

CORONAVIRUS: UPDATE

FROM COUNCILLOR SEÁN WOODWARD,
EXECUTIVE LEADER OF FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL



As a Council there is nothing more important than the health and wellbeing of our residents; the current COVID-19 pandemic is an enormous challenge for all of us. It has led to an unparalleled global response and restrictions have been put in place that are having a massive impact on all of our lives.

At a local level, we have already witnessed a significant reduction in the number of people going about their business across the Borough of Fareham as many vulnerable people at risk seek to protect themselves and their loved ones. Now, more than ever, local councils have a vital role to play in ensuring that communities have the resilience to cope and that critical services continue to be provided. We are working hard to ensure residents are kept up-to-date and know where to go quickly for key information - not just for national messages but for local information, so help can be found quickly when it is needed.

For example, we have asked local NHS surgeries to amend their ansaphone messages to ensure people know they should contact the council if they are vulnerable and need help. We are putting information on all 43 Council noticeboards across the Borough and posting messages on our social media channels.

With such wholesale changes to our lifestyles it is inevitable that many families are worried about how they will cope. The Government has announced all sorts of help packages to support individuals and businesses nationally, but it is the Council's website that sets out how this will be rolled out locally. All information relating to COVID-19 has been set out on a specific coronavirus page on the Council's homepage - and this is being added to daily; visit www.fareham.gov.uk

Support in the community

In times of crisis it is really important to understand who is doing what to help and I have to say we have some fantastic agencies in Fareham all working tirelessly to help and support some of the most vulnerable residents in our community. I have detailed overleaf the agencies we are working with to help care for our most vulnerable residents.

Your local Councillors are here to help. We may not be able to meet in person at the moment, but we are only a phone call away. All of our contact details are listed on the Council's website: www.fareham.gov.uk.

Acts of Kindness has a huge team of volunteers who are providing practical help to vulnerable or isolated residents right across the Borough by dropping off essential food supplies and picking up prescriptions for them. They have set up a traffic light system so that urgent help can be provided within two hours for our most vulnerable residents. Having been approached by them for accommodation to run the Fareham Basics Bank which had closed due to a lack of volunteers I am delighted that within just a few hours we were able to offer them the use of a suitable building.

☎ **07766 521314**

✉ **ActsofKindnessTeam@outlook.com**

Citizen Advice Bureau Fareham can provide a wealth of advice including information about debt and welfare benefits.

☎ **01329 223117**

🌐 **public.citafareham.org/advice**

One Community is co-ordinating the help available from some of the smaller local voluntary groups. They are also the first point of call for volunteers.

☎ **01329 239934**

✉ **vss@1community.org.uk**

Community First Wessex can help with transport to essential medical appointments, collect shopping and pick up prescriptions.

☎ **01730 777514**

✉ **reception@cfirst.org.uk**

🌐 **www.cfirst.org.uk**

Waypoint Church has set up a group of around 45 volunteers who can provide practical help such as shopping and telephone calls to the isolated, elderly and vulnerable.

☎ **07934 726212**

✉ **help@waypointchurch.org.uk**

Additional help

It is really important that we all look out for each other at this difficult time and I know some people have come up with great ways to keep in touch. For example individual streets have set up WhatsApp groups so if an individual is self-isolating and can't get out for essentials they can safely ask for help.

We can all look out for elderly or vulnerable neighbours and keep in touch with elderly relatives or friends by phone.

Finally, may I ask you to direct any people wishing to volunteer their services to One Community as they are well-placed to understand where help is needed.

If you know of anyone seeking practical help and support, please direct them to Acts of Kindness.



COUNCIL SERVICES



BUSINESSES



COMMUNITY HELP

Look out for these symbols on our social media pages.

We will be using them to highlight important updates in the coming weeks and months.

My thanks to you all for helping to keep our communities safe and well by observing Government advice.