P22pHAUOpP1mgV0SheZWgDDRVMTj5AR77kIkIpKya-5BM7WX-FGgMJYR3yL7bvZqivyDpITh2rNo8voekHVl_t8TW_14EDXqbTN8LkURx0ONrJpN-Q3ILRmK7R8hHnmZqxbDknen-D40es9qh8qbXdRIc97_UplWC6bHqJcNbURbk3RTzRuDeoTvaTKfvPhqntY_klX0rldypKNCzwVHMURoKcIOmtKiBSa1tx5OgL4AMNsmC509YQhrPeOEQZRJ8pxuyO4W4wCeF7tYlmbZ8yuKVsq_cQnEQozVGXWfhfxkpbe_llnov8x5k4k3GoMJhLFDKBTcs3Rbr16P-NER6DhH5oYLqXbeAR6w7wD9w8_leAOxX8z7mwKQFaGhkd2Z950Wn4D3C3NO0sgTMvW4DKtX9Rz4G51BOZmwo2QZCEM0sF2FzYJsRXriiS8mm30TrL6tLMk3WTJdG-IzRWkITL5haMnNkcGEVW8yCLNa7nCjH1WMgZn-RK8GWJAbfxhLstf9UEd31ab6W0Ze62Uqf-nIQ).

**Useful links:**

Mendip District Council: [www.mendip.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.mendip.gov.uk/coronavirus)

Latest information on coronavirus: [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

NHS information on coronavirus: [www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/)

Q&A from Public Health England on coronavirus: [publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2020/01/23/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-what-you-need-to-know/](https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2020/01/23/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-what-you-need-to-know/)

The LGA have issued some general guidance specific to elected councillors that you may find useful: [www.local.gov.uk/covid-19-outbreak-councillor-guidance](http://www.local.gov.uk/covid-19-outbreak-councillor-guidance)

**MDC Parish Briefings - previous issues**

**Issue 2** 10.04.20 News, plus briefings from SWP, the Post Office, Avon and Somerset Police

**Issue 1** 08.04.20 News, plusbriefings from Governance and from Planning

Any questions, please email: [democraticservices@mendip.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@mendip.gov.uk) and they will be able to send your query to the relevant Group Manager or Officer. Do get in touch as we are here to support you.