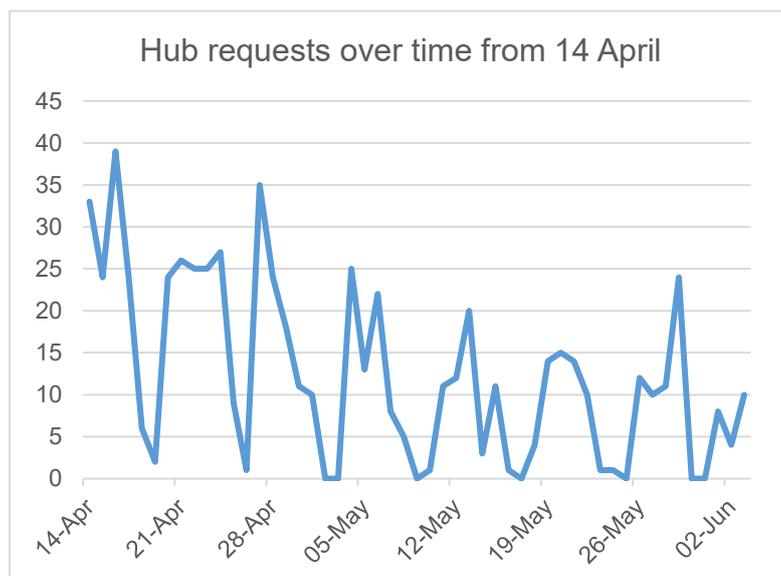




Weekly News Bulletin for Community and Voluntary Groups, Town and Parish Councils, Partners and Hub Update Subscribers

Facts and figures

- **2,732** shielded* residents of West Berkshire have registered on the government's website out of a total of **4,380** identified by the NHS
- **75%** of shielded residents registered have indicated they do **NOT** require support
- Nevertheless, **over 2,485 residents** have been contacted by council officers to check they have everything they need and **14 police welfare visits** have been carried out where our calls or emails were not answered
- **67%** of all requests for assistance to the Hub this week 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. The shielded list is under constant review by GPs and hospital clinicians, and they are responsible for informing people that they have been removed from the list.

How to contact the Community Support Hub

- 8:30am to 5pm, Monday to Thursday
- 8:30am to 4:30pm, Friday

The Hub is open during office hours although there is provision for out of hours emergencies.

If you need to get in touch, please call us on **01635 503579**, email us on westberksbct@westberks.gov.uk or you can ask for help from our Community Support Hub service online by going to

<https://citizen.westberks.gov.uk/communitysupportrequest>

Hub under new management

We now have a new Hub Manager in place – Katharine Makant was formerly the Communications Lead for the Hub but has now been formally seconded into the Manager role until the end of the year. The Hub now sits within the Building Communities Together team in the council.

The other two members of the new team – our Communities and Logistics Officer and our Response Officer - will be joining us in the next week or so. We will provide a team photo and further details when the team is complete!

The public contact details for the Hub remain the same, although the Hub will no longer be staffed over the weekend and bank holidays. Callers and emails will receive a recorded message advising them of the opening hours and providing details for out of hours provision in emergencies.

The direct email addresses will CHANGE from today (Friday) – details in the accompanying email - but we ask you to please continue to direct all queries about individual cases in need of support 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.

Frequently Asked Questions



What has changed for people who are shielding?

Last Sunday, the government updated its guidance for people who are shielding due to extreme vulnerability, taking into account that Covid-19 disease levels have decreased over the last few weeks.

People who are shielding remain vulnerable and should continue to take precautions but can now leave their home if they wish, as long as they are able to maintain strict social distancing. If they choose to spend time outdoors, this can be with members of their own household. If they live alone, they can spend time outdoors with one person from another household. Ideally, this should be the same person each time. If they do go out, they should take extra care to minimise contact with others by keeping 2 metres apart. You can read the guidance [HERE](#).

We are expecting a further announcement from the Government in the next few weeks, following a review of the guidance and support around people who are shielding. Local authorities are expecting to be asked to take on more responsibility for supporting the shielded, which may include changes to the distribution of Government food parcels.

What help is being offered by the council to support town centre businesses as they reopen?

We're working with town centres across the district to offer advice and support as they gradually start to reopen. We offer a number of [support packages](#) to our businesses and as part of this, we'll be hosting a Business Webinar next **Wednesday, 10 June at 3pm**, aimed at town centre businesses based in Newbury, Thatcham, Hungerford, Theale or Pangbourne.



Email gabrielle.mancini@westberks.gov.uk to register

There will be an introduction from Council Leader, Lynne Doherty and a presentation from Highways officers outlining the traffic measure we'll be taking in each town. Our Economic Development Manager will also be outlining any additional support we may be able to make available with the funding that Government has allocated to West Berkshire. This will be followed by a Q&A session. If you're a West Berkshire business and would like to attend the webinar, please email gabrielle.mancini@westberks.gov.uk.

Library Service - At Home Service and E-library

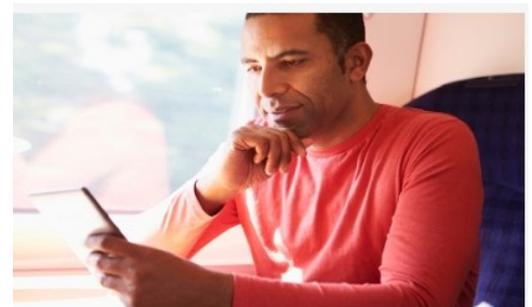


The Libraries' At Home Service resumed last week for existing customers only. The service delivers books and audio books to vulnerable people who are housebound. If you are interested in volunteering, the service is always looking for volunteers to help deliver books and other items to their readers.

You can find out more about the At Home Library Service [HERE](#)

The usage of the e-library (access to e-books, e-audio books, e-newspapers and e-magazines) has increased by 181% compared to April last year. This includes new as well as existing customers.

You can find out more about the libraries E-Resources [HERE](#)



West Berkshire Residents Survey: Covid-19



If you haven't already done so, please do take 10 minutes to complete our Residents Survey which is open until **midnight on Sunday 7 June**. The survey includes important questions around volunteering which will help to inform our local recovery plan. You can access the online survey [HERE](#) and hard copies are available for those without internet access. Please contact the Hub to request hard copies for your community or use the online link.

Celebrating Volunteers' Week 1-7 June 2020

To mark Volunteers' Week, our Hub [Facebook](#) page has been featuring some of our Local Heroes - the fantastic volunteers who are giving their time and energy to supporting local services and communities all around West Berkshire! Check out the video clips, photos and good news stories featuring:

- The Village Shop in Woolhampton, who have remained open throughout lockdown, providing much needed supplies for the residents, including a useful selection of food and all the necessities
- Liza's NHS Scrubs who've been sewing scrubs using fabric donated by DJ Chris Evans and son Noah
- Sarah from Thatcham who has loved every minute of volunteering for the Town Council!
- Lucy from the library service reading one of the weekly digital Storytimes
- Polly from the Hub and her family who 'made over' the garden of one of our shielding residents (see right!), enabling her to get out into the sunshine and making her feel so much better
- Glyn and Lowrie from Shaw-cum-Donnington and St Marys Parish Coronavirus Support Response: SAFE, who've been delivering food to local shielded residents while awaiting GCSE results
- Beth and Asha, Young Leaders at 1st Burghfield and Sulhamstead Scouts who are giving up their time to help young people have new opportunities and experiences and give back to their community



We will be featuring more volunteers on the Facebook page in the coming days and you can find more stories, photos and videos about the wonderful work of West Berkshire's volunteers on our [Local Heroes](#) website.

With our grateful thanks and best wishes
The Hub Team