

Community support is needed

Here are some ways you can support our community.

Donate to your local food bank

As the virus spreads, food banks could face additional pressures. Where possible, consider donating canned food, pasta, rice and other non-perishable products. Why not drop these off at the supermarkets or directly with the Exmouth Community Larder at Open Door, 67 Exeter Road.

Help at-risk neighbours

Public Health England considers the elderly and people with chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and lung disease to be at higher risk from the coronavirus. If you're in a lower-risk group, reach out to your higher-risk neighbours and community members and ask them how you can help, whether by picking up prescriptions and groceries or offering other assistance. Even if they're already fully stocked, simply sharing your plans with one another can be helpful, particularly as people spend more time at home instead of out.

"It can be very isolating for individuals if they're staying away from the places they normally go, and this can, in some cases, lead to mental health issues " said Councillor Steve Gazzard. "The community can help simply by offering to talk to those in isolation and providing them with the latest information."

Plan to stay in touch from afar

As Covid-19 spreads, we'll continue to see more people asked to work remotely or from home, more school closings, more cancelled events, and other measures associated with social distancing. Start putting a plan in place now for how you'll stay in touch with loved ones, friends, classmates, and co-workers, even when you're not physically seeing them. The advice currently is if possible, consider working from home to help stop the virus spreading.

Remember that there are a lot of ways to keep in contact. Use apps such as WhatsApp to stay in touch with family and friends. Challenge distant friends to virtual matches with online games such as chess and share the occasional photo from your day. Scheduling an hour to game online with a friend or swapping recipes in your group chat are small measures, but they let people know that you're thinking about them, even when you don't see them.

For further information on social-distancing for everyone in the UK and protecting the elderly and vulnerable see the guidance notes here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people>

Stay up on your local news

Start by checking the Town Council's website www.exmouth.gov.uk Once you've done that, it's time to get even more local. Get in touch with your neighbourhood groups and local community organisations to find out what efforts are already underway. If you or your children attend school, check to see what kinds of plans are in place in case of closures and how best to stay informed of any changes. Check out the local community Facebook pages, twitter, and local message boards so that you'll be able to share your surpluses, pool your expertise, and call on your neighbours for help when you need it, too.

Exmouth Town Council are aware that community efforts are growing, Check out Exmouth Friends in need or the Exmouth, Woodbury and Budleigh Hub, both having a large number of volunteers who can help. Similar community organisations wanting to help but unsure how to proceed may wish to contact the local Mutual Aid group which has been set up to bring together volunteers wanting to help those in need in Exmouth during the Covid-19 crisis:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/197458401530661/>. This is the local branch of the national 'Covid-19 Mutual Aid UK' group, which provides expert guidance on how to provide well-coordinated assistance without contributing to the spread of the virus: <https://covidmutualaid.org/>

Stock up, then stop

It's tempting to respond to footage of panicked shoppers sweeping shelves of toilet paper into their shopping trolleys by mentally tabulating how many you might be able to stuff into your own cupboards. But panic buying just contributes to shortages — and more panic. If you already have [30 days' worth](#) of prescriptions, food, and household supplies at home, stop shopping.

Answers to your most common questions:

Updated March 16, 2020

○ **What is a coronavirus?**

It is a novel virus named for the crownlike spikes that protrude from its surface.

The coronavirus can infect both animals and people and can cause a range of respiratory illnesses from the common cold to lung lesions and pneumonia.

○ **How contagious is the virus?**

It seems to spread very easily from person to person, especially in homes, hospitals and other confined spaces. The pathogen can travel through the air, enveloped in tiny respiratory droplets that are produced when a sick person breathes, talks, coughs or sneezes.

○ **Where has the virus spread?**

The virus, which originated in Wuhan, China, has sickened more than 170,400 in at least 140 countries and more than 6,600 have died. The spread

has slowed in China but is gaining speed in Europe and the United States. World Health Organization officials said the outbreak qualifies as a pandemic.

- **What symptoms should I look out for?**

Symptoms, which can take between two to 14 days to appear, include fever, a dry cough, fatigue and difficulty breathing or shortness of breath. Milder cases may resemble the flu or a bad cold, but people may be able to pass on the virus even before they develop symptoms.

- **How do I keep myself and others safe?**

Washing your hands frequently is the most important thing you can do, along with staying at home when you're sick and avoiding touching your face.

- **How can I prepare for a possible outbreak?**

Keep a 30-day supply of essential medicines. Have essential household items on hand. Have a support system in place for elderly family members.

- **How long will it take to develop a treatment or vaccine?**

Several drugs are being tested, and some initial findings are expected soon. A vaccine to stop the spread is still at least a year away.