

## **Kim Forward Script 18/09/20**

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

We are still living in very difficult times and the introduction of the government's new rule of six means that it is now against the law to meet people you don't live with in a group of more than six indoors or outdoors. So, you cannot gather in our parks, beaches, open spaces or playgrounds in groups of more than six people and this applies to everyone, including children.

There are exemptions to this law, such as schools, workplaces and sporting activities and you can find a full list of these on our website. Sussex Police will be enforcing this rule and have the power to fine people and again there is more information on our website.

Many people have been unable to book tests to check whether they have the virus which is very worrying and frustrating for them and their families and means they must self-isolate in order to protect others until they can secure a test and get the result.

It is unacceptable that people can't access tests when they need them and after so many months of this pandemic it is hard to believe that the government has not managed to put in place a testing system that works. It is imperative that we have an effective testing and track and trace system for the people of our town and our country.

You may have also seen the government's announcement about COVID-19 marshals which we heard about for the first time as it was announced.

There has been a backlash from councils across the country about the idea and how it will be funded – the expectation is councils will pick up the bill. We are still waiting to hear the details from the government, and we will let you know what will be happening once we know.

In other news, our Housing Renewal team have some government funding to take part in a scheme to tackle low energy efficiency standards in privately rented properties. Rented properties must have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of at least an E.

The team will be working with landlords whose properties have an EPC rating of F or G to help them improve the energy efficiency. This is good news for tenants as we move towards winter. You can find out more by visiting our website.

We are still looking for project ideas for our Town Deal Fund bid. The deadline is next Friday so if you have any good ideas that fit the brief or want to find out more, please visit our website.

There will be another call for projects to be funded through the Connecting Hastings and Rother Together programme. Our website and social media feeds will have more information soon.

As cases of the corona virus are slowly rising across East Sussex it's important that we continue to socially distance, wash our hands regularly, wear a face covering and now follow the government's new 'rule of 6' in order to keep ourselves and others as safe as possible. We know that we have had a relatively low infection rate in our town and appreciate how much people have done to follow the guidance.

Until next week, thanks for listening and please stay safe.