

## **COVID-19 UPDATE – Friday 23 October 2020**

The council will be publishing Covid-19 case statistics for Wiltshire every week through its channels. This week's statistics (as at 22 October) are attached to this newsletter.

Also attached are some new assets to support the promotion of key COVID-19 preventative health messages across our communities. These are additional materials to the COVID-19 Tool Kit and resources sent to previously.

- 1) COVID-19 Poster to encourage people to play their part to prevent the introduction of increased restrictions in Wiltshire (3 versions: banner, twitter and Facebook)
- 2) Medium Local COVID Alert Level Poster
- 3) COVID-19 Poster (including **Arabic** and **Polish** translated versions)
- 4) COVID-19 Business and Employees Tool Kit
- 5) COVID-19 Self-isolation guidance poster
- 6) COVID-19 Car share poster

All the latest guidance and advice published by Government can also be sent directly to you by clicking the following link: [GOV.UK COVID-19 updates](#).

If there are any additional resources or formats you think would be beneficial for your communities please do get in contact with our Communications Team [communications@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:communications@wiltshire.gov.uk).

Thank you for all your help to get these key preventative health messages out.

## **COVID-19 Schools update**

### **Precautionary COVID-19 measures taken at schools in Wiltshire**

Following advice from public health professionals, 25 education settings, including independent and boarding schools in Wiltshire are currently taking precautionary COVID-19 measures due to positive cases being confirmed in their settings. This information is correct as at 9.00am on 23 October.

Whilst the number of positive cases are very low in each setting, a total of 1,610 pupils are currently being asked to self-isolate to ensure any risk of transmission is kept as low as possible. The self-isolation of the pupils is very precautionary to minimise any risk to others and to reduce onward transmission of the virus.

All schools are working closely with the Public Health team at Wiltshire Council to ensure all the necessary measures are in place.

## **Business update**

The Chancellor has announced the following increased support for businesses:

### **Job Support Scheme**

The original scheme, starting on 1 November 2020, saw employers paying a third of their employees' wages for hours not worked and required employees to be working 33% of their normal hours. Yesterday's announcement means the employer contribution to those unworked hours has been reduced to 5% and the minimum hours requirements reduced to 20%, so those working just one day a week will be eligible.

Employers will continue to receive the £1,000 Job Retention Bonus for each employee retained until February 2021.

The Job Support Scheme Closed which supports those businesses legally required to close remains unchanged.

More information can be found in the Job Support Scheme Open Factsheet

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/928761/JSS\\_Open\\_factsheet.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/928761/JSS_Open_factsheet.pdf)

### **Self-employed Grant**

The amounts of profit covered by the two forthcoming self-employed grants has been increased from 20% to 40%, meaning the maximum grant will increase from £1,875 to £3,750. The first grant will cover a three-month period from the start of November 2020 until the end of January 2021. The second grant will cover a three-month period from the start of February until the end of April 2021.

### **Business Grants**

Cash grants of up to £2,100 per month will be available, primarily for businesses in the hospitality, accommodation and leisure sector that may be adversely impacted by the restrictions in high-alert areas. Businesses in Very High alert level areas may qualify for up to £3,000 per month.

More information can be found in the Business Grants Factsheet:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/928760/BUSINESS\\_GRANTS\\_FACTSHEET.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/928760/BUSINESS_GRANTS_FACTSHEET.pdf)

Read the Chancellor's announcement in full: [https://www.gov.uk/government/news/plan-for-jobs-chancellor-increases-financial-support-for-businesses-and-workers?utm\\_source=923e5ab2-e10c-490d-ac93-4287f524ee0e&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate#sw](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/plan-for-jobs-chancellor-increases-financial-support-for-businesses-and-workers?utm_source=923e5ab2-e10c-490d-ac93-4287f524ee0e&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate#sw)

### **COVID-19 Wiltshire Business and Employee Tool Kit**

The council has produced a COVID-19 Business and Employee Tool Kit to help provide useful advice and guidance to support. Within it you'll find a range of resources including symptoms step-by-step guides, advice on car sharing, guidance on staying safe outside of work, and a lot more.

A copy of the tool kit is attached to this newsletter and is available to download here:

[https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/4906/COVID-19-Public-health-advice-and-guidance-for-businesses/pdf/COVID-19\\_public\\_health\\_advice\\_and\\_guidance\\_for\\_your\\_business\\_and\\_employees.pdf?m=637387175459930000](https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/4906/COVID-19-Public-health-advice-and-guidance-for-businesses/pdf/COVID-19_public_health_advice_and_guidance_for_your_business_and_employees.pdf?m=637387175459930000)

### **Revaluation 2023**

The Valuation Office Agency is contacting businesses to request rental information to support the next revaluation of business rates in England and Wales – Revaluation 2023. Once businesses receive a letter they can [go online to submit up-to-date details](#). It is important to provide this information to ensure business rates are accurate.

### **Leaving the EU**

The government is urging businesses to step up preparations for leaving the EU on Australian-style terms based on simple principles of global free trade from 1 January 2021.

Businesses need to take the following actions:

- If you sell goods to the EU you must prepare for new customs procedures. Visit GOV.UK to check duties and customs procedures for exporting your goods worldwide from 1 January 2021
- If you travel to the EU for work purposes you will need to check if you need a visa or work permit and apply if necessary
- If you employ overseas nationals, you will need to prepare your business for the implementation of the new immigration system. From 1 January 2021, if you want to hire anyone from outside the UK, including the EU, you must be a Home Office licenced sponsor
- If your business receives personal data from contacts in the EEA, you may need to take extra steps to ensure that the data can continue to flow legally at the end of the transition period
- If you provide services in the EU, you must ensure that your qualifications are now recognised by EU regulations to be able to practice or service clients in the EU

You can get a personalised summary of the actions you need to take by using a simple tool on [gov.uk/transition](https://www.gov.uk/transition) (<https://www.gov.uk/transition>).

Read more: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/time-is-running-out-for-businesses-to-prepare>.

### **Self-isolation £500 payment for people on low income who cannot work from home**

A £500 payment is available for people who have to self-isolate, on a low income and will lose money because they cannot work from home.

If they are self-isolating because they've come home from another country this does not mean they are eligible, they **must** have a unique Test and Trace number provided by the NHS to qualify.

To be eligible a person must:

- have been asked to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace after Monday, 28 September 2020 and have a unique Test and Trace number provided by the NHS
- are employed or self-employed
- have lost income by being unable to work from home while self-isolating

They must also be receiving at least one of the following benefits:

- Universal Credit
- Pension Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-based Employment Support Allowance
- Working Tax Credit

The council is in the process of finalising a system to allow people to claim for this payment as quickly and easily as possible, and this will be live next week. People who

are eligible for this payment will be able to make a backdated claim to 28 September 2020.

More information on how to apply locally will be available on the council's [council tax and benefits pages](#) next week. In the meantime, more information can also be found on the [government website](#).

## **Other matters:**

### **Halloween 2020**

The council is encouraging families to have a fun but safe Halloween this year.

Wiltshire is currently the Medium tier of the government's local COVID alert levels, but with cases rising locally, the council is asking people to avoid trick or treating, not hold gatherings for more than six people, and instead take part in fun Halloween household activities.

Wiltshire Council has produced a Halloween themed information pack with some useful advice and guidance and some fun activities for youngsters. It can be found at <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/public-health-coronavirus>.

Wiltshire Libraries have a series of online Halloween themed activities. They are running a Facebook Halloween quiz to test people's knowledge of all things spooky. The quiz will be published at 7pm on Thursday 29 October, with answers published 24 hours later.

People can take part at <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/libraries-contact-us>.

### **People Friendly Salisbury**

People Friendly Salisbury, the scheme that will see pedestrians and cyclists prioritised in several city centre streets as a result of restricting through traffic movements, started on Wednesday 21 October.

The project will reduce through traffic in the city centre, improving air quality and prioritising pedestrians and cyclists, in turn encouraging an increase in the number of visitors and shoppers in the city.

The scheme creates a Low Traffic Zone (LTZ) in the city, with only some vehicles allowed to access the LTZ with a free permit.

Emergency vehicles, buses and coaches, taxis and bicycles will not require a permit to access the LTZ, but residents and commercial vehicles that are loading and unloading, plus Blue Badge holders, will need to apply for a free permit to access the LTZ. Vehicles over 7.5t are not able to access the LTZ between 10am and 4pm, and outside of these times they will also need a free permit.

The project, which is scheduled to last for 18 months as a trial, is subject to an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO), a legal document that allows the council to collect feedback and make changes to the scheme as appropriate. At the end of the ETRO period, the council will take into account the feedback received throughout the life of the ETRO and make a decision on whether to make any of the changes permanent, or to revert the streets back to the way they were.

The project will be fully monitored, with 47 sensors providing anonymous data on vehicle and pedestrian movements within the LTZ, on the A36 and at other key points in the city.

To help make people aware of the scheme, the council has sent letters to every residence and business in the LTZ, and has also sent letters to around 1,500 Blue Badge holders in the south of the county.

To apply for a free permit, LTZ residents, businesses, and Blue Badge holders should go to [www.wanttopark.com/Wiltshire](http://www.wanttopark.com/Wiltshire) or, for more information, including detailed FAQs, go to [www.wiltshire.gov.uk/salisbury-people-friendly-streets](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/salisbury-people-friendly-streets).

## **Calne Community Campus**

Following extensive refurbishment work, Calne Leisure Centre, now to be known as Calne Community Campus, is set to open on Tuesday 3 November 2020 – with the new facility delivering fresh, modern and safe facilities for the Calne community area.

The council has invested more than £3m into the project, which will help ensure the centre is sustainable and available for use by the community for the long-term. The reopening of the refurbished Leisure Centre completes the overall community campus project, which also included the work to the Community Hub and Beversbrook sports facility.

Some of the features the community can look forward to are:

- Fitness suite twice the size of the previous suite with state-of-the-art equipment.
- Refurbished dry changing rooms with an accessible changing room – interim COVID-19 measures will be in place
- Sports hall re-decorated with a new sprung floor installed and a new system for temperature controlled ventilation.
- Fitness Studio re-decorated with improved access, refurbished floor and a new sound system
- Swimming pool hall redecorated with new floor surround and pool cover
- New swimming village change area including personal care room, 23 separate cubicles, family cubicles, individual showers and new entrance to poolside.
- Refreshed entrance area including automatic and assessable doors
- First floor refurbished throughout, with new toilets, including an accessible toilet, new furniture and a movable wall for flexible use of space for functions and meetings.

The campus will open with full COVID-19 safety measures in place, so people can feel as safe as possible whilst visiting. The same safety measures have seen the council successfully reopen many of its leisure facilities up and down the county to positive feedback from customers during the current pandemic. More information about leisure services and measures during COVID-19 can be found at [www.wiltshire.gov.uk/leisure-covid19](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/leisure-covid19).

All enquiries relating to the new facility can be sent to [calnecommunitycampus@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:calnecommunitycampus@wiltshire.gov.uk).

## **Partners join forces to step up awareness of child exploitation on public transport**

A new drive to help people know how to spot the signs of a child in danger, and who to contact if they are concerned, is being launched across Wiltshire.

The message – child exploitation we need your help to stop it – will be shared widely encouraging taxi drivers, train and bus staff as well as the general public to look out for the signs and help protect young people.

The initiative comes to help track down cases where young people are victims of child sexual exploitation or child criminal exploitation and encourage the public to raise the alarm if they have concerns.

People are being encouraged to look out for children and young people who are:

- Travelling during the school day or during unusual hours, such as late in the evening
- With an older individual who appears controlling
- A victim of physical assault or unexplained injuries
- Receiving lots of texts, phones or video calls
- Looking withdrawn or distressed in the company of adults
- In a vulnerable state due to drink or drugs, accompanied by older individuals
- Possibly from another area, look lost or have a distinct accent
- Collected and taken to hotels, parties, B&Bs or other gatherings
- With an adult expressing sexualised behaviour to them
- Dropped off at any location that causes concern
- Having their fares paid by adults who are not in the taxi

**Guidance:**

- If you're worried – make a note of what you see and hear then call 101
- For immediate danger dial 999
- If you think a child is at risk of significant harm for Wiltshire call MASH on 0300 456 0108 8:45pm – 5pm and until 4pm on Friday and out of hours 0300 456 0100
- For Swindon call 01793466903 8.45am-5pm, Monday-Thursday and 8.45am-4pm Friday; out of hours 01793 436699 or email [mash@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:mash@wiltshire.gov.uk)  
[Swindonmash@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:Swindonmash@swindon.gov.uk)
- For non-emergency response or advice contact Crimestoppers 0800 55511 or [crimestoppers-uk.org](http://crimestoppers-uk.org)

**£75 million funding agreement with Homes England given seal of approval**

Cabinet has agreed to sign the Grant Determination Agreement with Homes England, the government's housing agency, subject to conditions, to secure £75 million of Housing Infrastructure Funding.

This decision, made on 13 October 2020, ensures funding is available to contribute towards the cost of delivering the strategic infrastructure in and around Chippenham to support the potential longer-term growth of the area.

The infrastructure improvements include the creation of a new relief road to the east and south of Chippenham, linking the A350 at the northern and southern ends of the town, as well as specific improvement to J17 on the M4.

The HIF bid identified the opportunity to provide 7,500 homes at Chippenham. The level of growth at the town to 2036 including where new homes could be allocated is being considered through the separate Wiltshire Local Plan review process. Any new housing allocations will be examined by an independent Inspector. Consultation on the Local Plan will be carried out early in the new year.

The report for the Cabinet meeting on 13 October 2020 can be viewed at: <https://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=141&MId=13083&Ver=4> (agenda item 10).

### **Work to make trees safe will close A4 at Derry Hill for 11 days**

The A4 at Derry Hill, near Calne, will be closed for 11 days (including the weekend) from Thursday 22 October as the Bowood Estate and Wiltshire Council carry out urgent works to remove around 400 ash trees that are dying of ash dieback disease, as well as other trees that are causing a material risk to the highway.

Ash dieback is a fungus that, in time, kills ash trees, and leads to large, dead branches throughout the crown of the tree, which can fall at any time, with a real risk of causing injury or death to people, particularly in high winds.

The work at Derry Hill, between the junction of the A342 and the village of Studley, is being undertaken by Bowood Estate, with Wiltshire Council supporting through traffic management. Anyone wishing to access the villages of Derry Hill, Studley or Bowood will still be able to do so throughout the works.

As three separate sets of roadworks are taking place around Calne at the same time, the Traffic Management Plan that applies to Hills' sites at Lower Compton and Sands Farm will be temporarily suspended. During this time vehicles, associated with Hills' business activities will have to follow the diversion routes and travel through the centre of Calne on the A4. The Traffic Management Plan will come back into force as soon as the roadworks are completed and diversions have been removed.

### **More volunteers needed for popular scheme which provides support for children in care**

A popular scheme which links independent adult volunteers with young people in care is looking for more people to join its committed team so it can expand its good work.

An Independent Visitor (IV) offers regular long-term support and friendship to a young person living in foster or residential care. Every local authority has a duty to provide this service for its young people.

The scheme aims to link up children and young people in foster or residential care with volunteer adults who are independent from the care system. Young people have to be keen to take up the offer of an IV, and if they want to take part in the scheme they are linked up with their own unique person who will befriend, visit and support them while they are in care.

In Wiltshire 57 young people are already linked up with visitors. However due to the schemes ongoing popularity with young people there are plans to expand the scheme further over the coming years. The scheme is keen to hear from anyone aged over 18 who is interested in this role, particularly male volunteers and those able to travel to visit young people living outside Wiltshire borders.

Volunteers are all offered regular training and ongoing support in their role and once appointed become a member of the volunteer team.

If you are interested in knowing more about becoming an Independent Visitor please contact [Sheila.lupton@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Sheila.lupton@wiltshire.gov.uk) or call 07733 303124.

More information can also be found at <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/children-young-people-independent-visitor-scheme>.

May I wish you an enjoyable weekend.

Regards,

**Cllr Philip Whitehead**