

Councillors' Connection

Monday, April 6

Please continue to send your queries to media@rushcliffe.gov.uk and the team will work to respond via email as quickly as possible.

BUSINESS CONTINUITY

VE day 75th anniversary celebrations

The UK Government and the Devolved Administrations are working on revised plans to ensure the nation can still thank the Second World War generation on the 75th anniversary of VE Day on May 8 in a manner consistent with the measures to contain the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).



Given the circumstances, digital options are likely to provide the safest means to provide this fitting tribute. Colleagues from DCMS are leading the coordination of the Government's programme, and an announcement will be made in due course.

In the meantime, please do think about how communities can join in online to learn about VE Day and honour those who made so many sacrifices for our nation.

Updates will continue to be posted on the Gov.UK website at the following link:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-guidance-for-mass-gatherings>

Leisure centre updates



A reminder that our leisure centres across Rushcliffe remain closed in line with government guidance.

During this time, our leisure contractors Parkwood have released a number of updates on their website to assist members and regular groups with a range of frequently asked questions:

<https://www.leisurecentre.com/coronavirus>

Included within these updates is the confirmation that members will 'pay nothing' until their centres reopen.

FINANCE AND BUSINESS

For all the latest, visit the [business pages on our website](#).

Funding available for sports clubs, community organisations and charities affected by COVID-19



Funding has been made available for the Borough's sports clubs, community organisations and charities who facilitate physical activity, affected by COVID-19.

Sport England have announced up to £195m to support the sport and physical activity sector through the pandemic, starting with a £20m Emergency Fund, which will see organisations or sports clubs receive grants of between £300 and £10,000.

This funding is specifically targeted at organisations, including those not currently supported by Sport England, who have a role in supporting our communities to be active but who experience short-term financial hardship or have had to cease operations.

This includes sports clubs who have been forced to close but continue to face ongoing costs around maintenance and utility bills, and voluntary and community sector organisations who deliver or enable sport and physical activity.

Sports clubs and community organisations can apply to Sport England here:

<https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/our-funds/community-emergency-fund>

D2N2 appeals to businesses for Personal Protective Equipment Donations



D2N2 is asking businesses across the region to donate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to the fight against coronavirus as part of the **PPE4NHS** campaign.

In addition to widely reported shortages of PPE within the NHS, the Care and Charity sectors are also finding it difficult to source adequate items of PPE in order to safeguard vulnerable members of society.

Amongst the items in demand are:

- Any fluid-resistant surgical masks including although not exclusively FFP2 or FFP3 (the rating is marked on each mask)
- Nitrile gloves
- Visors or goggles
- Disposable aprons or overalls
- Sanitising Gel
- Overshoes

Businesses interested in donating should visit the [D2N2 PPE4NHS webpage](#). To make the donation process as quick as possible, emails should include PPE supply details including quantity and postcode, plus a contact name and phone number.

Businesses will be asked some questions about the type of support that can be provided and will be contacted as soon as possible if the support is needed.

Businesses can also interact with the scheme on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn via the @PPE4NHS accounts.

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

COVID-19 Community Support and Volunteering Hub



It is Nottinghamshire County Council's role to coordinate the Community Support Hub and they are continuing to work closely with all seven District and Borough Councils to further their COVID-19 Community and Support Volunteering Hub.

They have now further developed their support with increased features for residents to make contact with the support functions they need.

Lots of details are available on their [website](#), which welcomes emails or phone calls from volunteers, as well as those seeking support for free between 8.30am and 5.30pm, Monday to Friday: **0300 500 8080**

Please promote this service in your community wherever possible.

The Friary connected with food box deliveries for vulnerable residents



We have connected charity the Friary with local efforts to deliver vital food boxes to some of our Borough's most vulnerable residents during COVID-19.

Chief Executive Ben Talbot safely collected 40 parcels on Friday (April 3) that are now being distributed to those who are clinically vulnerable and currently self-isolating.

It includes items such as bread, pasta, cereals, tinned tomatoes, baked beans and long-life milk

delivered in aid from the Red Cross.

The charity was put in touch with [Nottinghamshire County Council's Community Support Hub](#) which is now assisting efforts across Rushcliffe and wider Nottinghamshire.

Our Leader, Cllr Simon Robinson said: "We were delighted to signpost Ben and the team at the Friary to the local efforts at the Hub.

"It is heartening to see they will swiftly distribute the free food boxes to some of those being shielded at home across Rushcliffe.

"Our own teams have joined the County Council efforts with deliveries in recent days too and we'll continue to do all we can to join together voluntary, charity and other groups in the Borough who wish to help those in need."

Ben added: "We're so pleased to be able to safely help with deliveries to vulnerable residents at a time when our main support services are so affected because of the pandemic.

"We thank all the local authorities for their assistance in being able to continue to play a role in helping local people."

What if people aren't observing social-distancing?



We have received reports of groups and individuals allegedly ignoring government guidance on social-distancing and self-isolation in recent weeks.

Those concerned about private social gatherings or individual's behaviour that flouts government guidance should [contact Nottinghamshire Police via their non-emergency channels](#).

As reported in last week's edition of this newsletter, our Environmental Health teams are on hand to support and enforce the closure of any [non-essential businesses](#) attempting to operate during this time.

The latest guidance on COVID-19 can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

A reminder on enforcement powers available to police are listed in an article further down this update.

Nottinghamshire COVID-19 Community Fund



A £1 million Nottinghamshire COVID-19 Community Fund has been created to help communities as they respond to exceptional challenges over the coming months.

Nottinghamshire County Council want to support local charities and community organisations that are delivering essential services to vulnerable Nottinghamshire residents impacted by COVID-19.

We're encouraging charities and voluntary groups in the Borough to apply for a grant of anywhere between £200 to £10,000 to deliver projects or services that meet the Nottinghamshire COVID-19 Community Fund criteria:

- Projects that directly help vulnerable people affected by the effects of COVID-19, such as by providing access to food, toiletries, necessities, as well as projects to help vulnerable people in isolation.
- Projects that are already set up and helping vulnerable people now.

Please visit the [Nottinghamshire COVID-19 Community Fund page](#) to find out more.

Corona symptoms? Please complete the NHS status checker



A new Coronavirus Status Checker is now available to help the NHS coordinate its response and build up additional data on COVID-19.

Anyone with potential symptoms is now asked to complete the checker and answer a short series of questions which will tell the NHS about their experience, [here](#).

It is encouraged anyone who thinks they may be displaying signs, no matter how mild, to complete it.

Advice to residents walking in the countryside



Cllr Tina Combellack has signposted the below advice to residents taking walks in countryside in the Borough.

She said: "We are fortunate some of us are able to take our daily exercise in lovely countryside but please pass on these useful comments made by a local resident."

Gates on footpaths

Please remember these are hard surfaces on which the virus can sit and wait for you.

It's suggested to wear or use something disposable to open any gate latch, a small stick then discard it as far from reach as possible, so no-one else then re-uses it, but do try to protect hands from gate latches and bars, as you will then inevitably touch your face almost immediately afterwards.

Do wash your hands well once you get home regardless.

Dog walking

It's now being recommended in some mainly City boroughs that dogs be kept on a lead at all times. Luckily that's not yet the case here in Rushcliffe.

However please make sure that your hounds are under control at all times, especially as we have lots of folk out walking and riding and also be aware of heavily pregnant sheep in adjacent fields.

Please pick up after your dog

Please tidy up after your hound, it's not a bad dog, it's a bad owner who leaves poo where others may tread and please don't then just hang your poo-bag on a tree, gate or stile.

Please place it where it belongs in your own bin or a dog bin.

Stay safe, enjoy the lovely countryside and please help keep it equally enjoyable for others.

Coronavirus Information Service on WhatsApp



A reminder that residents can now access the government's [Coronavirus Information Service on WhatsApp](#).

The free service is an automated 'chatbot' that provides information on coronavirus prevention and symptoms, the latest number of cases in the UK, advice on staying at home, travel advice and

myth busting.

It aims to further reduce the burden on NHS services, including 111, combat the spread of the virus and ensure people stay at home and save lives.

Please publicise to residents where possible.

Stay one step ahead of the scammers



There's growing evidence of a spike in email and phone scammers as criminals look to seize on people's vulnerabilities during the pandemic.

Maybe you've received one claiming to be from organisations you would trust such as:

- the Government asking for your bank details so money related to free school meals can be transferred;
- HMRC stating you have a tax refund;
- banks asking you to confirm your details;
- emails from criminals disguising themselves as an organisation;
- callers offering coronavirus testing kits and protective equipment; or
- calls telling you your internet is going to be cut off in 24 hours because you've been hacked.
- A direct debit payment has failed

The common factor with emails is that you can only find out more if you click on a link or open an attachment.

An automated call will invariably ask you to press buttons on your phone and skilled criminals on live calls can deftly convince you of their legitimacy. And that's when the damage starts. Either by inadvertently giving criminals access to your computer or phone or, at the extreme end of the scale, emptying your bank account.

The good news is there are some simple steps to take to ensure you stay safe and don't fall victim to these invisible criminals.

Before you take any action, pause and take a moment to consider:

- Is the email addressed to you personally or is it addressed to "Dear customer" or "Valued customer"?
- Is the spelling, punctuation and grammar correct?
- Does the email ask you to urgently verify details within a specific time limit?

- Does the sender's email address look legitimate?
- Does the email look like previous emails you have legitimately had from the same organisation?
- Does the email ask for your bank account details, online banking passwords or your PIN number and CVC code for your debit card?
- Does the caller's offer sound too good to be true? Then it probably is.
- Do you actually have an existing relationship with the caller?

Agencies across the UK, and beyond, are working together providing advice on how to stay safe online.

The [National Cyber Security Centre](#) has an abundance of guidance including [how to spot and deal with suspicious emails](#); [top tips for staying safe online](#) and [securing your devices](#).

SERVICE SPECIFIC ISSUES

Reminder on Police and enforcement powers



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
POLICE
PROUD TO SERVE

A reminder that the government has strengthened police enforcement powers in England to reduce the spread of coronavirus.

If members of the public do not comply the police may:

- Instruct them to go home, leave an area or disperse
- ensure parents are taking necessary steps to stop their children breaking these rules
- issue a fixed penalty notice of £60, which will be lowered to £30 if paid within 14 days
- issue a fixed penalty notice of £120 for second time offenders, doubling on each further repeat offence

Individuals who do not pay a fixed penalty notice under the regulations could be taken to court, with magistrates able to impose unlimited fines.

If an individual continues to refuse to comply, they will be acting unlawfully, and the police may arrest them where deemed proportionate and necessary. However, in the first instance the police will always apply their common sense and discretion.

Parishes contacted on burial sites

Last week, our teams contacted Parish Councils across Rushcliffe with a request for updated information in light of COVID-19.

At present, alongside other capacities, we're reviewing the number of burial spaces available across the Borough.

This is for information purposes only at the moment. There is no indication at present of any medical reasons why burials spaces are required.

Our teams are now working closely with representatives from Parish



Councils to collect information that addresses the capacity of burial grounds and any anticipated changes to existing sites.

Should you receive correspondence from any Parish Councils with queries about this email, please signpost them to **Stephanie Powell** by emailing SPowell@rushcliffe.gov.uk or calling **0115 914 8395**.

Admission and care of people in care homes



Guidance on how to protect care home residents and staff during the coronavirus outbreak was published last week.

It includes registered residential care and nursing homes for people with learning disabilities, mental health and/or other disabilities.

Arrangements are being made to provide domiciliary care providers with the information they need to continue providing care during the coronavirus pandemic.

There is more available on the [government's advice webpages](#).

Funding for buses



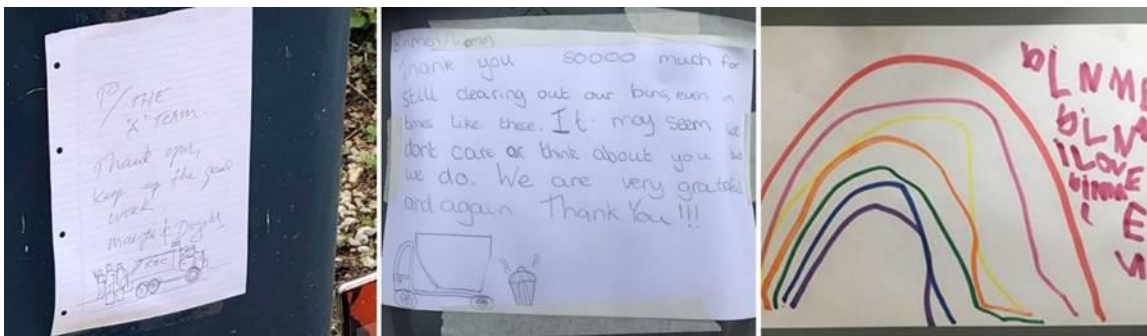
The Department for Transport has announced new funding to keep England's bus routes running during the pandemic.

New funding of up to £167 million will be paid over 12 weeks under the new COVID-19 Bus Services Support Grant.

As a condition of the funding, bus operators will be required to maintain necessary services at a level which is sufficient to meet much reduced demand, but also to allow adequate space between passengers on board. This is expected to be up to 50% of normal service levels.

The government has also promised that £200 million of existing funding under the Bus Services Operators Grant will continue to be paid as normal even though not all services may run during this time.

Residents continue to create posters to thank our bin crews!



As ever, our Waste teams are working exceptionally hard at present to ensure bins are collected

across the Borough as normal, despite challenging times.

Their efforts have not gone unnoticed by residents, with more households leaving posters out to thank their local crews!

As you can see from these photos, keeping essential frontline services running is important to lots of people across Rushcliffe, including one girl who wanted to make sure the crews had a rainbow drawing for their cab!

Please let us know if you spot any more fantastic works of art whilst enjoying your daily exercise this week.

Compliments

Our non-executive director at Streetwise Keith Daniell has thanked our waste teams for their continued service.

He said: "The service today from the blue and green bin collectors was fantastic. I was out this morning in East Bridgford delivering prescriptions and kept bumping into the chaps. Every time they were cheerful, helpful and efficient.

"A number of residents in my capacity as joint coordinator of East Bridgford College Street Care Group told me how terrific it was to see a glimpse of the old world. I noticed a few thank yous stuck to bins too.

"A terrific job. Thank you."

A resident has joined the voices praising our waste teams continuing their service.

She said: "I would like to express my appreciation of the bin men and the way they have kept the collection going so well. This is a very valuable service and we would be in bad way if we had rubbish piling up in addition to all the other difficulties. Thank you."

Equally, a resident wanted to thank the teams for their considerate actions during challenging times.

They said: "As we are both now retired and with the current lock-down, I have to confess that we have rather slipped into a rather later routine and our day doesn't tend to start much before 8:00.

"Imagine my pleasant surprise therefore when, on opening the curtains at 8:00 I spotted our black bin on the pavement – it had been collected from the top of the drive, even though I had forgotten to wheel it down! Amazing service 'above and beyond'.

"Please pass on our sincere thanks to our local team. Throughout the year we think they do a great job."

Councillors' queries

Each edition we'll be addressing Councillors' queries to help provide answers to common questions regarding COVID-19. Please email your questions to media@rushcliffe.gov.uk to be featured in this section.

Q: "The community support group in West Bridgford is not getting many requests for help but we know from personal experience of a few people we helping that support via the hub is insufficient. They get a box of tinned and dried food infrequently but no fresh food which is understandable. Posting on social media will not reach the people who need help."

A: We will feed this back to co-coordinators at the County Council's hub. We are expecting efforts to evolve into wider offerings in line with community and neighbourhood efforts in the coming weeks.

A letter to residents classed as vulnerable is being sent out as early as possible this week outlining the hub's support, that should go some way to alert those not digitally engaged to what can be accessed.

Q: "A person I know who is in a very active Whatsapp group is clearly completely unaware of the community support available to him. So if he doesn't know there must be lots of people who don't. I have looked after him but what about others?"

A: We're very hopeful the hub's efforts will click into higher gears very soon so that so many more will be engaged and understand the support available.

Q: "What are the mechanisms and guidance for reporting people who are not self-isolating?"

A: Please contact Nottinghamshire Police's non-emergency number (101) or visit the force's online channels: <https://www.nottinghamshire.police.uk/101> to report such incidences.

For more information, please see the article listed earlier in this update.

All the latest information for residents is available at www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/coronavirus or over the phone on 0115 981 99 11.