

Here is the 10<sup>th</sup> newsletter sent on behalf of **The Collaborative Communities Covid-19 Board**.

There is a lot of work being done in Suffolk to plan and develop our local approach to the national NHS **Test and Trace** programme. This includes thinking about the consequences of how we would lockdown a specific area if there is an isolated outbreak. This may include schools, care homes and locations. For the communities board, we need to consider our response if whole streets or villages, potentially have to isolate for 14 days and need help with food or medication deliveries. You can read more on Test and Trace in this newsletter [here](#) or visit [www.suffolk.gov.uk/testing](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/testing)

Other items included in this newsletter:

- [Those we've helped through The Home, But Not Alone phonenumber](#)
- [Tribe Update](#)
- [Loneliness Awareness Week](#)
- [£1m handed out to charities and community groups from Covid-19 fund](#)

[The Home, But Not Alone Phonenumber:](#)



**Home, But Not Alone**  
Supporting vulnerable people in **Suffolk**

The Home, But Not Alone free phonenumber is for people who need **urgent** help and support during the Coronavirus pandemic. It is only for people who do not have support available from friends, family or neighbours and are struggling for food, medicines or other essential supplies.

**Coronavirus Emergency Phonenumber**

 **0800 876 6926**

9am-5pm every day  
For all other enquiries please visit: [www.suffolk.gov.uk/homebutnotalone](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/homebutnotalone)

Logos at the bottom: EASTSUFFOLK COUNCIL, IPSWICH BOROUGH COUNCIL, West Suffolk Council, Suffolk County Council, and a logo with the text 'making together'.

Here is a snapshot of the great work going on through the Home, But Not Alone phonenumber as Suffolk comes together to respond to the Covid-19 outbreak:

- We helped a 64-year-old man who was struggling to afford food whilst on sick pay and universal credit. This is the second time he has asked us for a food parcel. It was also found that he was suffering from poor mental health. With his permission, we referred him to a number of other stakeholders who could help him, including a referral to Suffolk County Council to assess his financial means, the Citizens Advice Bureau for ongoing support, linking him with his nearest food bank and his housing association to make them aware of his situation. The man was grateful for the help given and should have adequate support for the time being.

- Community response officers helped a 91-year-old man who had no close support network and was in urgent need of food supplies. We gathered local intelligence about shops nearby who took payment over the phone and found volunteers who could deliver the food. In the end, the man just needed to place his food order and pay over the phone. He said he was very thankful for the support and the speed in which it was conducted.

There have been 9,948 calls taken since the phonenumber was set up and we are seeing an overall decline in the number of daily calls. Phone calls are answered, and cases managed by staff at each district, borough or county council depending on the type of enquiry. This phonenumber is for vulnerable people in our communities, and not for general Coronavirus enquiries. Wherever possible we link people in need with local groups and businesses, who are doing an amazing job in our communities.

### **Test and Trace in Suffolk**

Organisations across Suffolk are working together to plan and develop our local approach to the national NHS Test and Trace programme. As local organisations we understand our residents and are able to call on resources and assets to both prevent local outbreaks, and support local organisations, groups and individuals where outbreaks arise. The tool for developing this response will be through Local Outbreak Management Plans which are required to be produced by 30<sup>th</sup> June. These plans include:

- Planning for local outbreaks in Care Homes and Schools
- Identifying and planning how to manage high risk places, locations and communities
- Ensuring local testing is accessible to the entire population
- Assessing Contact Tracing capability in complex settings
- Integrating national and local data and scenario planning
- Supporting Vulnerable people to get help to self-isolate and ensuring services meet the needs of diverse communities
- Establishing governance structures

The plans will identify and outline support for different settings e.g. workplaces, housing complexes, care homes, schools, groups e.g. rough sleepers and vulnerable individuals who may be most at risk from the coronavirus. Focusing on both preventive actions and outbreak response. The plan will also ensure testing capacity is deployed effectively, as well as helping the most vulnerable in self-isolation access essential services in their area. It will build on and strengthen existing relationship and processes already in place for these types of settings.

**Tribe Update:** Here is a case study from a Tribe volunteer who has been shopping for a few people on her street since the lockdown began:

“I have lived in my street for 6 years and have got to know my next door neighbours and the lady across the road, but that's about it!

“As soon as lockdown started, I called on them to let them know that I could help with any shopping. The older lady was very grateful for this and had a list of items that she needed. But it did make me think if anyone else in the road needed my help?

“I signed up to the Tribe App to offer my services as a volunteer in Ipswich. I was pleased to be connected to a local Mutual Aid group - Ipswich Community Support group. I was sent some easy to read guidelines about volunteering safely and what to do if I was worried about somebody who I was helping.

“Within a few days of being connected to Ipswich Community Support Group, I was asked to help another neighbour on my road. I have now been shopping for this neighbour each week for 2 months. Each time I do her shopping we have a bit more of a chat and find out about each other – as you do as neighbours!

“Through our chats I have discovered that she has not been out of her house socially for 4 years. We have talked about being able to have a cup of tea together soon and maybe even going for a drive to Felixstowe.

“While the lady I am supporting is obviously benefiting from me doing her shopping for her, I am gaining so much myself. The weekly shopping trip gives me a welcome break from my full-time working from home and to be honest, it gives me a good feeling to know that I am making a difference.”

**Loneliness Awareness Week:** Sadly, we know that one of the biggest impacts of the pandemic has been loneliness amongst those who live alone. There are a number of befriending schemes across Suffolk that already existed or have been established since Covid-19.

One of these befriending services is run by a team of volunteers in Halesworth and surrounding villages. These volunteers will make regular phone calls to more than 70 people who live alone to double check they have everything they need, answer any queries they may have, but more importantly, enjoy a chat! Managed from the Halesworth Volunteer Centre, the team also make sure they spend time to chat when they deliver medication or food parcels. Since the pandemic they have made 5,000 deliveries and have set up 17 food collection points, with food donated from local businesses, charities, cash donations and contributions from neighbouring parish and town councils. They also run a bereavement and counselling service, and are launching a book exchange. It is a tremendous local effort.

Loneliness Awareness Weeks run from June 15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> and is being led by the Marmalade Trust, whose mission is to find and support isolated people to reconnect with society and enjoy better lives. For more information or resources please visit: <https://marmaladetrust.org/law-get-involved/>

**£1m given to charities and communities since Covid-19:** The Suffolk Coronavirus Community Fund overseen by the Suffolk Community Foundation has handed out £1million to help those in need. Set up to fight the coronavirus pandemic in Suffolk, 200 grants have now been awarded to charities and community groups and almost 100,000 local people have received support. Stephen Singleton, the Foundation's Chief Executive, said: “Suffolk has every reason to be proud of what has been achieved so far. This landmark moment of £1M reaching local causes from The Coronavirus Community Fund has only been possible because hundreds of local people have given what they can afford. We thank them from the bottom of our hearts for all their support thus far, but of course there are even more difficult times ahead.”

-----

This week the Government has announced another lifting of some lockdown restrictions. It is important that we continue to ease back into 'normal' life with caution and care. The communities board continue to respond to immediate need, but we are also looking at what provision and additional support may be needed in the longer term.

Please continue to **Stick with it Suffolk** – you are doing a great job!

With best wishes,

**Chrissie Geeson (Head of Localities and Partnerships, Suffolk County Council)**

**Chair of the Collaborative Communities COVID-19 Board**

The Board is made up of: Community Action Suffolk, Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils, Church of England in Suffolk, East Suffolk Council, Ipswich Borough Council, Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG, Ministry of Defence, National Probation Service – Norfolk & Suffolk, Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care System, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Suffolk Association of Local Councils, Suffolk Community Foundation, Suffolk Constabulary, Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Voluntary Organisations Group, West Suffolk CCG, West Suffolk Council