

Residents update from Dacorum Borough Council

www.dacorum.gov.uk/coronavirus



8 April 2020

Coronavirus

**A message from the Leader
of the Council,
Councillor Andrew Williams**



These are unprecedented times for all of us, with many concerns around loved ones, finances and how this will affect our livelihoods.

Our primary aim is to ensure that everyone who needs help is supported - especially the most vulnerable.

We take the welfare of our residents seriously and I want to reassure residents that we, along with our community partners, will do everything we can to ensure that the most vulnerable members of society are protected, and to ensure that essential council services continue during this challenging time.

We are supporting the local business community with advice on the government schemes and help that is available to them.

This is a rapidly changing situation and the government guidance is changing on a daily basis.

For updates on affected services, help and guidance, please visit our dedicated webpage www.dacorum.gov.uk/coronavirus

Delivering our services to you

Despite the rapidly changing situation, we will endeavour to continue delivering our day-to-day services. However, as the virus continues to spread throughout communities, this may impact our staffing levels, and affect the services we deliver.

We are prepared for this impact, and have plans in place to prioritise the services we know mean the most to you, and will redeploy our staff as necessary. This may become challenging at times, so please be patient with us.

Council facilities

In accordance with the government guidance and to protect staff and the public, all council facilities are closed to the public until further notice (unless stated otherwise).

Our online services remain available and we urge customers to use this facility. If your enquiry cannot be answered via our website, please email customer.services@dacorum.gov.uk or call **01442 228000**. Please only contact us for essential/urgent enquiries.

Council contractors

The council's contractors continue to undertake essential works where required. This includes compliance activities such as gas servicing because we still have a statutory requirement as a landlord to annually inspect gas appliances.

In addition, we will continue to respond to emergency repairs; a full list of what qualifies as an emergency repair can be found in the Tenants Handbook www.dacorum.gov.uk/tenantshandbook

Our contractors are following the government's COVID-19 guidelines and taking the necessary precautions to keep themselves and residents safe when undertaking works.

Housing

Supported Housing

Supported Housing, the service which provides accommodation for those aged 60 and over, is continuing to support its tenants during this difficult time. If you are a Supported Housing tenant, or a friend or relative and have concerns please contact the team on **01442 228347** or Hertfordshire Adult Social Services on **0300 123 4042**.

Lifeline Services

The Lifeline Service is continuing to operate as normal. Lifeline is an emergency community alarm that is available to all Dacorum residents. It provides users with an additional level of security so that users can continue to live independently in their own home. To find out more about the service, or to apply for a Lifeline unit, please get in touch with the team by email lifeline@dacorum.gov.uk, call **01442 228347** or visit www.dacorum.gov.uk/lifeline

Homelessness

If you become homeless, you should contact homelessnessprevention@dacorum.gov.uk or call **01442 228000**. If this is out of hours, please call **0800 018 60 50** for our 24 hour service.

Private Sector Housing

If a private sector resident is at risk of landlord harassment, concerns about a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO), illegal eviction, serious disrepair or safety issues (non DBC housing) they should contact us at pshousing@dacorum.gov.uk or call **01442 228000**.

Support for vulnerable people

We understand that this is a particularly worrying time for the more vulnerable people in our community. We will provide as much support as possible, together with other local organisations and voluntary groups.

Who is considered vulnerable?

If you are over 70, pregnant or have an underlying health condition you are likely to be more seriously affected by coronavirus and should ensure that you follow advice on how to protect yourself.

If you are at very high risk due to a serious underlying health condition (if you have a severe respiratory/heart condition, are undergoing treatment for cancer, have had an organ transplant or have a rare disease) you should have received a letter from the NHS giving specific advice on what to do and how to access help.

Further information and the latest advice is available on the NHS's website:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/advice-for-people-at-high-risk/>

HertsHelp

If you need help, from advice to assistance with shopping please contact HertsHelp. Visit: www.hertshelp.net, email: info@hertshelp.net or call 0300 123 4044.

You can also contact HertsHelp if you are concerned about a vulnerable person and think they need help.

How can I help vulnerable people in my local community?

If you are not vulnerable yourself and would like to help there is a Hertfordshire-wide initiative [#TeamHerts](https://www.thvolunteering.org.uk), which has been set up to mobilise volunteers during this difficult time. If you would like to volunteer please visit: www.thvolunteering.org.uk or call HertsHelp on 0300 123 4044.

Support for local businesses

We appreciate that many local businesses may face financial challenges over the coming months and we will do all we can to help. There are a number of schemes and grants that have been put in place by the government to try to reduce the economic impact of the pandemic.

For more details about any of these, please visit www.dacorum.gov.uk/covid-financial-support-for-businesses

If you have a business based in Dacorum, you do not need to do anything to access these grants, we will write to you directly if you are eligible. If you have any other business concerns, then please contact us directly via www.dacorum.gov.uk/business or phone our Economic Development team on **01442 531003**.

Financial support for individuals

The government has announced a range of measures to support individuals who may now be facing financial challenges through loss of work and jobs including an increase to the amount paid by Universal Credit and an uplift to the Local Housing Allowance.

Advice on how to claim for the first time and details regarding the Local Housing Allowance can be found at www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/coronavirus or call the Universal Credit helpline on **0800 328 5644** for support and advice.

For advice on council tax support please visit www.dacorum.gov.uk/counciltaxsupport

Help and advice

If you're self-isolating and you need emotional support or practical help

www.hertshelp.net

Info@hertshelp.net

HertsHelp: 0300 123 4044

Medical and health advice and information

www.nhs.uk/coronavirus

If you need help with a relationship, contact Mediation Herts for free support

www.mediationherts.org.uk or 01442 268 044

If you're experiencing domestic abuse or are concerned about someone else

www.hertssunflower.org

Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Helpline: 08 088 088 088

If you are in immediate danger always dial 999

Mental health advice and support

www.hertsmindnetwork.org

Herts Mind Network:

02037 273600

NHS mental health advice

www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-at-home-tips/

Financial advice

Money Advice Unit

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/benefits

www.dacorumcab.org.uk

Hertfordshire Citizens Advice Line: 03444 111 444

Help with claiming Universal Credit: 0800 144 8 444

Advice on avoiding and reporting scams

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/updates to sign up for scam alerts from trading standards

Citizens Advice consumer helpline: 0808 223 1133

www.actionfraud.police.uk/

Action Fraud: 0300 123 2040

Latest government information on coronavirus

www.gov.uk/coronavirus

Government Coronavirus Information Service on WhatsApp. Add 07860 064422 to your phone contacts and then message 'hi' in a WhatsApp message to get started.

For the latest Council information and advice visit: www.dacorum.gov.uk/coronavirus

Follow us on social media:



www.facebook.com/dacorum



@DacorumBC

Further information

Answers to frequently asked questions about coronavirus can be found on our website via www.dacorum.gov.uk/coronavirus

If you have any other concerns then please send an email to customer.services@dacorum.gov.uk or ring us on **01442 228000**.

Additional information for people with care and support needs as well as other Hertfordshire County Council service updates can be accessed at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk Alternatively you can contact them on **0300 123 4042**.

