



# Wells Community Network

## WCN Annual Report

Working Together, Supporting Each Other



### WCN Helpline

When we started the helpline at the beginning of the pandemic we didn't think for one minute we would still be operating today! The WCN helpline has been running for more than two years. Most of the volunteers, including the call handlers, request coordinators (WACS) and those who fulfil the requests, have been with us since the beginning. It's a brilliant team and we really appreciate their commitment, resilience and good humour.

Over 750 residents of Wells and the local villages have been supported by the helpline. We have taken 4072 calls. We have delivered 1873 prescriptions. We have undertaken 1777 shops. In addition, we have provided transport for many people to vaccination sites, GP appointments and hospital visits.

Many people phone us just for a chat and we try to provide befriending calls for those who request them.

Most importantly, we have signposted many other callers to appropriate organisations for further or specialist help.

We are always looking for volunteers so please contact us if you would like to help. A couple of hours a week or flexible, one off offers of support. All welcome. Contact

Trisha Leigh and Claire Chettoe  
wcnvolunteers@gmail.com

### WCN Marshals

In 2021 we provided West Mendip Hospital with 150 marshals to run the COVID vaccination clinic. Working in partnership with the Mendip Primary Care Network between December 20 and June 21, 38,000 vaccinations were administered.

Marshals have also been helping at Community Events - Wells Food Festival in October, The Crib festival at St Cuthbert's Church, and the Mistletoe and Wine in Wells Market Place both in December.

WCN core group worked hard to try to find a way of having a Covid vaccination clinic in Wells, meeting with the MP, speaking to different councils and finally Philip Welch was approached by Locking Pharmacy to marshal at a clinic at St Thomas Church hall. This started in March and the people of Wells now have the opportunity to book a jab locally.

To the future the vaccination clinic will be on-going and we have been approached to see if we could provide marshals in September for a 5 and 10K run.

So a huge thank you to all our volunteers who have given up their time to support these events, and support the community of Wells.

Carol Mohide  
Marshals Coordinator  
wcnmarshals@gmail.com

### WCN Volunteers

We have a team of around 60 active volunteers who get involved in a whole range of activities from going shopping for people, collecting prescriptions and walking dogs. We have several volunteers who have shopped on a weekly basis for people since the beginning of the pandemic.

Occasionally we are asked to give lifts to people who have difficulty in accessing public transport, who need help getting to a medical appointment.

Flexibility is key to ensuring we can continue to operate as this enables individuals to respond to WhatsApp requests when their own responsibilities and time allow.

The WCN volunteer body is made up of people with a wealth of knowledge and experience which we draw on from time to time.

Our work with partner organisations puts us in a prime position for sharing information and signposting in the first instance and allows us to draw upon each other for help when needed.

Please contact me for opportunities and thanks for all you do.

Vicki Payne  
Volunteer Coordinator  
wcnnewvolunteers@gmail.com

### WCN Helpline

Mon-Fri 9-5

Sat 9-12

01749 467079

### Wells Community Network

Originally set up in 2020 as Wells Coronavirus Network to respond to the pandemic in 2020, Wells Community Network has been operating as a community interest company for the last 12 months, continuing to offer the original services. In addition to the weekly Core Group Meetings, Philip Welch sends out a weekly newsletter which reports on Network Partner news. We hold a fortnightly Network Partners meeting and a quarterly Board meeting. As a result of this strong network of organisations, WCN now provide a weekly gardening team to Wells Health Centre and were involved in the organisation of the Jubilee Celebrations' Cream Tea in the Cathedral Nave. Emma Lefevre Chairman wcncoregroup@gmail.com



# Wells Community Network

## WCN Annual Report

Working Together, Supporting Each Other

### WCN Trishaws

WCN has been exploring the possibilities of bringing a Trishaw service to Wells. The Trishaw is a free, bookable bike ride which would encourage older, disabled or more vulnerable members of the community to get outside for a healthful bike ride and explore the surrounding area. It would be the opportunity for people to safely experience the local area, to connect with our volunteers and to enjoy nature close-up from a slow ride on a bicycle. A great chance to tackle loneliness as members could share stories and reminisce with a fully trained and insured pilot.

The inspiration for this initiative comes from Cycling Without Age, a movement that started ten years ago in Denmark which is now worldwide. This project will be ideal for our community which has a high proportion of elderly residents, and a large quantity of newly retired active volunteers.

Our vision is to give the opportunity for people who are isolated or have mobility problems to remain active in the community. This will be an intergenerational project that promotes good health, connection and joy. We have raised half the money required to get this project off the ground, we will be looking a further fundraising initiatives later in the year.

Nicki Hall  
wcnvolunteers@gmail.com

### WCN Network

Building a network of organisations that can work together collaboratively and efficiently has been central to our values.

This is what our partners say:

'WCN has enabled local organisations to work more effectively together and share resources, for example it was through a WCN network meeting that I met Fen Bagias from Health Connections Mendip. As a direct result we now host the Talking café here. WCN has responded swiftly to local need, in particular relating to COVID for example the setting up of a vaccination centre here. The network is a way for us all to stay in touch, making sure we are using all the local skills and resources to maximum effect'.

Siobhan Goodwin ~The Bishop's Palace

'The support of the volunteers from WCN for Foodbank over the past two years has been invaluable. We absolutely could not have met the needs of our clients. without the wonderful people who have faithfully delivered parcels week by week. Many of the clients we are serving would have had a massive challenge in accessing the Foodbank at all without WCN's volunteers working alongside us.

I really am so grateful to the Network and the wonderful people I have met through it. I would like to particularly commend Kathy Orme, who has also coordinated our delivery volunteers. You people rock!

Sue Marland ~ Wells Food Bank

### WCN Ukraine

Since March we have been working to help coordinate a community response to support hosts and Ukrainian families. We had an initial meeting for potential host families and over 60 attended.

A number of families have arrived and we have been keen to find out what support they need. We held a Welcome Evening for host families and their guests, 120 attended. It has been clear that there is a need for language support, so we have organised language lessons and a conversation cafe.

Our database captures information of offers of support, families who have offered to host, and we send a weekly newsletter with updates of information.

We are keeping informed of the developments led by Somerset and the District Councils, our aim being to work with them and enhance the statutory services at a local level and potentially form a local hub.

Building upon the networks we have developed during the pandemic we feel well placed to promote working together and supporting each other at this time of crisis for Ukraine. We have had several emergencies that we have responded to and found the appropriate support, and we know that more support will be needed.

Karen Deverell  
wcnukraine@gmail.com

### WCN Helpline

Mon-Fri 9-5

Sat 9-12

01749 467079

### Wells Community Network Finances

Since August 2020 when we became a CIC, we had £4426 in the bank. This came from a mix of donations, fundraising and grants raised during the Covid Pandemic. This year we have received donations in the region of £11,000 including substantial sums from an anonymous donor and for our work marshalling at West Mendip Hospital. We have fundraised approximately £1500. Our bank balance now stands at £11,800. Our outgoings include monthly overheads for the helpline, website, expenses and insurance. We have hosted two social events this year. Future costs will involve a stakeholder conference in September, a tax liability of about £2000 and we plan to support the Trishaw initiative with up to £5000 to help get it started. We are now raising money to support the WCN Ukraine 'welcome hub' initiative, with £650 raised at the Jubilee Cream Tea in the Nave.