

Dear stakeholder,

Volunteers continue to play such an important part in our system's response to COVID-19. We have seen a great outpouring of kindness by people of all ages. Volunteers for the Essex Welfare Service, in addition to the many hundreds of people who give their time to charity and community groups across the county, have ensured that our most vulnerable residents have received essential support. The same has happened in Suffolk – amazing generosity from so many people. I would also like to share two videos of local leaders thanking those who have been giving up their time to help others in Essex and Suffolk as part of national Volunteers Week. Please click [HERE](#) for the Essex video and [HERE](#) for the Suffolk recording.

A team of psychologists in Suffolk has created a 'support pack' to help schools cope with an increase in mental health issues faced by both students and colleagues as a result of the pandemic. The pack, designed to help staff best respond to any emotional distress displayed by students or colleagues, has already been adopted by councils in Suffolk and Norfolk. Thanks to everyone involved in developing this pack, which will provide vital support to many.

With the lifting of some restrictions relating to the use of our high streets expected on 15 June, the Ipswich Vision Board partners have combined to create a plan to help give confidence to those coming back to the town that it is open, safe and ready to do business. Measures to be introduced will include a 'keep left' pedestrian scheme and extensive banner messaging, including floor stickers, lamp-post banners and posters for shop windows. All these elements are designed to help encourage social distancing and considerate use of Suffolk's county town.

Getting young children active and keeping them entertained during the pandemic is no easy task and has proved stressful for many families. Lots of local groups have produced activity packs for children and Colchester Museums has launched theirs this week.

Finally, I wanted to pass on my thanks on behalf of local NHS system leaders to Nigel Beeton, Imaging Services Manager at West Suffolk Hospital. Nigel retired last week after more than 40 years' service in the NHS. He managed the radiology (X-ray, CT, MRI, nuclear medicine, ultrasound and breast imaging), clinical photography and endoscopy departments for 20 years. In recognition of his service the West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust has named one of its accommodation blocks 'Beeton House'.

Stay safe,

Ed.