

## **BIZ BUZZ CRISIS UPDATE 01-04-2020, 6.00pm**

Amidst increasing complaints at the slow pace of help that was promised to businesses two weeks ago, Biz Buzz has been collecting together the links and contacts that are now set up and *should* be operational. Sadly, that does not mean they ARE! However, if your business is in trouble or simply needs to re-group, **don't lose heart**. Most deadlines are flexible, to some extent, as much of the infrastructure for the support systems has yet to be built effectively. Breckland Council are the first to acknowledge this and want us to know that they are doing what they can. Keep ferreting around to find solutions. Be agile...and think out of the box. It's a new world and when this is all over, it will be a very new business environment. We should be preparing for that unknown future right now. The list below is lengthy, but it's reasonably concise. Stick with it!

**WHERE'S THE BIZ MONEY?** In today's press conference Business Secretary, Alok Sharma, claimed that £22 billion of the promised business relief and grants is available from today. On Saturday, local Councils received the £12 bn of grant money. The Government is pressing for it to be handed out "as quickly as possible". Following angry complaints from businesses who have been turned away from banks, Alok Sharma said it was "unacceptable for banks to refuse money to a company hit by this crisis." He pointed out that "we helped the banks in 2008, now they must help us" because it's "crucial that business can move forward" when this is all over. He said that they were working on new rules and regulations to ensure the system really does work. He said that the Chancellor, Rishi Sunak, will be making announcements in the next few days. So, as Biz Buzz keeps reminding you: Don't give up and don't think it's all over. There are changes happening all the time.

**VAT DEFERRAL: You must continue to submit VAT returns as normal but you don't have to pay.** As announced by the Chancellor on 20th March, all businesses with a UK VAT registration have the option to defer VAT payments due between 20 March and 30 June. HMRC clarified on Friday 27th March that "you therefore have until 31 March 2021 to pay any VAT deferred ... You do not need to inform HMRC if you wish to defer payment. You can opt in to the deferral simply by not making VAT payments due in this period. If you pay by Direct Debit you should cancel this with your bank. You should do so in sufficient time so that HMRC does not attempt to automatically collect on receipt of their VAT return. Should you wish, you can continue to make payments as normal during the deferral period. HMRC will also continue to pay repayment claims as normal. For more information go to [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

**SMALL BUSINESS GRANTS:** Breckland now has an online form you can fill in to get the grant. Here it is: <https://www.breckland.gov.uk/article/14041/Business-Rates-and-Grants>  
The full details of eligibility are here: [Small Business Grant](#) or the [Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant](#). Breckland DC will get in contact once you've done the form-filling.

The outline terms are:

- All businesses in England in receipt of Small Business Rates Relief (SBRR) and Rural Rate Relief (RRR) as of the 11th March will be eligible for a payment of £10,000.
- Businesses in England in receipt of the Expanded Retail Discount (which covers retail, hospitality and leisure) with a rateable value of less than £51,000 will be eligible for the following cash grants for each property (hereditament):
  - If you have a rateable value of up to £15,000 will receive a grant of £10,000, subject to eligibility criteria
  - If you have a rateable value of over £15,000 and less than £51,000 will receive a grant of £25,000, subject to eligibility criteria

Breckland are having to draw up completely new systems with a depleted staff and may be at home. They say they know it's frustrating but "please know that we are doing everything we can with what we have." If you need to discuss things email [regeneration@breckland.gov.uk](mailto:regeneration@breckland.gov.uk)

**HELP FOR BUSINESSES:** If you are a business in need of help, visit the New Anglia Growth Hub website for free support <https://www.newangliagrowthhub.co.uk/> call [0300 333 6536](tel:03003336536). or email [Growthhub@newanglia.co.uk](mailto:Growthhub@newanglia.co.uk)

**OTHER BIZ SUPPORT FROM UNIONS ETC:** There are lots of trade associations, unions and groups outside of Government that will have information about how to stay in business when times are this hard. The Norfolk Chambers of Commerce has put together a list with all the contacts: you'll find it here: [Biz Support outside of Government](#)

**NORFOLK BUSINESS to BUSINESS HELP** The NCC has compiled a list of offers from local Biz Bods which might help you e.g. free HR advice, free IT support, discounted advertising web sites. [https://www.norfolkchamber.co.uk/blog/general/norfolk-businesses-pull-together-offer-support-packages?utm\\_source=Norfolk%20Chamber&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=11444248\\_Coronavirus%20Business%20Briefing%20-%202031%20March%202020&dm\\_i=1DEE,6TAFS,MOTT09,RA74M,1](https://www.norfolkchamber.co.uk/blog/general/norfolk-businesses-pull-together-offer-support-packages?utm_source=Norfolk%20Chamber&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=11444248_Coronavirus%20Business%20Briefing%20-%202031%20March%202020&dm_i=1DEE,6TAFS,MOTT09,RA74M,1)

**CALL FOR BUSINESSES TO SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY** If you are a business and can help with services, vehicles or other resources, Breckland would love to hear from you. They've created a new Community Support Hub Network to co-ordinate volunteers to help the most vulnerable local people e.g. to deliver medicines/food/welfare phone calls etc. It'll be managed by community-focused council officers and link to the national network. Those already contacted by letter are not the only ones needing assistance. So, if you are classed as vulnerable or you are in need of support, either now or in the coming weeks, contact [0344 8008020](tel:03448008020) or visit [www.norfolk.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/coronavirus) and Breckland will help. Individuals who want to volunteer should visit [www.voluntarynorfolk.org.uk](http://www.voluntarynorfolk.org.uk) Businesses should email [covidbusinessresponse@voluntarynorfolk.org.uk](mailto:covidbusinessresponse@voluntarynorfolk.org.uk)

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS:** Breckland aren't taking paper copies of planning applications. It must all be done on line at :<https://www.planningportal.co.uk/> or by email to [planning@breckland.gov.uk](mailto:planning@breckland.gov.uk) The statutory time limits are no longer in operation as neighbour consultation is limited and officers aren't able to go on site. They say they'll work with applicants/agents to agree a determination period once the situation is clearer.

**BUILDING REGS:** All building regs applications and building notices must be submitted electronically via Submitaplan at: <https://www.submitaplan.com/> ([opens in a new window](#))

**NEW BUCKENHAM PARISH MAGAZINE PUBLISHED NOW - BUT ONLY ONLINE** New Buckenham's monthly parish news and activities update is still being published but, due to the current restrictions, cannot be printed for door-to-door delivery. It's available using the link below. If you know anyone who may need or want it printed out, please be so good as to offer to use your printer and give them a "real" magazine! There are some great articles in it including a fabulous, illustrated account of life in the village 40 years ago and a visitor's view of the amazing wildlife we have here from an "honorary New Buckenhamer" who's been arriving here from Belfast for years. Check it out. what you need right now is a good read!!!

[You can download your copy of Parish News by clicking here](#)

Parish News also has its own page on the New Buckenham village website, where you can download copies of the latest issue and older issues of the newsletter: <http://newbuckenham.net/index.php/parish-news>

**USEFUL LINKS:** [Local accountants M+A](#) have compiled a very practical guide of business support. Be aware that all the information coming out is changing all the time.

<https://www.mapartners.co.uk/news/coronavirus-financial-support-for-businesses/>

Breckland's "Regeneration Unit" is handling the Covid-19 business matters.

<https://www.breckland.gov.uk/coronavirus-business-guidance>

[regeneration@breckland.gov.uk](mailto:regeneration@breckland.gov.uk)

Govt Support <https://www.businesssupport.gov.uk/self-employment-income-support-scheme/>

**All Biz Buzz crisis updates are to be found on [www.np4nb.online](http://www.np4nb.online)**