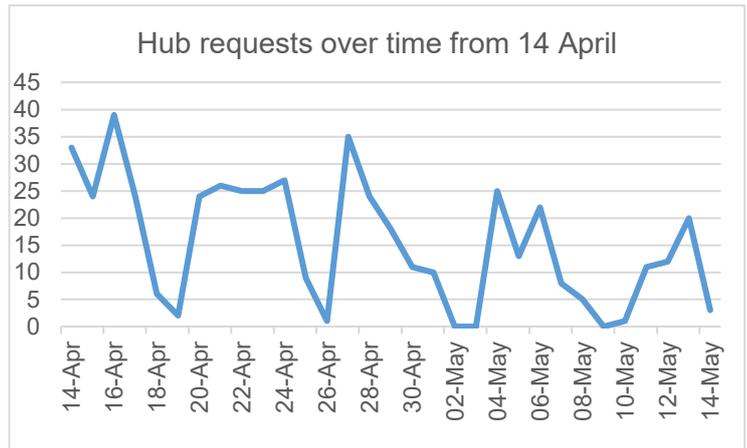




## Weekly News Bulletin for Community and Voluntary Groups, Town and Parish Councils, Partners and Hub Update Subscribers

### Facts and figures

- **2,542** shielded\* residents of West Berkshire have registered on the government's website out of a total of **4,213** identified by the NHS
- **Over 70%** of shielded residents registered have indicated they do **NOT** require support
- Nevertheless, **over 1,460 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.

### Number of shielded residents increases

Last week, we received the latest Government/NHS data on the total number of shielded residents in West Berkshire – the overall figure has increased by 980 to 4,213. In the main, the increase is down to GP surgeries having checked their records and cleansed the data. There has also been movement on specific conditions e.g. cancer patients moving along treatment pathways and those suffering from asthma. Those who have not registered are being contacted by the National Shielding Helpline to encourage them to do so.

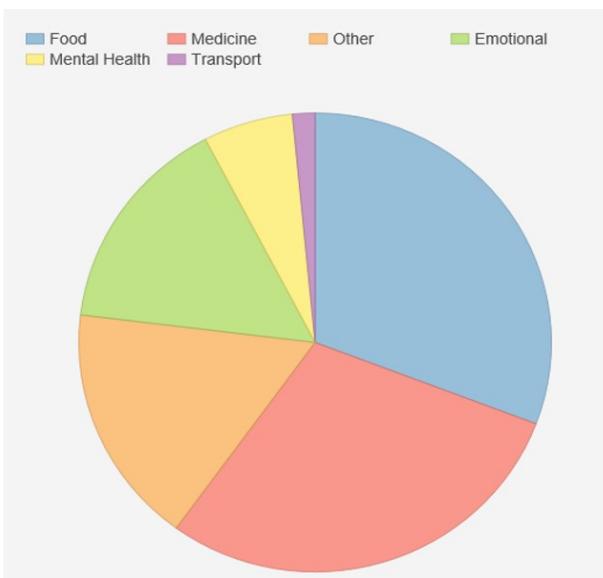


Chart shows types of requests received 6-12 May

### Mental Health and Emotional Support

The majority (60%) of requests for assistance coming through the Hub are still around food and medicine but there has been a noticeable increase this week in the volume and proportion of requests around mental health (6%) and emotional support (15%) – see pie chart opposite.

We first started using the digital platform to record types of requests for assistance to the Hub on 18<sup>th</sup> April. Of the 11 requests around emotional support received since then, 10 have been received in the last seven days. Of the 8 requests around mental health received since 18<sup>th</sup> April, 4 have been received in the last seven days. This change was anticipated but it is now showing up in the data.

Read on to find out about Mental Health Awareness Week!

## Frequently Asked Questions

### ***How long will shielding last?***

Shielded residents must follow [Government advice on shielding](#) by staying at home at all times and avoiding all non-essential face-to-face contact. This guidance is in place until the end of June. However, the Government's Covid-19 Recovery Strategy or roadmap published on 11<sup>th</sup> May stated that “those in the clinically extremely vulnerable cohort will continue to be advised to shield themselves for some time yet, and the Government recognises the difficulties this brings for those affected. Over the coming weeks, the Government will continue to introduce more support and assistance for these individuals so that they have the help they need as they stay shielded.” We are awaiting further details of the support and assistance to be introduced for shielded residents. You can read the whole roadmap document [HERE](#)

### ***How can voluntary groups continue to support their local communities as recovery takes effect?***

If our local recovery 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. The council is working hard on a local recovery plan and community engagement is going to be a key part of the process. To reflect this, you will be seeing more and different ways of the council informing, consulting and involving residents and community groups.

Please do take the opportunity to give us your views by taking part in tomorrow's online chat with Cllr Lynne Doherty (see below) or the forthcoming Residents Survey (see next week's Hub Bulletin).



*Volunteers from the Purley Residents Support Committee*



*Volunteers from the Theale Help Group*

We don't know how long it will take for things to return to normal, if they ever do. But as time goes on, many volunteers will find they have fewer hours to spare as they return to work, study and other commitments. Last month, volunteers were telling us that they didn't have enough to do. But now we're hearing that groups are finding it's taking that little bit longer to find someone who is available to help.

There will still be people in the community who need your support in the coming months - those who must stay indoors because they are shielding, those recovering from coronavirus itself, those struggling to cope with the emotional and financial fallout. So do please stay in touch with your local group and help out whenever you have time to spare.

### ***How can community groups access funding from West Berkshire Lottery?***

West Berkshire Lottery was created in 2019 by West Berkshire Council. Set up to support community projects in the local area, the Lottery operates on the principle of raising money within the community for the community. We empower local good causes to raise money in a fun and effective way. A ticket for West Berkshire Lottery costs £1 per week and 60p will go directly to good causes! Due to gambling legislation, participating organisations must meet certain criteria, including having a constitution and a bank account.



Find out more [HERE](#).

## Do you have a question for the Council?



Cllr Lynne Doherty, Leader of West Berkshire Council, will this weekend be answering the public's questions regarding the council's response to the coronavirus pandemic. The online chat will be streamed live on [the Council's Facebook Page](#) at **11am on Saturday 16 May**. Cllr Doherty will be on video, providing information and answer questions on areas including changes to local service provision, the Community Support Hub and what residents and businesses can do to help. You can watch live online from 11am. If you can't take part, why not [email questions in advance](#)?

## Mental Health Awareness Week

This year's mental health awareness week (18<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> May) is focussing on the theme of kindness. The theme this year was chosen as kindness is prevailing in these uncertain and challenging times. It is proven that being kind to others is good for our own mental health as well as the wellbeing of others. Find out more [HERE](#). Throughout West Berkshire we have seen so many examples of kindness from all of our wonderful community groups and volunteers – visit our [Local Heroes](#) webpage and our [Facebook](#) page to find out more!



## Be aware of scams aimed at vulnerable people

The Public Protection Partnership (PPP) has received a number of complaints about scams in operation during the Covid-19 pandemic which affects everyone, not just the vulnerable or elderly. Visit the PPP website [HERE](#) to find out more about the latest scams, including one where the caller pretends to be from Citizens Advice offering grants to pay off debts. The council's website also has information about how to protect yourself and your loved ones from scams [HERE](#).



## Calling all sewing enthusiasts!

A few months ago, we were delighted to help out a local sewing group by using our A1 printer to print out patterns for scrubs in varying sizes. Yesterday, we heard that the Newbury-based group – **Liza's NHS Scrubs** – has been given 2,500m of fabric by Scrubs Glorious Scrubs based in Ascot, using money raised by DJ Chris Evans and his son Noah. **The group is now desperately searching for sewers to help turn all this fabric into scrubs!** If you know of a sewing group that is interested in joining up with Liza and helping support this amazing project, please ask them to contact her via her [Facebook](#) page where you can see some stunning examples of the group's work.

Craft activities are great for mental health and even sewing novices can get creative by making **facemasks** for family and friends. The Government's recovery plan encourages the wearing of face coverings in enclosed spaces where social distancing isn't possible and where people will come into contact with others they do not normally meet e.g. on public transport or in some shops. Government advice on how to wear and make a cloth face covering may be found [HERE](#). Other instructions are widely available online.

## Individual cases

Please ensure that all queries about individual cases are directed to the Hub via the general email [westberksbct@westberks.gov.uk](mailto: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