Introduction

This pack has been produced to support Parish and Town Councils in the District, Community Organisations and residents during the ongoing COVID-19 situation.

Contents

Within this pack you find the following:

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- Social Distancing and at risk people
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- Health advice do's and don'ts
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Useful links

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

To increase community resilience and capacity throughout COVID-19. Also to enable local residents and communities to support vulnerable residents who may.

Objectives

- Identify, record and share resources and key contacts in the community
- Identify and document possible mitigation measures in relation to: shopping, medication, social isolation, bin collections, deliveries, medical appointments
- Identify and document vulnerable residents in the community

Key contacts

Community coordination:

- **Ben Page** - Strategic Theme Lead (Maldon District Council)
- **Sarah Troop Laskar** – Chief Exec (Maldon CVS)
- **Maldon District Council communications team** (for press enquiries)

Volunteering (Maldon CVS): **01621 851 997**

Essex County Council Public Health Team: **0345 743 0430**

Essex Lifestyle Service (NHS): **0300 303 9988**
Call: 01621 851 997

8am - 8pm daily

Call us for help getting food and other supplies (including children's needs), prescriptions, pet care, local info and social contact

www.maldoncvs.org.uk/corona
The information contained in this pack will be distributed throughout the District by the Town and Parish Councils listed below.

- Althorne
- Asheldham and Dengie
- Bradwell
- Burnham On Crouch
- Cold Norton
- Goldhanger Parish Council
- Great Braxted
- Great Totham
- Heybridge
- Langford & Ulting
- Latchingdon
- Little Braxted
- Little Totham
- Maldon (Town Council)
- Mayland
- Mundon
- North Fambridge
- Purleigh
- Southminster
- Saint Lawrence
- Steeple
- Stow Maries
- Tillingham
- Tollesbury
- Tolleshunt D’Arcy
- Tolleshunt Knights
- Tolleshunt Major
- Wickham Bishops
- Woodham Mortimer and Hazeleigh
- Woodham Walter
Organisational roles

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic it is important to outline the roles of key organisations who will be able to support and enable communities to deal with consequential issues that COVID-19 may pose.

Residents - To support each other, whether that be random acts of kindness, offers or support or a friendly chat or wave.

Parish and Town Councils - To work closely with local organisations and community groups to provide a coordinated community response where it is required to support local people. To champion local support networks.

Maldon District Council - To jointly coordinate activities, communication and interaction with partner organisations and communities. Specifically, to lead on creating a community database for vulnerable people and distributing this information to partner organisations.

Maldon CVS - To jointly coordinate activities, communication and interaction with partner organisations and communities. Leading on volunteer and referral coordination.

Salvation Army - Leading with Maldon District Council and Churches in Maldon to coordinate food donation collection and distribution to vulnerable/identified residents.
Organisational roles

**Churches Together In Maldon** - Supporting with the collection, distribution and storing of food donations.

**Maldon Child and Family Wellbeing Service** - To coordinate information and support for vulnerable/identified local families during COVID-19.

**Rural Community Council of Essex (Community Agents, United In Kind)** - Utilising specialist local knowledge of community agents, United In Kind coaches and other services which will support local communities.

**Action for Family Carers** - Providing information and insight both to their carers but also to partner organisations as to how they can be supported whilst COVID-19 is ongoing.

**Maldon Citizens Advice Bureau** - TBC
Coronavirus
Wash your hands with soap and water more often for 20 seconds

1. Palm to palm
2. The backs of hands
3. In between the fingers
4. The back of the fingers
5. The thumbs
6. The tips of the fingers

Use a tissue to turn off the tap. Dry hands thoroughly.
COVID-19 is causing inevitable distress to us all, through the current/potential health effects of the virus, or emotional and societal impacts of social distancing. You may feel that your mood and feelings are affected at this time which may result in feeling down, anxious, alone and irritable.

It is incredibly important that at this time, you avoid falling into the easy patterns of unhealthy behaviours that can make you feel worse; such as not exercising or eating convenient, junk food. There are simple things that you can do to help to stay mentally and physically healthy, for example: **Stay active at home!**

**Sitting exercises:** [https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/sitting-exercises/](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/sitting-exercises/).

**Strength exercises:** [https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/strength-exercises/](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/strength-exercises/).

**Flexibility exercises:** [https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/flexibility-exercises/](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/flexibility-exercises/).


**Cardio exercises:** Try a YouTube workout like 'PE with Joe' from The Body Coach - Joe Wicks.

**Go for a walk or do some gardening:**
Observe social distancing of 2 metres from others at all times.
How to livewell during COVID-19

MIND have produced a series of excellent online resources.

Plan for staying at home or indoors, take care of your mental health and well being. Here are some ideas which may help.

- Connect with people,
- Decide on your routine
- Keep active
- Get regular sunlight, fresh air and nature as you can
- Plan for working or studying at home
- Find ways to spend your time
- Find ways to relax and be creative
- Keep your mind stimulated
- Take care with news and information if you’re feeling anxious, claustrophobic or trapped

Connect Well Essex is a website that will help you to find local help and support, help you feel more involved in your community or make changes to improve your health and well being. They support the areas of Braintree, Chelmsford, Maldon, Colchester, Tendring & Basildon.

Provide are working on a newsletter to support organisations that have signed up to Working Well. This will include links to organisations with support documents, activities for self-isolating staff, HR support and information for small businesses; other useful information.

Contact lmowforth@nhs.net for more info.
How to livewell during COVID-19

Poor nutrition, be it not enough or poor quality food, can compromise immune function and increase infection risk.

COVID-19 has been caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS). This makes any efforts to prevent respiratory infection risks, reduce inflammation and strengthen overall immunity critical.

Vitamins and minerals are vital for strengthening the immune system. Several vitamins and minerals are essential; particularly vitamin A, C, D, E, B2 (riboflavin), B6 (pyridoxine), B12 (cobalamin) and B9 (folic acid) along with minerals like Iron, Selenium, Zinc, Magnesium and Copper.

The UK Government recommended intakes for these can be found online at https://bit.ly/2UD4PBG.

Eating a balanced diet will help reduce any vitamin and mineral deficiencies, particularly by eating 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day (fresh, tinned or frozen). Visit https://bit.ly/2wG4rKL for more info.

Some people are at greater risk of vitamin and mineral deficiency. Including pregnant women, young children, teens (particularly females), older people, overweight people and those with critical illnesses. It is therefore more important than ever to eat well at this time.
How to livewell during COVID-19

What can you do at home?

- Eat a healthy, nutritious and balanced diet
- Don’t forget your 5 a day and to follow the eatwell guide as best that you can
- Stay hydrated and drink 2-3 litres of water a day
- Avoid smoking, alcohol and drugs
- Spend time doing things you enjoy. This may include reading, cooking, other indoor hobbies, listening to music, or watching a film or TV
- Stay connected with your friends, family and work colleagues by getting in touch over the phone, by post or online. This is important in looking after your mental well being and you may find it helpful to talk to them about how you are feeling
- Keep your windows open to let in fresh air get some natural sunlight if you can, or get outside in the garden

Want to find out more information about looking after yourself at home and how to livewell? Visit Active Essex online at https://www.activeessex.org/keep-active-at-home/.
Coronavirus
Wash your hands more often for 20 seconds

Use soap and water or a hand sanitiser when you:
• Get home or into work
• Blow your nose, sneeze or cough
• Eat or handle food

For more information and the Government’s Action Plan go to nhs.uk/coronavirus
MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT DURING COVID-19

Campaign to end Loneliness

For more detailed guidance and info, visit https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/blog/coronavirus-and-social-isolation/

COMMUNITY ACTION RESPONSE: COVID-19

5 things you can do to make a positive difference in your community

Think of others, consider your actions & 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
Looking after our Mental Health

Find out what things you can do for yourself and others on: www.actionforhappiness.org. This includes 10 keys to happier living.

- **Giving** – Do things for others
- **Relating** – connect with people
- **Exercising** – take care of your body
- **Awareness** – live life mindfully
- **Trying out** – keep learning new things
- **Direction** – have goals to look forward to
- **Resilience** – find ways to bounce back
- **Emotions** – look for what’s good
- **Acceptance** – be comfortable with yourself
- **Meaning** – be part of something bigger

There is information on the government website about looking after your mental health.

**Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)** have launched a My Whole Self toolkit, the digital centre piece of its new campaign for workplace culture change. The toolkit helps everyone to support their mental health while working from home.

Links for Deaf people including British Sign Language videos and access to NHS 111 via a British Sign Language interpreter and information about Coronavirus in British Sign Language can be found online.
Looking after our Mental Health

Public Health England have produced their Every Mind Matters Campaign. Take their [online quiz](#) to receive a free plan, expert advice and practical tips.

Time to Change have a number of great resources including posters, leaflets and logos for schools, workplaces and communities on their [website](#) that are available to download.

Mid and North East Essex MIND are offering telephone counselling within their fee paying service. This is a confidential service which can be accessed by anyone over the age of 18 years. Whether you are currently looking for a counsellor or have found yourself in need due to the COVID-19 outbreak, you can speak to us on 01206 764 600 or visit their [website](#) for more information.

Online mental health support can be accessed by anyone living in Mid Essex experiencing symptoms of stress, anxiety or depression and anyone living with a chronic illness. Each user will be allocated modules tailored to their needs which they can complete in their own time with the help of our Silver cloud supporters. More information is [available online](#).
Looking after our Mental Health

From Wednesday 18 March, MIND will only be offering telephone appointments in line with government advice on social distancing.

If you are a current service user, you will be contacted by us in due course to make arrangements. Our Welcome Cafe’s, activity groups or the Friendship group will not run until further notice.

Virgin Care and Bernados Chat health service enables all 11-19 year old’s to text their school nurse on 07520 615731 to discuss their mental health and receive confidential advice and support.

Live Well Link Well is a free and confidential social prescribing service that provides practical or emotional support of a non-medical nature. They can help you to access support with a range of areas of health and well being, including maintaining mental well being, supporting independent, looking after someone, getting out and about, and social isolation.

If you live in mid Essex and are over 18, you can contact the service without having to go through your GP. Call 0300 303 9988 (Monday to Friday from 8am to 7pm) or email livewell.linkwell@nhs.net.

If you are a health and social care professional who wants to refer someone, please use the contact details above.
During the COVID-19 outbreak we will not be able to see you face to face.

Please call, email or visit our website for free, confidential advice.

01621 857 744

bureau@maldoncab.cabnet.org.uk

www.citizensadvice.org.uk
National Mental Health support

You can call **NHS 111** if you or someone you know needs urgent care, but it's not life threatening.

- If you have an existing mental health problem and your symptoms get worse
- If you experience a mental health problem for the first time
- If someone has self-harmed but it does not appear to be life threatening, or they're talking about wanting to self-harm
- If a person shows signs of possible dementia
- If a person is experiencing domestic violence or physical, sexual or emotional abuse

**MIND** telephone lines will remain open Monday to Friday 9am–5pm on **01206 764600**. Alternatively you can send us an email **enquiries@mnessexmind.org**.

**Anxiety UK** provides support if you have been diagnosed with an anxiety condition. Call **03444 775 774** (Monday to Friday, 9.30am-5.30pm) or visit **www.anxietyuk.org.uk**.

**Bipolar UK** helps those people living with manic depression and bipolar disorder. Visit **www.bipolaruk.org.uk** for more info.

**Men's Health Forum** offers 24/7 stress support for men by text, chat and email. Visit **www.menshealthforum.org.uk** for more info.
National Mental Health support

Mental Health Foundation provides information, guidance and support for anyone with mental health problems or learning disabilities. Visit [www.mentalhealth.org.uk](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk) for more info.

No Panic is a voluntary charity offering support for sufferers of panic attacks and obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD). They offer a course to help overcome your phobia or OCD. Call them on 0844 967 4848 (daily, 10am-10pm). Calls cost 5p per minute plus your phone provider's Access Charge or visit [www.nopanic.org.uk](http://www.nopanic.org.uk).

OCD Action provides support for people with OCD. Includes information on treatment and online resources. Call them on 0845 390 6232 (Monday to Friday, 9.30am-5pm). Calls cost 5p per minute plus your phone provider's Access Charge or visit [www.ocdaction.org.uk](http://www.ocdaction.org.uk).

Rethink Mental Illness offers support and advice for people living with mental illness. Call them on 0300 5000 927 (Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 4pm) or visit [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org).

Samaritans provides confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair. Phone: 116 123 (free 24-hour helpline) or visit [www.samaritans.org.uk](http://www.samaritans.org.uk).
National Mental Health support

SANE offers emotional support, information and guidance for people affected by mental illness, their families and carers. Call SANEline on 0300 304 7000 (daily, 4.30pm to 10.30pm).

Textcare provides comfort and care via text message, sent when the person needs it most. Visit www.sane.org.uk/textcare for more info.

Peer support forum offers a central support forum anyone affected by mental illness. Visit their website www.sane.org.uk/supportforum or www.sane.org.uk/support for more info.

SHOUT Crisis provides 24/7 anonymous text support for when you feel you can't cope. Text "SHOUT" to 85258 for non-judgemental support or visit https://www.giveusashout.org/ for more info.
Support for young people

**MIND** telephone lines will remain open Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm on **01206 764 600**. Alternatively you can send us an email at **enquiries@mnessexmind.org**.

**CALM** is the Campaign Against Living Miserably, for men aged 15-35. Call **0800 58 58 58** (daily, 5pm to midnight) or visit **www.thecalmzone.net**.

**PAPYRUS** young suicide prevention society. Call **0800 068 4141** (Monday to Friday, 10am to 10pm, 2pm to 10pm on weekends and bank holidays) or visit **www.papyrus-uk.org**.

**YoungMinds** offers information on child and adolescent mental health, services for parents and professionals. Call **0808 802 5544** (Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 4pm) or visit **www.youngminds.org.uk**.

**Essex Youth Service** provides Children and Young People Early Intervention Mental Health Services (CYP MHEIS). If you would like to speak to someone for more information about the services CYP MHEIS offer and to find out about what support might be available for you please call their Single Point of Access team on **0300 300 1600** from 9am-5pm, Monday – Friday.

**KOOTH** offers young people free, safe and online support. To find out more info and support options please visit their website at **https://www.kooth.com/index.html**.
Mental Health during COVID-19

EVERY MIND MATTERS

Visit NHS 'Your Mind Plan' for simple tips to help you

HTTPS://WWW.NHS.UK/ONEYOU/EVERY-MIND-MATTERS/

#EveryMindMatters
Domeic Abuse

Self-isolation will have a direct impact on anyone experiencing domestic abuse. If you are experiencing domestic abuse, you can talk to someone.

Compass is available 24hrs a day, for callers to speak with a trained member of staff who will complete an assessment and ensure contact is made with the most appropriate support service.

There is an easy to use online form for both the public and professionals wishing to make a referral. You can contact them on 0330 333 7444, enquiries@essexcompass.org.uk or by visiting https://www.essexcompass.org.uk/.

Next Chapter provides free and confidential services to support people who are experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse. Their website contains useful information, explains the types of abuse and common warning signs together with practical advice about staying safe and obtaining support.

For all new referrals to Next Chapter, contact Compass on 0330 333 7 444 or visit https://www.thenextchapter.org.uk/.
The Essex County Council Children & Families Hub will remain in operation with no changes to threshold decisions.

The Priority Line (for children at risk of immediate danger) remains open alongside the Consultation Line.

Call 0345 603 7627 and ask for the Children & Families Hub. Please also state if you are a member of public or a professional.

Members of the public will speak to a Family Adviser who will discuss and identify the right services that will help to meet the family's needs.

Professionals will have to state if they call for the Consultation Line (a Social Worker will give advice but not record the call) or the Priority Line (because an immediate response is necessary).

Requests for service should be made online at https://www.essexeffectivesupport.org.uk/.

The online Request for Information portal will remain active for the time being but will be reviewed as circumstances change and develop.
Financial support and advice

Maldon District Council is committed to supporting businesses in the District through this challenging period and we are working with our partners to provide advice and assistance as required.

We are also taking decisions that will maintain the viability and sustainability of the Council over the coming months, to ensure we continue to deliver vital services.

**Debt and financial advice** - If you have any worries about debt or want to talk to someone about financial advice, please go to [https://www.maldon.gov.uk/info/20087/benefits/9609/other_debt_and_financial_advice](https://www.maldon.gov.uk/info/20087/benefits/9609/other_debt_and_financial_advice) where you can find links to useful organisations who can provide support.

**Universal Credit** - For information, eligibility or questions about Universal Credit, please visit [https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit](https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit)
Mental health is just as important as physical health.
Fraud and scams

There has been an increased rise in scams and fraudsters offering support to older and vulnerable people. These scam have included asking for cash up-front for services like getting your shopping while you are self-isolating.

If you think you have been the victim of a scam, **speak to your bank immediately** and report any fraud to **Action Fraud** on **0300 123 2040**.

There has also been reports of people posing as NHS and emergency workers claiming to sell Coronavirus testing kits and vaccines.

If you think it could be a scam, **do not give them any money or let them into your home**. If you are unsure, ask to see their ID card for proof that they work for the NHS or emergency services.

If you think that it is a scam, call **Essex Police** on **101** or **999** if an emergency.

You can get further information on dealing with scams and fraud by calling the **Consumer Service Telephone number** on **0808 223 1133** or contact **Maldon Citizens Advice** on **01621 857 774**.
Social Distancing and at risk people

Community resources – There remains uncertainty from the Government in terms of recommendations and advice for people particularly at risk (Over 70, those who have a long-term health condition, those who are pregnant, those who have a weakened immune system) to self-isolate for a prolonged period of time, it is important that as key community organisations, we recommend to our Parish/ Towns and communities, resources and steps that could reduce any potential issues.

Vulnerable people - While the implications will be similar across different demographics, it is important that vulnerable groups are recognised and planned for.

We must consider the implications to vulnerable groups including:

- Increased social isolation issues
- Missed Doctor’s/ medical appointments
- Increased difficulty to access food shopping/ groceries
- Unable to exercise/ carry out regular physical activity
- Unable to support with childcare and implications if schools are forced to be closed.
- Increased mental health issues
- Reduced physical activity levels
- Disengagement with education and self-reliance/ accountability of learning/ revision
Local Facebook support groups

Maldon COVID-19 Action group:
https://www.facebook.com/groups/covid19maldon/

Essex Community Action:
https://www.facebook.com/essexcoronavirusaction

Useful social media channels

- Maldon District Council Facebook
- Maldon District Council Twitter
- Maldon District Council website
- Maldon Youth Strategy Group
- THINK family network
- Neighbourhood watch group
- Essex Child and Family Welfare Service Facebook page

Other useful channels

- Parish and Town Clerk email distribution
- Livewell partner network
- Shared via appropriate business groups (Strategic Lead – Prosperity)
- Maldon Children’s Advisory Board
- Responsible Authorities Group
- Maldon Man Cave – COVID-19 support groups
- The Essex Map - Map of local business and resources available in Maldon District
CORONAVIRUS
WASH YOUR HANDS MORE OFTEN FOR 20 SECONDS

Use soap and water or a hand sanitiser when you:
Get home or into work
Blow your nose, sneeze or cough
Eat or handle food

CORONAVIRUS
PROTECT YOURSELF & OTHERS

For more information and the Government’s Action Plan go to nhs.uk/coronavirus
Volunteering or referring people

Whilst the whole of the UK is applauding, extremely grateful and proud of the volunteer networks which have been rapidly set up, it is vitally important that volunteers are protected themselves from COVID-19 and also potentially spreading it further.

There is a certain risk to volunteers who may be exposed or at increased risk of contracting COVID-19. Volunteers must always protect themselves by doing the following:

- Wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) if provided
- Adhere to and promote social distancing guidelines and ensure they do not put themselves at risk

Therefore, it is crucial to be mindful of the government advice so please read the Community volunteers during COVID-19 outbreak safeguarding fact sheet for more information.

We will continue to supply more advice and support guidance for volunteers during COVID-19.

If there is any additional information which you feel should be added, please contact ben.page@maldon.gov.uk.
Volunteering or referring people

It is recognised over the coming months that the call upon volunteers will be drastically increased for a variety of support mechanisms.

**Volunteering** - If you know someone in the Maldon District who would like to volunteer to support vulnerable/identified residents, organisations/charities or general help during COVID-19 please visit [https://bit.ly/33z2H1T](https://bit.ly/33z2H1T).

If you have signed up to volunteer via the Essex County Council Volunteering form we will be integrating and coordinating those volunteers as well.


If you would like to **donate locally** please refer to corona in the subject and visit [https://bit.ly/3beeju0](https://bit.ly/3beeju0).

A big thank you from all partners who are supporting this coordinated response. Whether you can give time, money or resource it is well needed and greatly appreciated.
Food bank donations

The Salvation Army Church in Maldon is the nominated location for food donations. They are in need of:

- Tinned food
- Dried food
- Long-life products

These items are to be added to food parcels for vulnerable residents, which currently include a variety of fresh food.

If you would like to donate, call 01621 851 997 to arrange drop off or collection of donations.

If you need an emergency food parcel, 01621 851 997 from 8am or 8pm. The Maldon Food Bank is open Wednesday 9:30am - 1pm. If you need a voucher, contact Citizens Advice on 01621 857 744.
Supermarket opening times

Many supermarkets have tailored their opening times specifically for vulnerable residents and key workers.

Please see current supermarket opening times in Maldon District below:

- **Aldi** - Sunday 9:30-10am reserved for NHS/Emergency workers along with priority at checkout from 10am
- **Asda** - NHS ID card holders can shop before 9am
- **Co-op** - Mon-Sat 8-9am / Sunday 10-11am reserved for vulnerable customers and NHS staff
- **Iceland** - First hour for elderly and disabled customers and their carers
- **Lidl** - Normal hours
- **M&S** - First hour on weekdays is reserved for NHS/Emergency workers, elderly and more vulnerable customers. Mon and Thurs opening hours for elderly customers
- **Morrisons** - Mon-Sat 7-8am reserved for NHS ID card holders
- **Tesco** - Mon, Wed, Fri 9-10am for elderly and vulnerable shoppers. Sunday 9am for NHS staff
Do the following:

- Wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- Always wash your hands when you get home or into work
- Use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- Put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
- Avoid close contact with people who have symptoms of coronavirus
- Only travel on public transport if you need to
- Work from home, if you can
- Avoid social activities, such as going to pubs, restaurants, theatres and cinemas
- Avoid events with large groups of people
- Use phone, online services, or apps to contact your GP surgery or other NHS services

Do not do the following:

- Touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean
- Have visitors to your home, including friends and family
In line with the Government Pledge and with immediate effect, Maldon District Council will be offering free parking in all town centre car parks for health workers, social care workers and NHS volunteers.

Councillor Adrian Fluker, Leader of Maldon District Council, said; “We are all aware of the amazing contribution that NHS staff, Care workers and NHS volunteers across this District are making to help fight the Coronavirus. We are pleased therefore, to join with Councils up and down the Country to offer this free parking concession and provide just one less thing for the staff to worry about when they need to shop for their groceries.”

Please display a compliment slip or similar, of the organisation you work for in the windscreen of your vehicle so that your vehicle can be identified as eligible of free parking.
UK Power Network
update

Many are concerned about the ongoing Coronavirus public health issue and the way it has affected nearly every industry across the world.

We want to reassure you that, as the company responsible for distributing power to over 8.3 million properties across London, the South East and East of England, we know how important it is to keep electricity flowing to your home or business, especially during these uncertain times.

Our engineers are out as normal continuing their core role in maintaining your electricity network, and fixing any electrical faults that occur.

We have put into place a number of well-rehearsed contingency plans and precautions to ensure we maintain a good level of service, with high numbers of engineers and call centre staff available to support the ongoing situation.

With many of our customers now working from home and to support the wider UK economy through this very challenging period, from tomorrow evening (Friday 20th March), we will be cancelling most of our lower priority planned maintenance work. This is in order to avoid prolonged planned power cuts for people who are currently working from home.
UK Power Network update

If you or your constituents need information on a power cut, you can, as always, visit our Power Cut Map for live updates, tweet us at @UKPowerNetworks or telephone our customer service team, 24 hours a day, on 105 or 0800 3163 105. Calls are free from a landline or mobile phone.

Here are some of the practical steps we are taking:

- To ensure continued resilience in months to come, we have split key teams across different locations, and hundreds of call agents are equipped to answer customer queries while working from home.
- All essential work will continue as normal, including fixing power cuts on the rare occasions they happen.
- We’re postponing lower priority work on electricity cables and substations, as we recognise many people are working from home and we want to minimise disruption to their lives.
- We are working with other network operators and trade associations to ensure we share best practice and focus on activities that safeguards power supplies.
- We have engaged with our supply chain to ensure access to the equipment and supplies we need to keep the electricity flowing.
What it means for you or your residents:

- If our engineers might need to enter your home to restore your power, we’ll ask you on the phone first if you are self-isolating so we can make the relevant arrangements.
- National guidance has been given to our engineers, who will wear protective equipment, stay in a different room from people who are infected or self-isolating, and avoid touching surfaces.
- If you live in London, the East or South East of England, then being on our Priority Services Register will ensure you will receive extra support if you experience a power cut.
- We understand that the Coronavirus outbreak is a worrying time for many, and we want to make sure you have access to local services, should you need assistance during this unprecedented time.
- We are here for you 24/7 and there are over 20 ways to get in touch including our website, on Twitter @ukpowernetworks, or call 105.
UK Power Network update

We will continue to support those who need help the most during a power cut.

We continue to offer free additional tailored support and guidance to customers on our Priority Services Register if they experience a power cut, reliant on electronic medical equipment or with young children.

For more information on our Priority Services Register, go to www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/priority to register, or call us on 0800 169 9970.

Thank you for your support. This is a fast-changing situation, and we will continue to adapt so that the way we work...