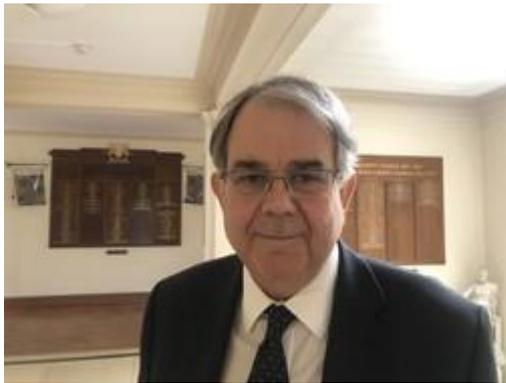


# COVID-19 COORDINATION HUB

## Highlights from the Hubs

**Welcome to the first edition of hub highlights**

**Welcome to the first edition of our newsletter which aims to share news and highlights from the Countywide Coordination Hub and the network of district and city hubs.**



I would like to pay tribute to all our staff, many of whom work on the 'front line', who have continued to serve our residents under increasingly difficult circumstances. I know that many have been redeployed to undertake vital roles in our response to the Coronavirus outbreak and our continued quest to support residents across the county. Thank you.

The response from our communities has been exemplary. Local councils and volunteers have been quick to set up a support network to provide help to those who need it now and reassurance to those who may need it later. Community spirit is alive and well in Cambridgeshire. Thank you.

Our partners across the whole public sector have come together to work as one, to pool resources, share information, spread the workload and protect the public. District councils, the NHS, carers, voluntary sector, faith groups, police, fire, ambulance and military, and many more. Businesses have also been quick to help, by providing food, transport and premises.

Thank you all.

Councillor Steve Criswell, Chairman of the Communities and Partnerships Committee,  
Cambridgeshire County Council

---

Welcome to the first edition of our newsletter which aims to share good news and highlights from the Countywide Coordination Hub and the network of district and city hubs.

We have been overwhelmed by the support we have received from members of the public offering their time as volunteers and from partner organisations who want to support people who need help at this very difficult time. Our staff too have once again shown their commitment to serving the city and its residents. We have always known it, but this has proven once again that community spirit is very much alive in Peterborough.

Staff in the COVID-19 Hubs are working hard to ensure that everybody in Peterborough and across the rest of the county has access to food, medicine and other essential supplies, working in partnership with the Government, public sector partners, the British Red Cross, supermarkets, the voluntary sector, charities and community groups. All of these groups have pulled together in the most magnificent way and we want to share that with you in this newsletter.

I hope the articles included each week will give you a flavour of how people across the city and the whole county are working together to make sure people get the help and support they need.

Councillor Irene Walsh

Cabinet Member for Communities, Peterborough City Council.



---

### **Support network available for everyone who needs it**

In the past month councils and other organisations across the county have been working flat out to create a network of support to ensure help is available for everyone who needs it during the COVID-19 emergency.

That support network is now in place and everyday hundreds of people are being supported to access food, medicines and in many other ways.

The Countywide Hub is focussed on supporting residents who have been identified as shielding and being of the highest risk. It is ensuring that critical services across the public sector, such as care for the elderly, can continue through the support of staff who have been redeployed from other council services and partner organisations and the support of volunteers.

Our most vulnerable residents who require support are being given access to food, medicines and other important supplies, and broader social needs are being met as far as possible, to minimise anxiety. Regular deliveries of food to those on the shielded list are also being made directly by the Government.

In addition, the countywide hub organises emergency deliveries of food for people who have specialist food and other items that need collecting, and is delivering PPE seven days a week to GP surgeries, pharmacies, care homes and elsewhere.

For those who are not shielded, but still need help and support, the network of district and city hubs are providing that support for residents responding to individual offers of help or requests for

support. This includes support for those who need it to access food and medicine and a befriending service. They are also connecting with and supporting mutual aid and other community-led initiatives which are taking place on their patch.

Lots of organisations, groups and charities are also offering support at this time, details of which can be found on the [Peterborough Information Network](#) or the [Cambridgeshire Directory of Services](#).

Each of the hubs is there to support those people who don't have assistance from friends, family or neighbours. Therefore, people who can are asked to use their own networks or the support being offered on the directories mentioned above.

The district and city councils have information on their websites about the local hubs including how people can get in touch and access help and support.

- [Cambridge City Hub](#)
- [Fenland District Hub](#)
- [East Cambs District Hub](#)
- [Hunts District Hub](#)
- [South Cambs District Hub](#)
- [Peterborough City Hub](#)

To contact the countywide hub visit [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/coronavirus) or [www.peterborough.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.peterborough.gov.uk/coronavirus)

It can also be contacted Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm, and Saturdays 9am to 1pm on 0345 045 5219

---

## **Countywide Hub supporting thousands of people every week**

In the past month the Countywide Hub has responded to more than 2,000 requests for help from people across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

As of yesterday (Thursday) the hub had responded to 1,261 direct requests for help and support and a further 781 requests for assistance from those on the shielded list – that's a total of 2,041 requests for help.

We are so far aware of just over 13,000 people who are on the shielded list - out of a possible 30,000 who may have received a letter from the NHS or been identified by their GP. Of these people, just short of 4,000 have been in touch to let us know that they don't have a reliable network of local family or friends to help them .

To ensure we keep in contact with this ever-growing group of people, 150 redeployed staff and volunteers have been identified to make weekly telephone contact each week, to check they have what they need and where support needs are identified.

If you know someone who needs help and support who we have not made contact with yet, please visit [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/coronavirus) or call 0345 045 5219.

---

### **Food parcels delivered to people's homes**

The countywide coordination hub has now delivered 572 food packages to homes where people have no other way of accessing food supplies.

As more and more shielded people successfully register, they are given access to supermarket home delivery slots or are registering to receive food parcels arranged through a national scheme.

However, for many, neither option is suitable and so we are also using our volunteers to collect groceries ordered via click and collect and delivering food supplies from our warehouse to residents in emergency situations.

These deliveries are helping people like June (not her real name) who lives in Huntingdonshire and has a terminal illness. She contacted us because the food delivery she received from HM Government did not meet her needs. Her illness means she can only eat vegetarian food which can be easily liquidated; she was grateful for the food delivery she had already received but was very distressed as she could not eat meat pies, corned beef, or some of the other items which it contained.

We arranged for the British Red Cross to do a special shopping trip for June and delivered a package of food to her doorstep. She called us back the next morning to tell us how grateful she was for the council's response.

---

### **Healthy meals for children**

The manager of a nursery in Cambridge got in touch with the hub because her staff were unable to obtain food from their normal supermarket to feed the children in their care. They are providing care to the children of key workers—including carers, social workers, nurses and doctors—but were struggling to obtain the ingredients to give the children a healthy, balanced meal.

A local community group was highlighted by colleagues from the Cambridge City Hub, and volunteers are now giving up their time to stand in line at the supermarket and collect food for the nursery. Furthermore, a local fruit company is now dropping off fresh fruit and vegetables at the nursery every week.

---

### **Praise for our army of volunteers**

None of the work the hubs are doing would be possible without an army of volunteers, including residents and groups who have offered their time and council staff who are being redeployed into different roles.

Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council have so far redeployed 2,297 staff, and volunteers into roles, which include delivering food and medicines, providing care for people in their homes and delivering PPE and other equipment to organisations across the county.

In the past week volunteers from The Red Cross have been helping the Countywide hub to organise and deliver Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to pharmacies.

Due to the overwhelming response we received from the public to our plea for volunteers, we still have a good number who are yet to be allocated roles.

We are matching volunteers to those who need our help every day and also sharing details (with their permission) with the network of district and City hubs, so if you know someone who has offered their time but is yet to hear anything further, please ask them to bear with us.



### **Spotlight on our partners**

Simon Cartwright, Chief Petty Officer in the Royal Navy's Submarine Service, tells us how he is using his military planning skills to assist the Countywide Hub.

"Prior to the COVID19 pandemic I was an instructor for an organisation known as Flag Officer Sea Training (FOST), preparing submarines for pending deployments. I have served my country for almost 18 years and I continue to do so to assist in the response phase, leading into the recovery phase for the COVID19 pandemic.

"As part of the MoD's response and contribution to the COVID19 pandemic, military planners have been deployed all around the UK in order to assist the Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) in dealing with planning operations.

"I have been a part of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough LRF for almost 4 weeks now. I began my work setting up the food distribution hub, supplying food to people on the shielded list. Considering we were starting from scratch and building this operation up from the ground up we had our work cut out for us! In the proceeding two weeks we managed to secure a warehouse, get it fit for purpose, risk assessed, racks fitted and filled with food for distribution. This was a tremendous achievement all involved and a large step towards sustainability. The warehouse then became dual purposed with the delivery of PPE for distribution to a multitude of health care facilities.

I have recently shifted my focus from the logistical efforts to the recovery group and I look forward to working with this new team and taking the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough communities back to normality."

---

### **Thanks for 'extremely valuable work'**

We often don't hear back from the people who have been helped, but when we do, we discover how much it means to them. We received this response from a gentleman in Cambridge a few days ago.

*"I am in my late 70s and have a medical condition that makes me officially 'extremely vulnerable.' I filled up an on-line form, saying that I needed some help getting essential supplies. I was very worried because I could not get any delivery slots from normal suppliers, like Sainsbury's and*

*Waitrose, all my neighbours are elderly too so can't pick up for me, and I cannot leave the house. Today I received a care package, and then a phone call from the shielding team. Thank you so much for this extremely valuable work that you are doing to support people like me."*

---

### **Offers of mutual aid**

The Countywide hub continues to receive information about mutual aid offers right across the county. These offers of support are being added to either the [Peterborough Information Network](#) or the [Cambridgeshire Directory of Services](#), so that people who need help can seek out their own support.

Where possible, we want people to access support from these organisations or groups, or from friends, family and neighbours, to make sure help available from the countywide and district/city hubs is prioritised for those who need them most.

---

### **Bright Ribbon Campaign supporting food bank appeal**

Villagers in Ashton and Bainton near Peterborough have started an innovative campaign to help vulnerable people in need of essential items.

In conjunction with Peterborough City Council's ongoing efforts to support communities since the coronavirus outbreak, Bainton & Ashton Parish Council recently launched the *Bright Ribbon campaign*.



Residents of the two villages donate non-perishable food items by placing them on their doorsteps in shopping bags tied with brightly-coloured ribbon. Within the first week of donations, 170kg of items were collected. This was then delivered to the Peterborough food bank where it could be passed on to those in need. Donations are currently being directed towards parent-carer families who have been affected by the current crisis. Local suppliers, Plants Eggs, have offered a sizable donation of fresh eggs towards the scheme.

Councillor Irene Walsh, Peterborough City Council's cabinet member who helped set up the campaign, said: "We've had a fantastic response from residents in the villages who are keen to help those in need. And full credit to the parish council who supported the scheme from the outset.

"We have been getting in touch with other parish councils, some of whom are already running schemes of their own and some who are keen to set up their own *Bright Ribbon* campaign. In Glinton the Good Neighbours Scheme is promoting the food donation point at the NISA store on the High Street. An impressive volunteering scheme is also running in the village, supporting local residents in a variety of ways.

All in all, a fantastic contribution from Peterborough's rural areas."

---



### **Easter and rainbow boxes delivered to Fenland families**

Boxes containing food and Easter eggs have been delivered to families across Fenland thanks to the Cambridgeshire Community Reuse & Recycling Network and staff from Fenland District Council .

During the Easter holidays 200 boxes containing Easter eggs and art and craft activities were delivered to families in boxes donated by Smurfit Kappa.

Boxes were delivered to the Oasis Centre in Wisbech where a wonderful group of community champions distributed them, as did the Rosmini Centre and the food banks in Wimblington and March. The team is planning to deliver more boxes over the next two months, known as rainbow boxes, which will include an indoor or small garden activity pack for children and educational activities.

The partnership, led by Nikki and Chris at the Oasis Centre in Wisbech, has been successful in obtaining a grant to support the development of the project.