

## Partnership Working through COVID-19 in Croydon

This document codifies how mutual aid groups, charitable and voluntary sector (CVS) organisations and Croydon borough council are working together to help Croydon residents through the COVID-19 pandemic. We have established a tiered system so that people can be referred to the most appropriate source of help, depending on the complexity of their needs. Needs will be met at the lowest possible tier, relieving pressure on CVS organisations and Croydon council and allowing them to deal with more complex, specialist requirements.

### How Does the Tier System Work?

The lowest tier comprises the [70+ local mutual aid groups](#) (LMAGs), coordinated by [Croydon COVID-19 Mutual Aid](#) (CCMA). These comprise neighbours volunteering to help with simple tasks like collecting shopping and medicine, dog-walking, befriending, etc. CCMA operates a helpline to direct callers to their nearest LMAG (020 3322 8379, 8am-8pm daily). LMAGs then connect people to local volunteers.

Where a person/ family's needs are more complex they may (with their permission) be referred upwards to Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA) or Age UK Croydon (AUKC).

- CVA is coordinating the CVS response in Croydon, including from local charities and foodbanks, listed in its [Simply Connect](#) database. It operates a helpline which can refer callers to more specialist services. CVA has also become a food distribution hub and can provide stop-gap assistance before specialist help becomes available.
- AUKC provides a helpline for everyone over 50 and provides extensive, specialist practical support covering a wide variety of health, social and community care needs.
- Croydon Neighbourhood Care Association provides specialist support for the over-80s.

The most complex cases will be referred to Croydon borough council, whose specialist services are responsible for caring for the most vulnerable.

### How will this work in practice?

Any group can refer to any tier at any time. Where there are extreme safeguarding concerns, referrals can be made to the Council, the police or ambulance services without permission. The organisation lists in the three tiers are not exhaustive and other referrals may take place e.g. to local councillors or MPs. Individuals/ families may also receive help from more than one tier at a time e.g. someone may need their shopping done today by a CCMA volunteer but in the longer term a proper care plan needs to be put in place by social services. For those who have No Recourse to Public Funds, CCMA volunteers are prepared to help whilst seeking support from relevant charities.

**“Shielded” (“extremely vulnerable”)  
Central government**

A very narrowly-defined group of 1.5m people nationwide are entitled to central government support, including free doorstep food deliveries. This comprises people with a very limited range of medical conditions who have been told to self-isolate for 12 weeks. The some-750,000 people who volunteered to help the NHS will be deployed for this purpose (among others).

Most eligible people should have received a letter with details of how to register. Individuals can also register (or be registered by someone else) [online](#) or 0800 028 8327.

**Most vulnerable  
Croydon Council**

**0208 604 7787**

[covid19support@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:covid19support@croydon.gov.uk)

[CroydonCouncilShieldingTeam@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:CroydonCouncilShieldingTeam@croydon.gov.uk)

- Those who GPs and Age UK have registered as the most vulnerable.
- Individuals/ families already known to council services (who should contact those services directly).
- Individuals or families reporting emergency situations e.g. domestic abuse.

Croydon council is also filling in gaps in central government support for “shielded” individuals.

**More vulnerable**

**Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA)**

**020 8253 7076  
Mon-Fri 10am-4pm**

- Any specialist need above CCMA level, supporting a wide range of individual and family needs
- Stop-gap emergency support (e.g. food parcels)
- Can refer under-50s to AUKC if they meet PIC criteria.

**Age UK Croydon (AUKC)**

**020 8686 0066  
Mon-Fri 10am-4pm**

- 50+ years old
- Needs above CCMA level, including:
  - Dementia, disability and or care needs
  - Health, social and community care
  - Signposting to other local services

**Croydon Neighbourhood Care Association (CNCA)**

**AUKC will refer to CNCA as appropriate**

- 80+ years old
- Totally isolated
- Any complex need above CCMA level

**Least vulnerable  
Croydon COVID-19 Mutual Aid (CCMA)**

**020 3322 8379, 8am-8pm daily**

- Individuals or families needing someone to pick up shopping because they are self-isolating
- Those in need of a friendly chat because they are lonely
- Those needing simple, routine tasks such as dog walking or picking up prescriptions
- Helping to distribute food for foodbanks