



Community Resilience

Community Support Briefing for Services and partners from London Borough of Hackney

This briefing summarises the help that the Council is co-ordinating in response to the impacts of Covid 19 on our communities. The briefing is for services within the Council (primarily via the Humanitarian Assistance Group) and also partners.

Help for the Shielded Group of residents

- Government recently asked a group of people to self isolate for [medical reasons](#). They have put in place a scheme to make sure that during this time they have help with food if they need it. The food is now being delivered by government directly.
- If they also need other support, we will make a referral through the I need help system we have set up. If you are in contact with someone on the shielded list please refer them to the [Gov.uk form](#) to sign up for support or the Council.
- The Council will seek to ensure that those whose needs are not met through the government provision (for example because of dietary requirements) are met by us

Status: live

Referral

- We have set up an [online form](#) and referral line for those affected by coronavirus, particularly those who are socially isolating and potentially cut off from help. Customer Services will log issues and these are then referred to the right services within the Council, DWP, independent advice providers or to local community and voluntary groups. More complex needs are triaged through a multidisciplinary team meeting. The helpline number is 020 8356 3111.

Status: live

Volunteering hub

- We have set up a volunteering hub with the voluntary and community sector, so that we can offer practical and social support to those who have been affected by coronavirus. The hub will take referrals from the helpline or online form.
- If people want to help out as volunteers, they can register their interest via an [online form](#). These offers of help are being coordinated with Volunteer Centre Hackney, to help make sure help reaches those who need it most in a safe and coordinated way, to ensure we can support people throughout the duration of the pandemic. People with DBS checks will be prioritised so we can meet needs quickly.
- Organisations will also request volunteers from the same page
- We have put this in place to offer additional help alongside the mutual aid groups that are already on the ground, because we cannot rely on the neighbourly efforts

alone given the likely duration when people will be self isolating or affected in some way.

- Volunteer Centre Hackney, a key partner in the Volunteering Hub, have dedicated a staff member to work with Mutual Aid groups in Hackney so that we can help support and connect with this help. We are also going to reach out to local community organisations to support their neighbourhood level efforts, working with the Integrated Commissioning Neighbourhoods team.
- In addition to this, the '[Find support services](#)' map shows organisations that are open but providing an online or phone alternative to their usual activities in response to Coronavirus (COVID-19).
- You will have seen that government also put out a call for help for volunteers to support our residents who are on the shielded group. Once we have clarity over how these volunteers will be managed we will do our best to involve them in our support networks if that is most effective.

For more information on the Volunteer Hub please contact lisa.atamian@hackney.gov.uk

**Status: live except for:
The request a volunteer form**

Donate money

Residents may want to help by donating money.

- Hackney Foodbank urgently needs donations. To donate financially visit: <https://hackney.foodbank.org.uk>
- Hackney CVS have launched [Hackney Giving Coronavirus Response Fund](#). They aim to raise £30k over the next 6 - 8 weeks. They will then provide grants of up to £3,000 to groups that are working with older people and vulnerable groups that will be disproportionately affected by the outbreak. **Donations** can be made online at our Virgin Money Fundraising page: <https://bit.ly/3dq6UJX>

Status: live

Food Poverty

- We have been working with the [food justice alliance](#) which brings together key organisations working to tackle food poverty. They need more volunteers and we will try to source these through the volunteer hub. If you work with people in food poverty and want to connect with a network you can register here: hackney_food_poverty_justice-subscribe@lists.riseup.net
- For children on free school meals, some schools are acting as lunch hubs for children in receipt of free school meals; others are doing delivery / grab and go bags and the government is going to provide schools with supermarket vouchers for families in need.

Status: live

Supporting the Food Poverty network

- They also need help with coordination and capacity and we are working with them to improve this and come up with a more sustainable offer to tackle the increase in food insecurity and poverty.

Status: recommendations currently being agreed

Support for those who are laid off / made redundant

- Our [Employment and Skills service](#) are flexing their offer to advise people who have been laid off or made redundant. There are contact details on the website or the telephone number is here: 020 8356 5700.

Status: live

Understanding the cumulative impact on communities

We are very concerned about the risks arising from the way Covid 19 is impacting on our everyday lives and the knock on impacts. One of our biggest concerns is that there are groups who are already vulnerable who will become more vulnerable and that the group of residents who are vulnerable will grow as they are laid off, made redundant, or lose business. The Council is building a picture of the knock on or cumulative impacts to inform our immediate response and inform our plans around recovery. You can send a summary of impacts to rachel.salmon@hackney.gov.uk

Status: live

Lead responsibilities

Overall leads	Stephen Haynes / Simon Galczynski
Shielded group	Contacting shielded residents: Matt Cain Food depot and deliveries: Bruce Deville
Helpline and triage	Matt Cain
Civil society support Volunteering Hub Food Poverty Donate money	Sonia Khan
Employment support	Andrew Munk
Understanding vulnerability and cumulative impact	Matt Cain / Sonia Khan

Key Covid Roles:

Sandra Husbands - Public Health Lead

Rob Miller - Resilience / Covid Lead

Sonia Khan - Community engagement

Polly Cziok - Comms

Gerry McCarthy - Community Safety

Dan Paul - HR policy and engagement with the Unions

Stephen Haynes and Bruce Devile - Shielding / food supplies

Anne Canning - communications with Faith and other key communities; safeguarding

Aled Richards - Excess deaths

Why we are offering this support and co-ordination

- We want to put in place a response that is sustainable and future proofed as the situation evolves. We have been building a picture of types of residents who might be vulnerable and of their support needs so we can get the right support to them.
- There is also a group who are being asked to stay at home for 12 weeks; they need food and will be isolated. We have been asked by government to contact them to co-ordinate delivery of food parcels if they need them and also find out if they have other needs.
- There are many grassroots groups that have been set up in the last ten days to reach out to residents and offer help. This effort has been incredible and our priority is to offer more capacity and make sure that it reaches our most vulnerable residents.
- We need to make sure volunteering efforts keep people safe and are in line with social distancing, and we have put advice in place about this on our volunteering page
- There is also an active network of organisations including faith groups that are tackling food poverty that are doing their best to meet needs, but have seen volunteering numbers drop and are struggling to bulk buy food- we need to support these groups
- Meeting the needs of vulnerable groups is going to take more than just a response from civil society - we need government to continue to take action, building on pledges that have already been made and for statutory partners to play their role
- We are trying where possible to utilise and redeploy existing resources (grants, people's time, volunteers)
- This is why we have stood up, as part of our emergency planning response, a Humanitarian Assistance Group which brings together Council services to ensure coordination of help and support
- The voluntary sector is key to this effort and have also been impacted substantially, in terms of loss of income, disruption of services and staff and volunteer sickness. By involving them proactively in the delivery of the services outlined above, we are supporting them and creating a role as well as helping them to recruit more volunteers. We are also offering the following:
 - We have suspended rents for our VCS tenants within our own property portfolio for three months and we have been in contact with all our VCS organisations that have an existing grant relationship with us (commissioned or grant funded) to relax the terms of their grant funding in line with the London Funders pledge.
 - We are also looking at repurposing existing sources of funding such as our existing community grants
 - The Hackney Giving programme led by HCVS has already been repurposed to go towards supporting those organisations facing immediate financial pressures due to Coronavirus.
 - We continue to work with the voluntary sector and with funders to identify further impacts and mitigation needed

