

Being a Good Neighbour

#1stCommunities

During the Coronavirus outbreak many people have come forward to help and support their neighbours.

We want you and your neighbours to be safe whilst you help one another out during this uncertain time.

This guide offers tips and advice on how to help, safely.

We have also produced a couple of introductory videos:

- Recruiting & Retaining Volunteers - https://youtu.be/o_HvaobkoEo
- Practical Support Volunteering - <https://youtu.be/Q7x8G86xkwc>
- Keeping in Touch Volunteering - <https://youtu.be/Gac9QAvugU8>

Top tips to help others - Offering help in your community

Keep it local and manageable. We suggest your own street or about 20-30 houses at most. Don't try to cover more than you realistically can sustain – this might last for months.

Stick to a patch you know well. Keep to where people will recognise you and trust your offer is genuine.

Try to understand that people may be cautious about accepting help if they don't know you well and have the right to refuse your help.

Create a list of the things that you feel able to help others with. Feel comfortable to say no if people ask for more help than you're able to give.

Trust your instincts when you are offering to help others or being offered help. Remove yourself from the situation if you don't feel safe and respect others choice to do the same.

People are pulling together in communities - but we are witnessing some instances of tensions. **If you witness hate crime, such as racist comments or physical violence, report it to the Police or Stop Hate UK.**

Looking after yourself whilst helping others

- ✓ If you would like to help others but have been instructed to self-isolate, please follow the official Government guidelines and don't break your isolation period early.
- ✓ When in contact with others follow social distancing advice and keep a safe distance from others (this is approximately 2 metres or 6 feet apart).
- ✓ Be sure to wash your hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds before and after contact with your neighbours and follow the NHS 'catch it, kill it, bin it' advice when coughing or sneezing
- ✓ If you are helping others, be aware of your own wellbeing and ask for help and support if you need it.
- ✓ Keep in touch with friends and family, and maintain activities that you're able to do such as reading, exercise, walking the dog and gardening.

Keeping safe at home

- ✓ Don't get into personal care or going into people's houses – be assured that other agencies are looking into this.
- ✓ We don't advise that people display signs in your home / windows to tell others you're self-isolating – this could make some people more vulnerable to being exploited at this difficult time.
- ✓ Keep an eye out for suspicious activity or visitors to your neighbours, particularly those who may be more vulnerable, and report this to the Police if you feel concerned.
- ✓ There have been some incidents of people knocking on doors and claiming to represent charities, such as the Red Cross. Be sure to carefully check people's identification if you are not expecting them to visit and don't answer the door if you feel uncomfortable.

Keeping safe online

- ✓ Keep up virtual community connections using social media, email or WhatsApp groups for your local community, rather than sending individual messages. This helps to maintain everyone's safety.
- ✓ There are lots of existing groups that you may wish to join – look out for Communities 1st, local Residents Association groups, Neighbourhood Watch and Facebook community groups.
- ✓ Do not share your personal details such as your email address or telephone number if you are not comfortable doing so.
- ✓ Be sure to continue to access up to date information from trusted organisations including Hertfordshire County Council, your local district/borough council, the NHS and Public Health.
- ✓ Don't open emails or click on links claiming to be from organisations such as Public Health or Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. They may be scams and could download a virus to your computer.

Financial safety

- ✓ Don't give or loan people money if you don't know them or if it doesn't feel safe to do so.
- ✓ Keep your personal information safe and don't share any account details with people you don't know and trust.
- ✓ If you would like to donate to charity to support people affected by the pandemic, check the credibility of the organisation first or donate to trusted organisations that you know. There are likely to be funds set up soon – these will be promoted by trusted organisations such as Communities 1st.

Safeguarding others

If you have concerns about your own safety or the safety and welfare of your neighbours, including children or vulnerable adults, then contact the relevant emergency service. You can watch our Introduction to Safeguarding video here - <https://youtu.be/QL2inKODjHs>

Useful numbers

Police (Emergency): 999

Police (Non-Emergency): 101

Adult Social Care: 0300 123 4042

Children's Social Care (Child Protection): 0300 123 4043

NHS (Non-Urgent): 111

Emergency Medical Attention: 999

Hertfordshire Independent Living Service: 0330 2000 103

Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Helpline: 08 088 088 088

Age UK Information and Helpline: 0800 6781602

Hertfordshire County Council General Enquiries: 0300 123 4040

Stop Hate UK (to report hate crime): 0800 138 1625

Citizens Advice Adviceline: 03444 111 444

For more information contact

Communities 1st

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