

Winter Edition November 2023

Issue Number 80

Coalition News



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Warm hubs are being set up across the county, we'll be posting more details as they become available!

Welcome from Nikki

Dear Members,

The end of another year is coming soon. I always take a moment to reflect on the year and take time to celebrate successes and think about how we can build on those in the following year.

This year we have achieved so much, here's the highlights:

You may have seen the very recent news that the proposals to close train ticket offices has been scrapped! More on this in the news section, a big thank you to everybody that was involved.

We have worked a lot this year with Surrey Hills to improve access to the countryside. Surrey Hills have already started to make the changes we suggested and people are benefitting from the improved access. Thanks again to our members for getting involved in this project.

The Community Transformation Team have been working hard to find out why certain communities don't feel able to access community mental health services. I'm looking forward to the results of this project early next year.

Finally, we have applied to register as a charity. We have submitted our application and hope to hear the outcome soon. This change meant a change to our Articles of Association and quite a few changes to our board. My thanks again to the board members that stepped down in September. These board members have been with us so long and given so much of their time, passion and commitment to the organisation.

In addition, as we move into Winter, I wanted to acknowledge that the Cost of Living is having a real impact on our community. The next wave of our Household Support Fund will be coming soon. Please keep an eye on our website and our weekly email for more details.

Thanks again for all of your support this year, I hope you have a restful festive season and a Happy New Year.

Best Wishes

Nikki Roberts, CEO

Household Support Fund - visit our website for details

News Update



Thanks to all of our campaigners!

As you may have seen in the news, the decision to close train ticket offices has been scrapped. Thank you to all of our members that worked so hard to campaign on this issue, you have made a huge difference to our community. You petitioned the Prime Minister twice, wrote to MPs, spoke to rail companies, spoke to press and wrote a response to the consultation. Congratulations on the outcome, now to make train station even more accessible!

Working with Students at Treloar's school in Alton

We're very excited to have an intern student join us from Treloar's for a few hours each week. Joe, will be helping us with our social media, blogging and photos! We're very excited to have you with us!



Technology Update



After a slightly quieter couple of summer months, September and October have returned to all systems go! We currently have 24 active Tech Angel's with one new recruit nearing completion of training stage. We are no longer working with Woking Borough Council Tech Angels due to not being able to secure project funds in this area. We have however been able to retain the majority of our NW Surrey Tech Angels who are now travelling a little further for us to support Tech Members in neighbouring boroughs where we are still active, i.e. Guildford and Waverley.

In September we welcomed Tunji to our Team. Tunji works at a school in Effingham. He has already visited two tech members in Leatherhead and Guildford and we are really pleased to have him on board. We also welcomed Colin. Colin has a lot of experience volunteering in his local community in a number of ways, including providing tech support, and is now looking to increase the tech support he provides, by volunteering with us.

For new Tech Angel training we are now using the Barclays Digital Eagles platform. This requires new applicants to attend 3 virtual live sessions covering topics such as; Soft-skills: building confidence and teaching others, an introduction to e-learning, digital basics and frauds and scams, safety tips and sharing with others. There are also self guided units to complete alongside this. On completion the volunteers receive their digital champion status. Barclays also has a number of additional units to explore and achieve for continuous development. It is still also a requirement for all new volunteers to complete safeguarding training as well.



Feedback from those who have completed the training (including ourselves) has been very positive. We like the more interactive approach it provides during the virtual sessions. We hope to offer a shortened version of the training to all existing Tech Angels as refresher training in the future.

We are currently carrying out our annual 1-1 check in with all volunteers. We take time to chat at length, collating any feedback and comments from our volunteers on areas where we can improve their volunteering experience with us.

We had a super trip to the Hogs back brewery with our volunteers. We were able to walk through the hop garden and taste some locally produced beer. We hope to be out and about with our volunteers more regularly in 2024 as those that have joined us for events so far have enjoyed meeting the team and sharing experiences with other Tech Angels.

The team have been out and about lots over the past few months at various different events promoting the Tech Angel Service.

Currently we have 1800 tech members, with 62 joining since September. Fancy becoming a volunteer? Get in touch!



Our virtual trips are back!

We are delighted to announce that our popular virtual trips are back thanks to funding from The Community Foundation for Surrey. Our first virtual trip took place in October where we enjoyed a talk from the Florence Nightingale Museum. We learnt a lot about Florence and her work including some new information. For example, we learnt that the drawings of Florence with her lamp are actually incorrect as she would not have had access to the type of lamp she is often pictured with! She is usually pictured with an oil lamp when in fact she used a Turkish lamp which used a candle. Also we learnt that Florence with the help of William Farr invented the Pie Chart!

If the above has given you serious FOMO (Fear of missing out) don't worry, we recorded the session and it's available to view on our Youtube Channel. The video has subtitles and BSL interpretation. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hn4Jp469kK0>

Our next trip is to the Jane Austen Museum and is scheduled for Monday 27th November at 11am. I realise you may be reading this information after the event, but the recording will be available on our Youtube Channel. Our last trip for 2023 will be to the Sir John Soane Museum on Monday 11th December at 11am. We really hope you can join us. If there is somewhere you would like to visit (virtually) please let us know by contacting Kimberley.Ellis@surreycoalition.org.uk

Involvement Update



Making Every Contact Count (MECC)

Alex, our Community Champion Coordinator, has held a number of MECC training sessions both online and in person, most staff and some Board Directors have taken part. Alex has also started to create a MECC database for participants to use in addition to the Surrey County Council recommended Healthy Surrey Website.

DENS meetings

At a recent DENS chairs meeting we discussed the current structure of the DENS and whether this could/should be changed to see if we can attract more members. Some ideas were discussed, and Yasmin will send out a survey to DENS members to get their thoughts. As a result of this we have not yet set up the meeting dates for the DENS next year.

Surrey Vision Action Group

The Surrey Vision Action Group met in October and had presentations from SILC'S Independent Health Advocacy service and from the Active Travel scheme proposed for Burpham. As expected, there was a lot of comments on the inaccessibility of the consultation and of the impact these changes will have on those who are visually impaired and/or hard of hearing.



Get Active

Following a successful summer Super Hero Tri, Katy is planning for the Winter Wonder wheels event. As I write, we almost have a full team for this event, which will be similar to the summer event but without the swimming. We plan to use sponsorship from this event to go towards continuation funding for the Get More Active project.

Royal Holloway research Grant

Dr Anica Zeyn, one of our members who is a professor at Royal Holloway University alerted us to some funding available for research into physical activity and access to leisure centres. Together with Anica, Nikki, Alex and Yasmin submitted a bid for funding to conduct the research. This was successful! We'll keep you updated!

Access All Areas visits

Jonathan, Angie and Yasmin have visited three Surrey County Council (SCC) properties, (Woodhatch Place, Fairmount House, Dakota), to carry out an access all areas visit. We have sent SCC a report of our findings and hope some changes will be made to ensure the buildings are accessible both to members of the public and disabled employees.

Surrey Hills Lottery Bid

We have written a letter of support for a Surrey Hills Lottery bid which will look at green volunteering and access to the countryside for minoritised groups.

Food Support report

Alex has developed a report which details the findings of our food support survey. The survey asked members about the barriers to accessing food support in Surrey. The report can be accessed on our website

Mental Health Update



Pathways to Change Research Project

Starting last year, The Coalition partnered with Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum (SMEF), on a research project looking at the experiences of South-Asian adults within mental health services in Surrey and North-East Hampshire.

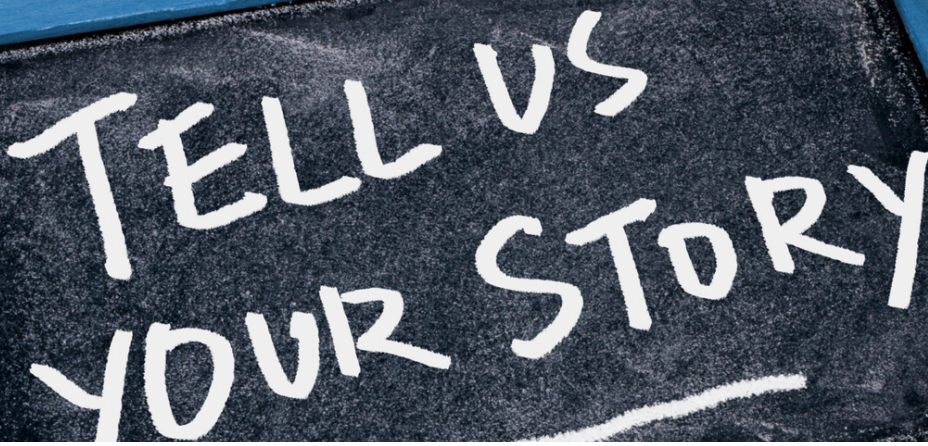
We spoke to 77 people to understand whether residents felt that their cultural and religious needs were understood and accommodated by mental health services, and how language barriers affected the service they received. There was good representation from Muslims, and people from Pakistani, Indian and Nepalese backgrounds. However only a small number of men were interested in taking part in the research.

Themes such as stigma, misunderstanding of mental health, complex family dynamics, generational differences, lack of professional understanding and language barriers were commonly discussed by participants.

If you like to know more about this project, the full report will be on The Coalition website soon. We hope this research project will highlight the experiences of previously under-represented groups and help to create more inclusive mental health services in our area.

Independent Mental Health Network (IMHN)

Over the last few months staff and members of the Network have been involved with Surrey County Council's work to provide community based mental health services. We have been helping to ensure equality of provision throughout the county and services that are accessible for all residents.



TELL US
YOUR STORY

Network Coordinator, Guy, works with service users and carers to film their stories of using mental health services. These videos are regularly shared at decision making meetings, hearing directly from people who use services really helps to highlight the challenges people face and has helped to make improvements. In October the IMHN provided the story of a carer and the impact caring had on her own physical and mental health. If you have used mental health services, please contact Guy via email to share your experiences.

Salem is doing some outreach work at the University of Surrey. During the Pathways to Change work he was invited by a group of Asian students to talk to the wellbeing group for students about accessing mental health services, he will be running a series of workshops with them to learn more about what university students are experiencing and what Surrey's services could be doing more of to help them.

FoCUS

The next FoCUS local area meetings will be held in December, issues raised in these meetings are discussed with Surrey and Borders Partnership (SABP) managers to create target improvements where people feel they are most needed. If you would like to attend the next meeting in your area, please email the FoCUS Coordinator Jennie Coulson at Jennie.Coulson@surreycoaliton.org.uk for details.

Community Transformation Team

The team are reviewing how the mental health services are working now that they are integrated into the community in our GP's surgeries. The team are particularly focussing on engaging with people from the following groups who tend to use services less than others: carers, men, LGBTQ+, neurodivergent, minority ethnic communities and the over 65s.

We have been running a survey since April and have received over 250 responses. Many of the respondents to the survey have been invited to focus groups over the last few months to gain greater insights into barriers to accessing services. The engagement phase of this project ends soon, and the project moves into the next phase of bringing together everything we have learnt to create coproduced recommendations for service improvement.

WEEKLY EVENTS

DAY	TIME	ACTIVITY
Every Monday	11am - 12pm	Virtual Café and craft discussion group
Every Tuesday	4pm - 5pm	Glee Club
Every Wednesday	2:30pm - 3:30pm	Book Chat
Every Thursday	2:30pm - 3:30pm	Quiz
Every Friday	11:30am - 12:30pm	Virtual Café and Get More Active discussion group

Key: IMHN: Independent Mental Health Network FoCUS: Forum of Carers and people who Use our Services (this is a forum for people who use, or have used, or care for someone who has used, services from Surrey and Borders NHS Partnership Trust). DENS: Disability Empowerment Network

Dates for your Diary

Our meetings are on Zoom and in person as stated below.

For information about how to use Zoom conferencing for the first time, please check out our how-to guides on our website. If you would like some help, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us and we can book a support session. The Zoom links are available from the Involvement Team.

If you would like to join us in person, please let the Involvement Team know by email: involvement@surreycoalition.org.uk

EVENTS JANUARY

DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY
Monday 8th January	1pm - 2:30pm	Combined East & Mid and Northwest FoCUS on Zoom only
Thursday 11th January	1pm - 2pm	Combined Southwest, & Northeast Hampshire FoCUS on Zoom only
Monday 11th January	11am - 12pm	FoCUS Reps on Zoom only
Monday 15th January	12:30pm - 2pm	Community Equipment Group on Zoom only
Tuesday 16th January	Time TBC	Minority Ethnic Mental Health Stakeholder Group on Zoom only
Thursday 18th January	10:30am - 12pm	Surrey Vision Action Group on zoom only
Tuesday 23rd January	1:30pm	Patient Transport Group on Zoom only
Friday 26th January	1pm - 3pm	IMHN Coordinating meeting on Zoom only

EVENTS FEBRUARY

DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY
Tuesday 6th February	2pm - 4pm	FoCUS Committee in person at SABP HQ, 18 Mole Business Park, Leatherhead, KT22 7AD and on Zoom
Tuesday 13th February	10:30am	Long Term Neurological Conditions Group on Zoom only
Wednesday 14th February	10am - 11am	Northwest Mental Health Stakeholder Group on Zoom only
Thursday 15th February	10am - 11am	Mid & East Mental Health Stakeholder Group on Zoom only
Thursday 22nd February	11am	IMHN Reps

EVENTS MARCH

DATE	TIME	ACTVITIY
Tuesday 5th March	1pm - 2:30pm	East & Mid FoCUS on Zoom
Wednesday 6th March	1pm - 2:30pm	SW FoCUS in person at Guildford Baptist Church Millmead GU2 4BE and on Zoom
Monday 11th March	10am	East & Mid FoCUS
Monday 11th March	1pm - 2pm	NW Disability Empowerment Network on Zoom only tbc
Thursday 14th March	10:30am	West FoCUS
Friday 15th March	TBC	Minority Ethnic Mental Health Stakeholder Group
Monday 18th March	1pm - 2:30pm	NW FoCUS
Monday 18th March	6pm - 7pm	Surrey Wide Disability Empowerment Network on Zoom only tbc

Wednesday 20th March	10:30am - 12pm	SW Disability Empowerment Network
Monday 25th March	10.30 am – 12.00pm	East Disability Empowerment Network on zoom and in person at YMCA in Redhill
Thursday 28th March	10.30 am – 12.00 noon	Hard of Hearing Forum
Friday 29th March	13.00 pm -15.00 pm	IMHN Coordinating meeting



We always love to hear from you!

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Get in touch today!