

SHARED LIVES News

December 2024

Inside this issue:

Greetings	1
Health and safety	2
Christmas health and safety	3
Dates for the diary	4
Equality and diversity	5
Cost of living	6
IT support	7
Casper's corner	8
Feed back and contacts	9

Dear All,

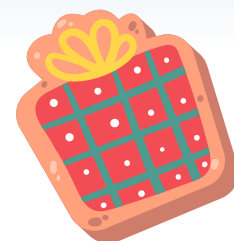
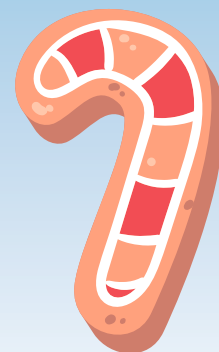
WOW, where has this year gone?

As we are already well into the Christmas period, we wanted to remind you to stay prepared and keep yourselves safe.

Please beware that over the Christmas period due to bank holidays Carers maybe asked to submit time sheets slightly differently . Max will keep you updated with any changes nearer the time

We are looking forward to seeing you all at the Christmas get together. On the 2nd of December.




The Shared Lives Team.



West Berkshire
COUNCIL

What U.K. weather warning colors mean

The Met Office provides severe or hazardous weather warnings to the public and emergency services through its National Severe Weather Warning Service. Warnings are issued for rain, snow, wind, fog and ice.

-  Severe weather is expected in the coming days and may impact travel or day-to-day activities. Keep an eye on the latest forecast and note that conditions may change or worsen.
-  Poor weather conditions are more likely to cause travel delays, road closures, power disruption and potential risk to life and property. Be prepared to change your plans.
-  Prepare to take action to protect yourself and others from extreme weather. Widespread damage, travel and power disruptions as well as risk to life are likely. Avoid dangerous areas and heed advice from emergency services and local authorities.

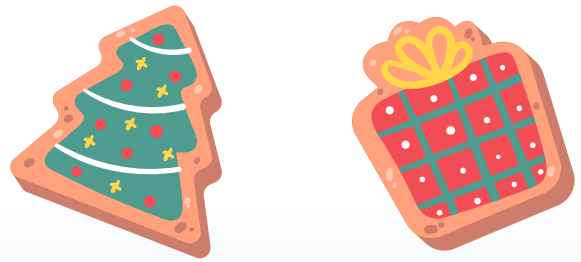
Source: The Met Office



Are you ready for the weather?

Thinking ahead and for what the weather may bring can make a real difference

[WeatherReady - Met Office](#)



Journeys

Getting your vehicle into tip-top shape is the best way to guarantee your journeys go according to plan whether you are heading to the coast, countryside, city or somewhere outside the UK.

Could your property be at risk of flooding?

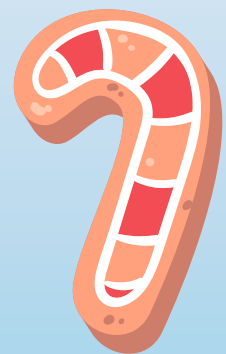
1. Check if your **property is at risk.**
2. If you are at risk, take the next two steps to protect your property when you need to:

- Prepare a flood plan
- Prepare an emergency flood kit

999	Emergency (UK)	
112	Emergency (EU-wide)	
111	NHS (non-emergency)	
101	Police (non-emergency)	
123	Speaking clock	
105	National power cut service	

TOP 10 'ELF & SAFETY TIPS THIS CHRISTMAS

1. Check to see if the lights you buy conform to the British Safety Standards
2. Check that you use your lights appropriately, taking note of the indoor/ outdoor use
3. Turn lights off on an evening/ when not supervised
4. Ensure any wires/ cables are secure and not a fire/ trip hazard
5. Don't overload sockets
6. Keep candles away from tree/ other flammable materials
7. Place the tree away from any heat sources
8. Regularly check decorations for breakages/ damages
9. Make sure visitors are aware of emergency exit routes
10. Test smoke alarms weekly.





Dates for the diary

Next Carer Meeting - 6th Jan 2025 at 6.30pm

Open door day in person and teams - Monday 24th Feb 2025

Next Service User Meeting - Date to be confirmed for the new year.



SHARED LIVES CHRISTMAS QUIZ EVENT

Monday 2nd December at 6:30pm

Carers & Service Users can attend either on Teams or in person at the Shared Lives offices in the Phoenix Resource Centre.



Mince pies and bingo will be available for those attending in person



Equality and diversity



December Diversity Calendar 2024

December marks the end of the year and an assortment of powerful annual observances and Diversity Equality and Inclusion holidays 2024 to help round out the year.

December 1 – World AIDS Day

This annual day raises awareness about HIV/AIDS and the journey to finding its cure.

December 10 – International Humans Rights Day

Celebrate the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the UN in 1948.

December 26 to January 2 – Hanukkah

This Jewish festival celebrates the Jewish people's uprising against the Greeks and Syrians attempting to take Jerusalem.

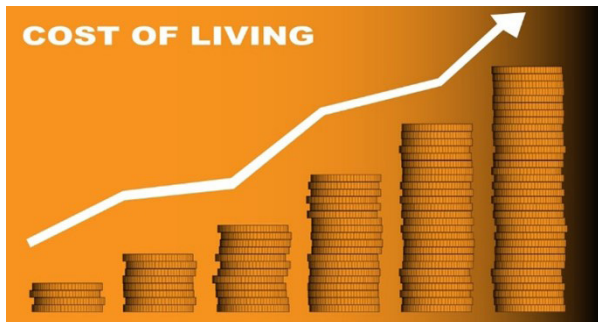
December 22 – Winter Solstice/Yule

Celebrated by both Pagan and Wiccan faiths, this holiday celebrates the newborn solstice sun.

December 25 – Christmas

This Christian holiday marks the birth of Jesus Christ.

Cost of Living



<https://nationaldebtline.org>

Where to go for more help:

Citizens Advice- national charity offering confidential advice

Help for households- site explaining what government help is available

Trussell Trust- charity offering emergency food support

Entitled To- calculator showing what benefits you could qualify for

Which?- cost of living advice for consumers

Reducing your regular outgoings

Short-term steps

You may be able to take short-term steps to help balance your budget quickly. Steps you may be able to take include stopping spending on items like clothing, socialising, meals at work, house maintenance, gifts, pocket money, hairdressing and opticians and dental costs. However, in the long-term, you will need to add this kind of spending back into your budget.

Long-term steps

You may be able to reduce your spending on some fixed costs. This could reduce your spending now and in the long term.

If you pay your council tax over 10 months, you may be able to pay over 12 months instead. This will reduce the amount you pay every month, but you will not get a payment break in February and March. Contact your council to ask about this.

If you're struggling with money, there are steps you can take to save on your regular outgoings.

You might be able to save money by:

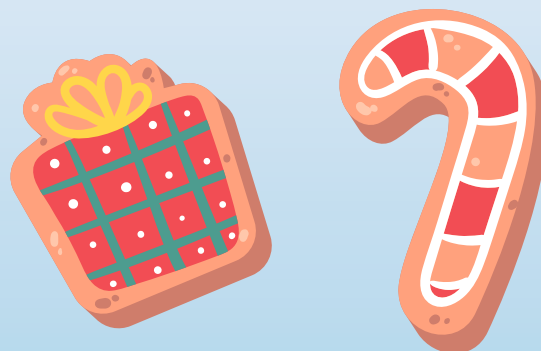
getting a discount on your council tax

getting a water meter fitted

switching to a cheaper broadband, TV, or phone deal

getting cheaper travel

paying for your prescriptions in advance





Uncertain how to use our library computers to search for what you want?

Need some assistance to use your own laptop, tablet or other mobile device?

Whether you need to complete an online form, sort out your digital photographs, read an e-magazine or learn how to Zoom with friends and family, we can help.

We provide **FREE**, individual help in friendly 30 or 60 minute sessions.

Please book in advance: 01635 519900 or email rav.gopal@westberks.gov.uk

www.westberks.gov.uk/libraries





Julie and John have been carers with West Berkshire Shared Lives for nearly 2 years.

Julie and John live in the countryside near Newbury and have many animals including ponies, goats, sheep and a dog.



When it's cold for us, it's cold for our pets, which is why it's important to take extra precautions to keep them safe and warm.

During the coldest months, dogs and cats need easy access to shelter and a cosy den, and while dogs will still need exercise, owners should take precautions to protect them from the cold.

Rabbits and guinea pigs are also vulnerable to hypothermia despite their warm coats, so owners should take steps to ensure any outdoor hutches are well protected.

If you have any concerns about your pet in this cold weather, please consult your local vet for advice.

For more tips and advice on taking care of your pets during severe weather. Visit the [**British Veterinary Association's website.**](#)

WBC Shared Lives feedback



Please scan
the QR code
below and leave
your feedback



WestBerkshire
COUNCIL

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