Updated information regarding business grants –

https://www.eden.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/business-support-grants/

Including the Restart Grant that was announced in the 2021 Budget – a one-off business grant available to non-essential retail businesses (Strand One), and hospitality, accommodation, leisure, personal care and gym or sport business premises (Strand Two).This scheme is for businesses in the business ratings list only.

Rapid result COVID-19 test centres in Cumbria now open to all

Cumbria County Council's rapid-result COVID-19 test centres are now offering free testing to all Cumbrians who want to help keep themselves, their family and those they come into contact with safe.

Rapid result testing is available to people who do not have COVID-19 symptoms. You can be tested at one of the 11 test sites located across the county.

People who do have symptoms of coronavirus should book a test at nhs.uk/coronavirus or by calling 119.

The rapid result test centres use Lateral Flow Device tests. These are processed on site without needing to be sent to a laboratory. The tests are free and no booking is required, but opening hours apply.

Testing sites are available locally at:

Penrith: Ullswater Community College, Wetheriggs Lane, Penrith, CA11 8NG. Saturdays 9.15am to 12.30pm; Wednesdays 5.15pm to 7.30pm.

Carlisle: Trinity School Scout Hut, Strand Rd, Carlisle CA1 1JB. Saturdays 9.15am to 12.30pm; Wednesdays 5.15pm to 7.30pm.

Kendal: Queen Katherine School, Appleby Rd, Kendal LA9 6PJ. Thursdays 5.15pm to 7.30pm ; Saturdays 9.15am to 12.30pm.

For more test site locations and opening hours, visit cumbria.gov.uk/covidtesting

Eden landlords urged to register with Property Links

Eden District Council is inviting new and existing private landlords to register with Property Links, its free matching service for letting properties, which is run in partnership with South Lakeland District Council.

The scheme is completely free, with no finder's fee or commission to pay. Other benefits include income assessments for potential tenants, a Housing Health and Safety Rating (HHSRS) assessment, full photographic inventory at the start and end of a tenancy with inspections, as well as administrative support for landlords and tenants for drawing up of tenancy agreements, or housing benefit claims, amongst other things.

Eden District Council's Private Rented Accommodation Officer, Richard Liddle, said; "If you're a landlord and you're tired of paying letting fees then this tailor made service matching tenants with landlords could be just what you're looking for.

"Our vision is to match people facing homelessness with private landlords looking for long-term tenants. Unlike many letting schemes, we don't believe in a one size fits all approach. We tailor our support for each tenant, based upon their needs, throughout the whole of the tenancy."

After a quick inspection to ensure your property is in reasonable condition and that all safety and security standards are met, you'll be registered with the service and assigned a dedicated support officer. They'll then begin the process of matching a tenant to your property. Although, there's no obligation to take tenants and landlords retain full control over their properties.

For more information, or to register you interest in joining Property Links, email richard.liddle@eden.gov.uk

Local Elections

Eden District Council is encouraging people to register for a postal vote ahead of elections day. You must be registered to vote to apply for a postal vote. Deadline for registration is Monday 19 April.

The deadline to apply for a postal vote for the upcoming May elections is 5.00pm on Tuesday 20 April.

You can request a postal vote application form that is pre-printed with your name, address, and a barcode to speed up your application, contact Eden District Council by calling 01768 817817 or emailing elections@eden.gov.uk.

Alternatively, you can download a postal voting form by visiting the Electoral Commission website at electoralcommission.org.uk

Royal Mail is also promoting the use of its priority post boxes for the upcoming local elections.

Royal Mail has over 34,000 priority post boxes with late collection times after 4pm, and in many cases, an earlier collection time as well. Almost half of these priority post boxes have a collection between 3pm and 5pm on both Saturday and Sunday too.

Priority post boxes were introduced to help with the collection and onward delivery of COVID test kits, but as elections are also a priority mailing, Royal Mail is promoting the use of the enhanced collection service for this purpose.

Postal voters can visit www.royalmail.com/priority-postboxes to find out where their nearest priority post box is in their area.

Alston Local Links

Eden District Council's Local Links office at Alston Town Hall is preparing to open its doors, once COVID-19 restrictions are lifted on Monday 12 April.

Special measures will be in place to ensure the safety of staff and customers and social distancing rules will apply, with a limit on the number of people able to enter the building. Masks will be compulsory for all, except those with a medical exemption.

To begin with, the Alston Local Links office will be open to the public on reduced hours to accommodate the implementation of a strict hygiene regime. The office will

be open to the public on Mondays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, between 10am and 1pm and from 2pm to 4pm. The office will be closed to the public on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, though an alternative email and phone service will be available on these days.

Alston Local Links will be offering most of their usual services, whilst remaining a Covid-safe and secure environment for staff and visitors. Services include a 'select and collect' library service, with books being quarantined in between loans; tourist information; access to council services through the Eden District Council contact centre; photocopying; additional blue refuse bags; postage stamps and rural wheels top ups; community and event information and public transport information.