

Barnet thanks you!

**To our keyworkers,
our neighbours,
our communities:**

thank you for working
together to keep
Barnet safe.

Take a moment to
thank someone who
has helped you:
#BarnetTogether

By Seren, age 13

Message from Cllr Dan Thomas, Leader of Barnet Council

During these challenging times we have seen the very best of Barnet. Sadly, the Covid-19 crisis has claimed many lives and affected the livelihoods of many more. However, Barnet's amazing community spirit and resilience has meant we've looked out for our neighbours and ensured those left most in need have been supported.

I was privileged to witness first-hand how one project, the Essential Supplies Hub, has been delivering food and hygiene packages to hundreds of vulnerable Barnet residents. It was quite astounding to see the scale of the operation which was established in such a short space of time.

The Essential Supplies Hub is just one of the new ways our Community Help Hub is supporting our vulnerable residents. As well as many Barnet Council staff, who are working outside of their normal daily duties, hundreds of Barnet residents have signed up to volunteer. The council has been working with Volunteering Barnet to place volunteers in roles supporting charities and faith groups across the borough. We have all pulled together to provide urgent support, companionship and other essential services.

Throughout the crisis, the council has maintained its core services. Residents have continued to have their bins collected weekly, access adult and children's social care, and enjoy our parks and green spaces. Services like our Libraries may have closed their doors temporarily but borrowing has been made possible through downloadable audio and e-books. Many of our schools kept their classrooms open for vulnerable children and children of key workers, as well as delivered lessons online.

This crisis has been referred to as The Great Pause, with life being put on hold. It has certainly been a time for reflection, to contemplate what is really important to us. As we start to look past lockdown, the council is now considering what changes and improvements it can make to its services. Life may be different once the Covid-19 crisis passes; we want to ensure that it will be for the better for everyone who lives in the borough.

I would like to thank everyone who has been part of the extraordinary response and relief effort.



Councillor Dan Thomas,
Leader of Barnet Council



WANT TO SHOW YOUR THANKS FOR THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE HELPED US ALL DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS?

Then why not remove the front cover and display it in your front window!

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Barnet Council's Covid-19 response in numbers

From the start of lockdown on 23 March to 1 June, we have continued to provide our core services as well as essential support and relief to those most affected by the outbreak.

3,513 urgent phone calls and **2,846** emails asking for help answered




4.4m bin collections



18,835 householders given Council Tax payment support

£££ 

6,893 food parcels and **700** hygiene parcels dispatched to most vulnerable





3,132 local businesses awarded **£51m** in grants




250 households at risk placed in temporary safe accommodation



STAY SAFE

115 schools and early years settings open, teaching




684 keyworkers' children and vulnerable children

2,435 weekly food hampers delivered to children at home eligible for free school meals




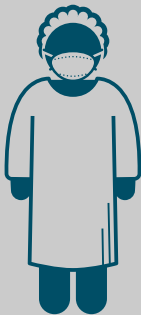
84,981 e-books, e-audio books, and e-newspapers loaned by Libraries



1,961 'triage' calls made and **6,585** text messages sent to shielded individuals




842,454 items of PPE dispatched to care homes, home carers, and schools

617 volunteers enlisted via Community Help Hub



COVID-19

Keeping Barnet in business

Millions awarded to support local employers

Barnet Council has already paid out more than £50million in grants to Barnet's small businesses during the Covid-19 crisis.

With the help of a government-backed scheme, grants have been paid to more than 3,000 Barnet businesses, with payments of £10,000 or £25,000.

Small business grants are available to businesses receiving small business rate relief giving them access to a cash grant of £10,000.

In addition, eligible businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors, with a rateable value less than £15,000, can benefit from a lump sum grant of £10,000, and those with a rateable value between £15,001 and £51,000 can qualify for a grant of £25,000.

Does your business qualify?

The council has attempted to contact all eligible businesses in order to pay the grant but has not been able to contact all. Anyone who believes they are eligible are encouraged to visit the council's website to check their eligibility. You will also find some other helpful information should you have difficulty in making a claim.

Barnet Council's Leader Cllr Dan Thomas, said: "Small businesses provide a livelihood to many people and we will do everything we can to help them through this.

"I would encourage businesses which haven't been contacted, but which feel they are eligible, to visit our website and submit their details.

"I would also like to caution businesses against using unscrupulous companies offering to make grant applications in return for a fee. It is unnecessary and I would strongly advise businesses to avoid using them."

Full details on the financial support available to businesses are available on our website: www.barnet.gov.uk/covid19



Retail, hospitality and leisure businesses can apply for grants of up to £25,000



Online support is available for Barnet's businesses

Ellis & Co Mill Hill

CASE STUDY

The small business grants available have been a lifeline for local businesses, such as estate agents Ellis & Co Mill Hill.

Jatender Chaggar, Director of Ellis & Co Mill Hill, said: "With the residential property market halted due to government restrictions on home moving, this funding was required for cash-flow to secure the longevity of the Ellis & Co Mill Hill business and its employees.

"Unfortunately, there were some challenges with the initial application, however the 1-2-1 support provided by Barnet Council was instrumental in securing the funding. I would like to pass on our gratitude for their commitment to support Ellis & Co Mill Hill, a local and independently owned business."



Jatender Chaggar



Help available for financial hardship

Many residents have suffered a big hit to their household income during the Covid-19 crisis. The council is providing a range of financial support to those in need.

Discretionary Housing Payment

Discretionary Housing Payments can provide extra money to you or your landlord if you already receive Housing Benefit or Universal Credit (including Housing Costs towards rental liability) but there is a shortfall between your rent and the Housing Benefit/Housing Costs you receive.

These are usually paid for a few months to help you through a crisis or short-term problem, but can pay for longer periods in exceptional circumstances.

Covid-19 Hardship Fund Allocation

The Government has provided the council with funding to support Council Tax payers. In line with government guidance, if you are a working age Barnet resident currently in receipt of Council Tax Support then you will be automatically awarded £150 towards your 2020/21 Council Tax account.

The grant was also awarded on any successful new Council Tax Support claims made on or before 30 May 2020.

Crisis Fund

The Crisis Fund provides a non-repayable 'cash' grant to Barnet residents who are facing financial hardship. Following the Covid-19 outbreak, we have made a temporary change to the qualifying criteria for Crisis Fund grants to support those most affected.

Until 30 September 2020, you can apply for a Crisis Fund payment if you are a Barnet resident, over the age of 16 and facing financial hardship.

Council Tax Discretionary Relief

You can apply for Council Tax Discretionary Relief (CTDR) if you are suffering from hardship due to exceptional circumstances and require help to meet your Council Tax liability.

It is only used for short-term assistance and is made at the council's discretion in cases where it considers that extra help with Council Tax liability is needed.

To be eligible for CTDR, you must be the person responsible for paying Council Tax, be able to demonstrate that you

need financial help in order to pay and are actively taking steps to address your financial hardship.

CTDR cannot be used to help with housing costs, however you can apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment (see left) using the same application form.

Council Tax deferral

To help our residents, we offered those who pay their Council Tax or other council services monthly, the option to defer payment until June 2020.

Where taken up this will mean a full year's liability (April to March) is split over the remaining months of the year (June to March) providing 10 months to pay the charge.

The services the council provides are reliant on the money raised from Council Tax, even more so now during this pandemic. Those who are able to pay are encouraged to continue to pay as billed in order to help the council deliver much-needed services at this time.

Find out more about financial help and support available at:
www.barnet.gov.uk/covid19
or call 0808 2813210



Building an extension or converting your loft or garage?

You will need the work checked and approved for compliance with the building regulations.

LABC Barnet ensures work is safe, up to standards, is energy efficient and helps protect you against rogue builders.

Our building control experts can help bring in your project on time and within budget.



building.control@barnet.gov.uk



020 8359 4500





THANK YOU to our bin collection crews



Our bin collection crews have done a fantastic job to ensure keep this essential service running during this difficult time.

We've received wonderful messages from residents thanking our crews!



Chargeable garden waste collection

Chargeable garden waste collections started in May. If you have signed up and paid for the garden waste service, the sticker issued to you is valid for 12 months from the service start date of 9 May 2020.

If you would like to sign up for the service you can do so at www.barnet.gov.uk/gardenwaste



Help protect our bin collectors - safe disposal of waste

Anyone asked to self-isolate either as a precaution or because they are confirmed to have Covid-19 should follow this advice:

1. Put your waste in a plastic rubbish bag and tie it up when full. This is especially important when disposing of tissues and cleaning cloths.
2. Put the plastic bag in a second bin bag and tie this up.
3. Make sure this is stored in a suitable and secure place away from children and pets. Keep all waste stored for at least 72 hours before putting it out for collection.

Find out more about the recycling and waste service at www.barnet.gov.uk/recycling

Passenger Transport Service making essential deliveries across Barnet

Since the Covid-19 outbreak, the regular schedules for our Passenger Transport Service have reduced. The service normally provides transport to school for children with special educational needs and drop offs and pick-ups to adult day centres. However, the team's skills and enthusiasm has been put to great use as they have carried out deliveries across the borough of essential supplies and more.

As well as delivering food packages to residents, they have also been making food bank deliveries, delivering PPE supplies and care packages to care homes to support their efforts and are primed to support other projects.

A big thank you to our Passenger Transport Service staff.










COVID-19

Discover and enjoy your local park






Barnet is one of the leafiest boroughs in London, with all residents having parks and gardens, wild landscapes, greenbelt land or river valleys within a mile of their doorsteps.

During lockdown, our open spaces have been a source of great comfort, relaxation and respite for many. Now that lockdown restrictions are easing, you can enjoy more of the free family-friendly facilities available in our 200+ parks and green spaces.

What you can enjoy now

-  Active trails – walking, running and cycling
-  Basketball, tennis and golf
-  Skateboard parks
-  Café takeaway services (this may vary within parks)
-  Sitting and enjoying the fresh air, picnicking, or sunbathing
-  1:1 exercise sessions * spend time outdoors including exercise/fitness in groups of up to six people from different households
-  Dog walking

How to get involved in parks once government restrictions are lifted

-  Enquire about specific parks and the facilities they have to offer
-  Join an existing Friends of Parks volunteer group or create a new group
-  Adopt a place
-  Hold an outdoor event
-  If you have a skill or qualification and would like to provide a service within parks such as activities or fitness opportunities

For more detailed information on getting involved with your local park please visit www.barnet.gov.uk/discoverbarnetparks

Competition time

Barnet Council has teamed up with the Decathlon Store in Brent Cross to offer one lucky reader the opportunity to win an outdoor badminton set to use and enjoy in a park near you. To be in with a chance please tag us on Twitter or Instagram in any pictures that you take enjoying a Barnet park using the hashtags **#fitandactivebarnet** and **#decathlonbrentcross**. The winning entry will be chosen on **Friday 17 July 2020. Good luck!**



Being active outdoors is easy, fun and social, and is great for both your physical and mental health. However, please ensure that you are following the most up to date government advice on Covid-19.



Please also keep our wonderful parks and greenspaces clean and enjoyable for all by taking your rubbish away with you, and remember that all Barnet parks are bbq free zones. For up to date Government Guidelines and The Countryside Code which sets out how to enjoy the outdoors while protecting the natural environment, please visit www.gov.uk





Bringing back the meaning of community

Pravashini Ramsamy, Finchley



At the onset of the Covid-19 crisis, when shelves were wiped clean by panic buying, Finchley resident Pravashini Ramsamy decided to do something to support elderly and vulnerable people who were unable to get everything they needed from the shops.



Pravashini's efforts started with a simple message on Facebook and ballooned into a group of over 100 local residents who were keen to support their neighbours and each other through the crisis.

The group set out to offer home-cooked meals for people who normally might rely on day centres or food banks – which at the time were running low on supplies – or for people who didn't have enough electricity to cook.

They also offered prescription collection for people who were unable to leave their homes. And a key part of the service was offering social interaction to isolated neighbours. Pravashini says that there are

some people who live in a busy city but no one to talk to and no friends nearby.

“When I get a call from someone who needs groceries because they will be isolating or are unable to get to the shops, I will go myself for them or ask one of my volunteers.

“As well as providing food and prescriptions, we can simply just give you a call – it's something to look forward to at the end of the day and can make a huge difference to a person's mental health.”

Happiness from helping

Pravashini says the project has brought a lot of happiness at a very sad time. The volunteers enjoy helping others as it breaks up the routine of being in lockdown at home, and also brings them a sense of belonging and happiness to be working together towards something good for the community.

“The generosity in this group has been unbelievable. I have no words to qualify how people have given up their time, resources, food, and their heart to others.

“People have connected in a very atypical but human way, and friendship has developed in a way you wouldn't think a friendship would develop. Which is one of the greatest achievements of it all.

“One lady I've been supporting lost her husband. I call her three or four times a week to see how she's doing. Hopefully when this is all over I can go and give her a hug.”

Kindness of strangers

As well as working directly with individuals and neighbours, the group has worked with community groups across North London including St Martin School, Long Lane Fire Station, Cranwood Homeless Centre, Whittington Hospital and the Metropolitan Police, and has relied on generous donations from various businesses, charities and volunteers.

“Coronavirus has brought a lot of negativity and a lot of sadness, but looking back in a couple of years I hope we'll see that it's also brought people together. It's bringing the meaning of community back.

“I've suggested when all of this is finished we're going to have a jolly good picnic! I hope we get to see everyone in real life.”

It's safe to say Pravashini and her team of volunteers behind the Finchley Covid-19 Community Support Group will not be stopping their amazing work in the community any time soon.



Rick volunteers for the Good Neighbours scheme, who support elderly and isolated residents in need.

“When the coronavirus crisis hit, I had a drive to want to do more. I was working from home and found I had a lot of extra time to give back. I've volunteered for other organisations in the past but I wanted to do something to help people in the current crisis who were in trouble, so I applied to volunteer through the Barnet Community Response Volunteer platform and was placed with the Good Neighbour scheme about a week later. I shop for groceries for people who are self-isolating and are unable to go out themselves. The people I support are often older people or people who are shielding. Everyone's been so glad for the help. I left a note for one lady, and when I visited her again she told me she had kept the note as she was so uplifted by it.

“I think the notion of wanting to look back and think 'I did as much as I could to help with the opportunities and skills that I have' is a big driving force for me and many other volunteers. I think a lot of people find that comforting – so not only are you helping others but you've helped yourself as well.”

Set up in partnership with Volunteer Barnet, the Barnet Community Response Volunteer platform helps voluntary groups recruit volunteers, enables residents to volunteer safely, and helps us all to work together to support our local communities during the Covid-19 crisis.

Find out more:
barnetvolunteersc19.co.uk or email enquiry@volunteeringbarnet.org.uk



Community and businesses collaborate

Since the onset of Covid-19, every corner of the Barnet community has sprung into action to support residents in need.



One project that has arisen from the crisis is the partnership between Stonegrove Community Trust, Bread n Butter CIC, The Hive Foundation and St Peter’s Church. The group are pooling their skills and resources to prepare and deliver home-cooked meals and essential supplies to those in need.

The healthy and nutritionally balanced home-cooked meals are prepared by a dedicated group of volunteers alongside the team at Bread n Butter CIC – a social enterprise that ordinarily teaches basic cookery and healthy sustainable living skills.

Operating out of the community café kitchen at OneStonegrove, by mid-May the partnership had provided over 11,000 meals to residents in need.

A network of volunteers use two vans lent to the cause by Goodman’s Autos Ltd, and deliver the meals and food items directly to residents, as well as to 18 local community

groups who disperse the packages among their communities.

Local removal firm Rogers Removals supported the partnership’s growth even further by volunteering time and muscle to move bulky catering equipment donated by Barnet Council to the OneStonegrove community kitchen café. The donated equipment enabled them to prepare and deliver as many as 3,000 meals to Barnet residents each week.

Gus Alston, CEO of Stonegrove Community Trust, said: “The catering kit really has made a massive and immediate difference to our operations and has helped us to continue scaling up, to be even bigger and better!”

Local business lends a helping hand

Dennis Rogers said: “Stonegrove Community Trust and their partners are doing a fantastic job providing meals

to vulnerable residents in Barnet so we are happy to support them however we can, especially at this challenging time.”

During the Covid-19 crisis, the Rogers Removals team have also been lending a hand to support local collections for Barnet Food Bank, St Barnabas Food Bank and Elizabeth House Food Hub. They are providing a contactless service for Barnet residents to donate items to the foodbanks by dropping an empty box on doorsteps each Thursday and leaving it to be filled for collection on Saturday.

Dennis added: “As our industry is all but shut down at the moment, we have plenty of vans and boxes and guys available to muck in, so our focus right now is very much on supporting the local community - and foodbanks especially. We know how much it means to the people who receive the food we collect.”

Barnet Together: joining forces to tackle Covid-19



Barnet Together is a partnership between Inclusion Barnet, Volunteering Barnet and Young Barnet Foundation, who have been

working with Barnet Council to provide fantastic support to the community throughout the coronavirus crisis. We spoke to Janet Matthewson, CEO of Young Barnet Foundation:

Tell us about Barnet Together’s role in the community response to Covid-19

As Barnet Together, we agreed we would better meet the needs of Barnet’s community sector and residents if we worked in partnership - so Barnet Together’s community response was born. The

community and faith sector across Barnet work tirelessly to support our residents and in times of crisis they often become the driving force in meeting the needs of our residents.

Covid-19 continues to test us as a sector and as a community, but our borough-wide response is working really well considering the challenges. Community groups and residents have stepped up to serve their community, which is something to really smile about!

What positives have come out of such a difficult time?

We love the stories we hear from the ground. It makes us smile to see there is good shining through all this chaos.

More and more organisations are connecting and working together. They are looking at problems in our community and seeking solutions – together. Barnet Together will continue to build on what is

a sound partnership, and encourage more organisations and residents to join us so that together we can create a stronger, safer, more connected Barnet for all.

How does the Community Response Fund support local initiatives?

Barnet is made up of hundreds of smaller, local groups who operate at the heart of our community. The community response fund offers small amounts of funding at a grassroots level to really make a difference and get the help to where it is needed.

What would you like to say to everyone who calls Barnet home?

It takes a village to raise a child, or in our case a borough, so let’s continue to ask not ‘what can I do?’ but ‘what needs to be done and how can I help?’ And together we will create a safer, stronger, more connected community for all!


COVID-19

On the frontline at the Essential

Syma Kadri, Head of Service for Barnet's Essential Supplies Hub, tells us how the team pulled together to respond to the Covid-19 crisis.

Do you need help or know someone who does? Get in contact.



When the lockdown was first announced, we had to work very quickly to set up an operation that ensured our vulnerable and self-isolating residents were

receiving the support they needed. The RAF Museum in Hendon generously lent us their premises to set up our Essential Supplies Hub.

My team manages the residential deliveries to people who are unable to leave their homes for shopping, as well as coordinating deliveries to food banks and local voluntary and community groups who distribute to their local communities.

The scale of our operation has increased from preparing and delivering food and essential supply packages to 40 residents per day, to over 280 daily deliveries.

We also deliver bulk packages to food banks and community groups each day that are then distributed among the community.

Learning on the job

It's a huge operation and none of us have done anything like this before. Each day there's a fantastic group of about 30 of us working together.

We're all deployed council staff or resident volunteers from completely different backgrounds and areas of work. There's a real sense of making a difference in someone's life with the work we do. The dedication, positive attitude and enthusiasm each person brings to the hub every day is so amazing to see.

I always try to be involved in all aspects of the hub and make deliveries to residents as well to meet the people we are helping. Some residents haven't had contact with the outside world for weeks and just want to have a chat. They're so lovely and grateful; it's really humbling. One delivery I made was to a 94-year-old who had recently had a

hip operation. She was so happy to get her package that she did a dance in the doorway – it was the loveliest sight!

Food or a chat, we're here for you

During the day everything moves at such a frantic speed, unloading and loading, packing, counting, taking the calls - it is such a huge challenge. The best part is at the end of the day when we all come together to talk about the day. We take a moment to celebrate how each person has contributed to helping residents in need and recognise the support we've received from council services, community partners, the London Fire Brigade and the RAF Museum - among many others - to run this essential service.

If you're struggling, please get in touch. There are so many different ways we can help, it's not just food packages. You may need to speak to someone, you may just need some advice or maybe you're not feeling safe. We will listen and connect you with the help you need.



The Essential Supplies Hub delivers to more than 200 Barnet residents a day



Keeping spirits high during Covid-19

Your Choice Barnet supports the elderly and adults with learning disabilities across the borough.

While their day services have been closed, their Supported Living schemes, respite facility and care homes remain open.

Carers have been getting creative with technology to keep everyone connected and have had generous support from the local community to help keep spirits high.

Jackie Hulley, employee at the local Morrison's, started a collection for Your Choice Barnet key workers and service users, supplying carers and those they care for with weekly food parcels. Some people have been isolated for many weeks, so Your Choice staff have been collecting the donations from Morrison's and delivering them to people's doorsteps.

Nikki Barnett, Care Coordinator at Your Choice Barnet, said: "The majority of day service users live at home with an elderly parent or a sibling who cares for them.

"They have been absolutely thrilled to receive the weekly treats on their doorstep and we share a little wave from the car. We're so grateful for the packages, it makes such a difference to everyone's week.

"We've also been helping the people we support to connect with friends and family virtually. Many have been finding it very hard without their regular activities and routines. I set up a WhatsApp video call with some of the people I support and we all danced the macarena together! As difficult as it is, we're trying to hold onto some positives and keep people as connected as possible."



Supplies Hub

Name: Ovi
Current role: Food Packer
Usual role: Traffic Warden



“I love to make a difference so this job is perfect for me. I unload deliveries and pack food parcels at the Essential Supplies Hub.

“At the end of the day we all give each other a round of applause which boosts morale, and on occasion I have been given a separate applause for working hard. It’s very touching to receive such kindness and thanks from my colleagues.

“There are so many people working here together now, it has created such a community. We’re all here for the greater good and I will always appreciate everyone coming together to help people during a time of need.”

Name: Ali
Current role: Team Leader
Usual role: Customer Service Officer at Chipping Barnet Library



“As team leader, I make sure everything is packed correctly and the right packages are put on the right routes. I look at the routes for the day and monitor the parcels that need special attention, such as for dietary requirements, religious requirements and allergens. I work with our drivers a lot to make sure the packages go where they are needed, that they are handled correctly and that we are alerted if

any residents need any extra care.

“The most satisfying part of my job is the feedback we have received from residents. And when we deliver parcels to community centres and shelters we get to see how we are helping and the impact of our work first-hand. Before this experience I didn’t realise there were so many places in Barnet that serve the community. I can now advise residents of the many places around the borough that can help them.

“There was a lovely resident who wanted to introduce me to her cat, but she couldn’t due to distancing measures. Instead she showed me through her second-floor window – she had dressed him up nicely in a bow tie!”

Here to help: the faces behind the Community Help Hub

Responding to queries and calls for urgent support via our online Community Help Hub is a dedicated team of friendly faces. The team have been deployed from their usual roles within the council to rapidly connect Barnet residents with the support they need.



“Working as part of the Community Help Hub has made me really proud. We’re here for residents – whether they need food parcels, financial support, or perhaps are struggling with their mental health or a bereavement. We are at the end of the line, responding urgently and linking everyone up with the support they need.”

Andrew, usual role: Senior Audit Executive
Current role: Team Leader, Covid-19 Support Mailbox



“It makes a huge difference when you’re stuck indoors to have these food parcels delivered. So please pass on our gratitude to everyone involved in organising, preparing and delivering these to us isolated folk. Keep up the good work and stay safe and healthy.”

A self-isolating Barnet resident

“Thank you to all involved in caring for the elderly. Really appreciate you taking the food. Mom is still able to use the microwave so I am able to call and talk her through cooking the meals.”

The overseas daughter of an elderly Barnet resident

Need help? Get in touch

We provide urgent, non-medical help including delivery of food, prescriptions and essential items, emotional support, legal and financial advice, employment and benefits support, drug and alcohol support, and links to community networks. We will connect you with the service that can help. Visit engage.barnet.gov.uk/communityhelphub or call our free helpline 9am to 5pm Monday to Sunday on **0808 2813210**.

Planning your child's return to school?

BARNET

HELPING CHILDREN
BACK TO SCHOOL

Top tips from a psychologist on how to make the return easier



As schools re-open and children return to the classroom, some may find it a little harder than others. You may notice a change in their usual behaviour, such as being a little more clingy than usual.

Dr Anindita Sarkar, Clinical Lead for Barnet Integrated Clinical Children and Young People Mental Health Service, provides some tips for helping your child get back into the groove of going into the classroom.



Five ways to deal with difficult behaviour

- 1 **Give emotions names:** These can be names such as "sad", "angry" or "worried", but they can also be descriptive words such as "shaky", "fuzzy", "spiny", "gurgley" and "heavy"
- 2 **Problem solve together:** If your kids have a worry, work with them to come up with solutions
- 3 **Stay calm yourself:** If you can, build in buffers to help lighten the load for a week or two and stay in contact with sympathetic friends who can listen to you
- 4 **Communicate with your school:** Speak to your child's teacher if you can but also remember that they're going through a pandemic too and their work world has been totally flipped around so try to be patient
- 5 **Contact services like Barnet Integrated Clinical Service.** We have helplines and group workshops providing recovery support for parents as well as looking after the range of needs of your children. Call the helpline from 9am-5pm 07926 085 495



Sleep Eazzzzzzzy

- z z z** Preparation plays an essential role in helping reduce stress and as schools open it's important we healthily adapt to a new sleep pattern so that we feel energised and ready for whatever the day has to offer! The Sleep Council has provided some tips for families preparing for their new school routines.

For more information visit our Helping Children Back to School guide online: www.barnet.gov.uk/backtoschool

Different ways to support sleep

DISCIPLINE YOURSELF: Try to keep to a consistent bedtime/wake time. If things have drifted then start to move them slowly by about 15 minutes every few days until they are back on track

BE CONSISTENT: Our body clocks thrive on routine. Having a set wake up time seven days a week is important

GET FRESH AIR: Try to encourage youngsters to go outside for at least half an hour each morning. Daylight supports our body clocks, helping us to wake-up and suppress the sleep hormone

GO SCREEN-FREE: Make the hour before bed a screen-free zone. Screens produce a blue light that trick our bodies into thinking it is daylight and make us feel more alert

DIM THE LIGHTS: In the hour before bed, dim the lights to help youngsters to produce melatonin, this is the sleep hormone that helps us to nod off more easily

WIND-DOWN: A bath followed by a warm milky drink and reading them a book is a simple and effective wind-down. This gets children relaxed and ready for bed

TALK IT OUT: Try to schedule in time to talk about worries away from the bedtime routine. We want bedtime to be positive and relaxing.

For more information about sleep support visit www.thesleepcharity.org.uk

COVID-19

Young people take action to tackle food poverty

Five days before the lockdown was announced, Barnet Refugee Service’s newly formed Action Club – a youth-led group of young people from refugee and asylum-seeking backgrounds – put their heads together to decide what action they could take to help tackle the coronavirus crisis.

Drawing on their own experiences of struggling to get hold of affordable food and essential items, the group launched a mobile food bank to create and distribute food parcels to people who needed it the most.

Thanks to funding from London Youth’s City Leader’s project, within a few days the group determined the resources needed, what they wanted to include in the parcels and created an advert to promote their service among refugee and asylum-seeking families and young people in Barnet.

Word quickly spread and the group packaged and delivered food parcels to 119 people within days.

Food, cooking and fitness

The programme has since continued thanks to adult volunteers from the Barnet Refugee Service and support from the local mosque and the Young Barnet Foundation among others, and continues to deliver food fortnightly to approximately 200 people.

Action Club members have also been running cooking demonstrations and fitness sessions online for young people in the community to stay connected, keep active and maintain a healthy lifestyle during lockdown.



Community Award for Tata

Tata, 18, (pictured above, middle) received a Community Award from the Jack Petchey Foundation for his leadership at Action Club: “I decided to set up the mobile food bank because lockdown caused difficulties and people were finding it hard to find food. “I know how difficult it is to have no one around because of my own life and my journey to the UK. So I thought of these people and how I can help and reach out to them.”

Action Club members range in age from 13-18 and are Tata, Idris, Yasmin, Koda, Ibrahim Kobi, Ibrahim Yusuf, Adam, Idris, Carone, Omar, Roaa, Natali, Nida, and Hamza.



Mission: Goody bag!



Since April we've been thinking outside of the box, trying to find ways to keep small children entertained during isolation. One of our most successful initiatives has been a delivery service of activity packs to children age 5 and under who have learning disabilities or who come from vulnerable families.

250 packs are delivered every two weeks to food banks across the borough including Bread N Butter (Stonegrove), Homestart, Finchley Food Bank, Unitas Youth Centre, Underhill Children's Centre and Burnt Oak Women's Group.

Each goody bag contains an activity sheet along with the special ingredients and/or tools needed however most of the activities can be done using household items. Some of the goodies we've provided so far include ingredients to make playdough, coloured pencils and sketch pads.

Activity sheets are regularly uploaded to our Barnet Childrens Centres Locality Facebook pages and we've already reached over 2,000 shares!



"We have shared this with our families and they were so grateful for the packs and activity sheets
😊 Thanks!"

Underhill Children's Centre

"Thank you so much! 😊 Families were excited to do the activities with their little ones."

Burnt Oak Women's Group

"We made the playdough today and it was amazing. It's literally kept the kids busy for most of the day. 😊 They love it."

Parent

Libraries go digital!

Barnet's libraries' doors are closed temporarily but that hasn't stopped us from providing our wide range of services virtually

Our regular children's and family events such as storytelling, Tracey's Rhyme Time and craft activity sessions have all gone digital with staff rising to the challenge of making videos at home to replace in-library activities.

We absolutely love hearing your great feedback as this helps us shape our future content. Rhyme Time has been a particular success, with our first session being watched 3,411 times, the highest number of views of any video on our Barnet Council YouTube channel!

Parents have been submitting their comments on Rhyme Time and the impact it's had on their young ones:

"I just want to say my children and I had the best online session the other day! We were really engaged the whole way through. Great idea and can't wait for the next one!" - *Saniya*

"Massive thank you for rhyme time. We come to baby bounce and all 3 of mine are under 5 and absolutely love it xxx" – *Natalie*

"Fabulous endeavours - thank you so much for organising these sessions." – *Carmen*

"My girls absolutely love your rhyme time. They especially loved row your boat in the washing basket so please keep up the good work!" - *Liz*

We couldn't be happier that our videos have been so well received and while videos can be incredibly engaging and exciting, we mustn't forget the importance of good old-fashioned reading!

If you haven't already, join our online library by visiting barnet.gov.uk/libraries where you can access a wide range of eBooks, audiobooks, digital magazines and newspapers for free.



Barnet Libraries
at the heart of our communities
LEARNING • LEISURE • LIFE

We understand how tough lockdown has been for some families and individuals therefore we will continue to work hard to keep you entertained, educated and informed during and beyond this pandemic! Find out more at barnet.gov.uk/libraries



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Full Council meetings

Hendon

Tuesday 28 July 2020, 7pm via Microsoft Teams or at Hendon Town Hall, The Burroughs, London NW4 4BQ, depending on government guidance.

Resident Forums

You can find the dates of the residents' forums on: barnet.moderngov.co.uk

For more information and for venue details, please visit: barnet.moderngov.co.uk

For details of surgeries, email: first.contact@barnet.gov.uk

Or write to us:
Members' Room,
Hendon Town Hall,
The Burroughs,
Hendon, NW4 4BG

#BarnetTogether

