

## EXTRA No 2 Early Help Newsletter Gloucester: March

Hello All,

This EXTRA 'no 2' newsletter is specifically designed for our Children and Families within Gloucester, so they know who they can turn to for advice and guidance. Please feel free to disseminate this to all families and children.

Our NHS colleagues are working tirelessly on helping to reduce the risk to our most vulnerable people and advice on anything relating to the illness will be found on <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Kindest regards Early Help Coordinators Gloucester

## Fair Shares community time banks

Well it looks all a bit gloomy out there. But it's times like this we're always reminded of the power of community and the strength of neighbours helping neighbours. I'm sure everyone has heard stories and reports of all the amazing acts of kindness and generosity from people in Gloucester and beyond. I know I'm grateful for living in a city with hundreds of community organisations, local groups and just amazing community minded individuals who are working hard to make life better for others. We're very proud that our own Fair Shares community is a part of this and we know you're all out there caring and thinking of your neighbours.

We're working with lots of different groups right now trying to make sure everyone who needs help can receive it and those who would like to help out have opportunities to do so. So the questions we have for you are:

Can you help out? Can you do some shopping? Can you walk a dog? Can you be a phone friend for someone who may be self isolating? Do you have any other ideas of how we can support people who may not be able to get out (look out for our regular sing song by Rich as our first experiment!)?

Do you need any help? Are you at home and can't get out and need someone to pick something up for you? Do you have elderly family or neighbours who you are worried about?

Please get in contact with us, either here, or by phone – 01452 415900 or by email – [Gloucester@fairshares.org.uk](mailto:Gloucester@fairshares.org.uk) and let's try to find ways to look after each other whilst keeping ourselves safe as well as other!

And lastly, remember you only get a rainbow when it rains!



All you have to do is create a picture of the theme of each week and place it in your window for children to see and find whilst out on walks. This is a little bit of fun during these hard times. You can be as creative as you like. Please share and get involved.

Facebook: Window Wonderland trail- Gloucester (and surrounding areas)



The hub includes four forms:

- **'I can offer help'** – is for those who are able to support neighbours with tasks such as picking up prescriptions, shopping, dog walking and more
- **'I need help'** – can be used by individuals to ask for support
- **'My neighbour needs help'** – may be used by people to request help on behalf of a neighbour, relative or friend who cannot access the internet themselves
- **'My business can help'** – will allow local businesses who may have skills and resources others could benefit from, to offer their help

The information collected will be shared with the relevant local council who will connect people who can help each other, or if appropriate refer individuals to an existing service.

Residents are encouraged to share details of the community help hub on social media using the hashtag #GlosCommunity

The hub will be accessible from every district council website, and from the county council's website at <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/helphub>

*Mark Hawthorne, leader of Gloucestershire County Council, said: "At times like these our communities really come together to help others and it's clear that there are many people who are keen to offer help where they can. Working together with our partners, we want to ensure that everyone is able to access the support they need and I'm confident that the community help hub will make this possible."*



The Family Information Service directory [www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk](http://www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk) holds a wide range of information advice, and signposting to support families, children and young people from 0 - 19 years of age (25 for young people with additional needs).

Freephone: 0800 542 02 02 Direct Line 01452 427362

### **National Trust**

We've sadly taken the decision to close our parks and gardens, in addition to our houses, shops and cafés, to help restrict the spread of coronavirus. We know that people are likely to need space and fresh air in the coming weeks and months and we will do all we can to provide access wherever possible. Our countryside and coastal locations remain open with parking charges waived, but we encourage people to stay local and observe social distancing measures. Please find more information on this here: <http://ow.ly/KXMw30qrDBH>

## Elderly & Vulnerable Priority Shopping Hours

**Sainsbury's**

Thursday - the first hour of opening.

**TESCO**

Monday, Wednesday and Friday,  
9am - 10am.  
(except Express stores).

**ASDA**

Friday - from store opening until 9am.

**M&S**

Monday and Thursday - the first hour  
of opening.

**Iceland**

The first hour of opening, every day.

**Morrisons**

Monday to Saturday, 9am - 10am.

**Waitrose**

The first hour of opening, every day.



Check local stores.



Check local stores.

HMRC have just set up a help line specifically for the self employed and businesses who will be struggling now due to the you know what



The Coronavirus helpline : 0300 456 3565

Apparently they will give you advice on your tax and any benefits you can claim for.

Hope we can all get through this ok together



Please share to all self employed.

Low-income families whose children are eligible for free school meals will be offered vouchers or meals at home, even if they are no longer attending school due to #coronavirus

Read more: [www.gov.uk/government/news/plans-set-out-to-support-pupils-eligible-for-free-school-meals](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/plans-set-out-to-support-pupils-eligible-for-free-school-meals)



Coronavirus (COVID-19) - Change to services:

As the Coronavirus continues to take hold, we are following the guidance of local authorities in service delivery.

From **Monday the 23<sup>rd</sup> March** the offices of GL Communities will be **closed** and all services will go through the following phone lines:

- **We have an advice line direct to Advisors – 01452 306581**
- **Our office line is 01452 505544 for the Trinity Centre**
- **Our office line is 01452 521557 for the Phoenix Centre**
- **Our office line is 01452 505001 for the Gateway**
- **We also have offices at The Hub in Podsmead which is 01452 415223**

If you need advice or support please give us a call.

### **Coronavirus - if you can't afford to top up**

Tell your supplier if you can't afford to top up because you're ill with coronavirus or following guidance to 'self-isolate'. You'll find their contact details on their website or on your bill.

They'll try to help you find other ways to keep your energy supply connected. For example:

- let someone else top up for you
- add funds to your account
- send you a pre-loaded top-up card

You'll need to pay back any credit your supplier gives you - ask them when and how you'll need to do this.

If your meter is outside and it's safe to get to it, it's a good idea to leave it unlocked. This means someone else could top it up for you.

If you've run out of credit and need gas or electricity urgently, contact your supplier to ask for temporary extra credit. You'll need to pay this back when you next top up.

If you have a prepayment meter because you're repaying a debt to your supplier, you can ask them to reduce the amount you repay each week. [Find out who your energy supplier is](#) if you're not sure.

Your supplier has to [replace your prepayment meter with a normal meter](#) (one that lets you pay for energy after you use it, rather than before) if you have a disability or illness that makes it:

- hard for you to use, read or put money on your meter
- bad for your health if your electricity or gas is cut off

Some suppliers add up heating separately. Unless you mention your electric heating, they might reduce the amount you pay back on the rest of your electricity, but leave your heating repayments the same.

### **Tell your supplier if you need extra support**

Your supplier has to treat you fairly and take your situation into account. Make sure they know about anything that could make it harder for you to pay. For example, tell them if you:

- are disabled
- have a long-term illness
- are over state pension age
- have young children living with you
- have financial problems - for example if you are behind on rent

Also ask whether you can be put on your supplier's [priority services register](#).

### **Check that your meter is working properly**

Meter faults are rare but can be expensive. [Check whether your meter is faulty](#) if you're running out of credit too quickly and nothing else seems to be wrong.

### **Further help**

[Contact the Citizens Advice consumer helpline](#) if you need more help or advice about stopping your supplier installing a prepayment meter.

If you're in debt, you might be able to [get financial help with paying for your energy](#). You might also be able to [save money on your gas and electricity](#), for example by switching to another supplier. Having a prepayment meter doesn't stop you switching unless you owe your current supplier more than £500 for gas or £500 for electricity.



### Top Tips for parents/carers whilst your child is not at school

1. Try to keep to a daily routine building in work time, down time, exercise, work on social/emotional skills
2. Show the day's activities on a visual timetable so that your child knows what to expect
3. Try and remain as calm as possible as this will help your child feel more calm and settled.
4. Use Social stories to explain what is happening and why
5. Have a quiet, distraction free area for your child to work as this will help them to focus
6. Try and ensure that the desk/table where the child is working only has the equipment that is relevant to the work they are doing.
7. Improve motivation by providing agreed rewards for both effort and achievement
8. Try to pick your battles! Decide what is really important to stick to and try not to worry about getting everything perfect all the time.
9. Stay in touch with other adults and friends – linking in and sharing ideas will be helpful for everyone. Consider use a video link (e.g. Facetime) sometimes to feel more connected.
10. Consider joining supportive on-line groups, for example The Gloucestershire Autism Support Group on Facebook
11. Take care of yourself as well as your child. Give yourself permission and time to do the things that help you feel relaxed and happy when your child is safe and settled

### Useful Websites and Resources

- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/supermovers>
- <https://scratch.mit.edu/explore/projects/games/>
- <https://blockly.games>
- <https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resources/covid19-school-closures>
- <https://www.teachyourmonstertoread.com/>
- <https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/>
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/>
- <http://www.treetoolsforschools.org.uk/menu/>
- <https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home>
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround>
- <http://primaryhomeworkhelp.co.uk/>
- <https://www.stageslearning.com/>
- <https://www.coolmathgames.com>
- <https://www.doodlemaths.com/>
- <https://thekidshouldseethis.com/>
- <https://www.literacysshed.com>
- <https://ed.ted.com>



### 'Be Kind' by Emily - aged 8 Gloucestershire

Don't think you can't do it if you're small, Because everyone can do it no matter who they are.

Don't feel left out because everybody is special.

Don't be selfish because it is unfair.

Don't think you're showing your weakness when you cry, because it's your strength.

Don't feel you got it wrong because you just need to learn it.

Don't feel you can't do it, because you can do it.

Don't go beside yourself because we are in this together.

#inittogether ♥