

Summer Edition June 2024

Issue Number 82

Coalition News



Contents

- Welcome
- News
- Mental Health Update
- Technology Update
- Get More Active Update
- Involvement Update
- Events
- Contact Us

Letter from Nikki

Dear members,

I can't believe we're already in Summer - I don't think anybody has told the weather though!

The Summer issue of Coalition News has a large focus on the mental health work that we have been working on. Quite a few of our mental health projects have now reached completion and we're delighted to share the results with you! Please read on for recommendations for making community mental health services accessible to all.

Our Pathways to change research is breaking new ground by exploring how South-Asian adults in Surrey and North-East Hampshire experience mental health services.

Thank you to all of those that took part in the research and a big thank you to the staff team for developing such fantastic pieces of research.

The Tech Team are now offering their service to Runnymede Borough Council Residents. This is so exciting as we have not been able to secure funding in this area before so a big thank you to Runnymede Borough Council for supporting this!

Get more Active is back in full swing, this time with an in-depth focus on East Surrey. Oh and we'll be back at the Superhero Tri in August.....it's such good fun, we'd love you to join us.

If you want to get involved with anything we do, we will always try to help. So please do email, call or SMS the office. If you are worried about transport to get to the activities, please do still get in touch as we'll do our best to help. There's some great fun activities taking place with Surrey Hills that are not to be missed!

Finally we're offering the Household Support funding again. So please call the office or complete our online form on our website to claim your £300 towards your food or electricity bills.

I hope to see you out and about over the Summer. Thanks as ever for all of your wonderful support.

Best wishes, Nikki

News!



Household Support Fund - Apply Now

What funding is available?

One grant per household (not per person) up to £300 may be awarded to help with costs that you are facing. Please note grants will be awarded on a first come first served basis. Once we have allocated the full amount that we have been given, we'll be unable to offer any further grants. So please make sure you apply as soon as possible.

Who can apply?

We welcome applications from Disabled adults, adults with a long-term health condition or a parent/carer whose child has a disability or long-term health condition who:

Are resident in Surrey.

Have an immediate need for this help.

Have not yet had a grant from this round of Household Support Funding or from another source.

Apply via our website or call the office on 01483 456 558 or SMS 07908671402

News!



I'm India, project officer for the Surrey Hills Society's Growing Together project, funded by National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Growing Together aims to engage underrepresented communities in the Surrey Hills countryside by co-designing a programme of nature-based activities aimed at building confidence, developing skills, and improving health and wellbeing. We will be working with three key partners, Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum, Surrey Choices, and yourselves, at Surrey Coalition of Disabled People.

I'm really excited to get to know members of the Coalition and hear your thoughts on how we can make the Surrey Hills accessible to you, by making adjustments to our events to support you to build skills and take part in activities you may not otherwise have done. As a Surrey native, I have found local nature spaces provide inspiration when I'm feeling creative, and solace when I need calm. I hope that by working together, we can empower more people to benefit from the wild landscapes surrounding us.

If you'd like to share your ideas in the beginning stages of this project, please do fill in our online google form, or message your ideas to 07955 271653, or via email to india4surreyhills@gmail.com.

Our campaigns committee have been busy responding to the government consultations regarding fit notes and PIP. If you would like to get involved in our campaigns group, please call/SMS the office or email us at involvement@surreycoalition.org.uk

Mental Health Update



Look out for our Talking Mental Health newsletter which now comes out every six weeks and is full of interesting content. To read the April edition [click here](#).

You can read more about our other mental health projects, Community Transformation and Pathways to Change in this edition of Coalition News.

Independent Mental Health Network (IMHN)

The IMHN team held a coffee morning at a supported living house in Woking for women who have been in hospital for their mental health and now are returning to living in the community in a supported environment for up to 2 years. It was very interesting to hear both the residents and staff experiences of mental health services and where they felt improvements could be made.

Our next IMHN coordinating meeting will be held at on Friday 26th July at 1pm - 3pm. The two local area mental health stakeholder meetings (North West Surrey & East and mid Surrey) will be held in August. We hope to see some of you at one of these meetings.

Finally, the term of the IMHN chair Megan Siarey has come to an end and we would like to thank her and our vice-chair David Muir for all of their hard work during the last couple of years. Nominations for new chair and vice-chair of the IMHN were collected from members in April, and the new chair and vice-chair will be announced at our next coordinating meeting and we are excited to welcome someone new into the roles.

FoCUS



Forum of Carers and people who Use our Services

The FoCUS Committee meeting was held in early May. Issues raised in our March & April local area meetings were raised with Surrey and Borders Partnership (SABP) managers at this meeting. The meeting was full of interesting conversations, including service users expressing valid frustration about the slow pace of change around some issues.

The staff team are currently working on implementing changes to the structure of FoCUS with the hope to include new people in the discussions we have and taking some of the formality out of the meetings. This will mean slightly changing how our local area meetings run and building in more co-production activity with members and Surrey and Borders projects. The changes will come into effect from our June local area meetings.

If you have used services from Surrey and Boarders Partnership NHS Trust before we would welcome you popping into a future meeting to share your thoughts about things are running. For more information about FoCUS please contact Jennie Coulson at Jennie.Coulson@surreycoalition.org.uk

Transforming Mental Health Support: A Community Approach

The Community Mental Health Transformation Programme has teamed up with the Surrey Coalition of Disabled People to bring a fresh perspective to mental health support in Surrey and North East Hampshire. This exciting research, conducted from January 2023 to March 2024, was about understanding why our residents may be reluctant or unable to get mental health support in their local community.

The project in numbers:

15 months of dedicated work

255 survey responses

24 focus group participants

57 co-designed recommendations to improve the accessibility of our services

3 Co-production and Community Engagement Officers with lived experience working for The Coalition on this project

400+ Surrey and North East Hants residents engaged





The main goal was to understand how mental health support can better fit the needs of the community. Here's what the project focused on:

- **Assessing Service Suitability:** How well do current health and wellbeing services meet people's needs?
- **Identifying Barriers:** What obstacles do people face when seeking support?
- **Understanding Specific Needs:** What unique challenges do different groups encounter?
- **Improving Existing Services:** How can mental health support be better in Surrey and North East Hampshire?

The project concentrated on the adult population of Surrey and North East Hampshire, specifically aiming to hear from: older adults (65+), neurodivergent individuals, the LGBTQ+ community, and men. The focus later expanded to include carers and young adults and university students (18-25).

Community Engagement

The team reached out to over 400 residents through surveys and focus groups, collecting invaluable insights:

Focus groups, held throughout 2023, provided deeper context to these survey findings, allowing participants to share their stories and experiences in a supportive environment.



Co-Designed Recommendations

All of the learning from the community engagement gave the researchers 60 commonly raised topics which were brought together into 10 key themes. 57 recommendations were then designed from these and co-produced with a diverse group including 11 people with lived experience.

The key themes identified were:

- **Diversity & Assumptions**
- **Communicating the Issue**
- **Access & Availability**
- **Mental Health Stigma**
- **Crisis and Prevention**
- **Holistic Needs**
- **Choice & Autonomy**

The learning from this projects themes and recommendations will guide the Community Mental Health Transformation Programme in refining and enhancing mental health services to ensure they are inclusive, accessible, and effective for everyone in the community.

This collaborative approach highlights the power of community engagement and the importance of listening to those with lived experience. Together we hope to create a mental health support system that truly meets the needs of all its users.

You can find out more about the project on our website:

Community Mental Health Transformation Programme: IMHN Co-production and Community Engagement - Surrey Coalition of Disabled People

Pathways to Change: Enhancing Mental Health Services for South-Asian Communities



The Pathways to Change project is breaking new ground by exploring how South-Asian adults in Surrey and North-East Hampshire experience mental health services. This research, a collaboration between the Surrey Coalition of Disabled People and the Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum (SMEF), delves into cultural, religious, and language barriers that affect mental health support for this community.

Background and Objectives

Building on a 2020 report by SMEF and the Independent Mental Health Network, this project aims to shed light on whether mental health services are inclusive and effective for South-Asian residents. By engaging directly with the community, Pathways to Change seeks to create a more understanding and accommodating mental health service landscape.



Community Engagement

The project reached out to 77 South-Asian individuals, using a combination of surveys, focus groups, and one-on-one interviews. A steering group of South-Asian community members, including Bangladeshi, Indian, Nepalese, and Pakistani representatives, guided the research process. Notably, the participants included 69 women and 8 men, reflecting the community's demographics and highlighting the underrepresentation of men in mental health discussions.

Mental health stigma is more pronounced compared to physical illness.

Adapting to Western culture poses additional stress

Traditional gender roles create specific pressures

Key Findings

Older generations resist changing their attitudes toward mental health.

Understanding the structure of South-Asian family units is crucial for effective support

Experiences of Islamophobia exacerbate mental health challenges

Supernatural attributions of mental illness persist among older generations.





Religious Barriers:

Greater support is needed from religious leaders, as they are often the first point of contact.

Some participants felt blamed for their mental health issues due to perceived lapses in religious practice.

Language Barriers:

Terms like “emotional wellbeing” are more acceptable than “mental health”

Older Nepalese residents find the lack of non-English services particularly challenging.

Other Barriers:

Concerns about privacy and stigma deter people from seeking help

Participants felt dismissed and rushed by healthcare professionals





Recommendations

In July 2023, researchers and stakeholders co-produced a set of recommendations aimed at improving mental health services:

1. **Training:**

Provide Mental Health First Aid and pastoral training to community and religious leaders. Offer cultural and religious awareness training for mental health professionals.

2. **Peer Support:**

Establish peer support groups for different age ranges, ethnicities and genders to foster shared understanding and support.

3. **Public Relations Campaigns:**

Develop co-produced PR campaigns on mental health in various languages. Utilize popular platforms like WhatsApp for dissemination.

4. **Community Engagement:**

Mental health professionals should attend community events, such as the Gurkha Cup, to build trust and raise awareness of available services.

Moving Forward

Pathways to Change aims to bring the voices of South-Asian communities to the forefront of mental health service development. By addressing cultural, religious and language barriers, this project aspires to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for all. Through continued collaboration and community engagement, we can work towards breaking down the stigmas surrounding mental health and ensuring everyone has access to the help they need.

Technology Update



Funding Update

We are delighted to announce that we have secured funding for another year for three of our four locations: Surrey Downs, East Surrey, and Guildford and Waverley. This ensures our volunteer Tech Angels and tech team can continue assisting residents in these Surrey areas for another year.

Even more exciting is our expansion into Runnymede in North West Surrey! For those of you who follow our newsletter, you know that due to previous funding constraints, we couldn't support residents of North West Surrey in overcoming digital exclusion. Now, thanks to Runnymede Borough Council, we can!

The project will run until February 2025 and will primarily focus on supporting working-age people with technology to help them search for jobs and re-enter employment. We will provide tablets on long term loan basis, offer one-on-one lessons, refer people to Brooklands College, and collaborate closely with social prescribers to assist those in need.

While the main focus is on bringing people back to employment, we will also help any Runnymede resident who needs assistance with technology, access to devices, or the internet. We plan to start taking referrals in June, and Attia will be coordinating this project. We hope this marks the beginning of Tech Angels extending our reach across all of Surrey again.



Volunteers

In April, we organised a trip for our volunteers to West Horsley Place Trust. We toured the grade 1 listed medieval manor, dating from 1425, which is undergoing renovation but is open to the public. Fans of the series “Ghosts” will recognise it as a filming location - a must-visit!

Meet our Volunteers

We recently caught up with two of our longest-serving volunteers, Phil and Bob, who have been with us since the early days.

Phil, a retired software engineer, runs a small computer advisory and repair business. He stays active by swimming, spinning, and participating in various sports at the local sports centre. Annually, he and his wife embark on a 3-4 week cycle-camping tour in Europe, relishing both the adventure and the comfort of home afterward.

Bob, a retired IT teacher, lives in Dorking with his wife and enjoys cycling in the Surrey Hills, often off-road with his electric mountain bike. His cycling adventures have taken him to Vietnam, South Africa, and Costa Rica. Bob keeps up-to-date with IT trends, especially AI and robotics.

Last but not least

We continue to offer 1:1 sessions, group training for people, free data SIM cards from Vodafone, O2 and Three, as well as tablets and mobile phones.

Here are some of our recent stats:

Tech Statistics

**60 new members joined
between April 1st and mid-
May.**

**33 active
Tech
Angels**

**Average number
of Tech Angels
visits per weeks
is 14.**

**97 visits have
been
conducted.**

We are proud of the progress and grateful for the continued support. Here's to another productive year!

"The best thing about the Tech Angels Project was the one-on-one attention. We focused on what was important to us, with a clear plan for each session. It was incredibly helpful to stick to our chosen subjects and know what to expect each time."

Get More Active Update



Exciting News! The Get More Active Project has received funding to increase our focus in East Surrey for adults with Learning Disabilities and Autism. The aim of the project remains to support Disabled people to be more physically active in a way that suits you and your needs.

If you live in East Surrey and have a Learning Disability or Autism you can refer yourself to the project or your community support team can refer you. If you are a patient at Townhill Surgery (Caterham), Birchwood Surgery (Horley) or Greystone Surgery (Redhill) then you can speak to your GP about the service.

Once you have been referred you can access any of the services. All of them are FREE to access.

If you would like to be involved with the project please contact:

Katy Hubbard

Email: Katy.hubbard@surreycoalition.org.uk

Phone/SMS: 07434 865062



A **one-to-one conversation** to offer advice on the ways you can be a little more physically active as well as finding out what suitable activities are available in your area

“Get more Active Get Togethers” - regular meet ups and taster sessions at activities in your community. These are a great opportunity to try out something new or just see what an activity is all about. They are always fun and a great social event! In the past we have enjoyed cycling, sailing, swimming, and wellbeing walks. This summer we will be trying out golf as well as returning to the Superhero Tri - the UK's only mass participation disability sports event!

“Active Buddy” - you can be matched with a volunteer buddy who can offer support getting to an activity or during the activity itself. Buddies may also provide transport to activities.

A **weekly online chat group** for the latest news and top tips as well as the opportunity to chat with friends, share ideas and successes. If you want you can also join in with a short seated exercise session!

Information about activities and local events via our website or give Katy a call on 07434 865062

We do have a small budget for transport, so if you're in East Surrey and want to get involved, please get in touch



The Superhero Tri is now 3 months away! We had so much fun last year we are going back for another go! Teams of Coalition staff and members will be taking on a relay of swimming, cycling, walking, wheeling or running. You can read all about last years event here: <https://surreycoalition.org.uk/superhero-tri-2023/>

If that's inspired you to give this year's event a try then get in touch with Katy:
Email. Katy.hubbard@surreycoalition.org.uk
Phone/SMS: 07434 865062

This is also a great opportunity to raise funds for the Coalition and we have launched our official fundraiser for 2024. Please share this link and help the Coalition raise funds!
[Fundraiser - Superhero Tri 2024! \(peoplesfundraising.com\)](https://peoplesfundraising.com)



Involvement Update



Disability Empowerment Network (DENS)

As you know, the DENS meetings have been running for several years. They have been a great mechanism to connect, coproduce and provide valuable feedback.

In more recent times, The Coalition has set up many new ways to connect and coproduce with our members and professionals with an interest in our work. These new ways of working duplicate the work of DENS in many aspects so moving forward we're going to merge the work of the DENS into the committees, boards and groups mentioned below.

We now have a campaigns committee that decides on what we should be campaigning for and supports that work with providing insight, case studies and buckets of energy and enthusiasm.

Our members worked with Surrey County Council to coproduce the Physical Disability and Sensory Impairment strategy and set up the Disability Partnership Board. This is really exciting and a reflection of everybody's hard work that this vision has been realised.

We have also started to hold ad hoc meetings on specific subjects. For example, we recently held a meeting for Surrey County Council to talk to our members about the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment on Loneliness. These sessions work really well as we're able to devote a chunk of time to focus on the topic. We're aiming to keep these sessions running and will try to run them at different times of the day/evening to ensure we cater for all.

And of course, we have our specialist interest group meetings - for example Long term neurological conditions, Surrey Vision Action Group etc. These groups bring together members and professionals working in the area.

Finally, we now run a social event most days of the working week, providing an opportunity for you to connect with others and have fun at Glee club or the weekly quiz!



So there's something for everyone to get involved with depending on your preference. Whether you want to join the weekly quiz, get involved with our campaigns work or provide strategic input via the Disability Partnership Board, we're very keen for you to get involved.

If you'd like more information on any of the topics mentioned above, please contact the involvement team involvement@surreycoalition.org.uk or call the main office for more information on 01483 456 558

Our heartfelt thanks to all Chairs, Vice Chairs and members of the DENS who have given so much time and valuable input into the DENS meetings. We could not have held the meetings without you.

Nextdoor Nature

Coalition members, staff and other organisations based at Astolat in Burpham are taking part in a project in conjunction with the Wildlife Trust which is bringing communities together to help nature flourish where people live and work.

The group undertook a tour of the grounds at Astolat and discussed their ideas for improving the grounds at Astolat for people and nature. We even found a Bee Orchid growing in the grass at the back of the building! There were lots of ideas and an abundance of enthusiasm. The 'Astolat Community' are looking to start the project by creating a herb garden at the back of the office. We have lots of other ideas to work on. If you would like to join this project please contact the Involvement Team.



Growing Together: Inclusion and Conservation in the Surrey Hills

Growing Together is an 18-month project funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. A huge thank you to National Lottery Players. The aim of the project is to engage underrepresented communities in the Surrey Hills countryside by co-designing a programme of nature-based activities aimed at building confidence, developing skills, and improving health and wellbeing.

We will be working with three key partners, Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum, Surrey Coalition of Disabled People and Surrey Choices who support people with a range of disabilities, particularly learning disabilities. All three of these organisations support people who traditionally face barriers to the countryside and environmental volunteering, and we will be working with them to co-create experiences and processes to overcome some of these barriers. We hope to create an ambassador network, whereby participants of the project encourage other members of their community to visit and enjoy the Surrey Hills, increasing representation of diverse communities in our visitor and volunteer profiles.

We need your ideas! We would really appreciate 5 minutes of your time to give us some of your initial thoughts and ideas by completing this quick survey.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf9jb44QEMRPKaYR00EJq3kh9HbbRnK_C3nUojn80bU2tr3IA/viewform?usp=sf_link

Do you struggle to get to your local food bank?

What is Access to Food?

Access to Food provides funding to people struggling with the cost of living who may also have difficulty, due to disability or long-term health condition, getting to their local food bank.

The scheme covers the cost of a taxi to a local food bank.

Who is eligible for Access to Food?

Anyone who is over 18, with a physical or mental disability who is in need of support but would struggle to travel to their nearest food bank.

How do I apply?

To apply for the scheme, or for more information, email involvement@surreycoalition.org.uk, call 01483 456558, text 07908 671402, or go to surreycoalition.org.uk/accesstofood

You will be asked to complete a questionnaire to confirm your eligibility.



Registered Charity Number: 1206289

Company Limited by Guarantee, number 3298760. Address: Astolat, Coniers Way, Burpham, Guildford GU4 7HL



Angie's Farewell Lunch

The smiling legend, Angie Taylor, left The Coalition at the end of May. We held a little staff lunch to say a HUGE thank you for all of Angie's hard work and dedication to The Coalition.

Angie has been involved with Access All Areas visits, making sure that venues and the countryside are accessible for all, she has run many a virtual social event, has organised many a member meeting, probably organised and booked more taxis than anybody ever and attended lots of events to promote our work!

Angie was seconded to us from Woking Borough Council in 2018 and has been a force for good working with us. We will most definitely miss her enthusiasm, wisdom and smile! However, once a Coalition member, always a Coalition member so we're sure Angie will be popping up at member events in the future.

Thank you, Angie, and thank you to Woking Borough Council for agreeing to the secondment all those years ago!

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

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 contact 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 JULY

DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY
Monday 15th July	10:30am - 12 noon	Community Equipment Group in person at Millbrook and on Zoom
Thursday 18th July	10:30am - 12 noon	Surrey Vision Action group on Zoom only

Tuesday 23rd July	10:30am - 12 noon	Long Term Neurological Conditions Group on Zoom only
-------------------	-------------------	--

EVENTS AUGUST

DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY
Wednesday 14th August	10am - 11am	Northwest Mental Health Stakeholder Group on zoom only
Thursday 15th August	10am - 11am	East and Mid Mental Health Stakeholder Group on zoom only
Monday 25th August	Bank Holiday	Bank Holiday

EVENTS SEPTEMBER

DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY
Thursday 19th September	10:30am - 12 noon	Hard of Hearing Forum on Zoom only
Friday 27th September	1pm - 3pm	IMHN Coordinating meeting on zoom only



We always love to hear from you!

Office: Email:

info@surreycoalition.org.uk

Phone: 01483 456 558 SMS:
07908671402

Immy Markwick

FoCUS and IMHN

Phone: 07593 991 993

Yasmin Broome Involvement

Phone: 07455 267 424

Sylwia Squires

Tech to Community Connect Project

Phone: 07547 016 933

Guy Hill

Independent Mental Health Network

Coordinator

Phone: 07305 009 869

Katy Hubbard

Get More Active project

Phone: 07434 865 062

Surrey Coalition of Disabled People
Astolat, Coniers Way,
Burpham, Guildford,
Surrey GU4 7HL



Let us lead you in the right direction

With over 20 years of experience within direct payments, DhPayroll offers a simple yet comprehensive service that is both efficient and cost effective.

Our friendly and experienced staff are always on hand to answer queries and reassure anyone who is worried about their responsibilities as an employer.

Join us today and benefit from:

- ✓ A payroll service provided by an experienced and helpful team.
- ✓ Free workplace pensions auto-enrolment set-up and support.
- ✓ Free text messaging reminder service.
- ✓ Free secure online portal for accessing payroll documents.
- ✓ Monthly Newslink updates, blogs and social media posts, to keep you up to date and in the know.
- ✓ An accessible website.
- ✓ Online submission of timesheets and other forms, for ease and accuracy.



Get in touch today!

