

# WHAT WE'RE DOING DURING THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

## Helping the voluntary sector to meet the community's needs

Community and voluntary groups and all the volunteers across the borough are doing a fantastic job.

Wokingham Borough Community Response is a partnership of community and voluntary sector organisations with town and parish councils and the borough council.

Via the single point of contact through Citizen Advice Wokingham, the community response team have been contacted by more than 600 people seeking help or advice and has delivered more than 600 food parcels and collected and delivered more than 80 prescriptions.

The borough council is supporting this effort in a genuine partnership

with the community and voluntary sector to meet our communities' needs

Jake Morrison, Chief Executive of Citizens Advice Wokingham said: "It has been such a great experience working with Wokingham Borough Council to provide this community response.

"I'm really pleased at how quickly we've been able to mobilise and get all the organisations round the table to respond to this crisis, and that is in large part due to the quick response of the council.

"If you look around the country, other councils are a good step or two behind us. It's amazing what we can do when we all pull together!"



## What YOU can do

- Help your friends, neighbours and families. Please find out who in your community needs support and help. It may be to do shopping, collect medicine or other essentials.
- If you or somebody you know needs more help contact the Wokingham Borough Community Response via Citizens Advice Wokingham's website or by calling **0300 330 1189** (entering 0118 978 7258 if prompted). Phone lines will be staffed Monday to Saturday, 9am to 5pm
- If you need a Wokingham Borough Council service, please contact us online if you can - visit the website, use contact forms or email if you can. Only call us if you have to.
- Stay home and stay safe: please keep social distancing and, if you need to, self-isolating.

## Meeting the huge challenges in adult and children's social care

Our social care teams provide vital support to older people, those with learning difficulties, physical disabilities and mental health issues. Children's services also protect children at risk or abuse or neglect. These needs are increasing during crisis.

### What we are doing:

- Welfare checks by phone - more than 4,000 vulnerable adults are being contacted. More than 200 identified as particularly vulnerable and have a named worker who is in regular contact. Many others then passed on to the LINK befriending service for additional contact.

- Regularly calling about 160 care providers to offer support where we can. We are helping them financially to ensure vital services continue

- Helping the NHS through swift discharges from hospital - we are now providing seven-days-a-week hospital discharge despite losing staff ourselves

- Providing ongoing adult social care support to about 1,850 people

- Children's services are keeping in contact with about 1,600 families to ensure they have the support they need and making sure young carers are provided ongoing help and support.

## Moving staff to where they are most needed

As some services temporarily close or reduce we are making sure staff affected are moving into the most vital areas.

So far more than 40 staff have been redeployed to areas such as:

- Working with the Wokingham Borough

Community Response, including at the Community Distribution Hub

- Joining our customer contact teams to make sure residents queries and being answered

- Helping adult social care make contacts with vulnerable people

## Keeping other essential services going

We've moved as many of our services online as we can and are adapting to make sure we can provide the vital services people need we are still here for you.

- You can still contact us via our Contact Us form on the website at [www.wokingham.gov.uk](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk) and we are responding to emails (there may be a delay but we are getting through them)

- Our recycling and waste collection services are still running, including food recycling and garden waste (although to relieve pressure on this service we are asking people to compost garden waste or share a neighbour's bin if they can)

- Our highways contractors are carrying out essential work to keep the roads safe and open

- Our Public Protection Partnership (shared service with West Berkshire and Bracknell) is supporting the police to ensure businesses that should not be open are not and investigating scams seeking to take advantage of this crisis

- Although we have had to close libraries (and most staff have been redeployed) we are offering online services such as library membership, increasing the

number of e-books available, masking material to help people with mental health issues available and running children events virtually and uploading home workouts on our Facebook page

- Our team are still out dealing with anti-social behaviour issues such as fly-tipping and have put more CCTV at potential hotspots

- We are also supporting local businesses through the Government's grant scheme and business rate relief.

To date more than £8million in grants has gone to businesses in the borough



[www.wokingham.gov.uk](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk)

To get help, call **0300 330 1189**

Enter 0118 978 7258 if prompted