

I'd like to begin this week's update by thanking you all once again for all your hard work and in particular for your efforts to stop the spread of the Coronavirus.

However, I must once again repeat – we aren't out of the woods yet, so please continue to be careful at all times.

Coronavirus is still a threat, as the delay in the planned re-opening of Brierton Sports Centre demonstrates.

A member of staff at the sports centre tested positive for COVID-19, and as that staff member had been in close contact with seven other employees they have all now been quarantined for 14 days.

The sports centre had been due to partially re-open this week as part of a phased re-opening of our leisure facilities across the town, but we've now pushed that date back until Wednesday 12th August.

Mill House Leisure Centre is due to re-open on the same day and the Headland Sports Centre will follow in the week commencing 17th August.

The safety of our staff and customers is our top priority and we have carried out a thorough deep clean of Brierton Sports Centre, on top of the extensive safety measures which we have introduced at all our leisure facilities, including new "gold standard" cleaning procedures and the purchase of specialist decontamination equipment to ensure that gym facilities are safe to use.

It will be really nice to see our leisure facilities starting to re-open again – for the latest updates click [here](#).

So – to keep COVID-19 at bay – and as we head into a weekend with predicted high temperatures and you are perhaps planning to head to the beach or other open spaces – it's as important as ever that we all take precautions and encourage our family and friends to do the same.

Please continue to keep your distance from people not in your own household (two metres wherever possible), wash your hands regularly, practice good hygiene measures and, of course, wear your face covering when you are out at the shops and in other enclosed public spaces. Simple measures but very effective!

The safety message features prominently in our latest newsletter for residents which has just started distribution to all households across the town – you can read it [here](#).

Being delivered with it is a new Hartlepool Support Hub leaflet, to remind people that the Hub is still available to help residents who are older or vulnerable to stay safe, stay well and stay connected – read it [here](#).



Hartlepool is truly a caring town, and I'm delighted that this week's update also contains a report on the success of our Filling The Holiday Gap scheme, which is helping ensure that hundreds of school-aged children in our most vulnerable families aren't going hungry over the summer holidays.

You can also read about the sterling work of the volunteers and staff of the Waverley Terrace Community Garden who have also been doing their bit to help our most vulnerable citizens.

It's always good to also have some personal goals in difficult times like these so please also check out the opportunities to enhance your skills in our new Hartlepool Learning and Skills Service prospectus – details below.

Have a nice weekend.

Gill



Wear a face covering in shops and on public transport



Wash your hands more regularly



Keep a safe distance from others

1. Help shape the future

You have a chance to influence the future of Hartlepool by contributing ideas for regeneration and telling us what's important to you and what could make the town a better place to live and work.

Hartlepool is one of 100 towns across England invited by the Government to develop innovative regeneration plans and secure up to £25m of funding through the Towns Fund. Each town is required to develop a Town

Investment Plan, and as part of this process we are talking to people about the challenges and opportunities they see for Hartlepool.

We are running separate consultations for residents and businesses until the end of August.

Click [here](#) to access the resident survey.

Click [here](#) to access the business survey.

2. New Learning and Skills prospectus launched

Hartlepool Learning and Skills Service's Prospectus 2020/21 is now available.

It includes information about a wide range of interesting courses - both classroom-based and online – that can help you enhance your personal, social and employability skills. Click [here](#) to find out more.



3. Great outcome for Filling The Holiday Gap

Our Filling The Holiday Gap scheme to help ensure children across the town don't go hungry over the summer holidays has been a great success, helping over 800 children.

The scheme provides resources to public sector and voluntary and community group (VCS) organisations and other charitable groups to help them ensure that families with school-aged children they are working with don't suffer acute food poverty during school holiday periods.

This summer, in the light of the overwhelming success of the food parcel scheme operated by Hartlepool Support Hub during the COVID-19 crisis, Filling The Holiday Gap has

given vulnerable families with school-aged children who are at risk of going hungry a food parcel to last throughout August, complete with recipe cards.

Public sector, VCS and other charitable groups were asked to identify the number of families they are working with who were in need of a food parcel and then apply for the parcels to distribute to them.

A total of 16 groups applied from across the borough, resulting in 370 food parcels being given out, to help a total of 830 children.

Read more [here](#).

4. Shop Local campaign

We are supporting the Government's Shop Local campaign which begins on Monday and runs throughout next week. It's all about supporting the local economy and jobs, so we would encourage you to do your shopping at safe small businesses in the community.



5. Join the Virtual Duathlon Challenge

Following the postponement of Hartlepool's Big Lime Triathlon as a result of the Coronavirus crisis, would-be competitors are being invited to take part in an alternative

"virtual" challenge. Our Participation Team has set up the Virtual Duathlon Challenge which involves cycling 20km and running 5km. Click [here](#) to find out how you can take part.

6. Community Garden team comes up trumps

Green-fingered volunteers and staff at the Waverley Terrace Community Garden have been playing their part to help those most in need during the COVID-19 crisis.

The Garden – on three acres of allotment land – helps local people to overcome the complex reasons preventing them from finding paid employment, such as physical or mental ill-health, for example.

Through the project they have an opportunity to build on their strengths and aspirations, make a contribution to their community and move closer towards paid work.

The team has been donating fresh produce of organic fruit and vegetables to organisations across Hartlepool including Hartlepower, Food Network, Reach Out Ministries and Miles for Men.

The team has continued to maintain the allotment garden throughout COVID-19, growing produce to go to the town's most vulnerable people.

Keeping the site open has also given the volunteers a social outlet and helped them to keep active during these difficult times.

For details of volunteering opportunities click [here](#).

