

22nd January 2021

## PPP Members Briefing Bulletin #7

## Public Protection Partnership

Bracknell Forest  
West Berkshire  
Wokingham

### New Regulations

The latest National Lockdown came into force on Wednesday 5th January. The key message being to stay at home and to only leave home for a limited number of reasons. See [here](#) for details.

The lockdown also resulted in some businesses being allowed to stay open, whilst others had to close. There were many similarities to the November lockdown so businesses, in general, were better prepared. There was also more clarity on some of the more vague guidelines from the November lockdown, such as hand car washes must close but automatic car washes can remain open. For full details of business which can remain open and those that must be closed see [here](#).

### Enforcement of Regulations & Patrols Across the Areas

Since the last bulletin at the beginning of December we have moved through the tiers at an alarming rate until ultimately, like the rest of England, we were placed in National Lockdown.

Since 2nd December 2020 (movement into Tier 2) to current day we have undertaken in excess of 310 visits/compliance checks. These are primarily reactive now meaning they are in response to complaints and intelligence received.

Tier 2 posed serious challenges to, and enforcing in, hospitality settings in terms on the restrictions on gatherings indoors and outdoors and the substantial meal provisions.

Training was undertaken with the trade to assist in understanding these rules. Our intention is to provide written advice, to be provided to non-compliant hospitality premises that concerns were raised with whilst in T2, and to repeatedly non compliant car washes – to make it very clear of expectations and when they are permitted to reopen.

High complaint areas for non-compliance with lockdown restrictions were car washes and gyms.

Areas seeking high levels of advice were dog groomers and mobile car valeters.

We have also worked closely with Covid ambassadors in Bracknell and the wardens in Wokingham regarding support and sharing information.

PPP Officers have been exceptional in their support of these monitoring visits, giving up weekends and evenings to support the response to the pandemic.

PPP have been receiving referrals from the marshals in Wokingham and Bracknell. We're also responding to complaints and visiting premises that the public health teams have identified as priorities, these have included food manufacturers/processors in

**A shared service provided by  
Bracknell Forest Council, West  
Berkshire Council and  
Wokingham Borough Council.**



## Enforcement of Regulations & Patrols cont...

consultation with HSE, undertakers, street markets and estate agents' offices. We have also looked at premises where we know positive cases have visited, although an individual could have potentially contracted Covid in a number of locations. So the visit is usually to check on compliance just in case, rather than there being a very strong link or strong suspicion of a link to a premises.

Earlier this week (week commencing 18th January) central government instructed local authorities to carry out compliance checks at supermarkets, so we are once again focusing on these premises, although we have already carried out many checks at these types of businesses.

## Events

Many events have obviously had to be postponed due to the current lockdown. There was a large running event that we had to cancel just before Christmas, were the tier 4 restrictions would have been breached (informally no enforcement action).

We are now starting to get enquiries from organisers who are looking ahead to spring and summer events. We have just had our first meeting to discuss one of our largest summer events with the organisers. At this stage we do not know if any of the summer events will go ahead, or in what format or with what restrictions. However we need to start planning with organisers as if these events will take place, alongside monitoring the latest COVID guidelines and regulations. As we get nearer to spring the number of event enquiries will increase as organisers will be keen to get things up and running again.

## Advice & Complaints

Since the last bulletin we have seen a big change in the tier system and lockdown implications in the area. This has been reflected in the types of complaints that we have received within the PPP.

As with the 1st and 2nd lockdowns we have seen an increase in Covid related enquiries from reopening after lockdown 2 through to tier 4 and the new lockdown.

In terms of enforcement we have also seen several complaints being made regarding premises being open which shouldn't be and others where compliance appears to be lacking.

For general business as usual type complaints, such as bonfires and noise, we have not experienced the peak we did in the first lockdown, this is mainly due to weather conditions and the civic amenity sites remaining open in this instance.

Some people are struggling with spending so much time at home and we have noticed a small increase of tinnitus and low frequency type noise complaints which rarely fall into our legal remit of statutory nuisance. We offer support to residents where we can and make use of local Mediation service (Resolve) as well as other low frequency and tinnitus support organisations.

**A shared service provided by  
Bracknell Forest Council, West  
Berkshire Council and  
Wokingham Borough Council.**



## Advice and Complaints cont...

Trading Standards related complaints continue to focus on holidays and internet purchases. As we continue in the uncertainty of the Covid situation, we have shared a lot of information on scams and it is disappointing to see that there continue to be opportunists out in our communities who seek to exploit the current circumstances.

## Case Management Update

The Case Management Unit remains busy as the Justice System is continuing to operate as an essential public service throughout this lockdown. Strict rules are in place in court buildings and footfall is being kept to a minimum. Wherever possible hearings are being conducted virtually using the CVS platform rolled out by HMCTS.

The Courts are still working through the backlog of cases built up during the first period of lockdown in March 2020 when all but essential work was stopped. Jury trials have now resumed in most Crown Courts however due to the measures required to conduct trials at the current time the Courts are able to accommodate fewer listings meaning that cases are being given trial dates well into 2021 and in some cases cannot be heard until 2022.

Recent examples of cases before the Courts –

**13th November 2020** – Wokingham Trader issued with a £1000 Fixed Penalty Notice under Covid Regulations for breaking the 10pm closing rule. The Fixed Penalty Notice was issued following an earlier prohibition notice which was ignored.

**15th December 2020** – Bracknell Forest - Tesco Stores Limited sentenced Reading Magistrates Court after pleading guilty to two health and safety offences arising out of an incident on 9th July 2017 at their store on County Lane, Warfield where a child

received an electric shock. Tesco were fined £268,000 for each offence and ordered to pay a victim's surcharge of £170 and the full costs of the case.

**11th December 2020** – Bracknell Forest – Proceedings under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 following the conviction of a trader for counterfeiting offences. Confiscation order made in the sum of £12,366.19 and costs awarded. The defendant was given three months in which to pay or faces a sentence of 6 months in custody in default.

**8th January 2021** – Wokingham trader convicted of unfair trading and ordered to pay compensation of £2000 to the victim after pleading guilty to one offence under the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008.

**8th January 2021** – West Berkshire - Drivers fined for breach of weight restrictions - Offences under section 5 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. Five drivers appeared before Reading Magistrates Court on this occasion following routine checks by officers of weight restrictions in place.

**8th January 2021** - West Berkshire – Chieveley Village Stores – guilty pleas were entered in relation to 5 offences following a mouse infestation in the store along with other food hygiene issues – Magistrates sentenced by way of a conditional discharge for 12 months and full costs were awarded to the Council.

**15th January 2021** – West Berkshire - Drivers fined for breach of weight restrictions - Offences under section 5 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. Five drivers appeared before Reading Magistrates Court on this occasion following routine checks by officers of weight restrictions in place.

**22nd January 2021** - Rogue trader who preyed on Thatcham pensioners narrowly avoids jail

## Animal Warden Service

One of the big challenges the animal warden team is facing at the moment is that a quick Google search for pet microchipping services don't give verified sites as the top results. These 'bogus' sites are paying Google to appear higher in the rankings. Therefore when a pet owner updates their details, or registers their pet, they're increasingly doing it on non-DEFRA compliant databases. This results in the Animal Wardens been unable to obtain owner details.

This has been raised with DEFRA and to IDB. The IDB, Intelligence Database, shares information with other local authorities improving links where common companies and people arise.

We are continuing to promote the message via the website and on social media that pet owners need to check the microchipping database they're using is registered with DEFRA. They can do this via the link [here](#). We've worked with PPP comms and below is an example of a poster we've had printed and are delivering to veterinary practices across the area to display on their notice boards. We've also had stickers for lamp posts created to display in popular dog walking areas.



As of yet we are pleased to report that we have not had an influx of lock down puppies being picked up, however we have had a few dogs abandoned due to ill health and therefore veterinary treatment required.

### 9th November 2019 - 19th January 2020

	Bracknell	West Berks	Wokingham
Handled	5	14	5
To Rescue	4	3	5

### 9th November 2020 - 19th January 2021

	Bracknell	West Berks	Wokingham
Handled	6	15	6
To Rescue	1	8	0

## Campaigns Update

### Alcohol Work Campaign

During the last 10 months school visits have been very difficult, however alcohol awareness information has still been available virtually, power points have been sent made accessible to all schools in both West Berkshire and Wokingham. These power points included quizzes and project work for students to complete.

The Last Orders Performance that has been going into schools as a live performance for thirteen years, this year has been available to all secondary school, year 9 students in West Berkshire and Wokingham virtually. In October we launched a series of podcasts for secondary school students, to date we have launched three podcasts. The first one relating to Covid, the second the harms of smoking the third the harms behind alcohol and the fourth one being recorded later this month relating to Mental Health issues. See link [here](#) for podcasts.

## Campaigns Update cont...

CAP (Community Alcohol Partnership) work is still happening, CAP offered schools a Young Health Championship opportunity during lockdown one which was offered to all CAP 1 and CAP 2 schools all done remotely. Kicks offered an online gaming challenge with young people in our area, playing online FIFA PlayStation/Xbox games to help with young people's mental health which we supported.

A virtual retailer conference took place in November, which was attended by retailers where they could access up to date information regarding current COVID information and general licensing queries etc.

Social media posts were put out advising people of alcohol awareness week and dry January.

### Loan Shark / Credit Union Training

Due to COVID affecting people financially we have done four online training sessions with the Loan Shark awareness team. Which has given us a great insight as to what to look out for when we are out visiting vulnerable people in our community.

We also attended another virtual training session on Credit unions, which links in well with education people how to avoid using loan sharks and getting back on track.

This is information that has been posted out on the PPP social media accounts and can be used to help our communities in the future when dealing with people who have been scammed or may be at risk of being scammed.

### Support with Confidence

Support with Confidence is a directory and vetting

scheme of local carers. It is designed to raise standards and provide assurance in the adult social care sector particularly regarding those self-employed providers that fall outside the Care Quality Commission regulatory framework.

The scheme has been a lifeline to our self-employed Personal Assistants by providing information, access to PPE, testing and the vaccine, and generally supporting the members through this difficult time.

For more information about the scheme please see our webpages [here](#).

### Handwashing Session

This January PPP launched a new project with Primary Schools to help the children learn how to wash their hands effectively. The aim is to run the project in West Berkshire, Wokingham and Bracknell. Due to the latest lockdown, this has been put on hold until the children return.

A few West Berkshire schools are running the session with their keyworker and vulnerable children. So far we have run the project with four West Berkshire Schools and piloted it in another. The feedback has been very positive.

### Smoke Free Homes

Smoking in the home causes those living with a smoker to take in smoke and associated toxins, released by the smoker-this is known as second hand smoke.

Second-hand smoke is particularly harmful to children, but has a health harm effect on all that are exposed to it. This includes adults living or visiting, and pets living in the home. Smoking indoors and exposing others to harmful chemicals, can have both immediate and long term effects on health.

## Campaigns Update cont...

The campaign is asking those that smoke in the home to stop smoking in the home. It provides information on the health effects of second hand smoke to other.

The launch, in January 2021, coincides with:

- The Better Health Campaign, launched in January 2021.
- Setting of New Year resolutions-many of which are around unhealthy habits.

Messages supporting Smoke Free Homes have been pushed out via the PPP social media channels throughout January.

The results to date have been positive, working with housing colleagues and associations has given a greater understanding of the work they do and for them to gain knowledge of the working of PPP and the tobacco control agenda.

## Trading Standards COVID Scams



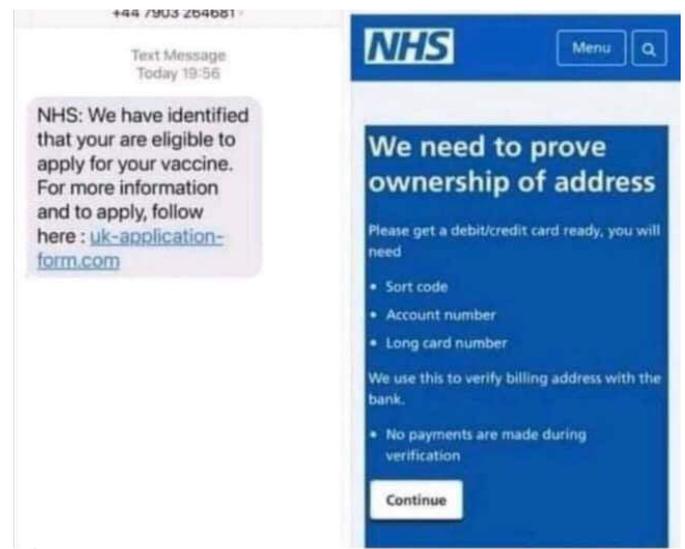
Around the UK, Trading Standards are experiencing an increase in the number of complaints about Covid scams, designed to prey on the concerns of people. We have pushed out a number of social media messages, radio interviews and press releases on this topic.

A dedicated Crimestoppers COVID scam hot line has been created and members of the public are urged to report scams relating to COVID to this number (0800 587 5030) or to report online [here](#). See [here](#) for full details.

Covid scams we are currently aware of:

- Fake NHS text telling people they're eligible to apply for the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Automated call telling them they're being called to organise their COVID vaccine.
- Scammers are selling fake 'Vaccination Cards'.
- Financial scams where text and email messages are received, which appear to be from Government departments.
- Reports of the sale of fake Coronavirus testing kits and vaccines.
- Emails / text messages purporting to be from HMRC regarding claiming tax back or grants, which are again a way of tricking people into providing bank details.

For full details of the scams and of how to report see link [here](#).



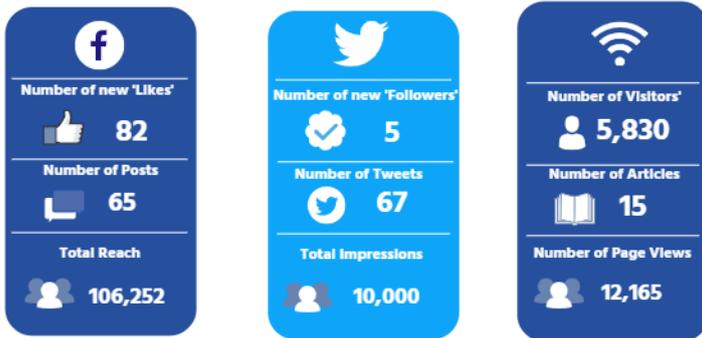
## Communication

Social media reach continues to grow with Facebook now at over 1290 followers. The most popular FB posts from December and January to date are to the left.

A local radio ad campaign to raise awareness of scams and how to report to PPP is being trialed in Newbury on Radio Kennett for three months. Results from that will determine if we do more local radio ads across the other areas.

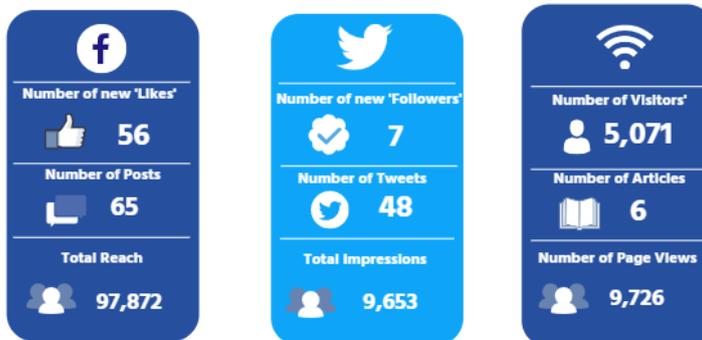
We have also produced posters for the Animal Warden team and for the Clean Air Day School competition.

### PPP Social Media Update 1st Nov -30th November



Total combined reach for November to date is 128,417

### PPP Social Media Update 1st Dec -31st December



Total combined reach for December to date is 117,251

## Top 3 Facebook Posts - December to January to date

**Public Protection Partnership**  
Published by Lisa Barnes [?] · ★ Favourites · 17 December 2020 · 🌐

⚠️ **SCAM WARNING** - Please be aware of two COVID vaccine scams we have reports on from other areas of the country. These may well travel to our region so please be vigilant.

🗨️ **SCAM 1** - The elderly and the vulnerable are being called via an automated call out telling them they're being called to organise their COVID vaccine. They're then asked to press a number to be put through to organise the vaccine. **HANG UP AND DO NOT PRESS A NUMBER.** The number will allow them to access your... See more

**COVID Vaccine Scam**

**17th December COVID Scams - Reach 11,100**

**Public Protection Partnership**  
Published by Lisa Barnes [?] · ★ Favourites · 17 December 2020 · 🌐

⚠️ **Bracknell Forest, West Berkshire & Wokingham's Covid Alert Level** has now changed to Tier 3 'Very High', with new rules we must ALL follow to keep ourselves and others safe.

This will be effective from Saturday 00.01 🚩

Information on what this means here... See more

**17th December - Tier 4 Announcement. Reach 5,300**

MEETING FRIENDS AND FAMILY	HAIR, NAILS AND RESTAURANTS	RETAIL	WORK AND BUSINESS
EDUCATION	INDOOR LEISURE	ACCOMMODATION	PERSONAL CARE
OVERNIGHT STAYS	WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS	ENTERTAINMENT	PLACES OF WORSHIP
TRAVELLING	EXERCISE	RESIDENTIAL CARE	LARGE EVENTS

Advice to Pet Owners – what the law says about taking your pet for grooming.

The latest lockdown is because we need to prevent transmission of the virus. We need to stay at home - there are of course exemptions, food shopping, exercising your pet - but we must remember every time we leave our homes we are at risk of transmitting or catching the virus.

You may also leave your home to take your pet to the vets if he or she is unwell. You can also take your pet to the groomer... See more



**15th January - Advice to Pet Owners re Grooming in Lockdown reach 4,700**

## Who to Contact

Reporting of complaints relating to Covid-19 can be made on the website via the Enforcement Form on the front page. [Link here](#).

### Trading Standards:

Concerned residents or anybody with information about coronavirus related scams are being asked to contact Trading Standards directly via: [TSadvice@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:TSadvice@westberks.gov.uk)

### Environmental Health:

Environmental Health matters are to contact us by emailing: [ehadvice@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:ehadvice@westberks.gov.uk)

### Licensing:

Bracknell Forest Licensing matters are to contact us by emailing: [Licence.All@Bracknell-Forest.gov.uk](mailto:Licence.All@Bracknell-Forest.gov.uk)

West Berkshire Licensing matters are to contact us by emailing: [Licensing@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:Licensing@westberks.gov.uk)

Wokingham Licensing matters are to contact us by emailing: [Licensing@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:Licensing@wokingham.gov.uk)

## Keeping in Touch With Updates

 [@PublicProtectionPartnershipUK](https://www.facebook.com/PublicProtectionPartnershipUK)

 [@PublicPP\\_UK](https://twitter.com/PublicPP_UK)

 [www.publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk](http://www.publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk)