

JUNE 2020 UPDATE - CLLR DARREN TYSOE

Discretionary Grant Funding Scheme

Huntingdonshire District Council launched its Discretionary Grant funding scheme on Monday 8th June, allowing small businesses to access government funding in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Local Authority Discretionary Grant Funding scheme is designed for businesses that have not yet been able to access government funding and is predominantly aimed at supporting small businesses and micro-businesses with fixed costs or businesses that are crucial to the local economy.

There is over £1.6m worth of funding available for one-off payments, ranging from £3,000 to £10,000, available to businesses that are eligible and apply. The government has set out four categories of businesses to be prioritised for the Discretionary Grant funding scheme:

- Small businesses in shared offices or other flexible workspaces. (Examples could include units in industrial parks, science parks and incubators which do not have their own business rates assessment.)
- Regular market traders with fixed building costs, such as rent, who do not have their own business rates assessment.
- Bed & Breakfasts which pay Council Tax instead of business rates; and
- Charity properties in receipt of charitable business rates relief which would otherwise have been eligible for Small Business Rates Relief or Rural Rate Relief.

Businesses can check their eligibility by visiting www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/covidgrantfunding. The scheme will open to applications at 9am on Monday 8th June, and due to the limited funds available and the speed at which support is required to be shared locally, the scheme will be run on a first-come, first-served basis until the funding pot is exhausted. Therefore, it is recommended that businesses assess their eligibility first and proceed to submit their application, along with the required supporting documents as soon as they are able once applications open.

Businesses who are eligible for the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme (SEISS) and the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (Furloughing) are also eligible to apply for Discretionary Grant Funding.

One Leisure

One Leisure [Live at Home](#) launches on Monday 1st June. One Leisure have partnered with MoveGB to bring live fitness classes to customers. Classes will be pay as you go with existing One Leisure memberships and class passes remaining frozen. For full details please see [the website](#).

Council Tax support during COVID-19

Huntingdonshire District Council has launched a scheme to provide additional council tax help during the COVID-19 pandemic. The initiative, supported by almost £500,000 of Government funding, is designed to offer a reduction in council tax payments which will initially be aimed at people who are in receipt of working-age council tax support.

Those in receipt of working-age council tax support will receive an additional reduction to their council tax bill of up to £150. There is no need to apply as the reduction will be applied to bills automatically and bills will be re-issued to reflect how much is left to pay following this.

The reductions will be automatically applied to new claims for council tax support as well as those that already exist.

Government has given local authorities across the country this additional funding to help support local people, aiming to reduce the council tax liability of working-age people in receipt of council tax support.

PREPARING FOR WIDER REOPENING OF TOWN CENTRES

Following the Government's announcement that non-essential shops can begin reopening from Monday 15 June 2020, Huntingdonshire District Council has been preparing new plans and measures to enable people to visit the town centres safely – and will use a £157,000 Government grant to kick-start the work on getting our local economy moving again whilst implementing social distancing measures.

The District Council has been working closely with; local businesses, town councils, Federation of Small Businesses, Chamber of Commerce as well as engaging with Cambridgeshire County Council Highways to prepare for a 'new normal' look in Huntingdon, St Ives, St Neots and Ramsey town centres.

Priority areas will be places with narrow footpaths and busy pedestrian areas, with over 100 new signs and environmentally friendly floor markers which will act as visible safety measures to visitors. Enhanced cleaning measures are also to be undertaken by the Street Cleansing Team.

Businesses and employers can access the latest information and guidance on how to safely reopen by visiting the Council's dedicated COVID-19 website: wearehuntingdonshire.org

MARKETS REOPENING IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE

Fresh food and essentials have continued to be sold at markets across the district throughout the Coronavirus pandemic, however following updated Government Guidance permitting the re-opening of Outdoor Markets (other than for essential trade) from 1 June 2020, HDC is finalising plans to reintroduce more traders into our markets.

On 20 June, the Huntingdon Saturday market will be partially relocated to the market square until further notice. From 15 June, the St Ives Monday and Friday markets will be relocating to Cattle Market car park (PE27 5BW) along with the Farmers Market operated by St Ives Town Council. This move aims to support social distancing within the town centres by providing more space for pedestrian movement as retailers begin to reopen and utilises larger areas for our markets to create safe space for traders and the public alike.

