



Edenbridge Town Council



NEWSLETTER June 2020

Community Care and Support during COVID-19 crisis

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS



Community spirit has a long tradition in Edenbridge and has flourished during Lockdown, with the Town Council co-ordinating a team of 75 volunteers who have been working tirelessly to assist vulnerable and elderly residents. We would like to introduce you to just some of the team who were able to attend a 'socially distanced' photo shoot at the Town Council offices last week – in between shopping and delivering medicines.

"Our volunteer is fantastic. We are very pleased with the prescription collection and Sarah's assistance and communications."

Cllr Angela Baker has been working hard organising the team like a military operation, ensuring that food is delivered freshly from the stores and medicine arrives in good time, especially for those who are running low. Many of you may have seen our volunteers in Paydens or Boots collecting bag loads of prescriptions for same day delivery over the wide area that we cover, including Four Elms, Marsh Green and Chiddingstone. In addition, each week more than 40 meals are distributed to residents self-isolating, and others help by being phone buddies, and running general errands.

During the sunny morning of the photo shoot the volunteers spoke about some of the residents they visit. Comments included: *"no-one ever complains if some of the shopping items are not available, they are just so grateful for what I have managed to get for them"* -- *"I have made so many new friends"* -- *"people are so funny, we do have a giggle together"* -- *"this volunteering works both ways. I have met so many lovely people"* -- *"I have met a lady who recognised me from running past her house. Now we are friends"*.

It seems it does 'work both ways' and we thought you would like to know what some of our residents told us: *"We are both full of praise for Aysha. We are direct contact with her and we are so happy with everything she does for us."* -- *"I have just received a lot of lovely food and received a text to tell me it was on my doorstep. It brought tears to my eyes. People are being so kind to me. I will be in touch with Dee is due course but I won't be running out of food any time soon."* --

Other volunteering during the COVID-19 Crisis

Edenbridge has always been a place with a large number of established volunteer run groups, and these past two months has been no different with local groups and individuals still looking out for everyone. Here are just a few examples of local activity and initiatives:

Edenbridge Food Bank has extended its services to residents who are self-isolating and experiencing more difficult times than usual.

Friends of Holcot has been delivering fresh food parcels to families needing a little extra help during these difficult times, and has also widened the support to other people. County Councillor Peter Lake awarded a grant to them to help low income families and children who did not have a computer to be able to continue their school studies.

PPE initiatives – There are three different groups making facemasks for residents and key workers, these include Covid-19 Group (making face shields providing masks for health workers across Kent and Medway), Edenbridge Facemask Group (email: edenbridgefacemasks@gmail.com), and the Community Car Wash are making Scrubs. *Details can be found on Facebook.*

Bridges Centre may have had to close its doors to visitors, but it has been busy behind the scenes keeping in touch with its team of volunteers, many of whom have had to self-isolate. They are currently planning and making changes so that they can receive visitors again soon. *If you would like to help, contact the Centre Manager mary@bridgescentre.org.*

UPDATE FROM THE TOWN COUNCIL

Calls to the Town Council office for help began as soon as Lockdown was announced 10 weeks ago, and the Council responded immediately to provide support to our community. There have been difficult and challenging times for everyone. We believe it is appropriate to recognise the collective coming together of all the residents in Edenbridge who have been helping family, friends, and neighbours; and the wider community for sticking to the Government guidelines. Working closely with Sevenoaks District Council (SDC), the Town Council set up a team to respond to the calls for help, which came either via SDC or direct to the Town Council Office. We have co-ordinated our 75 SDC registered volunteers. To date we have 224 requests for help, and collected and delivered over 500 sets of medications for residents, both locally and in some cases across the county border.

Our staff have adapted to the new working regime using available technology. Edenbridge Town Council has endeavoured to maintain its services, and is handling around 900 phone calls a week. The groundstaff have been working throughout the Lockdown period and continue to keep the town's open spaces to a high standard.

If you or someone you know needs a little extra support during this time, contact the Council office 01732 865368 or SDC offices 01732 227000.

Returning from abroad: If travel is necessary, you will be expected to quarantine for two weeks on your return to the U.K. As well as remembering to pack your passport, clothes, and confirming your flights, think about booking an online food delivery for your return.

The Town Council's website

(www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk) has information of local delivery services, and the main food retailers are available for online shopping.

GoodSAM is a community of Good Samaritans, and is powering the NHS Volunteer responder scheme across the UK. 750,000 Volunteers are helping those self-isolating due to Covid-19. If you have a health condition, are over 70, pregnant, registered disabled or have COVID-19 symptoms or have a Government NHS letter and would like help, please call 0808 196 3646 or visit <https://www.goodsamapp.org>

LOCAL BUSINESSES DOING HOME DELIVERY

Many local businesses have changed the way they are operating to help make it easier for you access their services and to help everyone to reduce their trips to the shops, thus reducing the spread of Coronavirus. In our previous newsletter, we provided website links and phone numbers for grocery and meal services available to your doorstep – these are available on the Town Council's website - www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk.

HEVER ROAD FIELD: Sevenoaks District Council has served an Article 4 to help protect the land against certain developments that could be considered under "permitted development". The land is also within the Green Belt. Kent County Council Highways are investing the access issues, and Trading Standards are also investigating complaints received. Any future planning application(s) that are submitted to the planning authority (SDC) will be determined against planning policies that are in place to protect these parcels of land. The site will be regularly monitored.

OTHER COUNCIL BUSINESS

Since the announcement of lockdown, the Town Council swung in to action to co-ordinated the response for Care for our Community, and continues to maintain the necessary operational business whilst adapting to a new working regime. However, as a result it took the decision to suspend all meetings until further notice. The Council will call remote meetings for the full Council and Open Spaces Committee in due course.

The Planning Committee will call a remote meeting where there are potential contentious applications. In the meantime, where it is not viable to hold a meeting applications will continue to be considered under executive powers set out in the Planning Committee Terms of reference. Responses to consultations are submitted to Sevenoaks District Council. Members of the public can view planning applications on www.sevenoaks.gov.uk

Garden rubbish bags, clear recycling bags and black bin bags continue to be available to purchase from the Council office (Doggetts Barn, 72A High Street).

Garden rubbish bags 62p each or £15 for a bundle of 25; clear recycling bags 50p a roll; black waste bags £1.50 per roll. During this unusual period we have a system in place to ensure social distancing. Please have the correct money or a cheque payable to Edenbridge Town Council, in an envelope ready to pop through the Council's office letterbox. It is advisable to phone in advance, then when you arrive, knock on the door, post your envelope, and the bags will be put outside.

Painted street furniture: The metal bollards, planters, finger-post signs, benches and some waste bins in the High Street were given a fresh coat of paint and now look smart and new.

Please don't tell us we've missed a few as we are not responsible for any street furniture owned by the County or District Councils.



Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) continues to collate requests for help across the district. The current number of requests for support across the district is 1,416; these are fed through to the local town and parish level to co-ordinate local resources. Small business and retail, hospitality and leisure grants have been made to more than 1,778 businesses; so far, a total of £21.86m in relief and grants has been awarded.

SDC is also providing help on a range of issues which are affecting people during the coronavirus outbreak, visit its website, <http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/or> call 01732 227000, for help on: [Requesting help from a volunteer](#) if are self-isolating; [Financial advice for residents](#) includes Universal Credit advice for help with rent, or Council Tax; [Business support](#) including grants, 12 months business rates holiday; [Coronavirus symptoms](#), advice for people at high risk.

Latest News: Dunbrik Household Waste Recycling Centre.

Following a fire at the Dunbrik Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) and waste transfer station on Sunday (24 May 2020) there may have been disruption to residents' refuse and garden waste collections. Public access to the HWRC has been restored but remains 'by appointment only'. (See Kent County Council website)

Hard work and determination has made sure that the residents' household black and clear sack collection suffered minimal disruption. Residents are asked to put their black and clear sacks out at 7am and garden waste at 6.30am on their collection day.