

Subject: East Devon residents Coronavirus update 27 March 2020

From: "East Devon District Council" <EastDevon@public.govdelivery.com>

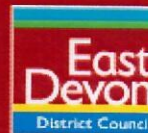
Date: 27/03/2020, 16:22

To: clerk@westhillparishcouncil.gov.uk

Having trouble viewing this email? [View it as a Web page.](#)

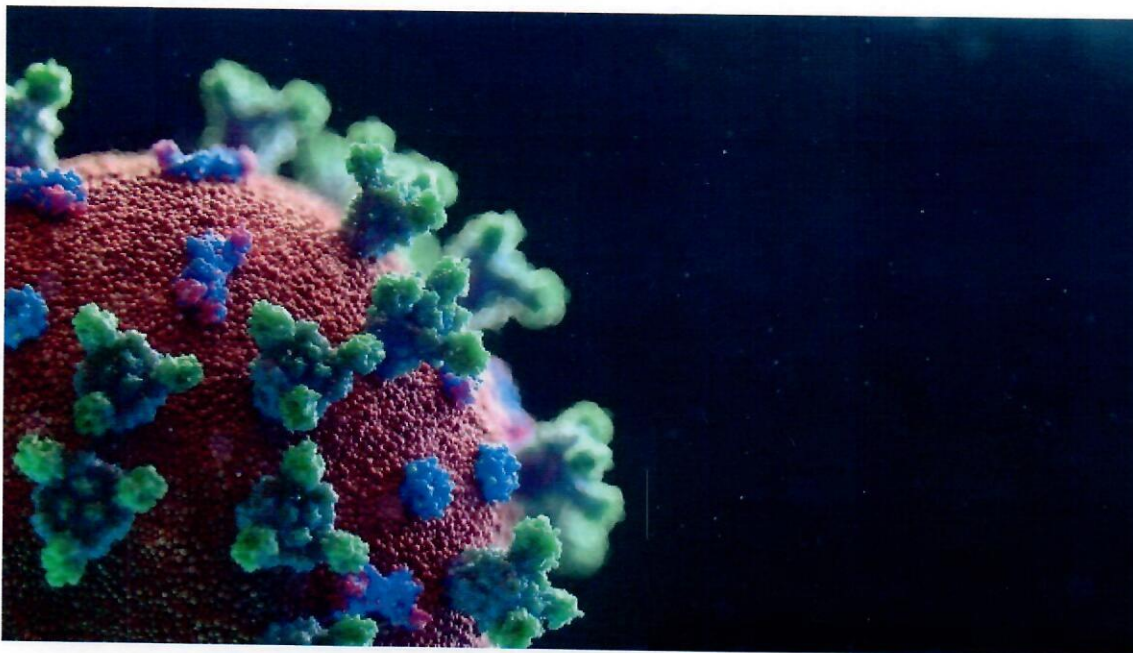


Coronavirus
East Devon
resident update



Coronavirus (Covid-19) update for residents - 27 March 2020

In this week's Covid-19 message to residents, Mark Williams, the Chief Executive of East Devon District Council and Councillor Ben Ingham, the Leader of the council, announce the launch on **Monday 30 March 2020** of the East Devon District Council Coronavirus Community Support Hub, as well as bringing you up to date with service changes in response to the outbreak.



"As part of the overall public sector effort to defeat Covid-19, East Devon District Council is committed to doing whatever is needed to help people directly and to support our communities. Government has asked us to undertake specific roles in terms of supporting the local economy and our most vulnerable people.

"This communication outlines our plans to support the most vulnerable people. We are working closely with Devon County Council, national bodies and local agencies, all of whom are committed to help and support local people through this outbreak.

"We have been asked to focus particularly on the needs and wellbeing of a critical 'shielded cohort' of people at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 who may be pregnant, over 70 or have other debilitating diseases. Their needs will be prioritised above others.

"To help support this work, we have created the East Devon District Council Coronavirus Community Support Hub to coordinate volunteer efforts, providing support for the shielded category people. The council will be the administrative unit delivering these hubs with a focus on providing access to food, medicines and other supplies in the first instance. The service will launch on Monday 30 March 2020.

"Our immediate task is to identify the people with the right skill-set to harness this community effort and volunteers. Our officers are already in contact with many groups and are working to expand this network. We will work with town and parish councils, voluntary and community groups, other local leaders and local businesses to help us build this response.

"We are already aware of many great examples of people coming together to look out for each other. We will look to nurture this and do all we can to make sure there is a focus on getting real help and support to all those that are likely to need it most.

"As the situation develops we will update you with guidelines and will outline what we will be asking of you, to help us carry out the new duties required by Government.

"Thank you for supporting your community in these unprecedented times."

With our very best wishes

Mark Williams, Chief Executive, East Devon District Council

Councillor Ben Ingham, Leader, East Devon District Council

Together #WeAreDevon

East Devon District Council Coronavirus Community Support Hub

The East Devon District Council Coronavirus Community Support Hub Hotline has been set up to help local residents, communities and organisations to access information and support, or volunteer their time and resources to help their local community.

- **From Monday 30 March, you can call the East Devon District Council's Coronavirus Community Hotline on: 01395 571500**

- The line is open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

If you are unwell you should contact NHS 111 or if you are seeking general advice about coronavirus symptoms visit www.111.nhs.uk if you can.

Do you want to help? Or do you need help?

If you would like to volunteer to help in the community OR if you are an individual or a group who NEEDS community support, please call the hotline: 01395 571500 – see the categories

below to help you decide which is the most appropriate for you.

- You are an individual that needs support, or you are calling on behalf of someone you care for, a family member, friend or neighbour
- You want to volunteer to help in your local community
- You are offering support on behalf of a community group, charity or organisation
- You are a community group, organisation or charity that needs support

Alternatively, please email your details to our East Devon District Council Community Support Hub team at COVID.Community@eastdevon.gov.uk – making sure to include the following information:

- Name, address, telephone number, email address
- Tell us briefly what support you need?
- OR for volunteers, tell us briefly what support you are offering/what you can help with, eg: shopping/delivery, caring for older/vulnerable people, checking in/staying in touch with people by phone, general volunteering,
- What particular groups/people you want to support.
- Which area/parish/village would you be happy to support people in.
- When are you able to offer support, eg: regular daytimes, regular evenings, occasional days, weekdays, weekends.
- Do you have an up to date Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check? This is a record of a person's criminal convictions and cautions. To be valid it must have been issued within the last 3 years.

For advice on your own wellbeing as a volunteer, please see our [volunteering top tips](#) page.

Five fast ways to help support people:

- Think of others, consider your actions and be kind
- Connect and reach out to your neighbours
- Make the most of local online groups
- Support vulnerable or isolated people
- Share accurate information and advice

Useful links:

Safeguarding and data protection

These are understandably areas of concern for many community volunteers and voluntary groups. The Government has issued [guidance on safeguarding](#) and the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has written a [blog about data protection](#)

Community grants

There are a number of grants available for East Devon communities that will provide support during the Coronavirus outbreak. [Read more](#)

Community contacts

This page has the contact details for the main organisations leading the response in our main towns and/or the co-ordinated community response information. [Read more](#)

Cooking for neighbours from home

Offering to cook a meal for a neighbour or friend during this difficult time is a very friendly thing to do. Follow our guide on how to do this safely during the Coronavirus pandemic.

[Read more](#)

Emergency food supply for shielded individuals

We have been tasked with helping to distribute emergency food supplies to those individuals in East Devon who are within the shielded cohort, and who have no local family support networks.

We anticipate that food packages will be distributed to Devon later today (Friday 27 March) or over the weekend. We have arranged to receive East Devon's packages at Blackdown House for onward distribution.

A team of our staff is already on standby to deliver food. As soon as we receive both the food packages and the list of East Devon's shielded individuals we will contact them to arrange delivery. These staff will carry ID and use council vans.

Shielded people will each have received a communication from the NHS this week, asking them to remain indoors. This is the group of residents we are assisting via this process.

Alongside this effort, we are working with community volunteer groups and others to offer assistance more widely for people self-isolating.

Who are shielded individuals?

Shielding is a measure to protect extremely vulnerable people by minimising interaction between those who are extremely vulnerable and others. This means that those who are extremely vulnerable should not leave their homes, and within their homes should minimise all non-essential contact with other members of their household. This is to protect those who are at very high risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19) from coming into contact with the virus.

More information about [shielding](#) can be found on the GOV.UK website.

Free car parking for NHS staff

East Devon District Council is offering free parking to NHS staff, Social Care staff and volunteers in all East Devon pay and display car parks during the coronavirus outbreak. Parking charges will be lifted for these important key workers who are being asked to display a note with an appropriate form of identification on their windscreen. The council has already announced that it will extend its winter offer of all day parking for £2 until midnight each day and is not bringing in its usual car park charging tariffs from April 1. Both measures will be reviewed in late May.

[Read more](#)

Coronavirus - stay home - protect the NHS - save lives

Following the [Prime Minister's announcement](#) on Monday evening, we should all be staying at home and only going out for the following reasons:

- To buy food or medicine
- To attend health appointments
- To take exercise
- or for essential work that cannot be done at home.

If you must go out, make sure you stay two metres (6ft) away from other people and wash your hands as soon as you get home.

[Full guidance from the government on staying at home and away from others.](#)

Recycling and waste

The impact of Coronavirus may lead to some interruptions in your recycling and waste service and we apologise for any inconvenience this may cause. If we are unable to collect please leave your containers out for one or two days as we catch up. Information about changes to the service is being updated daily [on our website](#) and includes extra measures you need to take if your household is affected by Coronavirus.

Suspension of green waste and bulky waste services

We've suspended our green waste and bulky waste collections in order to focus our available resources (drivers and loaders) on high priority services, such as waste and recycling collections. Normal service will be resumed when the current situation improves.

For more information visit the [East Devon recycling and waste](#) pages.

There is more helpful advice on ways you can reduce and manage waste at home on East Devon's [Managing your waste at home.](#)

Dog bins

Due to exceptionally heavy use some dog bins are overflowing. As soon as staffing levels allow we will be catching up with collections but this will take some time. To help with the situation, please take dog waste home, double bag it and put it in your wheeled waste bin.

Recycling centres

Devon County Council have decided to close all recycling centres. Check [their website for more information](#).

Check our new guide on [managing waste at home](#), especially during this period.

Textile collections suspended

Following Government guidance, the Salvation Army has had to shut down its textile re-use

operations.

This affects our textile collections as the textiles and shoes that we collect at kerbside are normally taken by The Salvation Army for re-use.

So for the time being, we are no longer able to collect your textiles as part of your recycling collections.

If you have any textiles that you want to recycle, please keep them at home so that we are able to collect them when we resume our textile collections.

If you inadvertently put textiles in your recycling box during this period, we have asked our crews to leave them behind in your box so that they can be kept at home for future collection and re-use.

We will return to collecting your quality textiles and shoes as part of our weekly recycling collections as soon as we can and will put out messages once we are able to restore this part of our recycling service.

[Read more](#)

Council tax

Hardship fund for people in receipt of Council Tax Reduction (Support)

In response to the Coronavirus outbreak, the Government has announced details of a [hardship fund](#) for people in receipt of Council Tax Reduction (Support). We are working through the details, but it could mean a reduction of up to £150 on Council Tax. There's no need to contact us about the fund, as we'll be in touch as soon as possible.

However, if your **personal** circumstances have changed, eg, you no longer live alone or your property is now empty, please email: counciltax@eastdevon.gov.uk

If your **financial** circumstances have changed, please fill in the online form on the [Request Financial Support \(Coronavirus COVID-19\)](#) page.

If you have any questions relating to Council Tax or benefits, please read our [Coronavirus related FAQs for Benefits and Council Tax](#) page.

If you are trying to contact us with concerns over paying your Council Tax or Business Rates, we will answer your enquiry, but it is just taking us longer than normal due to the number of enquiries we are receiving. Our Revenues and Benefits team thank you for your patience and understanding during this difficult time.

[Read more](#)

Coronavirus bill

The emergency legislation that the Government has been working on to help deal with COVID-19 has now passed into law and it contains a whole range of measures to help

ensure that the country is able to deal with the impact of the virus. The measures are primarily aimed around assisting with the health care response but they also address other related areas of concern.

Further implementing legislation (also known as regulations) is required to come forward from Government before some of the measures can be put into operation, and as these will come from a range of Government departments there is no clear timescale yet, although they are expected to come forward relatively quickly.

Coronavirus bill summary

- It ensures that recently retired NHS staff and social workers can return to work
- Students nearing the end of their medical training can start work
- It ensures that the national volunteer call is supported with individuals being able to help out for two, three or four week stints in any 16 week period without any impact on their job or loss of earnings.
- It also seeks to reduce the burdens on frontline staff and key workers, carrying out tasks remotely, ie less paperwork and less administrative tasks
- It enables local authorities to prioritise care for people with the most pressing needs.
- There are powers for local and national bodies to require information to be provided in relation to the capacity to deal with the deceased and our food supply.
- There are reduced paperwork requirements around registration of deaths
- It gives powers to direct certain actions in relation to the transportation, storage and disposal of the deceased.
- Individuals are being supported by ensuring that those suffering from Covid-19 are entitled to statutory sick pay and those in rented accommodation are at reduced risk from eviction.
- The Government is also looking to contain and slow the virus by reducing unnecessary social contacts. This is an ever changing situation and things have moved on significantly since the legislation was drafted (the current restrictions on movement and travel being such an example) but it gives powers to suspend certain events and gatherings, to quarantine individuals suspected of having the virus by the police, immigration and public health consultants, delaying planned elections and permitting the closure of schools and ports.

Council meetings

The Coronavirus Bill will enable the Secretary of State to bring forward regulations to permit our meetings to be held remotely/virtually. When in place, the regulations, will detail any restrictions or limitations on how this will work in practice. But at present, we don't know when we can expect the draft regulations to be available, which will help us understand how this will work in practice. However, we believe that our IT solution will enable remote/virtual meetings to be held and we are actively working to ensure that this can be put in place as soon as we are permitted to do so.

Exmouth

Construction paused at Sideshore development

Grenadier and local building contractors, Devon Contractors Ltd, have confirmed they have temporarily paused work at the Sideshore watersports centre development in Exmouth. Devon Contractors have said: "We have been following Public Health England guidance to ensure we protect our people, our subcontractors, and our suppliers health and safety. We will continue to monitor the impact and provide an update in due course."

More information can be found on our [Regeneration projects](#) page.

Queen's Drive Space

It was agreed on Monday 23 March 2020 that [Queen's Drive Space](#) on Exmouth Seafront will remain closed until further notice, this is following from the Government's advice on social distancing due to Coronavirus (COVID-19).

Housing

Housing repairs

Like many companies across the country our repairs and maintenance contractor, Ian Williams, has suffered from a loss of staff through self-isolation.

This has an impact on their ability to deliver a full service to our tenants. We are therefore no longer booking in routine repairs from today, and will only be able to carry out emergency repairs after Friday 27 March.

Please only contact us if a repair is a genuine emergency, such as loss of electricity, water or heating.

If you have a routine repair booked in for after Friday 27 March, this appointment will now be cancelled. You will need to contact us again once our full service resumes to arrange for this work to be carried out. We are sorry for the inconvenience.

Gas Servicing

If we have notified you that your gas appliance requires servicing, or a similar service or safety check is required, please do NOT ignore this request. We can make safe arrangements to undertake essential work. Whether you are self-isolating or not, we still have a statutory duty to carry out the gas servicing in your home to ensure your gas appliances are safe. Our operatives will ask a set of pre-screening questions before carrying out any works. [Read more](#)

Housing allocations

As our offices are now closed, if you have any queries relating to Housing Allocations please email us at housingallocations@eastdevon.gov.uk or call us on 01395 517469.

Home visits

Although most work is continuing as usual during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, we are significantly reducing the amount of home visits we are carrying out.

Mutual Exchanges

We have suspended any new mutual exchanges for the foreseeable future.

Devon Home Choice

Due to the restrictions in place there will be no properties advertised on Devon Home Choice in the next two weeks. There will also inevitably be delays in landlords being able to let properties, which are currently being advertised or in the shortlisting process. Some properties may be withdrawn from advertising where they are required for emergency accommodation.

As we are experiencing an increase in staff needing to self-isolate there are a few steps that you can take to help us process applications and changes.

- Please apply online, rather than by paper application, because it will be more likely to be processed at this time;
- If your communications preference is currently by letter, please consider changing it from letter to email and ensure that your email address is up-to-date; and
- If you are able to, please either screenshot, photograph or scan then email to us your completed application forms and/or proofs of evidence e.g. Health & Wellbeing forms, Supporting Evidence forms, letters, etc.

[Read more](#)

Guest bedrooms

The guest bedrooms and community centres are currently closed until further notice due to Coronavirus. Please see our page on [living independently at home with support](#) for more information.

GOV.UK launches coronavirus info service on Whatsapp

The UK Government has launched a GOV.UK Coronavirus Information service on WhatsApp.

To use the free GOV.UK Coronavirus Information Service on WhatsApp, simply add 07860 064422 in your phone contacts and then message the word 'hi' in a WhatsApp message to get started.

The new service will provide information on topics such as coronavirus prevention and symptoms, the latest number of cases in the UK, advice on staying at home, travel advice and myth busting, and will further reduce the burden on NHS services.

The GOV.UK Coronavirus Information Service is an automated 'chatbot' service which will allow the British public to get answers to the most common questions about coronavirus direct from government.

[Read more](#)

Business support

The Coronavirus outbreak is affecting all aspects of our economy. The Government has announced a package of measures to support business and employers through this difficult period. We have now received guidance on the deployment of grants to [support small](#)

[businesses and retail, leisure and hospitality businesses](#) These are key sectors of our local economy and our priority is to ensure that these funds flow to eligible businesses as quickly as possible. We will shortly be writing out to all qualifying businesses to provide details of how these funds can be accessed through a secure online claim system, which will be live from 12pm on Monday 30 March 2020. For more business updates, please read our latest [business newsletter](#).

Government information on businesses currently operating

The Government has given [guidance on the businesses that can remain open during the outbreak and those that must remain closed](#) as part of the social distancing measures.

Advice is also given for those who work in people's homes, for example by tradespeople carrying out repairs and maintenance. See our [Businesses currently operating and those that must remain closed page](#).

Business rates

Nurseries on Ofsted's Early Years Register have now been added to the list of premises that will receive [100% business rates retail relief](#) from the Government.

Food businesses

East Devon has given advice is for existing food businesses [looking to introduce takeaways and delivery options](#) where they have not done so before.

Advice for private water supply holders during the COVID19 Crisis

Due to the exceptional risk posed by COVID19 to customers and staff, we've suspended routine private water sampling and risk assessment until further notice. However, if your sample is urgent we will consider requests on a case-by-case basis. In these circumstances or for general queries, please contact us on: 01395 571572 Email: pshousing@eastdevon.gov.uk

If you're a person responsible for a private water supply, we recommend that you take additional measures to help ensure that your water supply remains wholesome during this period. You'll find more information our [Private Water](#) page.

Closure of parks, gardens, play areas, public toilets, beach huts/beach hut sites

We've closed the following facilities to limit social interaction and to reduce the risk of spreading the coronavirus infection:

- Play areas
- Parks and gardens
- Beach hut and beach hut site provision
- Public Toilets

Where sites can't be closed, such as at our beaches and nature reserves, we're reminding people to respect the Government's [social distancing and hygiene guidance](#):

- Stay at home
- No public gatherings of more than two people in public – excluding people you live with
- Stay at least 2 metres apart
- Wash your hands more regularly

More information about the [closure of all non-essential premises](#) can be found on the government's website.

Cemeteries and burials

Funeral Services

Currently there is no guidance on preventing gatherings. Funerals can still take place in line with the government's request for social distancing and protection of those in high risk groups. A risk based approach to attendance is encouraged.

Booking burials and interments

Funeral directors are now encouraged to use online electronic burial bookings. The offices are now closed to the public and interment notices should be sent by email rather than taken into the office and to avoid delays in the postal service.

Funeral directors are encouraged to email forms to: cemeteries@eastdevon.gov.uk and we will check they have been received. All bookings remain provisional until confirmed. During normal working office hours you will receive a response to all online booking and email requests. Please visit our [cemeteries information pages](#) for more information.

Suicide prevention

The [Stay Alive app](#) is a suicide prevention resource for the UK, packed full of useful information and tools to help you stay safe in crisis.

You can use it if you are having thoughts of suicide or if you are concerned about someone else who may be considering suicide.

Government ensures ticket refunds and protects services for passengers with rail emergency measures

The Government is [supporting train operators](#) to make sure our railways stay open for key workers during the coronavirus outbreak.

Home schooling tips

Five ways to keep your kids learning, happy and healthy. Read more on [Sky News](#).

Trusted sources of advice and information

Please make sure that you only follow advice from trusted, official sources:

Devon County Council

Gov.UK

NHS England

Public Health England

Stay Connected with East Devon District Council:



SUBSCRIBER SERVICES:

[Manage Subscriptions](#) | [Unsubscribe All](#) | [Help](#)

This email was sent to clerk@westhillparishcouncil.gov.uk using GovDelivery Communications Cloud on behalf of: East Devon District Council · East Devon District Council, Blackdown House, Heathpark Industrial Estate, Honiton EX14 1EJ

GOVDelivery 