

HELP FROM THE GOVERNMENT

In order to bring the outbreak under control the government has set up new facilities for testing either at an expanding number of designated centres or through kits sent to the home.

The list of those eligible for testing is being expanded day by day. Remember that the following groups of people can access priority testing through the NHS 111 website and by ringing 119:

- Anyone who has symptoms of coronavirus, whatever their age
- NHS patients and residents in care homes (with or without symptoms)
- All other essential workers with symptoms (this list is being expanded)
- Anyone who goes into work because they cannot work from home (for example, construction workers) and has symptoms
- Anyone who has symptoms and lives with someone who meets any of the above criteria.

OUT AND ABOUT

We enjoy an extensive network of footpaths for people to enjoy a stroll and do use the Recreation Ground and First Meadow for exercise and from the 4th of July, the playground equipment will be open. We must continue to adhere to the rules of social distancing set out by the government. If you are exercising a canine friend please bag and bin all mess so that the area remains one everyone can enjoy.

It is not enough to bag the mess left by a dog and then leave the bag beside a walk or hanging in a hedge. There are fifteen dog litter bins around the village and maps showing their locations are displayed on the notice boards and on the amenities section of the Parish Council website. Securely wrapped mess can also be put into any ordinary pavement litterbin. Dog bins are emptied on a regular basis and there is no collection service for full bags left on the ground or hanging in a hedge.

PLEASE ALSO REMEMBER:

1. Children should be made aware of the dangers of speaking to unknown people on-line. For guidance and advice to parents it is suggested they should consult ThinkUKnow.co.uk
2. Be aware that criminals are setting up fake sites to advertise goods for sale that either do not materialise or are fake. There has been an increase in telephone calls asking for monies to be transferred or requesting details of credit cards etc.
3. Only accept information from official sources. Rumours are distressing and damaging. If in any doubt please contact the Good Neighbour Scheme.
4. If your garden needs attending only employ a suitably qualified person and do not hesitate to ask them for proof of their qualifications.
5. Tick season is now upon us and residents and visitors are advised to wear appropriate clothing that leaves as little of their bodies exposed as possible in order to avoid contracting Lyme's disease.

To honour the National Health Service the Parish Council and the National Trust are continuing to fly a "Thank You NHS" banner from the main entrance to the Guildhall and an additional flag has been placed on the Bury Road at the entrance to the village.

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THE WAY FORWARD: KEEPING OURSELVES SAFE AND SECURE

The Prime Minister and his cabinet continue to ease the lockdown, however, we must all keep ourselves safe, secure and guard against further infections.

From the 4th of July social distancing will be reduced in certain circumstances to one metre with the recommendation that adequate forms of protection such as face coverings are used. The two metre rules will continue elsewhere, although home visiting can start. Continued perseverance, vigilance and observance of social distancing have paid off. We can now begin to resume some of our cherished daily activities.

In a nutshell;

- It will now be possible for two households of any size to meet up indoors and many of those who have been shielded will be able to emerge from their isolation. Guests will be able to stay overnight in self-contained accommodation.
- Pubs, restaurants, hotels, bed and breakfast establishments, libraries, museums and playgrounds will be able to open if they follow strict social distancing rules.
- Social distancing will have been reduced from two metres to "one metre plus." The government will further inform us of this process.
- As part of the new test-and-trace programme essential to use bringing the virus under control should you and anyone in your household develop symptoms such as a persistent cough and high fever please ring the new testing facility at 119.
- Non-essential shops can already start trading within guidelines protecting their staff, our residents and visitors.
- Our school can safely re-open its doors to some pupils.
- By the time you receive this newsletter public toilets should have re-opened.

For the time being, please remember to continue to stay at home as much as possible.

If you can, try to continue to work as much as possible from home.

If you go out, please continue to stay at the requisite distance away from other people at all times.

Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds several times a day and particularly as soon as you get home.

Remember you can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms.

If you have a motor car try to avoid unnecessary journeys.

We must not assume that the pandemic is nearing its end. These welcome measures can be rescinded if we and our visitors fail to obey the regulations designed to keep us safe. We must continue to remain alert, stay at home as much as possible and respect the rules of social distancing. If we do so we can enjoy our pubs, hotels, restaurants and visitor attractions that have been closed for so many weeks.

In this changing panorama our aim is to provide you with as up-to-date news as possible but please take into account that things can change rapidly so please listen to the news sent out by reliable sources.

During these difficult times we are here to help everyone in our village in any way we can. So please ring Good Neighbours on 07922 850082. With over 100 dedicated volunteers it has a village-wide network that continues to give advice, help with shopping and other tasks and help with solving day to day problems. There is no need to feel isolated or alone.

Remember that we can continue to provide free safe transport to medical facilities. Do you or someone in your household need a lift to see a doctor or attend a hospital or other medical facilities? If so, please do not hesitate and ring 07922 850082.

POST OFFICE AND LAVENHAM VISITOR INFORMATION POINT

Our Post Office is currently open on Tuesdays and Thursdays 11am to 2pm. Social distancing MUST be observed while in the building and queuing outside. We hope that it can soon be opened on additional days.

In accordance with government guidelines The Village Information Point and village hub elements continue to be closed until 4th July. For further information if you have access to a computer or mobile telephone please visit the "Lavenham VIP" Facebook page. Where you can also volunteer to help man and re-open our village hub and VIP.

FOOD FOR THE MIND: OUR LIBRARY SERVICE

We are pleased to report that the carefully remodelled Lavenham Library will re-open on Thursday 9th July at 10am. The Library layout has been changed to facilitate a more flexible room and also incorporate social distancing measures. Opening hours have been changed slightly to allow for regular cleaning and for the protection of the staff.

At the time of printing the library intends to adopt a select and collect model where you call or email the library on 01787 247729 or email Lavenham.library@suffolklibraries.co.uk. Staff will then select the books for you and you will be able to come and collect your already processed bundle. Returned books will be quarantined for three days before re-shelving and re-issuing. Unfortunately you will be unable to reserve books to begin with as all the libraries are not opening at the same time so our reservation process will not work properly. The library hopes to have it switched back on very soon. There will be no computer access to start with and they cannot accept cash. They will, however, be able to take contactless card payments over £1. Finally, they hope by the end of July we will be operating a near normal system whilst practising social distancing. Groups, however, will not be able to resume until the library is given further guidance.

SUPPORT FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES

Babergh councillor Margaret Maybury reminds us that some Lavenham businesses have still not applied for a business grant to tide them over during the current crisis.

As a matter of urgency they should visit: www.babergh.gov.uk/business/business-rates/grant-funding-schemes

FOOD FOR THE SOUL: OUR CHURCHES

The good news is that places of worship have now been given the go ahead to resume services from the 4th of July so long as social distancing measures are adhered to. Other Church news follows:

St Peter & St Paul, Lavenham re-opened from Sunday 21st June with times & days subject to some fluctuations reflecting circumstances. Funerals can now be arranged in line with necessary restrictions and protocols.

The Reverend Stephen Earl the rector reports that the church will continue to hold Sunday morning and mid-week services on Zoom. Details can be found on the church website www.lavenhamchurch.onesuffolk.net or you may contact him directly on earls2222@btinternet.com, or the Curate, Captain Paul Tyler cpaultyler@hotmail.com.

Our Lady & St John The Evangelist, Sudbury re-opened for Private Prayer daily between 5.00 and 6.00 pm from 15th June, with Father Brett always present. Contact Father Brett or join the streamed daily services at 10.00am via the website www.sudburywithhadleigh.com

The Salvation Army, Lavenham are not able to re-open at present. For information and advice please contact Major Debbie or Major Philip Neild at Lavenham@salvationarmy.org.uk and do not hesitate to request a copy of their weekly devotional leaflet.

OUR SCHOOL

Working closely with parents whilst experiencing the staffing and logical problems encountered by a small educational establishments located in older buildings, our much-praised school has taken a much-welcomed pragmatic and cautious approach. Teaching has been resumed for key worker pupils and Year 1 pupils but only for mornings. The school has also developed a programme that allows Year 6 pupils to meet once a week. These pupils have completed the curriculum but they are missing their peers and a sense of community and steps have been taken to allow them to socialise safely. The teachers continue to develop ingenious means to deliver the curriculum to all its pupils. Parents are more than pleased with the results.

AMENITIES AND SERVICES: LAVENHAM REOPENS FOR BUSINESS

We are fortunate to have a variety of shops so please patronise them. They have had to adjust their modes and times of operation and will continue to do so. Please be aware that shop hours can vary. In line with encouragement from 10 Downing Street many of our local shops are re-opening for business respecting the safe distance regulations and removing benches, street furniture and A-frames to allow their staff and customers to continue to be safe. Residents and visitors should no longer be putting two wheels of their vehicles on the pavement as this impedes pedestrians to pass safely.

All of the shops providing us with food continue to operate and have begun extending their hours. Please be aware that as a safety precaution they may close when deliveries arrive. For precise information please contact them.

Our pubs and restaurants should be able to open from the 4th of July.

Beauty galleries, hairdressers and the like will be able to resume their service from early July, depending on what the new guidelines will be.

OUR PRE-SCHOOL

Lavenham Pre-school partially re-opened on Thursday 4 June and are currently offering a limited service from 10am to 2pm, from Tuesday to Friday, for children already on our books. We hope to resume a full service in the autumn term. Inquiries from parents considering our service for this autumn are welcome. Please contact Kelly, the Manager, on 01787 249738 for more information and to be shown around when the setting is not open.

The situation is fluid so parents are advised to keep in close contact with the school.

STREET CALMING & SOCIAL DISTANCING MEASURES

The requirements for safe social distancing within a medieval village such as ours is fraught with difficulty. Any difficulty is compounded by irresponsible parking and motorists driving too fast. This has particularly been the case in the High Street. Under the emergency laws introduced by the government, Highways authorities may introduce regulations at short notice and dispensing with the need for any consultation.

To coincide with non-essential shops starting to reopen, Suffolk County Highways contractors started to install an over ambitious scheme along the High Street and in the central core of the village. With the exception of reducing pavement parking and seeking to reduce vehicle speed their scheme was dismantled within 24 hours.

The objective is still to allow safer space for pedestrians and cyclists to travel more safely. No-parking bollards will remain in place along part of the High Street to deter any hindrance of this simple objective. Irresponsible parking will therefore be dealt with by civil enforcement officers.

Suffolk County Council has accepted responsibility for the initial error and a copy of this can be viewed on the Lavenham Parish Council website: (<http://lavenham.onesuffolk.net/>).