



UDC briefing note – 3 April 2020

This briefing note is designed to keep you updated with what Uttlesford District Council is doing in response to the coronavirus (Covid-19) Pandemic.

The information here relates to the main activity that has happened across the council this week. You are welcome to share this information within your communities as you see fit.

To remind you, all service update and changes are published on the dedicated page on our website – www.uttlesford.gov.uk.

For official national advice, always visit www.gov.uk/coronavirus and www.nhs.uk/coronavirus.

General

We have:

- Continued to review government advice to ensure we are responding effectively and appropriately to the situation, and so that our staff and the public have the latest information.
- Updated all information about our services on our website at www.uttlesford.gov.uk/coronavirus and promoted where applicable across our communications channels
- Shared important Public Health England, NHS and government health and information messages, as well as information from Essex County Council (www.essex.gov.uk/news/coronavirus) across our communication channels
- Taken an active role in the Essex Resilience Forum and remained in contact with our voluntary and council partners to assess where our resources might be best used

Main actions this week

- We have received 550 requests from businesses for grant relief. The government has made two grants available, for small businesses & retail, hospitality and leisure businesses. Our teams are processing these grants as quickly as possible – so far almost 90 payments have been made. We have set up an online portal and are urging businesses to register their details, if they have not done so already: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/6629/Support-for-Uttlesford-businesses-and-employers-affected-by-coronavirus-Covid-19. Just under 2,000 people have visited the page since it was launched on Tuesday. We have also put up some FAQs for businesses – see www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/6630/Coronavirus-COVID-19-grant-funding-schemes-FAQs.
- We have promoted the option for people to reschedule their council tax instalments if the household has had a substantial drop in income due to the coronavirus pandemic and cannot find any other means to pay. Each case will be considered on its own merit and supporting documentation will need to be supplied. Full details are available at: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/counciltaxandbenefits. We've also added some independent information to the webpage on the financial help and support which might be available. For

those who are suffering severe financial hardship, the council has run an Extreme Hardship Fund – as part of the Covid-19 support the government has provided additional funds. Details can be found at: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/ehf

- We've continued to promote the Uttlesford Community Response helpline have dealt with hundreds of calls this week. We've been able to direct people to services that can help during this time, and provided advice to others on how they can register their offer of help to support their community. The details are:
 - Call: **03333 408 218** (8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday)
 - Email: communityresponse@uttlesford.gov.uk

In addition, we are working together with the government and Essex County Council in respect of 'Community Shield' which is the national initiative to get food and supplies out to our most vulnerable residents. We are also working with our partners and volunteers through our Community Response helpline to ensure that those residents identified as vulnerable and without help from family or friends are being supported appropriately. Further details will follow.

- We have publicised important information and resources about what people need to do to get rid of their waste if they are self-isolating or have coronavirus. This will help to protect residents and our bin crews: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/6620/How-to-deal-with-waste-if-you-are-self-isolating-or-have-Coronavirus. A number of social media posts have also gone out about the bin collection service this week, including the ways in which people can support the crews at this time.
- Residents have been warned to be on their guard if they are contacted by someone offering to check their Lifeline equipment. This follows a number of incidents in our district: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/6617/Bogus-Lifeline-equipment-scam>.
- For animal owners and breeders, we issued FAQs on the implications for companion animals during the coronavirus outbreak. This provides answers to some of the commonly asked questions about what breeders, pet shop and animal owners can do: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/6627/Companion-animals-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak-FAQs
- We've promoted via our website the [online activity and coaching package](#) being offered by 1Life whilst the leisure centres are closed, to help people stay healthy at home.