

Being a Good Neighbour

[Dorset Co-ordinated Community Response](#)

There has been a fantastic response from Dorset's Communities to COVID-19 and many people have signed up to volunteer their help.

If you would like to volunteer your support, or are part of a community group that would like to offer their support, you can sign up with Volunteer Centre Dorset.

- Registering your interest to volunteer-
Visit [Community Volunteer Signup Form](#)
- Registering your community group-
Visit [Voluntary Organisations Information](#)

Know someone who may need support? Dorset Council have set up a special web page to help people find key information, this includes contact details for [Age UK](#) (North, South & West Dorset) who are coordinating requests for help with issues relating to loneliness, medication or food and [Citizens Advice](#) for help with benefits, debt, employment advice. These details can be found on: [Dorset Council Coordinated Community Response](#) page.

Also for Community Groups - Keep up to date here with [Dorset Community Action](#)'s guidance, links and free webinar sessions

Promoting Your Group or Finding Local Groups – [Help & Kindness](#) have set up an easy search directory of local groups offering support.

Top tips to help others

What you can do as a community

- Check in on any vulnerable family, friends and neighbours. Sometimes just helping them with their shopping and checking they have everything they need, can make a big difference.
- If you know someone who is self-isolating contact them via phone and text and check that they're OK. By its very nature, self-isolation is a solitary experience and their wellbeing will likely be improved by talking to someone.
- Please be mindful with your comments and actions, so as not to cause undue concern or anxiety within your community. If you hear mis-information that may cause issues, respectfully challenge if you are able to.
- Public Health England has advised people who are self-isolating to do what they can to avoid visitors to their home and any deliveries of groceries, medications or other shopping to be left at the door so please ensure that when you are providing support this advice is followed.

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. Keep to where people will recognise you and trust your offer is genuine.

Join a group that is already working in your community. Search for groups in your area on [Help & Kindness](#) webpage.

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.

Protect the most vulnerable from exploitation. The better your safeguarding practice, the harder it will be for others to exploit people at this time. Report any suspicious activity to the Police.

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.
- ✓ Don't enter other people's homes.
- ✓ 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 set up to provide 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

- ✓ Check [Dorset Police Cyber-Crime](#) page for latest advice.
- ✓ 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 – check out Facebook groups for example.
- ✓ 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 Dorset 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. [Dorset Community Action](#) holds information on local charities and Covid-19 funders.

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.

Health Advice

- ✓ Stay at home advice— www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-advice
- ✓ Wash your hands with soap and warm water often—do this for at least 20 seconds.
- ✓ Always wash your hands when you get home or into work.
- ✓ Use hand sanitizer gel if soap and water are 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.

Useful Links

The following links provide useful, factual and regularly updated information on COVID-19, please feel free to share these with your communities.

- [Dorset Council](#) Advice & Support + Community Response page
- [Latest Government Advice](#)
- Advice from [Public Health Dorset](#)
- Online [NHS 111](#) Resource
- COVID-19 Condition [NHS Advice](#)

- This sort of incident could cause undue pressure and anxiety. The NHS Every Mind Matters website has some really simple useful tips and advice to support good mental health. www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters.
- Mencap have released an [Easy Read Guide](#) on the Covid-19 virus.
- Public Health Campaign Resource Centre
<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/101-coronavirus-/resources>

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