

**A MORSEL OF GOOD NEWS...** Some of those business grants are coming through. (See Easton's Experience below)

But if you are still trying , check out the useful site Accountants M+A have provided. Here you'll find the direct links to the application forms for each of the relevant District Authorities.

<https://www.mapartners.co.uk/coronavirus-grant-funding-schemes/>

Keep calm and carry on...As Biz Buzz has been saying, just keep trying. The businesses in and around New Buckenham have been taking that advice. Some have had to close, some are still open. All of them want to say a big thank you to residents and locals who have encouraged and helped them in many ways. It's important that everyone understands the pressure these businesses are under, so read on:



**KINGS STORES;** The village is hugely relieved that New Buckenham's shop is still open...and , incredibly, stock looks good. Sue Cattermole says some supplies are hard to find but most are now getting through. She even managed to find flour!! It's been an uphill struggle but she's managing it. Respect! So many villagers are so grateful. The part time Post Office had to shut down..and, for some reason best known to itself, so did the freezer! But, not to be defeated, a new one was soon up and running.



Villagers are to be heard calling from the door if they are uncertain about the number of people inside - there's a 2 people only rule - but it's a small price to pay to ensure they can still get what they need without having to wait interminably at Sainsbury's in Attleborough!



**ANGEL CAKES :** Sadly, there's no such activity next door in Angel Cakes. How long ago it seems when we saw this many eager people preparing for coffee and cake. After two years of day and night cooking , baking, cleaning, serving, doing the accounts, posting the publicity, looking after children and becoming a hub in the village, they were



forced into closure as "non essential" (That's a matter of opinion!!). Ryan and Stacey have been making the most of family time and helping elderly customers with food parcels , whilst working on future finances. Ryan Enever is putting a brave face on it. " We miss work a lot and miss seeing everyone. I know a lot of people are worried if their businesses can survive after this pandemic but I'm quite optimistic because of how much support we have had from the locals." (It's worth noting who his "locals" are. For a start there's , multiple award winning , voice artist , Simon Vance who lives in

California but enjoyed yummy cakes over here on a holiday. And then there's former BBC exec, Jim Wade who drools from a distance over the cakes on the website from his home in Cincinatti.) Ryan is determined " We're doing better than those who are ill, so we can't complain too much. We're happy so far with what the Government is



doing to help those working, and hope it continues if this pandemic lasts longer than expected. I know it's hard to see a light through all this at the moment but staying positive is the only tool we have."



**THE KING'S HEAD** is another incredible New Buckenham business where the family has worked ceaselessly over two years to become a key go-to venue. They too were forced to close. Dan and Jenny Leeder have also been making the most of family time,



with daughter Poppy, which is in short supply when you spend every waking hour working on business...and, in Jen's case, also work as a chemotherapy nurse. She went into self isolation before the lockdown to enable her to continue her vital work and for him to continue running the pub. They've applied for the Government's small business grant but like so many others, have heard nothing. The cellar is shut and they've lost a lot of stock. Beer does not have an indefinite shelf life and they will, as Jen puts it, "suffer a huge financial dent." But there's worse. "Our biggest task is taking on the insurance company. We are one of just a few selected companies covered for "non specific pandemics" such as Covid-19. However, they won't pay out because we can't prove that someone contracted it on the premises. That would be nigh on impossible when, even as a nurse, I couldn't get tested." This is a huge strain and may mean lawyers and legal action...when all they want to do is keep the business and family life going. Takeaways are



not viable. "Instead we are working like crazy behind the scenes to ensure we come back with a BANG!!" Jen tells me, "What's keeping us going is the wonderful messages of support, and people stopping to say how much they miss the pub. We've got a long, long way to go yet I'm afraid."

**G. EASTON & Son Ltd, BULK FOOD TRANSPORT** A long-established company like this suffers just as much...tho' Director, Charles Easton is trying to make sure he can keep on the road. All divisions of the business are classified as essential. 365 days of



the year in all conditions. Generally, the trouble is the length of time it takes to access funding. They applied to South Norfolk District Council and were just getting twitchy when...BINGO! Their loan was approved in three working days. As Charles himself said, "Not bad for a Government organisation." Staff shortages were what they feared most, not least because HMRC haven't worked out how to log claims for the latest



Statutory Sick Pay reclaim scheme. According to the Road Haulage Assn, 50% of the UK fleet is standing idle at the moment so Easton's have had a lot of job enquiries from those furloughed or out of work. So staff aren't the issue. Worryingly, Charles Easton's biggest problem is similar to that of the NHS. "Our biggest challenge



has been sourcing PPE, with suppliers either closed or taking stock off their shelves to supply their own staff." Longer term, they worry about sourcing parts and services. "Many of our regular suppliers are shut, on short hours, or short staffed due to self-isolation." On top of that future business decisions need to be made...but on what basis? Nobody knows what the rules are now. Customers are unwilling to discuss rate reviews, even though

the company has been on the same rates for 5 years... and a question mark hangs over the future of the contract with their largest customer. Nevertheless, if you want to succeed you have to keep trying and do what Charles Easton is doing - looking for the good news. "All that said, our ability to keep trading has at

least ensured that our cash position is strong and the overwhelming majority of our staff are really stepping up to the occasion, ensuring they observe social distancing and keep healthy, for which we're grateful."



EASTERN  
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Biz Bod, Charles Clarke is a New Buck resident and local farmer as well as being a Director and Chair of the Eastern Landlords Association. Not only has the property market taken a massive hit, but those attempting to maintain properties are finding it hard. Tradesmen won't go into a house where the occupants are in lockdown. Vital issues like gas checks are still being done but many other matters are necessarily on hold. Farming for Charles is "OK". Agrochemicals are coming within 2 days. "There's a much longer wait for fuel, but we were fortunate to fill up before this happened, so we can motor on for now!" The dry spell has made for slow emergence of the spring-sown crops like sugar beet and promised rain has not materialised here in the East. If he has any spare time (and there's not much of it) Charles is doing that great re-cycling thing...making new handles for hand tools!!



### **STAY SAFE... KEEP CALM... DON'T GIVE UP!**

If you know anyone who might find this group useful, do pass the information on to them  
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