

Coronavirus – Age UK West Sussex, Brighton & Hove to temporarily close centres

On Monday 16th March, the Government outlined new advice on containing the spread of the Coronavirus which suggested people in at-risk groups, including over 70s will be asked within days to be "largely shielded from social contact" for 12 weeks.

As a result, and in order to help protect those who use its services, Age UK West Sussex, Brighton & Hove has taken the decision to close its centres to the public from Saturday 21st March onwards. All existing social and activity groups run by the charity will be put on hold until further notice. This is likely to be at least 12 weeks in line with the Government advice, but may be longer. The closure will be kept under regular review and the charity will be following Government guidelines closely.

Age UK West Sussex, Brighton & Hove will adapt its services to continue offering emotional and practical help to older people locally. For example, it's likely that the charity will provide phone calls to help those self-isolating combat loneliness, and will begin offering to collect and deliver medication or groceries.

Helen Rice, Chief Executive at Age UK West Sussex, Brighton & Hove said "Obviously, we're disappointed that we have to close our centres to the public at the moment, but given the Government guidance, it's an important step. Despite this, we're absolutely determined to continue helping those who need us. We've already identified people that use our services who may need our assistance at this time, particularly those who are frail, vulnerable and isolated. We'll be doing all we can to support them, with personalised help based on their individual needs. This is such a difficult time, but our team are going to be working incredibly hard to help as many of our older community as possible in the coming weeks and months."

If you are self-isolating and need support, or if you're worried about a friend or family member during this time, please contact Age UK West Sussex, Brighton & Hove on 01903 731 800 or email information@ageukwestsussex.org.uk