

**WORKING TOGETHER IN ARGYLL & BUTE  
LOOKING AFTER PEOPLE AFFECTED BY  
CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)**

**COMMUNITY SUPPORT  
GUIDE**

**This short guide is aimed at supporting community groups/organisations and local people who are volunteering to support the vulnerable and elderly in the community during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.**



**SPREAD YOUR KINDNESS,  
NOT THE VIRUS**



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# MAKE YOUR KINDNESS:

## 1 CLEAN

Wash hands for 20 seconds with warm soapy water before and after every contact

(Watch the NHS video on how to wash your hands properly here:  
<https://youtu.be/N9hCY-MldMA>)

## 2 CLEAR

Be clear about what you can and can't offer. If you are not sure, then say no.

## 3 CONTACTLESS

Think about your safety first and the person you are supporting. Don't touch other people, and wash hands after touching surfaces.



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## **A** STAY UP TO DATE ON THE LATEST INFO ON THE CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK AND THE VIRUS

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

## **B** BEFORE VOLUNTEERING

Consider, are you well enough to volunteer?  
Your safety and limiting the spread of the virus is priority.

Don't put yourself or others at unnecessary risk.

## **C** HAND HYGIENE IS CRITICAL

Ensure you have access to hand washing facilities before and after every contact, or use hand sanitiser with 60% alcohol.

Avoid touching your face, especially your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.

The virus can last up to 72 hours on untreated hard surfaces (like plastic and stainless steel), so regularly disinfect surfaces and door handles you come in contact with.

Always wash your hands properly before eating, and on returning to your home - before you touch anything or anyone.



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**D**

## REPEAT PRESCRIPTIONS

Repeat prescriptions can be collected from the chemist and delivered to individuals but must be left at the doorstep.

If you have their phone number, phone them and let them know you have left them on the door step. Wait a distance of 2 metres away until they have been collected.

If you don't have their phone number, knock their door and wait 2 metres away.

Wash hands or clean with sanitiser.

**E**

## SHOPPING

Shopping can be delivered to the doorstep, but please minimise any handling. If you can, wear disposable gloves and bin after each visit.

Ensure shopping bags are not heavy as an elderly person may not be able to lift them in. If possible, bag in small amounts.

Ideally, wait to see the groceries being collected, and to ensure they are okay.

Keep a distance of 2 metres away, whilst they are being collected.

Wash your hands or use hand sanitiser before moving on to the next contact.



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F

## MONEY

It is understood that coronavirus can live on money for 24 hours. Consider how you can handle money safely and securely.

Where possible use electronic banking for transfer of required money.

**Volunteers should not take debit or credit cards from individuals, or take any PIN numbers for cards.**

If possible, wear disposable gloves whenever touching cash.

Cash to pay for shopping can be put in an envelope and posted in a box (e.g. tupperware tub). The box can be removed to a safe place and contents left untouched for 24 hours.

If you are giving change for shopping then you must inform the person you are supporting that their change is in an envelope in their shopping bag and they must leave it untouched for 24 hours before opening.

G

## HEATING/POWER

Many people have pay-as-you-go meters requiring a 'charging key' to be topped up at a pay point shop. There is a risk of cross contamination here, from the householder to yourself, the shopkeeper and back. Wear disposable gloves to accept the power key. On receiving the key, clean it with 60% alcohol wipes or sanitiser.

Before returning the key to the householder *clean the key again with 60% alcohol wipes or sanitiser*. Pop it through the letterbox with instructions to leave it untouched for 24 hours.



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## **H** SAFETY

If you are supporting someone you know, they will trust you. But remember some people may be anxious about having strangers help them.

Do not assume that someone needs help, or call unexpectedly, especially if they live alone.

Requests from additional volunteers to help show good community spirit, but you will have to consider safeguarding vulnerable people when you consider these offers of support.

Ideally, pair up new volunteers with existing volunteers who have PVG in place. Also consider other jobs for those without PVG, not requiring face to face contact.

On the flip side it may be worth having someone to 'buddy up' with if you are calling on people you don't know, or an area you are not familiar with.

PVG is obviously not a requirement of volunteering, as kindness and a willingness to help each other in the community are vital to get through these difficult times. However, knowing a volunteer is PVG cleared does provide vulnerable individuals with a bit of security and may help ease their anxiety in dealing with strangers.



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## I LACK OF RESPONSE

If you are supporting an elderly or vulnerable person there needs to be an agreement on what to do if you arrive and there is no response. This will differ from person to person.

Give them your contact details and ask them to let you know if their circumstances change.

If they live alone then you need to have a pre-agreed plan in place.

If they have a relative somewhere else and you have their details then contact them first.

Is there a TV or radio on? You may have to look in a window or letter box to see if signs of recent activity. If they have dementia they may have gone out. Perhaps they are hard of hearing, or have mobility issues which mean they take longer than average to get to the door or window?

Having considered all of the above, consider if it is appropriate to contact the emergency services. ***This should be a last resort*** and only taken if you are sure they are inside but not responding.



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## **J** SOME ADDITIONAL POINTS TO REMEMBER

- People may well be lonely, and may want you to come in and have a chat. You need to say no if you are going to protect them. You could stop and have a chat at their door as long as you are 2 metres away. You can also swap telephone numbers and let them know you are available for a chat if they are feeling anxious or lonely.
- Remember we are doing all this to keep our vulnerable population, you, and your family safe.
- If you are unsure whether something is safe, then say NO.
- If you feel unwell or have a temperature you must stay at home.

## **K** NHS INFORM

The 'NHS Inform' website has more information about Coronavirus and some very useful common questions at <https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19#common-questions>



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