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Coronavirus Special Newsletter

We were thinking how we could help our neighbourhood and especially our people in vulnerable groups to come through this epidemic. We've adapted an idea that started in Cornwall and has spread as far as Australia.

If every resident in our area gave contact details to four (or more) immediate neighbours, we would create a network that could help those self-isolating – be they single people, pensioners, families – basically anyone who might need help. Of course, there will need to be some limits in order to keep everybody safe.

We think that the most useful might be doing some shopping, but people could volunteer to be a voice at the end of the phone for people who are alone – two weeks or more – with only your own company might be a strain – as could two weeks with only the family for company!

But do remember to keep safe. If you volunteer to do shopping, leave it at the door. The money and shopping list should be posted through your door or left outside for you to pick up – avoiding theft by organising timings! Avoid physical contact – keep 2 metres distance. We've suggested also that you don't put your full postal address with your other details. If you can't help, because you too are self-isolating or ill – you may be able to pass them on to one of your contacts who can.

We've also heard of another idea which is tying a scarf or tie to your door handle if you can't go out but need help. Please look out for these in your area. And you may need to pay by cash so it would be useful if you could make sure you have enough to tide you over.

We've produced a template that you could use to post through your neighbours' doors – or hand to them personally while we have no local cases.

If you need help in the coming epidemic, I may be able to help:

Name (either first name only or full name)

Not your full postal address – just the road you live in

Phone number – This is important as many older people do not have access to the internet

Email address – optional but helpful

I can do shopping

I can be at the end of a phone

I can post your mail

I can collect prescriptions