



Dear Copeland residents,

The coronavirus pandemic is the most challenging time that many of us have ever faced.

We are concerned not only for our own personal health and wellbeing, but for that of our loved ones – especially the elderly and vulnerable – and, in a lot of cases, for our businesses and livelihoods.

There is no doubt that for the weeks and months to follow, we face some troubling times.

Yet, amid the concern, uncertainty and anxiety, the Copeland community has responded in the only way it knows how; to stand up and rally around one another.

As soon as the situation began to escalate, we saw the community galvanise. Community members, sports clubs, churches and elected representatives organised themselves to form support groups, volunteering a helping hand, literally, to those in isolation.

Notes were posted through doors offering the delivery of shopping or medicine, and social media became a hive of activity for well-intentioned folk to organise themselves.

It's heartening to see, and formal channels have now been set up (through local authorities and Cumbria CVS) to gather and organise the many volunteers who are selflessly willing to give up their time for their neighbours.

At Copeland Council, we are not immune. Our workers have families, some have health concerns, and all are equally anxious about the situation. Yet the workforce also has a determination to continue to deliver vital services for our community. Yes, some non-statutory services have had to be put on hold, but even with a depleted team, we will continue to carry out our priority services like paying benefits, supporting the homeless, and collecting your waste. I'd like to publicly thank our team for their resilience and commitment. I'd also like to thank everyone in Copeland who continues to deliver the services that keep us functioning.

In the current crisis, we are also offering direct support for the business community and the local tourism industry; please visit <https://www.copeland.gov.uk/coronavirus-pandemic-information-copeland> for further details.

Also at our website are links to the local support network, alongside up-to-the-minute guidance directly from Cumbria County Council, the Government and Public Health England. Please use only these trusted sources of information and heed the advice.

Finally, stay safe everyone. Let's all look out for one another and continue to be mindful of those that are isolated or vulnerable.

Anybody wishing to contact me personally can do so on 07526 258389 or e-mail [mike.starkie@copeland.gov.uk](mailto:mike.starkie@copeland.gov.uk)

Mike Starkie  
Elected Mayor of Copeland