Hertfordshire united against coronavirus: Volunteering

We have, as the county council, been asked to lead on communicating information and updates around volunteering to all partners across the county. **#TeamHerts Volunteering** will be coordinating Hertfordshire's official volunteer network for those affected by coronavirus, with support from Hertfordshire Care Providers Association (HCPA) and **HertsHelp. #TeamHerts** Volunteering will be matching location, availability and skills of the volunteer network to ensure we have the right support to allocate across the most vital of services. We also want to make sure that residents who are older, less able or self-isolating know where and how to get support should they need it.

Residents, services and community groups who would like to volunteer should visit **www.thvolunteering.org.uk** or call **Herts Help on 0300 123 4044**. Residents who are self-isolating and in need of support from volunteers, will be advised to contact **HertsHelp on 0300 123 4044**. Anyone currently using a social care service should expect that to continue, however they can speak to their care provider first or call on **0300 123 4042** for other urgent care needs. We have prepared frequently asked questions for people with care and support needs which they can access on our website,
www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/serviceupdates.

There are already lots of local successful schemes running in our communities, our aim is not to stop these, however we will be offering advice and support on staying and keeping safe. Sadly, there have been many reports of scams and opportunists operating in the name of goodwill around coronavirus – for this reason we will be asking existing genuine local and community groups to make **#TeamHerts** aware of their arrangements so that we can share an approved list on the Police, Neighbourhood Watch, **#TeamHerts Volunteering** and **HCC** channels for those who are vulnerable. If you know of any groups please ask them to contact **#TeamHerts** Volunteering directly, they can email **enquiries@thvolunteering.org.uk or call 01462 689 409.**

Any help you can provide in sharing these positive messages would be very much appreciated. You can find links to download promotional materials for Hertfordshire against coronavirus online, these include some specific messaging around volunteering; **https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/news/campaign-toolkits/coronavirus.aspx .**

In light of the latest government guidance, we've been working with a range of services and partners locally to produce a community focussed residents' campaign that we're calling **Hertfordshire united against coronavirus**. The following is a communication being shared with partners across the county today, outlining the campaign and our coordinated approach to volunteering; a press release has also been shared with local and national media.

The campaign hopes to inspire people to look out for others in their community, motivate residents who can to volunteer their time to help and support those who may be in need and/or feeling isolated. We want to focus on sharing messages of reassurance, reminding people to use trusted sources for information and advice and encouraging a humanitarian response to the virus.

As many of you will be aware, work has begun behind the scenes to coordinate our approach to volunteering. We will be working in partnership with local, district, town and parish councils and with colleagues across health, social and the voluntary sector to ensure the right support is in place for all residents. Thank you to those organisations who have supported this work so far, we appreciate this had to be done quickly; for those reading about this for the first time we look forward to working with you on this project moving forward.

As above, this work is being done in collaboration and so if you have comments or information you feel would be relevant and should be included in these plans, please contact us. We're looking forward to working with you all to make sure Hertfordshire's most vulnerable are supported at this difficult time.