

Latest updates for businesses affected by COVID-19



New Government guidance is now available on two coronavirus funding schemes - the Local Restrictions Support Grants (LRSG (Closed) Addendum) and the Closed Business Lockdown Payment.

Tourism and hospitality venues in England that have been required to close, as well as businesses that operate primarily as an in-person venue, but which have been forced to close those services and provide a takeaway-only service instead may be eligible for one or both of these grants. Eligible businesses must occupy property on which they pay business rates and be the ratepayer.

For those required to close due to the national restrictions beginning 5 January 2021, the [Closed Businesses Lockdown Payment \(CBLP\)](#) supports eligible businesses based on the rateable value of the property on the first full day of restrictions.

Businesses that were open as usual, but then required to close due to national restrictions imposed by government (for each period) may be eligible for the [LRSG \(Closed\)](#) Addendum schemes:

- From 5 January 2021 onwards
- Between 5 November and 2 December 2020

The grant will be based on the rateable value of the property on the first full day of restrictions.

[See all COVID-19 updates and guidance for businesses](#)

Sevenoaks Town Council encourages residents to engage with the Kent Wildlife Trust's long-term plans for its visitor centre at Sevenoaks.

During the Neighbourhood Development Plan consultation there was considerable interest in the Sevenoaks Wildlife reserve and its future plans. Members of the public informed the Town Council that it wanted to see a 'circular walk' around the main lake, access from Otford Road and general improvements to the facilities and entrance.

Sevenoaks Town Council were provided with a presentation by Kent Wildlife Trust last week and was pleased to learn that the creation of the 'circular walk' was completed and that it was holding a consultation on its long-term plans. The Town Council would encourage all residents to engage in the process – please see details below.

[Kent Wildlife Trust is consulting on our long-term plans for the future of our flagship visitor centre at Sevenoaks. We want to improve the visitor experience and inspire future generations to connect with nature. We'd like to hear from as many of you as possible to make sure our plans consider the needs of the whole community. View our proposals and have your say in the link below by 7th Feb.](#)

The link is: <https://www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/haveyoursay>



THE LAPTOP LIBRARY

The #laptoplibrary is an initiative started in the first lockdown by Ray Edun at Fine Tuned Tech with help from local volunteers. Our aim was to supply laptops to families who didn't have the technological means to access learning from home. As the pandemic has continued into 2021, many more families find themselves at the disadvantage of not having the technology (or connectivity) needed to enable children to receive education and parents and carers to work. It was clear that the project - a lifeline in the first lockdown - needed to continue, and be scaled up.



The library is now a few weeks into the year and the project is going from strength-to-strength. Donations of quality used laptops have been incredible, and the offer of financial help, too. The New Beacon school has fallen over backwards to provide a warm, spacious, Covid secure set up for #laptoplibrary to refurbish the laptops, as well as campaign for and collect donations. It's gaining scale and the ambition now is to be in a position where no child in Sevenoaks and surrounding areas is unable to access schooling due to a lack of technology.

In the last two weeks, we have received over 60 used laptops; as they are refurbished, they go out to local families, typically through the family's school, as soon as possible.

The need for laptops is much bigger than we could have anticipated; schools from all over west Kent are getting in touch with their requirements. In order to ensure that no one gets left out, we need more donations of used good quality used laptops, and monetary donations to replace parts and potentially even buy new laptops. Each laptop is loaned out on a library style basis, and if and when the need is fulfilled, it is returned to be wiped and reset for a new family to use.

How can you help?

If you have a used laptop to donate, please email on laptoplibrarysevenoaks@gmail.com to see if it's suitable. There is a donation drop off each Wednesday at The New Beacon school on Brittain's Lane between 8 and 10am, or separate arrangements can be made at different times.

#laptoplibrary are also gratefully receiving corporate donations, which can be especially helpful as a bulk donation offers the quickest route to fulfilling a need. The process of wiping the laptops is undertaken by professionals only. It is possible to provide erasure certification to allay any security concerns for those in data sensitive industries. Again, please email if this is something you can help with: laptoplibrarysevenoaks@gmail.com

If you are in a position to donate funds, there is a JustGiving page: https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/laptoplibrary?utm_term=49EnJG5jd

Free SKC Coaching



Thanks to [The National Lottery Community Fund](#), we are delighted to provide up to **5 hours of free one-to-one advice** from our professional partners to small groups and organisations. This service will be available until the end of March 2021.

Our professional partners are experts on charity registration, business and financial planning, marketing, fundraising and much more. If there is something that you need help with, we will try to match you with an expert who can provide you with the advice and support you require. [FIND OUT MORE](#)

Sevenoaks 2021 Business Awards



The Business Awards has become a highlight in the annual calendar for local businesses. This annual event provides an opportunity to promote local businesses to each other and the public and recognise their achievements.

Unfortunately, during 2020 due to the pandemic this event did not take place.

2021 is still a difficult time and our local businesses need help more than ever, hence our Love Your Local Business campaign. The Town Team are therefore looking at exciting methods to move forward with creating a virtual Business Awards. This will need to be a different format to previous years and will be more difficult to generate income to underwrite the events.

2021 Business Awards

The proposal is for a live streamed 'at home' award ceremony, with a few surprises, to celebrate Sevenoaks businesses and recognise their contributions to the community since the start of the pandemic.

The 2021 Business Awards will have different categories this year and this cutting-edge award ceremony will not only highlight the incredible work local businesses have done to adapt, survive, and help their community – it will also be a fantastic and entertaining night that can be enjoyed by business leaders and their families at home.

Sponsorship

The Town Team is no different to other organisations, it has been unable to carry on with its normal income generating activities. We need to be aware also that the Business Awards will not generate income from the sit-down meal tickets. The Business Awards have always been generously sponsored by local businesses and we are hoping that those who can do so will again this year. The Town Team will do all that it can to promote those who sponsor the events. If you are able and willing to sponsor these events a sponsorship sum, we would be happy to discuss this with you (email: admin.tp@sevenoakstown.gov.uk). Sponsorship opportunities start from £500.