

HERMITAGE COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS – COVID 19
Newsletter 4th May 2020

Dear Residents.

We sincerely hope that you are still well and adjusting to this 'new world' that we find ourselves in?

Andy, Jon and I felt that it would be appropriate to touch base with you all, firstly with a few reminders and secondly to put forward some new initiatives.

You may be thinking – 'new initiatives – aren't we coming out of lockdown?' Yes, this may be true and I know that we will be listening to the Government's plan for easing lockdown in the next week or so. However, after much discussion, we believe that for some people – things are going to remain the same; we may still need to provide a shopping delivery service for people that may not wish to leave their homes until such time as a vaccine is manufactured or some people will find themselves redundant from their jobs etc. We still want to be able to help when needed.

Firstly – Reminders

- Hopefully you will still have the contact details of the volunteers in your area of Hermitage? If not email us at:
 - hermitagespgrp@gmail.com
- Prescription Delivery Service: if you want our volunteers to collect your medicines on your behalf, then email the practice with your name, date of birth, address and consent at
 - pm.downland@nhs.net
- Our hardship fund is available – PLEASE do contact us if you need help financially for an unforeseen bill, food, etc. We have increased the limit to £100 and this does **not** need to be paid back.
- West Berkshire Community Hub has a wealth of information at:
 - <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/coronavirus-communityhub>

Secondly – New Initiatives

- Meals Service: We are looking at additional and external funding to be able to provide a free of charge meal service in conjunction with a local well-known and exceptional caterer. If you would be interested in receiving these meals (supplies will be limited) please would you email us at: hermitageSpGp@gmail.com or phone 07717 495154. These meals would be available for families that are struggling, as well as Key workers that may have finished a long shift. At this moment in time we are applying for the grants – but we have set aside a sum of money to trial this in the next week or so. The meals would be a basic meal, but cooked by a professional in hygienic conditions. Our first delivery will be next week -please email or phone by Sunday 10th May if you would be interested in receiving a free meal, stating your reason for wanting a free meal. Meals will be allocated on a first come-first served basis.
- Food Bank: Some communities have set up a food bank for non-perishable items – again we would appreciate your thoughts on this – an email would be great to understand community feeling about this.

We would sincerely like to thank all of our volunteers who have been out and about in the community: either delivering shopping, delivering medicines or food parcels or just phoning people to see how they are. We probably don't know everything that is going on as some people are just getting on with things and helping out their next- door neighbour quietly – we thank you too.

Finally, we would like to thank our Key workers – and that is you all –you know who you are.

Best wishes and stay safe
Carolyn, Andy and Jon

Useful Phone numbers: Spotlight foodbank: 07804 880072
Cruise(Bereavement): 01635 523573
Fair Close Centre Age Concern: 01635 40488
WB Hub 01635 503579