

Sevenoaks District

Seniors Action Forum

Working together in the interests of people aged 50 plus

Newsletter 38A

A Message from your committee

26th March 2020

Greetings to all of our Members and Friends

We hope you are keeping your spirits up amidst this tsunami of fast changing events that has temporarily destabilised us. This letter may be out of date by the time you receive it, in which case please forgive us.

Many in our community are in the vulnerable categories and will now need to self isolate at home for 12 weeks and the rest of us must stay at home and severely restrict our contact with others through social distancing. This is difficult for us all but the purpose is to save lives and to leave the NHS free to focus on the Covid-19 outbreak. We must all play our part and follow the latest guidance from the Government and the NHS.

It's only natural to feel fearful especially if we live alone, but we are all in this together and as a nation we are brilliant at supporting each other in times of crisis.

We are so very grateful to all the NHS staff and to all the key workers and Charities who are keeping our country going throughout this emergency. We are also very grateful to our local communities for coming forward to help us.

LOCAL VOLUNTEERS

The Towns and Parishes in our District have set up a network of volunteers at local level who can, whilst keeping their distance, support you by collecting urgent shopping and supplies, posting mail or being a friendly voice at the end of a phone. You may have already received a note through your door from your "road friend". The scheme is backed by SDC and for your security all volunteers are registered with them.

SDC has set up a facebook page to keep track of developments in the community

<https://www.facebook.com/Care-for-our-Community-Sevenoaks-109465934013615/>

if you need help from a volunteer go to

https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/info/20026/your_community/514/request_help_from_a_volunteer_in_your_community

or phone 01732 227000. Please don't be shy to ask for or to accept help from family friends and neighbours.

If you would like to help as a volunteer go to

https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/info/20026/your_community/513/volunteer_to_help_people_in_your_community

The aim is for support to be available throughout our District.

HELP FOR THE VERY VULNERABLE

If you have a disability or special needs please make your volunteer aware. If you have received a letter saying that you need to be 'shielded' and stay indoors for 12 weeks the following links can help you to get the support you need. If you know of someone who needs support but isn't online we know you will work as a community to find safe ways to help them to get the support they need.

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

ESSENTIAL SHOPPING

For those who are able to go out -

The major supermarkets have reserved early morning shopping slots for Seniors and vulnerable people

<https://www.kentlive.news/whats-on/shopping/kent-coronavirus-aldi-tesco-asda-3970172>

You can now use your free bus pass before 9.30 am on Stagecoach, Arriva, Go Coach and Nu-Venture services and parking charges throughout SDC in car parks and streets have been suspended.

We have been advised to do our shopping online if possible but it may take a while for the supermarkets to be ready to cope with the vast increase in demand.

REFUSE AND GARDEN WASTE SERVICES

Sevenoaks District Council is carrying on business as usual with many staff working from home. We have been asked to put our garden waste out by 6.30 and our refuse sacks out by 7.00.

See <https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk> for up to date information or call 01732 227 000

BEWARE OF SCAMMERS

Unfortunately we have to warn you that, whilst bringing out the best in most people, times like these give scammers an opportunity to fleece people. Note that road volunteers will

never ask you for your bank card or pin number, won't ask to come into your house or for payment before delivery. Please be vigilant

<https://us9.campaign-archive.com/?u=ce2871176f2cf0da723a750b1&id=b341da83e0>

PLEASE CONTACT US

Our MPs Laura Trott, Tom Tugendhat and Gareth Johnson are being very supportive towards our Seniors and have asked for us to bring matters of concern to their attention. Please email chair@sdsaf.org.uk if you have concerns to raise or call 07775 568 834

We would like to know how you are coping in these unusual times. We have heard that people are active with gardening , diy, spring cleaning and playing monopoly and scrabble. We have also heard heartwarming stories of our members supporting and cheering up those who are more restricted. Send us an email or letter (22 Lambarde Road Sevenoaks TN13 3HT) telling us what you are up to so we can share it with other members on our website and Facebook.

STAY POSITIVE AND STAY WELL

Now is the time to dig deep and find the inner strength that is inside all of us. We must take care of ourselves as well as we can. Maybe limit time in front of the tv whilst remembering to take deep calming breaths, to wash our hands, to keep surfaces clean and to make sure we keep mobile. You may want to do chair exercises

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/sitting-exercises/>

And remember, even if we are confined to barracks, we can spread our own virus of love and kindness by looking out for our neighbours either side and by keeping in contact with family and friends using whatever technology is available to us.

if you can, take a cup of tea outside and listen to the birds. Often it's the little things that make the difference. Let's do the small things in life with great love for ourselves and for others. And let's remember that each new dawn brings us closer to the time of recovery.

THANKS

Many thanks to Roger Bryan, our much valued Membership Secretary, who, though self isolating with many health challenges, is volunteering for us and many thanks to all the other committee members giving service behind the scenes.

Eileen Murray Giles
On behalf of Sevenoaks District
Seniors Action Forum
chair@sdsaf.org.uk

USEFUL SITES (use trusted sites for information)

- <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>