

Forum News

March 2021



This copy of Forum News forms the notes of a meeting held by Zoom on 17th March 2021.
If you would like to know more about any of the items, please contact us at:
mail@selseycommunityforum.uk.

- ◆ Although many activities remain on hold, there was a general expectation that they would begin to start up again in the not-too-distant future. After the recent closure of the Evergreen social group, it was considered important to nurture our local groups and help them overcome problems in re-starting their activities.
- ◆ The Covid-19 Vaccination Centre in The Selsey Centre had recently appeared in the country's top five for delivery of vaccinations – another outstanding local success.
- ◆ VAAC reported that, although local voluntary organisations had benefited from funding as a result of Covid, they were now anxious to return to normal. A report on the changing needs of the local voluntary sector during 2020 is at:
<https://www.vaac.org.uk/perch/resources/vaac-leading-in-response-to-the-changing-needs-of-the-vcse-in-arun-and-chichester-january-2021-report.pdf>
 - ◆ Together with Mind, VAAC are holding a Mental Health Forum by Zoom on 24th March. You can find out more and apply to join at:
<https://www.vaac.org.uk/events-training/training>
- ◆ West Sussex CC was providing food vouchers during the Easter holiday to families with children eligible for free school meals. In addition, the Care Manager's Forum continues to provide a useful link in the Council's support for local care homes.
 - ◆ The future of the WSCC Family and Children Centres is to be the subject of a consultation. See more at: <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/news/early-help-redesign-consultation-approved/>
- ◆ Selsey Medical Practice Patient Group was planning a survey to assess patient's reactions to medical provision during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- ◆ East Beach Church had reopened for Sunday services which were still also being streamed. The church was examining the impacts of lockdown on its congregation to ascertain what might be done to support them as we emerge from the Covid restrictions.
 - ◆ The church continued to be involved in partnership with UK Harvest, the Food Bank and the Methodist Church in the distribution of food supplies to those in need. One hundred vouchers for fruit and vegetables have been funded and will be issued for the Easter school holiday period to households where children receive free school meals. Subsequently, funding is in place for thirty households to receive similar vouchers every two weeks until June.
- ◆ Since the passing of Father John last July, St Wilfrid's Church has had a number of different priests providing services. The current incumbent is believed to be enthusiastic about working with the local community.
- ◆ Arts Dream Selsey were planning Mass Musical Moments, an online production intended to be streamed locally. In addition, discussions were taking place on the future of this year's Art Exhibition. Although the funding was in place for a production of 'Tonight Charlie

Chaplin at the Pavilion', there were now doubts about the availability of the Pavilion; the search for a possible alternative venue continues.

- ◆ It was hoped to hold both Singing and Arts Workshops in August and that Sing Your Heart Out would resume in September.
- ◆ U3A were still uncertain about when and where their meetings will restart but a regular newsletter had kept the group together during Covid.
- ◆ The Academy is open again and The Bridge had been working closely with others in counselling more than fifty young people, some from local Primary Schools. The waiting list is growing and enquiries about making referrals from outside the local area were having to be turned down.
- ◆ The Hidden Garden, originally a project by The Bridge, is in the Academy's grounds and is being developed as a community garden for young and old. This environmental and educational project, complete with a wildlife area, will allow people to work in or simply visit the the garden for enjoyment and fresh air. It is hoped that the Hidden Garden might be a catalyst for a further new Shared Gardens project involving older people's unused gardens being utilised by families for growing food. Ideas on how this project might be developed would be welcome.
- ◆ Aspirations to set up a gateway for Kickstart, the Government project for helping young people into employment, had been thwarted by Covid and difficulties in recruiting local businesses to provide thirty job placements. Nevertheless, subsequent discussions with DWP, Clarion Housing and others had revealed possible alternative ways ahead and these were being further investigated.
- ◆ The My Future Care project, which records people's preferences for their future care, had received additional funding and a pilot scheme would commence with trained volunteers shortly after Easter.
- ◆ Selsey Lions were initiating a recruitment drive which it was hoped would increase their current membership and reduce the average age of its members.
- ◆ The Selsey Royal Navy Association also hoped to increase membership by attracting serving RN members; their modest annual subscription has been cancelled as an inducement.
- ◆ Selsey Woodcarvers plan to again pick up their chisels and start carving in May.
- ◆ The Selsey Care Shop, with appropriate Covid-19 safety measures, remains open and is providing a wide range of support.
 - ◆ Befriending has been a life-line for many during the last year and, in January and February this year, 2,300 phone calls were made to keep in touch with lonely and vulnerable people in Selsey. There was a wealth of anecdotal evidence that support offered by daily telephone calls had been instrumental in helping people through a difficult time.
 - ◆ The Care Shop has been dealing with increasingly complex needs and, in partnership with statutory and other organisations, has achieved significant success, particularly in relation to housing matters.
 - ◆ A number of grant applications were being submitted to continue the shop's current services and to develop new ones, the need for which had become apparent during the Covid pandemic.
- ◆ Selsey Money Support continues with trained volunteers offering debt and benefits advice as well as tackling other associated problems. In the last 9 months, the service has interacted with 120 individuals on 543 occasions with around a dozen different types of needs arising from debts of up to £20K. The service had also shed light on local poverty issues.
- ◆ The SHOP hopes to reopen in May, perhaps with a small exhibition by a local artist.
- ◆ Apetito were looking forward to being able get back into closer involvement with the community. It was noted that food deliveries during the Covid period were one of the

important things that had held the community together.

- ◆ Chichester DC are seeking comments on a paper which aims to define the effects of climate change on the Manhood Peninsula.
- ◆ Local interest has been shown in the Quiet Lanes project (sponsored by CPRE - the countryside charity) which allows local authorities to designate minor country roads as Quiet Lanes to maintain their character by seeking to contain rising traffic growth and better allow for shared use by walkers, cyclists, horse riders and others. You can find more at: https://www.cpre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/quiet_lanes_1.pdf
- ◆ On the 23rd March, the anniversary of the first Covid-19 lockdown, it was intended to take part in the national Day of Reflection both in memory of those we have lost during the year and to thank those volunteers and key workers who have done so much to see us through a very difficult period.
- ◆ Carol Purnell retires shortly as a WSCC Councillor but will continue to serve on the local District and Town Councils. Carol was thanked warmly for her long involvement and support for local issues.
- ◆ The next meeting of the Selsey Community Forum will be by Zoom at 4.15pm on Wednesday 19th May 2021.