

Key Voluntary Sector Bodies – Annual Updates

Imago

Between April and December 2017 we have provided one-to-one support to 16 organisations that deliver services in Tonbridge.

The type of support provided includes:

- The supply of model policies - Compaid was supplied with 10 model policies in this period
- Organisations were supplied with contacts and information about networking events
- Fibromyalgia in West Kent Support Group was provided with assistance as they were looking to change their legal status to become a registered charity. We had an initial visit with them alongside Funding for All and a KCC Community Liaison Officer. Thereafter there were several follow up meetings and advice with paperwork was provided.
- Some organisations received fundraising support including Home-Start South West Kent and Tonbridge Swimming Club.
- Several organisations were supported to explore changes to their legal status. In the main they wanted to become Charitable Incorporated Organisations. Sahrudaya an organisation that works to support people in India and promotes integration in this country needed help to change legal status and become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Challenger Troop CIC also received advice about this in this period.
- Worked with Stronger Kent Communities to help them schedule low cost fundraising training. We gave them information about venues in this area and advertised their workshops.
- We provide information to 5 thematic groups – the West Kent Young Peoples Provider Forum, the West Kent Older Peoples Provider Forum, the Community Groups Network, the Disabled and Sensory Impaired Network and the Volunteer Coordinators Forum.
- We produce monthly newsletters. Our Imago monthly newsletter is distributed to 536 recipients some of whom are Tonbridge based voluntary or public sector organisations.
- We also produce monthly Volunteer Centre newsletters comprised of local volunteering opportunities. This is distributed to 284 individuals in west Kent 73 of whom have addresses in Tonbridge.
- We organise networking events for Volunteer Coordinators 3 times a year.
- We offered free training to organisations on press releases and press photography.
- Volunteering presentations were delivered to WKC Fresher's Fayre, TAMS, Man 2 Man group, and International Older Peoples Day at the Angel Centre
- Dial 2 Drive Community Transport completed 12425 journeys for clients across West Kent, of which 267 are older residents living in Tonbridge and Malling District. The service continues to be promoted and expanded in the area.

Age Concern Malling

Age Concern Malling remains grateful for the ongoing support from TMBC towards the transport costs incurred at Age Concern Malling in assisting clients to attend vital services such as Day Care opportunities and Dedicated Dementia Day Care.

As a member of the LSP, we have benefitted from contributing to collaborative working across organisations for the benefit of the public residing in the Borough. It has been particularly rewarding addressing the issue of self-neglect through the Self-Neglect Forum. The opportunity to share information and develop an approach that best meets the needs of vulnerable individuals. The LSP has also opened the opportunity to debate broader political issues and raise concerns experienced at a local level driven by Central Government policy.

Maidstone Mediation Scheme (MMS) and West Kent Mediation Scheme (WKMS)

Maidstone Mediation and West Kent Mediation continue to train and 2 cohorts of new volunteers on a yearly basis. We have adjusted our training to meet the changing needs of the community; they are trained in basic mediation skills to deliver a mediation service to the residents of Tonbridge and Malling, to deal with neighbourhood disputes and problems of antisocial behaviour within the borough. We now also train our volunteers in working with families and the issues that arise in the home, we have worked with young people and their families to prevent them from being made homeless, sofa surfing and presenting at TMBC as homeless. We also work with families in the Tonbridge and Malling borough when there has been Adolescent to Parent violence and the threat of homelessness, residents/ parents ask for our support and help which prevents their children entering into the criminal justice system. We are also able to offer Anger Management courses to any resident from the age of 12 right through to adults; sometimes this need had been identified through the mediation process.

All of our work takes away some of the burden off the statutory agencies; Police and housing providers and the council who otherwise would have to get further involved in the situation or conflict if Maidstone Mediation and West Kent Mediation did not exist.

We are able to offer a free service to those in the borough who most need it. In June 2016 MMS achieved the Restorative Justice Quality Mark for Best Practice from the Restorative Justice Council (RJC.) Our policies, procedures and practices were scrutinised by the RJC, we were very proud to be one of the first organisations in the country to achieve the RJC Quality Mark which replaces the Legal Services Commissions Quality Mark. Last year West Kent also achieved the RJC quality Mark.

We continue to receive referrals from all agencies as suggested in the SLA as well as self referrals thus making the service available and accessible to all members of the public. Our administrators report back to the referrer during the course of the

referral and when the case has closed. At the end of each financial year a report is sent which outlines the work that we have achieved including evaluations.

Staff and volunteers have had the most recent Safeguarding training from KCC and are working to ensure that we are GDPR compliant as of 25th May 2018.

The Mediation services regularly attend the TMBC meetings, e.g. the TMBC CSVG, The TMBC DA forum, and Strategy group meetings. We attend any training that is offered to us e.g. Prevent training and also offer training to TMBC staff.

Involve Kent - Report to Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council 2017

Involve Kent has an SLA with Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council to provide support around volunteering in the Malling area of the borough. During 2017 we have been proactive in recruiting volunteers with a focus on those with additional support needs, taking referrals from support agencies. We have also continued to develop community transport provision in the area with a good responsive coverage now available. We have proactively promoted volunteering through work with GPs and other partners, through newsletters, leaflets and press releases. Our drop in at Maidstone Town Hall as closed, as Involve has moved to a more accessible retail unit in the Mall, adjacent to the bus station (the former bus ticket office). This has led to a significant increase in the number of enquiries (around 150 per month) of which around 25% are from residents in Tonbridge and Malling, encouraged by our proximity to the bus station. Our new name and brand (formerly Voluntary Action Maidstone) without the specification of Maidstone has enabled us to make positive links in Malling and enabled greater engagement with people and organisations outside Maidstone.

Reporting on the specifics in the SLA for 2017;

- Recruiting volunteers who reflect the demographic makeup of the district, and including volunteers who have experienced need for support from voluntary or statutory services.

This year we have recruited 52 volunteers living in the Tonbridge and Malling area. 63% have experienced a need for support, for reasons such as mental health issues, unemployment, physical health issues, housing or debt.

- Matching volunteers to opportunities within volunteer involving organisations

We have worked with 15 organisations based in Tonbridge and Malling to recruit volunteers. Includes Age Concern Malling, RBLI, Heart of Kent Hospice. We work with many more partners who cover the Malling area as part of a larger geography.

- Providing support for individual volunteers, particularly those facing barriers to volunteering e.g. through age, disability, culture, income etc.

Supported volunteering has grown and developed to include opportunities in art, craft, woodwork and retail. Volunteers are supported to attend training with Adult Education in area such as building confidence or work based learning such as Health and Safety. Close partnership working with Job Centre Plus (we are now based underneath the local Job Centre in Maidstone). Currently 50 volunteers registered with Involve receiving direct support live in the Malling area.

- Promoting, stimulating and encouraging local interest in volunteering and community activity

Talks at Snodland Active Retirement association, promotional stand at Tracey Crouch MP pensioners fair, stand at RBLI event in Aylesford, held Carers Forum in Ditton- 65 carers from Malling area attended and it included talk on volunteering. Talk at West Malling GP Practice. Leaflets sent to all GP surgeries. Regular exercise class and wellbeing sessions for older people including volunteer opportunities at Snodland Community Centre. Promotional stand at Tesco's Lunsford Park.

- Promoting existing volunteer driver schemes within the area

'Refer a Friend' scheme to promote volunteer driving. Currently 17 registered volunteer drivers in Malling area. 745 trips undertaken.

- Promoting good practice within organisations involving volunteers by providing support and information.

Information distributed in the weekly 'Digest' newsletter to 125 contacts in Malling. Events included a networking session and seminar 'volunteering for wellbeing'.

- Working in partnership with statutory, voluntary and private sector agencies including specialist groups to develop local volunteering opportunities

Work with 15 organisations including Age Concern Malling, RBLI, Heart of Kent Hospice. Work with RBLI is focused on supporting unemployed people to volunteer as a form of skill development.

- Liaising with local organisations, including parish councils and other voluntary groups to promote services

Contact is maintained through regular newsletters with all parish councils promoting volunteering and other community initiatives.

- Providing information through the Involve Kent website and online directory

The website is regularly updated alongside the directory. Volunteer opportunities are now advertised on Doit.org across Kent. Social media is now a key communication tool with approximately 1900 'followers' across Maidstone and Malling and daily updates.

- Participating in local, regional and national campaigns, either individually or in partnership with other providers

Campaigns include; Volunteers Week, World Mental Health Day, Carers Week, Carers Rights Day.

- Providing input into strategic development of volunteering locally, regionally and nationally

Response to Kent County Council 'Older Person's Wellbeing' consultation focusing on benefit of volunteering. Response to the national 'Fuller Working Lives' consultation on volunteering and caring.

- Carrying out DBS checks on all volunteers, working in Involve Kent, who work with vulnerable adults

Done

- Acting as an umbrella body for DBS checks for all Voluntary Organisations

Continue to act as umbrella body for DBS checks and promote the service widely.

Moving forward 2018 onwards

- Build links with key GP practices particularly Snodland to identify and support people with health needs to volunteer
- Focus on supported volunteering for isolated and disadvantaged people rather than generic brokerage (now done via Doit.org).
- Develop supportive volunteering for people with mental health issues, working with partners such as Live Well Kent and Mind.



Photo of Involve's forum in Ditton Community Centre in November 2017, attended by 65 people and including a talk from Healthwatch Kent.

Age UK Sevenoaks and Tonbridge

- Information and Advice services are in great demand and we now have a team of 4 people, 1 staff member and 3 volunteers, to cope with this increase of clients. We assist with everything from benefits, housing and other issues. A further new volunteer is currently undergoing training. We provide home visit and sessions at Bradford Street. Our I&A Manager attends the office once a week and other staff are available throughout the week. The service holds the Advice Service Quality Mark

- Befriending has continued, over 35 clients a week get regular visits from their befriender in their own homes. The service is to those older people who are often housebound and are lonely. We currently have around 25 volunteers providing the visits.
- The lunch club at Bradford Street meets on a monthly basis and around 40 people attend. We are currently trying to find volunteers to run fortnightly as this service is very popular.
- We hold a weekly coffee morning at Bradford Street, people pop along for coffee, a chat and support. Many of the clients are carers or people living with early dementia.
- Falls prevention classes take place on a Monday, with a trained instructor and are well attended.
- Fridays we hold a weekly Knit and natter craft group and around 25 – 30 ladies attend, making items to sell and to donate to other establishments, such as the premature baby unit at Pembury or blankets to local residential homes. Again many of the ladies are very lonely when they start, but soon make friends within the group and they support each other.
- Independent Living Support – delivered in people's homes, including housework, shopping and gardening. We have seen an increase in numbers requesting this service. The service aims to keep people in their homes and as independent as possible.
- Advocacy Service - Our two advocates have been busy in the past year, dealing with complex issues for residents in Tonbridge. The issues can be anything from safeguarding, health and care, to disputes with other organisations or family issues.
- Counselling Service, Fran our Counsellor has been kept busy with clients, obviously the nature of her work, she works with only a few clients at a time, as she will have many sessions with them to try to resolve their issues. We are about to have a student placement to train along Fran for the next 6 months.
- Foot care and podiatry. This summer we took on board a second Podiatrist/Chiropodist to cope with the demand for this service. Full podiatry sessions and further toe nail cutting services are held each week at our Bradford St. premises. Often these services are a way of introducing people to the full range of services that we offer.

- We provide batteries for hearing aids on a pop in basis at Bradford Street.
- Town lock day centre continues to flourish and we have 20-22 frail older people attending each session x 3 days a week.

CANWK - Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council area activities Year to date to 26/1/2018

Service offer

Telephone Service

Five day per week telephone Adviceline 10am-3pm

Face to Face Service

Tonbridge Main Centre at the Castle

Appointments 10am-4pm

Monday – 2 upstairs interview rooms, 2 downstairs accessible interview rooms

Tuesday – 2 upstairs interview rooms, 1 downstairs accessible interview rooms

Friday – 2 upstairs interview rooms, 2 downstairs accessible interview rooms

Drop-in

Due to lack of reception space and interview rooms, we encouraged people to initially ring us and deal with the issue as much as possible by telephone.

Now that we have hired further interview space downstairs, we are reintroducing drop-in to the service from February 2018 on every day that we are open (Mon, Tues, Weds).

Outreaches

Outreaches are reserved for the most vulnerable clients/complex cases/those that cannot reach the main centre easily.

Aylesford – Thursday mornings, appointments

Larkfield – Tuesday mornings, appointments

Snodland – Tuesday mornings, appointments

N.B. We have found that these outreaches are used by people across the northern wards and not just the particular village locations, e.g. Larkfield outreach was used by people from 10 different northern wards.

Projects available to TMBC area clients

Funder	Project
Big Lottery	PATH (homelessness)
Big Lottery	MISP (immigration project)
Comic Relief	Debt project for highly vulnerable
TMBC & Gatwick Foundation	Benefits Specialists
Money Advice Service	MASDAP (debt project)
Citizens Advice/Central Govt	Energy saving and efficiency project
Good Things (Central Govt)	Tax advice

N.B. PATH has also offered nine monthly drop-in housing/homelessness sessions in the TMBC area (at St Stephen's Church, the Baptist Church, and a local pub) attended by Porchlight and other partner agencies. The Energy Project had a well-attended public switching event on 25/1/18 in the High Street.

Clients helped

Face to Face – 1,265 clients including 77 at the outreaches, and 181 clients receiving specialist project services.

Telephone Adviceline – 1,125 clients with a TMBC address.

Issues

For clients with a detailed TMBC address:
3,360 issues (approx. 3 issues per client).

Advice Together network

CANWK are the lead agency in this partnership of 25 advice providers across west and north Kent. Agencies meet quarterly at a CANWK hosted event. They use the Nellbooker referral service, administered by CANWK, to securely cross-refer clients. Agencies include:

Age UK, Age Concern Malling, Crosslight (West Debt Advice), Samaritans, West Kent Mediation, Kent Equality Cohesion Council, West Kent Mind, Carers First, DAVSS, Probation Service, Sevenoaks District Council, DGS Mind, Choices, Kent Family Mediation, Sevenoaks Counselling Service, Citizens Advice Tunbridge Wells & District, Citizens Advice Edenbridge & Westerham, Rethink, The Gr@nd, Compaid, Porchlight, CROP Kent, West Kent Housing Association.

The Advice Together project ensures clients can easily and rapidly be referred to another agency, ensuring a much better wraparound service for our clients with the assurance of the client being contacted by the agency. The partnership also ensures that current topics and best practice can be discussed by the agencies. The project was set up by CANWK using Big Lottery funds and is now largely self-funding via agency contributions.

Councils (and sub-departments) are welcome to join the partnership and referral network.