

South Brent Assist Community Crisis Assistance



News release

20th April 2020

Villagers in South Brent Show Unrelenting Kindness

Villagers in South Brent have come together to support each other in response to the Coronavirus crisis. A month ago, a group of villagers and representatives from local organisations and businesses made a plan to help those self-isolating and experiencing financial hardship in the village and local parishes.

In a matter of days, villagers had volunteered to support community efforts, fundraising was underway and a team of volunteers organised a leaflet drop to homes across the village, providing details of a prescription collection service, shopping support, takeaway deliveries from local businesses and a phone befriending service. A Facebook group encouraged people to support each other and share information digitally.

Now over 160 volunteers have come forward, the community has set up and launched a new village food bank for those experiencing financial hardship, and over 400 deliveries of shopping have been made to those in self-isolation. Local counsellors, coaches and therapists have set up a listening service to support individuals' wellbeing and mental health and a phone befriending service has made 281 calls to those in isolation. Virtual church services are underway for villagers and email bulletins are keeping people informed about the changing situation.

Much of the effort was supported by staff, trustees and volunteers from South Brent and Community District Caring. Jane Sullivan, Charity Care Coordinator for South Brent and District Caring said:

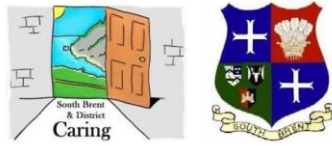
“It’s been a huge team effort. Some of my volunteers are helping me keep in touch with our regular lunch club and memory cafe attendees. We are working together with The Village Shop, the pharmacy, Foggs Deli, the Coop, the butcher and The Packhorse to support those self-isolating and vulnerable in our community.”

Villagers are being encouraged to look out for neighbours and there have been numerous acts of kindness. These have ranged from anonymous food donations on doorsteps, to offering to grow and share seedlings with the community. The food bank has reported donations of chocolate eggs for local families over Easter, and house plants have been delivered to lots of people self-isolating alone, organised by a village shop.

Dr James Hill is the Chair of Trustees for South Brent and District Caring:

“The response of volunteers, local businesses and donors to the crisis has been outstanding. The spirit of community and co-operation in the area has been wonderful and heart-warming to see and will leave a lasting legacy when we return to more normal times.”

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All the latest information for villagers in South Brent and the surrounding districts can be found at www.sbadc.org.uk. The team are now sharing information about how they have organised their response and hope this can be used to help other communities addresses similar challenges.

-ENDS-

South Brent is a village on the southern edge of Dartmoor in Devon.

South Brent and District Caring is a befriending service based in the Old School Community Centre in South Brent, Devon. It offers help to those living in South Brent and the surrounding area including Avonwick, North Huish, Diptford and Rattery Parishes.

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