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# GUIDANCE FOR VOLUNTEER GROUPS RESPONDING TO COVID-19

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## **Group Volunteer Pack**

Thank you for registering your Group with the Nottinghamshire Community Coronavirus Support Hub. This pack contains some guidance on co-ordinating a volunteering group and some guidance for the individuals within your group.

**Contents** – within this pack you will find:

- Data Protection and Confidentiality
- Equality
- Safeguarding
- Advice for volunteers on carrying out volunteer activities
- Using personal vehicle for volunteer activities
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- Advice on dog walking
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## **Volunteer Agreements**

If you haven't done so already, create simple descriptions and volunteer agreements for volunteer roles so that it is clear what volunteers are being expected to do. These agreements should include the tasks that it has been agreed volunteers will carry out in your group, the name of the group coordinator and what is expected of the volunteer, some examples of expectations could include:

- To perform my role to the best of my ability.
- To follow the groups procedures and the guidance that is provided to me.
- To maintain confidentiality.

## **Data Protection and Confidentiality**

Both group co-ordinators and volunteers will be trusted with personal data about the person you have volunteered to support. "Personal data" is any data that could be used to identify a living person, eg. name, address, photograph, bank details. It also includes information which could identify a person if it was put together with other available information.

There may be rare occasions where more sensitive personal data is shared with you such as health information, race, religion, amongst other things. Personal data classed as "sensitive" could, if used incorrectly, potentially cause an individual much distress and even harm.

All group co-ordinators and volunteers should be mindful of when they come into contact with data about another person and ensure they are adopting safe practices.

DO	DON'T
If you receive paperwork containing personal data, for example a prescription then please treat it in the same way you would treat your valuables – make sure you know where it is at all times and don't leave it lying around in the open at home or in the car.	Discuss or share the personal data you are given or acquire through your volunteering with anyone else.
Whilst you are out and about volunteering, keep an eye on your personal possessions, especially those which have personal information on them. If you don't already then protect your phone with a PIN or biometrics.	If you are making a phone call about someone, then don't make a phone call out in the open where people can overhear you.

If you are an individual within a Group and you lose a device or any paperwork with personal data on then you should inform your group co-ordinator immediately. If the personal data came from information provided to you through the Nottinghamshire Coronavirus Community Support Hub then you should report it to us immediately.

Take a look at the [Information Commissioner's Office](#) list of security tips for volunteers.

### Contacting residents by phone

Ideally your group should have a phone that they are able to use to contact the resident, rather than you using your personal mobile phone. This means that your group will also be able to advertise this phone number, so that residents that do not have access to the internet have a method of contacting your group.

### Equality

You will support a diverse range of individuals in diverse communities. Volunteers should respect every individual's beliefs and that nobody is treated less favourably or excluded in anyway. We are all different and all have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. If you witness any behaviours where you feel someone is being treated less favourably or excluded, then you should inform your group co-ordinator.

DO	DON'T
Treat others the same way you would want to be treated.	Treat anyone less favourably or exclude anyone who you are supporting in our communities.
Respect everyone, regardless of who they are, their backgrounds and the communities in which they live.	Ignore any unacceptable behaviours towards anyone and ensure that you report it to your group co-ordinator.

### Safeguarding

During your volunteering activities, volunteers within the group may come across children or adults at risk of harm.

Safeguarding means protecting the most vulnerable from abuse and neglect. Group co-ordinators should view the safeguarding presentation that is on the [Nottinghamshire Coronavirus Community Support Hub webpage](#). It is advised that you also make this available to the volunteers within your group, if you haven't already shared anything with them in relation to safeguarding. This will help you all understand what safeguarding means in more detail and will explain what you should do if you have concerns.

We know that this is a difficult and worrying time for everyone – but particularly so for adults at risk and children living with domestic abuse. During the current coronavirus 'stay at home' situation one of the concerns is that there will be an increase in domestic abuse. Home may not be a safe place for victims, survivors and children living in households with domestic abuse and they will be increasingly isolated from support networks.

A safeguarding concern regarding a child or young person is when they are living in circumstances where there is a significant risk of abuse (physical, sexual, emotional or neglect). It can also be where the young person themselves may pose a risk of serious harm to others or where there are complex needs in relation to disability.

If there are concerns that an adult or child is at risk, or appears to have care and support needs that are not being met, for example they are struggling to keep themselves clean or prepare food, may be experiencing domestic abuse, or if you witness abuse or neglect don't ignore it, contact us as soon as possible on <https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/safeguarding/mash> (for adults), <https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/safeguarding/childrens-mash> (for children) or phone 0300 500 80 80.

Ideally the volunteer should report their concerns directly, but if a volunteer comes to you as a group co-ordinator and is reluctant to report their concerns, then the group co-ordinator should do so.

## **Risk Assessment**

If you are a group coordinator and you haven't already done so, then you should consider completing a risk assessment. There is an example risk assessment for Covid-19 and Good Neighbour type activity on the [Nottinghamshire Coronavirus Community Support Hub webpage](#). If you use this template you will need to adapt it for your own group and ensure you review it regularly.

## **Insurance**

You may already have liability insurance in place to cover volunteers and other third party liabilities. If you haven't already done so then we would strongly advise that you inform your insurer of your temporary change in activity. If you do not currently have any liability insurance in place, then you should consider taking out a policy to provide cover for the cost of any potential claims that may be made against you.

## **Community Fund**

Nottinghamshire County Council values the great work that is being done by charities and groups within the community and we want to support local charities and community organisations that are delivering essential services to vulnerable Nottinghamshire residents impacted by COVID-19.

A £1 million Nottinghamshire COVID-19 Community Fund has been created to help communities as they respond to exceptional challenges over the coming months.

Nottinghamshire charities and voluntary groups can now apply for a grant of anywhere between £200 to £10,000 to deliver projects or services that meet the Nottinghamshire COVID-19 Community Fund criteria.

We are particularly prioritising:

- Projects that directly help vulnerable people affected by the effects of COVID-19, such as by providing access to food, toiletries, necessities, as well as projects to help vulnerable people in isolation.
- Projects that are already set up and are incurring extra costs as a result of helping vulnerable people

Please view the following link for upto date information on the Community Fund and to view guidance on organisations that can apply <https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/business-community/community-and-voluntary-sector/supporting-voluntary-sector/covid-19-community-fund>

### **Advice for Volunteers on carrying out volunteer activities**

The support you offer, may mean that you will be out in the community, supporting the most vulnerable.

Ensure you keep yourself up to date and follow the current advice

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-how-to-help-safely--2/coronavirus-how-to-help-safely>

If you, the people you live with, or anyone you have been in close contact with has any symptoms of Covid-19, such as a fever, sore throat or cough then **do not** agree to volunteer.

If you are pregnant, have an underlying health condition or are more at risk from Covid-19 due to your age then you should only offer to assist with volunteering activities that are able to be done from your home, such as befriending phone calls.

If you are asked to collect and deliver a residents shopping or medication or you are asked to walk a dog, please adhere to the following guidance:

- Contact the resident beforehand and introduce yourself and explain why you are calling. Arrange a suitable time for you to carry out your volunteer activity, so that they know when to expect you. Provide your name to the resident so they can check your identification on arrival and use this call to discuss the specifics of the volunteer activity, for example what food is required. If you do not have identification then consider agreeing a password with the resident.

- Please ensure you wash your hands, for 20 seconds using soap and hot water before you leave your house and as soon as you get home. If soap and water are not available when you are out and you have some hand sanitiser then you can use this or alternatively carry liquid hand soap, bottled water, paper towels and a bag for disposal, so you can wash your hands remotely.
- Avoid touching your eyes and mouth.
- **Do not** enter someone's house. Even if you are only trying to help, to do so will potentially put them at risk of becoming infected.
- If you are concerned that a resident that you are helping has become unwell and you would like further advice on whether they need medical assistance then please use the NHS online service for further advice <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19/> or if you feel that the resident requires emergency medical assistance then ring 999 for an ambulance.
- Carry a charged, mobile phone when carrying out volunteer activities.
- Tell someone you trust that you are going to carry out a volunteer role. Provide them with an expected time of return or arrange to ring them at a certain time. They can then ring your group coordinator if they become concerned. Please do not provide them with the details of the resident you are going to assist or their address, as to do so would be a breach of data protection.

### Using your vehicle for Volunteer Activities

If you are using your own car for voluntary purposes to transport groceries or medication then you should ensure that the vehicle that is being used is roadworthy, has a valid MOT certificate where appropriate and is taxed for use on the roads.

We understand the Association of British Insurers has confirmed that volunteers supporting public services and using their own vehicles will be insured under their own motor policies. However, we would recommend that all volunteers who will be using their own vehicle check with their own insurer to ensure that they have the appropriate cover in place.

### Advice on Shopping

If you are asked to do some shopping, then please consider the guidance outlined below.

- Discuss how the shopping will be paid for and agree a ceiling price. Suggest that just the essentials are purchased to limit how much money is involved. To avoid handling cash, there are some alternative methods of payment you may want to suggest to the person, these will protect you from unnecessary risk. You should not allow someone to hand over their bank card to you.

Scheme	Details
Post Office Payout Now Scheme <a href="https://www.postoffice.co.uk/post-office-payout">https://www.postoffice.co.uk/post-office-payout</a>	This service is now also being extended by a lot of the major banks and building societies. The person being assisted will need to contact their bank or post office to access this service. The individual requests a barcode that can be sent to the volunteer, the volunteer can then

	take to the post office or bank and can be used to exchange for cash. The amount can be set to a value at to which the person feels the shopping will come to.
Post Office Fast PACE service	The person being assisted can contact their bank, explain that want to withdraw cash using the Fast Track Cheque Enrichment Service, the bank will inform the Post Office of the maximum cheque amount they are allowed to cash. The person being assisted can arrange for a volunteer to collect the cheque and cash it at a Post Office branch.
ASDA Volunteering Card <a href="https://cards.asda.com/volunteer">https://cards.asda.com/volunteer</a>	The Volunteer Shopping Card enables the person being assisted to buy a volunteer shopping card online, this can then be emailed to the volunteer and the volunteer can shop using the card, making payment using the barcode in store.
Marks and Spencer E-Card <a href="https://www.marksandspencer.com/all-in-this-together/p/p60282075">https://www.marksandspencer.com/all-in-this-together/p/p60282075</a>	The person being assisted can purchase a “We’re all in this together e-gift card” and chose how much they want to load onto it. They can then provide an email address for the e-gift card to be sent to. At the store the volunteer shopper scans the barcode at the till. The remaining balance on the card will be printed on the bottom of the receipt.
TESCO and Morrisons Regular E Gift Cards <a href="https://www.morrisons-corporate.com/media-centre/corporate-news/volunteer-buying-your-groceries-send-them-an-egift-or-gift-card/">https://www.morrisons-corporate.com/media-centre/corporate-news/volunteer-buying-your-groceries-send-them-an-egift-or-gift-card/</a>	The person being assisted can purchase a gift card online, they can then provide an email address for the e-gift card to be sent to. The e-gift card can then be presented by the volunteer in store, either as a print out or on a phone. The remaining balance will remain on the card.
Local Businesses	When thinking about where you will do the person’s shopping, do consider supporting local businesses. They may able to arrange for payment via telephone and some local businesses are providing a delivery service.
Payment by Cheque	If a resident already has a cheque book then this could be used as way of paying. Some of the bank apps will allow a volunteer to scan and pay cheques in remotely. The resident would need to put the cheque in an envelope, and you would need to ensure that the resident placed it on their doorstep and that you wait until the door is closed before picking the envelope up.

- It is important to keep a record of what you have bought and the cost. It would be sensible where possible to take a photo of the receipt before you give it to the person and keep a record of any money or payment that is exchanged.
- Consider others whilst shopping. Follow the government advice on how to reduce your risk of catching or spreading the illness. Always Keep 2 metres away from other people, including at the check-out. Many shops and supermarkets now have procedures in place to respect social distancing so please follow them. Try to buy your own shopping at the same time to limit the number of shopping trips you have to make.
- You may need to consider substituting foods, particularly those in short supply. Please be aware that some people do have allergies and certain foods may react with a person's medication. Please check with the person first in case a substitution is necessary. You could also arrange to phone them from the shop to check the suitability of a substitute item.
- You may need to consider what sort of cooking and food storage facilities the person has, and would they be able to open tins/jars for example.
- When you are transporting shopping, for food hygiene purposes, ensure any frozen food does not thaw before reaching the person's house. For food that should be refrigerated, such as raw/cooked meat; do not allow it to get too hot whilst being transported and make sure it is delivered to the person within two hours of picking from the shelf.
- If you are dropping off shopping then either leave it in a pre-arranged place or knock on the door and leave it on the doorstep. Ensure you then step back at least two metres.
- Shopping trips could involve lifting heavy bags of groceries. Below are some NHS safe lifting tips for you to consider: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/safe-lifting-tips/>
- Please be aware that some people may have dogs in the garden, if a dog is loose please call the person to say you have arrived and for them to secure the dog.

### **Advice on Collecting and Delivering Medication**

- If you are collecting prescription medication then you will need to contact the resident prior to collection, to confirm whether they pay for their prescriptions or whether they are exempt. If the resident normally has to pay for their prescription, then they should contact the pharmacy and pay over the phone prior to collection.
- On arrival at the pharmacy you will need to be able to provide the pharmacist with the name and address of the resident. Some pharmacists will ask you to provide them with some identification. Before leaving the pharmacy check the name and address details that are on the external labelling of the package to ensure they correspond to the resident you are collecting the medication for. If the pharmacy does not have all of the medicine on the prescription in stock then they should give you a slip, confirm when the rest of this medication will be ready. It is important that you pass this slip onto the resident.
- Do not open the bag of medication to be handed over the patient, if the medicine package splits or there is a breakage, call the pharmacy immediately for their advice.
- Deliver the prescription immediately to the resident. Place the medication on the doorstep and stand back 2 metres from the front door after knocking. If there is no answer, then do not leave the medication, instead you could try ringing the resident.
- When the resident answers the door confirm with the resident that you are at the correct address.
- Do not offer any advice or instructions on the use of the medication (including over the counter medications) – the resident should be encouraged to contact the pharmacy if they have any

queries. Only deliver over the counter medicines which are within the maximum amount able to be purchased by any one person -e.g. Box of 32 paracetamol.

- If the resident asks you to return unwanted medicines to the pharmacy for disposal, explain that you cannot do this and ask them to contact the pharmacy to discuss how to arrange for the disposal of the medicines.
- If the medication is unable to be successfully delivered then you should immediately return the medication to the pharmacy. Do not leave medicines outside or post them through the letter box. No undelivered medication should ever be held overnight by a volunteer.

### **Advice on Dog Walking**

- When you contact the resident by phone prior to your visit, ask them whether they would like to let you know of any information on usual routes/routines for their dog. Ensure you find out how the dog behaves normally and use a muzzle if the dog owner has one and recommends use.
- Knock on the door and then keep a 2-metre distance between yourself and the person answering the door.
- Consider using your own dog lead if you have one, to avoid handling the residents dog lead and make sure you have bags to pick up and appropriately dispose of any dog faeces.
- If you own a dog, then do not bring your own dog along to walk at the same time.
- Just like human hands, pet fur could carry the virus from one person to another so limit handling and petting the dog and don't allow the dog to lick your face.
- When you are walking the dog, keep it on the lead, at all times, practice social distancing and keep yourself and the dog at least two metres from others.
- Notify owners and pursue veterinary attention for any dog that becomes sick or injured under your supervision.
- Ensure you are physically fit enough to be able to walk for at least 30 minutes at a time and have the physical strength to handle a larger dog if required and keep control of a leash if a dog pulls.

### **Befriending Phone Calls**

- The purpose of calling residents is to provide regular contact to someone who is self-isolating. It will provide a 'listening ear' and keep those that are self-isolating connected with their community.
- Before making the call, you should make sure you have a quiet place to chat where you won't be interrupted and that you have sufficient time set aside for the call.
- It's important for you to feel comfortable with the frequency and duration of any calls.
- You and the resident receiving your calls should decide between you, how long the calls should last. As a guide, we recommend up to 30 minutes.
- Keep an eye on the time and start to bring the conversation to an end within this time.
- You and the resident should decide between you, how often the calls will happen.
- If at any point you have concerns about the welfare of the person you are speaking to, or people in their household, you should inform your group coordinator.

### **Fraud Awareness**

Unfortunately, COVID-19 provides an opportunity to fraudsters to target the most vulnerable within our society at this difficult and worrying time. Criminal may try to contact resident at the door, by

phone, post or online and constantly develop new tactics to try and de-fraud people. It is useful for you to have an awareness of the types of scams that have been seen locally and nationally:

- Virus testing kits – these are only offered by the NHS.
- Vaccines or miracle cures – there is no vaccine or miracle cure.
- Overpriced or fake goods to protect yourself or others from coronavirus such as anti-bacterial products.
- Home decontamination services
- Emails saying that you can get a refund on taxes, utilities etc are usually bogus and are just after peoples personal and bank details.
- Phone calls from callers claiming to be from the Council asking for people to provide bank details.

Encourage people to Take 5 <https://takefive-stopfraud.org.uk/>

<b>STOP</b> – take a moment to stop and think before parting with your money or information, this could keep you safe.
<b>CHALLENGE</b> – Could it be fake? It is ok to reject, refuse or ignore any requests. Only criminals will try and rush and panic you.
<b>PROTECT</b> – Contact your bank immediately if you think you have fallen for a scam and report it to Action Fraud by visiting <a href="https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/">https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/</a> or contacting 0300 123 2040

If you would like to increase your awareness and help protect others from scams then you can complete a short online training session and become a Friend Against Scams by visiting <https://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/training/friends-elearning>

If you think that the resident you are helping may have been a victim of a scam and needs some support or has a complaint against a business then they can report this to the Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 0808 223 1133 who will give further advice and pass the report onto Trading Standards.

Please report any cold calling of doorstep traders and canvassers to the police non-emergency number 101 or the Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 0808 223 1133

### Contacts at Nottinghamshire County Council

The Nottinghamshire Coronavirus Community Hub is here to support you. If you have any questions, or you have any concerns then please contact the named contacts listed below, who are part of the [Communities Team](#) at Nottinghamshire County Council.

Stephen Smith	Neighbourhood Coordinator: Community Friendly Nottinghamshire	0115 977 2120 07387 257895	<a href="mailto:stephen.smith2@nottscc.gov.uk">stephen.smith2@nottscc.gov.uk</a>
Rob Bryant	Neighbourhood Coordinator:	0115 977 2212 07387 257894	<a href="mailto:rob.bryant@nottscc.gov.uk">rob.bryant@nottscc.gov.uk</a>

	Community Friendly Nottinghamshire		
Gillian Wheatcroft (Monday-Thursday)	Neighbourhood Coordinator: Community Friendly Nottinghamshire	0115 977 4438 07341 509 746	<a href="mailto:gillian.wheatcroft@nottsc.gov.uk">gillian.wheatcroft@nottsc.gov.uk</a>
Communities Team	<a href="#">Communities Team</a>	0115 977 2041	<a href="mailto:cvs.team@nottsc.gov.uk">cvs.team@nottsc.gov.uk</a>
Customer Service Centre	<a href="#">Nottinghamshire Coronavirus Community Support Hub</a>	Please use the <a href="#">online form</a> to contact us	

<b>Bank</b>	<b>Contact number</b>	<b>Dedicated Support line for customers over 70 or those in isolation</b>	<b>Redeploying or directing resources to support vulnerable customers</b>	<b>Cash Delivery Service</b>	<b>Payout Scheme</b>
RBS	0800 051 4177	✓		✓	✓
NatWest	0800 051 4176	✓		✓	✓
Ulster NI	0800 092 4238	✓		✓	✓
Metro Bank	0345 08 08 500		✓		
Lloyds Bank	0345 072 5555	✓			
Halifax	0345 720 3040	✓			
Bank of Scotland	0345 721 3141	✓			
Santander	0800 9 123 123		✓		
Barclays	03457 345 345		✓	✓	
HSBC	03457 404 404		✓		
TSB	03459 758 758		✓		
Co-operative Bank	03457 212 21				
Nationwide	0800 30 20 11		✓		
Post Office				✓	

## **Useful Numbers**

### Nottinghamshire Police

If you are in immediate danger, or there is a crime in progress contact the police on 999. Otherwise call the main switchboard number on 101.

The Samaritans  
Emotional support  
<https://www.samaritans.org/>  
116 123 (free call)

The Silverline  
Helpline and friendship service for the over 55's  
<http://www.thesilverline.org.uk/>  
0800 470 80 90 (free call, open 24 hours)

Cruse Bereavement Care  
Helpline offering support to anyone affected by bereavement  
<https://www.cruse.org.uk/get-help/helpline>  
0808 808 1677 (free call)

Grief Line  
griefline@notsshospice.org  
080011 4451

Money Advice Service  
[www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk](http://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk)  
0808 138 7777

Citizens Advice Bureau  
Benefits Advice  
[www.citizensadvice.org.uk/](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/)  
03444 111 444

Shelter  
Advice on Housing  
[https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing\\_advice/coronavirus](https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/coronavirus)  
0808 800 4444 (urgent advice)

Domestic abuse advice line for women  
<https://junowomensaid.org.uk/>  
0808 800 0340

Domestic abuse advice line for men  
0115 960 5566

## Safeguarding

If you have concerns about an adult at risk, please visit

<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/safeguarding/reporting-abuse> you can also call us on 0300 500 80 80. You can report abuse anonymously.