

## A note on making it easier for local residents to support initiatives...

We have a community support operation in our Littlemoor and Preston ward in Weymouth. As part of this, we collect prescriptions, do shopping for residents and supply food packages for those in need.

So far, it sounds pretty similar to hundreds of other fantastic voluntary groups across the country.

However, we had a problem...

If a resident requested or needed something that had not been donated, we couldn't buy it as we didn't have any money.

As a voluntary group, we have no bank account and we didn't want to handle cash for social distancing reasons.

Through my role as Dorset Council's Finance, Commercial and Assets Portfolio Holder, I asked the Officers if there was any way that the Council could help.

We were told that there is a Government website ([gov.uk/payments/foodbanks/foodbanks](https://www.gov.uk/payments/foodbanks/foodbanks)), which allows individuals to donate to foodbanks.

Dorset Council have set up an account for us on the site. This means that we can go to residents and ask for donations, which they can make via the website.

The Council then tell us how much money we have and we email back an order of needed items, and they then place an order with their wholesaler, which we collect and deliver to residents who need them most.

I hope others in a similar situation to us can find this useful!

Cllr Tony Ferrari,  
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