

Neighbourly Help

It is brilliant how our communities are pulling together at this worrying time for us all. The shut-down is in daily stages, making for a very fast-moving situation. You can get the latest government updates on your phone or on the web.

gov.uk/coronavirus - latest information on the situation in the UK and our response.

nhs.uk/coronavirus - For information about the illness and symptoms.

Emergency, Health and Council services are continuing, with office staff working from home. Meetings are suspended except for essential decisions made remotely.

Locally, we are setting up and supporting local voluntary groups in every village, guidelines below. The main help is to keep in touch with people in self-isolation and deliver shopping and medicines. The plan is to have a central co-ordinator phone number. The co-ordinator on duty accesses the local volunteers' rota on the "what's app group" for volunteers from that village and puts the volunteer in touch with the task. We have arrangements for direct payment with local shops. Surgeries may need help with getting medicines out, so we will help with that too. I am also doing a "**contact me**" note to go up in each village and a newsletter with the useful local contacts. Contact Welbourn Volunteers on 07 377 219 268

Links with other organisations: Public Health comes under the **County Council**. They are setting up a "hub" connected to the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum and will connect with our local group. I have rung Parish Councils to ask how they are getting on, to connect and offer assistance. **Churches** are doing a daily phone call from trained volunteers, if requested.

Schools are closing on Friday, except for vulnerable children and children of essential and health workers. Imagine how the children will love that while other children are skipping in the park! With many Grandparents not allowed to babysit and all activity, heritage and leisure centres closed, it will be mighty tough for parents. We may do more on-line.

What else to do? I am doing a lot more on the telephone and our clubs can have virtual meetings on Zoom (free) or Microsoft (Team meetings or skype). We can have book club meetings or wildlife activities for children in that way. For anyone who is fit enough and off work, our villages have allotment space for growing vegetables.

If you have a little time, your voluntary help is welcome! Please get in touch.

Cllr Marianne Overton MBE

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Action Plan for our local self-help groups; (Full Plan is available)

Single point of contact	Safeguarding Vulnerable people
Publication of single point of contact	Shopping arrangements
Provision of help	Working with other organisations
Volunteers and Rota	Management of scheme