

Sample Covid-19 Action Plan

[Insert name] Parish Council is coordinating a parish-wide response to the current Covid-19 Corona Virus emergency based on the advice being issued from Public Health England. This is to provide a safety net for residents that may be vulnerable, those people home-working, suffering from the Covid-19 virus or being advised to self-isolate.

The Parish Council response is only concerned with social responsibility and cannot provide advice or information on health care issues including information on whether residents need to self-isolate. It is also not intended to pass on information being issued from Government or Public Health England and will not be used for that purpose.

In preparing this action plan, the Parish Council is mindful that pressures on existing social and individual care plans will be strained as Covid-19 emergency develops and that community-based networks will increasingly be used to provide local support for those that need it. Many parishes across the UK are preparing similar responses as it is anticipated that rural communities will be expected to become particularly self-resilient as the crisis deepens.

The Parish Council is also mindful that families displaying Covid-19 symptoms will need to self-isolate and that the Government has now recommended self-isolation for people over the age of 70 and for those people with pre-existing medical conditions. This will include a significant section of the community including many of the people that in normal circumstances would make up our volunteer support networks.

The Parish Covid-19 Response is intended to provide multiple safety-nets of support for all parishioners that may need it. This includes:

- People aged over 70
- Vulnerable people of all ages who rely on others for their care
- People who are sick or have long term illnesses
- People who live alone
- Families with children
- Those that are feeling lonely or isolated
- People with mental health issues
- Health care professionals who may need some rest or simply a bottle of wine dropped round
- Parents homeworking who may need to be directed to a peer group for support

The Parish Covid-19 Response looks to providing vital social support for those people that require it, such as the collection of drugs and the delivery of food or other supplies that cannot be met through existing arrangements (made for example, with local shops for home delivery, the medical practice or other suppliers such as on-line retailers that should naturally be the first port of call). It also allows for volunteers to help residents find a solution for any needs that are totally unexpected (such as a burst water pipe, a rat infestation, an lawn that needs mowing or a broken boiler) that under the circumstances

may be particularly stressful to those self isolating. It can also provide a network for residents to simply talk to someone if they are feeling vulnerable.

It is likely that many residents will have already made arrangements with their medical practice or other home shopping providers. Advice, however, indicates that some of these arrangements may be put under pressure as staff are taken ill or volunteers are required to self-isolate.

For the Parish Council to co-ordinate its response however, it needs to know who needs our help. The PC has identified a series of ways for residents to register if they think that they will require some assistance and for people to let the PC know if they know of someone that may need our help. It is likely that many residents will not consider that they need help at first. Evidence from other countries already coping with the Covid-19 emergency indicate that it is also likely that there will be several waves of responses as those who at first did not consider that they are at risk or need help come forward as the emergency develops. The parish council mechanism should be ready for several waves of responses.

In order to establish who is need of help, it is proposed that the following means of communication are used:

- A Parish WhatsApp group is established that deals only with the parish response to COVID-19
- A Facebook page regularly updated with a call for help and information on why / how to register that deals only with the parish response
- The Parish Council puts information on its homepage that deals only with the parish response
- Residents are asked to think about anyone else that may need help
- The church and village shop refer residents as needed
- Letter drops to every resident that deals only with the parish response

It is important that any parish response deals only with the community based social responsibility issues that can be achieved. At no time should the parish response look to provide other information that is being issued by Public Health England or HM Government or offer medical advice.

A two-page letter has been written and is attached to this action plan. It is proposed that this should be printed and delivered to every household in the parish by volunteers as soon as possible – before people are requested to go into self-isolation.

The communication will also look to recruit volunteers that can help to deliver any measures that may be needed. The Parish Council needs volunteers to help us deliver our response in the following areas.

- Runners for home delivery
- Shoppers
- Collection and delivery of medicines
- Coordination of the central list

- Samaritans who have indicated that they can be called by those that may need to talk to someone

Residents can contact the PC using the following means:

- The Parish Council to set up a dedicated email address for people to use
- A phone number with an answer phone that will be checked daily. This telephone could be time sensitive and at some point delegated to local networks of volunteers.
- Through monitoring of the village Facebook page
- Referrals and word of mouth

As already indicated, Public Health England anticipate that there will be several waves of responses as residents realise that they may indeed need some help. The way that the parish communications with residents needs to keep on top of this and update information as required.

The PC needs to find dedicated volunteers to act as central list compilers (preferably at least one parish councilor and 2 others to cover in case of illness) to keep up to date a central list of those people that have indicated they need help and to log what help is needed. This will be the information that is left via the various ways that residents can communicate with the parish. It is important that a single central list is kept that can be updated by all volunteers allocated this task. Data protection measures will need to be followed and a statement issued by the Parish Council.

A template excel spread sheet has been provided to us setting out the for the information that is needed as follows:

Name

Address

Contact Number / email

Next of kin / emergency contact and Emergency Contact Number (voluntary but useful)

What it is that you need help with.

Family or other home delivery established already with details of who?

Shopping needed

Medication drop needed

Other requirements

Volunteer Area allocated for help and deliveries

The central coordinators will pass down the information to each group regarding what is required as indicated by the central C19 Action List. It has been suggested that this approach works well as it ensures that the collection and collation of information is simplified for respondents and can be controlled whilst delivery can be achieved at a more personal level that responds to individual needs. For example, it is important that on delivery, no face to face contact is made with recipients to keep the risk of passing infection to a minimum. Volunteers will get to know where to leave provisions as indicated by households. It is also anticipated that as the relationship between the volunteer and the

vulnerable person grows, any sudden changes in circumstances can be accounted for and recognised.

A Parish Councilor will be needed to manage the volunteers and to allocate volunteers to the various groups at the start. Over time it would be intended that the local groups become more self resilient acting on the information passed on by residents.

It is proposed for the Parish Council to update residents by the following means:

- Letters dropped off with supplies and deliveries
- The Parish Council and Community Parish websites
- The Parish Facebook page
- The Village Notice boards
- A dedicated WhatsApp group

At present there are still issues that need to be agreed. This would include a detailed set of guidelines for volunteers to follow to minimize the risk of infection being spread and also payment for goods. It is also important to note that this situation may last into the summer.

THE FOLLOWING TWO PAGES SET OUT A DRAFT LETTER TO GO TO RESIDENTS.

A more detailed letter has been chosen over a simple postcard as it is likely that many residents in the parish who are in vulnerable groups will be reluctant to accept that they are.

[Village Name] CORONAVIRUS COVID-19

Dear Resident of [Insert Name]

[Insert Name] Parish Council is coordinating a parish-wide response to the Covid-19 Corona Virus emergency based on the latest guidance issued by Public Health England. Our response is to provide a safety net for residents who may need help, for people homeworking, or being advised to self-isolate.

**If you are self-isolating or need any assistance during the Coronavirus Covid-19 emergency just let us know.
We can help!**

WHAT IS PROPOSED

As existing social and individual care plans are put under pressure, it is likely that community-based networks will increasingly be used to provide local support for those that need it. At the time of writing for example, families displaying Covid-19 symptoms will need

to self-isolate and the government has recommended self-isolation for people over the age of 70 and those with underlying health issues, or who are pregnant.

As such, many Parish Councils are reaching out to their residents to provide vital support for those that may need it during the Covid-19 emergency. It is not intended to replace any measures that you have already put in place (such as home deliveries organised at the Village Stores or through another provider) including the delivery of medicines. Rather, by letting the us know of your needs, you can feel safe in the knowledge that you have a back-up mechanism in the unlikely event that your existing arrangements are compromised in some way.

It may be that you have not made any provision for home delivery of food and other supplies before self-isolation – in this case just send us your details and we can help. It also allows for volunteers to help residents find a solution for any needs that are totally unexpected during self-isolation (such as a burst water pipe, a lawn that needs cutting or a broken boiler) that under the circumstances could be particularly stressful. It also provides a mechanism for residents to simply talk to someone if they are feeling lonely.

Public Health England has advised for everyone to ensure that they plan for every eventuality during the Covid-19 emergency even if you may not consider that you are at risk at the moment. It is unclear how the situation will develop with time. For example, you may already have someone that you can rely on to help you as you self-isolate but they themselves may have to self-isolate at some point leaving you in a vulnerable position. We can offer you a safety net.

For the Parish Council to co-ordinate their response, we need to know who may need our help and what assistance you require. We are therefore asking residents to contact us if you are in one of the following groups or let us know if you are aware of someone that may need our help:

- People aged over 70 who are self-isolating
- Vulnerable people of all ages who rely on others for their care
- People who are sick or have long term illnesses or health conditions
- People who live alone
- People with mental health problems
- Families with children or pregnancy
- Those that are feeling lonely or isolated

HOW TO CONTACT US

- The Parish Council has set up a dedicated email address XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
- A phone number with an answer phone will be checked daily and can be reached on X
- Through the Parish Covid-19 WhatsApp group

WHAT INFORMATION WE NEED FROM YOU

We will need your name, address and contact details. It would also be useful to have details of your next of kin and emergency contact numbers although this is down to you. We need

to know what your current situation is and what help you may need assistance with. It would also be useful to know whether you have someone helping you at the moment (this could be a friend, an on-line retailer or a family member) and whether you are caring for anyone else at the moment.

The Parish Council would like to reassure you that your information will not be shared with anyone else and will only be used for the purposes of providing for your needs if and when you require help.

HOW WE WILL KEEP YOU UP TO DATE

It is proposed to update residents by the following means:

- Letters dropped off with your supplies and deliveries
- The Parish Council and Community websites
- The Parish Facebook page
- A dedicated WhatsApp group

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

The Parish Council needs volunteers to help us deliver our response. If you would like to help in any way, please do contact us by any of the ways provided for in this letter. We will need help in the following areas: runners for home delivery, picking up shopping, a friendly phone call, posting mail, collection and delivery of medicines and assistance running vital parish voluntary groups that may be affected by self-isolation.

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If you are self-isolating or in need of help due to COVID-19, we can help you by:

Picking up shopping A friendly phone call Posting mail

Urgent supplies

Picking up medicines Anything else

Just call, email or drop us a note and we will do our best to help you! Don't forget to give us your contact details including an email or telephone number.

The Parish Council response can only help with social responsibility and cannot provide advice or information on health care issues including information on whether you need to self-isolate.