

This is the 6th newsletter sent on behalf of **The Collaborative Communities Covid-19 Board**.

This week we wanted to do a [spotlight on housing](#) and look at the demand on that service as Covid-19 continues. Within this work it is important that we consider the legacy of homelessness prevention in the future.

Other items included in this newsletter:

- [Those we've helped through The Home, But Not Alone phonenumber](#)
- [Tribe volunteer](#)
- [Foodbanks](#)
- [East Suffolk & North Essex NHS Foundation Tru](#)
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- [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

    

Here is a snapshot of the great work going on as Suffolk comes together to respond to the Covid-19 outbreak:

- An elderly woman, who lives alone, needed help with her medication delivery which was arranged for the longer-term. She was also offered the number of a near-by befriending service which she was very happy to accept.
- A social worker contacted Help, But Not Alone with concerns for a couple she works with. They live in temporary accommodation and needed a food delivery that day. An emergency food package was arranged from the same day and provisions were made with a local shop to take payment over the phone for longer-term support. The social worker was grateful for the help received.
- A neighbour raised concerns about an elderly man who she hadn't seen for a while. The team at Home, But Not Alone made contact with him and he reassured the officer that he was getting help from friends and family with food deliveries. The phonenumber details were left with him in case he needed help on another occasion and he was very thankful for the support offered.

There have been 7,600 calls taken since the phonenumber was set up. Phone calls are answered and cases managed by staff at each district, borough or county council depending on the type of enquiry. Wherever possible we link people in need with local groups and businesses, who are doing an amazing job in our communities. This phonenumber is for vulnerable people in our communities, and not for general Coronavirus enquiries.

[A Spotlight on Housing](#)

Organisations across Suffolk have been working in partnership to meet urgent housing needs during the COVID-19 crisis... and build a legacy of homelessness prevention for the future.

Agencies have come together as part of the Collaborative Communities' Housing Task and Finish Group to identify demand, and source enough accommodation of the right type and in the right location for key workers, rough sleepers, people released from prison, anyone escaping domestic abuse or displaced by the current lockdown.

They have then worked to ensure their health, wellbeing and safety, making sure they have access to food, safety, warmth, and support services such as health outreach, drug and alcohol addiction services.

Together they have managed to:

- accommodate 65 rough sleepers to protect their health during the pandemic
- accommodate more than 100 individuals in Suffolk who were at immediate risk of rough sleeping (and who local authorities would not usually owe a duty to house)
- source more than 900 hotel rooms to meet the needs of key workers or anyone requiring short term accommodation as a direct result of COVID-19
- explore a new process to ensure every care leaver is supported to have somewhere they can call home
- actively work with organisations across the county so no rough sleeper accommodated since the outbreak has to return to Suffolk's streets
- start exploring a system-wide approach to preventing homelessness in future.

This is in addition to supporting the 465 people already living in temporary accommodation across Suffolk that our local authorities have a duty to house because they are classed as priority, either because of certain vulnerabilities, health conditions or dependent children.

The total cost of all temporary accommodation for up to 12 weeks has been circa £750K. Despite this cost being unsustainable in the long term, the Housing Task and Finish Group has pledged to prevent anyone accommodated during the past 12 weeks returning to the streets if they do not wish to do so.

A plan exploring a variety of short, medium and long-term proposals is now being drawn up

for Suffolk public sector chief executives and leaders to consider and debate in June.

These proposals are not just about providing additional accommodation, but also about the essential wrap-around support required to prevent ‘the revolving door of homelessness’ and ensure individuals can thrive, prosper and retain the security of somewhere they can call home.

This supports the next phase of government support for rough sleepers during the pandemic and the [appointment of Dame Louise Casey earlier this month to spearhead a specialist taskforce](#).

The East Anglian Daily Times included information provided by the Housing Task and Finish Group in [an article earlier this week](#), which also featured stories of two people helped within our county who had been previously reluctant to accept help.

The challenge now is to build on the opportunity we have to continue our work with these vulnerable people and ensure they have a more secure future thanks to our communities working in collaboration.

Tribe Volunteers: Officers from the District and Borough Councils continue to make contact with volunteers registered on the app to match them into local voluntary roles either within new community groups or with other local charities who require support.

Foodbanks: We continue to ensure there is a resilient supply of food delivered directly to food banks across Suffolk. Before the pandemic, Suffolk had 12 foodbanks – it now has 46. So far this week, with the help of the Ministry of Defence, 2.4tonnes of food has been distributed to foodbanks across Suffolk from FareShare.

East Suffolk & North Essex NHS Foundation Trust has collaborated with Suffolk Family Carers charity to introduce a scheme called **At My Bedside** to allow patients and their friends and families to stay in touch during their hospital stay. As soon as a patient is taken into hospital, staff are able to identify what is in place for the person to be touch with those people who are most important to them. Volunteers managed by Suffolk Family Carers will then speak to family members about any specific support needs they may have. Anyone interested in the scheme can contact the charity's team on hello@suffolkfamilycarers.org or 01473 835477.

As we enter phase 2 of lockdown, please remember to stay home as much as possible and continue to wash your hands. We are grateful to everyone who works in our communities and continues to look out for one another.

With very 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

