

Coronavirus

Advice for Residents in North Ayrshire

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Adult Protection

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I am concerned about the welfare of an adult. What should I do?

If the adult is in immediate danger, contact the police by telephoning 101. In an emergency call 999.

You can also raise any concerns with our Social Work team by calling:

01294 310005 (Three Towns)
01294 310300 (Irvine/Kilwinning)
01505 684551 (Garnock)
01475 687592 (Largs) / 01770 600742 (Arran)
0800 328 7758 (Out of Hours)

Child Protection

HOME

I am concerned about the welfare of a child. What should I do?

If the child is in immediate danger, contact the police by telephoning 101. In an emergency call 999.

You can also raise any concerns with our Social Work team by calling:

01294 310005 (Three Towns)
01294 310300 (Irvine/Kilwinning)
01505 684551 (Garnock)
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0800 328 7758 (Out of Hours)

Business Enquiries

HOME

I run a small business and need advice and support in relation to Coronavirus. Who should I get in touch with?

You can contact our Business Development Team by telephone on 01294 449944.

Care/Disability Support

HOME

I need some support in relation to (eg) District Nurses, Home Helps, Care at Home, Community Psychiatric Nurses, Social Work or the Sensory Impairment team. Who should I contact?

Please get in touch with our Service Access team on:

01294 310005 (Three Towns)
01294 310300 (Irvine/Kilwinning)
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0800 328 7758 (Out of Hours)

I have an enquiry about wheelchairs, walking aids, commodes or other occupational therapy equipment. Who should I contact?

Please get in touch with our Service Access team on:

01294 310005 (Three Towns)
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Community Groups

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I would like to know what other types of support are available in my local community. Who can I get in touch with?

Our Community Hubs can provide information about support in your area. To contact your local hub, call the Contact Centre on 01294 310000. Further information about Community Hubs can be found [here](#).

Coronavirus Support and Information

[HOME](#)

I am looking for some general information and advice about Coronavirus. Where can I access that?

If you have internet access, visit the NHS Inform site [here](#).

There is also a free helpline on 0800 028 2816, which is open from 8am to 10pm each day.

If you are an older person, Age Concern have some advice on their website [here](#).

Financial Advice

[HOME](#)

I have some issues or concerns regarding my benefits. Who can I speak to for advice?

For all residents of North Ayrshire, our Money Matters team can:

- Complete a benefits check for you.
- Confirm the benefits you are entitled to.
- Help you to dispute benefits decisions.
- Help you to dispute benefits sanctions.
- Provide appeal representation.

To get in touch, email moneymatters@north-ayrshire.gov.uk, or call 01294 310456.

If you are a carer for a family member or friend, whether paid or unpaid, you can contact North Ayrshire Carer's Centre on 01294 311333.

Scottish Welfare Fund & Crisis Grants

To find out more about Scottish Welfare Fund and Crisis Grants, click [here](#) or telephone 01294 310001.

I am a North Ayrshire Council tenant who is worried about debt. Who can I speak to?

The North Ayrshire Welfare Reform Team delivers welfare and debt advice to council tenants across North Ayrshire. You can contact them on 0300 999 4606.

I am a Cunninghame Housing Association tenant who is worried about debt. Who can I speak to?

The Financial Inclusion Officer at Cunninghame Housing Association can:

- Give you general advice and information on a wide range of benefits.
- Check which benefits you should be receiving.
- Help to fill in claim forms.
- Mediate/negotiate on your behalf on repayment arrangements from rent or other debts.
- Give you help and advice on fuel issues.
- Provide advice on money and budgeting.
- Make referrals to specialist agencies.

If you are having difficulties call 01294 468360, or speak to your local housing officer.

There is also information on the Cunninghame Housing Association website [here](#).

I am caring for a child and worried about debt. Who can I contact?

Parentline Scotland's Money Advisors can support parents and carers across Scotland, especially those who are struggling with debt, caring for others or with uncertainties about work or [welfare benefits](#).

You can arrange to speak to a Money Advisor by contacting 0800 0282 233, or visit the website [here](#).

As a North Ayrshire resident, who else can I turn to for debt advice?

The Community Housing Advocacy Project (CHAP) provides services for all North Ayrshire residents. These include:

- Negotiating repayments with creditors, including payday loan lenders.
- Advice on bankruptcy.
- Representation at court proceedings.
- Accredited Debt Arrangement Scheme (DAS) Advisors.
- Assistance with Council Tax Arrears.

You can call them on 01294 475636. You can also visit their website [here](#).

The Citizens Advice Direct/Advice Scotland helpline can also be contacted on 0808 800 9060.

I am unable to access my bank or post office account due self- isolation. How can I collect my pension?

Do you have a trusted family member/friend who can help? If not, please contact our Service Access team on:

01294 310005 (Three Towns)
01294 310300 (Irvine/Kilwinning)
01505 684551 (Garnock)
01475 687592 (Largs) / 01770 600742 (Arran)
0800 328 7758 (Out of Hours)

Current advice on Post Office pensions can be found [here](#).

I am worried about paying my utility bills. Who should I contact?

You should contact your energy supplier in the first instance.

However, should you require assistance or advocacy then Citrus Energy may be able to help. You can contact them by calling freephone 0800 221 8089 between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Thursday, and 9am to 4.30pm on a Friday. You can leave a voicemail in the evenings and at weekends and an energy advisor will get back to you.

Further information and advice in relation to topping up pre-paid meters while self-isolating is available via the Money Saving Expert website [here](#).

I am not a member of the shielded group, however I am self-isolating and have less than two days' supply of food left in the house. What can I do?

Do you have a family member, friend or neighbour who can help?

If not, please call our Contact Centre on 01294 310000 to be connected to one of our Community Hubs. Further information about Community Hubs can be found [here](#).

I am not a member of the shielded group, however I am self-isolating and need some help to set up online food deliveries. Who can I contact?

Please call our Contact Centre on 01294 310000 to be connected to one of our Community Hubs. Further information about Community Hubs can be found [here](#).

I have received a letter from the Chief Medical Officer to say I am in the shielding group. How can I access food?

You can find out more about the shielding service [here](#).

What is the SMS shielding service?

The SMS Shielding Service allows the Scottish Government to keep in touch with you. It will send automated messages to ask whether you need the Scottish Government to arrange a weekly delivery of basic groceries for you.

The Scottish Government will also use it to check whether you need medications delivered, and to keep you up to date with other forms of support available to you. Please have your CHI number to hand when you call/text them. Your CHI number can be found at the top of the letter you will have received.

If you do not have a mobile phone, you will still be able to access support with daily living through North Ayrshire Council by calling our Contact Centre on 01294 310000.

If your GP or specialist clinician has told you that you're in the shielding group but you haven't yet received a letter from the Chief Medical Officer, you may find that there is a delay of several days before you are able to register for the text message service while your records are being updated. If you need help arranging groceries or other support while you are waiting to be able to register, call our Contact Centre on 01294 310000.

Further information about Community Hubs can be found [here](#).

Signing up for the National SMS Shielding Service

To sign up, you need to text the service your 10-digit CHI number. Please only include your CHI number in your message, don't include any other words or information. This will make sure that the Scottish Government service can identify your CHI number and check it against our records to confirm you are eligible for shielding services. If you get a response saying that your CHI number has not been recognised, you may have made a mistake entering it – please try again.

You might not need the service right now, but registering will also help Scottish Government to keep in touch with you if you need help later on. If you encounter difficulties registering for the SMS, it is likely that any issues are short term network issues. You can register with North Ayrshire Council for food/prescriptions in these circumstances by calling our Contact Centre on 01294 310000.

Further information about Community Hubs can be found [here](#).

How to order Food from the national Scottish Government service

Once you are registered with the SMS Shielding Service, you can order a grocery pack by sending the service a text that says 1BOX.

If there is more than one person in your household, you can text 2BOX to order 2 boxes (they will be delivered on the same day as each other).

If you cannot lift the grocery pack to bring it in from outside, you may need to bring items inside a few at a time.

Frequency of Scottish Government deliveries

Your first package will be delivered within a week from the day you place your order, so do not wait until you have run out of food to order. After your first delivery, you will automatically receive your grocery pack(s) once a week on the same day, until you stop the service, so you do not need to order again. Deliveries will continue on Bank Holidays.

Stopping food deliveries

You do not have to register for this service if you do not need it. If your circumstances change and you find you no longer need this service, you can text STOPBOX to the SMS Shielding Service, or call our Contact Centre on 01294 310000. Text 1BOX or 2BOX at any time to start the service again, or call our Contact Centre. Further information about Community Hubs can be found [here](#).

Priority supermarket delivery slots

The Scottish Government is working with supermarkets in Scotland to make sure individuals who are shielding have access to priority delivery slots. You'll pay for these deliveries in the normal way, but having a guaranteed delivery will allow you to choose what you want each

week. The simplest way to find out more about this service is to make sure you've joined the SMS Shielding Service.

As soon as the Scottish Government can, they'll contact you using the SMS Shielding Service with details of how to get priority supermarket deliveries. If you cannot access the SMS Shielding Service, we can help you with a food delivery if you call our Contact Centre on 01294 310000. Further information about Community Hubs can be found [here](#).

Financially able

Are you in a position financially to buy food, but cannot yet obtain a supermarket delivery slot? Please call our Contact Centre on 01294 310000 who will be able to connect you to your closest Community Hub. The staff there will be able to provide you with details of any smaller local shops that are offering a delivery service. Further information about Community Hubs can be found [here](#).

Homelessness

[HOME](#)

I am homeless or worried about being made homeless. Who can I contact?

Please call North Ayrshire Housing advice services on 01294 314600 or email housing-info-advice@north-ayrshire.gov.uk. On evenings, weekends and bank holidays you can call the out of hours number on 0800 0196500.

Housing Support

[HOME](#)

I'm in North Ayrshire rented or private rented accommodation and have a housing problem relating to Coronavirus. Who should I contact?

Please call North Ayrshire Housing advice services on 01294 314600 or email housing-info-advice@north-ayrshire.gov.uk. On evenings, weekends and bank holidays you can call the out of hours number on 0800 0196500.

Mental Health and Well-Being

[HOME](#)

I am feeling depressed, lonely, distressed, anxious or stressed and need to talk to someone about my mental well-being. Who can I speak to?

There is lots of help available to support you at this time, so please try not to worry.

Do you already use North Ayrshire Mental Health services? Do you have a:

- Mental health social worker, if so please call 01294 476000.
- Community Psychiatric Nurse (CPN) or Consultant Psychiatrist, if so please call

01294 470010.

If you don't use North Ayrshire Mental Health Services, you can speak to your GP or arrange an appointment with one of our Community Link Workers, who can point you in the right direction for support. You can get in touch with a Community Link Worker by calling the Contact Centre on 01294 310000.

The Samaritans charity offers support to people who are suicidal or despairing. Call 116 123 (lines open 24 hours).

Breathing Space offers free, confidential support for people experiencing low mood, depression or anxiety. Call 0800 83 85 87 (Monday to Thursday, 6pm to 2am, then Friday to Monday, 6pm to 6am).

If you have online access, visit the NHS Inform site [here](#), where you will find a helpful section on managing your mental well-being.

The NHS also has a free helpline on 0800 028 2816 which you can call for information or advice relating to Coronavirus. The helpline is open daily from 8am to 10pm.

If you are an older person, Age Concern has some great advice too. Click [here](#) to read more.

We have some telephone befriending volunteers who would be happy to stay in touch with you during the pandemic. If you'd like to be put in touch with someone, please call our Contact Centre on 01294 310000. Further information about Community Hubs can be found [here](#).

Prescriptions

HOME

I am shielding or self-isolating and I'm unable to collect my prescription. What can I do?

Does your pharmacy normally deliver your prescription? This service may be continuing. Contact your pharmacy to find out.

Do you have a neighbour, friend or family member that can help? If not, don't worry. Get in touch with our Contact Centre on 01294 310000 and they will connect you to your local Community Hub who will be able to help. Further information about Community Hubs can be found [here](#).

I receive an addiction prescription, but I'm unable to collect it as I am shielding or self-isolating. Is there anyone who could help?

Please call North Ayrshire Drug and Alcohol Recovery Service (NADARS) on 01294 476 000.

I have just been released from prison and need some guidance on benefits or resettlement assistance. Who should I contact?

If you were on remand, you will not have received a liberation grant and will need to restart your benefits claim. If you need help or advice regarding claiming benefits, you can contact our Money Matters team by emailing moneymatters@north-ayrshire.gov.uk or calling 01294 310456.

If you were serving a prison sentence, you will have a liberation grant and will need to restart your benefit claim. If you need help or advice regarding claiming benefits, you can contact our Money Matters team by emailing moneymatters@north-ayrshire.gov.uk or calling 01294 310456

Was your sentence less than 4 years? If yes, then you are entitled to voluntary throughcare - a service that can provide a social work assistant to signpost and assist you with resettlement. You can call to arrange this on 01294 463924.

Scam Callers

I am worried about scam callers. How do I know if someone calling from North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership or North Ayrshire Council is genuine?

North Ayrshire Council has produced a leaflet which can help you to decide whether a caller is who they say they are. You can read the leaflet [here](#).

What is Shielding?

Shielding is a range of measures that can be taken to protect extremely vulnerable people from coming into contact with Coronavirus, by minimising all interaction between them and others. These can include medical issues such as:

- Solid organ transplant recipients.
- People with specific cancers.
- People with severe respiratory conditions.
- People with rare diseases including all forms of interstitial lung disease/sarcoidosis and inborn errors of metabolism that significantly increase the risk of infections.
- People on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection.
- People who are pregnant with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired.

As a result, some people have received a letter from the Chief Medical Officer for Scotland advising them to isolate themselves (“shielding”) for a period of at least 12 weeks. There are currently 4,342 shielded people across North Ayrshire.

Those is the ‘shielding’ group should:

- Not leave their homes.
- Minimise all non-essential contact with other members of their household.

If anyone has a query about why they have received a shielded letter (or have not received a letter and believe they should have) they should contact their GP.

Other Vulnerable Groups

[HOME](#)

In week beginning the April 20, the government will write to a further wide range of vulnerable people who require to continue to ‘social distance’. This vulnerable group includes:

- Older people over 70 years.
- People with medical conditions which require them to have a flu jab.
- People with disabilities.
- Supported Mental Health.
- Pregnant.

People in these groups are encouraged to contact our Community Hubs by calling the Contact Centre on 01294 310000 if they need assistance in obtaining food or prescriptions throughout the 12-week period. For access to other services, please call our Service Access team on:

01294 310005 (Three Towns)
01294 310300 (Irvine/Kilwinning)
01505 684551 (Garnock)
01475 687592 (Largs) / 01770 600742 (Arran)
0800 328 7758 (Out of Hours)

What is Social Distancing?

[HOME](#)

Social distancing measures are steps everyone should take to reduce the social interaction between people. This will help reduce the spread of Coronavirus.

They are:

- Avoid contact with someone who is displaying symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19) - these symptoms include high temperature and/or new and continuous cough.
- Stay at home and only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you can’t

work from home).

- Only take one form of exercise a day, for example a run, walk or cycle alone or with members of your household.
- Stay 2 metres (6 feet) away from other people at all times if you go out.
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home.
- Do not meet others, even friends or family - if parents don't live together, children under 18 can be moved between parents' homes as long as no one in either house has symptoms.
- Avoid non-essential use of public transport - when possible, alter your travel times to avoid rush hour.
- Work from home, where possible - your employer should support you to do this.
- Avoid gatherings with friends and family - keep in touch using remote technology such as phone, internet, and social media.
- Use telephone or online services to contact your GP or other essential services.

Community Hubs - Further Information

HOME

For access to our Community Hubs, patients should call the Contact Centre on 01294 310000.

The Contact Centre will be manned from 9am to 4.45pm, Monday to Thursday, and 9am to 4.30pm on a Friday. Outside those hours, calls are redirected to the Out of Hours provider who will answer the phone, take details of the request and forward by email to the Contact Centre. Someone will then contact the person the next working day.

There is a process in place should anyone call the Out of Hours service with emergency food needs over the weekend.

Community Hubs are open from 10am to 1pm. If a call is received after 12.30pm it will not be actioned until the next working day. If a call is received on the Friday after 12.30pm it will not be actioned until the Monday.

There are Community Hubs in each of the following areas:

- Irvine Hub - Covers Dreghorn, Springside, Drybridge and all of Irvine
- Kilwinning Hub - Covers Kilwinning
- Three Towns Hub - Covers Ardrossan, Saltcoats and Stevenston
- North Coast Hub - Covers Cumbrae (Millport), Largs, Skelmorlie, Fairlie and West Kilbride
- Garnock Valley Hub - Covers Dalry, Kilbirnie and Beith
- Arran Hub - Covers whole island