

HAWKHURST COMMUNITY SUPPORT GROUP

Helping the community beat the virus

Newsletter No. 15

25 September 2020

We're back after the Summer break!

The newsletter is also published on our website:

www.hawkhurstcommunitysupport.com/hcsg-newsletter

Future editions of the Newsletter will be published between two and four-weekly depending on content.

A word from the Chair.....



Back in April, I didn't imagine I would still be writing this in September! But then, this is proving to be a very unusual year.

As is happening elsewhere, the number of COVID-19 cases in our area has increased over the past few weeks. However, the figures (per 100,000) for TWBC are much lower than for England overall. As I write this, the ZOE app estimates that there are 104 active cases in the borough of Tunbridge Wells.

To keep these figures low, we all need to continue to follow Government guidance (see page 2). Keeping our distance is the single most effective thing we can do to keep ourselves and each other safe. Judging distances can be challenging, so to put it into context: 2 metres is about the length of a double bed or the length of two shopping trolleys. This is the distance you should aim to keep between you and other people, indoors and outdoors, whenever possible.

At our last reference group meeting, it was clear that our supermarkets have been busy preparing for any challenges over the next few months and are confident they can meet demand. So, thankfully, no need for panic buying!

I've been asked to remind you of the importance of having your flu jab if you're eligible for one.

And finally, I'd like to say a huge thank you to Bella, our Operations Manager, who is leaving HCSG because she's moving away. Bella was instrumental in setting up the systems and processes that have made HCSG so successful. We wish her the very best of luck. I'm pleased to say that Jane, our Client Manager, and Ruth, our Volunteer Manager, will be jointly responsible for the day-to-day operations from HCSG, thereby giving us continuity. Thank you both.

Take care.

Clare

Coronavirus - latest news on law and guidance

Following the latest Government announcement, we thought it might be helpful to provide the following summary of the law and guidance currently in force in England.

Face masks

These rules on wearing of face masks have not changed. You are required by law to wear a face covering in most public indoor settings including:

- Public transport
- Shops, supermarkets and shopping centres
- Post offices, banks and building societies
- Premises providing personal care and beauty treatments
- Visitor attractions and entertainment venues
- Libraries and public reading rooms
- Places of worship
- Funeral service providers
- Community centres, youth centres and social clubs

You should also wear a face covering in indoor places not listed here where social distancing may be difficult and where you will come into contact with people you do not normally meet.

Face coverings are needed in NHS settings, including hospitals and primary or community care settings, such as GP surgeries. They should also be worn in care homes.

You are expected to wear a face covering before entering any of these settings and to keep it on until you leave unless there is a reasonable excuse for removing it.

The above list is not comprehensive: for the full list and more detailed advice on the application of these requirements in different settings, consult Government guidance at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>

Also:

- "Rule of Six" means that no more than six people from multiple households may gather together, indoors or outdoors.
- "Rule of six" now applies to indoor team sports.
- People from different households should keep at least one metre apart.
- Pubs, bars and restaurants must close at 10.0 p.m. and offer table service only.
- People should work from home wherever possible.
- Face masks are compulsory for bar staff, non-seated customers, shop workers and waiters.
- Limit on guests at weddings reduced from 30 to 15.
- Fines for not wearing masks or following rules increased to £200 for first offence.

Food 4 Families

Our Food 4 Families initiative, which we launched five months ago, is still going strong. We are pleased to be able to help a number of families who would otherwise be struggling to feed themselves during the crisis. Eligible families are invited to come along to the KGV Centre on the Moor one day a week to collect essential supplies purchased and delivered by our small dedicated team of volunteer shoppers.

We are only able to do this thanks to the generosity of local residents, charities and businesses who have so far donated well over £4,000 to our support fund. In addition, Clare Escombe recently succeeded in securing a £1,000 grant from TWBC. We have established links with the Kings Church food bank in Hastings, who have shared some of their stock with us, and we gratefully accept donations of shopping from kind members of St Laurence Church.

Our thanks to everyone who has contributed to the success of this worthwhile scheme - donors and volunteers. We hope to be able to continue operations until at least Christmas, but we are concerned that, with the furlough scheme due to end, the prospect of redundancies rising and the second coronavirus peak progressing into winter, the need will, if anything, increase.

Donations to our support fund are gratefully received. Bank transfers can be made to:

“Hawkhurst Community Support Group”
Sort code: 40-44-37
Account number: 42304961

Your Community Fridge needs you!

You may have seen the community fridge installation just outside the Green Shop in the village. Since opening on 29th June the community fridge has redistributed over two tonnes of food, which is nearly the equivalent of 5,000 meals!

The ability to give to, and receive from, the fridge promotes inclusivity and dignity. While sharing food, community fridges give people opportunities to contribute through volunteering, learning new skills, or sharing their existing skills. Our hope is that we pave the way to a more sustainable approach to food security in addition to being a gateway to other community services and activities and having a positive impact on health and wellbeing and reducing social isolation. We aim high but the process is simple.

We are growing bigger with more outlets wanting to contribute. To enable them to be included we need more volunteers to collect food. Get involved. You won't regret it.

Contact: hawkhurstcommunityfridge@gmail.com

Coronavirus cases in Tunbridge Wells

During the week ending 25 September, the Borough of Tunbridge Wells recorded 16 cases of coronavirus, 6 more than the previous week. This equates to 13 cases per 100,000 population.

To put this in perspective, the average area in England had 21 cases per 100,000 people. In terms of surrounding boroughs, the equivalent figures for cases per 100,000 are:

Sevenoaks:	7
Tonbridge & Malling:..	16
Maidstone:	10
Ashford:	8
Rother:	7

During the year to 11 September, 84 coronavirus-related deaths were registered in the Borough.

Source: BBC and national health bodies.

Guidelines for buying and selling during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Governments across the globe recommend limiting social interaction to only what is necessary. If you are planning to meet someone to buy or sell an item, take necessary precautions and follow these guidelines to protect yourself and others.

- Keep your distance. Maintain a distance of at least six feet from other parties. If delivering, do not enter a person's home; leave the goods outside their door. Do not touch other parties or their possessions.
- Pay safely. If you can, avoid cash transactions and gift cards (you can use bank transfer, Venmo, Cash App or PayPal instead).
- Sanitize before and after an interaction. Wear latex gloves if possible and wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds both before and after interactions. Remind the other party to wash their hands in the same way after handling the item and to throw away any exterior packaging. Where possible, purchasers should sanitize their purchases before use.

For more detailed instructions, see the CDC's COVID19 prevention recommendations:

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fprepare%2Fprevention.html