



BUDDY SUPPORT NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2024



Well, we've had a little bit of summer weather! In the Spring newsletter there were hopes for a long and dry summer. Unfortunately rain didn't allow this to happen quite as much as I had hoped, but if there were any interludes between the rain, I was outside making the most of it! A hot end to July was welcome to some, and a little too hot for others.

As always, firstly I would like to thank you all for your ongoing support to enable us to support our local community. It would be impossible for us to run without you all, and you change the lives of so many.

The Thank You event on the 3rd August was our way of saying a proper thank you for all of this support. It was great to catch up with those that could make it in a more relaxed environment. As we all know, the Care Shop and other areas of the charity are so busy, it is often snatched hellos, and thanks you when we manage to see each other face to face. I hope that everyone enjoyed the afternoon. The weather wasn't the best but the food, music and company were all fantastic!



For the past year we have been producing a report for the NHS around **Health Inequalities in isolated and rural communities**. An 80 page grant report was produced, and then condensed into a final 40 page report, with the help of some

wonderful volunteers. They were out speaking to those within our community to discern their views around health inequalities relating to being voluntary carers, poverty, communication needs, transport, well-being and expanding services amongst others. Without the volunteers we wouldn't have been able to produce this report from which we have identified areas that extra support was needed locally such as:

Expanding Buddy Assisted transport- we have extended to incorporate covid vaccinations, opticians, hearing appointments and dentists.

Combatting isolation- We discerned that every community, especially isolated and rural communities, needs a 'funded' Care Shop to offer help, support, and knowledge to their community. The running of our Care Shop in itself demonstrates its benefits to those living in isolated communities.

Deprivation- People living in poverty need access to food banks, money support, housing support, employment help to gain work amongst other issues, all of which we as a charity can offer.

Support for voluntary carers- We know that voluntary carers save the NHS and government million of pounds every year by taking on the caring responsibilities of loved ones. Being a carer in itself can bring feelings of isolation, often neglecting their own health and well-being. From July 2023 to July 2024 a minimum of 1845 calls to voluntary carers were made either monthly, or every 6 weeks, to check on their own welfare, as well as those they care for. Carers support groups are run, cancer support, parental and guardian support, men's breakfasts amongst others, all to take a little of the burden off of carers and allow them a voice and to know they are not alone.

Dying Well Services and End of Life Care- An area of need was identified locally for support for those in rural communities that may not have the support of family, or have family close by, to spend time with those that are nearing end of life. The Robin's Project offered through the charity addresses these very issues and is the only scheme run within the community in the Country, providing

befrienders to spend time with those who are on palliative care, whether in their own home or Care Homes.

Communication- Another need highlighted was around communication barriers. This could be from people for whom English is their second language, those with hearing impairments, or people without access or knowledge of accessing their phones and computers and for whom modern technology is a mystery (me!)

We can support with English Classes, Sign language classes and CASPS (Computer and Smartphone Service) all to support people to overcome these communication barriers. We also help in the Care Shop itself at times with issues such as e-consults to gain doctor's appointments or Med 3 requests for sick notes. Many people don't have access to online services, and this can leave them at a disadvantage to others.

The vision at the end of report was the need to create a culture of support and community, preparing for older age, end of life and bereavement support.

Following the completion of the report, submitted in July, it was clear that this work can benefit the other rural parishes on the Manhood Peninsula. We are looking to expand services in the Wittering area and work on this has already started.

We will continue to support all of those in our community, and producing the report has re-emphasised how much Selsey does truly need a Care Shop and all the volunteers support to enable all of the above actions to take place- *Thank You.*

For information, we are now able to offer Individual Bereavement Support appointments on the third Thursday of the month in the afternoon at The Shop next to Truevision. If this may help you or someone you know, please contact me at the Care Shop, 201616, and I will make an appointment to offer support in this regard.

As always, we continue to need further volunteers. Selsey has grown so much recently from a fairly small village when I was young, to a large town with ever increasing numbers of houses being built. With the extra numbers of residents, need increases month on month.

An example of the increased needs:

July

572 visitors to Care Shop – 4251 to date (3647 same time 2023) ↑

595 calls to Care Shop - 4526 to date (3215 same time 2023) ↑

358 calls out of Care Shop - 2741 to date (1538 same time 2023) ↑

If you know of anyone that may like to offer, even perhaps an hour a week, to support our charity please do let us know. Support is always needed with many areas including the following:

Good Morning calls- Do you have an hour or so every week spare that you could support with the good morning calls, offering a friendly phone call to those living within our community who are vulnerable or housebound.

BATS drivers- Buddy Assisted Drivers- this service is very much in demand to enable people to attend their medical appointments that they may otherwise miss. Mileage is reimbursed. The more drivers that we have, the fewer trips each would be made.

Buddy Volunteers to go onto our group chats helping with issues such as collection of prescriptions, small shops, moving furniture.

Befrienders- Some people in our community need a little extra support and befrienders can offer this on a more one to one basis, drawing isolated and lonely people more closely into our community.

Selsey Money Support- Are you good with forms? We support many in our community with completion of financial application forms such as Attendance Allowance, Personal Independence payments or other related forms. Support can be so valuable to ensure they are received the necessary financial help.

Any help is always so appreciated by us and the community.

I hope that the rest of the summer is drier, brighter and can only once again say thank you for your support so far in 2024.

Stay safe and well, Katy x