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1.COVID-19 Response

1.1 Community Resilience Hub

Support offered by the Community Hub continues to meet the needs of residents, supporting prescription collections, food shopping, and calls for loneliness. A vital part of the hub response is continuing to build upon, and work with the many community and voluntary organisations across South Northamptonshire and the county. This way of working will form part of the ‘new norm’ and will only enhance our services. We do not know as to whether a second wave of the virus will happen, but please be assured the Community Hub have processes in place should this happen, to ensure we can react and

respond quickly to the need should it be required.

As of the end of 31st August, 233 individuals have been referred to SNC’s Community Hub to arrange appropriate help and ongoing support. Some individuals had multiple requests, generating 294 requests for help.

These covered requests for help with:

- Food deliveries (125)
- Prescription collection (100)
- Support with loneliness (24)
- Other (45) – Posting mail; Help to get online and medical transport.

1.2 Current Government Guidance on Covid-19

Current Government guidance can be found [here](#).

1.3 Towcester Foodbank Update

Community [larders](#) are reverting to their normal subscription service from the end of August, so anyone who needs food due to their financial situation can be referred to our local Foodbanks. Towcester Foodbank is now open for collection as well as delivery. It is now open to guests on Tuesday's 12 - 2pm and Friday's 10.30 – 12.30. The foodbank will be encouraging people to visit them at St John Ambulance Hall, Islington Road, Towcester, NN12 6AU so they can listen to any concerns and link them to appropriate services if required. Social distancing measures and a one-way system are in place for everyone's protection.

Parish Councils can issue e-vouchers, but if you would prefer the guest can ring the foodbank direct on 07724 832043 or go through our Money Advice Team on 01327 322275. If you would like a refresher on issuing vouchers contact Christine on vouchers@towcesterfoodbank.org.uk Full info and address [on their website](#).

[Brackley foodbank](#) continues to operate, view their webpages for all up to date information.

We are continuing to work with SOFEA/FairShare and other local food banks to strengthen the offer and ensure services are reaching those in need.

1.4 Keeping active and well

Our [webpages](#) include a range of resources to help you keep fit and active while staying at home. Please

look at these and link to them from your own websites/ social media.

We also have information on local walks and cycle routes and local arts and craft opportunities.

1.5 Work Safe/Safe Work

The government and industry have written [new guidelines](#) for tradespeople that promote safe working in and around people's homes. Their website includes a useful video and leaflet that can be downloaded and shared with those without internet access who need to allow access to tradespeople for repairs or maintenance. Their guidance includes:

Before

- Be sure your tradesperson, you, and anyone living with you are free from COVID-19 symptoms
- Ask what PPE and disinfectant methods will be used by your tradesperson

During

- Disinfect door handles at the beginning and end of every day tradespeople are working at your home
- Keep to social distancing guidelines at all times
- Pay electronically using online banking if possible

After

- Let your tradesperson know immediately if you or anyone else in your home develops symptoms of COVID-19 within 14 days of the work being completed.

1.6 Help and Support from partner organisations

Please continue to check our [list of partner organisations and links to services](#) that can help with money, debt, housing and employment problems; domestic abuse and substance misuse as well as services to help those with mental health issues; children and younger people; older people and veterans and those experiencing bereavement.

Please signpost to these resources.

1.7 Covid-19 Leaflet

The Northamptonshire County Council full information leaflet is attached alongside this newsletter. Please keep promoting the County support helpline, who will pass referrals to the District and Community Hubs.

2. Other business

2.1 Housing: Rural Exception Sites and Entry Level Sites

Rural Exceptions Sites are a way of delivering more affordable housing in rural areas. They are sites on the edges of the villages that wouldn't normally receive planning permission for housing, but if there is evidence that new affordable homes are needed for local people, an exception to normal planning policy can be made, hence the name.

In South Northamptonshire almost every village has a 'village confines' line, set by the [Part 2 Local Plan](#), which marks the village boundary for planning policy purposes. Inside the confines planning policies generally support new development, such as new homes, but outside of the confines planning policy aims to limit development to protect the

character of the countryside and encourage sustainable patterns of development. This can, however, increase the cost of land and homes within villages and make it harder for local people to afford a home.

If there is evidence that a village needs more affordable homes for local people, which is usually assessed through a [Housing Need Survey](#), a planning application can be made for new homes to meet that need on land outside of, but next to, the village confines. Those homes must meet the Government's definition of affordable housing as set out in Annex 2 of the [National Planning Policy Framework](#). Sometimes open market housing can be included to make the development viable, but it must be shown that this is necessary, and the amount of open market housing is the minimum required for viability.

Entry Level Sites are another form of exception site and are similar to Rural Exception Sites in that they are sites outside of, but next to village confines that wouldn't normally get planning permission for housing. However, unlike a Rural Exception Site there is no need to provide evidence of a need for housing, but an Entry Level Site can be no more than a hectare in size or 5% of the size of the village and the homes must be suitable for first time buyers and renters. Furthermore, all the homes must be affordable and open market homes are not permitted.

For more information on Rural Exception Sites and Entry Level Sites, please contact the Council's Strategic Housing Team:
HousingStrategy@southnorthants.gov.uk;

2.2 Free webinars for Local residents

In order to support residents, the SNC Job Club is working with expert partners to provide free webinars on an extensive range of topics. The SNC Job Club is dedicated to helping local people secure appropriate local employment.



For anyone currently out of work, looking for a new career or considering starting their own business, we are offering masterclasses on topics such as:

- Identifying the Best Job Opportunities
- Enhancing your CV
- Interview Tips & Tricks
- Building Personal and Professional Resilience
- Starting Your Own Business

All our upcoming webinars can be found here: bit.ly/JobClubWebinars



The SNC Job Club is a one-stop-shop of support, including:

- Confidential Expert Guidance

- Employment Support
- Training Webinars & Masterclasses
- Assistance Identifying Appropriate Jobs
- Support with Redundancy
- Starting Your Own Business

Contact Information

JobClub@SouthNorthants.gov.uk

01327 322087

2.3 Office of Police Fire and Crime Commissioner funding

Funding streams from the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners (OPFCC), Making Northamptonshire Safer and Road Safety Community Funds are still open and now on a monthly rolling programme.

They are keen to support as many groups as possible to access the funds and support the community of Northamptonshire. They have also simplified the application process. **Please don't hesitate to contact Northants OPFCC if you need support or have any questions about the funds.** You can contact us at funding@northantspfcc.pnn.gov.uk or telephone on 01604 888113

To apply download the forms at: <http://www.northantspfcc.org.uk/get-involved/community-grants-2/>

2.4 Slow Ways

This is a volunteer-led project, started during lockdown and aiming to map thousands of new walking routes, to get people discovering the country in an entirely new way.

The British Isles are rich with paths, that have not been pulled together into a

single network that makes it easy for people to see how to get between places on foot. Slow Ways aims to create a network of walking routes that connect all Great Britain's towns and cities, as well as thousands of villages. Most of the project has been completed in lockdown, with 700 volunteers drafting 7,000 Slow Ways routes that collectively stretch for 100,000km.

Now the network has been drafted, the next challenge is to get outside, to explore and test the routes. It is hoped to recruit 10,000 volunteers from across Great Britain to help with the project at the end of this summer. To volunteer for and to get involved you can sign up for the newsletter on the [Slow Ways](#) website. If anyone takes advantage of this volunteer-led project, please feedback to us at: <mailto:healthycommunities@southnorthyants.gov.uk> we would love to hear about your experience.

2.5 Climate Change

Electric Vehicle charge points

In the last Parish update (27th July) we wrote to you about an opportunity to install public charge points in your localities at no cost to yourselves. These charge points would be funded through a combination of grant funding and private investment. The purpose of installing these charge points is to make ownership of an electric vehicle a more viable option for residents who do not have access to off-street parking and would therefore be unable to charge their vehicle at home.

The number of sites that could be accepted for this project is limited and the application need to be submitted soon. If you have a site and would like to be considered we will need to hear from you by the end of week

commencing 7th September. Please provide the full address for the site, any evidence you have that there is demand/future demand for charging and confirmation that you are the land owner. **Contact our Climate Change Officer, Felicity Parker:** climatechange@southnorthyants.gov.uk

Tree Planting

In Parish updates 2 (9th April) and 5 (28th May) we wrote to you asking for you to consider if you had any land which may be suitable for tree planting. The tree planting season runs from November to March and so now is really the time to start putting plans together. If you are hoping to plant this year, we are happy to help you to organise this. For smaller planting schemes we would like to direct you to the Woodland Trust's community tree pack scheme. This provides tree packs of between 15 and 420 trees to local schools and community groups (including parish councils) for free. Applications for delivery of trees in November has already closed, but they are currently accepting applications for delivery of trees in March, so to avoid missing out, apply soon! More information can be found here: <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/schools-and-communities/>.

For larger projects, there are other funding options available which can provide a large proportion of the costs required as well as advice on planting schemes. If you are considering a larger project, please get in touch as soon as possible with details of what you would like to do, and we can advise on the options available. Please contact the climate change officer at climatechange@southnorthyants.gov.uk