



Telford and Wrekin launch Kindle Kindness project to help people in care homes stay connected

Andrew Woodall, Library Service and Digital Inclusion Manager for Telford and Wrekin, and his team have been recognised for the work they are doing to deliver much needed digital support to ensure people in care homes and a hospital stay connected as part of West Midlands Employers (WME) #EverydayHeroes campaign.*

The work Andrew and his team are doing is particularly timely as next week marks the fourth annual [Loneliness Awareness Week](#) (15th-19th June 2020), a campaign that promotes conversations and discussions on the topic of loneliness.

Telford & Wrekin created a [community fundraising page for a Kindle Kindness Project](#), which was set up to buy 200 Kindle Fires for the Women's and Children's Centre at the Princes Royal Hospital and care homes across the borough in a bid to reduce isolation and improve wellbeing. So far the team have raised over £22,000.

The initiative came about after the Leader of the Council was approached by the hospital about supporting the Women's and Children's Unit there. The idea was simple; provide a Kindle Fire with the council's library app providing free access to books, magazines and newspapers and help people stay in touch with family and friends online using video calls.

Andrew has been out delivering the Kindles with his colleagues. He and his fiancé, who Andrew roped into help, have been installing the library app and Skype on each Kindle Fire. They all come with clear instructions to help people get started, along with a helpline number too.

The hospital explained how some of their patients are benefitting from the project: "On Behalf of the Women and Children's Care Group (at the hospital) I would like to send our sincerest thanks. The children on the wards are delighted and having hours of pleasure playing the games and reading the books."

Rebecca Davis, Chief Executive of West Midlands Employers says, “It has been fantastic to hear how the Andrew and his team continue to deliver much-needed information and support to people in care homes and the hospital, this will have made a big impact on those individuals during lockdown. The Kindle Kindness project is a fantastic example of how we can help combat loneliness and support the wellbeing of those in care.”

Councillor Paul Watling, Cabinet Member for Cooperative Communities, Engagement and Partnerships, said: “So many people are struggling with loneliness and isolation at the moment and this is a fantastic opportunity to show them that we care.

“Our #KindleKindness campaign aims to get as many people who are vulnerable and isolated in touch again. We know times are tough for everyone, but every donation, no matter how big or small will be greatly appreciated and will go towards helping those most in need.

“Many in residential care homes have not been able to have visitors since the outbreak and are going without much needed interaction from loved ones. Visiting restrictions in hospitals also mean that women and children are going long periods without being able to keep in touch with their friends and families.

“We wanted to help them by giving them the chance to pass the time with something to read, puzzles, a quiz, a newspaper or the chance to stay in touch.”

*Local authority improvement body WME, owned by [33 councils](#) across the West Midlands, launched the campaign this month to recognise #EverydayHeroes – council workers who are working around the clock to keep essential services running and keep us safe through the coronavirus crisis.

Anyone can nominate one or more local council heroes [here](#). West Midlands Employers will review nominations in partnership with the relevant council and we will share their stories via <https://wmheroes.co.uk/meet-your-heroes/>.

Ends

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Notes to editors – About West Midlands Employers

West Midland Employers (WME) is one of 9 independent regional employer organisations nationally.

WME is a not for profit membership organisation owned by the 33 West Midlands local authorities. We are led by an Elected Member Management Board representing the membership body with a Chief Executive leading the organisation. Chief Executive Rebecca Davis is available through media interviews through the contact details above.

WME's vision is **“to advocate, build and champion people centred organisations for a resilient and diverse public sector workforce that benefits everyone in the West Midlands”**. WME launched their new Strategic Plan 2020 -25 earlier this year <https://bit.ly/3aYsvHF> <http://www.wmemployers.org.uk/ourwork>

WME is playing a pivotal role in the Local Government response to the Covid-19 crisis and is providing daily support through their Covid-19 site (<https://wme covid19.org.uk/>), including provision of advice, innovative webinars, recruitment and resourcing and weekly bulletins [Pulse Extra bulletin](#)

WME also work in partnership with public and private sector organisations to design and deliver services on behalf of the 33 Councils in the Region, which span the employee lifecycle including: candidate attraction, recruitment, talent management, training and development, executive coaching and mentoring, leadership development, organisational design and restructuring, job evaluation, investigations, mediation and exit plans.