

Brentwood Borough Council



BRENTWOOD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

COVID-19 Community Support Handbook



**STAY
HOME**

**PROTECT
THE NHS**

**SAVE
LIVES**

Introduction

This booklet has been produced to support you and your community during the ongoing COVID-19 situation. Within it you will find a list of key contacts, resources and information all in one place, which we hope you can share with your community to support each other as much as possible during this time.

During these exceptional times Brentwood Borough Council is working closely with strategic partners, including Essex Country Council, Brentwood Council for Voluntary Service, the Parish Council's, key voluntary sector organisations and many others to create **Brentwood Community Support Network** to support our community.

Brentwood Borough Council staff have been mobilised to provide, support, advice and assistance to those in need across the borough. Brentwood's amazing community spirit is being demonstrated in force, with volunteers, groups and activities springing up with local

leaders and those helping those in the need. The Council is supporting this social movement however it can. Our local businesses, despite their own challenges are stepping up and helping in so many ways and the council is committed to supporting them with up to date with advice and information as soon as things are shared from Government at

www.brentwood.gov.uk/coronavirus

Organisations or groups who need advice or support are encouraged to contact Community Services on **communitysupport@brentwood.gov.uk**

Brentwood Council for Voluntary Service (Brentwood CVS) are coordinating the volunteer response, along with many local communities who are mobilising themselves into action. Contact Brentwood CVS on **enquiries@brentwoodcvs.org.uk** Visit the Council's website at **www.brentwood.gov.uk/coronavirus** for the most up to date information.

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How can we help you?

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic it is important to outline the roles of key organisations who will be able to support and enable communities to deal with the issues that COVID-19 pandemic may pose

Residents - support each other whether that is random acts of kindness, offers of support or a friendly chat or wave.

Parish Councils - To work closely with local organisations and community groups to provide a coordinated response where it is required to support local people. To champion the Community Help Hubs which have been established across the borough.

Brentwood Borough Council - To jointly coordinate activities, communication and interaction with partner organisations and

communities. Specifically, the Council has created **Brentwood Community Support Network** with a number of key organisations that will enable us to identify and support the most vulnerable in the community. A central email has been set up and the Council's website provides up to date information. **communitysupport@brentwood.gov.uk**

Brentwood Council for Voluntary Service - Co-ordinating requests to volunteer and referring these into the Community Help Hubs **enquiries@brentwoodcvs.org.uk**

Brentwood COVID-19 Mutual Aid - provides a volunteer network across the borough. T: 01277 424953
BRAG - provides a volunteer network of support across the borough. T: 07961 972917

Useful Social Media Channels

Brentwood Borough Council [website](#)
Brentwood Borough Council [Facebook page](#)
Brentwood Borough Council [Twitter](#)
Brentwood Borough Council [Instagram](#)
Brentwood CVS [Facebook page](#)

Useful links

- **Overview of COVID-19** -[what is it? NHS guidance – Coronavirus](#)
- **Government advice** [Gov.UK Coronavirus](#)
- [Brentwood Borough Council/ coronavirus](#)
- [Follow the latest stay at home advice](#)
- **NHS 111**
- **NHS Every Mind Matters** [website](#) useful tips and advice to support good mental health if the outbreak is causing you anxiety
- **Public Health Campaign Resource Centre** (you will need to register). For the latest posters, videos and social media graphics
- **Age UK:** Doorstep Scams-advice on how to protect yourself and stay safe on your doorstep
- Stay at home guidance
- **Essex Safeguarding Adults Board**
- **Essex Safeguarding Children's Board**
- [Guidance on social distancing for vulnerable people](#)
- [www.livewellcampaign.co.uk](#)



Community resources

It is important that as key community organisations we recommend to our parishes and communities, resources and steps that can reduce any potential issues.

Vulnerable people

While the implications will be similar across different demographics, it is important that vulnerable groups be recognised and planned for such as:

- Increased social isolation issues
- Missed doctor's medical appointments
- Increased difficulty in accessing food shopping/ groceries
- Unable to exercise/ carry out regular physical activity
- Unable to support child-care and implications as schools have been forced to close
- Increased mental health issues



Community Help Hubs

The main Help Hub is Brentwood Borough Council that will provide a coordinated response to the coronavirus pandemic. The main hub is supported with a number of satellite Community Help Hubs to provide help with picking up shopping, a friendly phone call, posting mail or urgent supplies please contact a Community Help Hub in your area/village.

Area/ Village	Community Help Hub Contact details (phone during office hours unless otherwise stated)	Services provided
Boroughwide support	Brentwood Borough Council - Main Hub Monday-Thursday 8.30am - 5pm Friday 8.30am - 4.30pm T: 01277 312500 Out of Hours: 01277 262728 communitysupport@brentwood.gov.uk	Food donation point and food distribution hub. Advice and guidance for residents and businesses
Blackmore & Stondon Massey (including Hook End & Wyatts Green)	St Laurence Church 01277 821464 or 07894948867 blackmorevicarage@gmail.com b_through@btinternet.com 07740123 579 peter.jakobsson@brentwood.gov.uk	Help with shopping and telephone befriending
Doddingtonhurst	All Saints Church 01277 821366 annvcol@gmail.com	Help with shopping and telephone befriending
Kelvedon Hatch	Kelvedon Hatch Good Neighbour Scheme 01277 372447 or 01277 374319	Help with shopping and telephone befriending

Area/ Village	Community Help Hub Contact details (phone during office hours unless otherwise stated)	Services provided
Ingatestone and Fryerning	Ingatestone and Fryerning Parish Council 01277 353315 Tuesday and Thursday only clerk@ingatestone-fryerningpc.gov.uk	Help with shopping and telephone befriending
Mountnessing	Mountnessing Parish Council 07453712681 Parishclerk.mountnessingpc@yahoo. co.uk	Help with shopping and telephone befriending
Pilgrims Hatch	St George's Church 01277 214340 or 01277 215619 harrisch@lsbu.ac.uk Brentwood Centre 07879465009 (Mark) Mark_p_reed@live.com	Help with shopping and telephone befriending
Brentwood	Sawyers Church 07817961558 pastor@sawyerschurch.org	Help with shopping and telephone befriending
Brentwood	Doddington Road Church 01277 224528 contact@doddroadcommunitychurch. org	Foodbank session only – voucher required
Brentwood	Brentwood Baptist Church 07572 695 459 office@brentwoodbaptist.org.uk	Help with shopping and telephone befriending
Hutton	St Peters Church / Daily Bread Cafe 01277 262864 or 01277 514896 office@huttonparish.com lisa@huttonparish.com	Help with shopping and telephone befriending

Area/ Village	Community Help Hub Contact details (phone during office hours unless otherwise stated)	Services provided
Hutton	Breakthru Church Hutton Monday and Thursday 10am-12noon	Foodbank session only – voucher required
Shenfield	St Mary's Church 01277 212948	Help with shopping and telephone befriending
Warley	Christ Church Warley 07514782389 admin@christchurchwarley.org revdsj2@gmail.com	Help with shopping and telephone befriending
Herongate and Ingrave	St Nicholas Church 01277 811543 or 07446068293 Kjm1954@btinternet	Help with shopping and telephone befriending
Little Warley & Childerditch	Little Warley & Childerditch Village Committee 01277 418300 Peterbennett5474@aol.co.uk	Help with shopping and telephone befriending
South Weald	St Peter's Church 01277 212054 Revdjane2902@gmail.com	Help with shopping and telephone befriending
West Horndon	West Horndon Parish Council 07756962034 whpc.parishclerk@gmail.com	Help with shopping, prescriptions and telephone befriending

How can we protect the most vulnerable?

We all play a part in protecting the most vulnerable in our communities. We need to ensure that they are protected during this coronavirus pandemic; that they can be supported if they are self-isolating; and that we protect the NHS by reducing admissions to hospital and therefore help to save lives.

At risk people

Guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable from COVID_19 (Published 21 March 2020)

- People over the age of 70
- People living with complex health conditions
- People who have received an organ transplant and remain on ongoing immunosuppression medication
- People with specific cancers
- People with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy or radical radiotherapy for lung cancer
- People with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment
- People having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
- People having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
- People who have had bonemarrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs
- People with chest conditions such as cystic fibrosis or severe asthma (requiring hospital admissions or courses of steroid tablets)
- People with severe diseases of the body systems, such as severe kidney disease (dialysis)
- People with rare diseases and inborn errors of metabolism



that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as SCID, homozygous sickle cell)

- People on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase the risk of infection
- Under 70, but living with long term health conditions which means you would normally get the flu jab each year.

These include

- Chronic long-term respiratory diseases
- Chronic heart disease
- Chronic kidney disease
- Chronic liver disease
- Chronic neurological conditions
- Diabetes
- Problems with your spleen
- A weakened immune system
- Being seriously overweight with a BMI of 40 or above
- Women who are pregnant, with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired.

Shielding

Shielding helps to protect the most vulnerable and reduces the chance of people catching the virus and potentially ending up in hospital.

The NHS in England is directly contacting people with these conditions to provide further advice. They should have received letters by 29 March 2020 or will be contacted by their GP.

Guidance for people, including children who are at very high risk of severe illness from coronavirus, because of an underlying health condition, and for their family and friends can be found [here](#).

Volunteering

The need for volunteers is likely to increase during this pandemic. Resources for groups can be found [here](#). If you would like to volunteer please contact Brentwood Council for Voluntary Service enquiries@brentwoodcvs.org.uk or visit their [Facebook page](#)

- If you feel at all unwell, do not volunteer and do not pop in to see your neighbour
- Wash your hands regularly and thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds, especially before and after you deliver any items
- Try and support people who live close to you, so you don't travel long distances
- Avoid bringing people together face-to-face and remember the government's advice on social distancing and isolating people at greater risk from COVID-19
- If you make a delivery to a household that is self-isolating, at all times stay 2 metres away from the person or people who are isolating

REMEMBER

CLEAN - wash your hands for 20 seconds with warm soapy water before and after every contact - watch the NHS video on how to wash your hands properly [here](#).

CLEAR - be clear about what you can and cannot offer. If you are unsure, say no.

CONTACTLESS - Think about your safety first and the person you are supporting. Don't touch other people and wash your hands after touching surfaces.



Place the items outside their door and then step away

- To keep yourself and others safe, be careful about how you share personal information about yourself and other people. We can provide further information on this
- Know who to contact where the person you are helping needs more support or has complex needs. In Brentwood this will be the **Essex Welfare Service**. This is a new single, convenient point of contact for anyone in the Essex area who is in urgent need of help during the coronavirus outbreak. It is also the place to report anyone who you are concerned about. You can contact the Essex Welfare Service.

Call: 0300 303 9988

Email: provide.essexwelfare@nhs.net

Website:

www.essexwelfareservice.org

Opening hours:

Monday to Friday, 8am - 7pm

Saturday and Sunday, 10am-2pm.

Shopping

- Access to food and shopping

is critical for people who are self-isolating and may not have access to other means of support. We advise residents who need to access food by contacting Brentwood Borough Council 01277 312500 or email communitysupport@brentwood.gov.uk

Money

- Our current advice to volunteers is not to handle residents' money on their behalf and that alternative payment methods be used where possible. Further information and protocols can be found [here](#). You will need to make sure you are clear about what shopping the person or household would like and any preferences about where it will come from (e.g. a specific shop, supermarket). Remember that it may be difficult to fulfill their ask if supplies are low.
- You and the resident might want to exchange phone numbers in case you need to ask something while in the shop.
- You should get a receipt for whatever you buy and make sure you give this to the person in the household that has asked you to do their shopping

- Where possible, you should take a photo of the receipt, in case of any queries further down the line
 - You should leave the shopping (and receipt) in a designated place agreed by you and the person in the household that you are helping
 - If you have to go into the resident's house (<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>) please ensure that you should remain at least 2 metres apart from others
 - If you feel like you can't help the resident or household (e.g. a member of the household has more complex needs, becomes concerned or may have difficulties), please contact the Essex Welfare Service.
- is to provide regular contact to someone who is self-isolating. It will provide a 'listening ear'; however, this is not an emergency service or counselling support
- It is strongly advised that you only call residents Monday to Friday 9.30am- 4.30pm
 - Before making the call, you should make sure that you have a quiet place to chat where you will not be interrupted and that you have sufficient time set aside for the call
 - It is important that you feel comfortable with the frequency and duration of any calls
 - You and the resident receiving your calls should decide between you, how long the calls should last. As a guide, we recommend up to 30 minutes

Telephone support and befriending

People who are self-isolating for long periods are more likely to become socially isolated. A regular phone call to check in or to have a longer conversation will become more and more important as time progresses. We recommend that volunteers follow the guidelines below:

- The purpose of calling residents

the [Essex Welfare Service](#), if the individual is in immediate need then contact the emergency services on 999.

phone number, knock on their door and wait 2 metres away. Wash your hands or clean with sanitiser.

Collecting repeat prescriptions

- Repeat prescriptions can be collected from the chemist and delivered to individuals but must be left at the doorstep. If you have their phone number, phone them and let them know you have left them on the doorstep. Wait a distance of 2 metres away until they have been collected. If you don't have their

- COVID-19 Mutual Aid group in Brentwood can also provide assistance. T: 01277 424953 or E: admin@brentwood-mutual-aid.org
- Further guidance on collection of medication can be found [here](#).



Heating and power

- Many people have pay-as-you-go meters requiring a 'charging key' to be topped up. There is risk of cross contamination here, from the householder to yourself, the shop keeper and back. Wear disposable gloves to accept the power key. On receiving the key, clean it with 60% alcohol wipes or sanitiser. Before returning the key to the householder clean the key again with 60% alcohol wipes or sanitiser. Pop it through the letter-box with instructions to leave it untouched for 24 hours.

Safety

- If you are supporting someone you know, they will trust you. But remember some people may be anxious around strangers.
- You will have to consider safeguarding vulnerable people

when you consider these offers of support from additional volunteers.

- DBS is obviously not a requirement of volunteering, as kindness and a willingness to get through these difficult times. However knowing a volunteer is DBS cleared does provide vulnerable individuals with a bit of security and may help ease their anxiety in dealing with strangers.
- For more information on the requirement of DBS can be found [here](#).

Lack of response

- If you are supporting an elderly or vulnerable person there needs to be an agreement on what to do if you arrive and there is no response. This will differ from person to person
- Give them your contact details and ask them to let you know if their circumstances change.

- If they live alone then you need to have a pre-agreed plan in place
- If they have a relative somewhere else and you have their contact details, please contact them first.
- If there is a tv or radio on? You may have a look in a window or letter box to see if there are any signs of recent activity. If they have dementia they may have gone out. Perhaps they are hard of hearing, or have mobility issues which mean they take longer than average to get to the front door or window?
- Having considered all the above, consider if it is appropriate to contact the emergency services. This should be a last resort and only taken if you are sure they are inside but not responding.
- Remember we are doing this to keep our vulnerable population

and your family safe. If you are unsure whether something is safe, then say no.

- If you are unwell or have a temperature you must stay at home.

Other things to remember

- People may well be lonely and may want you to come in and have a chat. You will need to say no if you are going to protect them. You should stop and have a chat at their door as long as you are 2 metres away. You can also swap telephone numbers and let them know you are available for a chat if they are feeling anxious or lonely.
- You can find more information on telephone befriending best practice [here](#).



Additional support

We know that anyone can find themselves at crisis point for a number of different reasons.

In order to provide the most appropriate help for the circumstances of your situation **Foodbank** work with local agencies. If they feel you are struggling to put food on the table, they will issue you with a foodbank voucher. The local agency can also provide long term support if needed to help address some of the issues behind the reasons for your crisis.

Brentwood Foodbank works with a number of different agencies, such as Citizens Advice, Children's Centres and health visitors. To find

out more about the agencies that hold Foodbank vouchers and how you can get help, please [contact us](#).

When you contact a referral agency they will take some basic details from you to complete the voucher. This will help them to identify the cause of your crisis and offer practical guidance. It also means we are able to prepare suitable emergency food for the right number of people.

Once you have been issued with a voucher, you can exchange this for a minimum of three days of **emergency food** at your nearest foodbank centre.

Brentwood Foodbank referrals agents

If you are a referral agency and would like to become a registered voucher holder for our Foodbank, please visit [Brentwood Foodbank](#) to find out more.

A list of Brentwood Foodbank referral agents can be found [here](#). Please be aware that this list may change as the we continue to be in this current situation. Please go the council's website for the most up to date information

www.brentwood.gov.uk/coronavirus

Foodbank outlets Doddinghurst Road Community Church

56-60 Doddinghurst Road
Brentwood, CM15 9EH

Opening days and times:

Tuesday 11am – 1pm,

Wednesday 11am – 1pm

01277 224528

contact@doddroadcommunitychurch.org

Breakthru Church

The Christian Centre, 165 Hanging Hill Lane, Hutton, CM13 2QH

Opening days and times:

Monday 10am – 12noon,

Thursday 10am – 12noon

01277 229189

admin@breakthru-church.com

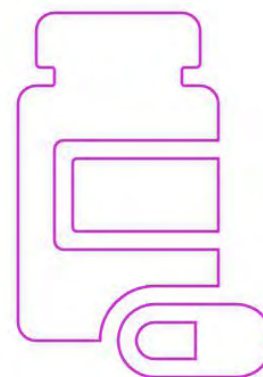
Medicines

If you are unable to get to the pharmacy to pick up repeat prescriptions.

1. Check to see whether any family, friends or neighbours could collect your prescriptions on your behalf.
2. Check with your local

pharmacy to see if they can deliver your prescriptions to you.

3. COVID-19 Mutual Aid group in Brentwood can also provide assistance in the collection and delivery of prescriptions. T: 01277 424953, E: admin@brentwood-mutual-aid.org



Social contact

The Community Help Hubs provide a variety of services and support if you are socially isolating. These can include telephone befriending, dog walking. Look on page 7 to locate your nearest Community Help Hub.

Utility information

Essex and Suffolk Water

[Essex and Suffolk Water](#) also offer extra support, with their our Priority Services. They're free to all their customers who need them. Even if you don't need these services, you may know someone who does. There's no need to call, it's easy to sign up online.

Appointments

Essex and Suffolk Water has been advised to stop non-essential contact with other members of the public where possible.

This means appointments and events are being rearranged, and they might need to ask you a few more questions than usual if they are carrying out home visits.

If Essex and Suffolk Water have not been in touch with you yet, and you feel unwell or would prefer to rearrange, please call them on **0345 782 0999** or send them a [Facebook message](#).

UK Power Networks

If you need information on a power cut, you can visit [Power Cut Map](#) for **live updates** tweet them [@UKPowerNetworks](#) or telephone customer service team, 24 hours a day, on **105** or **0800 3163 105**. Calls are free from a landline or mobile phone.

Engineers might need to enter your home to restore your power, they will ask you on the phone first if you are self-isolating so they can make the relevant arrangements.

National guidance has been given to engineers, who will wear protective equipment, stay in a different room from people who are infected or self-isolating, and avoid touching surfaces.

If you live in London, the East or South East of England, then being on the Priority Services Register will ensure you will receive extra support if you experience a power cut.

For more information visit the [Priority Services Register](#), or call on **0800 169 9970**.

Energy supplies

You can find advice and answers to your questions you may have on managing your energy supply during the outbreak. Information will continue to be updated. www.ofgem.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-and-your-energy-supply

Pre Payment Cards

If you have payment cards for your electric please see the following advice. This link provides some good information on what each energy company is doing to support their customers, currently.

You can ask for pre-loaded payment cards to be sent to your house. Most energy companies have put a hold on any debt too.

How to keep well

Physical Activity

- Eat a healthy, nutritious and balanced diet. Don't forget to follow the Eat Well guide as best you can
- Stay hydrated and drink 2-3 litres of water a day
- Avoid smoking, alcohol and drugs
- Spend time doing things you enjoy. This may include reading, cooking and other indoor hobbies, listening to music or watching a film or TV
- Stay connected with your friends, family and work colleagues by getting in touch over the phone, by post or on-line. This is important in looking after your mental wellbeing and you may feel it helpful to talk to them about how you are feeling.
- Keep your windows open to let in fresh air, get some natural sunlight if you can, or get outside in the garden
- Go for a walk, either by yourself or with your household ensuring you stay 2 metres from others
- Do some gardening
- Stay active at home with the following resources-[Active Essex website](#), or follow them on [facebook](#), [Live Well](#), [Sport England](#) and [NHS](#) have resources to use at home.
- Youtube also has a number of physical activity resources



What can you do at home?

- Keep the house clean
- NHS advice to avoid catching or spreading COVID-19
- Stay at home advice
- Regularly wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and warm water
- Always wash your hands when you get home or into work
- Use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water is not available
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- Put used tissues in the bin straight away and wash your hands afterwards
- Try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell

Safer Brentwood

The Safer Brentwood Community Safety Partnership (CSP) has been created by law to bring together local agencies, businesses and community groups who work together to improve safety and prevent or reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in the borough. For more information visit their website

www.saferbrentwood.com

Neighbourhood Watch

For your nearest neighbourhood watch email banhw@talktalk.net

Police

For non emergencies dial 101, for emergencies dial 999

Mental Health Support

COVID-19 is causing inevitable distress to us all, through the current/potential health effects of the virus, or emotional and social impacts of social distancing. You may feel that your mood and feelings are affected at this time which may result in you feeling down, anxious, alone and irritable.

It is incredibly important at this time that you avoid falling into

easy patterns of unhealthy behaviours that can make you feel worse, such as; not exercising or eating convenient, junk food. There are simple things that you can do to help stay mentally and physically healthy, e.g. stay active at home. A list of local resources and services can be found [here](#).

You can call [NHS 111](#) if you or someone you know needs urgent care, but it's not life threatening.

- If you have an existing mental health problem and your symptoms are getting worse
- If you are experiencing a mental health problem for the first time
- If someone has self-harmed but it does not appear to be life threatening, or they are talking about wanting to self-harm.
- If a person shows signs of possible dementia.

- If a person is experiencing domestic violence or physical, sexual or emotional abuse.

[MIND](#) telephone lines are open Monday - Friday 9am-5pm on 01375 391411 or email reception@thurrockandbrentwood-mind.org.uk



Children and young people

Virgin Care and Barnardos Chat Health Service

enables 11-19 year olds to text their school nurse on 07520 615731 to discuss their mental health and receive confidential advice and support.

KOOTH offers young people free, safe and online support options, please visit their website.

PAPYRUS young suicide prevention society. Call 0800 068 4141 (Monday to Friday 10am - 10pm, 2pm to 10pm on weekends and bank holidays) or visit www.papyrus-uk.org

NSPCC has information for parents to support their children.

YoungMinds offers information on child and adolescent mental health services, for parents and professionals. Call 0808 802 5544 (Monday to Friday, 9.30am - 4pm).

Essex Youth Service provides Children and Young People Early Intervention Mental Health Services (CYP MHEIS). If you want to find out more information about support available call 0300 300 1600 from 9am- 5pm Monday to Friday.

Childline offers support on 0800 1111 or on their website.

Effective Support Directory has a range of services to support Children, Young People and Families, click on link for West Essex.

Adults

- **NHS Every Mind Matters**
- **Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)**

have launched a My Whole Self toolkit, for workplace culture change. The toolkit helps everyone to support their mental health while working from home.

- **Thurrock and Brentwood MIND**

If you are currently looking for a counsellor or have found yourself in need due to the COVID-19 outbreak, you can speak to them on Monday-Friday 9am-5pm 01375 391411 or email reception@thurrockandbrentwoodmind.org.uk or visit their website.

- **Live Well Link Well** is a free and confidential social prescribing service that provides practical or emotional support of a non-medical nature. They can help you access support with a range of areas of health and wellbeing, including maintaining mental wellbeing, supporting independence, looking after someone, getting out and about, and social isolation. If you live in Brentwood and are over 18 you can contact the service without having to go through your GP. Call 0300 303 9988 (Monday to Friday from 8am- 7pm) or email

livewell.linkwell@nhs.net

- **Anxiety UK** provides support if you have been diagnosed with an anxiety condition. Call 03444 775 774 (Monday- Friday, 9.30pm-5.30pm) or visit www.anxietyuk.org
- **Men's Health Forum** offers 24/7 stress support for men by text, chat and email. Visit www.men-shealthforum.org.uk for more information.
- **Samaritans** provides confidential support for people experiencing feeling of distress or despair. Phone 116 123 (free 24-hour helpline) or visit www.samaritans.org
- **Textcare** provides comfort and care via text message, sent when the person needs it most. Visit www.sane.org.uk/textcare for more information.
- **SHOUT Crisis** provides 24/7 anonymous text support when you feel you cannot cope. Text "SHOUT" to 85258 for non-judgemental support or visit www.giveushout.org/ for more information.
- **#quitforCovid** It is vitally important to quit as smokers are less protected against infections. The Health Secretary stated that "smoking makes the impact of the coronavirus worse."

Business support

Brentwood Borough Council is regularly talking to local businesses to find out what they need and how to support them through this current situation. There is a dedicated [webpage](#) for business information on the Council's website.

Visit [GOV.UK](#) for the latest information on the government's business support packages.

If you have a low income, consider claiming tax credit. If you're already claiming tax credit or Child Tax Credit, you may need to let [HMRC](#) know about your change in circumstances because of the coronavirus.

Helpful resources for employers and employees

- [Government guidance on social distance measures](#)
- [Coronavirus business support from government](#)
- [COVID-19: guidance for employees](#)
- [Support for businesses from outside of government](#)
- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) business support FAQs](#)
- [Guidance for employers and](#)

[businesses on coronavirus](#)

- [Federation of Small Businesses](#), who give advice and guidance for small businesses and the self-employed
- [BEST Growth Hub](#), who lists regional and national organisations that can help businesses
- [ACAS](#), who offers a range of advice and support to businesses

Business helplines

You can contact the government's Business Support Helpline for free advice on 0300 456 3565. Lines are open Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm.

HMRC operates a helpline for businesses on 0800 0159 559.

Sign up to receive alerts from Brentwood Borough Council about coronavirus (COVID-19) business support. Contact the Brentwood Borough Council Economic Development team. If you need further assistance email business@brentwood.gov.uk with your enquiry.

Community Safety

Fake Products/Websites

Fake coronavirus testing/treatment kits are being produced. These kits contain harmful chemicals and police are warning anyone who had bought one of these kits not to use it. Report to [Action Fraud](#) quoting "TrinityCV19 treatment kits."

- During this time be aware of fake websites and suspicious links. Criminals will advertise products they know will be in short supply, such as hand sanitiser, face masks and treatments.
- Claims like '100% safe', 'No side effects' and 'Quick results' should be warning signs.

Fake Emails

There are several fake emails circulating claiming to be from Health organisations (such as the World Health Organisation), with attached 'safety advice' which when clicked, downloads malware to infect the device.

- Ensure you check where an email has come from- is the email address suspicious?
- Never click on any suspicious links or open any documents on emails that you were not expecting.

Elderly individuals targeted by doorstep scammers

The elderly and vulnerable are increasingly being targeted by doorstep scammers due to their increased isolation from family and friends.

- Be vigilant as always, do not accept offers on the doorstep.
- Always confirm who the person is, using a trusted number- genuine officials will always wait and carry identification

Thieves offering to shop for the elderly

Thieves posing as good Samaritans are offering to complete shopping trips on behalf of the elderly, before keeping the money or bank cards that are handed over.

- Never hand over your bank cards or details
- If vulnerable people are using others to do their shopping, ensure it is someone they know from a trusted source.

Pension Exploitation

- As always, the advice remains- do not respond to cold callers
- If something looks too good to be true- it usually is

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