Ask for what you need and give what you can

The Government wants to reassure Islanders that help is available for those who really need it during these challenging times. Islanders in need are urged to either contact the coronavirus helpline, their Parish Hall or complete the Connect Me form for what they need, whilst those who can offer help are encouraged to come forward.

Connect Me has been established to bring together and match up the help and support available from Government, the Parishes, the voluntary and community sector, local businesses and individuals stepping forward to volunteer, with the needs of islanders – whatever they may be.

There are four key parts to Connect Me:
1. Addressing critical needs – from food deliveries for those in hardship to dog walking for individuals who are not able to leave their homes at all.
2. Providing information – from linking customers to lists of retailers offering food delivery to information on how to access Income Support and emergency accommodation.
3. Coordinating new volunteers – working with the Bodet Foundation’s volunteer.je website to collate volunteer details to deploy the most appropriate people to the charities and individuals who are most in need.
4. Supporting voluntary and community sector organisations – during times of heightened demand, Connect Me can help ensure organisations are well resourced to support Islanders.

Anyone who is fit and well, is encouraged to register as a volunteer. There are a wide range of roles, both in the community – such as delivering essential supplies and hot meals to home based roles – such as translating or calling someone in need of a chat.

The Minister for Social Security, Deputy Judy Martin, heads up the Community Taskforce said: “During these unprecedented times, keeping everybody safe and well is our absolute focus and I want to reassure Islanders that help is available. Over 2,000 individuals and 170 businesses are registered with us to provide help and this help is being deployed to deliver critical services such as Meals on Wheels and the Salvation Army Food Bank.

“Although yesterday’s announcement that Islanders must now stay at home to help reduce the spread of coronavirus was made to help save lives, we realise that it will bring about a wide range of needs and concerns, particularly from the most vulnerable in our community. That is
why we have launched Connect Me – to ensure that we are connecting those in need with the help available, quickly and safely.

“For anybody who is struggling, or who needs a bit of support through this challenging time, please get in touch either via the Coronavirus helpline, by completing the Connect Me form or by contacting your Parish Hall.”

To help prevent Islanders reaching crisis point, the Government has put in place a series of measures to support the whole community during the coronavirus pandemic. These include:

- An extensive package of financial support designed to ensure the survival of sectors most heavily impacted to enable employees to remain in employment and so able to support themselves and their families
- Relaxation of Income Support rules for those under 25
- Putting financial support in place for anyone living in Jersey for less than five years
- Jersey’s courts will not hear any cases relating to evictions during this period. Landlords are asking tenants who are struggling to pay their rent to contact them
- Launching the Children and Families Hub to provide the right help at the right time for children, young people and families, which can be contacted on 01534 519000.

Chief executive of Citizens Advice Jersey, Malcolm Ferey, who is part of a Government Community Task Force brought together to coordinate efforts with the Parishes and the voluntary and community sector in response to Coronavirus, said: “As an Island community, we have a long tradition of looking after one another and now, it is more important than ever, that we make sure our neighbours, friends and loved ones are able to get the help that they need and that the most vulnerable in our community, who may not have support structures, are protected.”

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Notes to Editors

1. For further information, please contact the press office on 01534 440430 or pressoffice@gov.je