

Cllr Kim Forward weekly vlog 21.08.20

Hi, it's Kim here, with this week's update from Hastings Borough Council.

Over the past six months we have all had to adapt to unprecedented and unexpected change as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It has been a challenging time, but we have supported each other, and this unity has been vital; at a time when we weren't able to come together with loved ones and friends we really came together as a community. Let's keep this in mind as we move forward.

The Community Hub is still here for you if you need it. Please call 01424451019 for urgent help or find more information on our website.

From last Saturday more businesses, particularly in the leisure sector, were able to reopen following further easing of lockdown measures.

Many of us have more freedom now but there are parts of our country that are still being put into local lockdowns which is a reminder that we must not be complacent, the risks posed by this virus are still with us.

Although infection rates in Hastings remain low, if we want to keep them that way and enjoy the freedoms of lockdown easing, we must all continue to do what we can to stay safe and keep others safe. So, we must: keep wearing face coverings in shops, on public transport and in crowded areas, wash our hands often, maintain social distancing and, if we have any symptoms, book a test and self-isolate.

You can book a test here in Ore this Sunday, Monday or Tuesday Once you've made an appointment, you'll be given details of how to drive to the testing site. Appointment slots go live at 8pm the evening before and tests can be booked online at www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test

Testing is an important part of managing the spread of the virus and the threat it poses to us, our friends, family, communities and freedoms.

On a happier more exciting note, Hastings Museum is reopening next Thursday! The team have and still are working hard to prepare everything to reopen safely.

One of the measures in place is that you must book in advance, you can do this through the museum's website.

There's lots to see, including the Hastings Open which features local talent, as well as plenty of national and international artists. It's really worth a look. Congratulations to Monika Veriopoulus, the first ever 'Hastings Open' prize winner!

Also, our Seaside Cycle Hire Hut is opening again this weekend. The hut will only be open at weekends this summer, to ensure that all equipment is sterilised properly between uses.

Cycling is a great way to see the sights of the town and it's good for the environment and your health!

You need to book in advance through our website.

The small business and retail leisure and hospitality grants will be closing at the end of August. We know that despite everyone's efforts there are still some businesses who have not claimed their grant yet, please check if you have a business to see if you are eligible. Find out more on our website.

I know that the exam results debacle this week has caused such uncertainty and unnecessary distress for some young people and their families in our town and the wait isn't over for those who studied BTECs.

I am relieved that there has been a U-turn by the government on this matter just as I was about their U-turn on free school meals earlier in the summer. But the truth is that it's not good enough, we need the right carefully considered decisions to be made in the first place to ensure stability and certainty for people.

I hope you all enjoy what remains of August.

Please stay safe and thanks you for your time.