

# Helen Grant MP - Covid-19 Bulletin 24-03-2020

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## Covid-19 bulletin 24-03-2020

Dear Friends and Residents

I am writing further to my bulletin of last week to update you on the following;

- Latest Government instructions
- Supporting the most vulnerable in Maidstone & The Weald
- Support for businesses and employees
- Support for the self employed

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### LATEST GOVERNMENT INSTRUCTIONS

In his historic address to the nation on Monday evening the Prime Minister was clear that we all have an urgent part to play in reducing the spread of Coronavirus.

That means we must stay at home except for a very few specific and essential journeys out of the house.

This is a hugely significant request of us all which will fundamentally change our everyday lives in the short term, but we must follow the advice to protect our NHS and

to save thousands of lives.

Please do stay up to date with the latest advice here: <https://bit.ly/2UASBtw>.

## SUPPORTING OUR MOST VULNERABLE CITIZENS

Our community really is pulling together in these most challenging of circumstances to support the more vulnerable amongst us. Our brilliant Parish Councils are at the vanguard of this action and many have already drawn up plans to ensure that food and prescriptions etc. are delivered to those who are isolating in their homes.

If you are willing and able to volunteer to support this effort, then please do contact your Parish Council in the first instance. I have set out below a list of Parish Council contacts.

<b>Parish council contacts</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Email</b>
Barming	Fay Gooch	Chairman	<a href="mailto:faygooch@maidstone.gov.uk">faygooch@maidstone.gov.uk</a>
Collier Street	Mr David Goff	Chairman	<a href="mailto:david.goff@collierstreetparishcouncil.co.uk">david.goff@collierstreetparishcouncil.co.uk</a>
Coxheath	Mr Clive Parker	Chairman	<a href="mailto:clive.parker27@btinternet.com">clive.parker27@btinternet.com</a>
East Farleigh	Glyn Charlton	Chairman	<a href="mailto:glyncharlton1@gmail.com">glyncharlton1@gmail.com</a>
Hunton	Mr Gareth Thomas	Chairman	<a href="mailto:gwmt@uwclub.net">gwmt@uwclub.net</a>
Linton	Jerry Whitmarsh	Chairman	<a href="mailto:lpc@jerrywhitmarsh.com">lpc@jerrywhitmarsh.com</a>
Loose	Mrs Vianne Gibbons	Chairman	<a href="mailto:viannegibbons@aol.com">viannegibbons@aol.com</a>
Marden	Alison Hooker	Clerk	<a href="mailto:clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk">clerk@mardenkent-pc.gov.uk</a>
Nettlestead	Anita van Hensbergen	Dep chairman	<a href="mailto:Anita@wildhorus.co.uk">Anita@wildhorus.co.uk</a>
Staplehurst	Mr Mick Westwood	Clerk	<a href="mailto:clerk@staplehurst-pc.uk">clerk@staplehurst-pc.uk</a>
Teston	Mr Peter Coulling	Chairman	<a href="mailto:petercoulling@btconnect.com">petercoulling@btconnect.com</a>
Tovil	Lisa Rackett	Clerk	<a href="mailto:clerk@tovilparishcouncil.co.uk">clerk@tovilparishcouncil.co.uk</a>
West Farleigh	Mrs Amanda Broadhurst	Clerk	<a href="mailto:westfarleighpc@googlemail.com">westfarleighpc@googlemail.com</a>
Yalding & Laddingford	Mrs Geraldine Brown	Chairman	<a href="mailto:chairman@yaldingparishcouncil.gov.uk">chairman@yaldingparishcouncil.gov.uk</a>
Benenden	Mrs Caroline Levett	Clerk	<a href="mailto:clerk@benendenparishcouncil.org">clerk@benendenparishcouncil.org</a>
Cranbrook & Sissinghurst	Mrs Lori Ham	Clerk	<a href="mailto:clerk@cranbrookandsissinghurstpc.co.uk">clerk@cranbrookandsissinghurstpc.co.uk</a>

In particular, I know that Tovil Parish Council are looking for more volunteers to assist with the delivery of groceries and prescriptions. If you can help please contact Lisa Rackett (Clerk to Tovil Parish Council) on [clerk@tovilparishcouncil.co.uk](mailto:clerk@tovilparishcouncil.co.uk) or on 01622 675628.

And Coxheath Parish Council are also looking for more volunteers as they seek to scale up their support team. If you can assist please contact Lottie Parfitt Reid on [charlotteparfittreid@gmail.com](mailto:charlotteparfittreid@gmail.com).

Furthermore, thank you to those of you who have already been in touch with Wendy Pfeiffer of the West Kent Befriending Service. The number of people isolating has grown in recent days so if anyone else is prepared to volunteer to call and have a friendly chat with some of the older and more vulnerable people in our community then please do let Wendy know on [wendy.pfeiffer@ageukmaidstone.org.uk](mailto:wendy.pfeiffer@ageukmaidstone.org.uk).

**If you are able to offer your time to help, then please ensure you follow social distancing guidelines and other Public Health England advice at all times. I have asked the Kent Resilience Forum to provide a 'guide for volunteers' and I will share this with you as soon as it has been received.**

## SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES & EMPLOYEES

Providing support to our economy during this period is more crucial than ever. Last week the Chancellor announced an unprecedented package of support for businesses small and large to help them cope with the economic impact of this crisis.

The measures include a commitment to pay 80% of employee's wages and the provision of Government backed loans and grants.

If any business in Maidstone and The Weald needs assistance with accessing the support available then please do not hesitate to get in touch with me at [helen.grant.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:helen.grant.mp@parliament.uk).

## SUPPORT FOR SELF-EMPLOYED PEOPLE

At the time of writing there has been some support announced for the self-employed including;

- changes to ensure every self-employed person can now access Universal Credit at a rate equivalent to Statutory Sick Pay

- and the deferral of self-assessment and VAT payments

I know from speaking with constituents in recent days that we must do more. This need has become even more acute since the necessary and strict measures were been imposed by the Prime Minister on Monday this week.

The self-employed are the lifeblood of our economy and it is therefore essential that we protect them through this difficult period. I have therefore written to the Chancellor to urge him to bring forward financial support for the self-employed, akin to that announced last week for people on payroll. I very much hope we will see progress on this in the coming days.

## IN CONCLUSION

Thank you to everyone who is doing their bit to follow Government advice and look after our most vulnerable.

By supporting each other and following the expert advice we can, and will, beat this together. If anyone has any specific needs, concerns or questions then please feel free to get in touch with me at [helen.grant.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:helen.grant.mp@parliament.uk).



**Helen Grant MP**

Member of Parliament for Maidstone and the Weald



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