

Report to Tavistock Town Council – Cllr Steve Hipsey WDBC 8/4/2021

- A session on Tuesday 23 March set out a Roadmap for recovery from the latest COVID lock-down with key dates, potential impacts and the mitigation we have put in place. This isn't an exact science but this operational, tactical plan sits comfortably alongside the wider Strategic Recovery and Renewal Plan that Members developed and adopted back in December 2020. Details are available on the WDBC web site.
- It has been announced that despite intense lobbying of the Government, including Cllr Jory writing directly to Rt Hon Jacob Rees-Mogg, the emergency powers to allow Council meetings to be held virtually will not be extended beyond 7 May 2021. This is disappointing and seems out of the step with the Government's own Roadmap and is still subject to legal challenge by the Local Government Association. Planning is underway to allow all WDBC meetings that cannot be conducted virtually to be moved back to Kilworthy Park
- As restrictions begin to ease from 12 April, new grants are available for businesses which are reopening, or businesses that are severely impacted by the restrictions. Updates are being issued via the WDBC web site. Two new grants are now available:

New Restart Grants - support businesses which have premises that are liable for business rates in reopening safely as restrictions are lifted

Ongoing Additional Restrictions Grants (ARG) - for businesses that are still severely impacted by restrictions, or which may or may not have premises that are liable for business rates

- WDBC has announced that entertainment venues such as pubs and restaurants, particularly those with little available outdoor space, can apply for the use of nearby council own land such as car parks and pavements, when they are allowed to partially recommence business on 12 April. This offer was made with some take-up in Tavistock during previous periods of business restriction
- Fusion Leisure centres are gearing up to Spring Back into action when local restrictions lift. In line with the government roadmap, outdoor group exercise classes started at Meadowlands Leisure Centre on Monday 29 March. Take-up appears to be fairly healthy so far. A new manager, Nick Cotton, is now in place at Meadowlands. Lauren Parker is now in charge at Ivybridge. From 12 April, swim schools, gyms and swimming for individual and family exercise will also commence at leisure centres across the Borough. Fusion Lifestyle hopes to be able to reopen indoor groups exercise, sports halls and other activities in May, as stated in the Government's Roadmap to recovery. Fusion has planned a campaign on social media to encourage people back to use the facilities, which we will support. TTC members are asked to encourage maximum use of the Meadowlands Centre in order to help get it back on it's feet and bring in customer revenue once again.
- Many members attended an online Have I Got Planning News For You? workshop with the Joint Local Plan team on 30 March The aims of this event was to find out more about the JLP and start thinking about the key challenges for the future.
- West Devon Borough Council's Garden Waste fortnightly collection service will continue to be available for another year. Annual subscriptions of £40 per household were due on 31st March and are currently being collected.
- WDBC staff are very busy preparing for the elections for Devon County Council members and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon and Cornwall on 6 May. Temporary staff are being recruited across the Borough to run polling stations and count votes.

- I recently undertook a personal study of the distribution of planning applications submitted across the Borough in the year between 26 Feb 2020 and 16 Feb 2021. The results may be of interest, particularly the numbers submitted from the Tavistock wards. The results are as follows:

Ward	Applications	% of Total	% of Ward within DNP
Exbourne	101	14.4%	0%
Bridestowe	79	11.2%	16%
Tavistock North	76	10.8%	0%
Tavistock SE	67	9.5%	0%
Hatherleigh	61	8.7%	0%
Okehampton N	57	8.1%	0%
Buckland Monachorum	54	7.7%	39%
Bere Ferrers	51	7.3%	0%
Milton Ford	40	5.7%	0%
Tamarside	33	4.7%	0%
Tavistock SW	29	4.1%	0%
Drewsteignton	25	3.6%	70%
Okehampton S	15	2.1%	84%
S Tawton	8	1.1%	62%
Dartmoor	4	0.6%	98%
Mary Tavy	3	0.4%	90%
Burrator	0	0.0%	100%
Chagford	0	0.0%	100%
Total	703		

The total number of applications made from the three Tavistock wards was 172, accounting for 24.5% of the total.

Fewer applications were received from wards which are largely served by the Dartmoor National Park Authority as a Local Planning Authority, as demonstrated in the right hand column.

It should also be noted that Exbourne and Bridestowe are very large wards.