Practical ways to support your community

> The guidance below is intended as a guide for any resident, community group or organisation seeking to set up some grassroots activity to support those affected by the coronavirus.
>
> It should be read alongside the regularly updated guidance from the government which can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response, and NHS advice for keeping yourself and others safe which can be found here: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/.

Please be assured that any voluntary tasks you are asked to perform will be in compliance with the latest government guidelines.

We are following public health guidance on social distancing, and the safety and wellbeing of our volunteers is a priority to us.

First - keep yourselves safe

- This is a highly infectious virus and if you become infected, you are likely to infect others. By keeping yourselves safe, you help stop the spread of the virus and keep people around you safe.
- Always remain two metres apart from others. Take particular care to avoid any physical contact with vulnerable groups or those who are self-isolating.
- If you are dropping off items, leave them on the doorstep, knock on the door and stand back.
- If you are doing some shopping for a neighbour and money or items exchange hands, make sure both people wash hands before and after to reduce the risk of the virus spreading.
- If you are unwell, follow NHS guidance and do not seek to help others.
- If you are delivering information/fliers to invite neighbours to social media groups wash your hands or apply sanitiser gel (60-90% alcohol). Do not wear gloves instead. Gloves are not a substitute for proper hand washing, and can become a carrier of bacteria.

Setting up neighbourhood activity

This sort of activity works best on a small scale, street by street basis – so keep it very local.

Covid-19 Mutual Aid UK have created a comprehensive guide on how to set up a group of local people to support each other through the outbreak.

Their website here: https://covidmutualaid.org/resources/ covers:

1. What is a Covid-19 mutual aid local group?

2. What does a Covid mutual aid local group/volunteer do?

3. Where are the local groups in my area?

4. Setting up your own local group

5. Managing Requests

You will find a range of templates online that assist in setting up groups, the template below having been used very successfully within a few streets in the Norwich area.

There is good guidance on how to deliver leaflets safely here: https://covidmutualaid.org/resources/#avoid

Printing:

- Wash your hands thoroughly before taking leaflets out of the printer and put the leaflets directly into a ziploc bag (a small pile up to about 40).
- Don't stockpile excess leaflets.

Distributing Leaflets

It is important to follow safety guidelines when distributing leaflets to ensure that as far as possible we are not exposing people to the virus and putting anyone at more harm. Here are some guidelines that everyone distributing leaflets should follow. You should not do this if you are ill at all.

- Do not leaflet if you are unwell at all, even if you're only experiencing mild symptoms.
- Leaflets should be stored in smaller piles within ziploc bags
- Listen to social distancing guidelines and don't leaflet in large groups. When leafleting in small groups, avoid physical contacts or exchanging resources.
- Make sure to wash your hands well before starting leafleting and use hand sanitiser if you are able to at regular intervals.
- Only one person should handle leaflets from each ziplocked pack, putting them directly from the bag through the door for each house and minimising contact as far as possible
- Make sure to wash your hands after you are finished too

We would recommend having two or three people as admins to run the group, as this shares the responsibility of any moderation or guidance that may be necessary. Information about how to set up a WhatsApp group is here: WhatsApp: How to create and invite into a group.

Covid 19 Neighbour Support Chat

Dear Neighbour,

A few of us from (**Name of Road/Street**) have got together and set up a WhatsApp group to support each other during the outbreak of Covid 19 (coronavirus).

The idea is to provide a place for us to talk to each other, look out for each other and contact neighbours for support.

Don't feel you are under any obligation to join at all but if you would like to, details are below. You can also leave the group at any time.

Please use the app to:

- Ask for help with shopping, or any other related assistance
- Let your neighbours know if you're self-isolating so someone can make sure you're okay
- Share important updates from official sources (NHS, local authorities, and national governmental announcements).

We want to caution against the sharing of misinformation or speculation in these groups, but we hope they can serve as a useful resource for building an effective support network in the weeks to come.

The (**number of**) of us (**names**) are setting this up and will moderate the chat, but we're not in charge - or volunteering to do everyone's shopping :)

To join: Download WhatsApp on your phone from the iPhone or Android store

It looks like this:

The group name is: (**Name of Street/s**) Covid 19 Community

For an invitation please use this link: (**WhatsApp link here)**

(**only give out numbers if you are comfortable doing so – the link will work without needing to**)

Or text one of the following and you'll be invited:

First name (no.):

First name (no.):

First name (no.):

If you need help setting up or using this, you can ask any of us (or a friend/neighbour).

If you don't have a smart phone and would like to stay connected in case of any emergencies please text one of the above with your email address or email (email address) **(you could set up a separate Covid email)**