

SUPPORT AND ADVICE

This is an anxious and uncertain time but I wanted you to know that Wendy Chamberlain MP, our local councillors and myself are ready to help in whatever way that we can.

You can email us at:

Wendy.chamberlain.mp@parliament.uk

Willie.rennie.msp@parliament.scot

Or phone on 01334 656361

I hope you find the following practical advice and information helpful.



COMMUNITY MUTUAL AID

Community Facebook Groups now exist to coordinate aid and support for people who fall ill. St Andrews Covid-19 Mutual Aid and Cupar COVID-19 Mutual Aid are two specific groups, but many other existing community groups are providing the same service. If you would like support to set up one for your community, please reply to this email.

You may wish to copy this postcard and post it through the letterboxes of your neighbours in case they need assistance.

HELLO! If you are self-isolating, I can help.

My name is
.....

I live locally at
.....

My phone number is
.....

If you are self-isolating due to COVID-19 I can help with:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Picking up shopping | <input type="checkbox"/> Posting mail |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A friendly phone call | <input type="checkbox"/> Urgent supplies |

Just call or text me and I'll do my best to help you (for free!)

Coronavirus is contagious. Please take every precaution to ensure you are spreading only kindness. Avoid physical contact (2m distance). Wash your hands regularly. Items should be left on your doorstep.

#ViralKindness

IF YOU FEEL UNWELL

If you have symptoms consistent with COVID19: Fever, shortness of breath and or a persistent cough you must stay at home and self-isolate for 7 days. Only call 111 (NHS 24) or your GP if you are in an at-risk group (older people/other health problems) or if your symptoms worsen dramatically.

After 7 days, if you feel better and no longer have a high temperature, you can return to your normal routine. If you have not had any signs of improvement and have not already sought medical advice, you should contact NHS 111 online at 111.nhs.uk. If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111. (the 14 day requirement from the WHO is for those who have been exposed to the virus but are not yet showing symptoms)

The cough may persist for several weeks in some people, despite the coronavirus infection having cleared. A persistent cough alone does not mean you must continue to self-isolate for more than 7 days.

www.nhsinform.scot/self-help-guides/self-help-guide-coronavirus-covid-19
www.scot.nhs.uk

If you want to know more about the scientific advice to government, you can find more at the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies:

www.gov.uk/government/news/update-from-sage-delay-phase-modelling?fbclid=IwAR3Z52ZGx8urGE5K_KjiNSsS1786CUYJCniU9QoLHIeNU788ugkoRVWAlfw

If a case is suspected, it won't be tested routinely. Testing will be conducted on a sample basis to gauge infection levels within communities.

www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-51895936

OLDER PEOPLE AND THOSE WITH EXISTING HEALTH PROBLEMS

Older people and those with previous conditions are not being asked to self-isolate now but to take measures to reduce the risk.

See the following advice from AgeScotland

www.ageuk.org.uk/scotland/information-advice/health-and-wellbeing/coronavirus/

NHS 24 have set up a helpline specifically for older people to call for advice and information on 0800 028 2816.

Please look out for elderly or infirm neighbours but be mindful of infection risk. If you have a concern about someone you can phone the council's Social Work Service Contact Centre on 03451 551503

If you are a carer for someone in your family, you may want to make an emergency plan with friends or family for the care of your loved one should you fall ill or need to self-isolate. If you are unable to provide care and no plan is in place, then you should call 03451 551503.

SCHOOLS

Schools will remain open for the time being. It is likely that they may need to close but when they do they may not re-open for several months- or until we've passed the 'viral peak'. Advice from clinicians is that at this early stage, keeping children in schools where they can be supervised and encouraged to wash hands etc, will be more hygienic than the informal gatherings children will form when off school. There is also a consideration on the childcare strain for working parents- particularly those in who work in health services.

Many schools are considering how to deliver lesson content remotely should schools be closed, especially for exam candidates.

Trips: Planned overseas school trips will now not go ahead until further notice.

Exams: the SQA has released a statement saying that the Summer timetable for exams is unaltered at this time but they are monitoring the situation. Keep up to date at their website: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/70972.html

WORK AND EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

Different companies have different policies, so best to check with your employer. Businesses are advised to continue as usual but to keep assessing risk and necessity of larger meetings.

Statutory sick pay (SSP) is money paid by employers, casual or agency workers are eligible but self-employed workers are not. SSP is £94.25 a week. The chancellor said that SSP would be paid for people told to isolate even if they do present symptoms. You are now eligible for SSP from first day off (not 4th day as before) and can get a sick note by calling NHS 111.

Businesses with fewer than 250 employees will be able to claim back from the government two weeks of SSP paid to staff affected by the virus.

Self-employed people will be able to access statutory benefits like universal credit to cover pay.

Currently no provision for those zero hour workers earning less than £118 (what you need to earn as minimum for SSP), but it is worth checking with your employer in case they have chosen to set up provision.

EVENTS

Scottish Government guidance has said that no public events of more than 500 people should take place. Those requiring police or ambulance and emergency services support will be cancelled.

A number of local organisers of community summer fairs have been in touch to ask about planning. It is estimated that we will reach the peak of the virus in late May or June. It is unlikely that the event restrictions will be lifted until long after this, so you should plan on this basis.

TRAVEL

Anyone planning travel in the next few weeks are advised that both outward and return travel might be disrupted, depending on continued spread of virus. It is vital that you check the extent of your travel insurance cover, particularly with regard to falling sick overseas, repatriation and cancellation provisions.

For the latest travel advice go to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>

BUSINESSES

The Scottish Government has new measures to limit the impact of COVID-19 on the business community. For 2020/21:

- a 75% rates relief for retail, hospitality and leisure sectors with a rateable value of less than £69,000 from 1 April 2020 (this differs from the relief in England of 100% up to £51,000 RV)
- an £80 million fund to provide grants of at least £3,000 to small businesses in sectors facing the worst economic impact of COVID-19 (sectors still to be determined)
- 1.6% rates relief for all properties across Scotland, effectively reversing the planned below inflation uplift in the poundage from 1 April 2020
- a fixed rates relief of up to £5,000 for all pubs with a rateable value of less than £100,000 from 1 April 2020
- Councils are also being urged to respond positively to requests from rate payers for payment deferrals for a fixed period.

www.bgateway.com

www.businessgatewayfife.com

ADVICE

I now share my office with Wendy Chamberlain MP. We are located at Unit G3, The Granary, Coal Road, Cupar. KY15 5YQ.

For more regular updates on my work, please like or follow my Facebook page www.facebook.com/WillieRennieFife

On Instagram it is <https://www.instagram.com/willie.rennie/>

Or I'm here on twitter https://twitter.com/willie_rennie

Willie Rennie

Member of the Scottish Parliament

North East Fife

Leader, Scottish Liberal Democrats