

Flintshire Together



Useful
information
for residents



Sir y Fflint a chi yn ymladdi Coronafeirws COVID-19 **fel un**
Together we are Fighting Coronavirus COVID-19

Helpu pobl #Arwasdref #Achubbywyddau #FCC
Helping people #Stayhome #SaveLives #FCC

We as a Council are continually looking at ways to help our residents during these unprecedented times.

We have put together this booklet of information from the Council and our partners which we hope you will find useful and beneficial - both from the Council and our partners.

The booklet contains a wide range of topics including:

- Key Council contact details
- Safeguarding information
- Help and advice on Council Tax and rent
- Welsh Water
- Warm Wales
- Fire Service
- Be aware of scams

We want to take this opportunity to remind you how we can help during this emergency situation to ensure you stay safe and are receiving the care and support you need. It is a challenging time for everyone. If you need help, contact us between 8.30 a.m. and 5.00 p.m. Monday-Friday on **01352 752121**.

Our friendly team will talk to you about the help we can provide. We can arrange for food and medicine to be delivered to your home and keep you in touch with people. We have already helped members of our community and this has really supported them to keep safe and follow the advice given by Welsh Government. Please keep safe and continue to follow the advice you have been given.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Colin Everett". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Colin Everett
Chief Executive

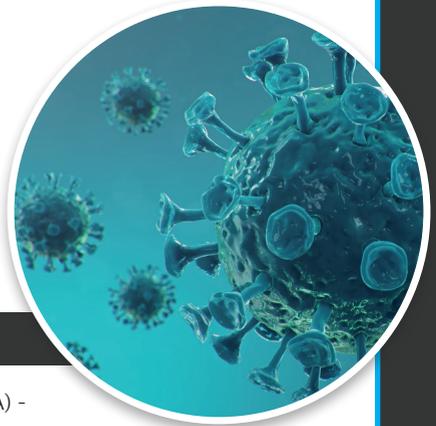
In this challenging and fast-developing national and international situation we are reviewing the arrangements for Council services on a daily basis.

To keep you updated, we have a web page Coronavirus (Covid-19):

Council services update

www.flintshire.gov.uk/COVID-19

We have also developed a set of frequently asked questions which can be accessed on the council services update page. Information for our vulnerable residents is contained in these FAQs.



Useful contact details

- Adult Services Single Point of Access (SPOA) - **03000 858858** or SPOA@flintshire.gov.uk
- Flintshire County Council Contact Centre - **01352 752121**
- Flintshire Local Voluntary Council - **01352 744000**
- Flintshire Family Information Service:
Email:(for Family Information Service enquiries only)
fisf@flintshire.gov.uk
- Websites: www.dewis.wales or www.fis.wales

Help is at hand

- Are you concerned about your mental health and well-being?
- Do you need support to help you through this stressful period?
- The Dewis website has details of a range of mental health and well-being support services.

Flintshire working together to safeguard our children and vulnerable people

We all need to be looking after each other at this difficult time more than ever. If you have concerns or suspicions about a child in Flintshire being harmed, a family needing support or an adult who is at risk, please phone:

- **01352 701000** to report concerns about children;
- **03000 858858** to report concerns about adults;
- Flintshire Youth Justice Service and Flintshire Sorted offices are currently closed but if you need to speak to someone please call **01352 701125** and leave a message and someone will get back to you.
- Alternatively, outside regular office hours, please phone the Duty Social Worker on: **0345 0533116**.
- Child Protection referrals or queries can be emailed to **ChildProtectionReferral@flintshire.gov.uk**.
- Adult Protection referrals or queries can be emailed to **SSDuty@flintshire.gov.uk**.

Please remember that in all cases if your query is a police matter call **101** for non-urgent enquiries or if the matter is urgent please contact **999**.

We want to reassure you that our child and adult protection services are continuing and we are relying on professionals and the public to report any concerns they may have about children, families and adults at risk.



Help and advice with Council Tax and housing costs

In the current situation, some people may have difficulties and may be worried that they cannot make their regular Council Tax or rent payments.

We are here to offer support and advice if you find yourselves in this situation. If you are in need of advice and assistance with Council Tax Team, contact our Council Tax team on **01352 704848** or by email at local.taxation@flintshire.gov.uk.

- If Council tenants are worried about falling into arrears it is important to speak to the Rent Income Team on **01352 703838** or by email at rents@flintshire.gov.uk

The Council is committed to supporting residents and we are on hand to agree affordable repayment plans.

- If you rent privately or have a mortgage and are worried about your housing costs, you could contact your landlord or mortgage provider. You may be able to agree a payment holiday or payment reduction. If you are worried about your housing situation contact our Housing Solutions Team on **01352 703515** or email housing.support@flintshire.gov.uk. Alternatively Shelter Cymru offer Independent Housing Advice and Expert Debt Advice. You can call them **08000 495495** or visit their [website www.sheltercymru.org.uk](http://www.sheltercymru.org.uk).
- If you usually pay your Council Tax or rent at Flintshire Connects which are now closed, there are other ways to pay. If you are able, you can make on-line payments. We also offer an automated payment service (ATP) by calling **01352 704470**.
- If residents can only pay in cash, the advice is to keep the money to one side until the cash payment facilities in Flintshire Connects have re-opened. It is always worth getting in touch with the Council Tax or rent service so that we are aware of your circumstances.

Please be aware that call volumes are very high and we are receiving large numbers of emails but will respond as quickly as we can. We appreciate your patience and cooperation at this time.



Warm Wales COVID-19 Service Update



WARM WALES
CYMRU GYNNES

Available services

Community Support Helplines

North Wales: 01352 711 751

South Wales: 01656 747 617

Our Community Workers are providing a telephone support service, this can offer help and support to people who are:

- Struggling to keep their home warm
- Worried about paying energy bills
- Affected by a change in income or employment
- Need advice on benefit availability



Preparing for winter

When the sun is shining, it's the perfect time to start getting your home winter ready. Warm Wales can help by making referrals for work to be done when the lockdown ends.

Referrals for qualifying households include: Nest for home improvements and Wales & West Utilities for new gas connections. Call 01656 747 622 for further details.



Information distribution

Information about our services and other community resources are being published on our Twitter and Facebook pages.

 warmwales

 warmwalescic

www.warmwales.org.uk
01656 747622
information@warmwales.org.uk

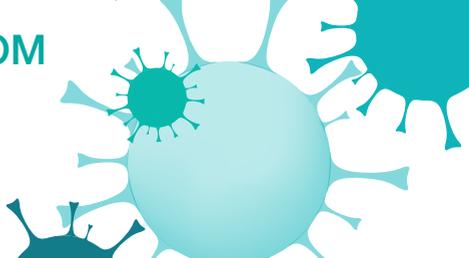


HEALTHY HOMES
HEALTHY PEOPLE
CARTREI IACH
POBL IACH



WALES & WEST
UTILITIES

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FROM FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL



Ongoing situation. What support is available?

Changes to Job Centre Appointments

If you are in receipt of benefits you do not have to attend the jobcentre appointments for three months, starting from Thursday 19th March 2020. You will continue to receive your benefits as normal but all requirements to attend the jobcentre in person are suspended. You can still make your applications for benefit online as long as you're eligible.

Jobcenters remain open and will continue to support people who are not able to use phones and online, including homeless people. To find out more please visit <https://www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/coronavirus/>

What can you claim?

If you're following government guidance because you have coronavirus symptoms, you'll be considered unfit for work. You'll also be considered unfit for work if you're staying at home, or 'self-isolating', because you've been in contact with someone with coronavirus.

You'll get statutory sick pay (SSP) if you're considered unfit for work and are usually entitled to it - check if you're entitled to SSP.
<https://www.gov.uk/statutory-sick-pay>

If you are not eligible to receive sick pay you can apply for either Universal Credit or New Style Employment and Support Allowance
<https://www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit>
<https://www.gov.uk/employment-support-allowance/eligibility>
Job Retention Scheme

The Government have recently introduced the 'Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme'. This is to help employees that have had their pay reduced to 80% due to Coronavirus. If **ALL** the criteria below are met, please get in touch with us as you may be entitled to more Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Reduction.

- You are still employed and remain on your employer's payroll, and you are **NOT** currently undertaking any form of work, and you are receiving 80% of your normal pay.

Self Employed

If you have to take time off work and you don't get paid while you're off, you might be entitled to claim benefits. If you're already claiming Housing Benefit and or Council Tax Support please email the office at benefits@flintshiregov.uk and we will aim to contact you within 48 hours or alternatively please contact the office on **01352 704848** but please note that we may be experiencing high volumes of calls.

For more information on the Self-employment Income Support Scheme please use the following link;
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-a-grant-through-the-coronavirus-covid-19-self-employment-income-support-scheme>

Housing Benefit/Council Tax Reduction

If you have had a change in your circumstances please contact the

benefit office by emailing benefits@flintshire.gov.uk and we will aim to contact you within 48 hours or alternatively please contact the office on **01352 704848** but please note that we may be experiencing high volumes of calls.

Universal Credit Minimum Income Floor (MIF)

If you are self-employed, the Minimum Income Floor (MIF) won't apply to you after 6 April 2020. This change will apply to you if you claim Universal Credit (UC) and will last until the coronavirus outbreak is over. New UC claimants do not have to attend a job center to provide evidence that they are self-employed. These will be dealt with on a case by case basis when new claimants contact UC.

Advice and Support

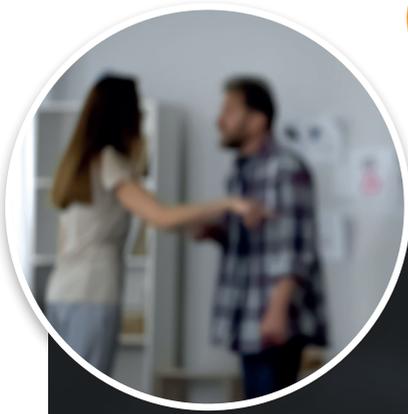
If you are finding it difficult to make a claim for Housing Benefit and or Council Tax during this difficult time then please contact the Welfare Reform Team by emailing wrrt@flintshire.gov.uk who may be able to assist you with completing an application form. If you are finding it difficult to budget and pay bills or need help to understand what support is available to you then please email wrrt@flintshire.gov.uk alternatively please contact the office on **01352 704848** but please note that we may be experiencing high volumes of calls.



Live Fear Free

Domestic abuse is a largely hidden crime, occurring primarily at home.

The current crisis may mean that you are facing increased danger. If you have experienced domestic abuse or sexual violence, or are worried about a friend or relative who is experiencing domestic abuse or sexual violence, you can call the **Live Fear Free Helpline for free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**



Live Fear Free Helpline
Llinell Gymorth
Byw Heb Ofn
0808 80 10 800



Having problems paying your water bill?

If you're having problems paying your bill, please don't ignore them, we have a number of ways we may be able to help you.



Dŵr Cymru
Welsh Water

Spread the cost of your bill over instalments by setting up a payment plan.

- Setup a Direct Debit using our online Direct Debit form (annual, half-year, monthly or weekly instalments available).
- If you would prefer to pay via a payment card you can set this up using our online payment card form.

If you are already paying via instalments and you're still struggling, please don't ignore any problems instead take a look at other schemes below which aim to help make your water bill more affordable.

Or if you have a particular problem in getting the money to us because of illness or disability, you can pay us in a different way which may be more convenient.



Ways to make your water bill more affordable

- Pay your water charges automatically through your benefits with our **Water Direct scheme** and we'll reduce your bill by £25!
- Our **HelpU** tariff fixes charges at an affordable rate for low income households in receipt of means-tested benefits.
- Our **Water Sure Wales** scheme caps your bill at a maximum of £343 which may reduce your bill.
- The **Customer Assistance Fund** gives you affordable instalments and helps you clear what you owe <https://www.dwrcymru.com/en/My-Account/Help-Paying-My-Water-Bill.aspx> or Telephone 0800 052 0145.

Priority Services

At times, some customers need a little extra help. For example, you may be a parent with a young baby, a dialysis patient, have sight or hearing difficulties or are elderly or disabled. By joining our Priority Services Register you can get extra help with:



- bottled water if your supply is interrupted
- alternative ways of getting information
- reassurance against bogus callers

<https://www.dwrcymru.com/en/My-Account/Priority-Services.aspx> or
Telephone **0800 052 0145**.



Look out for COVID-19 scams

Criminals are exploiting fears about COVID-19 to prey on members of the public, particularly older and vulnerable people.

Please be vigilant - examples of these scams are:

- criminals targeting older people on their doorstep and offering to do their shopping. Any genuine person will carry ID - ask to see it;
- doorstep cleansing services offering to disinfect drives and doorways;
- fake sanitisers, face masks and Covid-19 swabbing kits sold online and door-to-door. These products can often be dangerous and unsafe.



Telephone scams including criminals claiming to be:

- your bank, mortgage lender or utility company;
- from the Council saying you have to pay for your black bin to be emptied and asking for bank details;
- a pre-recorded message saying face masks are compulsory and where you can buy them.

If you do receive any calls like this, hang up straight away.

- Thieves extorting money from consumers by claiming they are collecting donations for a COVID-19 'vaccine'.

To avoid these scams:

- be sceptical if you receive an email, text or WhatsApp message and never click on any attachments or links;
- never provide personal information - scammers can use this information to steal your identity;
- don't allow yourself to be pressured into donating money.

You can get further information on dealing with scams and fraud by calling the Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 0808 223 1133.



FIRE SAFETY IN THE HOME

*Keeping you safe from fire,
while you stay safe at home.*

IN THE KITCHEN...

DON'T leave pans unattended while cooking and NEVER leave children and pets in the kitchen alone.

Keep cooking areas clear from combustible items like tea towels, oven gloves and food packaging.

Clean your oven and grill regularly. A build up of fat and grease can cause a fire.

Ditch the chip pan.

ELECTRICAL ITEMS

Check your electrical appliances are in good working order. If the wires are damaged or frayed, do not use them.

DON'T leave washing machines, tumble dryers or dishwashers running overnight.

HEATERS should be kept well away from clothes, curtains, furniture and other flammable materials.

NEVER use heaters to dry clothes.

Make sure they're switched off and unplugged before you go to bed.



SMOKE ALARMS

save lives, but only if they're working. You should have **AT LEAST ONE** smoke alarm on every level of your home. You should test your smoke alarms at least weekly.

ONE SOCKET = ONE PLUG



Don't overload your plug sockets. Appliances such as washing machines should have a single plug to themselves as they are high powered.



CANDLES should never be left unattended when lit and should be fully extinguished before you leave the room or go to bed.

Keep candles away from flammable items like curtains, furniture, bedding, clothing or books. Consider using LED battery operated candles instead.

ESCAPE ROUTES

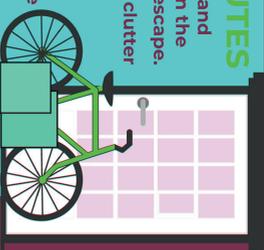
Plan an escape route and make sure everyone in the home knows how to escape.

Keep exits clear from clutter and obstructions.

Keep your door and window keys in a known and accessible place.

Think of a second escape route in case the first one is blocked.

If you have an emergency pendant, make sure you wear it and have it close by at bedtime.



PUT IT OUT - RIGHT OUT



NEVER smoke in bed.

Take extra care if you smoke when tired, taking prescription drugs that make you feel drowsy or have been drinking.

Be sure to use a proper ashtray that can't tip over.

Be careful if you smoke and use emollient creams - they can soak into clothing, bedding and dressings leaving a flammable residue.

**REMEMBER, IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE,
GET OUT, STAY OUT, AND CALL 999.**

If you don't have working smoke alarms, please contact your local fire and rescue service (not 999) for advice by calling:

0800 169 1234



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Chiefs Council



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