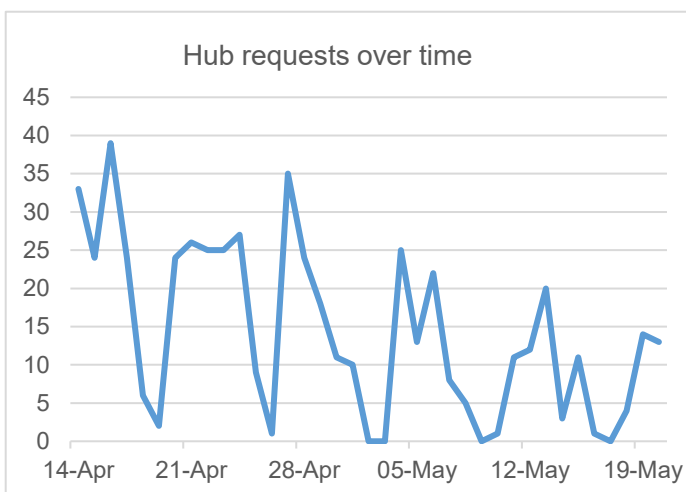




Weekly News Bulletin for Community and Voluntary Groups, Town and Parish Councils, Partners and Hub Update Subscribers

Facts and figures

- **2,617** shielded* residents of West Berkshire have registered on the government's website out of a total of **4,208** identified by the NHS
- **Over 70%** of shielded residents registered have indicated they do **NOT** require support
- Nevertheless, **over 2,070 residents** have been contacted by council officers to check they have everything they need and **10 police welfare visits** have been carried out where our calls or emails were not answered
- **65%** of all requests for assistance to the Hub were from shielded residents



***shielded** people are those who have received a letter from the NHS telling them they must stay at home for 12 weeks because their health condition makes them extremely vulnerable to Covid-19

Changes planned to take the Hub to the end of the year



It has been an immense privilege for those of us who have had the opportunity to work in the Hub over the past two months, supporting individuals in need, volunteers and community groups. As part of the council's Recovery Plan, we are now moving into a new phase with the Hub, which is likely to be in operation for the remainder of the year. To ensure we can meet the needs of the community and continue with our other work, there will be some changes in the coming weeks. These will include relocation of the Hub to elsewhere in the council offices, revised contact details and opening times and three new roles of Hub Manager, Communities and Logistics Officer and Response Officer, which will be filled by staff secondment. Further details to follow.

West Berkshire Residents Survey: Covid-19

We mentioned in last week's Hub Bulletin that the council is looking at more and different ways of informing, consulting and involving residents and community groups. Last Saturday's inaugural Facebook Live Q&A with Cllr Lynne Doherty was well received and you can view it on the West Berkshire Council YouTube channel [HERE](#).

We have now set up an online survey and it's open from **5pm today until midnight on Sunday 7 June**. It includes important questions around volunteering which will help to inform our local recovery plan. If this is to be successful, the strong community networks that have built up over the past few months must become a lasting legacy of this situation. Please do take 10-15 minutes to complete the survey and give us your views. You can access the survey [HERE](#) and there is also a link where you can contact the team to request a hard copy to be posted to those without internet access.

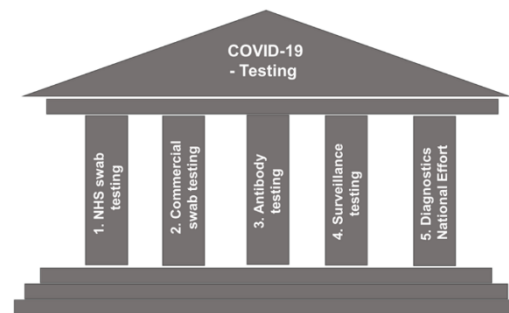


Frequently Asked Questions

Who is entitled to be tested for Covid-19?

The Government has recently updated its [guidance on Covid-19 testing](#). If you have any of the symptoms of coronavirus, you can now [ask for a test through the NHS website](#). Testing is most effective within three days of symptoms developing. The tests are not suitable for children aged under five. You can ask for a test:

- for yourself, if you have coronavirus symptoms now (a high temperature, a new, continuous cough, or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste)
- for someone you live with, if they have coronavirus symptoms



There is very high demand for tests at the moment and people in hospital and essential workers, including NHS and social care staff, are getting priority. Getting a test depends on how many are available each day in different parts of the country. You may be able to choose between driving to a regional testing site or getting a home test kit. There is a mobile testing site that visits Henwick Worthy Sports Ground in Thatcham from time to time but tests must be booked through the national website and are not available by drop-in.

If you have symptoms and you're an essential worker or you live with an essential worker, you can apply for priority testing through [GOV.UK](#) website, following the guidance on [testing for essential workers](#). If you're a social care worker or resident in a care home you can get tested whether you have symptoms or not. There is special guidance on [testing for care home residents and workers](#).

How can community groups access FREE hand sanitiser?

Compton-based [Hawkridge Distillers](#) have moved production from gin to hand sanitiser! In partnership with St Nicolas Church, Newbury and funded by Greenham Trust, they are making available 300L of **FREE** hand sanitiser to community groups on a first come, first served basis.



The sanitiser comes in 5L tubs but Hawkridge can dispense smaller amounts if you bring your own containers. If you can't get to Compton, St Nicolas Church, Newbury have a limited amount available for collection or Hawkridge may be able to deliver. Email hello@hawkridgedistillers.com or call 01635 578357 for details.

Why have 40% of 'shielded' individuals in West Berks NOT registered on the government website?

At present, those identified as shielded by the NHS but not registered on the Government website are followed up by the National Shielding Service and we are not aware of any work going on to find out why. Of the **2070 residents** we have contacted, most were fine and did not want to be contacted again. In many cases, those who registered for support did so in order to get a priority shopping delivery slot from supermarkets. Going forward, local authorities will be expected to be more pro-active in contacting those who have not registered but, whilst the process is straightforward, there is no legal requirement to register.



Befriender and Buddying scheme launched with Age UK Berkshire

The council has just launched a new scheme with [Age UK Berkshire](#) aimed at preventing and reducing social isolation and loneliness in West Berkshire. It will provide social and emotional support to residents aged 50 and over from a volunteer befriender or buddy. At present, it's a telephone service but face to face befriending and buddying will be introduced when it's safe to do so and government guidance permits.

We know that many community groups are offering a befriending service during the Covid-19 emergency. If you would like to know more about an ongoing volunteering commitment as a Befriender or Buddy, contact Age UK Berkshire by email info@ageukberkshire.org.uk or tel 0118 959 4242.



Every Mind Matters

Now, more than ever, Every Mind Matters. We'll all be experiencing highs and lows and it's perfectly normal to miss loved ones, get frustrated, or feel anxious or stressed. It's important to be able to strengthen your resilience and reduce stress as much as possible. To help with this, West Berkshire Council and partners are actively promoting the Public Health England (PHE), and NHS Every Mind Matters campaign. Visit the council website [HERE](#) to find out more and create a free personalised action plan, designed to help you deal with stress, boost your mood, improve your sleep and feel in control.

Leaflets to help vulnerable people avoid becoming scam victims

Did you know just about anyone can become a victim of a scam? This could be conducted over the telephone, the internet, by mail or on your very doorstep. Our WBC Trading Standards team is here to help, offering advice and materials to help prevent you and your neighbours becoming a victim of crime. They are particularly keen to reach people without internet access across West Berkshire, and would be delighted if you could help with the distribution of leaflets and stickers in your community.

To request a FREE pack of advice leaflets and household stickers, email our Fraud Victim Support Officer Malcolm.Phillips@westberks.gov.uk or call 07500 102989 with an indication of how many you need. Visit the Public Protection Partnership website [HERE](#) for further information about scams.



New look website for the Hub!



A cheery wave from the volunteers of Inkpen village

Take a look at our new look [Hub website](#) where you can [sign up to our residents e-bulletin](#) to receive regular service updates and download weekly updates about how the coronavirus pandemic is affecting West Berkshire and how the council is responding.

Check out the [food](#) page for details of where to signpost those in need of help – and where to donate to the wonderful organisations that are helping to provide them with food!

You will also find links to our Hub [Facebook](#) page and photos and videos of amazing [Local Heroes](#) as well as back copies of the Hub Bulletin.

Individual cases

Please ensure that all queries about individual cases are directed to the Hub via the general email westberksbct@westberks.gov.uk or by calling **01635 503579**. This is to ensure they are dealt with promptly, effectively and in line with guidelines on dealing with vulnerable adults.

With very best wishes,
The Hub Team