



## **New helpline launched for vulnerable people**

A new helpline has been launched for frail and vulnerable residents to call if they need help during the coronavirus pandemic.

Havant Borough Council has joined forces with Hampshire County Council, voluntary groups and other district and boroughs across the county to set up the Coronavirus Hampshire Helpline.

The line can be used by residents who do not have support from families, friends or their local community, and who need urgent assistance with essential food or household supplies, collection of medication, or who are at risk of loneliness.

The number - **0333 370 4000** – will be manned seven days a week, from 9am-5pm.

It is available only for Hampshire residents, while those in Southampton, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight have alternative arrangements.

As well as providing advice and information the call centre will co-ordinate requests for practical help, passing them through to the appropriate local authority.

HBC Leader, Cllr Michael Wilson, said: “This number is a vital lifeline for residents who cannot get the supplies or services they need during the coronavirus outbreak.

“We know that many people will be self-isolating, ill or otherwise unable to go out and shop for food or collect medicines. If that’s you, please phone this number and we will be able to find someone to help.”

**Ends**

**Note to editors:**

### **Extremely vulnerable ‘shielded’ people**

The Government has identified some people who are ‘extremely vulnerable’ to becoming seriously ill from coronavirus because of an underlying health condition.

Those in this shielded group will have been contacted by the NHS to request that they not leave home for at least 12 weeks, and have been advised that if they do not have friends, family or neighbours who can provide support, they can register for help to

access food, medicine and social contact via [gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable).

### **Food boxes**

For vulnerable residents in need of urgent food supplies, the Local Response Centres will provide a food box of basic necessities. Typically, this might include:

- Pasta
- Cereal
- Soup
- UHT milk
- Long life orange juice
- Bread
- Apples
- Biscuits
- Plus urgent household necessities if needed eg shower gel

Wherever possible, special dietary requirements will be met.

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