

YOUR **HEALTH** matters

Check out new West Berkshire Directory

Free online guide has information, advice and support that's available across the district for adults, families and children

WEST Berkshire – a great place to live with great amenities. Do you know what's on offer for you and your family?

Are you a parent worried about your child and needing someone to talk to?

Or maybe you're caring for a friend or relative, feeling isolated and want to know what sort of support is available in your community.

The answers to all these questions, and more, are now available at the touch of a button in the newly-formed West Berkshire Directory, which brings together details of the Adult Social Care Information Point, the Family Information Service and SEND (special educational needs and/or disabilities).

The directory is free, online, and gives details of the wide range of the information, advice and support that's available across West Berkshire for adults, families and children.

It includes lists of useful phone numbers, email addresses and websites.

So, for adults, there's information about a range of



THIS column is brought to you on behalf of the West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board. The board is responsible for improving the health and wellbeing of our population across the district by developing improved and joined-up health and social care services

resources in your community that can help you remain independent or feel less isolated.

This includes information about leisure activities and local support groups which run events that could help you get out more and make new friends.

The other two sections of the directory contain details of the Family Information and the SEND service, which supports families with children and young people aged from 0-25.

These sections provide a wealth of information on childcare, Early Years funding, leisure activities, support services and much more including a phoneline offering free help and advice for parents, parents-to-be, carers and professionals.

You can email directory@westberks.gov.uk or phone (01635) 503100 for more help.

The directory has been redesigned by Mary Blackett from adult social care and Wendy Neighbour from the Family Information Service and the local officer.

Kamal Bahia, who chairs the Patient and Public Engagement Group for the West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board, has been working closely with her colleagues and is championing the launch of the directory.

Mrs Bahia said: "We know from talking to people, especially those caring for children or adults, that they often don't



Graham Bridgman

know where to go for help, or they are pushed from pillar to post when they start making phone calls.

"All this can be very frustrating and upsetting when you are sometimes at your wits end and need support.

"The directory is easy to use and gives people that important first point of contact in the health and social care system.

"There's a huge amount of advice and support out there along with so many organisations and community groups running events and activities in our area.

"I hope the directory gives people the first step towards accessing all this knowledge and all these networks."

Councillor Graham Bridgman, from West Berkshire Council, said: "The West Berkshire Directory is a free, online, one-stop shop that provides information, advice and support on a wide range of topics and services for adults, families and children across the district.

"The directory provides support for all of our residents who might need assistance, including those who sometimes don't know

West Berkshire Directory

The West Berkshire directory is a free, online one-stop shop providing information, advice and support on a wide range of services for adults, families and children in West Berkshire. You may need an assessment from one of West Berkshire Council's Children's or Adult Social Care teams to access some of the services.



The wide range of services for adults include where local groups or leisure activities are taking place, what help you can source to remain in your own home as well as care home information and supported living advice and much more.

Search the Family and SEND Local Offer sections of the site for a broad range of national and local information to give you and your family easy access to registered childcare, leisure activities, support and services in your area.

<https://directory.westberks.gov.uk>



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Fun activities for Carers Week

THE West Berkshire Directory has been launched to coincide with National Carers Week, which runs from June 10 to 16.

A number of events have been lined up across West Berkshire to treat carers to a well-earned break and to thank them for the great work they do day in and day out supporting a family member or friend in need of help.

They are:

■ Crossroads Care is hosting an indoor fete for carers and the cared-for on Monday, June 10, from 2pm to 4pm in Broadway House, 4-8 The Broadway, Newbury.



If you would like to attend call Crossroads Care call (01635) 30008 or email care@oxfordshire-crossroads.org.uk

■ Reading and West Berkshire Carers Hub will host three events – for carers only. Monday, June 10: Craft event – card making, 1pm to 3pm in Frank Hutchings Hall,

Thatcham.

Wednesday, June 12, A two-hour barge trip will set sail from Newbury Wharf towards Reading at 11am sharp.

Thursday, June 13: Greenham Common Control Tower, 10.30am, for a guided museum tour and sites from the tower followed by tea, sandwiches and cake.

Places must be booked for these three events by calling Reading and West Berkshire Carers Hub on (0118) 3247333 or email ask@berkshirecarershub.org

An information stand will be sited all week in Sainsbury's, Hectors Way, Newbury RG14 5AB.

Tell us what you think by emailing Kamal Bahia, chair of Patient and Public Engagement Group, West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board – ppe.chair@nhs.net