

Hello, I hope that you are keeping well and staying safe. There is so much information coming from the government and media, that it can become confusing. That's why we want to keep in touch with you every month to let you know what help and support is available.

- Celia Steventon, Forum Chairperson.

Forum Telephone Chat Service

The Forum is supporting people with regular calls to make sure they are coping and to be a friendly voice on the end of the phone. The service is free and available to anyone, you don't need to be living alone or be in great difficulty. It's a scary and unsettling time, and talking to others who are feeling the same can really help. Most of our volunteers are over 65 and isolating at home too, and would equally appreciate someone to chat to.

If you would like to have a regular chat, or you would like to volunteer to be one of our callers:

Call or text 07932 828333 or 07552 975676 or email: enquiries@twseniors.org.uk

Monday to Friday between 10am and 4pm. Leave a message outside of these hours and we'll call you back. (Email and messaging support available too).



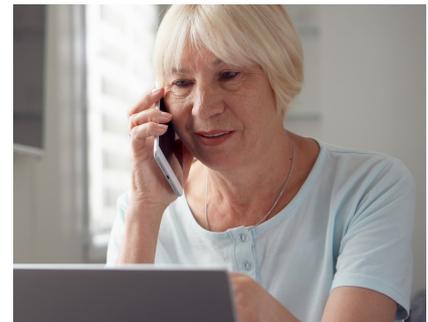
Confused by the new lockdown rules?



So are we! See over the page. We've tried to clarify how the changes might affect you.

IT Support

Do you need help to solve a problem with your computer, tablet or smartphone? Would you like to find out how you can connect to family and friends? We are offering telephone or email support from one of our computer tutors. They may not be able to solve every problem this way, but they'll have a good try. Contact details above.



'I look forward to my regular calls and find they have really helped me cope. My caller is very kind, we have a good chat and we make each other laugh'. - Shirley

'I cannot say enough how grateful I am for how the Forum is supporting my father and how good the volunteer is'. - Ken's daughter

'I'm very grateful and happy for the support I'm receiving'. - Dilys

'It's great to know that I am helping someone through this uncertain time and by focusing on someone else, it's helped me to cope with it too'. - Julie, volunteer.

Expect a call from the Forum....

If we hold a telephone number for you in our records, you may receive a call from us over the next few weeks. This is to enquire about whether you need any help or support, and to find out how you've been coping and keeping yourselves busy. If you prefer not to take the call, that's fine.

Other sources of support

Age UK Shropshire Telford & Wrekin:

Advice and support, shopping and prescription service. Tel 01743 33123.

T&W Council Community Support Line: 01952 382030.

If you are unwell and need advice, call 111. Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.

Useful online advice and resources:

www.ageuk.org.uk/shropshireandtelford
www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/coronavirus
www.independentage.org/covid-safe-and-well
www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19
www.telford.gov.uk/coronavirus
www.gov.uk/coronavirus
www.moneysavingexpert.com

New lockdown rules - what's changed?

For people in the 'clinically vulnerable' group:

These are people who should have received a letter from their GP, the measures remain as before:

- You are advised to stay at home and remain in lockdown until at least the end of June.

For older people with no underlying conditions:

- At the time of writing this, the rules aren't any different to the rest of the population.
- You are allowed to go out to take exercise as much as you like, keeping a safe 2m distance between yourself and people not in your household group.
- You can go for a drive and park at a beauty spot and take a walk.
- You can meet up with one other person outside, in a public place.
- You can also go to work if you cannot work from home, avoiding public transport if possible.
- Garden centres are re-opening. The opening of other shops will be phased in.
- You are strongly advised to 'take particular care' and maintain the 2m distance, but stay at home as much as possible.
- You should wear a face mask if going anywhere where you can't maintain the 2m distance.

Humour always helps!

2020 is a unique leap year. It has 29 days in February, 300 days in March and 10 years in April.

They said that a mask and gloves were enough to go to the supermarket. They lied, everyone else has clothes on.

Day 3 without sports. Found a lady sitting on my couch yesterday. Apparently she is my wife. She seems nice.

Have you come up with any ingenious ideas to help you through the pandemic? Perhaps making your own special face masks, devising a way to keep busy, making things to help others or coming up with new recipes using your store cupboard supplies. Let us know or send us a photo, we may include it in our next magazine.



Celia's homemade mask

Reluctant to seek help for other issues?

The NHS is stressing the need for people to seek the care and treatment they need for other illnesses as delay could pose a long term risk to health. Findings show that many worry about being a burden on the NHS or are fearful of having to stay in hospital. Call your GP or the 111 service if you are concerned or unsure about symptoms, or 999 in an emergency. You must attend hospital if advised to do so. Measures are in place to separate the services in hospital.

Worried about your finances?

Age UK Shrops T&W have stated that the number of enquiries to their benefits team has dropped massively and they are concerned that people are not accessing the benefits they are entitled to. They are there to help with benefits consultations over the phone. Even if you have been turned down for benefits in the past, it's always worth applying again if your circumstances have changed. Call 01743 233123. (free, confidential and independent service) and leave a message with your name and number.

Worried about debt? Call Citizens Advice on 01952 567193/567173.

Staying on top of worries

Even if we manage well most of the time, it might be harder to follow our usual ways of coping during this pandemic. As well as fear of the virus, our normal way of life has changed beyond our control and some of the things we take for granted and rely on, are not available to us at the moment.

Try to focus on things that you can control. Keep to a routine, try to get up and go to bed at a similar time each day. Plan your day and do activities you enjoy or try something new.

Stay well hydrated, this improves concentration, energy and mood. Try to move more throughout your day, getting out in the fresh air, on a walk, in the garden or on your doorstep. Talk to others about how you feel, and limit how much news you watch or listen to, using only trusted sources. Don't lose sight of the fact that things will go back to normal in time.

A Recently Unearthed Rudyard Kipling Poem (Parody written by John Boyne)

If you can talk with crowds, but keep your distance,
Or walk with friends – nor lose the common touch,
If people stay away on your insistence,
If you can drink alone, but not too much.
If you can fill each unforgiving minute
With books and music, writing, song and dance,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
(Just cancel this year's holiday in France.)

Make sure you are receiving your free Forum magazine either by post or email. If not, or you would like to change how you receive it, please get in touch. If you would prefer not to receive any more correspondence from the Forum, please contact 07932 828333/07552 975676, email: enquiries@twseniors.org.uk, website: twseniors.org.uk