

GUIDANCE NOTE No. 4

Shopping for Residents

Firstly, a reminder of our vision statement

*To create and evolve a coordinated and fully collaborative operational response to keep our residents and volunteers safe, connected and supported. Working together efficiently at District, Village and **most importantly** Local Neighbourhood level to deliver the non-medical support that our residents need*

1. Shopping for essentials

Shopping is one of the most important and frequent tasks that volunteers are asked to do. It's important to get it right. Shopping for essentials should be done locally, avoiding travel as much as possible.

When shopping for someone you should initially, by telephone, prepare an agreed shopping list with acceptable substitute products. You can also ring from the store and check what alternatives would work. Make sure that you ask about any special dietary requirements.

It is not up to us to judge what people want to buy. So, for example, if they want cigarettes, we should get them. If you have a serious objection (e.g. a vegan being asked to go to the butchers) then you should politely decline and/or seek to pass the request onto another volunteer.

Before doing the shopping, agree with the resident how you will be paid. See section 3 below.

The risk of any contamination for households you support must be minimised through:

- Good hygiene, as detailed on the NHS website, <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- Avoiding direct or close contact (closer than two metres). If bringing shopping or other items, it would be sensible to deposit them on the doorstep and ring the bell to let them know that the shopping has arrived. Step back and let the resident come out to collect the shopping.
- Make sure that all the shopping has been taken in before leaving.

You must provide receipts to account for all expenditure when you return with the shopping.

2. Weekly/fortnightly large shopping requests

At the commencement of the pandemic, there was a lot of panic buying and all delivery and “click-and-collect” slots were booked up weeks ahead. The situation now is better and there are some delivery and click-and-collect slots open at Tesco and other retailers. However, they are not opening new accounts.

Clearly, delivery or click-and-collect are preferable to a volunteer going to a supermarket to do a full shopping trip for a neighbour so, if a volunteer has one of these slots with spare space, they may be able to add in some items for residents in their Street.

Please ring 01223 320420 Option 2 for details of supermarket priority schemes for the vulnerable and a list of companies who are doing home deliveries.

In the event that there is no option but for the volunteer to go shopping, the same guidance as above for essentials shopping should be followed.

3 Payment

Our current advice is that handling of cash should be an absolute last resort because of the risk of transferring the virus. Unfortunately, cash is the norm for many of the older residents in the community.

Any financial exchanges for activities like shopping should be strictly controlled. Here is a suggested order to pursue when arranging payment:

- If the resident can make a bank transfer to you then do this.
- Tesco Gift Card - <https://www.tescoforbusiness.com/> or Co-op Gift Card - <https://www.coop.co.uk/terms-and-conditions>
- Paypal - where payments can be made easily, and do not cost anything for person to person transfers - and avoid sharing account details.
- Can the resident give you contact details of a relative? If so, see if they would be happy to make a bank transfer to you.
- Many of those who do not have internet banking still use cheques. These are preferable to cash. It is possible to pay in cheques by post. You just have to enclose a paying-in slip and a note asking the staff to pay it in.
- If the resident can only give you cash then we suggest that they put it into an envelope and that you do not take the cash out of the envelope until 72 hours after receiving it. Alternatively, the plastic notes are washable, if volunteers would prefer to do that.
- Some SCs are taking cash before the shopping trip and either giving the change back with the shopping or (better) keeping an account for the resident to be settled in due course

You should phone the resident before delivery, to ensure they are ready to receive it, but also to let them know the cost so they can get the right change ready or a cheque ready. This helps to avoid the need to give change back to the resident. Do not let them overpay, as a thank you. If they insist, offset their next bill to avoid giving change.

Whatever form of payment is received, you should write out some form of receipt or keep a photo of the shopping receipt that you hand to them.

Avoiding the use of cash will also have benefits in reducing trips and contamination from cash machines and also reducing requests to collect residents' pensions.

It is a fundamental principle that no volunteer should be out of pocket (other than your time and normal 'wear and tear' of any clothing and vehicle, and its fuel consumption, you might use). If you do incur other costs please retain a receipt so that we may reimburse you. As stated above, the method of payment should be agreed before the shopping is done.

4. Financial Hardship or no access to funds.

If a resident has no means of making a payment due to financial hardship or cash flow issues because they can't access their money, please contact the Core Team via the dedicated phone line 01223 320424, Option 2.

In cases of extreme hardship, arrange for food parcels to be delivered. A village food parcel scheme has been launched this week for any individual, couple or family in need. Please help us to identify the need. You can order a food parcel by ringing 01223 320420 Option 5

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