

The Collaborative Communities COVID-19 Board

Who sits on the Board?

The Collaborative Communities COVID-19 Board is made up of representatives from across Suffolk, including:

- Community Action Suffolk
- Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council
- Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich
- East Suffolk District Council
- Ipswich District Council
- Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG
- Ministry of Defence
- National Probation Service – Norfolk & Suffolk
- NHS – Integrated Care System
- Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
- Suffolk Association of Local Councils
- Suffolk Community Foundation
- Suffolk Constabulary
- Suffolk County Council
- Suffolk Voluntary Organisations Group
- West Suffolk CCG
- West Suffolk District Council

Why was the Board set up?

COVID-19 has brought about a national emergency and there have been many fundamental changes to the lives of those across Suffolk. At the end of March, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), Robert Jenrick, outlined his vision for the role of local public bodies in working with and supporting community groups. He talked about ‘community hubs’ co-ordinated on a countywide basis, in line with Suffolk’s Local Resilience Forums (strategic lead group dealing with the overall emergency). This the role that the Collaborative Communities COVID-19 Board is fulfilling.

While there have always been emergency plans in place, the work of the Board is unlike any that have been implemented before. It is more important than ever that everyone - across parish and town councils, businesses, the voluntary, community and enterprise sectors, council staff, councillors and members of the public - work together to make sure that vital support and services continue to be provided to the most vulnerable in our communities during these challenging times.

What does the Board do?

Our Suffolk wide partnership is responsible for:

- Bolstering and supporting existing neighbourhood networks
- Assisting the structuring and coordination of volunteering
- Ensuring that national and local offers connect to the current arrangements in Suffolk to provide care and support

How does it complement work already being done in the communities?

Phoneline

There is a free phoneline which is staffed daily by councils and is targeted at vulnerable members of our communities to call for help and support. Friends or family may also call on their behalf. The

telephone line is not a general information line for COVID-19 queries, but for those people who need emergency support with care needs (including food), loneliness and to connect with community support. This is a new service and will be adapted as the emergency progresses. The telephone number is freephone 0800 876 6926 and is staffed from 09:00 to 17:00, seven days a week.

Tribe Volunteer App

We have launched the **Tribe Volunteer App** which enables individuals, charities, town and parish councils, community and religious groups to register their details on the App to support the co-ordination of local need and volunteers. As well as managing immediate need, over the coming months, we know that this support will be vital and the App will help to match volunteers with individuals and communities who need help. This help may consist of delivering groceries, medication or essential household goods, in line with social distancing guidelines. This system has already matched a number of people with volunteers and this continues to grow daily. Tribe Volunteer can be downloaded from the Apple App Store and Google Play Store. We would urge all individuals and organisations to register on the app, even where local support is already in place, so we are able to see where the resource is and where there may be gaps in the system. This allows us to map the whole of Suffolk. It is worth mentioning that this is a new app and we are working through any problems or constraints that may appear. This phonenumber and the Tribe Volunteer app are part of the Home, But Not Alone brand.

Logistics

The Board is also working with foodbanks and arranging supplies, storage and transport of any food parcels needed. Central Government wrote to nearly one million people who were identified by the NHS as being clinically vulnerable to COVID-19, referred to as the 'shielding' approach. We believe this applies to around 11,000 people in Suffolk. The Government asked these people to call or register online to assess their needs and request a regular food parcel to be delivered direct by food companies organised by Government (if needed by them). While the Government gets this system up and running, councils were tasked with providing emergency food parcels to those people most in need. Suffolk Fire and Rescue and council staff helped us to do this. This will not be a permanent arrangement and as time progresses, we will be asking foodbanks and local groups to support this effort, alongside those national deliveries.

Housing

The Collaborative Communities COVID-19 Board is also working on additional housing needs in communities. This includes putting in place temporary accommodation for homeless people to protect them from COVID-19.

Who can I contact?

CCBCOVID19@suffolk.gov.uk