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## Covid-19 Business Bulletin

A full range of business support measures have been made available to UK businesses and employees.

Follow the links to see the latest updates from Government, **find financial support for your business** and **click here if you are self employed**.

The Government has set up a business support helpline on 0300 456 3565. This is available Monday to Friday from 9am to 6pm.

Visit the **Malvern Hills website** to sign up for the latest updates on business support and our regular email newsletter.

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## Kickstart - Grow your workforce, build your business and support young people.

You can use the Kickstart Scheme to create new 6-month job placements for young people who are currently on Universal Credit and at risk of long-term unemployment. The placements should support participants to develop the skills and experience they need to find work after completing the scheme.

Funding is available for 100% of the relevant National Minimum Wage for 25 hours a week, plus associated employer National Insurance contributions and employer minimum automatic enrolment contributions. There is also £1,500 per job placement available for setup costs, support and training.

WCC and WLEP are acting as the local registration body so if you are interested in offering a placement please contact Worcestershire Business Central [info@business-central.co.uk](mailto:info@business-central.co.uk) or T 01905 677888

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## Latest Covid Guidance

Further to the **Prime Minister's statement** yesterday outlining the new rule of six in England, the official Government guidance for **working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19)** has been updated.

Additional specialised advice has also been updated, including the **Visitor Economy guidance** and guidance for **restaurants, pubs, bars and takeaway services**. The seven priority actions are:

1. Complete a COVID-19 risk assessment. Share it with all your staff. **Find out how to do a risk assessment.**
2. Clean more often. Increase how often you clean surfaces, especially those that are being touched a lot. Ask your staff and your customers to use hand sanitiser and wash their hands frequently.
3. Ask your customers to wear face coverings where required to do so by law. That is especially important if your customers are likely to be around people they do not normally meet. Some exemptions apply. **Check when to wear one, exemptions, and how to make your own.**
4. Make sure everyone is social distancing. Make it easy for everyone to do so by putting up signs or introducing a one-way system that your customers can follow. Enable people in the same party who do not live together to remain a safe distance apart.
5. Increase ventilation by keeping doors and windows open where possible and running ventilation systems at all times.
6. Take part in NHS Test and Trace by keeping a record of all your customers for 21 days. From 18 September, this will be enforced in law. Some exemptions apply. Check '**Maintaining records of staff, customers and visitors to support NHS Test and Trace**' for details.
7. Turn people with coronavirus symptoms away. If a staff member (or someone in their household) or a customer has a persistent cough, a high temperature or has lost their sense of taste or smell, they should be isolating.

The additional guidance for **restaurants, pub, bar or takeaway** and **visitor economy businesses** is available on [gov.uk](http://gov.uk).

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## Track and Trace – Customer Logging Kit

A new and updated **Customer Logging Toolkit** for businesses that collects customer details for Test & Trace is now available. Please help drive awareness of this by sharing through your local business' networks.

The toolkit includes a suite of materials on customer logging that local businesses can use, including suggested copy, posters and social media assets.

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## Worcestershire LEP launches new Annual Report and Delivery Plan documents

The Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (WLEP) has launched its new Annual Report and Delivery Plan documents.

Both documents form part of the requirements from Government to outline what the WLEP has achieved in the past financial year and the aims for the coming year. Both documents follow the 5 principles outlined in the WLEP's Local Industrial Strategy of Ideas, People, Infrastructure, Place and Business Environment.

The Annual Report for 2019/20 provides readers with more information on the latest achievements that have taken place in Worcestershire's business community, including major projects like the £71.71m Local Growth Fund and €68m EU Funding schemes. Some of the notable entries in this year's report are Worcestershire Parkway rail-station, the 2020 Worcestershire Skills Show and the acceleration of BetaDen's second cohort of tech businesses.

The Delivery Plan document has been designed to showcase the priorities for the coming financial year and the progress towards achieving the key objectives set out in the Strategic Economic Plan; increasing GVA by £2.9 billion, creating 25,000 jobs and enabling 21,500 new homes in the county by 2025.

This includes information on the Government's new Getting Building Fund, where Worcestershire LEP was successful in a bid for £12m to fund capital projects and programmes, which will help support jobs, skills and infrastructure in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

View both documents [here](#) and [here](#)

For more information on either document, please contact the Worcestershire LEP team by emailing [enquiries@wlep.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@wlep.co.uk)

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## Campaign launched to support and promote Worcestershire's Food and Drink Sector

The Worcestershire Food and Drink Industry is getting new support through the new 'Make it Worcestershire' campaign launched recently.

The Make It Worcestershire campaign has been developed by One Worcestershire and Worcestershire Food and Drink to promote local produce and outlets.

Worcestershire has a plethora of producers and outlet shops and this new campaign aims to further showcase and celebrate local produce to shoppers both digitally and in physical stores.

Customers are encouraged to love their local shops and look out for the Make it Worcestershire campaign which highlights the produce made in the county.

Initially 20 organisations have pledged to be involved within the campaign and going forward there is a growing opportunity to get more.

The campaign will also have a heavy social media presence, advertising great locations to go to and experience some Worcestershire produce. There will also be various competitions taking place within the campaign which will be announced over the next few weeks and months.

To follow and join the social media campaign, use the hashtag #MakeltWorcs

For more information about the Make It Worcestershire campaign and for how to get involved, visit the [One Worcestershire website here](#).

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## Using Innovation and Growth to advance your business with WINN

The Worcestershire Innovation Network (WINN) has a series of new platforms which have been designed to help businesses grow.

The WINN Innovation Platform has now launched allowing businesses to ask questions to specialist advisors, create and manage their own ideas and challenges and browse a library of online support content. The Platform will continue to develop over the coming months and now is an exciting time to join the WINN Community. To register for the platform please visit the [website here](#).

Alongside this, WINN are also promoting their Launch Pad. Learn more from cutting-edge innovators and subject specialists about how ideas can work in your business. For more information or to reserve your place please visit the [WINN Launch Pad website here](#).

Businesses in the county also have the chance to apply for the Worcestershire 'Proof of Concept' (POC). Worcestershire Proof of Concept is a popular programme that has been available for several years. The latest round of funding was launched on February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019. The programme offers grants of up to £30,000, representing 40% of the total project costs. All costs must be external to the company and are claimed retrospectively. Worcestershire County Council delivers the grant fund in partnership with Central Technology Belt.

If you would like more information on the Worcestershire Proof of Concept grant fund please contact **Worcestershire Business Central**

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## Quarter 2 Economic Survey Results

Herefordshire & Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce, in association with the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership, have released the results of the latest quarterly economic report, outlining key economic indicators for Quarter 2 (Q2) 2020.

To read the full report for Quarter 2 2020, [click here](#).

Data collection for the Quarterly Economic Report for Quarter 3 is now live.

**Take part now** and tell government about the impact of COVID-19 on your business. This information will be anonymised and given to the government to lobby for business support during the economic restart and recovery from coronavirus.

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## National Apprenticeship Awards now open

The National Apprenticeship Awards 2020 will be open for entries between 1st and 25th September 2020.

Back for their 17th year, the National Apprenticeship Awards are a fantastic opportunity to showcase the apprentices and employers who have gone above and beyond, despite the challenges faced during this pandemic.

Entries to the awards are open until 25 September 2020 and this year's winners will be recognised via virtual ceremonies. These ceremonies will champion employers, apprentices and apprenticeship champions from all sectors - from engineering, digital, healthcare and science, to beauty, manufacturing and education.

[Click here for more details](#)

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## Here2Help Business Support – Register your interest now

Worcestershire County Council has launched Here2Help Business to provide financial support and consultancy advice to help kickstart the local economy.

Small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) can apply for up to £10,000 for a Graduate Development Support Grant to recruit a graduate employee for a one-year period. Sustain and Grow Grants up to £25,000 are also open to applicants.

The grant will assist Worcestershire businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic supporting them with projects to help aid recovery and future growth. A limited number of larger grants up to £100,000 will also be available for businesses across the county. These are available to help support projects that directly impact the COVID19 response.

There is also a capital grant provision for projects within the agriculture and horticulture sector.

It is anticipated that there will be high demand so to register your interest in any of the programmes [click here](#) now

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## Kickstart Grant – Tourism and Business Recovery

The Government confirmed **£10 million of funding to boost tourism** and a further **£20 million to boost business recovery** in England.

The Kickstart Grant Scheme will give small businesses grants of up to £3,000 to help them adapt their businesses following the pandemic.

Further details are due out shortly.

To register your interest in the Kickstart Grant Scheme, please Contact Worcestershire Business Central [here](#)

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## Light up your premises for Recycle Week

The national Recycle Week campaign, which is run every year, is this year being held from 21<sup>st</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> September.

The theme this year is “thank you” to acknowledge the work done by the recycling crews during lockdown as they continued to collect from people’s houses (and a few businesses) and also to thank the public for continuing to recycle when the world was a little bit chaotic to say the least!

As part of the work being done by Worcestershire County Council and the six district councils, we are asking buildings to light up green to show their support for Recycle Week. So far, the town halls in Bromsgrove and Redditch, the Palace Theatre, Worcester Arena, University of Worcester’s Arthouse Clock Tower, Evesham Bell Tower and Broadway Tower have all agreed to take part.

WCC would very much like shops and businesses in the county to also light up green for the duration of Recycle Week and would appreciate as many as possible participating.

If businesses are interested they can contact Emma Stuart at Worcestershire County Council ([estuart@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:estuart@worcestershire.gov.uk)) for more information or just light up and send

Emma photos of your green business and they will then include in our publicity material during the week.



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## Low Carbon Webinars

The Low Carbon Opportunities Programme which has been specifically designed to support businesses with innovation within the Low Carbon sector is introducing a series of webinars which will help SMEs in Worcestershire.

These webinars are aimed at:

- Businesses interested in launching new ventures;
- Businesses already in this market
- Businesses who see the value in diversifying into this sector

Our programme exists to provide direct support to SMEs through targeted and intensive expert advice and financial support. The series of three-monthly webinars will take SMEs through understanding the support available from the County Council, analysing what business opportunities exist in the Low Carbon economy, and how to plan and launch business ventures in the market.

They each will last around an hour and will include an opportunity for interacting with the speakers and for networking with other attendees. They will feature input from businesses which have already benefited from the programme.

The first of the series will be at 4pm on September the 16th.

If you would like to reserve your place, [click here](#)

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## EU Exit Webinar

On Friday 9 October 2020 8.00-9.30am industry experts from across a variety business functions will present and discuss the organisational challenges and opportunities associated with EU Exit. They will share best practice regarding current preparation for EU exit and share potential challenges and opportunities in relation to specific business functions across organisational structures and sectors.

The event will provide practical business advice regarding regulatory change. This event will be interactive; the audience will be encouraged to arrive ready to participate in discussion and ask questions. The purpose of this event is to have a constructive conversation about how businesses can prepare for regulatory changes associated with a "No Deal" exit or a managed "Deal" exit from the EU.

The event will allow delegates to ask questions specific to their sector or unique business. This event is ideal for businesses of all sectors and sizes who want to share their experiences and find solutions for impact on business functions of a "Deal" or "No Deal" EU exit scenario.

The event will provide the opportunity to share challenges and best practice to improve resilience to potential change. [Click here to register](#)

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## BetaDen confirms Tech Tuesday schedule and welcomes new cohort member

Malvern-based technology accelerator has confirmed the schedule for its popular TechTuesday events through to the end of the year. The free, bi-monthly series is open to anyone interested in the evolving technology landscape, with the most recent online event attracting attendees from as far away as Australia.

The next event takes place on Tuesday 3 November and will focus on 5G and Manufacturing.

Linda Smith, CEO of BetaDen, said: "Moving our TechTuesday events online due to the Covid-19 pandemic has proved a real success with over 70 attendees taking part in our July event and creating a number of new leads for our guest speakers.

"The November event marks the first of a new series-within-a-series that will focus on the possibilities presented by 5G technology. Providing our members with access to one of the only 5G testbeds in the country was one of the key reasons we decided to base BetaDen in Malvern and we're looking forward to explaining how this new technology is being developed by a number of local manufacturers and looks set to change the face of manufacturing for years to come.

"I'm also delighted to confirm that DronePrep, one of the guest speakers at our July event, has now joined BetaDen Cohort 3 and we're looking forward to working with them"

For further information about TechTuesdays and to book your space at either event, visit

<https://www.beta-den.com/events/08092020/tech-tuesdays-security-by-design/>

or

<https://www.beta-den.com/events/03112020/tech-tuesdays-5g-and-manufacturing>

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## Tell us how your business has been affected

The ED team wants to fully understand the impact of the Coronavirus on specific businesses and the wider economy.

This will help us tailor our service to you and feedback to Government to help shape their ongoing response.

If you would like to talk one-to-one with a member of the ED team about your business experience and effects of Covid-19, please email us with your contact details  
[ecodev@malvern hills.gov.uk](mailto:ecodev@malvern hills.gov.uk)

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