

How a Community Organisation Adapted During the COVID-19 Crisis

September 2020

By working with our colleagues in the Voluntary and Community sector, we have a series of reports on our website that capture the experiences and issues from the point of view of services and groups that support local people in the community.

This is an independent case study showing an example of one community organisation's story of adapting and what the future holds.

About the organisation



Chichester Wellbeing offer free, friendly advice and support and help people to improve their health and wellbeing. They provide guidance and support with things like becoming more active, losing weight, healthy eating, managing stress or anxiety, emotional wellbeing, reducing alcohol intake, or stopping smoking.



Chichester Wellbeing is a friendly and impartial service which comes from Chichester District Council and West Sussex County Council Public Health, the majority of our services are completely free to users. As well as using our website, you can find out more about local activities and support services by talking to our Wellbeing team over the phone or in person.

Elaine Thomas Community Wellbeing Manager



What were the immediate challenges?

Chichester Wellbeing Team straight away moved to working from home. Pre-Covid-19 they were really busy with referrals, which literally dried-up over night. Normally people would self-refer or GPs would direct their patients to them, but this slowed right down and they had to completely rethink how they deliver the service.

The team started contacting their clients and made lots of daily telephone *welfare calls* to the more vulnerable people. They were also supporting any referrals who had contacted the Community Hub.



It is understandable that referrals slowed right down for a while. GPs were not seeing so many patients and people were more concerned about loved ones and getting through these tough times in a very uncertain new world. Referrals are now picking up and we have adapted the service so that we can support people safely.



What was the impact on staff, volunteers and service users?

Chichester Wellbeing Team know that mental health issues have increased. Whilst some people *coped well with lockdown, lots of others really struggled and* the isolation and loneliness has made their lives feel more complex. Lots of people put on weight during lockdown or increased their alcohol intake and are now ready to make changes.



We have adapted the way we worked with people and are working primarily on the phone but also some weight management classes will be held via video. We will be trialling socially distanced face to face appointments in the coming weeks.



Has Covid-19 affected their finances?

Chichester Wellbeing is funded by West Sussex County Council Public Health and are contracted until March 2022. There is new evidence to show that leading a healthy lifestyle can improve the outcome for people who get Covid-19 so they are hopeful that the service they provide will continue to provide support for people wanting to improve their health.

Contact details

To learn more about Chichester Wellbeing

Call **01243 521041** (Mon - Thurs, 8.45am - 5.10pm and Fri till 5pm).

Email info@chichesterwellbeing.org.uk

Or visit their website: <https://chichester.westsussexwellbeing.org.uk/>



Voluntary Action Arun and Chichester

Our role is to enable, support and promote VCS groups across Arun and Chichester.

- Support for Member Organisations. Please contact us by downloading our referral form from our [website](#) or emailing lucie.maldoom@vaac.org.uk
- We provide a Funding monthly e-newsletter, and our funding surgeries via zoom.
- We provide regular Networking and Training Events, see our e-bulletins and website for details.
- Our e-bulletin provides the latest information for the VCS.
- Volunteers - if you would like to advertise for volunteers please get in touch with Jenny.holmes@vaac.org.uk or go to our website to upload your information. <https://www.vaac.org.uk/volunteering>

Website: www.vaac.org.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/VAArunChi/

Twitter: www.twitter.com/VAAC_Community

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/vaac

We have a simple ambition at Healthwatch West Sussex...
to make local health and social care services better for
people that use them.



We are here to listen, take action and influence positive change for local people
living in West Sussex.

We record what people tell us and share this anonymously with those who make
decisions about our health and care services.

You can contact us in several ways:



Telephone - 0300 012 0122



Email - helpdesk@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk



Website - www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk

You can also follow our social media channels to always be updated with the latest
in health and social care news across West Sussex: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#).

If you have questions about the content of this update, please either call 0300 012
0122 or email cheryl.berry@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk



How a voluntary organisation has adapted during COVID-19 - Case Study

