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Issue 9



Harborough District Community Safety Partnership



Community Safety Partnership Newsletter

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Welcome

What a difference a few months make, one minute we're thinking about spring and summer campaigns, and the next we're preparing to spend untold hours at home, home schooling, worrying about work, family, friends, the economy and what the world will be like by the time lockdown ends. This newsletter we've looked at loneliness, domestic abuse, fraud and other ways that you may have been affected by COVID 19. Please be safe, look after yourselves, and others, and contact the community hub if you need support.

Loneliness

Even before social distancing and self-isolation, loneliness was affecting so many people in many different ways.

Prior to COVID 19, loneliness was affecting approximately 10% of all residents of Harborough District, which is a staggering 10,000 people. It could have been down to bereavement, age, low self esteem,



mobility, any number of issues. Research shows that loneliness can lead to an increased risk of some mental health issues, including depression, anxiety, sleep problems and stress. To help tackle loneliness, **Leicestershire Communities have produced a toolkit**, it can be used by a person who feels lonely, or by someone who could help make the difference in someone else's life. You can also contact VASL (Voluntary Action South Leicestershire) who both coordinate volunteers, but also support individuals. As a result of the lockdown, Harborough District Council have developed the Community Hub, to help facilitate support directly to vulnerable residents, this is supported by VASL and other partners. Please have a look at page 2 for more information.

Police Contact Information

The alternative to phoning 101 is to report crimes to Leicestershire Police online. Reports are triaged, given a crime number and dealt with as they would do if they were reported over the phone. Have a look at www.leics.police.uk for further information or to report.



Report

ONLINE

Community Hub

The Harborough District Community Hub has been set up to support vulnerable people across the district who may be self isolating, or isolated because of risks associated with the coronavirus (COVID 19).

If you, or someone you know, is currently self-isolating and needs immediate support with essential food, medical needs, or other, and do not have family, friends or neighbours who can help, please contact the community hub by clicking on the [link](#).

The service will prioritise those who are most vulnerable and in urgent need of help and support, these include:

- People who are over the age of 70
- People with underlying health conditions
- People who have received an NHS letter stating that they are in a 'shielded group'
- Families who are struggling to cope



Volunteering with VASL

We are so thankful to the many volunteers that have come forward to help during these uncertain times. To help assemble and organise the volunteers, Harborough District Council have teamed up with VASL (Voluntary Action South Leicestershire) and other voluntary sector partners who are better placed to do this.

To volunteer, please click the "[I want to volunteer](#)" link, which will take you to VASL's website where you can complete the volunteering registration form. If you cannot use the online form, please email communityhub@harborough.gov.uk with your name, contact details and how you would like to help / volunteer and your details will be passed to VASL for them to contact you.

Foodbanks

We have two permanent foodbanks operating within our district, the Jubilee Foodbank Market Harborough, and the Lutterworth and Villages Foodbank. For support from either of them, please contact our Community Hub to be referred for support. Last year Lutterworth and Villages Foodbank reported over 1800 packages of three day emergency food were given out during January to December 2019, compared with over 100 last week alone. Both foodbanks are working hard to support those who need it, and as ever, are grateful for any donations, to be made while doing your usual shop. You can see a current shopping list for [Jubilee Foodbank here](#), and for [Lutterworth and Villages Foodbank here](#).

Crimestoppers

Crimestoppers is an independent charity, set up to allow people to 'Speak up. Stay safe' by passing on information about crime 100% anonymously. Their staff are trained in how to take information from callers and they are regularly given updated training in what to ask because crimes, drugs and methods change rapidly.

Over recent years, the charity has seen a significant rise in reporting on Modern Slavery (75%), Domestic Abuse (37.5%), Possession of Weapons (35%) and Violence (18%) and around 10 people are arrested and charged every day as a result of information given to Crimestoppers.

It is estimated that around 20% of people are unwilling to speak directly to the police. This can be for a host of reasons, from fear of reprisals to cultural reasons. This is where Crimestoppers charity can help. Their **0800 555 111** telephone number and website **[crimestoppers-uk.org](https://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)** gives people the power to report 100% anonymously, and in over 30 years, that promise of anonymity has not been broken.



Fly Tipping

With all this time at home and waste and refuse sites being closed, you'd be

forgiven for thinking that Fly Tipping might be on the rise.

Thankfully, this has not been the case within the district. The Environmental Crime Enforcement Team have reported that the number of incidences are down over the same period as last year, and they are now able to increase the patrols that had been suspended due to the lockdown. Their increased patrols

on parks and open spaces will help to advise on social distancing, and deter potential fly tippers. Ultimately, the patrols are mainly to educate people, however, they have warned that anyone found committing an offence will be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice.

The Environmental Crime Team are continuing to promote the Tip Off campaign, you can report fly tipping **online**, or email **tipoff@harborough.gov.uk**. For all other environmental crime issues, you can email **envirocrime@harborough.gov.uk**.

Fly-tipping is a crime

See it... Report it...

Tip-Off

Stop fly-tipping in
Harborough District

Domestic Abuse

Nationally there has been an increase of about 25% in the number of calls made to domestic abuse support services since the beginning of the lockdown caused by the coronavirus. Many perpetrators already use isolating as a form of control, cutting someone off from family and friends, so that the victim is more reliant on the perpetrator. The lockdown has increased pressure on families during this time, reduced finances and cut people off from escape routes. UAVA (United Against Violence and Abuse) is the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland support service for anyone affected by domestic abuse or sexual violence. Anyone can contact them for support on **0808 80 200 28** or look at their **website** for more information. In the case of an emergency, where there is immediate threat of harm, contact the police on 999. If you are unable to talk, make a **'Silent call' to the police, dial 999, then 55**. Click **here for guidelines** on silent ways to notify the police.

Domestic abuse isn't always physical. It is a pattern of controlling threatening and coercive behaviour, and includes emotional, financial, psychological and sexual abuse. Please look out for your neighbours, friends and family, they may need you to make the first move.

SafeLives are promoting #ReachIn to remind us that by reaching in to offer to help, we could make all the difference. **The stay-at-home instruction as a result of COVID-19 does not apply if you need to leave your home to escape domestic abuse.**

It's hard to reach out for help from behind closed doors. We need someone outside to



Alcohol Habits During Lockdown

There has been significant media speculation focussing on increased alcohol consumption during the coronavirus lockdown, with increased sales of alcohol and off-licenses being allowed to stay open once pubs and clubs had shut. To check the validity of this, Alcohol Change UK commissioned research to find out whether habits have actually changed during COVID-19 lockdown or not, you can view the research **here**. Headline findings show that 1 in 3 people have actually reduced their alcohol intake during lockdown, although most of these were people who did not drink significantly pre-lockdown. 1 in 5 people reported they are drinking more often during lockdown, again, heavier drinkers were found to be less likely to have cut down. The concern is that whilst habits are easy to form, they can be hard to break, and if people start drinking at risky levels now, they face not only immediate harms, from accidents etc, but also long term damage to health. There is support and advice available for reducing or managing alcohol intake, both from **Alcohol Change UK**, and also **Turning Point**, the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland commissioned service.



Respect and Tolerate

As always, when the nights get lighter, we tend to have an increase in the number of complaints about anti-social neighbours. And this year, with us all stuck at home, it is no different. Our consistent advice is

respect and tolerate. Remain respectful of your neighbours, and the environment, and tolerate, particularly during this tumultuous time, a possible increase in the disturbances you may experience. People are likely to be doing an increased amount of DIY, children are likely to be sent into the garden to burn off some energy and because the tips are closed, and we're in the gardens more, there are also likely to be more bonfires. Have a look at the [Harborough District website](#) for more information on nuisance, about what is legal, and the correct procedures for making a complaint.



Cannabis in Dwellings

One of the most common complaints to the Community Safety Team, is of the smell of cannabis smoke from neighbouring properties. The assumption that because the drug is illegal, is that it would be dealt with by the Police, but, in reality, the burden of proof is such that they are unlikely to be able to satisfactorily resolve the complaint. There is a currently a piece of work being undertaken by Leicestershire Police, local authorities and housing associations on how to best resolve complaints of this nature. This is an ongoing process, and discussions are ongoing as to how this multi agency approach deal with the complaints more efficiently in the future. In the meantime, complaints can be made through to either the [Community Safety](#) team, [Environmental Health](#) or the [Police](#).

Fraud & Scams

You may already be aware that unfortunately a number of scammers are using the coronavirus (COVID 19) as a tool in scamming vulnerable people out of money. Action Fraud have reported that as of Friday 24th April, 1,072 victims have lost a combined total of £2,360,727 to coronavirus-related scams. For more information on keeping yourself, friends and family safe from fraud, please read the current information on the [government website](#), and keep up-to-date with all the latest scam awareness advice on the [Action Fraud Website](#).



Hoarding Awareness

National hoarding awareness week is from the 18th May, set up initially by the Chief Fire Officers Association it is being supported by the Environmental Team at Harborough District Council. It is estimated that more than a million people in the UK may have a hoarding disorder, which can range from mild, where it may not have an impact on someone's life, to severe, where it seriously affects someone's ability to function in everyday life. Additionally, hoarding can present fire risks to individuals affected by the disorder. Prior to lockdown, the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service were offering a peer support group at Wigston Fire Station to help people cope with hoarding behaviour and managing clutter, however, this is not currently running, due to the coronavirus. For further information or for support with hoarding, have a look at the [Help for Hoarders webpage](#), or the [Hoarding Awareness Week resource pages](#).



**A huge heartfelt thank you to
all key workers
and everyone doing their bit
at this time.**

Photo and News Opportunities

The front page photo is of the display outside Beauchamp Grange Farm in Kibworth. If you have photos or news from around the Harborough District that you would like to have featured in the quarterly newsletter, please submit them by end of July 2020 to r.woods@harborough.gov.uk.

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Harborough District
Community Safety Partnership

Keeping Harborough District Safer Together



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