Corston Parish Council

Corston Community Support Volunteers

**Introduction**

On Sunday 22nd March 2020 Corston Parish Council having worked closely with All Saints Church PCC was able to introduce the Corston Community Support Volunteers scheme and associated Helpline. All Saints Church PCC introduced the Phone-a-Friend initiative.

The Corston Community Support Volunteers scheme and associated Helpline is a formal local support arrangement that will work very closely alongside the many longstanding and recently arranged informal support arrangements that exist in Corston, which are already working very effectively between families, friends and neighbours.

During the four days following the introduction 16 local residents used the Helpline to offer their services as local volunteers to assist those vulnerable and older members of the village community. During this time 6 calls for help were received and all were successfully satisfied on the day received.

The voluntary formal support task includes collecting prescriptions from chemist shops, pharmacy outlets, collecting and delivering prearranged shopping orders, plus other important everyday activities where Corston’s local group of vulnerable and older villagers may require help during the weeks to come. Other support tasks for this group of villagers will be considered.

Because understandably there is a limit of formal volunteer resources available, if requests for local support eventually exceed volunteer availability then decisions based on priority may be required.

For duty-of-care and safeguarding reasons it was essential that every volunteer was registered, reminded of the UK Government’s current advice on what each of us needs to do and provided with guidance.

[**Coronavirus (COVID-19): what you need to do**](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

**Stay at home**

* Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home)
* If you go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times
* Wash your hands as soon as you get home

Do not meet others, even friends or family.

You can spread the virus even if you don’t have symptoms.

**Corston Community Support Volunteers - Guidance**

The following detailed guidance is taken from advice contained on Government and NHS websites.

**1. Personal care & safety**

COVID-19 can be spread through close physical contact by breathing in air carrying the virus, so please ensure that you:

* **Wash hands** regularly
* Please familiarize yourselves with the current **NHS guidelines** online at: <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
* Please do not help if you or anyone in your household has had **symptoms**
* Always keep **2m (6’) apart** from other people
* Do **NOT** enter **homes**
* Take care of **yourself and your family first** – you can say no and help again at a later date
* You do not have to **give personal information** to anyone you are helping
* If you are ever **uncomfortable** about what is asked of you, **do not do it**

**2. Providing help**

* **Never give medical advice**. Please direct to Online 111 or to phone 111
* Please follow the latest guidance on **social distancing** when working outside your home
* If **walking someone else’s dog**, please keep the dog on its lead
* After helping anyone, **please wash your hands immediately** you return home

**3. Safeguarding**

* If you have any other concerns for someone’s **wellbeing**, please let the Helpline coordinator know so the Parish Council can ensure they are offered extra support

**4. Getting coronavirus support as a clinically extremely vulnerable person**

It is unlikely that the Helpline and volunteers will need to provide advice to this group but if asked the following specific guidance is taken from Government advice contained on the www.gov.uk website where the person seeking the advice should be referred or to contact their GP.

* If you have a medical condition which makes you extremely vulnerable to coronavirus (COVID-19), register with the NHS and tell them whether or not you need support.
* You may have received a letter from the NHS telling you that you’re clinically extremely vulnerable, or been contacted by your GP or hospital clinician. If this has not happened by Monday 30 March, contact your GP or clinician to register with this service. You can register yourself, or on behalf of someone else.
* When following registration it is confirmed that you are eligible, as a member of this group the NHS will provide support with a medicine and a food parcel delivery service directly to the individual.

**5. Providing Support to Older Corston villagers (those over 70) who are taking Government advice to stay at home and social distancing.**

*These are the Corston villagers where it is expected that the local volunteers will make the biggest difference and focus the majority of their support and time.*

**6. Providing Support to Corston villagers who are younger than 70 but have underlying medical conditions and are taking Government advice to stay at home and social distance.**

*When any already existing support arrangements are unable to cope, local volunteers will provide support to this smaller group of villagers.*

**7. Providing support to other Corston residents who are not included in the above categories.**

*Members of the Corston Community Support Group of volunteers, like all other members of our village community, will be following Government advice on what you can and can’t do as shown on the gov.uk website.*

*Due to limited resources and the need for volunteers to follow Government guidance, as it is for everyone else, it will not be possible to provide support to those who, by following Government advice can leave their house. The Government advice can be found on the gov.uk website.*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do>

Corston Parish Council 31/03/2020

Helpline –Mobile No. 07496 374055