



The Government of Sark

## **POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**A COMMITTEE OF THE CHIEF PLEAS OF SARK**  
**COMMITTEE OFFICE, LA CHASSE MARETTE, SARK GY10 1SF**  
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**23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020**

**Dear Residents,**

I appreciate that this letter contains a lot of information but we ask that you please take the time to read it all thoroughly as it will help us to keep our community safe.

As you will all be aware, we are in the midst of a world pandemic and although Sark is an isolated place, we are by no means exempt from the threat of COVID-19. This is not said to scare you but to urge those who are underestimating the importance of social distancing, self isolation and basic hygiene to put more care and thought into their actions.

In the event of a medical threat or emergency within the Bailiwick, such as we are experiencing now, there exists a government body in Guernsey called the Civil Contingency Authority, (CCA). They are in charge of all key decisions, actions and regulations relating to health and welfare of the Bailiwick. Sark is part of the Bailiwick and has a seat in the CCA. This means that any regulations which Sark wishes to impose must first be approved by the CCA to ensure they are in the best interest of the Bailiwick. For this reason it takes time to get regulations in place.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 virus can spread very quickly, quicker than we can propose regulations for Sark and pass them over to Guernsey for approval. We are doing our very best to try and stay one step ahead of the virus outbreak but in reality the power lies within each individual taking responsibility and doing their part to minimize the spread. This responsibility extends to businesses as well, and we should all be taking a proactive approach when it comes to decisions regarding minimizing social interaction.

All regulations that are currently in place are listed on the Sark and Guernsey Government websites. They are all Bailiwick regulations and Sark residents are expected to abide by them just as Guernsey and Alderney residents are too.

In addition to the regulations already in place, Sark Government has decided to instruct the Isle of Sark Shipping to isolate the Viking ferry for cargo only (no passengers) and to reduce passenger sailings to one trip per week for essential travel (medical reasons only). Proof of medical reason for travel will be required to purchase tickets. This decision has been made to reduce the risk of infection traveling to

Sark. That being said, until island wide testing is available we cannot be sure if the infection is on island already or not. Although not regulation as yet, we would also strongly advise that any person or persons who do travel to Guernsey for essential medical reasons self-isolate for 14 days upon their return.

As of this weekend just gone a committee of Chief Pleas has been set up to help steer Sark through this difficult time. The Pandemic Emergency Committee will take the lead on all further matters regarding the COVID-19 situation on Sark and will also serve as the public's point of contact for any questions or worries you may have.

The Pandemic Emergency Committee members are:

Sam La Trobe-Bateman (P&F) (Chairman) sam.latrobe-bateman@gov.sark.gg

Amanda De Carteret (Medical/Education) (Deputy Chairman) amanda.decarteret@gov.sark.gg

Helen Plummer (Medical & Emergency Services/Ag&E) helen.plummer@gov.sark.gg

John Guille (H&S) john.guille@gov.sark.gg

Alan Blythe (Douzaine) alan.blythe@gov.sark.gg

Paul Williams (Tourism) paul.williams@gov.sark.gg

Constable constable@gov.sark.gg

Rev. David Stolton

Joseph Donovan

Zannette Bougourd Chief Secretary Zannette.bougourd@gov.sark.gg

Caroline Robins (Minutes)

**A group email address will follow shortly.**

## **MEDICAL STATEMENT**

On behalf of the Medical and Emergency Services Committee we would like to give you the following information.

As you are aware Dr Gray has been serving our Island since 16<sup>th</sup> December 2019 as a locum GP providing cover from when Dr Stevenson left and Dr McKelvie arriving. Unfortunately Dr McKelvie sadly withdrew his application in January.

The GP position was offered to Dr Gray who began the application process, however during this period Dr Gray then withdrew her application and informed the committee that her contract would cease on 31<sup>st</sup> March.

The Medical Committee are working extremely hard to recruit a locum Dr to replace Dr Gray however this process is clearly extremely difficult with the Covid19 situation worsening.

The Medical Director of Guernsey and other medical officials are providing invaluable support and working alongside the Medical Committee to assist Sark whilst we develop a new model of medical care for Sark

Previously our GP has provided 24/7 care, this model is no longer practical as GPs are no longer prepared to provide this level of cover

Implementation of the new medical model has begun with the recruitment of Mrs. Alison Stolton, who is a fully qualified midwife and practice nurse and is working part-time work in the surgery providing clinical support and to allow the doctor to receive a full day of rest from 24hr cover.

We have also commenced training Community First Aid Responders in conjunction with St Johns Ambulance. The Community First Aid Responders will be providing assistance with out of hours service, unfortunately due to Covid19 that training maybe postponed to a later date.

We have begun re- advertising for a new resident GP however this process could be delayed due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

The Medical & Emergency Services Committee are working extremely hard to resolve this difficult situation and will continue to ensure Sark has Medical & Emergency care for our residents and visitors at all time. Whether we use a Locum GP/ Guernsey Paramedics or Qualified Nurses, Guernsey officials are committed to supporting Sark in whatever way they can.

Further information:

### **Evacuation:**

If any Sark patients need emergency care due to Covid 19 or other reasons the Flying Christine will continue to provide this service.

The Sark ambulance station has a designated ambulance to transport any patient who has Covid 19 to the harbour.

### **Testing**

The Sark Locum GP or Qualified Nurse are trained to test a patient who is showing signs of Covid 19 symptoms.

This patient must then self isolate for 14 days and follow medical advice regarding the result and further action.

### **Prevention**

You can protect yourself and help prevent spreading the virus to others if you :

Do

- Wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds, with soap and water or use alcohol- based hand rub before touching surfaces.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a disposable tissue or flexed elbow when you cough or sneeze
- Avoid close contact (2metre or 6.5 feet) with everyone
- Social distancing, avoid social gatherings including in your own or other houses.
- Stay home and self isolate from others in the household if you feel unwell

Don't

- Touch your eyes, nose or mouth and avoid touching all surfaces whenever possible. This virus lives for significant periods on hard surfaces.

### **Symptoms**

If you experience any of the following symptoms

- Cough
- Fever
- Tiredness

- Difficulty Breathing

**CALL THE MEDICAL CENTRE -DO NOT IN ANY CIRCUMSTANCES GO TO THE SURGERY  
832045**

As you are aware the surgery is now operating an appointment only service, this is to reduce waiting times and provide the recommended personal distancing to reduce the possibility of infection transmission.

### **MEDICAL INSURANCE**

If you are with the Island scheme this is the information received:-

**In order to pre-empt any queries that you may receive, we have received the following advice from AXA regarding Coronavirus:**

**Members covered by international health plans arranged by AXA Global Healthcare\* will be able to claim for treatment of COVID-19 in line with their usual terms, conditions and underwriting. Members should be aware that many countries are restricting treatment of COVID-19 patients to state hospitals so there may be a limit on the private treatment available.”**

**\* AXA Global Healthcare (UK) Limited, AXA Global Healthcare (EU) Limited, AXA Global Healthcare (Hong Kong) Limited**

There's also a member facing FAQ on our website, which you can find here

<https://www.axaglobalhealthcare.com/en/members/coronavirus/>

### **FOOD STOP INFORMATION**

**Nikki, Julie & Ben would like the following information to be available to all customers.**

**Changes to their opening times**

**Opening hours as from Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March**

<b>Monday</b>	<b>10-3</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>10-3</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>10-3</b>
<b>Thursday.</b>	<b>10-3</b>
<b>FRIDAY.</b>	<b>8-3</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>10-3</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>10.30-12.30</b>

**Deliveries every weekday please email your order [foodstop@cwgsy.net](mailto:foodstop@cwgsy.net)**

**OR Telephone 832660**

**Please be aware stock maybe limited**

**All residents on Sark must individually take responsibility for our community through this difficult time while the Coronavirus (Covid19) Pandemic is upon us.**

**We ask you to follow these guidelines**

**Please ensure you prevent any further spreading of the Virus among our society by reducing any social gatherings.**

**Stay indoors as much as possible to reduce social interaction, walking outside, as long as you observe strict distancing is permitted**

**Being fully aware of the distancing between people (2 metres or 6.5 feet)**

**Hand washing regularly with sanitizer or soap**

**IF YOU DEVELOP ANY SYMPTOMS YOU MUST SELF ISOLATE IMMEDIATELY AND  
CONTACT THE DOCTOR  
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION REGARDING CORONAVIRUS SYMPTOMS, ISOLATION or any other  
queries PLEASE SEE THE CHIEF PLEAS WEBSITE OR GOV.GG WEBSITE**

**THE ISLAND SAFEGUARDING OFFICER**

Sark ISO is available to assist anyone with any concerns or worries in any aspect of Island life during this difficult time. Sharon is available on 07781 105772 for residents who need support.

**EDUCATION**

The decision to close Sark School followed the advice from Guernsey to reduce social gatherings and to protect our children and staff.

Dr Roberts will be keeping parents up to date with any information they will need.

He has also suggested parents can contact their child's class teacher if you require any further curriculum work during the school closure.

**PARENTS MUST RESTRICT SOCIAL GATHERINGS FOR CHILDREN AS THIS WILL HELP STOP THE  
SPREAD OF CORONAVIRUS.**

Thank you for your continued assistance and consideration during these difficult times.

Pandemic Emergency Committee.