

CORONAVIRUS-related Update to 24 March 2020

To 'One and All',

It doesn't need for me to say what a difficult time this is for so many in our communities. I will say that I am deeply proud, yet again, of the kind of responses being initiated by so many of you in caring, especially, for those most in need.

A short while ago I requested of our parish councils and others that they share some of the wonderful work currently being undertaken across the 30 parishes of Holsworthy Rural, the responses of which I will now share with you. I wanted also to include information which, I feel, may also be of benefit to many of us at this very challenging time. It concerns matters such as bus services availability and those locally, health-related.

I ask of all to whom I send this information that the items below are shared with as many individuals/organisations as possible in order to try and reach as many folk as we can. We are, indeed, in this fight together and must share with one another as much as we possibly can.

Ruby Country Medical Group (RCMG)

Jane Wells, who manages the RCMG has kindly given the following information:

The RCMG continues with a service but looking to drastically reduce the number of patients actually coming to the surgeries to protect their health and assist in maintaining a service.

The situation is fast moving and advice and information is changing day by day, so RCMG are using Facebook and Twitter, to update the general public.

RCMG recommending that the public only attend the practice if they need to and to this end ask that only the patient enters the practice for their appointment, and ask that friends and family wait in the car. Further, patients will be asked to wait outside the building (in their car) under the clinician is ready to see them.

RCMG has made the following changes to the appointments offered:

GP Appointments

Will now all be telephone triage and invited in only clinician need. Patients with respiratory symptoms can be seen in Room 45 at Holsworthy, Consulting Room 2 at Hatherleigh and Consulting Room 7 in Stratton (there are PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) supplies available in each of these rooms).

Nurse Appointments

RCMG is screening all patients attending for nursing appointments and, if needed, will see these patients in the isolation rooms (Room 45 at Holsworthy, Consulting Room 2 at Hatherleigh and Consulting Room 7 in Stratton) using PPE as required.

RCMG is **cancelling the following clinics for the next month:**

- Spirometry
- Travel Clinics
- 40-75 Health Checks
- New Patient Checks

The following appointments will be **carried out over the telephone:**

- Pill Checks
- Asthma Checks
- DM (Diabetes Mellitus) annual review (if RCMG has a recent HBA1c result)
- Stroke & CHD (Congenital Heart Disease) appts (if RCMG has recent BP & Cholesterol results)
- GUS (related to urinary system)
- Mental Health
- Depression Reviews

RCMG will encourage patients to purchase their own blood pressure (BP) machines so that they don't have to attend the practice to have their BP monitored.

The following appointment types will be reviewed by the nursing team to see if they can be postponed.

- Ring Changes

At the moment we will continue appointments for:

- Injections
- Blood Tests
- INR Monitoring (but interval between monitoring will be reviewed to see if it can be lengthened).

Childhood Immunizations

Appointments will be offered for childhood immes as followed, RCMG will limit the other patients in the building at these times:

- Holsworthy - Tuesday afternoon
- Hatherleigh - Wednesday afternoon
- Stratton - Thursday afternoon

Social Prescribing Appointments

These appointments will be offered by telephone.

Geoffrey Cox MP

Our MP's Office in Tavistock has informed me that our MP has uploaded a series of briefings to his website including helpful information and advice for businesses and individuals alike.

The constituency office will also remain contactable by phone, email and post (please see detail below) and is ready to help anyone seeking advice or who needs help with any matter, not just those relating to coronavirus.

Contact via:

The Rt Hon Geoffrey Cox QC MP, First Floor, Lockyer House, Paddons Row, Tavistock, PL19 0HF

Tel: 01822 612925

E-mail: tellgeoffrey@geoffreycox.co.uk

TRANSPORT – BUSES

As a result of the COVID-19 situation, bus companies across the county are facing a very difficult situation as passenger numbers fall drastically alongside staffing issues and loss of income.

In response, bus companies are planning to reduce their services, inevitably with less than the usual notice period. They are doing this in discussion with the County Council which is supporting them in obtaining short-notice authorization from the Traffic Commissioner. Some community transport groups have closed down, others have altered their services.

At present the best advice for anyone having to undertake essential travel is to check with their local bus company or community transport group before travelling. I have just asked Martin Prentice at Community Transport to furnish me with latest information from the team and will forward this also as soon as received.

ON STREET PARKING RELAXATION

As you will know councils are being presented by exceptional challenges and Devon County Council will play a critical role in responding to Covid19. Teams in Highway Management and across the Authority will be essential in helping our communities through this challenge.

These teams will need to adapt and refocus to meet these challenges. There are many questions already raised regarding how we will undertake parking enforcement duties. Our area cannot be compared to the likes of Exeter and some of the larger towns where there is the recognition that we must keep the network moving. We recognise concerns in residential areas where people are needing to park at home more often due to the need to social distance / home work.

The Traffic Management Team have reviewed deployment ensuring that our provision of parking enforcement is proportionate to the needs of the network as the situation develops. As a minimum the service will seek to maintain free flow of traffic by managing parking on:

- Strategic Routes: All A and B roads
- Settlement Population: Main access route to settlements with a population of 500 or greater
- Emergency Premises – Main access routes to 24 hour emergency services premises, including ambulance stations, full time and retained fire stations, hospitals with 24 hour casualty departments and police stations manned 24 hours.
- Cottage and Community Hospitals – Main access routes to strategic cottage and community hospitals as notified by Devon Primary Care Trust
- Doctors surgeries and other public buildings – Main access routes to strategic doctors surgeries and other public buildings (for such purposes as infection testing) as notified by Devon Primary Care Trust
- Bus Routes – No waiting restrictions on bus routes will be maintained so long as services continue.
- Supermarkets and food distribution centres – All parking restrictions of access routes to supermarkets and food distribution centres (including loading bays, limited waiting, and P&D) will be managed.
- Locations identified as needing enforcement to permit refuse collection.

In order to focus resources to strategically important locations the service will be down-scaled removing enforcement from:

- Peripheral areas – including coastal and tourist destinations (except where identified as on a strategic route or location)
- Residential areas - including residents parking bays (except restrictions in these areas, such yellow lines and where a residential area is identified as on a strategic route)
- Central commercial areas – including limited waiting and P&D (except where identified as on a strategic route or location)

The team are also mindful of protecting our civil enforcement officers from exposure. As we refocus there will be a greater need for staff to be deployed on "mobile" beats, allowing them to operate predominantly from vehicles rather than walked beats. Staff have always been supplied with cleaning products, alcohol / anti bacterial wipes, alcohol hand gel and gloves, and we will continue to ensure these are supplied (so long as supplies are available).

Additionally, as the networks need for enforcement reduces, we are also looking at how these front-line staff can be redeployed to support and build resilience in other highways teams that will become essential to the Authorities response to Covid19.

Household Waste Re-cycling Centres

Following the Government's announcement last night regarding further restrictions the County Council cannot open its Recycling centres.

Suez (the County Council's contractor) will now support their kerbside crews and transfer station operations in Devon to maintain critical services for managing waste across the county.

In response to the many, ongoing changes the information below gives a real flavour of just how many of our **parishes and our town of Holsworthy is responding to people's needs:**

Holsworthy Hamlets

- had an emergency meeting of Holsworthy Hamlets Parish Council on Tuesday this week to talk about the emergency plan in relation to the current coronavirus situation. The following was agreed:

- A leaflet was drafted which will be delivered to **all** households in Holsworthy Hamlets parish.
- The leaflet was printed using parish council funds & will be delivered via the delivery network of volunteers who deliver our parish newsletters to all the households in the parish every month, so they are already familiar with where all the properties are (I (Clerk to the Parish Council) believe 400 leaflets already delivered).
- The leaflet offers information, using the latest advice from Public Health in Exeter, to help parishioners stay safe during the virus outbreak.
- The notice also offers assistance to vulnerable parishioners who may need help if they are self-isolating.
- Contact details for volunteer Councillors in each part of the parish (which is made up of several distinct hamlets) are provided so that parishioners will have somebody they can contact to ask for help (with things like shopping etc).
- The leaflet was printed this week with the aim of getting it delivered to the households as soon as possible ... & the deliveries will be completed by the weekend.

Dr Julia Foster, Parish Clerk, Holsworthy Hamlets Parish Council
9 The Willows, Chilsworthy, Holsworthy, Devon, EX22 7BB
Tel: 01409 255502 Email: holsworthyhamletsclerk@gmail.com

Ashwater PC

Emails have been circulated to everyone on the Ashwater newsletter with the information you (County Councillor) have been sending through. In addition, the Ashwater Village Shop has been asking for volunteers to help deliver shopping, walk dogs etc. They have said that they have had a good response to this. Also they asked whether there are any health workers living locally who could help if necessary. One nurse had come forward and they were going to get PPE for her to use – the Parish Chairman checked with the Parish Council about funding the purchase of this. The links to the various relevant websites have also been circulated.

In addition, PC Mandy Brown telephoned earlier in the week to ask whether was being done and she also mentioned that she was seeking authorisation to put contact details on the police Facebook page if anybody wanted to get in touch and I could pass the details along.

Holsworthy Town Council

In Holsworthy we have set up 'Holsworthy Covid-19 Mutual Aid' group on Facebook

In only a few days we have had over 400 people join the page

We have set up a mobile contact number with a phone we had donated

We did a flyer drop around the whole town and posters have been put around the town with the contact number.

Already we have been getting requests, from we need a toilet roll and none in the shops, can someone collect a prescription to batteries for a hearing aid -the system is working so far!!

We have a co-ordinating group which is myself, Nigel, Mother Elizabeth and Sophie Sleeman (local student)

People with requests text or call the phone number, the co-ordinator with the phone then posts into a volunteer's messenger group where so far all requests have been answered very quickly. Its amazing who pulls together in a small town when there is a crisis.

We have also been feeding information, pharmacy opening times, requests for staff (deer park), offers available etc etc

We are now working on supporting the food bank although slightly separate. We are going to put together food parcels for 100 people so if a request come in we can react straight away, this will be via Elizabeth who can give the go ahead.

We will support foodbank but obviously they work slightly differently, they only give 3 days worth at the moment.

We have opened up several extra collection points in the town including me at the pub, we are already getting donations.

Our packs will be made up by some bulk purchasing, we have some money via David and I's council grants, some vouchers from Waitrose and a £1000 donation from sepcots

We also want to get some non food items such as toilet rolls, paracetamol, cat/dog food, we are compiling a list today

As the moment the system is working well and I am so thankful to all those involved especially the co-ord team, its been a very long week!

Who knows what will happen in the coming weeks months
So the only need at the moment would be financial to top up the pot so to say.
There is also a gofundme page which money is trickling into
If we can apply or you can arrange I can give you the details of the Churches bank account where most of the money is being looked after for us
Any money/donations/food left at the end of this crisis will be distributed locally

Halwill PC and Black Torrington PC

Both Halwill and Black Torrington have formed community support groups mainly organised through Facebook. Halwill PC has decided that it is not able to offer help directly as most of its members are in vulnerable groups themselves but I have been helping the community group organise itself. Offers of help shopping, dog walking and collecting prescriptions that sort of thing. The pub and the shop are offering deliveries as are several of the local farm shops. BT PC have taken a direct role and offered themselves as an initial point of contact. Similar range of services to Halwill.

Buckland Brewer PC

We held a community meeting ... agreed to set up a help-line using the community shop as the hub. They will have a list/contact numbers of all those in the Buckland Brewer Community. They will be able to help with all the usual request from shopping to dog walking.

We are pushing the use of Torridge Volunteer Cars re hospital and doctor runs etc. We shall publish the Parish Mag next week (early) with the info and it will be delivered to every home in the parish. (450)

All the info will also go on the community Website and the PC Facebook page.

W&E Putford PC

Dear Parishioner

As you are all aware the current Coronavirus or Covid-19 outbreak is having major impacts on all of our lives. The Parish Council wish to ensure that all in the Parishes of East and West Putford are kept as safe and well as we can.

We would therefore ask in the first instance that you look after yourself and reach out to, neighbours, friends and relatives locally for help and to support them where possible.

Please follow the latest Government and Public Health England guidance which is constantly being updated to minimise spread of the virus and impact of the virus on yourself and others. (follow Coronavirus links on www.putford.co.uk)

It is important that we pull together as a community during a period that will be difficult for all, please keep in contact with your relatives/neighbours safely and regularly.

Ensure you know their telephone numbers or can use social media to allow you to maintain contact during any necessary period of quarantine or self-isolation and make sure they are well and know you are too.

It is important that we maintain distance from people we meet to prevent spread, so If you are in self isolation, please let people know ideally put a note on your door so that postal staff and other deliverers can knock and stand back when making a delivery.

If you are assisting an elderly person, or isolated neighbour please advise the assistance co-ordination contacts below to let them know or advise them if you need further assistance. Also if you have any concerns for a member of the parish or have no one to support you and wish someone to contact you or them please let us know.

We would also be happy to hear from you if you feel you could offer assistance in some way if the situation demands

Assistance Co-ordination

David Smith Tel 01409 240219 e-mail davidandtinasmith@yahoo.co.uk

Nicky Williams Tel 01409 240168 e-mail dyersdevon@gmail.com

Steve Carter Tel 01409 240328 e-mail steve.carter54@btinternet.com

At the last meeting of the Parish Council our Business continuity plan was approved and will be available on www.putford.co.uk and reviewed routinely. Two pages of the Plan that provide parish council contacts and emergency contacts have been included as they may be useful to you to have immediately available in this current situation.

Lizzy's Larder at Milton Damerel

Lizzy is establishing a basic list of food she can supply she will take orders and payment over the phone and is offering a drive through collection for people in self isolation, we are looking to establish distribution in Putford on a twice weekly basis if you cannot collect. Contact Lizzy 07792858622 or shop 01409261440 e-mail lizzy@lizzyslarder.co.uk or Facebook lizzy s larder or @blackberryfarmshop

Thornbury PC

In Thornbury, we have:

Set up a support group, via the Parish Council, and identified at-risk residents, and have started to recruit helpers. Sent out a printed letter to every household, as per the attached copy.

Started a web site page at <http://www.thornburyhamlets.com/virus/> which we will develop as the crisis unfolds.

Enhanced our Facebook group, and encouraged residents to join, as our primary vehicle for quick communication into the community here.

Emailed others who are members of Neighbourhood Watch with the same messages.

So now we wait for the 'action to start' – we already have numbers of elderly or medically compromised people isolated, and are keeping in touch through the support network.

At this time, we have not identified any additional support that we might need – not having any public buildings, there is not much we can do other than support people in their homes.

Letter to Thornbury residents includes:

Getting local information:

We will publish local information on our Facebook group "Thornbury Tatler", and we urge you to join, even if you don't usually do social media – it's the quickest way for us to communicate with you.

We have a Neighbourhood Watch email list as well – we will use this to make sure we reach as many as possible.

Email me if you want to join.

Our website at www.thornburyhamlets.com will also contain inand links to Devon and national links.

Bradford and Cookbury PC

Bradford and Cookbury Parish Council have built its own 'Emergency Plan Call Tree'. It comprises two main strands for Emergency Service Contact with the Parish Council:

- Public and Private Building Access
- Resources

The first strand comprises Village Hall, Churches and School; the second, Bedding, Clothing and Food (and interestingly, Underground Water Storage). In both strands the Bickford Arms is prominent and they include contact details and strand responsibilities allocated to Members of the Parish Council.

You can see just from above there is a good deal going on. Let's stick together. Please stay at home and protect the NHS by doing the right thing and looking after lives. So many of you are doing a wonderful job. Thank you.

Barry

A very important PS – just received (with above attachment):

Along with other members I am also in receipt of an e-mail from our Locality Lead Officer from Devon County Council, Ali Boyd, who informs of the following in relation to new funding available from the County Council:

Devon County Council has launched the COVID-19 Prompt Action Fund to provide flexible resources to organisations working with communities who are disproportionately impacted by coronavirus and the social and economic consequences of this outbreak.

Grants available for applications of UNDER £500

While our healthcare systems, public health practitioners, and Local and National Government are doing everything in their power to slow the spread of coronavirus, our Voluntary and Community Sector organisations and local communities are also preparing to safely assist those most vulnerable during this unprecedented time.

Through the COVID-19 Action Fund, DCC will rapidly provide small amounts of grant funding to community-led schemes, which identify and/or achieve the small but important things that can safely address some of the issues that are arising because of this Coronavirus outbreak

These can include:

- Safe deliveries of essential goods and services to those who are vulnerable, such as foods and medicines.
- Support for accessing online information and services
- Virtual support groups to help people to stay connected and informed and to maintain and support mental health and wellbeing
- Transport related initiatives that support safe community responses to the outbreak.

Applications are accepted from constituted and not-for-private-profit Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector groups and organisations, Town and Parish Councils, charities or businesses, or a combination of such groups working together

**** (a) Non-constituted groups without their own, separate bank account, small local businesses and individuals may apply but they will need to do so with the support of an accountable constituted organisation acting on their behalf either as guarantor or as the holder of the funding. If you fall into this category, organisations that DCC would accept as guarantor or fund holder include:**

- Town or Parish Councils
- Local Community and Voluntary Services organisation (CVS)
- Village Hall
- Another constituted local Voluntary group that qualifies

If you are uncertain how to do this then please contact COVID19FUND@devon.gov.uk and mark your email **SUPPORT** in the subject line.

The application form can be accessed online here: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/document/covid-19-prompt-action-fund/>

But I have also attached a form that you can share with your contacts. We are asking that all applications are either online, or emailed back to the COVID19FUND mailbox as there may be nobody in G60 or Belaire to receive paper copies.

We are currently developing a fund to cover larger applications of up to £5,000. I will keep you informed of progress with this.

Regards

Ali Boyd

The Prompt Action Fund Team

<https://inside.devon.gov.uk/task/guidance-for-dealing-with-coronavirus-covid-19/>

Pinpoint - community services in Devon: www.pinpointdevon.co.uk
www.devon.gov.uk/Disclaimer