

Business newsletter (3 March 2021)

Welcome to the new Fareham Borough Council newsletter, which aims to keep businesses informed about what is happening locally during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

This newsletter will provide details of:

- [Grants helpline now open](#)
- [Covid-19 Rapid Community Testing](#)
- [Grant schemes still available from the Council](#)
- [The Roadmap out of Lockdown](#)
- [Covid-19 Spot Checks](#)
- [Subscribe](#)
- [Useful Links](#)

Further information will be published to inform readers of useful information as and when it occurs.


Grants helpline now open

Fareham Borough Council has opened a special grants helpline specifically designed to help local business owners find the Government Business Support Grants they are eligible for and provide information on how to claim them.

Businesses looking for information and guidance on which grant scheme to apply for can call 01329 824430 on weekdays from 8.45am to 5.15pm and a member of the team will be happy to help.

Covid-19 Rapid Community Testing

COVID-19 rapid community testing is now available at Fareham College. This is for people with no coronavirus symptoms, but who need to leave home for work.

Employees unable to work from home are encouraged to book a test twice a week to help protect family, friends, colleagues and the local community. The usual opening hours will be Monday to Friday 9am–5pm and employees will need to book a test at least 24 hours in advance using this [portal](#) .

The test takes under 20 minutes and result will be sent by text in around 30 minutes. Employers are asked to allow and encourage their staff to take part in regular testing to ensure a safer working environment.

If test results are positive, the employee and their household must isolate immediately for 10 days.

Anyone experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, a high temperature, new, continuous cough, or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste should not attend a

community testing site, but instead book a test at www.nhs.uk/coronavirus or by calling 119.

If anyone is not able to book an appointment online they can call 01329 824399 and a member of Fareham Borough Council will be happy to help. Further information is available [here](#).

Grant schemes still available from the Council

There are currently nine grant schemes available offering up to £9,000, which local businesses may still be eligible to receive.

Some of these are top-up schemes announced by government to extend existing support grants. If businesses have already applied for and received grants which have been extended, they will receive the top-up amount automatically and there is no need to reapply.

There are three schemes which are currently open for new applications. The deadline for applications is **31 March** so please apply without delay if not done so already:

- **Local Restrictions Support Grant (LRSB) – Closed**

This is for business rate payers which were required to close during Covid restrictions. This scheme includes the Closed Business Lockdown top up payments announced by the Government on 5 January 2021.

- **LRSB – Open**

This is for business rate payers in the hospitality, leisure and food industries which suffered a severe reduction in income during the Covid restrictions when the borough was under Tier 2 restrictions.

- **Additional Restrictions Grants (ARG)**

This is open to rate payers, non-rate payers and businesses run from domestic settings which have suffered at least a 15% loss in income during the periods of lockdown.

A new **Taxi License Holders** scheme is now available for holders of a current taxi licence issued by Fareham Borough Council. This scheme applies to those who live or operate in the Borough, who have not received any assistance under the Local Restrictions Grants Schemes or other Additional Restrictions Grants Schemes. We will be contacting people who we think are eligible directly. You can find full eligibility criteria and further details

here: https://www.fareham.gov.uk/business/business_rates/grants.aspx

In addition, the council is operating a **Market Traders Scheme**. This is a scheme for businesses trading at the Fareham Town Centre and Portchester Markets. Under the

scheme the stall fees are reimbursed. You do not have to be regularly stall holder to be eligible for this scheme. If you are interested in becoming a permanent or temporary stall holder when lockdown restrictions are lifted, please contact 023 9254 5609 or email: regulatory@fareham.gov.uk

Whilst the Council has contacted as many local businesses as possible with information about specific grants, it is urging business owners to visit https://www.fareham.gov.uk/business/business_rates/grants.aspx to ensure they have received all the support they are eligible for.

We are awaiting further details of the **Restart Grant Scheme** recently announced by the Chancellor, which will be going live in April.

The Roadmap out of Lockdown

On 22 February the Government published their [roadmap out of lockdown](#). The key dates are listed below are subject to change depending on the most up to date scientific data:

- 8 March – children return to school and practical higher education courses
- 12 April – opening of non-essential retail, hairdressers and beauty salons, indoor leisure facilities, outdoor leisure such as zoos, theme parks, campsites and self-contained holiday accommodation, hospitality venues – outdoors only. Weddings increase to 15 people.
- 17 May – indoor leisure, indoor hospitality, larger performances and sporting events subject to restrictions, Weddings increase to 30 people
- 21 June – all other closed businesses to open including nightclubs. Complete review of all social distancing measures.

While this roadmap offers businesses an indication of when specific restrictions will be lifted, Covid is still highly prevalent in the community. Businesses should fully prepare for positive cases among employees in order to protect staff and customers and prevent the risk of infection. There is information available at www.gov.uk to help you prepare or you can call the Environmental Health team at Fareham Borough Council on 023 9254 5609 for further advice.

If you are seeing multiple cases, despite putting control measures in place, please call the PHE Health Protection Team 0344 225 3861.

Covid-19 Spot Checks


To help businesses comply with regulations Fareham Borough Council Environmental Health Officers have been undertaking Covid-19 spot checks.


These spot checks will continue throughout the roadmap out of lockdown period to ensure workplaces continue to be safe environments for both their employees and the wider community.


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Useful Links

You can find guidance about support for small businesses and the self-employed from the [Federation of Small Business](#) .

Find a wide range of business support and information with the [Hampshire Chamber of Commerce](#) .

There is a new 'Coronavirus' hub on the [Solent LEP](#)  website detailing all of the available support for local businesses.

There are also a number of national financial support schemes designed to help businesses during the pandemic. You can find out if your business is eligible using the [Business Support Finder Tool](#) .