

# Update for borough and parish councillors

## **Stay at home, save lives, protect our NHS**

**It is essential that people stay at home, especially this weekend and over the Easter weekend.** Please help us to remind people of the vital importance of this and reiterate the **'stay home, save lives, protect our NHS'** message.

Following the Government's announcement, the Coronavirus lockdown guidelines are that you must not leave your house except to:

- Shop for essentials, as infrequently as possible
- Receive medical treatment or provide care
- Travel to and from work, if it's impossible to work from home
- Exercise outdoors once per day, alone or with household members.

Remember when out of your house, stay 2m away from other people and wash your hands as soon as you get home

**Everyone must comply with these measures.**

## **Latest updates**

Here are this week's latest updates:

### **Bins (Press Release attached)**

Waste and refuse teams in west Norfolk are working to new advice on social distancing. This will affect collections from week commencing 6 April 2020. Garden waste collections (brown bins) will be reinstated from next week but food waste will only be collected with black bin collections and not green bins.

Also, due to smaller waste teams, in some areas the collection team will need to combine the food caddy waste with the black bin waste and it will not be processed separately in the normal way. It will not be possible to collect side waste or garden waste that has been bagged. Please feed any excess garden waste into your brown bin over the next couple of collections.

We would ask if people could assist this situation by being very careful about not overbuying their perishable foods to avoid waste, and by getting creative with leftovers to reduce waste and their need to go the shops. For more tips visit [www.lovefoodhatewaste.com](http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com).

Residents are reminded to practice safe hygiene and to wash their hands thoroughly after they take the bin out and when they return it to their property.

Bin service changes can be found here: [www.norfolk.gov.uk/yourbins](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/yourbins) or by following their social media channels.

### **Business grants (Press Release attached)**

The Government has announced a package of support including for small businesses, and businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors. This support will take the form of two grant funding schemes, **the Small Business Grant Fund** and **the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund**, both of which are administered by the borough council. This week we have paid out the first of those grants to local businesses, totalling a sum of £6.955m by close of play today (3 April 2020). The first grants were paid to businesses on Tuesday, 31 March. A total of 578 businesses have now received grants of either £10,000 or £25,000.

Anyone that hasn't yet registered for one of the above grants should go to the webpage <https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/coronavirus> and click on business assistance page to check their eligibility for a grant and to complete the online verification form. It is important that businesses don't miss out on support to which they could be entitled. Further information about support for businesses from the government is available by going to: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19>

### **Business Rates Relief**

Under the Expanded Retail Discount Phase 1 – an additional £5,602,791 has been awarded and a further 404 accounts included in the scheme – Revised bills and letters have gone out to business automatically.

### **Car parking (Press Release attached)**

It is important to support the many key workers as identified by the Government and the borough council is introducing **free parking for key workers in priority car parks** in King's Lynn and Hunstanton. With effect from 2 April 2020, key workers are able to park in Austin Fields East - near the sorting office, and the upper deck of the Vancouver Quarter car park – Sainsburys, King's Lynn, and the Central car park in Hunstanton, free of charge. If you are a key worker, all you need to do is get a document or card from your employer with the following on: your employer's logo, confirmation that you are a key worker as set out in the Government's guidance and an authorised signatory. This should then be placed on your dashboard. This will be in place for the duration of the current stay home arrangements announced by Government last week. If the initial three-week period announced by Government is extended then this parking arrangement will be extended for as long as necessary. Any key workers that currently have parking permits will be credited for the period that this arrangement is in place, so that they also benefit from the free parking. More information is here: <https://west-norfolk.gov.uk/keyworkerparking>

In addition, a **simple parking permit** has been made available to ease the way for health workers, and community volunteers, who are helping people across Norfolk. County, city, borough and district councils have all come together to create the new permits which will allow free parking on-street and in council run car parks for key workers and community volunteers helping people across Norfolk. Outside of Norwich people can apply online for the new COVID-19 Response Permit by providing a photo of their work id badge or proof they are registered with the NHS scheme if they are a community volunteer. The new permit will allow free parking in all council run car parks, in on-street pay and display bays, permit parking and time limited waiting bays. However to ensure vital spaces will still remain available, and roads accessible for emergency services, the new rules will not apply to disabled parking bays, loading bays, car club spaces and double yellow lines. Initially permits will be valid for three months, however this will be extended if necessary. To find out more, and to apply for a permit, visit: [www.norfolk.gov.uk/freeparking](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/freeparking).

### **Community Hubs**

Thanks to the help of a host of local businesses the hub has now been established and the first food parcels are going out to our most vulnerable residents. The call centre has been set up on behalf of Norfolk – the number is 0344 800 8020. The lines are open 9am -5pm Monday to Friday and 10am – 4pm for emergencies only on Saturday and Sunday. The calls are then triaged and directed to the place that can help those people the most.

Here in west Norfolk calls are referred to our Lily service which has a well established network of support. They are provided information on their website which includes a list of local businesses and organisations that can offer assistance to those that can't leave the house but are able and willing to pay for services and deliveries, leaving the team able to help those most in need.

All residents should have or will shortly be receiving a letter so that those who are isolated by not on the shielded list can get in touch and seek help if they need it.

The staff in the hub are also dealing with outgoing calls to everyone on the shielded list to ensure they are getting the assistance they need. Feedback has been very good so far, and staff are going over and above to ensure that they help is available for everyone that needs it. We will be doing a Press Release on this next week.

### **Council Tax**

The Government announced a £500m hardship fund which will allow those of working age in receipt of Council Tax Support to receive a £150 grant reduction on their council tax. More news is expected next week about this.

We know this is a difficult and worrying time for everyone and that for many finances are becoming increasingly stretched. Anyone who is struggling to pay their council tax should

get in touch to see how we can help, by telephoning 01553 616200, option 2, to discuss further.

### **Crematorium**

The Crematorium (including book of remembrance room and remembrance gardens) is closed to members of the public except immediate family when they are attending a funeral. Full details of the impacts on the crematorium can be found here:

<https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/coronavirus>

### **Deliveries**

If you have any businesses in your area that are able to provide deliveries of groceries, sanitary products, cleaning products, or baby products (nappies and formula), for people who are isolated and unable to leave the house, but able to pay, please ask them to get in touch with us and we will help promote them on the askLily website. Please ask them to email [communications@west-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:communications@west-norfolk.gov.uk) with their name, what they can provide, and how people can contact them.

### **Dog Mess Bins**

We apologise but the regularity of collections of dog poo bins has reduced due to pressure on our services in these unprecedented times. People can bag their dog poo as normal and place it in their black bin at home.

### **Grounds maintenance and street cleansing**

As a council we are pooling all our resources. Our priority is refuse and cleansing services, along with closing play areas and installing appropriate signage for the safe use of open areas and allotments. It is important to maintain some level of grounds maintenance in order to provide a clean and safe environment for those who are doing their daily exercise. However, staff working on these duties are on alert that at any time they could be redeployed to other duties and grounds maintenance will be reduced or stopped. Staff have been instructed to ensure they maintain social distancing at all times, please respect this.

If you have play areas in your parish that have not been closed, please make sure they are closed and that appropriate signage is put in place. A copy of the sign we have produced is attached for your use.

### **Housing (Press Release attached)**

The Government asked all local authorities to find suitable accommodation for homeless people in shelters and hostels to enable them to self-isolate properly. All those identified have now been relocated to alternative accommodation where they have their own room and are able to follow social distancing guidance. They are also being provided with welfare support, three meals a day, toiletries and will soon be provided with clothing bundles. This was no mean feat and would not have been achieved without the support of partners in west Norfolk providing assistance. The Purfleet Trust have worked with the council and Alive West Norfolk to ensure the safe accommodation of 26 people.

The **Winter Night Shelter and the Purfleet Trust Day Centre** are now closed. Anyone homeless needing assistance should contact the council on 01553 616200 (option 4 then option 1) during office hours or 01553 616601 outside office hours. If you are homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless, please let the council know as soon as possible.

### **Neighbourhood support**

With many more people now working from home, we are keen to encourage everyone to be respectful of their neighbours, for example, by keeping noise levels down or not having bonfires which may be disruptive. We would ask too that people look out for neighbours – safely – who may not have anyone checking on them.

### **Staff (Press Release attached)**

There are many, many frontline and keyworker staff who are undertaking enormous efforts to keep services running, right across the borough council and in other organisations. We are extremely grateful to everyone who is making a difference for our community at this time and we are keen to shine a light on these efforts wherever possible.

Alive West Norfolk staff have already opened their doors to provide activities and care to enable key workers at the NHS and the council to continue to provide essential duties. This has really helped many people who are working so hard to care for all of us.

### **Universal Credit**

We are aware that there has been an increase in the number of people seeking Universal Credit. If anyone has any concerns about Universal Credit, for example being sanctioned if they can't attend an appointment due to self-isolating, please contact the with an enquiry about Universal Credit can call their enquiry line 0800 328 9344.

### **Borough Council service impacts**

**All of our service impacts can be found here: [www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/coronavirus)**

Please remember our council offices are no longer accepting visits from the public. People can contact us through Live Chat on our website, or by calling us on 01553 616200. Anyone needing to provide documents can post and drop these into the letterbox which is emptied daily.

If you require specific information about any of the issues raised in this update, please contact [communications@west-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:communications@west-norfolk.gov.uk)

### **Useful contacts and information**

### Business Support

- The government advice for businesses is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19>
- The Growth Hub from the New Anglia LEP offers free, expert advice for any business in Norfolk and Suffolk and the advisers are able to signpost employers and employees to details of the new Government support schemes. They're a valuable additional resource. Please call them on 0300 333 6536 or email [growthhub@newanglia.co.uk](mailto:growthhub@newanglia.co.uk)
- You can follow @newanglialep and @angliahub for tweets with links to the latest Government guidance and updates.

### Health advice

The best places for health advice are:

- NHS - <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- Public Health England - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

### Norfolk County Council

- A single dedicated web page is being developed and details of this will be shared once it is ready. In the meantime the Norfolk County Council website is a useful and trusted resource: <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/care-support-and-health/health-and-wellbeing/adults-health/coronavirus>

### Volunteering

- We know that there are many people keen to help out at this time which is very much welcomed. If you are able to volunteer some of your time to assist others in your community, we really need your help. If you are a business and can help with services, vehicles or other resources, we would love to hear from you, as together we really can make a difference. Individuals who want to volunteer should visit [www.voluntarynorfolk.org.uk](http://www.voluntarynorfolk.org.uk) and businesses should email [covidbusinessresponse@voluntarynorfolk.org.uk](mailto:covidbusinessresponse@voluntarynorfolk.org.uk)
- If any groups have set themselves up in your village or parish, please encourage them to get in touch with the Lily team at [asklily@west-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:asklily@west-norfolk.gov.uk) so that we can support each other through this. They may be able to assist the group with help, advice and support, and the group may be able to help individuals that are referring through the countywide helpline. Anything you can do to promote this would be very helpful.