

Updates from Voluntary Sector Mar 23rd

BDCA

- Donation & distribution centre (10-2, Tues & Thurs)
- Advocacy & advice services (including debt advice) – now via telephone/internet.
- Telephone support to most vulnerable/socially isolated (especially older residents) – for befriending and to identify material needs which can be met through our donation centre. This is being undertaken by staff and existing trained and DBS-checked volunteers in order to manage safeguarding considerations.
- Foodbank (including community lunch now via takeaway) Weds 11-2
- Craft/activity packs and online resources for families (in collaboration with WSF).
- Open gardening sessions (with social distancing) Fri 10-12, Sat 1-3.
- We are also aiming to open our sports field and provide ideas for individual exercise.
- We are exploring re-opening our after school club to support some local schools with childcare for key workers.

Our staff are continuing to develop other 'remote' services, so more to follow! For example, we are seeking funding to enable our community café to provide freshly prepared meals for distribution. Many thanks

RDLAC

We are still running our food bank / surplus good project as an emergency service, with no direct contact.

We do have supplies of long life food, cans, pasta, cereals etc.

If any volunteers would like to pick up bags to distribute to vulnerable people please let us know how many and we will put some aside for you (again no contact)

Carers FIRST's Response to COVID-19

We are living in unprecedented times and like you are determined to continue to provide support to those we serve. We are closely following the Government's advice in relation to Coronavirus (COVID-19) and have a robust business continuity plan in place, which we are reviewing regularly to ensure we can protect the wellbeing of our staff/volunteers and continue to deliver services to carers.

Carers are in the front line, a great number providing essential care for a friend or relative within the government's identified vulnerable group, many of whom

fall within this group themselves. As always they are doing an amazing job and we will continue to provide support to those who need our help.

What are we doing:

- Our Carers Hub remains open Monday-Thursday 9am – 5pm and Fridays 9am – 4:30pm. Carers and professionals can contact us on 0300 303 1555
- Our evening virtual drop in will continue to run every Wednesday evening via webchat from 6-8pm
- We are in the process of identifying carers at risk and initiating wellbeing calls to ensure they are safe and supported
 - We will continue to provide telephone, email, webchat and online support to carers
 - Carers can access our [Carers On-line Forum](#) and we plan to hold regular live wellbeing sessions with a support worker
- We are sending regular emails to carers with information about local initiatives and advice from local and central government

What has changed:

- Carers FIRST has suspended all Carers Groups and Activities until further notice
- Any request for face to face support will be strictly limited and assessed on a case by case need

We would welcome any opportunity to work collaboratively with other services in the area so we can ensure as many vulnerable people receive support during this challenging time so would be grateful if you could get in touch via your local contacts or email info@carersfirst.org.uk and let us know what services you are able to provide and how we might be able to support each other.

Community Links

we have a food bank – every Weds at 5-7pm – dried and packaged food only.
Anchor House has one and then I'm sure you know about the 8 through Newham Food Bank.
We have one at Asta on a Friday also.