



16/4/2020

## Weekly Covid 19 update



### Virtual garden tours

Mary Berry, famous for her love of gardens as well as cooking, launched virtual tours on the National Garden Scheme website. As well as gardens there are also plenty of canine stars to see, plus some tutorial videos with practical tips.

<https://ngs.org.uk/virtual-garden-visits/>

### Keeping Reading's Volunteers Safe



The response from the Reading community has been fantastic and lots of people have come forward to help their neighbours. Reading Voluntary Action want to help everyone stay safe whilst volunteering and receiving support.

If you are involved in volunteering and connected with community or neighbourhood groups, take a look at this guide from Reading Voluntary Action on how to volunteer safely and share with others in your group.

[Staying Safe whilst Volunteering: A guide for voluntary and community groups](#)

<http://rva.org.uk/article/guide-for-community-groups-offering-coronavirus-support-services/>

You can also access [online safeguarding resources and videos here.](#)

You can contact Reading Voluntary Action for free support and advice about running your group email: [advice@rva.org.uk](mailto:advice@rva.org.uk) or call 0118 9372273.

If you need help and assistance from people outside your family and friends contact the One Reading Hub on **0808 1894325**, who will direct you to help that is available from established organisations, including established charities and community groups. They will explain to you how the help will take place and how they will do this safely.

## Get summer ready!



We don't know what kind of a summer we're going to have while the pandemic continues, but we can still look forward to some warmer weather and use the opportunity to get in shape.

Here are some tips and resources to get you feeling good whatever the situation.

### Getting Active:

You may not be able to go your favourite classes at the moment, but the RSL team have shared lots of videos on-line, including classes with their own coaches. There's something for everyone including people with long term conditions and its all **FREE** to access!

<http://www.readingleisure.co.uk/exercise-classes/>



### Healthy Eating for Less:

Healthy Eating Course- Wednesday 22nd April 11am-12pm.

How do I eat healthily at a time like this?  
What can I eat that is inexpensive, nutritious and tasty? Join Compass Recovery College for discussion, ideas, tips and maybe even a recipe or two.



This **FREE** session will be delivered through the online platform <https://zoom.us/>.



[compass.opportunities@reading.gov.uk](mailto:compass.opportunities@reading.gov.uk)  
or phone/text 07739 823 140.

### Quitting Smoking:



Quitting will help protect you and your loved ones, save you money and give you a feel good boost! It can also help to reduce impact on the NHS services at this critical time.

[www.todayistheday.co.uk](http://www.todayistheday.co.uk)

## Alcohol

Isolation is disrupting everyone's routine and you might be thinking about how to watch your alcohol intake.

Drinkaware has easy guides on how much alcohol is safe and tips on how to cut down while you're in isolation.  
<https://www.drinkaware.co.uk/>

Here are a few of the rewards you can expect to keep you going!

The immediate effects of cutting down:

- feeling better in the mornings
- better looking skin
- being less tired during the day
- feeling more energetic
- better weight management

Long-term benefits:

- Improved Mood - hangovers often make you feel anxious and low. If you already feel anxious or sad, drinking can make this worse. Cutting down may improve your mood generally.
- Better Sleep - drinking can affect your sleep. Although it might help you fall asleep quickly, it may disrupt your sleep patterns and stop you sleeping deeply. Cutting down on alcohol should help you feel more rested when you wake up.
- More Effective Immune system - regular drinking can affect your body's ability to fight infections. Heavy drinkers tend to catch more infectious diseases.

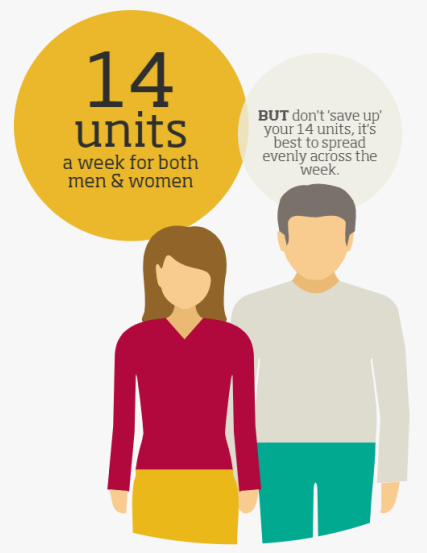


For more information visit the NHS website:  
<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/alcohol-support/tips-on-cutting-down-alcohol/>

## Affected by someone's drinking?

Al-Anon have virtual resources on their website, including podcasts. You can also find out if there is a virtual support group you can join.  
<http://www.al-anonuk.org.uk> or call: 0800 0086 811

 **AL-ANON**  
FAMILY GROUPS  
UK & EIRE



## Activities for SEND children

The Family Information Service have created a SEND Local Offer COVID-19 newsletter. It covers all services providing support for children and young people with additional needs and their families.



[SEND Local Offer - Newsletter | Reading Services Guide](#)



### Keep Active at Home

Here are some fun videos to help children to stay active at home and burn off some of their energy!

There are lots of ways to keep children and young people active – start off by choosing the activities your child is interested in - it's ok to adapt them if you need to.

<https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/activities/accessible-activities>



Mr Higgins is a PE Teacher with 16 years' experience who has created videos of inclusive PE games to play at home. They help children with special needs to develop their motor skills and to enjoy staying active indoors.

[https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=mr+higgins+inclusive](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=mr+higgins+inclusive)



Steph Johnson from Reading Rockets has created 'FUNdamental Workout' - a workout designed for young people to help develop their fundamental movements. The workout is designed for all the amazing SEND children and helps children to practice their fundamental movements and multi skills.

<https://youtu.be/qBpoR53v1Gc>



## Reading Mencap



Reading Mencap are helping children & adults with a learning disability and their families by:

- Keeping in touch on the phone
- Making sure you've got essential supplies of food & medicine
- Help & advice from our Family Support Service
- Activity packs and ideas for things to do
- Links to other services

If you, or someone you know, needs support, please call: **0118 966 2518**

Email: [office@readingmencap.org.uk](mailto:office@readingmencap.org.uk)  
or visit [www.readingmencap.org.uk](http://www.readingmencap.org.uk)



The local voice of learning disability

## Local Help

Many groups are still contactable through their website or phone number.

Please check <http://servicesguide.reading.gov.uk> updates on what is happening locally and put 'COVID' into the search.

Reading  
Community  
Welfare Rights  
Unit

**Reading Community Welfare Rights** - Working remotely and supporting existing clients. New clients looking for benefits advice can still get in touch: email

[advisor@readingspecialist.co.uk](mailto:advisor@readingspecialist.co.uk) or call **0118 955 1070**



**Solace** - If you have been the victim of rape or sexual abuse you can contact Solace. Supporting men, women and children. 24/7 helpline **0800 970 9952**

## Reading Services Guide

Social groups ★ lunch clubs ★ activities ★ support ★ services.

Visit [www.reading.gov.uk/servicesguide](http://www.reading.gov.uk/servicesguide) or call **0118 937 3747**



## Struggling with the rent?



The government has brought forward a package of measures to protect renters affected by coronavirus (COVID-19). This is to ensure that no-one in either social or private accommodation will be forced out of their home.

Landlords will also be protected by a 3 month mortgage payment holiday where they have buy to let mortgages.

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/if-you-cant-pay-your-bills-because-of-coronavirus/>

or call: **03444 111 306** or **03444 111 444**

## Money worries due to Coronavirus?

If you are already receiving benefit payments these will be paid automatically.

In line with Government advice on social distancing, to help protect our customers, communities, and colleagues, our doors will be temporarily closed and we do not need anyone to come into a Job Centre face to face. We are asking everyone to access our services either on line, or by telephone.

- To apply for any benefits please go online: <https://www.gov.uk/benefits>
- If you make a claim online, your local job centre will contact you.

The local Job Centre Number line is closed until further. Appointments in the Job Centre are temporarily suspended.

**General advice line for all benefits** - call Citizens Advice on 0344 4111 444

**Universal Credit helpline for claims** - call Citizens Advice on 0800 144 8444

**Universal Credit customers** - use your online journal to contact and log queries.

**Text Phone for vulnerable adults** 0800 328 1344. NGT text relay – if you cannot hear or speak on the phone: 18001 then 0800 328 5644

To get more information generally please visit:

<https://www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/coronavirus/>

## Do you need urgent welfare support?

If you need extra support or are concerned for someone else during this time:

- For anyone who is already receiving support from Reading Borough Council's social care teams call: **0118 937 3747**
- For anyone **not** in receipt of support from adult social care contact the One Reading Community Hub: Fill in the online coronavirus support form: <https://www.reading.gov.uk/coronavirussupportform>
- or call **0808 1894325**

Please only contact the Hub for **urgent** welfare needs so that resources can be directed to the people that need it most at this challenging time.



Links with additional information:

- Safeguarding concerns and guidelines  
<http://rva.org.uk/article/safeguarding-resources-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>
- <http://rva.org.uk/ready-friends/>
- <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/urgent-and-emergency-care/nhs-111/>

On behalf of all of us at Reading Borough Council and the Voluntary sector & Community services, please stay safe.

If you have any queries, contact [Wellbeing.Service@reading.gov.uk](mailto:Wellbeing.Service@reading.gov.uk)