

Making it Happen

The Community Learning Newsletter - May 2020
Focusing on Adult Learning in West Berkshire

Welcome to this special edition of Making Happen with information and tips on how providers can continue to deliver courses and support their learners during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Many of West Berkshire's community learning providers have taken up the challenge to develop new and innovative ways of delivering courses and supporting learners across the district. In this issue we share some of the tutor's experiences around producing on-line courses, developing material and resources and promoting new ways of learning.

It is also important for tutors and providers to keep in touch with their learners particularly those who are vulnerable with issues relating to mental health, social isolation and learning difficulties. This issue outlines some of the support, information and advice available across the district to help providers connect and engage with learners so that learning can continue when lockdown is lifted.

If you would like more information contact the community learning team on acsteam@westberks.gov.uk or telephone **01635 519060**.



National, Regional and Local Developments

The national government and West Berkshire Council have provided a range of measures to support the continuation of community learning and address the challenges of Covid-19.

- Adult Education Budget (AEB) 2019/20 allocations have been paid to providers covering both accredited and non-accredited courses.
- [A range of business support is available](#) including the Government Retention Scheme, Small Business Grants, Business Rates Holiday and Business Interruption Loan Scheme.
- Specialist educational professionals can [access Covid-19 testing](#).
- The Campaign for Learning (CfL) has produced a [government policy paper](#) that addresses the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the economy, labour market and post-16 education.
- The community learning team is working closely with local partners to identify local needs and priorities, share ideas and resources and explore funding opportunities.
- To enable providers to plan their 2020/21 programmes there will be two [Community Education Funding](#) rounds in May 2020 and September 2020.

Working for Community Learning

The community learning sector relies on the expertise and support of a number of people to ensure adult learning continues to be a government priority. The two key people who are working to develop the sector are:



Gillian Keegan, Apprenticeship and Skills Minister.

<https://feweek.co.uk/2020/03/05/profile-gillian-keegan/>



Dr Sue Pember, HOLEX

<https://holex.org.uk/the-national-office-and-team/>

Developing Distance Learning

Over the last few weeks many providers and training organisations have been sharing their experiences and knowledge on the wide range of on-line learning systems and apps that are currently available.

The community learning team has received feedback from Hoxex, a national representative of local authority adult education services, the Education and Training Foundation and JISC on some of the systems, platforms and tools currently being used across the sector.

1. [Zoom](#)
2. [Microsoft Teams](#)
3. [Google Classroom](#)
4. Future.now includes information and training on how to develop resources and access IT equipment via the [DevicesDotNow initiative](#).
5. The Department for Education has launched a new online learning platform, [The Skills Toolkit](#), that brings together existing on-line provision and includes for English and maths courses.
6. JISC supports the further education sector with [IT advice and support](#).
7. [Learn My Way](#) provides free courses to develop digital skills



Local Providers Move On-line



COMMUNITY
LEARNING

The College has successfully moved a number of courses on-line including languages and

the Keeping Active programme in adult care settings. Tutors have also contributed to the 'Newbury College At Home' initiative with tasters on a range of subjects via the [College's You Tube channel](#)



The Real Business Club

Making business happen

TRBC is delivering [a range of on-line courses](#) to support the self-employed to develop and grow their businesses. The courses cover sales and marketing, tax, finance and the legal aspects of setting up a company. There will also be the opportunity to access follow up 1-1 sessions and information on the range of government support that is available to small businesses.



The Berkshire School Of English

The BSE is continuing to deliver ESOL courses to learners via Google classroom and email. They have also developed [a range of on-line courses](#) that feature dedicated 1-1 tutor support.

From September 2020 the BSE will have their full portfolio of courses on-line covering both non-accredited and accredited provision.



Parenting Special Children has moved [all its services on-line](#) including the delivery of training such as the Time Out for ADHD course which is scheduled to start after the May half term.



Tanya Reid, Keeping Active tutor, has set up activities at Newbury College for residents in local care setting to complete. Learners will be invited to submit their work to be displayed in an on-line 'Lockdown Exhibition' that is being curated by Tanya and open to the local community.

Contact Sarah Hemming for more information.

S-hemmings@newbury-college.ac.uk



GRAFT is keeping in contact with some of their very vulnerable learners via telephone and email in addition to providing video conferencing activities and [support through the GRAFT website](#).

[PACT delivers courses and support](#) to families in danger of domestic abuse. Since the lockdown PACT has been working with specialist services to provide 1-1 weekly consultations over the phone. They are also sending out a weekly newsletter to targeted families offering support and advice and using Zoom to deliver play therapy sessions to young families.



[Recovery in Mind is supporting all past and current learners](#) via a weekly newsletter that consists of ideas, suggestions and activities to maintain good mental health during this challenging time. Tutors are also keeping communication channels open with learners via telephone and email.

CCB will be delivering webinars to support community volunteers and parish councils to [continue to deliver and develop community based services](#) and facilities.



It has been a national effort to move community learning classes on to on-line platforms. The following community learning services have been particularly successful in developing their provision:

[Kent Adult Learning](#)

[Newcastle City Learning](#)



We can help control the virus if we all **STAY ALERT**

-  Stay at home as much as possible
-  Keep your distance if you go out (2 metres apart where possible)
-  Work from home if you can
-  Wash your hands regularly
-  Limit contact with other people

 And if you or anyone in your household has symptoms, you all need to self-isolate.

STAY ALERT > CONTROL THE VIRUS > SAVE LIVES

Useful West Berkshire Contacts

Ian Pearson, Head of
Education Service, West
Berkshire Council
01635 519729
ipearson@westberks.gov.uk

Mark Browne, Post 16 Adviser,
West Berkshire Council
07766 367018
mbrowne@westberks.gov.uk

Alison Prudden, CL Principal
Officer, West Berkshire Council
01635 519025
aprudden@westberks.gov.uk

Sarah Hemmings ,
Community Learning Manager,
Newbury College
01635 845236 [s-hemmings@
newbury-college.ac.uk](mailto:s-hemmings@newbury-college.ac.uk)

West Berkshire
Public Health
[https://info.westberks.gov.uk/
publichealth](https://info.westberks.gov.uk/publichealth)

West Berkshire
Family Hubs
0118 986 3532
[www.westberks.gov.uk/
familyhubs](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/familyhubs)

Coronavirus (Covid-19)
Community Support Hub
[www.westberks.gov.uk/
coronavirus-communityhub](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/coronavirus-communityhub)

Tim Parry,
Chief Executive, CCB
0773 888 7611
tim.parry@cckberks.org.uk

Matt Garvey, West Berkshire
Training Consortium,
01635 35975
matt@wbtc-uk.com

Ruth Pearse CEO, Parenting
Special Children
[ruth@parentingspecialchildren.
co.uk](mailto:ruth@parentingspecialchildren.co.uk) 0118 986 3532

National Careers Service
0800 100 900

Keeping Mentally Well

Taking care of your mind as well as your body is really important while staying at home during the current lockdown.

If you are feeling anxious or concerned it is important to remember that it is normal to feel this way and, for most of us, these feelings will pass.

There is a wide range of support and advice available to help you stay positive and manage your mental health such as:

- Focus on the positive aspects of your life: Check the news a few times per day and try and limit what you read to reports from legitimate public health agencies.

- Be kind to each other; we are all in this together: Help others if you can, by supporting vulnerable people in your community.
- Create a new routine for yourself: Set a new time for a daily home workout, and pick a regular time to clean, read, watch a TV programme or film, or cook.
- Stay in social contact: By phone, messaging, video calls or social media.
- Look after mind and body – do one form of exercise a day such as a walk, run or bike ride or online class. Read, write, play games, do crosswords, complete sudoku puzzles, finish jigsaws, or try drawing and painting.

It's OK to Ask for Help



Mental Health helplines:

NHS - [Stress, anxiety, depression](#)

NHS - [Coronavirus](#)

[Public Health England](#)

Samaritans: call on 116 123 for urgent support

Contact Us:

Community Learning Team
West Berkshire Council, West Street House
West Street, Newbury
Berkshire. RG14 1BZ

Tel: 01635 519060.

e-mail: acsteam@westberks.gov.uk

We are committed to being accessible to everyone. If you require this document in an alternative format or translation, please call the Community Learning Team on Telephone 01635 519060.