

Latest Information from Wiltshire Council

Wiltshire Wellbeing Hub

We have set up a designated Wiltshire Wellbeing Hub specifically for our most vulnerable residents to receive support and guidance during COVID-19.

The phonenumber number is **0300 003 4576** and will be open from tomorrow (Saturday 27 March) for the duration of the pandemic. We will be publicising this number through Council, partner and media channels and I would be grateful if you could make your communities aware of it too.

We continue to keep our hubs open in Trowbridge, Chippenham and Salisbury for the following essential face-to-face services:

- Support for the homeless
- Adult social care
- Children's social care
- Support for vulnerable people

Our Customer Service Team continues to support our communities on all other matters through our customer services number **0300 456 0100**(lines open 9am - 5pm Monday to Friday) and via social media channels.

Information pack to support volunteer groups

The council has published a 'COVID-19 Volunteer Pack' today to help volunteer groups support their communities during the ongoing COVID-19 situation.

Many groups have shared their way of working with us and this pack brings together a lot of their best practise in setting up an effective response, including top tips on setting up a volunteer group, advice on supporting those in self-isolation, and a range of template forms and useful signposting to other resources.

The 'COVID-19 Volunteer Pack' can be downloaded at www.wiltshire.gov.uk and can be used in conjunction with the Community Groups

Directory <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/downloads/22069>. which lists all the volunteer groups the council has been informed are providing support in their community. This directory will be updated as much as possible.

Council Tax and Business Rate Payments

To support people as much as possible during the ongoing COVID-19 situation, the council has confirmed that no resident or business in Wiltshire will have to pay council tax or business rates until June 2020 if they are struggling.

Any resident wishing to defer paying their council tax in April and May 2020 can contact the council and this will be arranged. Those payments will then be taken in February and March 2021 instead, as council tax is normally only collected over the first ten months of the financial year.

Similarly, businesses who also wish to defer business rates payments for two months, and not pay in April and May, can also arrange that by contacting the council. For anyone wishing to do this, the council will freeze direct debit payments, so people do not need to contact their bank to arrange.

People should call **0300 456 0109** or email counciltax@wiltshire.gov.uk to request the deferral – these will be taken at face value and there will be no vetting of anyone wishing to defer payments for April and May 2020.

For those who choose to defer, payments will resume in June 2020 and will be taken over the 10 months from June 2020 to March 2021. For those that pay annually, they can still do so at <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/benefits-council-tax>. Those that make manual payments can also continue to do this if they wish, but they will need to contact the council if they want the April and May payment break.

Working age residents who benefit from the current Council Tax Support Scheme will receive an additional reduction to their bill in line with the government's hardship fund criteria. Those households eligible for this reduction will automatically be re-billed.

Business support

We are committed to supporting all of our businesses through these unprecedented times and will continue to work closely with Swindon and Wiltshire Growth Hub to ensure we deliver information and support to businesses as quickly as possible. The first of our COVID-19 Business newsletters was published this week ([Click here](#)) and we continue to provide updates on [our website and through social media channels.](#)

[Next week the council will be issuing a letter](#) to 10,000 businesses who we believe may be eligible for either the Small Business Grant Fund or the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund. The letter requests businesses to provide information on eligibility so please encourage any relevant businesses in your area to return this to us as quickly as possible so that we can release the grants to help support them. If businesses have any questions about the letter they can email covid-19businesssupport@wiltshire.gov.uk for further assistance.

The council welcomes the Chancellor's announcement yesterday regarding the introduction of a Self Employment Income Support Scheme bit.ly/SelfEmployedSupport which will:

- pay a taxable grant worth 80% of their profits up to a total of £2,500 per month. This scheme will be open for at least three months and grants can be claimed from June 2020
- be open to businesses with average trading profits of up to £50,000 over the last three years. Only those who are already self-employed and have a tax return for 2019 will be able to apply. HMRC will contact these businesses directly
- allow an extra four weeks from today for businesses to submit their tax return for those who missed the deadline
- provide eligible businesses access to Universal Credit with an advance payment available almost immediately after the claim has been submitted

Visiting Wiltshire Council hubs

Following government advice and to help stop the transmission of COVID-19, Wiltshire Council are asking people not to visit their hubs where possible.

A number of their key services can be dealt with online or over the phone including:

Adult Care 0300 456 0111 or

email AdviceandContact@wiltshire.gov.uk

Children's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub 0300 456 0108

Council tax enquiries – call 0300 456 0109 or

email counciltax@wiltshire.gov.uk. You can also manage your council tax [online](#).

Housing enquiries – call 0300 456 0104 or

email homes4wiltshire@wiltshire.gov.uk.

Homeless enquiries – call 01225 718005 for the Trowbridge area, 01249 706666 for the Chippenham area or 01722 434233 for the Salisbury area. Or email homeless@wiltshire.gov.uk

[Parking](#) enquiries - call 01249 706131 or

email parking@wiltshire.gov.uk.

Planning enquiries – call 0300 456 0114 or

email developmentmanagement@wiltshire.gov.uk.

Registration enquiries – call 0300 003 4569 for births and marriages and 0300 003 4570 for marriages. Or

email ceremonies@wiltshire.gov.uk.

Waste enquiries – call 0300 456 0102 or

email customerservices@wiltshire.gov.uk