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## Covid-19 - update

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We hope that you, your councillors and residents continue to stay safe. We have been aiming to send you updates every fortnight but this will likely move to monthly from now on, as we begin to see many services reopen.

You can keep up to date with all our public messaging by following our [social media](#) accounts or checking the coronavirus updates on our [webpage](#)

The Cabinet Office continues to update its [guidance on what you can and cannot do](#). This includes information on the changes to the restrictions on people in the NHS shielded group.

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### NHS test and trace - scam warning

We have sent the following information out to residents who have subscribed to our news alerts:

The NHS test and trace service is an important part of helping us return to the way of life we were used to before Covid-19.

Unfortunately, there will be those who will attempt to take advantage of the situation to carry out scams.

[Ofcom has issued advice on how to protect yourself from potential test and trace scams.](#)

On a genuine call, contact tracers will **never**:

- ask you to dial a premium rate number (for example, those starting 09 or 087)
- ask you to make any form of payment
- ask for any details about your bank account
- ask for your social media identities or login details, or those of your contacts
- ask you for any passwords or PINs, or ask you to set up any passwords or PINs over the phone
- ask you to purchase a product – including a test
- ask you to download any software to your device or ask you to hand over control of your PC, smartphone or tablet
- ask you to access any website that does not belong to the Government or NHS

If you receive a call from somebody claiming to be from the NHS, and they ask you to do any of these things, hang up and report the call:

- to Action Fraud, by calling 0300 123 2040 or by visiting its [website](#), if you are in England, Wales or Northern Ireland; or
- to the Police, via 101, if you are in Scotland.

Please do not let this deter you from complying with the NHS test and trace system if you are contacted by them.

Your help is crucial to making the system work, so we can control the spread of the virus and save lives by making sure anyone with symptoms of Covid-19 is quickly tested. If they have the virus they

can then self-isolate at home and those they have come into contact with will be advised to do so as well.

You can help by:

- Self-isolating at home if you develop symptoms, along with other members of your household, and order a test to find out if you have the virus
- If you test positive for the virus, sharing information promptly about your recent contacts through the NHS test and trace service so other people can be alerted who may need to self-isolate
- Self-isolating if you have come into close contact with someone who has had coronavirus and you are advised to do so by the NHS test and trace service

[Read more about the test and trace service and how it works](#)

[Read more about when to self-isolate and what to do](#)

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## High Street Recovery Plan

Town and retail centres across the district have been very busy with non-essential shops opening their doors on 15 June and pubs, cafes and restaurants reopening gradually. The Economic Development team at the council has been liaising for the last two months with business groups, individual businesses and stakeholders to produce a recovery plan, which will include an internal secondment for a short term (6-12 month) role for a Town Centre Recovery Officer.

Free parking will be on offer in all Malvern Hills District Council car parks on every Sunday during July.

Residents can also buy 2 hour permits which will allow them to park for two hours, in any four-hour period, in any council owned car park. They cost just £25 and if people buy them during July and August, they will get 15 months for the price of 12.

Permits can be bought online at [www.malvern hills.gov.uk/parking-and-streets](http://www.malvern hills.gov.uk/parking-and-streets)

Visitors are urged to stay **S.A.F.E** by:

**S**anitising and washing their hands regularly

**A**lways being kind and considerate to others

**F**ollowing social distancing guidelines

**E**njoying our environment but making sure they take litter home with them or put it in the bins provided.

Signs have been put up to remind people about social distancing rules and public hand sanitiser points will shortly be installed around town centres, to help people maintain good hand hygiene. Most public toilets are open but Edith Walk, Malvern and Upton High Street are closed as social distancing is difficult to maintain.

Tourist Information Centres will be reopening in Malvern from Monday, 6 July and in Upton on Friday, 10 July. Tenbury TIC is expected to be open from Monday, 13 July.

Additional bike racks will also be installed to encourage cycling. Discussions continue with Worcestershire County Council about the use of public highways to help food businesses serve diners.

There will also be promotional campaigns to promote the safety measures in place and give residents the confidence to get out and support their local traders, while encouraging visitors to explore the district.

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## Play Areas

We have now reopened our play areas with adjustments. Phil Merrick, Director of Economy and Environment, has emailed all parish and town clerks to share the risk assessment and signs we will be using, which local councils are welcome to use.

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## Planning system changes

The Government has announced a number of changes to the planning system in response to the relaxation of lockdown.

Planning permission deadlines will be extended, planning appeals will be sped up and builders will be allowed more flexible working hours following agreement with their local council. [Read the announcement in full.](#)

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## More support to help rough sleepers

The Government has announced that £105 million will be used to support rough sleepers and those at risk of homelessness into tenancies of their own.

The funding will be used to help with deposits for accommodation and to secure alternative rooms that are already available and ready for use, such as student accommodation.

A further £16 million is also being provided so that vulnerable people currently in emergency accommodation can access the specialist help they need for substance misuse issues.

The £105 million is made up of £85 million of new funding from HM Treasury and £20 million from refocusing existing homelessness and rough sleeping budgets.

Read the announcement [here](#).

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## Recycling increases during lockdown

The amount of recycling collected from households across Worcestershire has rocketed by 12% during lockdown.

In total, 11,200 tonnes of recyclable items were collected during April and May – up 1,190 tonnes compared with the same period in 2019.

It is the equivalent of collecting an additional 135,000 green bins of recycling.

This outweighs the 4% increase in general waste across the county during the same period.

Household Recycling Centres are now open but with social distancing rules in place. Please make sure you have read and understood them before you travel.

[Read Household Recycling Centre social distancing rules](#)

If you are interested in learning more about how to reduce your waste then every Wednesday at 2pm, the Let's Waste Less team are holding waste reduction sessions over Zoom, offering useful advice and tips.

You can access them using the details below:

To access the session log into Zoom: <https://worcestershirecc.zoom.us/j/5530251529>

Meeting ID: 553 025 1529

Password: 119159

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## List of upcoming meetings for Malvern Hills District Council

The following are due to take place via Zoom over the next two months (subject to change). The majority will be shown live on our YouTube channel. Visit [www.malvern hills.gov.uk/about-your-council/your-local-council/webcasts-of-meetings](http://www.malvern hills.gov.uk/about-your-council/your-local-council/webcasts-of-meetings) to watch.

### July and August Meetings

Date	Malvern	Time
16 Jul	Audit & Standards	2pm
21 Jul	Council	6pm
	Followed by	
	Annual Council	
22 Jul	SAPC	6pm
5 Aug	NAPC	6pm
19 Aug	SAPC	6pm

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## Repair Café Outreach Plans

As many of you will know, we now have a [Destination Zero plan](#) to help us become a carbon neutral district by 2050. One of the actions within that plan is to support the [Malvern Hills Repair Café](#) to develop their service.

The Café is currently looking into potentially developing an outreach service for 2021, visiting different village halls across the district during the course of the year. This would be a reduced service to their permanent one, with two repairers and they would bring any equipment they need. They would just need the hall to provide some tables and chairs.

There are a few other things to consider before responding:

- They are volunteers who work for donations so ideally the village hall would be able to supply the village hall for a few hours free of charge.
- Whilst reducing impact on the environment is a crucial element of their work, they also believe that the social element is as important and the usual Repair Café includes tea, coffee and biscuit provision for those bringing their items along. As they will only have two volunteers for this outreach service, they would welcome support from one or two members of the community in providing refreshments for local residents who attend the cafe with their items.

- This would not be a regular event but more likely an annual visit. Because it will be a one off we would ask the parish/town council to support us in promoting the service beforehand.
- The village hall would need to provide parking and be easily accessible, with a kitchen or tea-making facilities available.

If you think your village hall would be able to accommodate the Repair Café for a session in 2021/22 then please let Claire know at [claire.vaughan@malvern hills.gov.uk](mailto:claire.vaughan@malvern hills.gov.uk) ideally **by Thursday 30 July**.

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## Keep on running...

Our Health and Wellbeing officer, Rachel Nichols, would like to work with our Parish and Town Councils to come up with an accessible walking/running route in each parish over the next few years.

Ideally the route will:

- be under 5km
- be circular
- have few stiles
- avoid busy roads and private land
- have somewhere to park at the start

You may also want to take the opportunity to showcase a piece of local heritage, like a beloved church, as part of it too. The route could be part of an already established public right of way and this could just be an opportunity to promote it as an accessible, family-friendly walk or a running route.

Claire will be supporting Rachel with this project. We are hoping the walks will become waymarked routes with some also featuring on [our walking app](#).

If you would like your parish to be included in this project and have an idea for a route then please let Claire know by emailing [claire.vaughan@malvern hills.gov.uk](mailto:claire.vaughan@malvern hills.gov.uk) before **Thursday 30 July** at

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## Heritage Open Days

Once a year, local historic buildings open their doors for the public to discover more about the hidden history on their doorstep. Although it is not yet clear if this September's events can take place, the local organisers would like to hear any suggestions and comments about the annual festival. The current plan is to collectively assemble a draft programme which can be adapted accordingly.

The theme for 2020 is 'Hidden Nature' with a focus on the natural world. You can email the local organisers via [Victoria.carman@malvern hills.gov.uk](mailto:Victoria.carman@malvern hills.gov.uk)

[More info.](#)

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## Malvern Hills Photoboxing

For 2020, we have revised the existing Letterboxing project due to Covid-19, temporarily renaming it as 'Photoboxing'. This year there will be no physical boxes to find; instead, you need to take photographs of the answers to your clues. There are still 25 clues to solve, with five walks to choose from around our district.

You can purchase the latest clue pack for just £3 [here](#). Select 'Community Health' as the top drop down and 'Photoboxing' as the second option.

Visit [www.malvern hills.gov.uk/letterboxing](http://www.malvern hills.gov.uk/letterboxing) to find out more (poster attached).

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## Run Route Quest Challenge

We will be running a new virtual challenge from Monday 20 July. You can find out more about the challenge at [www.malvern hills.gov.uk/get-active](http://www.malvern hills.gov.uk/get-active) or check out the promotional video [here](#) (poster attached).

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## Funding support for community groups and charities

Each week we are adding new sources of funding support available to community groups and charities who are affected by the COVID-19 outbreak or who are working to support vulnerable people impacted by COVID-19.

Visit [support for community groups and charities page](#) for more information. Please promote this support to relevant groups in your parish/town.

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## Here 2 Help

If you are aware of anyone who is vulnerable and in need, please make sure they fill in the form or call the number on the [Worcestershire Here 2 Help website](#).

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## Visit the Virtual Village Hall

Anyone looking to beat the boredom of isolation is invited to visit the [Virtual Village Hall](#), a new programme of online activities to join in with at home.

Designed by the Royal Voluntary Service, the Virtual Village Hall is supported by players of People's Postcode Lottery and features themed video sessions led by expert tutors, TV and radio personalities, and Royal Voluntary Service activity co-ordinators and volunteers.

Live and pre-recorded sessions take place daily and include exercise and dance, music and singing, relaxation and meditation, arts and crafts, cooking and baking, technology skills, gardening and more.



Malvern Hills District Council

**CORONAVIRUS**

*Here to help you through this*

- Supporting businesses
- Helping those facing hardship
- Protecting the homeless
- Maintaining critical services
- Working with communities to support the vulnerable
- Keeping you informed

[www.malvern hills.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.malvern hills.gov.uk/coronavirus) #hereforyou