# Community Reassurance Teams

## What are the CRTs?

Shropshire Council has set up temporary area-based Community Reassurance Teams (CRT) only for responding to COV19 during this crisis, they will provide support to the new and existing community groups set up in response to COVID-19, Town and Parish Councils and other organisations.

The CRT are there to ensure that the Council has information about what is happening, so we can advise residents who are getting in touch with us, and to ensure that the information and guidance we need to share gets to the right people. The role of the CRT is to understand the new solutions from within the community, identify them as being appropriate to solving a particular challenge and supporting the solution to be put in place. We will also identify gaps in provision and be there as emergency backup if needed. The Teams want to work with communities to complement and enhance the amazing work already happening to ensure that everyone gets the help and support that they need to stay at home and stay well and healthy.

The Community Reassurance Teams are a local point of contact for groups, local Councils and Shropshire Council Members, and will be able to help with calls for support from them that are coming forward, as well as ensuring the delivery of the things we are being asked to do by central government. This will include promotion of and assistance with the small grants programme for local groups.

It is important that all enquiries to the CRT are logged with the Covid-19 Helpline on 0345 6789028. There is also a dedicated email address; communityreassurance@shropshire.gov.uk. Members will be pivotal in supporting the CRT, in terms of local advice, contacts and utilising their established local communication channels to disseminate and supply information accordingly. Hence how the area CRT teams works locally will reflect this rather than a one size fits all model.

## Who is involved?

CRTs are made up of Shropshire Council staff, who have put themselves forward to be redeployed in full or partially to help with this work. They come from all different parts of the Council and have many different skills and expertise. When the COV19 work has ceased, staff will return to their roles across the council and the CRT`s formal role will end.

**CRT Management**-. This work comes under the Vulnerable People and Communities Working Group for the Covid-19 response, led by Penny Bason. Clare Featherstone, Culture and Heritage Manager is leading the inception, development and management of these teams, working with Michael Lewis, Libraries Manager

The county has been split into five areas:

* **North West** (Oswestry, Ellesmere, Wem and surrounds)
* **North Eas**t (Market Drayton, Whitchurch, and surrounds)
* **Central**- (Shrewsbury, Pontesbury, Minsterley, Atcham, Cressage and surrounds)
* **South West** (Ludlow, Bishop’s Castle, Clun, Craven Arms, Church Stretton, Cleobury Mortimer and surrounds)
* **South East**- (Bridgnorth, Highley, Broseley, Much Wenlock, Shifnal, Albrighton and surrounds)

In each of the five geographical areas there will be the following staff:

* **Community Reassurance Team Leader**- This role is to lead on the co-ordination of CRT staff and activity in their designated area and to be the liaison between the CRT and other Council teams, and key agencies. They will make sure they have the latest Government and local guidance to pass on to community groups.
* **Community Reassurance Team Co-ordinators**- each of the five areas will be split into key market towns and surrounding areas. The Co-ordinators are staff who have local knowledge and will lead on mapping the current activity of voluntary groups and businesses in these areas and identifying gaps in provision.
* **CRT Member Support**- The Place Plan Officers will be helping each of the teams by being the key contact for Shropshire Council Members and Town and Parish Councils. They will liaise with SALC who will communicate with Town and Parish Councils, providing consistent messages. SALC will ask Town and Parish Councils to email communityreassurance@shropshire.gov.uk with information about any groups / help that are in their parish to be included in the list of information of groups / mapping by the team co coordinators.
* **CRT Social Care links**- in each area, a member of staff from the local Adult Social Care and Children’s Services teams will be aligned to the CRT to ensure team are working together and there is limited duplication of efforts. Where possible, the CRT will work to reduce pressure on these teams, so they can deal with people in most need. The CRT will also be helping those discharged from hospital have access to community support. Michael Lewis is taking the lead with this.
* **CRT Officers**- These members of staff will be contacting local voluntary groups, voluntary organisations, businesses, Pharmacies and others who are offering support to the community and contacting vulnerable people in areas where there is no support currently. Each Officer will be allocated a smaller local area, with which they are familiar.

Most of this work is envisaged to be home based but there may be occasions where team members need to do emergency food or medicine deliveries where there is an urgent need and/ or no community support.

Practical support has been offered by:

* Outdoor Partnerships Countryside Maintenance Team led by Richard Knight
* Shrewsbury Town Council’s Grounds Maintenance Team, led by Matt Willcoxon

## How will organisations and individuals in the community be contacted?

Those working in the community will be contacted by CRT:

* Shropshire Council Members and Town and Parish Councils will be contacted by the Place Plan Officers and/or SALC
* The VCSA and countywide voluntary organisations will be contacted by Kate Garner to establish how best to work with them across the county
* Local community groups and businesses will be contacted by Co-ordinators and Officers

## Liaison with other Council Departments

The CRTs have a specific role in the Vulnerable People and Communities Working Group for the Covid-19 response, CRT will be working with:

* **Customer Services**- calls from the public will be received by Shropshire Council’s Customer Service Centre in the first instance. They will be dealt with there or transferred to the relevant Council team, including the CRT where appropriate.
* **Public Health**- to ensure the most up to date advice and guidance is available to the community and to answer specific health related queries
* **Emergency Food**- a new team has been developed to lead on the provision of food for those in need, working closely with the local Food Banks. This team will help identify wholesalers who can provide bulk deliveries locally and match these deliveries to those in need.
* **Community Grants**- £75k is being made available from Shropshire Council to support community groups responding to the crisis. Groups will be able to apply for up to £500 each to support their work. The programme is being developed by Neil Evans and an application process will be available shortly. The CRT will help promote this scheme and assist groups with applications.
* **Registrars and Bereavement**- Any issues related to the registration of births or deaths will be referred to the Registrars and Bereavement Services.
* **Social Care-** If there are any issues raised with the CRT staff that need specialist social care support, these will be referred through the Adult Social Care and Children’s Services teams.
* **Homelessness and Welfare**- Any issues picked up by CRT regarding homelessness and welfare will also be referred directly to the specialist teams.
* **Passenger Transport**- to provide vehicles and drivers for urgent journeys or food and medicine deliveries, working closely with Community Transport groups. Transport solutions are being agreed for each of the areas.
* **Economic Growth**- Colleagues in the Economic Growth Team are leading on business support and any requests for this will be signposted to them.
* **Education**- CRT will forward any issues regarding schools and colleges to relevant staff in the Education Teams.
* **Insights and Intelligence**- Information about those in need is being collated by colleagues in the Insights and Intelligence Team

There will also be other relevant referrals to all Council services including Waste, Trading Standards etc.

## Information Gathering

Information about local community offers, support from the voluntary sector and local businesses offers is being collated at a single point to ensure this information is readily available to all Council departments.

## Communication

Communications will be led Shropshire Council’s Communication Team, through Adam Spreckley and Maria Jones. Kate Bentham will be leading on Comms for Children’s and Young People.

## Contact Details

Team Leaders for the areas are:

* Teresa Eccleston- North West (Oswestry, Ellesmere, Wem and surrounds)
* Hannah Thomas: North East (Market Drayton, Whitchurch, and surrounds)
* Sean McCarthy- Central- (Shrewsbury, Pontesbury, Minsterley, Atcham, Cressage and surrounds)
* Cath Landles/ Pete Banford- South West (Ludlow, Bishop’s Castle, Clun, Craven Arms, Church Stretton, Cleobury Mortimer and surrounds)
* Lisa Jones- South East- (Bridgnorth, Highley, Broseley, Much Wenlock, Shifnal, Albrighton and surrounds)

CRT Member Support; Place Plan Officers are:

* Julie Ruler- Oswestry, Wem and Ellesmere Place Plan areas
* Tracy Johnson- Bridgnorth, Highley, Broseley and Much Wenlock
* Vicky Turner- Cleobury Mortimer, Craven Arms, Church Stretton, Ludlow
* Mathew Mead- Bishop’s Castle, Pontesbury and Minsterley and Shrewsbury
* Andrea McWiliams- Shifnal and Albrighton
* Lucy Roberts- Market Drayton and Whitchurch (part-time)

Appendix 1 shows the contact details for key staff in each of the five areas.

## Timescales

The CRTs are functioning now but more work will be needed over the coming weeks to strengthen these teams and make sure they have the right information and training. New staff members will be added.

## How is this working?

Examples of how the CRT are already helping:

* One of our social workers is supporting an elderly couple who are living with dementia and mental health issues, which results in them only trusting and being supported by a couple of people. The impact of COVID-19 on this couple’s life has been significant, especially as one of them has recently fallen and sustained a fracture resulting in them not being able to go shopping or to drive. Members of the Community Reassurance Team have worked with the social worker to come up with solutions for their shopping to be done and delivered to them, and for transport to be arranged for an upcoming hospital appointment.

Qube in Oswestry's Dial-a-Ride is no longer running as all the drivers have had to self-isolate. CRT worked with our Passenger Transport team to connect Qube with Lakeland Travel who are able to support, including for medical/hospital appointments, under their existing Council contract.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Appendix 1- Community Reassurance Team Leaders and Member support** |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Name** | **SC position** | **CRT role** | **Email** | **Phone no** |
| Clare Featherstone | Culture and Heritage Manager | Management | clare.feathestone@Shropshire.gov.uk | 01743 255067/ 07811 904264 |
| Michael Lewis | Library Service Manager | Management | michael.lewis@shropshire.gov.uk | 01743 255023/ 07458 120752 |
| **Central Team** |  |  |  |  |
| Sean McCarthy | Leisure Services Project Officer | Leader | sean.mccarthy@shropshire.gov.uk  | 01743 255933/ 07990 085557 |
| Mat Mead | Place Plan Officer | Member support | mathew.mead@shropshire.gov.uk  | 01743 252534 |
| Barry Tench | Operations Manager, Theatre Severn | Co-ordinator | barry.tench@shropshire.gov.uk  | 01743 256501 |
| Katherine Berry | Shrewsbury Library | Co-ordinator | katherine.berry@shropshire.gov.uk  | 01743 255395 |
| **North East Team** |  |  |  |  |
| Hannah Thomas | Specialist Advisor, Public Health | Leader | hannah.thomas@shropshire.gov.uk  | 01743 254235 |
| Lucy Roberts | Place Plan Officer | Member support | lucy.roberts@shropshire.gov.uk  | 01743 252328 |
| Alastair Pack   | Market Drayton Library | Co-ordinator | Alastair.Pack@shropshire.gov.uk  | 01743 255392 |
| **North West Team** |  |  |  |  |
| Teresa Eccleston | Library Manager | Leader | teresa.eccleston@shropshire.gov.uk  | 01743 250431 |
| Julie Ruler | Place Plan Officer | Member support | Julie.Ruler@shropshire.gov.uk  | 01743 251691 |
| Hazel Price | Whitchuch Library | Co-ordinator | hazel.price@shropshire.gov.uk  | 01743 255393 |
| Siobhan Shaw | Oswestry Library | Co-ordinator | Siobhan.Shaw@Shropshire.gov.uk  | 01743 255394 |
| **South East Team** |  |  |  |  |
| Lisa Jones | Let’s Talk Local Coordinator Lead | Leader | Lisa.K.Jones@shropshire.gov.uk  | 01743 255734 |
| Tracy Johnson | Place Plan Officer | Member support | tracy.johnson@shropshire.gov.uk  | 01743 254683 |
| Andrea McWiliams | Place Plan Officer | Member support | andrea.mcwilliams@shropshire.gov.uk  | 01743 254682 |
| Ed Andrews | Country Parks and Sites Manager (South) | Co-ordinator | edward.andrews@shropshire.gov.uk  | 07990 085352 |
| Emma Spenser | Bridgnorth Library | Co-ordinator | emma.spenser@shropshire.gov.uk  | 01743 255391 |
| **South West Team** |  |  |  |  |
| Cath Landles | Community Officer, SHAONB | Leader | cath.landles@shropshire.gov.uk  | 01743 254742 |
| Pete Banford | Outdoor Partnerships Manager | Leader | pete.banford@shropshire.gov.uk  | 01743 254796 |
| Vicky Turner | Place Plan Officer | Member support | vicky.turner@shropshire.gov.uk  | 01743 254684 |
| Mat Mead | Place Plan Officer | Member support | mathew.mead@shropshire.gov.uk  | 01743 252534 |
| Iran Morris | Ludlow Library | Co-ordinator | iran.morris@shropshire.gov.uk  | 01743 250519 |
| Richard Williams | Project coordinator - Assets and Estate Team  | Co-ordinator | Richard.Williams@shropshire.gov.uk  | 01743 251729 |