

# NEWS RELEASE



**WOKINGHAM  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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## **NEW CHARITY AND COMMUNITY HUB OPENS ITS DOORS**

The Wokingham Charity and Community Hub has been officially opened by the Mayor of Wokingham Borough. Cllr Keith Baker MBE cut the ribbon on the new centre on Friday (28 January), which is the new home for 10 charities and organisations.

He was given a tour of the almost 6,000 sq ft new facility in Wokingham town centre, which is at Waterford House and is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm. It's now open for drop-ins for the public to seek advice, help and support, while appointments can be booked by calling (0118) 228 0480 or emailing [reception@vcshub.co.uk](mailto:reception@vcshub.co.uk)

"It's a pleasure to have opened this fantastic facility which will undoubtedly help hundreds of people from our area in the years ahead," said Cllr Keith Baker MBE. "Our charities and voluntary organisations make a huge difference to our communities and our residents, having them all together under roof is a moment to celebrate. It was a joy to see the new hub and how it's already making a difference to our residents."

The charities now calling the hub home are:

- Involve (which is managing the hub)
- Cranstoun Wokingham
- Home Start Wokingham District
- Health Watch Wokingham Borough
- The Link Visiting Scheme
- Mind in Berkshire
- CLASP
- Promise Inclusion (Pinc)
- Wokingham Volunteer Centre
- Wokingham Foodbank (moving in over the next few weeks)

- Citizen's Advice Wokingham are already located at Waterford House on the second floor and are also part of the hub

Last year, the borough council agreed grants and contracts worth more than £2million with voluntary, and community sector (VCS) organisations to provide prevention services to adults.

This will help deliver on the council's [VCS Strategy 2020-2025 priorities](#), specifically to work in partnership and build the capacity of the VCS, whilst commissioning services in line with strategic priorities that deliver quality and value for money. The Wokingham Charity and Community Hub is a key service as outlined in the voluntary and community sector strategy, agreed in 2020.

Waterford House has been reconfigured to create suitable office, breakout and meeting room space for the voluntary, charity and community organisations moving into the building. This has included new carpets, ceilings and fittings and improved ventilation to some rooms in response to Covid-19 best practice.

This new hub builds on the positive partnership developed between the borough council and the voluntary and community sector during the Covid-19 pandemic. It brings several organisations under one roof and it will provide high-quality information, advice and support to enable people to access the right services to meet their individual needs and circumstances at the right time.

Cllr Charles Margetts, executive member for health, wellbeing and adult services, said: "Working alongside the voluntary sector in our borough is a clear priority for us, as we know it produces better outcomes for those who live in our area. This coordinated approach by the council with our voluntary community sector partners means those who need help can get it promptly from one place.

"Bringing these eleven brilliant organisations under one roof is built on partnership working over the last few years during the Covid-19 pandemic."

As well as contacting the Hub directly, you can also continue to contact the charities in the usual way too:

- **Cranstoun Wokingham** - An integrated domestic abuse service that supports victims and children and delivers programmes that tackle the root cause of perpetrator behaviour.

Telephone: (0118) 402 1921 / email: [dass@cranstoun.org.uk](mailto:dass@cranstoun.org.uk) / website:

<https://www.cranstoun.org/services/domestic-abuse/dass/>

- **Citizen's Advice Wokingham** – offers free, confidential, impartial and independent advice and information to anyone living or working in Wokingham borough. Telephone: 0808 278 7958 / email: [contact@cawokingham.org.uk](mailto:contact@cawokingham.org.uk) / website: <https://citizensadvicewokingham.org.uk/>
- **Home Start Wokingham District** – a local community network of trained volunteers and expert support helping families with young children through their challenging times. Telephone: (0118) 98 88025 / email: [admin@home-Startwd.org.uk](mailto:admin@home-Startwd.org.uk) / website: [www.home-startwd.org.uk](http://www.home-startwd.org.uk)
- **Healthwatch Wokingham Borough** – is the independent champion for people who use health and social care services. Telephone: (0118) 418 1418 / email: [enquiries@healthwatchwokingham.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchwokingham.co.uk) / website: [www.healthwatchwokingham.co.uk/](http://www.healthwatchwokingham.co.uk/)
- **Involve** - helps to support other charities and community groups throughout Bracknell Forest, Wokingham Borough and the surrounding areas. Telephone (01344) 304404 / email: [reception@involve.community](mailto:reception@involve.community) / website: <https://involve.community/contact-us/>
- **The Link Visiting Scheme** - a charity dedicated to reducing loneliness in Wokingham Borough. Telephone: (0118) 979 8019 / email: [admin@linkvisiting.org](mailto:admin@linkvisiting.org) / website: [www.linkvisiting.org/](http://www.linkvisiting.org/)
- **Mind in Berkshire** – the Wokingham Wellbeing Service helps borough residents suffering from mental health issues, including anxiety, isolation and stress. It is available through all Wokingham Borough GP practices. To seek support speak to your GP practice and ask for a referral to the service, alternatively residents can fill out a self-referral form online. Email: [wokinghamwellbeing@oxfordshiremind.org.uk](mailto:wokinghamwellbeing@oxfordshiremind.org.uk) / website: <https://services.thejoyapp.com/en/listings/489>
- **CLASP** – a self-advocacy group for people with learning disabilities in the Wokingham Borough. Telephone: (0118) 979 6364 / email: [admin@claspwokingham.org.uk](mailto:admin@claspwokingham.org.uk) / website: [www.wokinghamclasp.org.uk](http://www.wokinghamclasp.org.uk)
- **Promise Inclusion (Pinc)** - Supporting people with learning disabilities and/or autism, their carers and families. Telephone: 0300 777 8539 / email: [admin@promiseinclusion.org](mailto:admin@promiseinclusion.org) / website: <https://promiseinclusion.org>
- **Wokingham Foodbank** – an organisation that exists to provide help to those in need in Wokingham including the supply of food (all food parcels require a referral) and, where appropriate, help with heating and lighting. Members of the public will be able to collect food parcels from the Wokingham Charity and Community Hub from Monday 7 February. Telephone: 07926 524605 / email: [info@wokingham.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:info@wokingham.foodbank.org.uk) / website: <https://wokingham.foodbank.org.uk/>
- **Wokingham Volunteer Centre** - Offers a free volunteer recruitment and matching service across the Wokingham Borough area. It also runs an employer supported volunteering scheme to get local companies and businesses based within Wokingham Borough involved in volunteering as

well as the community schemes Green 'n' Tidy scheme and Wokingham Transport Scheme.

Telephone: (0118) 977 0749 / email: [volunteer@wok-vol.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@wok-vol.org.uk) website:

<https://wokinghamvolunteercentre.org.uk/>

- ENDS -

**Further information:**

1. More from Cllr Charles Margetts, executive member for health, wellbeing and adult services, on [charles.margetts@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:charles.margetts@wokingham.gov.uk)
2. More from the Mayor of Wokingham Borough, Cllr Keith Baker MBE, via [mayoralsupport@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:mayoralsupport@wokingham.gov.uk)
3. Alternatively, contact the communications, engagement and marketing team via [CEM@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:CEM@wokingham.gov.uk)