

# Matlock Bath Parish Council

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## To all Businesses in Matlock Bath

This is an appeal from the Parish Council on behalf of residents of Matlock Bath to business owners. We are asking you to consider the impact of high visitor numbers on the safety and well-being of residents, visitors and people working in your businesses.

We understand that some businesses are permitted to open under the strict regulations contained in the Coronavirus Act. We know that some businesses in the village have taken a conscious decision not to open which is very much appreciated by the residents.

As you know, the Parish Council has been actively campaigning for visitors to stay away from the village. The reason for this is threefold:

- The pavements on some parts of the Parades do not lend themselves to social distancing;
- With food outlets only being allowed to operate as takeaways, their customers then have to find somewhere to eat the food and this inevitably is the pavements which are already crowded;
- The crowding of the pavements means that residents are finding it extremely difficult to take their daily exercise and some feel like prisoners in their own homes. We have and continue to receive many e-mails from residents on this issue.

We have also been actively lobbying both of our local authorities to take actions that could alleviate the situation and make social distancing more manageable. However, currently we have not had any indications as to whether these suggestions will be acted upon.

For those who do decide to open, we would like to remind them of their legal responsibilities under the current legislation:

- It is the responsibility of the business to ensure that those waiting to be served are social distancing and not causing a hazard to pedestrians on the pavement by making social distancing difficult. It may be that for some shops, queuing outside will cause such a hazard social distancing is not possible. Under the legislation these businesses can be fined and closed.
- Putting up signs is helpful as a reminder but not sufficient. The rules must be enforced by the business. As food outlets are allowed to open as 'Takeaways', as soon as the food is purchased, the customer must leave the area of the shop and not cause a hazard. It is also the duty of the business to ensure this happens.
- Businesses should not be providing a seating area for customers. If such a seating area exists it must be securely closed.

Finally, we would ask that all pavements are kept clear of obstructions including advertising and A boards all of which impede social distancing.

We hope you will appreciate that our ultimate aim is to make the village as safe as possible for residents, businesses and visitors. Thank you for your co-operation during these difficult times. We all hope that very soon the village will be able to welcome back visitors in a safe and managed way.