

Staff News

03 April 2020



A message from our Chief Executive, Sandra Black

"It's hard to believe this is only the second week since the Scottish and UK Governments announced unprecedented changes to the way we work and live. In the shortest space of time, as a council we have radically changed how we work as well as how we live at home and I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to all of you for the determination and hard work you have put in to making this work for the benefit of our local communities."

[Read Sandra's message in full here.](#)



Together we each have our part to play—thank you

The response from people across Renfrewshire looking to volunteer and help their communities in this time of crisis has been truly outstanding. For those of us who are healthy and do not fall into a risk category, volunteering is a great opportunity to play your part. However, if you are not able to volunteer, you can still do your bit in the fight against Coronavirus by staying at home!

There are three main ways to volunteer; you can join the local community effort by signing up to the Renfrewshire Volunteer Reserve, you can register with the British Red Cross as a Community Reserve Volunteer, or for those with health and social care experience you can volunteer through the NHS.

[Read more information on volunteering and local community groups.](#)



Changes to flexi system—what do you need to do?

Don't forget that we'll be changing flexi-systems on Monday 6 April. Etarmis will be no more and we'll move to the new system: Imperago (HFX). Add this new link to your browser favourites:

<https://renfrewshire-ess.imperago.co.uk/>

You must make sure you have all flexi adjustment requests to your manager and authorised by 5.30pm today (Fri 3 April).

Flexi balances will only show information that's been transferred to the new system. Guidance and log on details have been issued by email from ICT.

All queries should be directed to cs.flexi@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Most recent changes to Council services

Our [information, help and guidance on Coronavirus](#) provides details of the changes to Council services as we follow national guidance to manage the impact of Coronavirus.

Stay home, stay safe, protect the NHS

Our [Staff advice on Coronavirus webpage](#) gives useful information and advice from the NHS, UK and Scottish Governments.



Shielding—our co-ordinated humanitarian response

We are now LIVE with our Renfrewshire Local Assistance Centre providing a single point of contact for local people who have been asked to follow the Scottish Government's [Shielding advice](#). Shielding is for people, including children, who are at very high risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19). The Scottish Government's Chief Medical Officer has sent a letter to all those who fall within this very high-risk group. A Local Support Helpline **0300 300 0230** has been set up and is available from **08:45 to 4:45, 7 days a week** for local people in this group who urgently need help to receive food, medicines and practical support during their 12-week quarantine. There is also a mailbox that can be used out of hours—Shielding.Support.Referrals@renfrewshire.gov.uk. **Everyone is encouraged to share the helpline number with family and friends and pass on to anyone who might need help.**

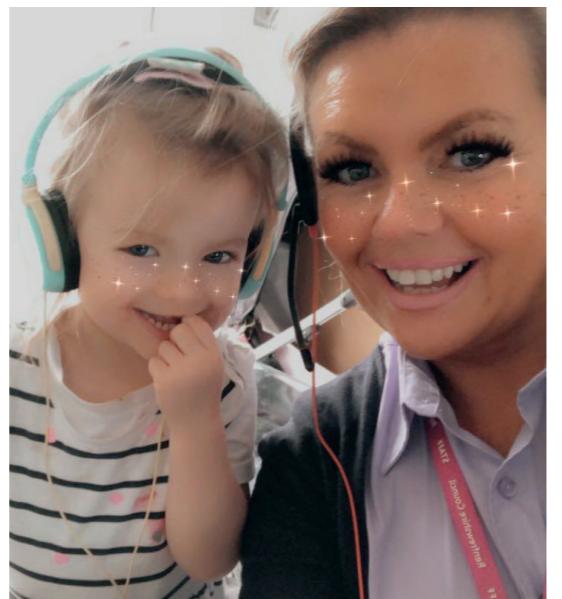
Maxine Hendry, who leads the Local Assistance Team said "Our humanitarian response is vital at this time and the team are doing everything we can to support our most vulnerable residents. Colleagues from across HSCP, Environment and Infrastructure, Resilience and ASERT are working closely in partnership with a network of local community organisations to maximise resources. Our experienced officers are ready so please, if you know someone who may need help, make sure they contact us."

On call, at home and thriving—well done customer services team!

Well done to our colleagues in the customer contact centre who are now providing telephone support to the people of Renfrewshire from home. Team members have shown great resilience, normally used to taking around 1500 calls per day, last week, the contact centre received a whopping 3148 calls on Monday, 2139 on Tuesday and 1837 on Wednesday. All of these were handled while the rapid move to re-locate staff to homeworking was still taking place.

Customer Services Manager, Gary Innes, said: "Our team have adjusted very well and are now doing an amazing job handling calls and juggling the demands of home. We could not continue to support our customers if it wasn't for their hard work."

Here's a photo of Senior Customer Service Advisor/Assistant Registrar Stacey Stuart getting a little help whilst working from home!



Health & Wellbeing



Health and safety tips

For everyone working at home, please make sure you're looking after your health and safety. From the environment you're working in, to the equipment you're using—it's important you're aware of any potential hazards. [Here's a short video from our Health and Safety \(H&S\) team](#) with some useful information and tips. There's further guidance on display screen equipment plus a handy checklist on our intranet.

Protecting those at risk of abuse

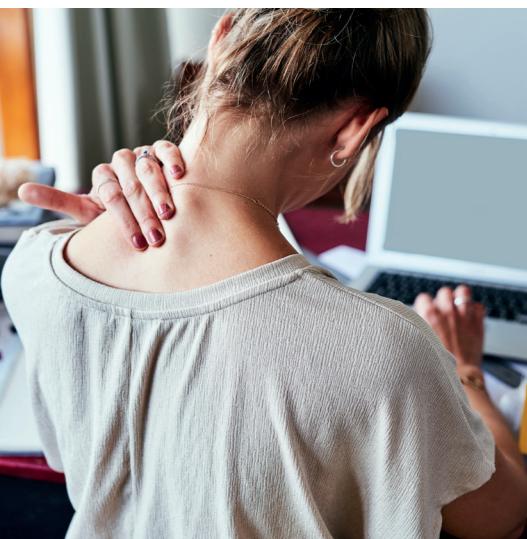
With most workplaces, schools and nurseries closing we are aware this can be an especially frightening time for children and adults at risk of domestic abuse. We take a zero-tolerance approach to all domestic abuse and encourage you to keep your eyes and ears open and report any concerns you have. If you are a neighbour and hear any form of domestic abuse taking place, please report it. You can call the police on 101 to report concerns about adults or children at risk.

If you are worried about the safety of a child or children, you should also contact Social Work Services—**0300 300 1199**.

Anyone who feels they need protection, or is worried that someone else does, can find out more information about the [support available via our website](#). Our staff Domestic Abuse Policy is a further source of guidance and steps to take if you are personally affected. This can be found on our staff intranet site.

A Message to Health and Social Care Staff from
**Clare Haughey MSP,
Minister for Mental Health**

"I want to note my sincere appreciation for the extraordinary work that health and social care staff in our hospitals and community care settings are doing to protect and care for people in these difficult times... the scale of the challenge is unprecedented...It is going to be crucial that we are all able to talk openly and honestly about our mental health and wellbeing, and that we have access to the right help and support when we need it. Looking after our mental health is just as important as our physical health."



New Occupational Health Helpline

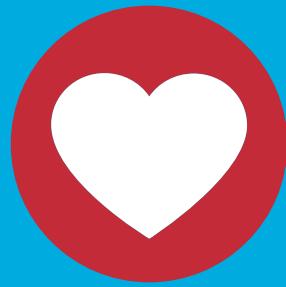
A new Occupational Health helpline—**0141 212 6970**—has been launched to support you if you have questions about the impact of coronavirus on you in your work role. The PAM Occupational Health Advisors will provide general advice about your health at work but won't be able to support management referrals at this time.

If you require **urgent medical advice** you should call **NHS 111**.

Social Shout Outs

Our Facebook and Twitter channels have received some fantastic feedback from the people of Renfrewshire. Just goes to show all your hard work is recognised and appreciated.

Here are just a few of the comments we have received so far...



"Can you please pass on a massive thank you to your cleansing staff for continuing to provide vital services through this challenging time? Their efforts are very much appreciated"

Kevin Stevenson via Twitter

"The process been made much easier thanks to Mrs Drew St James Paisley who kept in touch all week. Not forgetting all teachers at St Andrews Academy who are on hand for my eldest."

Ann McCabe via Twitter

"Thanks to staff @ HQ for having clear direction & a structured plan for Renfrewshire staff in these strange times. We were the envy of some of my teaching colleagues in other authorities as we knew what was happening, when it was happening & what was needed from us. #goodplanning"

@ALNicholson via Twitter

"@ThornPriSch @Barsail_Primary @ TodholmPs @BishoptonPS @RenCouncil Oh how this has cheered us up & made us smile from ear to ear this morning. Absolutely brilliant! Amazing skills Suzie, Rory just loved seeing you all, also brought it home how much they are missing you. Go Thorn!!! Loved the music too"

Di via Twitter

"And thanks for your prompt answers thus far—very good indeed"

Billy Anderson via Facebook

"@RenLibraries @WhatsOnRen @RL4Leisure @RenCouncil @RenArtsMuseums @paisleyis Brilliant! Thank you. This will keep me going for a few weeks! I'm on my last book"

Carol Cowan via Twitter

"To all the staff at St Marys primary and nursery amazing staff can't thank them enough for absolutely everything best ever x"

Michelle Malaney via Twitter

"@RenLibraries @RL4Leisure @RenCouncil @BookPaisley @PaisleyMuseum @RenArtsMuseums @paisleyis @WhatsOnRen Brilliant! Thanks for your help!
All sorted!"

Lisa Donachie via Twitter

"Well done to all the great teachers for continuing to support our children during this difficult time at St Annes PS x"

Lena via Twitter

"I'm so glad to see this. Great support"

Laurie Lee via Facebook (in response to our mental health and wellbeing advice)

Share your stories and photos

We'd love to hear from you. It could be a photo of you working from home, something interesting from your daily walk, or a photo of your new "colleagues" (furry friends most welcome!). Have you started volunteering or taking on new roles and responsibilities you never thought you would? Tell us all about it and we can share your stories. Send them in to internalcommunications@renfrewshire.gov.uk.

