



UDC briefing note – 9 April 2020

This briefing note is designed to keep you updated with what Uttlesford District Council is doing in response to the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic. The information here relates to the main activity that has happened across the council this week. You are welcome to share this information within your communities.

Service updates and changes are published on:

www.uttlesford.gov.uk/coronavirus

www.twitter.com/UttlesfordDC

www.facebook.com/UttlesfordDC

Updates are also provided through the council's *Keep me posted* e-newsletter service – people can sign up to receive the newsletters here: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/keepmeposted.

For official national advice always visit www.gov.uk/coronavirus and www.nhs.uk/coronavirus.

Main UDC actions this week

We have:

- Distributed government grants totalling almost £9million to around 800 small businesses. If they have not done so already, businesses can register their details via the online portal for the funding to be processed: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/6629/Support-for-Uttlesford-businesses-and-employers-affected-by-coronavirus-Covid-19. We have also put up some FAQs for businesses – see www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/6630/Coronavirus-COVID-19-grant-funding-schemes-FAQs.
- Continued to promote the option for people to reschedule their council tax instalments if the household has had a substantial drop in income due to the coronavirus pandemic and cannot find any other means to pay. Full details are available at: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/counciltaxandbenefits. Independent information on the financial help and support which might be available for residents is also on the webpage. For those who are suffering severe financial hardship, the council has an Extreme Hardship Fund in place, and we have received additional funding from government to provide further support for residents who need it. Details can be found at: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/ehf.
- Implemented a temporary freeze on the recovery of overpaid Housing Benefit (HB) – no deductions will be taken from ongoing HB entitlements for the period 16 March to 14 June. This will be applied automatically. The Department of Work and Pensions has also announced the suspension of overpayment recovery for a period of three months on all Universal Credit and other DWP legacy benefits.
- Dealt with hundreds of call through the Uttlesford Community Response helpline. We've been able to direct people to services that can help during this time, and provided advice to

others on how they can register their offer of help to support their community. The details are:

- Call: **03333 408 218** (8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday)
- Email: **communityresponse@uttlesford.gov.uk**

As part of the national 'Community Shield' work, the community response team is now conducting phone calls to vulnerable residents who registered with the government to ensure that they all have the appropriate support in place. There have been 168 phone calls made today. The list will be refreshed daily and sent through to the hub to action further telephone calls. They are working closely with the local volunteer support groups and are sharing information with the groups regarding more specialist support that is available and encouraging the use of the Frontline service.

In addition, we have rebuilt the coronavirus (Covid-19) landing page on the UDC website – www.uttlesford.gov.uk/coronavirus (note: a link to this is available from the top of every page on the website). This now promotes the 'Stay at home' advice and provides a clear menu of information and updates.

It allows us to highlight the key information that residents and businesses need such as help with housing benefits and rents, council tax and access to business grants. Additional information on bin collections and council meetings is also included.

The main service updates may be of interest to you and your communities (many of these have or will be publicised through the council's communications channels):

- Updated guidance on businesses that must remain closed and those that can be open. We've included a reporting process for notifying us of any businesses that should not be trading or are profiteering from the coronavirus situation: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/business/article/6611/Guidance-Further-businesses-and-premises-to-close.
- A dedicated form for reporting businesses that should not be open: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/6637/Coronavirus-COVID-19-report-a-non-essential-business-opening
- An explanation and link to GOV.UK to report a business behaving unfairly during the outbreak: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/6637/Coronavirus-COVID-19-report-a-non-essential-business-opening
- Signposting to coronavirus funding for sports and arts organisations: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/6645/Coronavirus-COVID-19-sports-and-arts-organisations-grant-funds
- Additional resources around animals safety during the coronavirus outbreak and running animal-related businesses such as dog breeding and stables: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/5696/Animal-safety-and-welfare
- Special advice for dog walkers and those looking after animals for people shielding or isolating: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/6644/Dog-walking-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak
- Information, advice and reporting procedure for bonfires as advice is that the smoke can aggravate health conditions particularly for those people suffering from coronavirus: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/5706/Bonfires
- Additional advice for council tenants and signposting to information for private tenants concerned about eviction: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/6633/Housing-benefits-and-rent-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak

- Updated contact details for council tenants regarding Uttlesford Norse Limited and where those tenants require emergency repairs: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/councilpropertyrepairs
- New information for taxi and private hire operators about applying for new/replacement plates, badges etc: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/6641/Taxis-and-private-hire-vehicle-licences-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak