

ESCC Report for Parish Councils June 2020

We seem to be moving slowly out of lock down as the numbers of Coronavirus cases decreases.

As I write this at the end of May, the daily new cases of infection stands at 217-412 cases in the North West, 101-176 cases per day in the South East, and 88-179 cases per day in London. This is a dramatic reduction ,apart from the north west ,and let's hope this trend continues.

It is pleasing that several Parish Councils in Northern Rother now feel they can operate virtually. Obviously we don't know how long we will need to continue to do this but, at county hall, we have been instructed to work in this way till the year end.

There are concerns about the increase in Domestic Abuse incidents during lockdown. Lockdown is particularly difficult and dangerous if you live with an abuser. From February to March 2020 traffic to the website for the National Domestic Abuse Helpline increased by 156%. ESCC are running a campaign so that people know where to go for help. **The stay-at-home instruction does not apply if you need to leave home to escape domestic abuse.**

For advice and support contact: **The Portal 0300 323 9985**

If you are in immediate danger ring 999

If unable to talk, call 999, listen to the operator, then press 55 on a mobile when prompted, or on a landline wait to be connected to the Police.

For more advice: **SafeinEast Sussex website**

Vulnerable and disadvantaged young people in East Sussex can now access free laptops under a DfE scheme to facilitate home learning. During the week 22nd May, 1187 laptops have been delivered with 170 dongles to children having a social worker, and a further order has been placed for disadvantaged Year 10 pupils.

Councils across the country fear a rise in vulnerable children and "troubled families" as a result of the Covid/19 lockdown. Councils will struggle to cope with a surge in demand. Issues such as financial hardship, lost schooling, loss of support networks, neglect, domestic abuse, dealing with deaths from the disease, and families relocating, are all problems that might emerge, as well as many families who have not previously needed support. Recent analysis shows spending on preventative and early intervention services by county authorities decreased by £172m since 2015/16. Councils are calling on central government to cover all additional costs in Children's Services Departments due to Covid , and also to bring forward the £165m from the Troubled Families programme to support families as lock down is eased.

In East Sussex the 10 Household Waste Recycling Sites opened to the public on May 18th. However the sites will be busy and social distancing has to be maintained which means:

- 1) A limited number of unloading bays will be in use
- 2) Only one person at a time will be able to access ramps
- 3) Staff will not be able to help unload
- 4) Trailers and oversized vehicles will not be allowed initially
- 5) Chargeable waste will not be accepted
- 6) The re-use shops will remain closed.

The public are warned there will be long queues,

Walkers during lockdown and after, are being warned to stay safe along the Sussex coast. The White Chalk cliffs are unstable so do not walk too close to the edge, and don't walk at the base of the cliffs as you may get cut off by the tide. Recently there has been a cliff fall in Peacehaven, a visitor stuck at the base of a cliff cut off by the tide at Seaford, and people posing for a selfie at the cliff edge at Eastbourne required rescue. Signs and posters are displayed along cliff top walks and at various bus stops and notice boards.

If a member of the public sees someone who needs rescue, do not attempt to try to rescue, **CALL 999**.

Highways crews in East Sussex have taken advantage of less traffic on the roads to complete resurfacing programmes, clear drains, and 6000 potholes have been filled since lockdown. Six large scale plans to pre-patch in preparation for surface dressing have been completed and I have personally seen our Highways Steward out on the roads. Pavements have been resurfaced and repaired, signs cleaned or replaced, street lighting faults repaired and drains cleared. Five major pavement resurfacing programmes have been completed in Bexhill, Eastbourne and Hastings.

Minor drainage works will be carried out in Dixter Road, Northiam on 3rd June. Minor drainage works in Main Street, Peasmarsh will be completed between 1st-5th June.

Highways have followed government guidelines re: health and safety at all times. The Customer Team can be contacted at www.eastsussexhighways.com or 03456080193

Stay well

Angharad Davies East Sussex County Councillor Northern Rother