

HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE



South Ribble Borough Council

Supporting Communities to ‘resocialise’ following the Covid-19 pandemic...

Throughout the Pandemic the ‘South Ribble Together Hub’ offered support to vulnerable residents. Several issues residents faced were highlighted as exacerbated and targeted contact with residents at risk was made. Data including those on council tax support, single occupant discount, assisted bins, and poor energy efficiency identified residents at elevated risk. A cohort of 198 residents completed assessments making an average of 1.18 referrals were made per resident. Outcome measures shown improved levels of wellbeing, loneliness, and activity, highlighting the benefits of proactive support.

A theme identified was loneliness and isolation created or increased by the pandemic. Residents remained



anxious to socialise and felt nervous about attending established groups. When asked residents shown more interest in new, socially distanced groups to meet new people.

New 'drop-in café' events were organised across South Ribble, providing a safe, new space for people to meet, have a brew and chat to reduce loneliness. Ten community venues, supported with grants and a Council Officer, delivered weekly cafés. Each venue developed their own ideas helping the venues get people back through the doors. Attendance varies with some averaging over twenty and thirty but all being successful in enabling Covid-safe 'resocialisation'. In a survey carried out all respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that they felt less lonely and isolated since starting to attend.

The café's achieved their objectives; and the next phase is to develop them into Community support 'hubs' to enable support for wider post-pandemic issues such as the cost of living crisis. Working with partners such as CAB, Christians Against Poverty, Unify Credit Union, Key and others, staff will now attend and discuss issues, supporting or making referrals.

This is part of a development of a 'Financial Inclusion Network' linking organisations offering financial support in South Rubble, increasing co-working and referrals and improving support both for service users and providers. This will be developed throughout 2022 with residents already benefiting from services being brought to them in their own communities.

For further information contact:

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