

COST OF LIVING SUPPORT HUB

COMMS TOOLKIT

(INTERNAL SERVICES)



Communications Team
WEST BERKSHIRE COUNCIL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Cost of Living Support Hub – Comms Toolkit (Internal Services)	2
<i>Key Messages</i>	2
<i>Email signature</i>	3
<i>Newsletter/Website/Service Dept copy</i>	4
<i>Social media messages</i>	5

COST OF LIVING SUPPORT HUB – COMMS TOOLKIT (INTERNAL SERVICES)

This toolkit has been put together to help staff recognise what the Council is doing to help West Berkshire residents and businesses during these challenging times.

We would like service areas to help us promote the Cost of Living Hub so that more people know help is available. Information in this pack will help you promote the Cost of Living Hub externally and equip you with the correct information to refer/signpost service users if you come across people in hardship.

There is also information in Appendix 1 which has information for staff only to know what is available for yourself and your family.

Please cascade the messages/resources within this pack to all your relevant service areas, stakeholder groups and service users, as appropriate.

If you need any additional help with this comms pack, please contact the Communications Team via email: PR@westberks.gov.uk or phone: 01635 519125.

Thank you.

KEY MESSAGES

- The Cost of Living Support Hub is open to provide advice and practical support for anyone in financial hardship, making it easier for residents and businesses to get the help they need.
- The Cost of Living Support Hub is a community resource from West Berkshire Council, Greenham Trust and the Volunteer Centre West Berkshire – working with more than 20 local charities and community organisations. We're working to arrange physical drop in sessions across the district so that residents can speak to someone face to face. Keep an eye on our website: <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support-hub> and on the Councils social media channels for updates.
- No matter how big or small residents and businesses need our support, the [Cost of Living Support Hub](#) is a place where everyone in West Berkshire can go to for advice on financial support, help with food costs, money saving tips, health and wellbeing, and help with benefits.
- The Opening Hours for the Cost of Living Hub are:
 - Monday to Thursday 8.30am - 5.00pm
 - Friday 8.30am - 4.30pm
- Be scam aware! There has been an increase in the number of scams taking place that prey on vulnerable residents by claiming to be messages offering support with cost of living support. The Council will raise awareness of scams based on Cost of

Living support and risks from unsafe solutions/options/practices (e.g. open flames, unsafe appliances).

- With annual energy bills more than doubling in the last year, the Government forced to freeze household bills at £2,500 a year, and inflation at around 10%, in partnership with Greenham Trust, we have pledged £50,000 each in 1:1 match funding, hoping that a further £100,000 can be raised for charities to provide emergency assistance to disadvantaged families and individuals. If you would like to make a donation to the appeal please visit: <https://app.thegoodexchange.com/project/19728/greenham-trust/west-berkshire-emergency-cost-of-living-crisis-appeal>
- Visit the hub online to find out more and contact the hub online: www.westberks.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support-hub. You can also email the hub at: costofliving@westberks.gov.uk or telephone the hub on: **01635 503333**.

EMAIL SIGNATURE

ADD THIS TO THE BOTTOM OF YOUR EMAIL SIGNATURE:

Find out what is happening around West Berkshire and sign up to our [newsletter](#).

The Cost of Living Support Hub helps residents facing financial hardship. If you, or someone you know needs help, please [contact the Hub online](#), email: costofliving@westberks.gov.uk or phone: 01635 503333.

COST OF LIVING SUPPORT HUB – NEWSLETTER/WEBSITE/SERVICE DEPT COPY

Communities across the country are feeling the pressure of increased living costs this winter and we are working hard to ensure everyone doesn't miss out on support available or reach a crisis point.

In West Berkshire, we are working as part of a new Cost of Living Support Hub in partnership with [Greenham Trust](#) and the [Volunteer Centre West Berkshire](#), to work closely together with the wider local community and voluntary sector.

Local residents and businesses can find advice and support around cost of living issues with a wealth of information available on the [hub website](#). The staff at the hub will be able to provide advice and match residents' needs with the support available both nationally and locally, including from local charities and voluntary organisations.

Local residents are also encouraged to help with donations and volunteering to help bring the community together, plus educate residents about scams which aim to exploit people through imitating cost of living support services.

The hub is open from Monday-Thursday 8.30-5.00pm, and Friday 8.30am-4.30pm.

[More information about the hub and an online contact form can be found on the Council's website](#). Enquiries can be submitted at any time via the online form and will be processed during opening hours.

We recommend people make initial contact using the online form so that Hub staff can best process and give the right advice to respond to your query. However, if necessary please call the team on: **01635 503333** or email: costofliving@westberks.gov.uk.


For children and their families, there is also additional support that can be accessed via the Cost of Living Support Hub from My Family First (MFF), who can provide longer term support and intervention delivered by a team of specially trained staff who work with children and their families at the earliest point possible. In addition, the [Early Response Hub \(ERH\)](#), can provide advice and work with families to create a plan of support.

The Cost of Living Support Hub is the latest in a range of support for residents impacted by the rising cost of living offered by the council and us. This includes assisting residents with advice, signposting and referrals to a range of partners and Council Services. *[add in your own information to this list as necessary]:*



- A [Household Support Fund](#)
- A £100,000 [Emergency Cost of Living Crisis Fund](#) - support frontline charities to help residents
- A [new online resource](#) is now available to help residents worried about paying bills find out about help available locally.

SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGES

Please use the images that correspond to the message. All images can be found in the attached 'assets' folder that came with this comms pack.

<u>Facebook/Instagram</u>	<u>Twitter</u>	<u>Image</u>
<p>Please tag us all in:</p> <p>FB: @WestBerkshire / IG: @westberkshire</p> <p>@GreenhamTrustLtd / IG: @greenhamtrust</p> <p>FB: @volunteercenwestberkshire / IG: @vol.centre.westberks</p> <p>For anyone struggling during these challenging times we are here to help.</p> <p>We have collaborated with Greenham Trust and the Volunteer Centre West Berkshire, to create the Cost of Living Support Hub – a place where everyone in West Berkshire can go to for advice on financial support, help with food costs, money saving tips and help with benefits.</p> <p>No matter how big or small your query, residents or businesses please feel free to get in touch to see what help is available.</p> <p>We recommend you make initial contact using the online form: https://westberks.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support-hub. However, if necessary you can also call</p>	<p>Please tag us all in:</p> <p>@WestBerkshire</p> <p>@Greenham_Trust</p> <p>@VCWB1</p> <p>The West Berkshire Cost of Living Support Hub is now open. Residents or businesses with financial or emotional struggles during this challenging time can contact us to see what help is available.</p> <p>🔗 Click the link in our bio for more information</p> <p>#WestBerkshire #CostOfLiving</p>	 <p>The image shows the 'Cost of Living Hub' logo on a purple background. To the right is a colorful illustration of a house surrounded by icons representing various aspects of daily life: a shopping basket, a credit card, a lightbulb, a car, a newspaper, and a calculator.</p> <p>Image: 1. COL hub_FB</p>

<p>the team on: 01635 503333 or email: costofliving@westberks.gov.uk</p> <p>#WestBerkshire #CostOfLiving #WorkingTogether</p>		
<p>The West Berkshire Cost of Living Support Hub provides advice and practical support for anyone in financial hardship, making it easier for you to get the help you need.</p> <p>⇒ Please do get in touch: https://westberks.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support-hub</p> <p>#WestBerkshire #CostOfLivingCrisis</p>	<p>The West Berkshire Cost of Living Support Hub provides advice and practical support for anyone in financial hardship, making it easier for you to get the help you need.</p> <p>⇒ Please do get in touch by clicking on the link in our bio for more information</p> <p>#WestBerkshire #CostOfLiving</p>	 <p><i>Image: 2. Support hub</i></p>
<p>The new West Berkshire Cost of Living Hub, which has been created to support those facing hardship this winter, is open and we are here to help.</p> <p>⇒ We recommend you make initial contact using the online form: https://westberks.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support-hub. However, if necessary you can also call the team on: 01635 503333 or email: costofliving@westberks.gov.uk</p> <p>#WestBerks #CostOfLivingSupport</p>	<p>The new West Berkshire Cost of Living Hub, which has been created to support those facing hardship this winter, is open and we are here to help.</p> <p>⇒ Please do get in touch by clicking on the link in our bio for more information</p> <p>#WestBerks #CostOfLiving</p>	 <p><i>Image: 3. COL hub open_FB</i></p>

<p>Be safe! Please be aware of scams which aim to exploit people through imitating cost of living support services with unsafe solutions/options/practices.</p> <p>Never give out your passwords or bank information to anyone.</p> <p>If you spot a scam let us know at: tsadvice@westberks.gov.uk or call us on: 01635 519930. If you have been the victim of a scam contact @actionfraud</p> <p>☞ We can help: https://westberks.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support-hub</p> <p>#WestBerkshire #CostOfLiving #BeScamAware</p>	<p>Be safe! Please be aware of scams which aim to exploit people through imitating cost of living support services with unsafe solutions/options/practices.</p> <p>Never give out your passwords or bank information to anyone.</p> <p>☞ We can help. Click the link in our bio for more information</p> <p>#WestBerkshire #CostOfLiving</p>	 <p><i>Image: 4. COL scam_FB</i></p>
<p>Find out how you can help those struggling with the cost of living, including donating, volunteering and helping someone you're concerned about.</p> <p>Get involved and help bring the community together here: https://westberks.gov.uk/cost-of-living-help</p> <p>#WestBerkshire #CostOfLiving #Volunteer #Community</p>	<p>Find out how you can help those struggling with the cost of living, including donating, volunteering and helping someone you're concerned about.</p> <p>Get involved and help bring the community together.</p> <p>☞ Click the link in our bio for more information</p> <p>#WestBerkshire #CostOfLiving #Volunteer #Community</p>	 <p><i>Image: 5. COL volunteering_FB</i></p>

With annual energy bills more than doubling in the last year, the Government forced to freeze household bills at £2,500 a year, and inflation forecast to reach 13% by December, we are working in partnership with @GreenhamTrustLtd to pledge £50,000 each in 1:1 match funding, hoping that a further £100,000 can be raised for charities to provide emergency assistance to disadvantaged families and individuals.

If you would like to make a donation to the appeal please

visit: <https://app.thegoodexchange.com/project/19728/greenham-trust/west-berkshire-emergency-cost-of-living-crisis-appeal>

#WestBerkshire #CostOfLivingCrisis #Community

@Greenham_Trust & @WestBerkshire launched a £100,000 Emergency Cost of Living Crisis Fund to help charities support those affected by unaffordable hikes in energy prices and double-digit inflation.

⇒ Click the link in our bio for more information and how to donate to the appeal

Emergency Cost of Living Crisis Fund



£100,000

Image: 6. COL emergency_FB

