

Top Lines Brief (2)

Coronavirus (COVID-19) update

Please send all enquiries about coronavirus to coronavirus@westberks.gov.uk

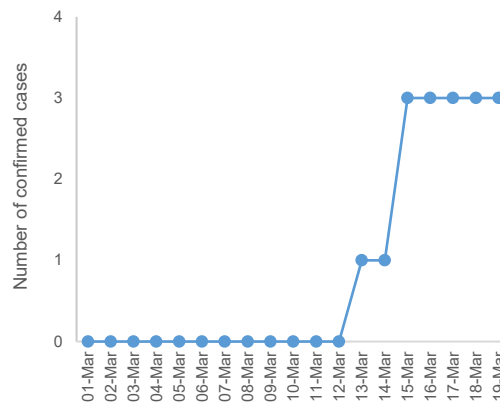
20th March 2020



West Berkshire Position

A major incident has now been declared. The Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG) for Thames Valley continues to meet and is taking overall responsibility for managing the COVID-19 outbreak. This group is being supported by a Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG) and topic specific cells e.g. Media Cell, Community Working Hub, Social Care Cell, Education Cell

Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 in West Berkshire



Numbers at a glance (confirmed cases)

England	3269
Bracknell Forest	3
Reading	7
Slough	17
West Berkshire	3
Windsor and Maidenhead	13
Wokingham	9

Please note these figures are likely to underestimate the true number of actual cases (accurate as of 20/03/2020)

Local Response

The council is now holding daily “Gold” meetings comprising of the CEO, Leader, Executive Directors, Emergency Planning, Public Health and the Communication Team. There are also “Silver” meetings which will replace the local COVID Responses group, this group will continue to include all representatives from across the council and will meet three times per week. The following GOV.UK page has also been set up to bring together guidance for local councils and LRFs during the coronavirus outbreak: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-local-government>

The introduction of social distancing measures by the government will have a significant impact on the local economy. The Council are working with partners to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 with a specific focus on supporting vulnerable people, supporting local business and ensuring good communication with our partners and residents.

The Government is in negotiations to buy an antibody test that can tell if individuals have had COVID-19. We have fed back to Public Health England which key workers should have access to this test when it becomes available. We continue to monitor the supply and demand of PPE across the district and to ensure sufficient provision for our ‘people services’. The Government have set-up a national PPE supply disruption contact desk.

A new group has been established to provide extra support for rough sleepers. As well as the council the group includes Two Saints, Eight Bells for Mental Health, Newbury Soup Kitchen, Loose Ends, the Community Furniture Project, Healthwatch West Berkshire and West Berkshire Homeless. Support will include the Distribution of health packs and Food provision by charities.

Local Community Support Hub

In order to mobilise support for our vulnerable communities over the coming months, the Building Communities Together Team have been working with the Volunteer Centre West Berkshire and Greenham Common Trust to set up a new Community Support Hub to give guidance and to help coordinate organisations representing their communities. You can find out more on the website: <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/coronavirus-communityhub>. Please share with any community groups you are aware of. They can also contact the Hub by phone on: 01635 503579 or via email: westberksbct@westberks.gov.uk

Latest Government Information

Beginning on Monday 16th March the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson begun televised daily press briefings at approximately 5pm. The links to the daily statements detailing the new measures to respond to the Coronavirus pandemic are below.

[Prime ministers statement 16th March](#) - discussing the introduction of social distancing advice, particularly for those over 70 or with underlying health conditions

[Prime ministers statement 17th March](#) – discussing the economic support being provided by the government to individuals and businesses.

[Prime ministers statement 18th March](#) – statement includes the decision to close all schools and education settings except for skeleton staff to provide provision for the children of [front line and key workers](#) beginning Mon 23rd March.

[Prime ministers statement 19th March](#)- discussing the upscaling of testing for the coronavirus and reiteration of the important of social distancing.

[Prime ministers Statement 20th March](#)- discussing a significant financial package to keep people in work and the closing of cafes, pubs and restaurants nightclubs, theatres, cinemas, gyms and leisure centres

Coronavirus Bill

The Coronavirus Bill was introduced to Parliament this week. The measures in the bill will be used if necessary to implement a number of measures. For more information about the bill, visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-bill-what-it-will-do>

Public Information Campaign

The government has launched the next stage of its [public information campaign](#), including TV adverts, radio adverts and social media posts, making sure that the public knows the best way to limit and delay the spread of the COVID-19, including an increased focus on Social-Distancing.

New updated resources are also available from the Public Health [Campaign Resource Centre](#), including posters, leaflet and videos for social media posts. PDFs of the poster and leaflets have been sent with this newsletter.

We have already shared these resources with the Community Support Hub, who are going to arrange for these to be sent on to Parish Councils to be displayed in local communities. We are also continuing to share national guidance and information with the public through our social media channels and on our dedicated website <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/coronavirus>



The poster features the NHS logo in the top right corner and the UK Government logo in the top left. The main heading is 'Coronavirus Isolate your household Stay at home'. Below this, it states: 'If you or anyone in your household has a high temperature or a new and continuous cough – even if it's mild'. There are four bullet points with icons: 1. A green checkmark icon: 'Everyone in your household must stay at home for 14 days and keep away from others.' 2. A red 'X' icon: 'DO NOT go to your GP, hospital or pharmacy.' 3. A green checkmark icon: 'Go to NHS.UK to check your symptoms and follow the specialist medical advice. Only call NHS 111 if you can't get online or your symptoms worsen.' 4. A green checkmark icon: 'Protect older people and those with existing health conditions by avoiding contact.' At the bottom left, it says 'Find out how to isolate your household at nhs.uk/coronavirus'. At the bottom right, there is a small box with the text 'CORONAVIRUS PROTECT YOURSELF OTHERS & THE NHS'.

Useful Links

- [Symptoms of Coronavirus](#)
- [Government Action Plan](#)
- [How to prevent spreading infection](#)
- [World Health Organisation latest updates](#)
- [Public information](#)
- [Information for councils](#)
- [Department for Education Helpline](#)

New/Updated Guidance Published

- [Residential care, supported living and home care guidance](#)
- [Maintaining educational provision](#)
- [Guidance for employers, employees and businesses](#)
- [Staying at home guidance](#)
- [Social Distancing guidance](#)
- [Hospital service discharge requirements](#)
- [Extra funding for Local Authorities](#)

Care Homes Update

As of yesterday (19th March) West Berkshire council has made the decision to close care homes to all but essential visitors, the press release can be read [here](#). Care homes across the district have now stopped running their regular memory cafes for people with dementia and their carers.

Schools Update

All schools and educational settings are working in a different way from the beginning of next week 23rd March. Schools will have a reduced number of staff working who will provide education provision for the children of key workers. A list of key workers can be found in the [Maintaining educational provision](#) guidance. Guidance has also been written for parents and carers to provide information on the changes happening in [schools](#).

Coronavirus – Epidemiology; what you need to know

- Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses with some causing less-severe disease, such as common cold, and others causing more severe disease.
- Coronavirus was first detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China and WHO were notified on 31st December 2019. The source of the outbreak has not been determined.
- Fever, cough, chest tightness have been the main symptoms reported in China
- The [WHO Coronavirus dashboard](#) has country by country information. WHO also publishes a [daily international situation report](#). There have been 209,839 confirmed cases worldwide and 8,778 deaths across 169 countries.
- Whilst we continue to learn more about this new virus, evidence we have to date suggests that for most people who contract the novel coronavirus experience mild symptoms

Top tips to look after your mental health during the coronavirus outbreak

The Public Health and Wellbeing Team have developed guidance for people to support their mental health and wellbeing during the coronavirus outbreak. This will be published on both the intranet and internet shortly. In the meantime we have put together some tips linked to the 5-ways to wellbeing below:

Connect: Even with increased social-distancing it's important to keep in touch virtually with family, friends and colleagues. Why not set up a WhatsApp group? Remember to get support if you're struggling.

Be active: You can still go outside to exercise (walk, run, cycle) but be mindful about maintaining a 2 meter distance from others

Keep learning: Take up a new hobby now that you are spending more time at home.

Take notice: Be mindful about the amount of time you are spending reading the news. Take regular breaks from social media and take time to relax.

Give: Share information about the new community support hub with your local residents as this will help vulnerable people to get support.

Health advice

Everyone is being reminded to follow **Public Health England advice** including:

1. Wash your hands with soap and water often – for at least 20 seconds
2. Always wash your hands when you get home or into work
3. Use hand sanitiser if soap and water unavailable
4. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
5. Put used tissues in the bin straight away and wash your hands afterwards
6. Try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell