



HENFIELD COMMUNITY DURING COVID 19 CASE STUDY

June 2020

Healthwatch West Sussex is currently working with a number of Community & Voluntary Sector Organisations to help understand how local groups and services have adapted in response to the Coronavirus outbreak and Lockdown.

It is important to independently capture this information, as it helps to build a picture of what community support has been available and the impact this has had on local people.

This is a case study of one of the villages in West Sussex, Henfield and shows how local people have come together to support others.

We hope this case study will help our Health and Care System recognise the importance of supporting and sustaining local people to respond to the health and care needs of their neighbours and community.

Henfield is a large village and parish in the Horsham District of West Sussex, lying 33 miles south of London, 12 miles northwest of Brighton, and 30 miles east northeast of the county town of Chichester at the road junction of the A281 and A2037.



Looking at the community response from a distance and talking virtually to local people, we have seen that residents of Henfield, as we have found in many other parts of our County, have stepped forward to support and meet the practical and emotional needs of each other.

Local businesses appeared to quickly adapt to having to close their eateries to the public, by offering food and drink supplies/deliveries to residents - including local pubs, restaurants and retailers. This has meant that people have continued to get access to fresh produce, cooked meals and *treats*.



Residents have also supported the provision of food through donating to the local food bank and the district's mutual aid fundraising. We also note the creation of [Social Box CIC](#), a not-for-profit organisation, offering food deliveries across West Sussex.

During the pandemic, people have been able to donate food at the Horsham Matters donation points at **Budgens** and the **OneStop** on the High Street in Henfield.



“ Paul shared on Love Henfield Online Community Group

I hope you don't mind me reinforcing what others have been saying on here, but the community spirit that has continued to be shown in our lovely village must continue long after this horrible illness has moved on!

I have been amazed by the generosity, kindness and willingness to help others you, the Henfield residents, have shown. If it's ok by you all, as front line health care workers, my wife and I will be on our doorstep clapping for our village tonight, for you guys. Keep up the great work, I am so proud to be a resident of this amazing village!

”

The community's online social media groups have enabled residents to ask for information or support, as one resident's post in March shows.

“ I know this is probably a really silly question, but I have 2 kids, both young, one with autism Anybody know the best way to get some shopping, I don't want to ask volunteers as feel they are for more vulnerable groups. Does anyone with young kids (5 and 4) have a sensible way I can get bits from one stop/Budgens with the least amount of risk to us and other? My feeling is having both kids and myself in the shop creates more risk than anything else? But I'm no expert. Many thanks for any ideas.

This post received 34 comments with suggestions of local providers and also these responses:

I offered to help with the Henfield Helps Group and have only done a very small errand for one person. I am working at home this week and happy to go and get stuff for you.

I'm on the volunteers group and I promise you if you need help please call. People with young children may not be vulnerable in respect of the virus but you can't go into shops along. Happy to help.

”



Posted on March 24, 2020

We found details of the **Henfield Helpline** very visible on the BN5 Magazine website (posted on 24 March 2020).

01273 494420
helpline@henfieldhub.com



Whilst member of the Henfield Haven (Community Hub) have not been able to visit they have remained in contact, receiving regular calls from the Hub Team.

The Henfield website states, there were nearly 300 volunteers that could offer support with: driving, dog walking, shopping or fetching prescriptions, and can offer phone chats. (60% of requests at the time were for collecting prescriptions and 30% to buy food.)

As at 17 April 300 local people had been helped. The focus has been on Henfield itself with a few exceptional cases in Shermanbury, Woodmancote and Cowfold. Calls from further afield have been referred to other voluntary groups.

The Henfield Helpline will continue to operate for as long as the need exists (as stated on 17 April 2020). It is nominally operated on weekdays, but the phones are manned evenings and weekends, with a willingness to try to respond to emergency requests.

Information also shows that the village is supported through the NHS Volunteer Responder system, with someone support with the collection of prescriptions for an elderly couple in isolation (April 2020).



Henfield Medical Centre has created frequently asked questions to help residents understand the changes and are keeping these up to date, according to their website. They also have information for younger residents (13-19 year olds) to help them with understanding the virus and changes. Their website also promotes the [Isolation Pack](#) produced by the Sussex Health and Care Partnership, to support older residents.

