**ESCC Report for Parish Councils May 2020**

This is such an odd time!!! I am sure you are all feeling as if this is an “out of world experience”. It is not like anything we have lived through before. I know that all the parishes in Northern Rother have been working hard to help all those who are on their own, or especially vulnerable, and I thank you all for your supreme effort.

At this time there are 504 published cases of Covid/19 virus in East Sussex (26/04/20). There are 26,097 deaths in hospitals, care homes and the community to end April. Many more tests for antigen are now being carried out and this has been extended to Care Home clients and carers, as well as the over 65s with symptoms. Soon testing and contact tracing should provide more evidence that the pandemic in this country is being brought under control. It seems that the end to lock down is going to be slow and gradual. The NHSE graphs at the moment still show a flattish trend. However there is a 16% decrease in hospital cases across all parts of the UK and critical care beds are at 40% capacity showing good ability to cope.

The “shielded “group of residents who received a letter from the D of HSC gets a parcel each week and a phone call. They can ring 01273 481242 to change their requirements. This group should isolate for 3 months. This service is managed by ESCC.

Rother Community Hub looks after the group B Covid /19 vulnerable group who may be worried, alone or unwell, short of money, or who can’t get prescribed medicines or food supplies, because of lock down. These people can ring 01424 747000 option 4 . Nicola is in charge of the Rother Hub. She links with local (parish) hubs when necessary.

Anyone can contact their local “Helping Hands “group or their Parish Council. Anyone can contact me at any time for help 01580 831969

“Northiam Together” has now set up “Northiam Talking” which is a system for people to interact with each other by phone, or email or facetime or skype. Write 20 words describing yourself and send this to northiamtalking@gmail.com. You will then be linked up to another person by Jane who is coordinating this new idea.

I just want to let everyone know that Highways maintenance has continued throughout lockdown. Road maintenance across East Sussex is continuing in the normal way with social distancing, and road maintenance teams are key workers.

Despite alarming reports from the media, we have a policy in East Sussex in relation to Care Homes (Nursing and Residential). Care homes are private providers (not NHS). Before discharge from the NHS, patients are either tested, or are nursed in an NHS setting to ensure they are clear of infection before moving to a Care Home. During the initial phase of the pandemic, routine testing was not available, this being the national and local position. Covid /19+ and symptomatic patients were however not discharged to Care Homes until they were ready.

ESCC sends Care Homes a daily bulletin and we have regular web based provider forums. We have a specific email address for questions and issues. We respond individually or through the bulletin. For PPE we have a specific email address for enquiries. If providers identify shortages we have a standard form for them to complete and we then prioritise allocation.

We have been asked to inform residents that SE Water have provided extra support for customers during the pandemic: 1) 3 month payment breaks 2) automatic renewal of support tariffs, 3) referrals to the priority service register from councils, emergency services, and CAB plus other financial assistance programmes

Contact for support : payless@southernwater.co.uk

East Sussex County Council is inviting voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations whose income has been significantly affected by the “stay at home “ advice to apply for a £300.000 emergency fund. The CV-19 VCSE Emergency Grant Fund will enable the hardest hit to get a cash boost of up to £50,000 within a few days of applying. [www.eastsussex.gov.uk/community/funding/emergencyfunding](http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/community/funding/emergencyfunding)

ESCC has also contributed £100,000 to the Sussex Crisis Fund run by Sussex Community Foundation from which organisations can apply for up to £5000 to help them to respond to local needs. <https://sussexgiving.org.uk/sussexcrisisfund>

The Sussex Health and Care Partnership which includes councils and health services has launched a Suicide Prevention Innovation Fund and is inviting groups and organisations to apply for a share of a £155,000 grant. The 2020/21 fund will help groups like community and voluntary groups, charities, and parish councils deliver projects that reduce harm, prevent suicide, and improve mental health. Grants of between £1000 and £15,000 will be considered in 2 rounds, the first round will be in May and the second in September. For more information: ruth.finlay@eastsussex.gov.uk apply by 28th May for the first round.

Parking charges are suspended for NHS volunteers, health and social care workers provided they park legally on street bays, and on roads, but they must display their identification document on the wind screen . The parking charge increases across the county have been delayed due to the pandemic. Costs for on-street parking and permits were due to rise on April 27th, but concerns about the impact of the changes on communities at this time has persuaded ESCC to defer these increases till July 1st.

Young people in East Sussex are being helped to survive the lock down with a new social media campaign **“STAY”:**  STAY well, STAY informed, STAY home, STAY sunny

This was devised by the East Sussex Youth Cabinet and the content is shared on its Twitter, Facebook and Instagram pages. It includes tips on how to keep up with school work at home, myth busting about the virus, as well as fun stories to stay positive during lock down. It brings quality –checked information and guidance in one place. Young people are particularly affected in their education and social lives by lock down.

 More information about the Youth Cabinet [www.c360.org.uk/youthcabinet](http://www.c360.org.uk/youthcabinet)

As usual the Youth Cabinet have come up with a great idea!

Wishing everyone good health and calm in difficult times.

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