

Appendix 7: South Derbyshire CVS Overview Report 2021-22

How COVID impacted on our activities

Group work

- Many groups had to close during the pandemic
- Learning new ways of keeping in touch with their members e.g., zoom and teams
- Their members started to become isolated and lonely, losing confidence and not wanting to leave the house at all
- Less money coming in as charities, couldn't organise any fundraising events
- Development of the COVID Connectors Network funded by Public Health. Throughout the pandemic a fortnightly e-bulletin was sent out to the COVID Connectors to share within their local communities

Volunteer Force

- Mass recruitment end of 2020 going into 2021/22 with the Vaccine Centres enabled this service to be run efficiently, professionally giving the NHS more opportunities to offer jobs to the most vulnerable communities within South Derbyshire. There was a high demand for volunteers to help with the vaccine clinics
- More people offered to volunteer to keep groups operating otherwise they would have closed down e.g., Newhall Scouts
- Impact of volunteering – reduced social isolation/loneliness, improved people's health and wellbeing, boosted confidence and gave people a sense of purpose
- Volunteers became exhausted and traumatised in supporting the NHS throughout the crisis and now don't want to volunteer anymore
- Many volunteers themselves were suffering with depression and mental health issues

Food Bank

- Higher demand on our service and food parcels
- A decrease of donations towards the end of 2021
- Challenges faced by the staff, keeping the service operating during the pandemic but also keeping themselves safe from the virus
- Loss of clients (15-20 people) who passed away which had an effect on the staff and volunteers as relationships had formed
- Had to reduce the number of volunteers due to covid as some were too vulnerable to continue volunteering

Shopmobility

Wheelchairs were loaned to vaccination centres to enable people with disabilities to access their vaccines

Active Travel and Social Car Schemes

Due to the pandemic these services were suspended in March 2020. When it was safe to do so we began supporting people again to get to health appointments. This has continued and we are now offering more support for more journeys.

Safer Homes South Derbyshire

After the initial wave of the pandemic this service delivery continued as normal with staff wearing PPE and taking extra hygiene precautions

Handy Person Help At Home

Funding from the Better Care Fund enabled this pilot project to start in July 21 and is proving to be a great success supporting people to stay independent in their own homes through provision of key safes, grab rails and minor repairs

Connect Befriending Service

Throughout the pandemic, befriending support was provided predominantly by telephone. During the last year we have started to provide some face-to-face visits and this will continue

Home From Hospital

This service has continued to support those at risk of hospital admission or recently discharged. We support people with shopping, signposting to other services supporting them for a 6-week period

Learning & Development

Face to face delivery stopped. Due to the nature of our learners, we were unable to offer on-line training. We have maintained and made sure that our AIM Accredited Centre has been up to date, and we have been able to register and assess courses that have been delivered by our external partners

IsLand (Isolation & Loneliness Action Networks Derbyshire)

- The project had been essentially mothballed during 2020/21 and funding repurposed to support the community effort against Covid
- In April 2021 we were faced with restarting a project with a membership with which we had had little or no contact during the first year of the Covid crisis
- We had to recontact all the original members to see where they were at, whether they had survived and whether new organisations had started
- Face to face meetings were no longer an option

How we adapted

- SDCVS staff continued to work from home throughout the pandemic.
- Some services were adapted e.g. the way we did befriending to enable services to still continue supporting people in a safe manner for staff, volunteers and our service users
- we continued with the community forums and networks on-line so that people could still engage with and support each other
- IsLand carried out a survey amongst the original members to find out what impact Covid had had on them and what support they needed for the future. This survey was also promoted through our social media channels which resulted in new members joining IsLAND and the membership has gone up from around 22 organisations at the start of Covid to 36 currently.
- Clients with challenging issues were seen at the Food Bank, face to face through booked appointments.
- Access to the Food Bank was made easier for clients through self-referrals via phone, text and emails
- Supporting services were asked to hold food parcels for their clients to ease the pressure on the Food Bank team
- Food Bank delivered food parcels to vulnerable people when possible

The steps we are taking towards recovery/normality

- Covid recovery network – we are continuing to send out e-bulletins but with more focus on recovery e.g. how to stay safe, health and wellbeing, support services and things to do in your community.
- Returning to normal delivery with our services whilst still being covid safe
- More face-to-face meetings with groups
- Developing community networks where people can start to meet up more, learn more about volunteering opportunities and support each other
- Starting to organise some community events for local people to come along and find out what support is available for them to access
- Moving premises where more face-to-face interactions can happen e.g. training
- Planning on more of a 'wrap around' service for our services users who access the Food Bank

- **IsLand** - network and support meetings are once more a regular feature although these have remained online as there seems little appetite for face-to-face meetings. The fact that this is a countywide project with participants from a wide area may also be a contributing factor which encourages more people to attend virtual meetings rather than in person. The funding for the project ends in December so we have been looking for a sustainable model for the network by developing it into a Charitable Community Benefit Society (Bencom) and would give the network a formal structure to be able to apply for funding in its own right as well as tendering for commissioned services.
- **IsLand** - the survey provided us with a plan of action to support the members so we set about putting that into action by the providing training which had been identified as needed, bringing in specialist support to support organisations' volunteers and staff through the Help the Helpers project, and starting to look at a sustainable model for IsLand at the end of the Lottery funding. This should have ended in May 2022 but has been extended to December 2022.
- Food Bank – we will be moving to a larger venue, extending opening hours and plans around offering drop in sessions e.g. support with the energy costs etc. and are starting to partner with more local supermarkets for additional food donations