

Rotary District 1100 Council Meeting

21st April 2020

City of Hereford Club Covid-19 Report

The Club has put a range of actions in place to support the local community during the pandemic. The following is a brief summary of the current work in progress:

1 Rotary Covid-19 Facebook Page

The Club set this up prior to the lockdown to provide a communication portal for local groups with national and local information – [Hereford Rotary COVID-19 Volunteers](#)

To date there are 7,500 members from all over the globe.

2 Vulnerable People Contact Cards

The Club was concerned that well meaning people were making contact with vulnerable people, without any safeguards in place. The Club devised a simple form to be used for local neighbours and includes some 'rules'. 10,000 were printed free by a local printer.

3 Rotary Covid-19 Fund

The Club set up a PayPal account with the aim of supporting small local charities and community groups who are supporting people during the pandemic. This was as a result of discussion with [Herefordshire Voluntary Organisations Support Service](#), who are promoting the fund. Their CEO is included in all discussions relating to the fund and is informing the grant decision making process.

The balance of the fund is around £7,500. To date £1,600 has been donated.

4 Emergency Goods Parcel Scheme

Initially the Club approached the Food Bank to ask if they would like us to develop a delivery service during the pandemic. This was declined, it was prior to the full extent of the impact in the UK was fully recognised. The Club was then approached by a Local Councillor who asked if we would develop Food Bank Plus to support people impacted by the pandemic. Following discussion with the local Food Bank it was decided not to pursue this.

We were then keen to take on a big project during the pandemic and decided to support families. Our Club has a vast range of skills and is firmly embedded in the local community. After some debate we decided to work with schools.

The upshot is that we have devised a scheme where we are able to deliver food parcels to families in need. Over the past 10 days we have delivered 220 parcels.

The parcels are based on the Food Bank weekly parcel for a family of 4. If families have more than 2 children, we give them 2 parcels.

We are sourcing the food from wholesalers and not local outlets. This is much easier as the food is ordered, collected in vans by volunteers and transferred to a temporary warehouse, we have been loaned. This also means we have been able to negotiate discounts and are not affecting local outlets.

We have linked with the Education Department at Herefordshire Council, who have given us the schools contact details and the number of children having free school meals. This has been essential for financial and operational planning.

We contact the schools and explain the scheme. The schools identify the families in need, these are not necessarily in receipt of free school meals. They have a choice how this is implemented and to date – 1 school only needed 25 parcels, which they agreed to deliver, 2 schools said they would email parents and ask the parents to contact us (we set up a separate inbox for this, with limited access) and 2 schools agreed to contact parents and sent us a collated list of name, addresses and telephone numbers.

To comply with GDPR, the family's details are sent to a Rotarian who is also a current teacher. She then collates the addresses for our volunteer drivers. All volunteers in the scheme are registered as Rotary Covid-19 Volunteers, including the organisers. All are either Rotarians, Rotarian family members or linked to 3 main businesses we are working with so that they have all been referenced etc.

We have a volunteer policy and very clear criteria for working. This has been shared with West Mercia Police who are informed on the areas and days we are delivering. All volunteers wear ID badges, whenever they are involved with the scheme.

Funding for the scheme is from local businesses, local Council and large local charities. So far, we have raised £19,930 which will enable us to give 1 food parcel to each family in the City and surrounding schools. Now we have seen the need, we would like to continue with the scheme – but this will depend on funding.

Bobby Morris
Chair Community and Vocational Service

[Hereford City Rotary Club](#)

19th April 2020