

## MAGPIES COMMUNITY HUB

The Magpies Community Hub supports people living in Maidenhead and the surrounding areas who need support with day to day tasks such as shopping, collecting prescriptions or dog walking whilst self-isolating.

The hub has been set up specifically as a result of the Pandemic through the charitable arm of Maidenhead Football Club and is run by the Maidenhead United Community Trust.

When the league finished its season prematurely it recognised the issues that the Pandemic would bring with it and wanted to support residents. To ensure that volunteers would need to be kept safe and work remotely one of their strategic partners Equity Networks suggested a virtual telephone app allowing volunteers to operate a helpdesk from the safety of their own homes.

Within a very short time there were 16 helpdesk volunteers running a helpline between 9am and 5pm, seven days a week on three telephone lines. Over 90 volunteers work in the community delivering shopping, prescriptions and dog walking to residents in Maidenhead, Windsor and the surrounding area. All volunteers are security checked.

Volunteers range from sporting colleagues to those who responded to advertisements in the local papers and on social media platforms. Where possible volunteers have been linked to people close to where they live, this has built friendships and the ability for residents to contact volunteers directly where this has been agreed.

Magpies have had nearly 200 calls come through the hotline since it launched at the end of March and has approx. 35 residents who are receiving ongoing support through a volunteer that has been linked with them.

The Hub has linked in to other local groups such as the Maidenhead Mosque for food parcels, the Maidenhead Gossip Girls to support residents with additional needs and Cookham SOS out of Elizabeth Day Centre.

A daughter (living in Brighton with young children) whose father is supported by the Magpies said ***“You did a wonderful job of it - I could hear how uplifted he was on the phone.”***

A Community Volunteer has said ***“I believe that in these moments of difficulty it is a duty for all of us to be able to be of assistance to the most vulnerable in our community.”***

***Their words of thanks, their moved looks when we deliver them their medicines or food are the greatest gift.”***

Another Community Volunteer said ***“The people are lovely and so grateful it’s both humbling and embarrassing. I don’t have any other skills to help in this crisis and it is such a small way to help. I can see myself keeping in touch with D\*\* afterwards and having a cup of tea or more likely a G&T”***

The hub are hoping that there will be many new friendships that will continue post the pandemic.