

MAY 2020



Braintree District Council

# heretohelp

**Guidance and advice** on our services and where to get help during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic



Tips on how to stay active on page 6







# Do you need help?

The Essex Welfare Service, Essex County Council's new service, has been established to help vulnerable people in our community who are staying at home and in need of support during the coronavirus period. It is specifically for those people who are not able to get any support from either family or friends or from their local district area support groups.



The Service can help you with:

- Delivering food, supplies and prescriptions
- Looking after your pets
- Checking on people's welfare
- Phoning you for a chat

The service can help provide local volunteers to help you.

You can call them on **0300 303 9988** or email [provide.essexwelfareservice@nhs.net](mailto:provide.essexwelfareservice@nhs.net)

**OPENING HOURS:** Monday to Friday, 8am-7pm, Saturday to Sunday, 10am-2pm

## Other ways to get help or assistance:

### Friends and Family

– If you have friends and family who live locally, they may be able to help you with online shopping or be able to get supplies for you. Don't be afraid to ask for help.

### Local community

– We have seen many local communities and parish councils working to help aid and protect their local community. You may have received a leaflet from them, many are willing to help their neighbours by delivering supplies and collecting prescriptions. Many of these have registered with the Essex Welfare Service so you may be directed to them when you call.

## Braintree Community Hub

The Braintree Community Hub is our response to looking after our residents in the Braintree District. We have so far received over 200 referrals from the Essex Welfare Service and contacted over 700 individuals the government has identified as high risk and requiring additional support.

Our Community Transport Team have been redeployed to help deliver food parcels to vulnerable people across the district.



## Received a food parcel you don't need?

Some people that fall under the vulnerable status may have received a government food parcel which they don't need because they have been able to obtain food and supplies. These can be donated to the food bank, to arrange for pick up please email [communitytransport@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:communitytransport@braintree.gov.uk) or call **01376 557883**

# Financial Help

We understand the unprecedented situation we are in is a worrying time for our residents. We are committed to doing everything we can to support you all through this period.

## Council Tax Support

If your household is on a low income, your Council Tax bill could be reduced through the Local Council Tax Support (LCTS). You can see if you are eligible for this and get more information on the range of support available on our council tax webpage at [www.braintree.gov.uk/counciltax](http://www.braintree.gov.uk/counciltax) (Please do not apply if you have savings of over £16,000)

To help reduce your monthly payments you might prefer



to pay your bill over 12 months instead of over 10 months. If you would like to do this please call **01376 557755**.

## Universal Credit

Universal Credit can help you with your living costs if you're on low income or out of work. It is paid monthly. You will need to claim Universal Credit from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) either online at [www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit](http://www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit) or by telephone: **0800 328 5644**

## Nominate someone to collect State Pension

Contact your account provider to nominate someone to collect your State Pension.

Most banks, building societies or other account providers allow a third party access to your account, eg with a second card. Contact your bank, building society or other account provider for more information.

## Food Banks

If you are struggling to feed yourself or your family:

**Braintree Area Foodbank** (serves food banks across the district)

**E:** [info@braintreearea.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:info@braintreearea.foodbank.org.uk)  
**T:** **01376 330694**





# Your mind matters

every mind matters

It's okay not to be okay

Coronavirus is causing distress to us all and you may feel bored, frustrated or lonely. You may also be low, worried, anxious, or concerned about your finances, your health or those close to you.

It's important to remember that it is OK to feel this way and that everyone reacts

differently. Remember, this situation is temporary and, for most of us, these feelings will pass.

Taking care of your mind as well as your body is really important while staying at home, to avoid feeling worse.

## Befriending

There are great befriending services available to anyone feeling lonely or isolated. During lockdown and self-isolation, these services are more important than ever. If you are feeling lonely, the following services are available to you.

**Essex Befriends** – They can provide telephone befriending for people over 18 who are carers, older people and those experiencing mental ill health or a learning disability.  
**Call: 0300 770 1263**

**Essex Age UK** – Local Age UK service for 60+ who can provide a telephone befriending service.  
**Call: 01268 525353**  
(10am – 3pm Mon-Fri)



**The Silver Line** – This national free helpline for older people can provide telephone befriending or a pen pal service called Silver Letter for those 55+.  
**Call: 0800 470 8090**  
(Available 24 hours a day)



## HERE ARE SOME TIPS:

**Stay connected:** Staying in touch with family and friends is very important- either through regular phone calls or staying in touch online.

**Keep busy:** Try to keep up with your normal hobbies and activities as far as possible. Whether you're a keen knitter, a gardening enthusiast or Sudoku champion, make sure you have plenty of supplies to keep you going. You can order what you need online or ask someone to pick up what you need.

**Don't stay glued to the news:** If it is making you anxious and depressed, try limiting yourself to set times each day to check in on events. Also stick to trusted sources of information.

**Look after yourself:** Get plenty of rest and try to stick to your normal sleeping patterns. Carry on managing any other on-going health conditions. Make sure you keep taking your usual medications and keep doing any recommended exercises, even if it means changing your usual routine.

**Stay active:** If you haven't been advised to self-isolate, try to get outside for some fresh air. Just sitting in the garden, on the balcony or opening a window can help. You may want to consider a short walk if that's possible (taking care to follow sensible precautions and official advice). See more tips on staying active at home on page 6.





# Stay Home, Stay Fit

The NHS has a range of simple exercises you can do online at [www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise) - we've featured some here.

## STRENGTH EXERCISE - Bicep curls



- A** Hold a pair of light weights (filled water bottles or tin of beans will do) and stand with your feet hip-width apart.
- B** Keeping your arms by your side, slowly bend them until the weight in your hand reaches your shoulder.
- C** Slowly lower again

**Attempt 2 sets of curls with each arm.**

## FLEXIBILITY EXERCISE - Sideways bench

- A** Stand upright with your feet hip-width apart and arms by your sides.
- B** Slide your left arm down your side as far as is comfortable. As you lower your arm, you should feel a stretch on the opposite hip.
- C** Repeat with your right arm.



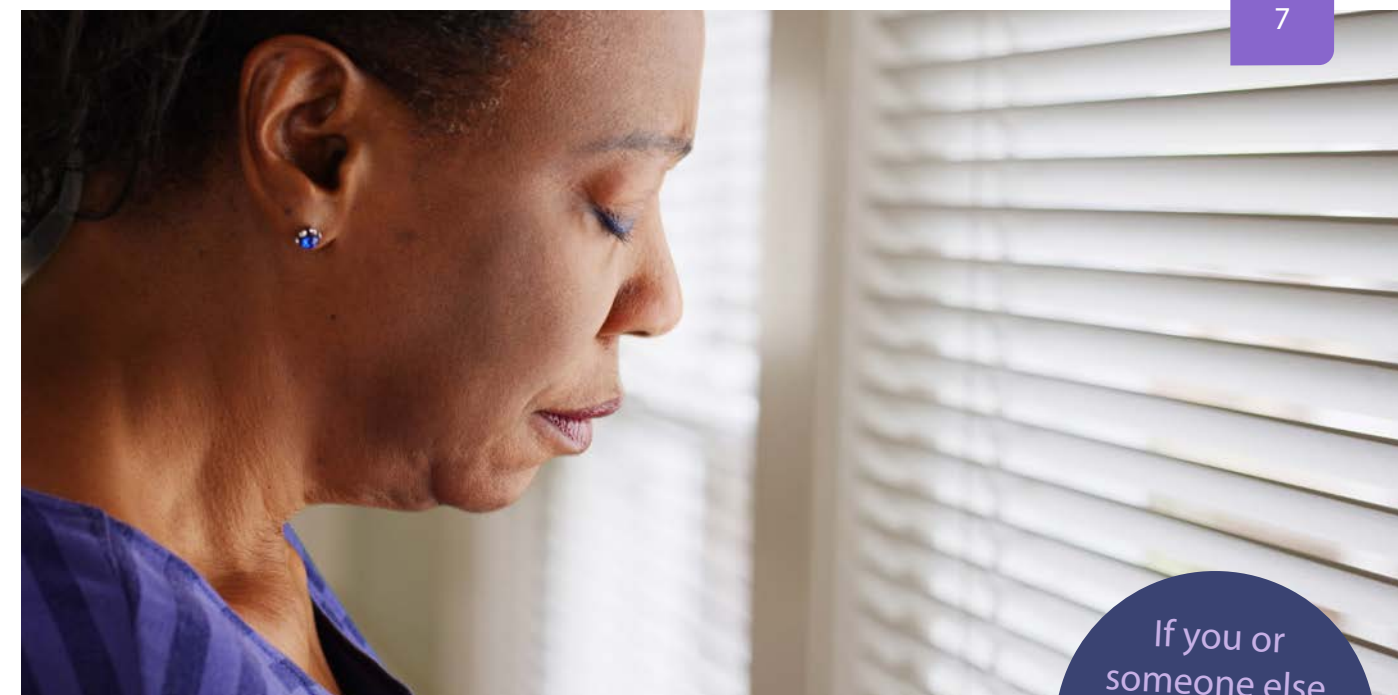
**Hold each stretch for 2 seconds and perform 3 on each side.**

## SITTING EXERCISE - Hip marching



- A** - Upright and do not lean on the back of the chair, hold on to the sides of the chair.
- B** - Lift your leg with your knee bent as far as is comfortable. Place your foot down with control.

**Do 5 lifts for each leg.**



If you or someone else are in immediate danger, call 999

# Domestic Abuse

For anyone who feels they are at risk of abuse, it is important to remember that there is help and support available to you, including police response, online support, helplines, refuges and other services. You are not alone.

The household isolation instruction as a result of coronavirus does not apply if you need to leave your home to escape domestic abuse.

If you believe that you or someone else could be a victim of domestic abuse, there are signs that you can look out for including:

- being withdrawn
- having bruises
- controlling finances
- not being allowed to leave the house
- monitoring technology use such as social media platforms

If you suspect that your neighbours or those in your community are victims of domestic abuse, we encourage you to report it to the police.

**If you or someone else are in immediate danger, call 999.** If you are in danger and unable to talk on the phone, listen to the questions from the operator and respond by coughing or tapping the handset if you can. If you're calling from a mobile, when prompted press 55 to be transferred to the police.

If you want to talk to someone about your concerns either for yourself or someone else, please ring Essex Compass on **0330 333 7 444** who are available 24 hours a day.

You can also look out for the J9 logo in shops, offices, community groups and pharmacies – which mean there are trained people you can talk to confidentially if you are a victim of domestic abuse who can direct you to help.





# Service UPDATES

All Braintree District Council public buildings such as Causeway House and Braintree Town Hall are closed to the public until further notice but we are continuing to work and deliver services to the best of our abilities at this difficult time to support our residents.

To see the latest updates on our services visit [www.braintree.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.braintree.gov.uk/coronavirus)

## Green Waste

We are pleased to let you know that we have **partially reinstated the Garden Waste** Collection Service initially on a four-weekly cycle.

Soon, there will be a postcard coming through your letterbox letting you know when your first collection will be. Your next collection will be four-weeks later on your normal recycling day.

As your existing Collection Calendar still shows the original dates before the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, your postcard will also have a reference code on the back so you will be able to check your next 4-weekly recycling day via our website. If you do not have access to the internet to look up your next due date, please call our Customer Service Centre on **01376 552525**.

Please make sure your garden waste is loose inside your garden waste bin as we are unable to accept bags of any kind.

## Recycling Centres

Select recycling centres have now been opened by Essex County Council, including the Braintree and Witham sites. Sites will be open from 9am and will be running extended opening hours.

Please be aware there are new restrictions and strict social distancing controls in place for the safety of other residents and site staff. The number of cars on site at any one time will be limited, meaning there may be long queues to get on the site.

You should only visit the recycling centre if your household waste cannot be stored safely until recycling centres return to normal. Garden waste will be accepted if it can't be stored at home safely.

Multiple visits are not allowed and vans are only permitted for essential household waste and only one person is allowed to exit the vehicle on site. While on site, please maintain a 2m distance from others at all times.

Making the most of the kerbside collections is the safest option.

## Recycling Sacks



The annual delivery of recycling sacks is due to commence in June. In the meantime if you need more sacks please fill out the request form on our website at [www.braintree.gov.uk/clearsacks](http://www.braintree.gov.uk/clearsacks) or call **01376 552525** to order a delivery. These will arrive within 10 working days.



## Bonfires



**In view of the health implications linked to Coronavirus (COVID-19) (a respiratory condition), we are asking residents not to burn their garden waste, or any other waste.**

If you do have a bonfire, you should be aware that if the smoke or odour is to a level that is affecting the life of others in the locality, action under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 may be taken against you.



If you wish to report a bonfire, you can do this via our website at [www.braintree.gov.uk/bonfires](http://www.braintree.gov.uk/bonfires) or by calling **01376 552525**.

## Markets



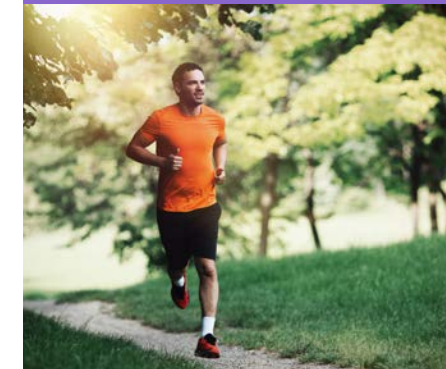
Our monthly Braintree Street Market has been suspended until further notice, but we are continuing to operate our weekly markets in Braintree (Wednesdays and Saturdays) and Witham (Saturdays only) within Government guidelines **only with traders that offer essential food and groceries** until further notice.

We ask you to please observe social distancing rules and stay 2m away from other shoppers.



## Dog walking

Please remember to pick up after your dog and use the dog waste bins around the district. If these bins are full please take your poo bag home with you and place it in your grey bin.



**Our parks and open spaces remain open to the public to allow people to have their daily exercise and walk their dog**, but we have shut play areas and outdoor gyms until further notice and ask that you observe the signs. You are now permitted to spend unlimited time in parks and can meet one other person from outside your household as long as you keep 2m distance at all times. If you have been advised to self-isolate, you should continue to stay at home.



To report a full dog waste bin: [www.braintree.gov.uk/reportfullbin](http://www.braintree.gov.uk/reportfullbin) or call **01376 552525**



# Be Fraud Aware

Criminals are using the Covid-19 pandemic to scam the public – don't become a victim.

Law enforcement, government and private sectors partners are working together to encourage members of the public to be more vigilant against fraud, particularly about sharing their financial and personal information, as criminals seek to capitalise on the Covid-19 pandemic.

Criminals are experts at impersonating people, organisations and the police.

They spend hours researching you for their scams, hoping you'll let your guard down for just a moment.



**Stop:** Taking a moment to stop and think before parting with your money or information could keep you safe.

**Challenge:** Could it be fake? It's ok to reject, refuse or ignore any requests. Only criminals will try to rush or panic you.

**Protect:** Contact your bank immediately if you think you've fallen for a scam and report it to Action Fraud.

Criminals are targeting people looking to buy medical supplies online, sending emails offering fake medical support and scamming people who may be vulnerable or

increasingly isolated at home. These frauds try to lure you in with offers that look too good to be true, such as high return investments and 'healthcare opportunities', or make appeals for you to support bogus charities or those who are ill.

Reports from the public have already included online shopping scams where people have ordered protective face masks, hand sanitiser, and other products, which have never arrived and a number of cases have been identified where fake testing kits have been offered for sale.

Criminals are also using Government branding to try to trick people, including reports of using HMRC branding to make spurious offers of financial support through unsolicited emails, phone calls and text messages.

**Your bank or the police will NEVER ask you to transfer money or move it to a safe account.**

**For more advice on how to keep safe visit [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)**

## Useful contacts



### Essex Welfare Service

**T: 0300 303 9988**

8am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Weekends

**E: [provide.essexwelfareservice@nhs.net](mailto:provide.essexwelfareservice@nhs.net)**

### Braintree District Council Customer Services

**T: 01376 552525**

8.30am-5pm Mon-Fri

**E: [csc@braintree.gov.uk](mailto:csc@braintree.gov.uk)**

### Essex County Council Customer Services

**T: 0345 743 0430**

9am-5pm Mon-Fri

**E: [contact@essex.gov.uk](mailto:contact@essex.gov.uk)**

(Recycling centres, Highways and Libraries are the responsibility of Essex County Council)

### Citizens Advice (Freephone)

**T: 0808 2082138** 10am-4pm Mon-Fri

### Community 360

**T: 01376 550507**

**E: [engagement7@community360.org.uk](mailto:engagement7@community360.org.uk)**

### Greenfields Community Housing

**T: 01376 535400**

8:30am-5:00pm, Mon- Fri **Text: 07860 024 511**

**E: [csc@GreenfieldsCH.org.uk](mailto:csc@GreenfieldsCH.org.uk)**

### Braintree Area Foodbank

**T: 01376 330694**

Covers Braintree district

**E: [info@braintreearea.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:info@braintreearea.foodbank.org.uk)**

### Essex Befriending Service

**T: 0300 770 1263**

**E: [essexbefriends@affc.org.uk](mailto:essexbefriends@affc.org.uk)**

## Helplines



### Farleigh Hospice

**Advice Line: 01245 455478**

### CIRCLE Adult Bereavement

**T: 01245 457308**

### Samaritans

**T: 116 123** 24 hours a day

**E: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)**

### Compass – Domestic Abuse Support

**T: 0330 333 7 444** 24 hours a day

**E: [enquiries@essexcompass.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@essexcompass.org.uk)**

### Essex Dementia Care

**T: 01245 363789** 8am-6pm Mon-Fri

### The Silver Line

**T: 0800 470 8090** 24 hours a day

### Essex Age UK

**T: 01245 346106** 10am-3pm Mon-Fri

### Action for Family Carers

**T: 0300 770 80 90**

### Independent Age

**T: 0800 319 6789** 8.30am-6.30pm Mon-Fri

### Action on Elder Abuse

**T: 0808 808 8141** 9am-5pm Mon-Fri

### Action Fraud

**T: 0300 123 2040** 8am-8pm Mon-Fri

### AbilityNet IT Support

**T: 0800 269 545** 9am-5pm, Mon-Fri

**E: [enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk)**



**Mid Essex**  
Clinical Commissioning Group

# EXTENDED GP HOURS



Patients in mid Essex can still  
access appointments with a  
GP or nurse in the **evening** or  
on a **Saturday** or **Sunday**



To book please contact your own GP  
surgery or call **01245 398055\***

\*Phone line only open Saturday and Sunday

Consultations will take place via  
**telephone** or **video**. Where a  
**face-to-face** appointment is required,  
this will take place at the North  
Chelmsford Health Centre

## OPENING TIMES:

**Monday to Friday,  
6:30pm to 8:00pm  
Saturday and Sunday,  
8:00am to 8:00pm**

North Chelmsford NHS Healthcare Centre  
Sainsbury's, 2 White Hart Lane,  
Chelmsford, Essex CM2 5EF.



We want everyone  
in mid Essex to Live Well

