

EARLY HELP UPDATE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES - 14th April 2020

Dear Parent, Carer and Colleagues, thank you for being patient with us.

The Early Help Service like all you have changed the way it delivers its services. In line with government advice and guidance, our staff will be working from home. So that we can ensure a continuation of our service we will be carrying out appointments by phone, video call and emails.

This will specifically mean that through this difficult period our service will provide;

1. Phone calls/video calls to young people
2. Phone calls to parents' carers offering general advice and guidance.
3. Referrals to community support services where available.
4. Advice and guidance of activities for children/young people to keep them stimulated and motivated
5. Parenting advice
6. General Family Support – which can be done remotely without coming into face to face contact with families

Through this difficult time please note that our contact number has changed, you can contact the Early Help Hub are;

For Advice and Support Please call the Early Help Hub

0207 364 7828/0207 364 3181

Our online enquiry forms are still available as normal
and can be found <https://bit.ly/2AA2WNy>.

Please find attached services which are available to help you though this difficult period.

For more information about Early Help please go to www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/earlyhelp
NEW Early Help Hub Number through this period [0207 364 7828/0207 364 3181](tel:02073647828).



Support Service available to children and families during the Covid-19 Pandemic

For the latest information, advice and support visit

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/coronavirus

If you have been identified as high-risk, extremely vulnerable or your requirement is urgent, call **020 7364 3030** (Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm. Saturday 10am to 5pm. Sunday 10am to 4pm).

Food & Fuel

Residents' Support Scheme

The [Residents' Support Scheme](#) is designed to help residents who are either in or at risk of being in crisis or are in need of immediate help and have no source of financial support available to them.

The scheme can help with short-term living costs such as credit food and gas/electric pre-payment metres. It can also help in some circumstances with white goods and furniture. Cash will not usually be awarded, but a pay point voucher can be supplied to the applicant where necessary.

You can [apply online](#).

If you are finding it difficult to apply online, or if you have a query about a new or existing application, please email lwpqueries@northgateps.com or call 020 7520 7217.

If you would like to appeal a previously refused application, or you wish to make a formal complaint, please email lwpappeal@northgateps.com.

First Love Foundation – referral by Early Help service of other agency only.

Offering deliveries to vulnerable individuals who are self-isolating or experiencing income shock.

St Lukes Foodbank Monday - Thursday, 10am - 12noon.

Fresh produce from restaurants that are sadly closing this week (24.3.20), but from next week we will be mostly onto non-perishables. We are welcoming donations from the community.

St Luke's, Millwall, Alpha Grove, E14 8LH

Tel: 07730 594755

fuzz@stlukesmillwall.org

Limehouse Aid

Offering food and errand runs for anyone vulnerable and/or self-isolating.

Phone/text 020 3322 7452

limehouseaid@gmail.com

Bow Foodbank

Mondays, 9.30am - 12.30pm.

St Mary's Church, 230 Bow Road, London E3 3AH

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info@bowfoodbank.org

Community Fridge

Where: Bromley-by-Bow Centre (Connection Zone), St Leonard's Street, London, E3 3BT

When: Wednesdays, 9:30am until supplies last

More info: Drop in. Kate Coules on 07983 290940

Bethnal Green Food Bank

Where: St Matthew's Church, St Matthew's Row, London E2 6DT

When: 1st and 3rd Friday of the month, 10am-12pm

More info: Drop in. rector@st-matthews.co.uk

0207 739 7586

Foodcycle

Takeaway' service; on Fridays at 7pm at the Methodist Church, 1 Merchant Street, E3 4LY. This service is open for anyone with a special emphasis for those who may be vulnerable. They are looking to setup a home delivery service especially for the elderly and are currently talks with their corporate partners which they will trial out next week.

[Benefits, Housing, Debt, Financial Hardship](#)

Support with new Universal Credit applications

The council has a dedicated phone line for people who want help with Universal Credit.

To book a phone appointment with a council officer, please call 020 7364 7010.

Welfare benefits advice

The council is working with local advice agencies to continue providing welfare benefits advice remotely.

Their contact details are listed below. All our partners are experiencing unprecedented demand so we would ask you to keep trying if you cannot get through at your first attempt.

Organisation	Telephone advice	E-mail
Account 3	0207 739 7720	admin@account3.org.uk
Age UK	0208 981 7124	info@ageukeastlondon.org.uk
Apasen	0207 001 2266	syeda.ara@apasen.org.uk
Bromley by Bow Centre	020 8709 9757 020 8709 9745	Advice@bbbc.org.uk
Carers Centre Tower Hamlets	0207 709 1765	enquiries@ccth.org.uk
Citizens Advice Bureau	0203 855 4472	advice@eastendcab.org.uk
DeafPlus	077 4570 8878 (Text only)	Aiysha.begum@deafplus.org
Fair Finance	0203 475 8811	info@fairmoneyadvice.co.uk

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Financial Health Centre	0207 364 2200	fhc@thh.org.uk
Island Advice Centre	0207 987 9379	admin@island-advice.org.uk
Legal Advice Centre	0203 606 0372	admin@legaladvicecentre.london
Limhouse Project	0207 538 0075	info@limehouseproject.org.uk
Local Link/Real	020 7001 2175	local-link@real.org.uk
Mind in Tower Hamlets and Newham	0207 510 1081	info@mithn.org.uk
Ocean Somali Community Centre		abdi@oceansomali.org.uk
Paxis	0207 749 7608 (Wednesday 2 - 4pm) 0207 749 7605 (Thursday 10am - 12.30pm)	admin@praxis.org.uk
Positive East	020 7791 2855	talktome@positiveeast.org.uk
St Hildas	0207 739 8066 (Monday to Thursday, 10am - 2pm)	alaya@sthildas.org.uk
St Peter	0207 729 1036	stpetersba@live.co.uk
Stifford Centre	0207 790 3632	info@stifford.org.uk
Tower Hamlets Law Centre	0207 538 4909	info@thlc.co.uk
Tower Hamlets Resident Support Outreach Service	0207 364 7010	LBTHResidentSupport@towerhamlets.gov.uk
Toynbee	020 7392 2953	advice@toynbeehall.org.uk

[Free School Meals](#)

Voucher scheme for free school meals

The government announced on [31 March 2020](#) that children eligible for free schools meals will benefit from a national voucher scheme allowing them to continue to access meals whilst they stay at home.

Schools can now provide every eligible child with a weekly shopping voucher worth £15 to spend at supermarkets while schools are closed due to coronavirus.

Schools can continue to provide meals for collection or delivery themselves, but where this is not possible, the scheme will allow schools to provide vouchers to families electronically, or as a gift card for those without internet access.

The vouchers can be spent on food at a range of shops including Sainsbury's, Tesco, Asda, Morrisons, Waitrose and M&S, with the Department working to get more shops to join the scheme as soon as possible.

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Parents will receive the voucher through their child's school, which can then be redeemed online via a code, or sent to their house as a gift card and used at supermarkets across the country.

Your child may be able to get free school meals if you get any of the following:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

To check eligibility go to <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

Tower Hamlets housing advice and enforcement services

Our private housing advice team are continuing to provide advice over email and by phone. Please contact housing.advice@towerhamlets.gov.uk or 02073643558 if you need support.

The housing options counter service at Albert Jacob House in Bethnal Green is closed until further notice. Residents who are homeless or who are at risk of becoming homeless, should call 0207 364 7474 where a member of the housing team will be able to assess their case and advise on their housing options. Any other enquiries should be directed to homelessness@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Environmental health, licensing and trading standards can be reached on 020 7364 5008 or at environmental.health@towerhamlets.gov.uk, licensing@towerhamlets.gov.uk and trading.standards@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Local Support Groups

COVID 19 Local Support groups Local groups listed according to what ward you live in and volunteers help with dropping of food/errands for vulnerable/self-isolating

- <https://covidmutualaid.org/local-groups/>
- Tower Hamlets Covid 19 Support Groups (list of all TH ones)
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2740546326063053/?ref=share>
- Island Gardens COVID 19 Support group Offering food and errand runs for anyone vulnerable and/or self – isolating Phone 020 3488 4594 Islandgardens.covid19@gmail.com
- Canary Wharf COVID 19 Support group Offering food and errand runs for anyone vulnerable and/or self – isolating Phone 0208 126 6000
- canarywharf.covid19@gmail.com
- Covid-19 Mutual Aid Bow (E3)
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/643367883166920>

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- Royal Docks COVID-19 Mutual Aid
- <https://www.facebook.com/RoyalVictoriaDocksCovid19>

Support in 'Island'

Delivering hot meals and food packs

07983 798 791 maiumtalukdar28@gmail.com

[Supporting your community](#)

Volunteer

Volunteer Centre Tower Hamlets have a variety of roles to support the local community during the Covid-19 pandemic. Find all the details you need on [here](#).

[GrowTH](#), a night shelter in Tower Hamlets need volunteers. If you know anyone who interested in volunteering, people can help for an evening, stay overnight, or help with breakfast in the morning.

The NHS continues to look for [volunteer responders](#) in a number of roles.

Register someone (or yourself) as extremely vulnerable to the government for coronavirus support
Register if you have a medical condition that makes you extremely vulnerable to coronavirus. For example, you'll be able to ask for help getting deliveries of essential supplies like food. If you're not sure whether your medical condition makes you extremely vulnerable, register anyway. You can register yourself, or on behalf of someone else. [Register](#).

[Supporting people with no recourse to public funds during the coronavirus \(Covid-19\) pandemic](#)

Please see link information and local support. [Support for those with no recourse to public funds](#).

<http://www.nrpfnetwork.org.uk/Documents/coronavirus-factsheet.pdf>

[Violence Against Women and Girls \(VAWG\) services](#)

Despite the COVID-19 outbreak, Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) services are **still in operation**. Please see below for all support available.



In an emergency you should always call 999

If you are in danger and unable to talk on the phone, call **999**, and then press **55**. This will transfer your call to the relevant police force who will assist you without you having to speak.

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Our Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVA) and Hate Crime Casework service are still available. However, due to Government guidelines around Covid 19, the drop-in service at the Shadwell Centre will not be available, neither will our Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop.

If you are experiencing **domestic** or **'honour' based abuse** currently and would like emotional or practical support over the telephone, there are several options:

Local support:

- **Tower Hamlets Victim Support IDVAs** – **020 7364 7957/2448** Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm
- **[Victim Support](#) 24-hour support line** - **0808 1689 111**
- **[Tower Hamlets Crisis Intervention Service](#)** - **020 3222 4027** Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm & weekends 10am to 6pm
- Stratford / Thames Magistrates Court updates - **0300 303 0645** northlondonmc@justice.gov.uk
- **Legal advice** relating to domestic abuse and family law, such as non-molestation orders, child arrangements, or divorce - Bowling & Co solicitors: family@bowlinglaw.co.uk / **020 8221 8000** and in case of emergencies **07464 925 083**
- **Tower Hamlets VAWG Team** duty line for signposting professionals and victims onto specialist VAWG services - **0800 279 5434** Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm or Domestic.Violence@towerhamlets.gov.uk
- **Tower Hamlets Housing Options Service Team (HOST)** will no longer have a drop in service. For those at risk of homelessness contact HOST on **020 7364 7474**, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm. After 5pm call their emergency line on **020 7364 4079**
- **Adult Safeguarding Team** - **020 7364 5005**
- **Children Safeguarding Team** - **020 7364 3444**
- If you require information or advice about a court related case, please contact the Police Officer in charge or your IDVA/Support Worker.

National support:

- **[National Domestic Violence Helpline](#)** for free safety advice and refuge spaces is open 24 hours a day 7 days a week on **0808 2000 247**
- If you are a member of the LGBT+ community, [Galop](#) runs a specialist helpline on **0800 999 5428** open Monday-Friday 10am to 12.30pm & 1.30pm to 4pm or email help@galop.org.uk
- All of the above services support men and there is a specific [Men's Advice](#) line **0808 801 0327** open Monday-Friday (9am-8pm Monday & Wednesday; 9am-5pm Tuesday, Thursday, Friday) or email info@mensadviceline.org.uk
- **[Women's Aid](#)** have an online support service <https://chat.womensaid.org.uk/> Monday to Friday 10am-12pm. They also have provided survivors a [COVID-19 safety guide you can find here](#). Women's Aid and Imkaan also coordinate free rail travel via the "Rail to Refuge" Scheme once a refuge place has been offered.

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- [Hestia](#) provides a free-to-download mobile app, Bright Sky, which hides as a weather app but provides support and information to anyone who may be in an abusive relationship or those concerned about someone they know.

Other VAWG support:

- If you are a girl (aged 14+) or woman and have been a victim of **sexual assault**, you can contact [Rape Crisis](#) **0808 802 9999** between 12pm-2.30pm and 7pm-9.30pm every day. For survivors aged 16+ Rape Crisis have a [Live online Chat Helpline](#) open Monday to Friday (Various times)
- [Beyond the Streets](#), who provide outreach support to women involved in **prostitution** continue to support women via telephone and can be contacted on **0800 133 7870** or email on support@beyondthestreets.org.uk
- Women's Health and Family Service run the [Female Genital Mutilation \(FGM\)](#) Engagement Service. They continue to offer support to women by telephone and can be contacted on **020 7377 872** Monday to Friday 9am-5pm.
- The [Forced Marriage Unit](#) can be contacted for advice and support on **020 7008 0151** or emailed on fmou outreach@fco.gov.uk or you can contact them via Facebook: [Forced Marriage page](#).
- [Karma Nirvana](#) is another organization supporting those at risk of **'honour' based abuse** and **forced marriage** and can be contacted on **0800 599 9247** Monday to Friday 9am-5pm or emailed on support@karmanirvana.org.uk
- If you are experiencing **stalking** or **harassment** you can call the [National Stalking Helpline](#) on **0808 802 0300** open Monday-Friday 9.30am to 4pm except for Wednesdays when it is open 1pm to 4pm
- If you believe that someone is being **trafficked** for the purposes of sexual exploitation you can report your suspicions to the [Modern Slavery Helpline](#): **08000 121 7000**

Perpetrators of abuse

If you are worried about how you are treating your partner or family member and want to stop your behaviour, you can contact [Respect](#) on **0808 802 4040** or email on info@respectphoneline.org.uk they also have a live Webchat available (various times).

Safety advice if you are living with your abuser

- Keep your phone charged and on you at all times
- Ensure phone credit is topped up
- Keep away from the kitchen if trying to find a safe space / avoid your abuser
- Speak to a trusted neighbour about the situation and ask them to call 999 if they hear loud noises/arguments
- At the first sign of abuse call 999 for help

The Women's Aid website has [safety advice](#) and a [COVID-19 safety guide](#)

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If your abuser has access to your phone/internet access, please **delete your browsing history** after you have visited the site.

Worried about a friend or neighbour?

If you are worried that your friend or neighbour is experiencing domestic abuse you can:

- Reach out to the victim and let them know that you care
- Ask the victim if they are ok
- Call 999
- Report it via Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or <https://crimestoppers-uk.org/give-information/forms/pre-form>
- Silence Shields Abuse Campaign, contact Solace – 0808 802 5565

You could be the person that makes a difference.

For the latest information, advice and support visit
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