



News Release

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Help the West Sussex Record Office document these unprecedented times

West Sussex Record Office has closed its doors for the first time in over 70 years because of coronavirus (COVID-19), but their great work continues, and they need residents' help.

The team are inviting residents across the county to record a diary that will be kept alongside other pandemic related records. These will then be catalogued, stored, and ultimately available to the public for research.

All residents need to do is document their experiences during the coronavirus pandemic, including how it is affecting them, their family and friends and the local community. It can also include new experiences, thoughts and feelings.

The diary can be recorded on paper or on a phone and be done as an individual, part of a family project within the same household, a creative outlet or simply as a daily record.

Screen Archive South East, who are already partnered with the Record Office and look after all the moving image archives for the region, will be supporting to archive the video diary footage.

Duncan Crow, Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue and Communities, said: "The current situation is an extraordinary one and something the majority of us will never have experienced before. The West Sussex Record Office is in a privileged position to be able to document what is going on right now, but some of this can't be done without help from West Sussex residents, who are in a unique position to provide personal insight at this difficult time.

"Please let the Record Office have your experiences of what it is like living under the new government guidance and let us know how it is affecting your day-to-day lives, what you are doing to cope and how your daily routine has adapted. We want people to be as open and honest as possible and record how they are feeling so that future generations have an insight into what happened at the start of this new decade."

If people don't want to participate in a diary, the Record Office would also like help in collecting other material that residents might come across such as:

- Leaflets/flyers/posters from councils and other organisations about the pandemic
- Material from local business relating to closures or changes to how they operate
- Advice from local organisations about hygiene, social distancing and self-isolation
- Information about community efforts to help vulnerable and isolated persons
- Information from local schools regarding closures and home-schooling

If you're interested in finding out how you can support this Record Office initiative, please visit [//www.westsussexrecordofficeblog.com/2020/03/31](http://www.westsussexrecordofficeblog.com/2020/03/31) and for the latest government advice on coronavirus and how it affects West Sussex, visit [//www.westsussex.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/coronavirus).

Notes to editor

To find about more about the Record Office collections go to: <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/leisure-recreation-and-community/history-and-heritage/west-sussex-record-office/>.

To find out more about Screen Archive South East and watch over 1200 archive films online go to: <https://screenarchive.brighton.co.uk>.

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