

## PPP Members Briefing Bulletin #4

## Public Protection Partnership

Bracknell Forest  
West Berkshire  
Wokingham

### Introduction

Covid 19 and non-Covid 19 related service requests and enquiries continue to rise but as a result of the unlocking of some previously suspended activities, we have now entered Recovery phase.

We are providing advice based on guidance published by the Government, so as different business sectors reopen we are able to give appropriate advice whilst keeping our website relevant and up to date. It is evident that each transitional phase brings different challenges.

### Response

Service requests for advice received during June included the following:

- An increase in fly tipping cases in Bracknell Forest possibly due to the targeted project work.
- An increase in general enquiries to Trading Standards from consumers asking about their rights; a 219% increase compared to June 2019.
- 24% of the notifications to Trading Standards related to the travel sector

- 9% of all service requests/enquiries related to Covid 19
- The highest proportion of service requests (20%) were noise related, with an increase from commercial sources and little reduction in domestic sources. With many residents still at home, and children on school holidays, this is understandable.

Our Q1 data (April – June) has shown a 40% increase in service requests compared to the same period in 2019, of which 12% are Covid 19 related. Bonfires represent 16% of those requests, higher than 2019 although the numbers did decrease towards the end of the period.

With the hospitality sector closed until 4th July, we have seen a decrease in the number of commercial service requests with the same time last year.

However there has been an increase in Health and Safety risk assessment enquiries from businesses preparing to re-open and an increase in concerns/queries relating to the lack of clarity with the amended Regulations.

## Outbreak Control and the Test and Trace System

When it comes to Infectious Disease Control – Environmental Health have two objectives.

The first (and our priority) is to work with Public Health England and LA Public Health Team to prevent spread (this is under Public Health legislation). This involves using our knowledge of the premises and our experience in investigations and inspections to inform the Incident Team and to audit the premises to determine whether there are non-compliances with Legislation (and in the case of Covid 19, the Government Guidance) and where this may have contributed to the cases.

The second is to look at the outbreak in terms of Health and Safety investigation and to determine whether there are any breaches at those premises where we enforce health and safety under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974.

Environmental Health has been contributing to and commenting on the Covid Outbreak Control Plans and has a representative on both the Daily Test and Trace Catch Up meetings and the Outbreak Management Group. As Subject Matter Experts for a wide range of High Risk Settings EH has been working on preventative projects with those settings and on actions to be taken should suspected or positive cases be reported.

As part of the National Test and Trace System, Environmental Health is the 'front door' for positive case notifications from PHE in relation to high risk settings. Reports are received via our CV19 Notifications inbox which is monitored seven days a week from 09.00 to 17.00 (these times mirror the SE PHE Test and Trace desk). When positive notifications

are received, officers act on the instruction of PHE and coordinate the LA's response to pull together the appropriate officers for an Incident Control Team. This team would include the Consultant in Public Health, the Subject Matter Expert (most likely Environmental Health) and any other appropriate officers depending on the situation. EH would subsequently follow up on any actions required by the Incident Control Team.

High Risk Premises can also report suspected cases directly using the CV19 Notifications inbox. The PPP Covid Duty Team is in place to co-ordinate these notifications, inform PHE to determine whether they are connected to other positive cases in the setting and ensure that both the Consultant in Public Health and the Subject Matter Expert (if different from EH) are also informed. The CD team can advise on testing, infectious disease control and if necessary set up a Local Authority Response Team to ensure that the incident is properly managed and controlled. This team can include officers from other disciplines such as Communications.

## Advice for Businesses

All three local authorities have been working with their communications/economic development teams regarding the re-opening of town centres.

In the Wokingham Borough, we held a virtual Hospitality Business Briefing on 30th June with over thirty businesses 'attending'. This came about as the result of a survey being issued asking what support businesses felt they needed. Bracknell Forest also hosted a webinar following a similar survey.

Following these briefings, businesses provided Covid 19 Risk Assessments so that officers from both Health and Safety and Licensing teams could provide feedback and advice as necessary.

## Officer Patrols for Re-opening Businesses

On 15th June some non-essential premises were able to re-open and our officers visited several town centres across the area to see how the re-opening went.

In order to help businesses PPP developed a Covid 19 Tool Kit ([see here](#)) and as a result we found that overall the premises were well prepared for their new responsibilities.

On Saturday 4th July, the day premises such as pubs and restaurants were permitted to re-open, officers from Licensing, Trading Standards and Environmental Health carried out patrols in partnership with TVP in Bracknell, Newbury, Wokingham and Woodley town centres.

The officers considered the use of outdoor space, noise from people congregating, any music issues, how social distancing was being managed indoors/out and the logging of contact details for Test and Trace.

Since 6th July, Health and Safety patrols have been carried out for two days a week in each LA. Areas covered include Bracknell town centre, Crowthorne, Sandhurst, Newbury, Thatcham, Hungerford, Kintbury, Theale, Calcot, Twyford, Woodley and Wokingham town centre. Our officers are observing cafes/restaurants/bars/pubs and shops and offering advice as needed. This has been an ideal opportunity to promote our Covid 19 Toolkit and check on Covid 19 Risk Assessments.

Further, these visits to the main retail and hospitality centres in all three areas, have given us the opportunity to check that those premises still meant

to be closed, such as nail bars and tattooists, had remained so.

As of 13th July, hairdressers and barbers have been added to the list of premises being observed on patrol.



Patrol at Open Air Cinema in Mortimer

## Recommencement of Routine Food Hygiene Inspections

Previously the Food Standards Agency advised LAs that they were to prioritise urgent reactive work and carry out enforcement revisits as required.

As of mid-July, as a 'medium' priority we may now also proactively inspect higher risk premises that are overdue/due to the end of September 2020.

We will now begin this work and during visits will note any concerns about lack of Covid-19 control measures and deal with these as 'matters arising' under Health and Safety legislation.

The guidance states that where a business is rated 'higher risk' because of vulnerable consumers, officers should carry out a remote assessment in advance to determine whether or not an actual visit is required.

## Caravan and Park Home Sites Update

Caravan and Park Home sites are subject to caravan site licensing requirements under the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 (The Act). The Mobile Homes Act 2013 amended this Act.

We have a programme of inspection for these sites having regard to risk based approach.

At the start of the Covid 19 lockdown, our routine inspections were not possible, however officers have undertaken visits with Thames Valley Police and Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue (RBFRS) where issues have been raised.

Where unlicensed plots have been found the owners have been contacted and encouraged to take caravan site applications forward, whereas plots already licensed by PPP are undergoing a review of licence conditions to ensure they reflect the model standards. Where defects have been found, we are achieving compliance using licensing enforcement powers (i.e. DCLG Guidance document 'Mobile Homes Act 2013 – licensing enforcement tools'). This work is ongoing.

With the easing of the lockdown PPP is now resuming the risk based inspection programme for caravan and park home sites across our areas.

We are also in the process of updating the Private Sector Housing Policy to align with the Housing Strategy for Wokingham Council and the Housing strategies for Bracknell and West Berkshire Councils. Further, we are developing a joint working strategy with RBFRS colleagues, Central Hub Wokingham with the aim of improving fire safety within the private rented sector, particularly Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO).

## New Legislation - Business & Planning Bill

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected businesses across the economy causing many to cease trading for several months, whilst others have had to significantly modify their operations.

In the hospitality sector, changes to some licensing measures proposed by the Business and Planning Bill announced by the Government on 25th June, provide some much-needed flexibility as businesses seek to re-open under social distancing requirements. The proposals relating to PPP are as follows:

### Extension of Construction Site Hours

This is to allow for changes to construction working hours to support safe construction when working in line with the latest social distancing guidance on construction and other outdoor work. This only applies where hours of work conditions already exist.

Local Planning Authorities will need to make a decision on an application within 14 days of receipt and they may choose to engage relevant Ward Councillors, Environmental Health officers and others who they consider will have an interest.

### Alcohol Licensing Changes

In order to help the hospitality sector recover from lockdown, temporary changes to Planning Procedures and Alcohol Licensing will make it easier for premises serving food and drink such as bars, restaurants and pubs, to seat and serve customers outdoors. Under the Licensing Act 2003, premises are licensed for the sale of alcohol for consumption either 'on' the premises, 'off' the premises, or both. The measures included in this Bill modify provisions in the Licensing



Act 2003 to provide automatic extensions to the terms of on-sales alcohol licences to allow for off-sales, without making an application or incurring additional fees. This temporary measure aims to boost the economy, with provisions lasting until the end of September 2021.

This change will allow businesses to trade outdoors and maintain social distancing measures indoors. However, premises which have had an application for an off-sales permission refused, or had their off-sales permission excluded by variation or at review within the last three years, are excluded from this licence extension. This is a safeguard to ensure that where it has been decided that the licensee should not have the off-sales permission, they do not then gain it through this legislation. The default hours in which off-sales will be permitted will be the same as those in which on-sales are permitted. Any premises wishing to open for longer hours must still apply for a licence variation.

The provisions will also apply temporary conditions to licences where there is a pre-existing permission for off-sales. The conditions will set the hours of off-sales to match those for on-sales, allow off-sales of alcohol in open containers and allow deliveries of alcohol to residential or work buildings. Those conditions will suspend the more restrictive existing conditions. So, for example, an existing condition that allowed off-sales only in closed containers would be suspended to allow sales in open containers.

Should there be any issues relating to the licensing objectives (crime and disorder, public nuisance, public safety or the protection of children) arising from how the premises operate using the new permission, any Responsible Authority, including the Police, Environmental Health or Trading Standards, can apply for an off-sales review. The off-sales review process is modelled on the existing summary review process. In

the event that an off-sales review is triggered, it will only relate to off-sales authorised by virtue of these provisions, or conditions which have effect by virtue of these provisions: it cannot be used to revoke the existing licence or modify pre-existing licence conditions.

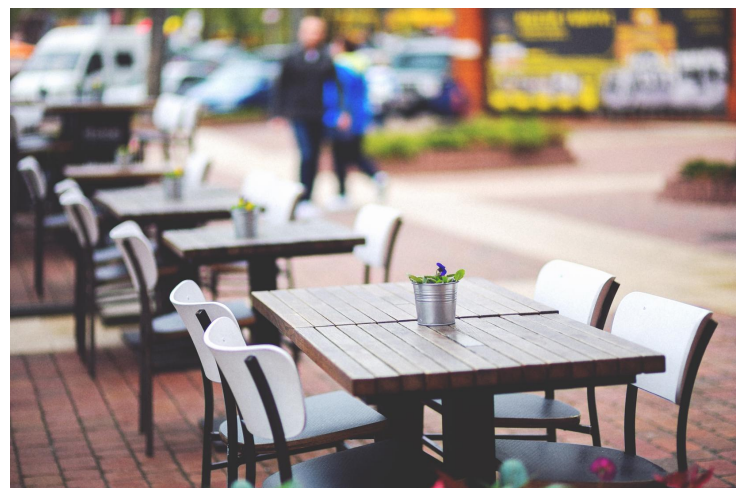
### Pavement Licenses - (for information only)

This is an additional measure that is licensed by our Highways colleagues.

These measures provide for the placement of furniture (tables and chairs) on the pavement outside a premises to enable the business to maximise capacity whilst adhering to social distancing guidelines.

The Business and Planning Act 2020 got Royal Assent on 22nd July and the pavement licence and off-sales extension provisions came into force immediately. The government guidance can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-temporary-alcohol-licensing-provisions-in-the-business-and-planning-bill>



## Animal Warden Service

As reported in the last members' bulletin the Animal Warden Team has recruited its newest member. We have also recently recorded some information videos for dog owners and those who find a stray dog.

Video topics and links as below:

- [Dog Fouling](#)
- [Barking Dogs](#)
- [Keeping Dogs Under Control](#)

Statistically, the team has dealt with fewer stray dogs compared with this time last year however, eight more dogs collected during this period have ended up with rescue centres rather than been reunited with their owners.

This information tells us there's still more to be done about informing owners of their responsibilities around microchipping and dog tags.

### 1st April - 4th July 2019

	Bracknell	West Berks	Wokingham
Handled	11	32	7
To Rescue	3	7	7

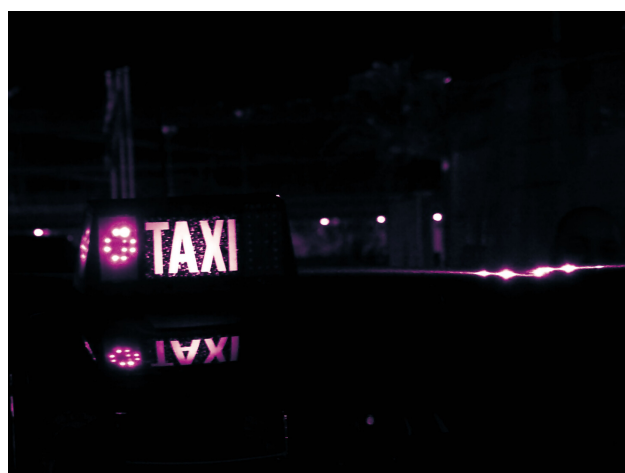
### 1st April - 4th July 2020

	Bracknell	West Berks	Wokingham
Handled	15	13	17
To Rescue	8	4	12

## Licensing & Applications

In addition to the influx of service requests relating to Covid 19, the Licensing and Applications officers continue the essential work aligned with the Licensing Act 2003 including New Premises Licence Applications, Licence reviews, Variations, Virtual Licensing Committee Hearings and Annual Fee payments.

Other licence holders like taxi drivers, home dog boarders, dog walkers and dermal licensees are asking for more information than usual and these requests receive a reasoned approach and solid information despite additional pressures from Coronavirus queries.



## Air Quality

The 3 Annual Status Reports, for 2019 monitoring data, have all been submitted ahead of the DEFRA deadline. We have already received the positive appraisal for the Wokingham report which agreed with our findings. There were no exceedances of any of the objectives at any of the locations. Our monitoring continues each month and the 2020 results so far are showing a downward trend in nitrogen dioxide annual mean and 1 hour objective and particulate matter (monitored in BF only) levels.

## Waste Social Media Operation

The operation has identified 60 businesses advertising on Facebook to collect waste, 78% of those were identified as holding the necessary Waste Carriers Licence issued by the Environment Agency. Following further enquiries and contact with those advertising, 7 businesses have not responded to our request for licence details and will shortly be sent enforcement advice.

One business obtained a licence once advised and a second has blocked his Facebook page.

19 Facebook posts from members of the public looking for waste collections were identified. The vast majority of businesses responding to these requests had Waste Carriers Licences and could legally remove the waste to a licensed waste transfer facility. We have asked a number of these Facebook users for details of who did remove their waste and are awaiting replies. However, it was pleasing to note that many such posts contained references to the need for Waste Carriers Licences, waste notes and the avoidance of fly tipping.

Whilst there is no guarantee that licensed waste carriers will not fly tip it is essential that householders use licensed waste carriers, as a failure to do so can make the householder liable for a fixed penalty notice. There is also no excuse for a licensed waste carrier to fly tip, waste transfer stations have remained open throughout the Covid period so any rubbish collected can easily be legally disposed of.

The operation authorisation expires at the end of July following which a further campaign will be developed.

## Pop Up Food Premises

During lockdown we have seen a number of new 'pop-up' food businesses operating via Facebook pages and selling into local Facebook groups. Many of these businesses are difficult to identify as they have no physical premises and are often selling on a very small and local scale through non-traditional means. Most will not even know that they need to register as a food business. Our Environmental Health officers have identified a number of such businesses and although initially some were difficult to contact via phone calls and emails we have been able to contact them successfully via Facebook messenger and they are now submitting their food registrations.

We also posted out a number of social media messages on Facebook and Twitter reminding those who are thinking of starting, or have recently started, a new food business what their obligations are and how to contact Environmental Health to register as a food business. .

## Governance & Case Management

The first Joint Public Protection Committee of the municipal calendar was held virtually on 24/06/20. Presentations on the response to Covid 19 by the service and the plan for recovery were included on the agenda. To view the Committee please use this link [here](#).

Although the Case Management Unit has not seen an increase in case work over the last three months the team is expecting a backlog within the courts system as it opens up. The Crown Court has already recommenced hearings but with reduced capacity and the Magistrates put everything on hold to 30/06/20. Formal interviewing is taking place mainly in writing although some are being carried out with TVP at police stations.



## Unlicensed Ice Cream Traders

The PPP Licensing Teams received a number of service requests about ice cream vans operating in West Berkshire, Wokingham and Bracknell without a street trading consent. This was particularly worrying as we couldn't be sure they were operating with the relevant food hygiene standards in place. Many of these traders were advertising their location 'last minute' on local Facebook groups.

PPP issued a press release and a number of social media posts were shared within the same local Facebook groups reminding consumers to check that any street food business, including ice cream vans, should be checked regarding their Food Hygiene rating and if they have a street trading license. We also reached out to the businesses we knew didn't have a licence.

Interestingly, Reading Borough Council picked up on our Facebook notifications relating to unlicensed ice cream sellers and in turn the Reading Chronicle created an article warning of the trend and advising caution.



## Snapshot of our Social Media Posts





# Snapshot of our Social Media Posts

PPP

**Public Protection Partnership** @PublicPP\_UK · Jul 15

Fly-tippers beware. We're on to you.

Make sure any waste removal service you use is licensed - or you could be fined if they fly-tip your waste.

#FlyTipping



PPP

**Public Protection Partnership** @PublicPP\_UK · Jul 17

Reminder for #Hairdressers, #Barbers & other close contact services. Gov guidance states that visors should be worn by staff servicing clients and face coverings are not a suitable alternative to a visor.

Full details and guidance in link below:

[publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk/news-articles/...](https://publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk/news-articles/)



PPP

**Public Protection Partnership** @PublicPP\_UK · Jul 14

Following businesses can reopen from 13 July 2020:

- spas
- nail bars and salons and beauty salons
- tanning booths and salons
- massage therapists
- tattoo studios
- body and skin piercing services

No treatments/services on the face until government advice changes.



PPP

**Public Protection Partnership**

Published by Lisa Barnes [?] · 6 July · 🌐

**\*\* Rogue Trader sentenced to 66 weeks custody \*\***

Ruben William Reed, a Director of Warm Roof Group Ltd, Warm Systems Group Ltd and FDG Associates Ltd, at the relevant time of the offences with which he was charged, was sentenced at Reading Crown Court on 26th June 2020, after pleading guilty at Reading Crown Court on the 20th August 2019 to six offences between February to November 2018.

The offences consisted of 4 charges under the Fraud Act 2006, and 2 charges under the Con...

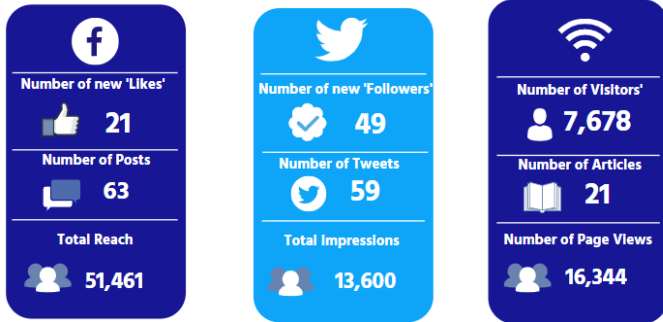
[Continue reading](#)



## Communication

Social media and website engagement continues to grow. See below for summary of June stats:

### PPP Social Media Update 1st June - 30th June '20



**Total combined reach for June is 81,405**

### Facebook Stats:

	New Likes	Reach	No. Posts
Oct	15	7,645	17
Nov	44	9,890	35
Dec	52	12,346	30
Jan	70	19,202	36
Feb	96	107,684	29
Mar	153	38,930	38
Apr	96	103,470	53
May	43	65,409	49
June	21	51,461	63

Like us on Facebook [here](#)

### Twitter Stats:

	New Followers	Impressions	No. Tweets
Oct	18	2,160	19
Nov	44	13,100	45
Dec	8	9,241	32
Jan	28	10,500	47
Feb	13	12,500	33
Mar	19	30,100	50
Apr	19	25,000	59
May	6	16,200	47
June	49	13,600	59

Follow us on Twitter [here](#)

### Website Stats:

During June 2020 the website has had 7,678 visits with 16,344 page views.

In June 21 articles were published to the website as follows:

- 30 June - [So what can you and can't you do on or after 4th July? Coronavirus outbreak FAQs](#)
- 30 June - [Latest Scam Warnings](#)
- 30 June - [Summary of Support for Business Re-Opening](#)
- 18 June - [Heartless scammers target residents during coronavirus lockdown](#)
- 17 June - [COVID-19 Business Toolkit](#)
- 17 June - [Gambling Act 2005 Licensed Premises FAQ's - COVID 19](#)
- 17 June - [Animal Activity Licensing FAQ's - COVID 19 - Updated](#)
- 16 June - [Licensing Pre-opening Checklist](#)
- 16 June - [What is Cuckooing?](#)
- 15 June - [Do I need to wear a face mask in a taxi?](#)
- 15 June - [HSE Warns of Sub-Standard PPE Face Masks](#)
- 15 June - [Community Alcohol Partnership Retailer Newsletter](#)
- 15 June - [Unlicensed Ice Cream Traders Operating](#)
- 11 June - [Wokingham, Woodley and Twyford Open for Business - Press Release](#)
- 11 June - [Retail / Business Poster Downloads](#)
- 9 June - [Keep Your Workplace Safe Poster](#)
- 8 June - [How to Spot a Scam Email Video](#)
- 3 June - [COVID-19 Test and Trace Scam](#)
- 2 June - [Animal Activity Licensing FAQ's - COVID 19](#)
- 1 June - [Renting update from MHCLG - Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government](#)
- 1 June - [MHCLG Guidance on Electrical Safety Standards in Private Rented Sector](#)

The most visited pages, excluding home page, on the website during June were:

- 494 Page visits - [Environmental Health - Nuisance Neighbours](#)
- 429 Page visits - [Environmental Health - Animal Warden](#)
- 341 Page visits - [Bonfires during Coronavirus Outbreak](#)

All news articles can be viewed via the link

below:

<https://publicprotectionpartnership.org.uk/news/>

## 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



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