

## Domestic Abuse

If you've been suffering at the hands of a partner or relative, the lockdown is likely to have aggravated matters.

Help is available from both local & national organisations.

- Choices (Maidstone Based)  
**0800 917 9948**  
[info@choicesdaservice.org.uk](mailto:info@choicesdaservice.org.uk)
- National Domestic Violence Helpline  
**0808 2000 247**

If you are in immediate danger, always dial 999 for Maidstone Police.

## Bins & Fly-Tipping

MBC's contractors have been trying very hard to keep the bin collections going. Problems are occurring however. Similarly, there has been a sharp increase in fly-tipping.

You can report these to MBC: -

- Bin Collection Problems  
**01622 602600**  
[maidstone.cc/bins](http://maidstone.cc/bins)
- Fly-tipping  
[maidstone.cc/flytipping](http://maidstone.cc/flytipping)

or of course you can contact me:  
[LottieParfittReid@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:LottieParfittReid@maidstone.gov.uk)

## Mental Health

This heading covers a lot of topics.

If you're an older resident who feels very lonely: -

- West Kent Befriending Service  
**0800 048 4668**  
[befriending@ageukmaidstone.org.uk](mailto:befriending@ageukmaidstone.org.uk)

For people of all ages suffering stress, anxiety or depression: -

- NHS Information  
[maidstone.cc/mentalhealth](http://maidstone.cc/mentalhealth)
- MIND (mental health charity) operate an infoline:  
**0300 123 3393**  
[info@mind.org.uk](mailto:info@mind.org.uk)

Dedicated information & support is available for NHS workers, carers, the Blue Light emergency services & key workers: -

- [www.ourfrontline.org](http://www.ourfrontline.org)

For everyone, whatever you're going through, the Samaritans are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year: -

- **116123** (free number to call)

## Stay Alert?

It means please do not be complacent. In everything you do, please take precautions to help control the virus.

Government guidance on the latest 'dos & don'ts' is available: -

- [maidstone.cc/lockdownfaq](http://maidstone.cc/lockdownfaq)

## Housing

If you are worried about ending-up homeless as a result of Covid, MBC aim to be proactive in preventing this.

- MBC Housing **01622 602440**  
[maidstone.cc/housing](http://maidstone.cc/housing)

or you can contact me.

## Financial Problems

The financial consequences of the pandemic and the lockdown are hitting people in different ways. They're certainly likely to be with us for a long time to come. Below are pointers to a range of support covering a range of needs. Again, you can contact me on any of these subjects: [LottieParfittReid@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:LottieParfittReid@maidstone.gov.uk) & **07919 360000**.

### Claiming Benefits

If you're now without an income, perhaps needing to claim Universal Credit for the first time: -

- Universal Credit Helpline  
**0800 328 5644**
- Online benefit calculators can help you understand what you might claim.  
[www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators](http://www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators)

It is important not to delay in making a claim, however novel doing so may be for you.

### Debt

If you are now in debt and feel the situation may be unmanageable, there are local & national sources of advice on your options.

- Maidstone Citizens Advice  
**0344 848 7978**  
[www.maidstonecab.org.uk](http://www.maidstonecab.org.uk)
- StepChange (debt charity)  
**0800 138 1111**  
[www.stepchange.org](http://www.stepchange.org)

### Small Businesses

If you run a small business in Maidstone, things are tough at the moment.

Useful information about small business grants and other support can be found here: -

[maidstone.cc/business](http://maidstone.cc/business)

The 'Self Employment Income Support Scheme' from HMRC is finally open. Details on eligibility and applying can be found here: -

[maidstone.cc/selfemployed](http://maidstone.cc/selfemployed)

The 'Bounce Back Loan Scheme' is available for all types of business (sole trader, LtdCo etc). Borrow 25% of your 2019 turnover for 6 years. No repayments in Year 1. No collateral & no personal guarantee required. No credit check. Just 2.5% pa interest. Details can be found here: -

[maidstone.cc/bouncebackloans](http://maidstone.cc/bouncebackloans)

### Retirement Savings

If you're still saving for retirement and have any worries, concerns or needs, you should speak to an FCA authorised financial adviser. If you do not have an adviser, you can peruse local firms here: -

[www.unbiased.co.uk](http://www.unbiased.co.uk)