Community connections evaluation
Report of findings

Date report published 8 April 2016

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Executive summary

Surrey community connections services are universal access services to support people with mental health needs to stay well in their communities. They are an integral part of the pathway for people who experience mental health problems, often bridging the gap between primary mental health care and secondary mental health care. There are five voluntary sector providers covering the 11 districts and boroughs in Surrey, who are commissioned for the outcomes and outputs they deliver.

Providers work in different ways to deliver those outcomes. This evaluation analyses the impact of the different models of community connections services in Surrey in 2014/15 (the second year of operation of these services). Performance monitoring data for the financial year 2014/15 was enriched by survey data obtained from people who use community connections and staff/volunteers working in the services.
CornerHouse is the lead provider for the borough of Woking. CornerHouse is a local voluntary sector organisation that has been established for 13 years with a history of delivering community connections services in Woking. A host of different groups and charities operate under the CornerHouse umbrella. The groups provided are self-help groups with CornerHouse staff encouraging people to be active in their own recovery. Whilst staff may signpost people to further support they encourage people, where possible, to take that active role themselves.

The total population of Woking according to the 2011 Census was 99,567. The population of Surrey was 1,132,390 which means Woking accounted for 8.8%.

The graph to the right shows the number of community connections referrals received per 10,000 population for each quarter in year 2 for Woking, as well as the county average for the same period.

The survey of people using CornerHouse service illustrates improved outcomes, which reinforces the quarterly reporting of recovery star outcomes (see charts overleaf).

90% of respondents said CornerHouse had very much or moderately helped to improve their life. Analysing and exploring the qualitative feedback further, the following key themes that make CornerHouse a service that improves people’s lives include:

- Enabling people to make and maintain a network of support
- Enabling self-help and recovery
- Appropriate courses, groups and activities
- Provides a reason for people to get out and about
Executive summary - CornerHouse

- Supportive staff and volunteers, giving help and advice

“It has given me an opportunity to get out and meet other people with similar issues. We can discuss our problems in a safe environment. It means I do not feel so isolated. I have also taken part in various social activities which have been arranged at weekends. These have included theatre outings, meals at restaurants and cycling events. I believe that Cornerhouse is providing a vital service to those with mental health issues. The team is very enthusiastic and proactive and deserves all the support and resources it can get in order to continue to grow.”

In conclusion, CornerHouse is a well established local service. In 14/15, they developed their business plan which is aligned to the local integrated commissioning strategy for emotional well-being and mental health and they work in partnership with local statutory and voluntary services to improve mental health in Woking.

CornerHouse have above the county average for referrals and continue to develop their services to meet the needs of local people, such as starting a depression/anxiety support group for younger adults. CornerHouse also provides specific services for Asian women through their SHIFA groups and runs groups and services in areas of deprivation within the borough. At the end of March 2015, CornerHouse were supporting 369 people.

The data demonstrates a growth in caseload (from 284 to 369) over the evaluation period and 90% of people surveyed stated that the support they had received had very much or moderately improved their life. Specifically, CornerHouse enabled people to make and maintain support networks, gave people a reason to get out and about and supported self help and recovery. This was through the courses, groups and activities available and the quality of staff and volunteers. Recovery star outcomes also illustrate the vast majority of people who used the service improved or maintained their well-being.
Mary Frances Trust

Mary Frances Trust is the lead provider for the boroughs of Mole Valley and Epsom and Ewell and is a well established local voluntary sector organisation. Mary Frances Trust historically delivered community connections services in Mole Valley, and Epsom and Ewell was a new area they covered from April 2013. **At the centre of their work is the person they provide services for, looking at an individual from a perspective of their assets and not mental health problems.** Mary Frances Trust tailor support to help people achieve their goals and aspirations, allowing people to start their journey to recovery and progress at their own pace. They provide a “wrap around” service and a safety net for people who are already in the community.

The total population of Epsom & Ewell according to the 2011 Census was 75,102 and Mole Valley was 85,375. The population of Surrey was 1,132,390 which means Epsom & Ewell accounted for 6.6% and Mole Valley 7.5%.

The graph to the right shows the number of community connections referrals received per 10,000 population for each quarter in year 2 for Woking, as well as the county average for the same period.

The survey of people using Mary Frances Trust services illustrates improved outcomes, which reinforces the quarterly reporting of recovery star outcomes (see charts below).

96% of respondents said Mary Frances Trust had very much or moderately helped to improve their life. Analysing and exploring the qualitative feedback further, the following key themes that make Mary Frances Trust a service that improves people’s lives include:

- Appropriate courses, groups and activities
- Enabling people to make and maintain a network of support
Executive summary - Mary Frances Trust

- Supportive staff and volunteers, giving help and advice
- Enabling self-help and recovery
- Providing personalised help, advice and support

“It has given me a focus and a purpose to aid my recovery. I am extremely grateful to all the staff - it is a lifeline”.

In conclusion, Mary Frances Trust is a well established local service. From the existing base in Leatherhead, covering Mole Valley, they started delivering community connections services in Epsom and Ewell in 2013. Referral numbers in Epsom and Ewell are now slightly above the county average by the end of 2014/15, which is excellent progress for a new service. Mole Valley referral numbers are also above the county average.

Mary Frances Trust continues to develop their services to meet the needs of local people, such as starting a bi-polar support group. They also run a support group for people who have a hoarding disorder, the only one in Surrey, which attracts people from different parts of Surrey. At the end of March 2015, Mary Frances Trust was supporting 179 people in Mole valley and 136 people in Epsom and Ewell.

The data demonstrates an increase in caseload (for both areas from 261 to 315) over the evaluation period and 96% of people surveyed stated that the support they had received had very much or moderately improved their life. Specifically, Mary France Trust enabled people to make and maintain support networks, provided a personalised approach and supported self help and recovery. This was through the courses, groups and activities available and the quality of staff and volunteers. Recovery star outcomes also illustrate the majority of people who used the service improved or maintained their well-being.
Richmond Fellowship (East) is the lead provider for the boroughs of Reigate & Banstead and Tandridge. They have worked in the Reigate and Banstead area for many years, with Tandridge being a new area for community connections when the services started in April 2013. **Richmond Fellowship works with partner providers to deliver community connections services.** The service has a holistic approach to recovery and with the use of the recovery star, service users are encouraged to take the lead in this process and particularly in their reviews of where they think they are at in all aspects of the star.

The total population of Reigate & Banstead according to the 2011 Census was 137,835 and Tandridge was 82,998. The population of Surrey was 1,132,390 which means Reigate & Banstead accounted for 12.2% and Tandridge 7.3%.

The graph to the right shows the number of community connections referrals received per 10,000 population for each quarter in year 2 for Reigate & Banstead and Tandridge, as well as the county average for the same period.

The survey of people using Richmond Fellowship services illustrates improved outcomes, which reinforces the quarterly reporting of recovery star outcomes (see charts below).

100% of respondents said Richmond Fellowship had very much or moderately helped to improve their life. Analysing and exploring the qualitative feedback further, the following key themes that make Richmond Fellowship a service that improves people's lives include:

- Enabling self-help and recovery
- Appropriate courses, groups and activities available
Enabling people to make and maintain a network of support

“It provided an opportunity to focus on something and a positive sense of involvement as well as support and encouragement.”

In conclusion, Richmond Fellowship is a well established local service in East Surrey. From the existing base in Redhill covering Reigate and Banstead, they started delivering community connections services in Tandridge in 2013. Referral numbers in Tandridge were slightly below the county average by the end of 2014/15, however Reigate and Banstead referrals were substantially higher than the county average.

Richmond Fellowship continues to develop services to meet the needs of local people, such as starting art workshops in Tandridge. They run a service user forum which informs service developments and are well connected with other local voluntary and statutory services. At the end of March 2015, Richmond Fellowship was supporting 531 people in Reigate and Banstead and 190 people in Tandridge.

The data demonstrates a growth in caseload over the evaluation period (for both areas from 582 to 721) and 100% of people surveyed stated that the support they had received had very much or moderately improved their life. Specifically, Richmond Fellowship enabled people to make and maintain support networks, and supported self help and recovery. This was through the courses, groups and activities available. Recovery star outcomes also illustrate the vast majority of people who used the service improved or maintained their well-being.
Richmond Fellowship (north west)

Richmond Fellowship (north west) is the lead provider for the boroughs of Spelthorne and Runnymede and is a well-established voluntary sector organisation. Richmond Fellowship was a new provider of community connections services in April 2013 in Spelthorne and Runnymede. Richmond Fellowship works with partner providers to deliver community connections services. Through one to one, face to face meetings with clients, Richmond Fellowship identifies people’s preferences with regard to accessing mainstream community based activities. There is also a variety of groups provided that people can access.

Richmond Fellowship continuously develops and promotes the service as well as developing partnership working with different external organisations.

The total population of Spelthorne according to the 2011 Census was 95,598 and Runnymede was 80,510. The population of Surrey was 1,132,390 which means Spelthorne accounted for 8.4% and Runnymede 7.1%.

The graph to the right shows the number of community connections referrals received per 10,000 population for each quarter in year 2 for Spelthorne and Runnymede, as well as the county average for the same period.

The survey of people using Richmond Fellowship services illustrates improved outcomes, which reinforces the quarterly reporting of recovery star outcomes (see charts overleaf).

93% of respondents said Richmond Fellowship had very much or moderately helped to improve their life. Analysing and exploring the qualitative feedback further, the following key themes that make Richmond Fellowship a service that improves people’s lives include:

- Provides a reason for people to get out and about
Executive summary - Richmond Fellowship (north west)

- Enabling people to make and maintain a network of support
- Appropriate courses, groups and activities available
- Enabling self-help and recovery

“I don’t feel so lonely and isolated. It’s given me new skills and confidence.”

In conclusion, Richmond Fellowship was a new provider of community connections services in Runnymede and Spelthorne from 2013. Referral numbers in Spelthorne were below the county average by the end of 2014/15, however Runnymede referrals were higher than the county average.

Richmond Fellowship continues to develop services to meet the needs of local people, such as starting an allotment group. They run service user meetings which inform service developments and deliver 1:1 as well as group work. At the end of March 2015, Richmond Fellowship was supporting 333 people in Runnymede and 293 people in Spelthorne.

The data demonstrates a growth in caseload over the evaluation period (for both areas from 561 to 626) and 93% of people surveyed stated that the support they had received had very much or moderately improved their life. Specifically, Richmond Fellowship enabled people to make and maintain support networks, provided a reason to get out and about and supported self help and recovery. This was through the courses, groups and activities available. Recovery star outcomes also illustrate that all people who completed recovery star improved or maintained their well-being.
The Welcome Project

The Welcome Project is the lead provider for the boroughs of Surrey Heath, Guildford and Waverley. The services provided by The Welcome Project vary as they are provided in three very different areas and settings. In Surrey Heath almost all services are run in the community by staff, volunteers and peers. In Waverley there is a centre in the community which is open three days a week as well as other activities available in other community settings. In Guildford the services are provided mainly through partner organisations; Oakleaf, Guildford Action and Voluntary Action South West Surrey.

The total population of Guildford according to the 2011 Census was 137,183, Surrey Heath was 86,144 and Waverley 121,572. The population of Surrey was 1,161,300 which means Guildford accounted for 12.1%, Surrey Heath 7.6% and Waverley 10.7%.

The graph to the right shows the number of community connections referrals received per 10,000 population for each quarter in year 2 for Guildford, Waverley and Surrey Heath, as well as the county average for the same period.

The survey of people using The Welcome Project services illustrates improved outcomes, which reinforces the quarterly reporting of recovery star outcomes (see charts below).

89% of respondents said Welcome Project had very much or moderately helped to improve their life. Analysing and exploring the qualitative feedback further, the following key themes that make Welcome Project a service that improves people’s lives include:

- Appropriate courses, groups and activities
- Enabling self-help and recovery
Executive summary - The Welcome Project

- Enabling people to make and maintain a network of support
- Provides a reason for people to get out and about
- Supportive staff and volunteers, giving help and advice

“The Welcome Project gave me time to talk to someone on a regular basis as and when I have needed it. They have also given me help and support with practical issues concerning benefits and also as a carer for someone with dementia. I have also taken part in craft and quiz events at Christmas and Easter when my other commitment (voluntary work) has closed down over the holidays and I am on my own.”

In conclusion, The Welcome Project was a new provider of community connections services in Surrey Heath, Guildford and Waverley from 2013. Referral numbers in Waverley and Surrey Heath were below the county average by the end of 2014/15, however Guildford referrals were the highest in the county.

The Welcome Project continues to develop services to meet the needs of local people, such as starting peer led groups to support health and well-being. They use recovery star as a person-centred tool to enable people to be active in their own recovery. At the end of March 2015, The Welcome Project were supporting 187 people in Surrey Heath, 751 people in Guildford and 332 people in Waverley.

The data demonstrates a growth in caseload (for all areas from 876 to 1,270) over the evaluation period and 89% of people surveyed stated that the support they had received had very much or moderately improved their life. Specifically, The Welcome Project enabled people to make and maintain support networks, gave people a reason to get out and about and supported self help and recovery. This was through the courses, groups and activities available and the quality of staff and volunteers. Recovery star outcomes also illustrate the vast majority of people who used the service improved or maintained their well-being.
Wellness With A Goal

WWAG (Wellness With A Goal) is the lead provider in the borough of Elmbridge. **WWAG is a user-led service with much of the direct support delivered by people with experience of mental health problems.** WWAG is a long established provider of services in Elmbridge, with good long-term knowledge of the people being supported.

WWAG are involved in changing attitudes to mental health through the Time to Change Surrey campaign. They also run a range of courses and groups to support people with mental health problems.

The total population of Elmbridge according to the 2011 Census was 130,875. The population of Surrey was 1,132,390 which means Elmbridge accounted for 11.6% of the county total.

The graph to the right shows the number of community connections referrals received per 10,000 population for each quarter in year 2 for Elmbridge, as well as the county average for the same period.

The survey of people using WWAG illustrates improved outcomes (see chart below).

89% of respondents said WWAG had very much or moderately helped to improve their life.

Analysing and exploring the qualitative feedback further, the following key themes that make WWAG a service that improves people’s lives include:

- Appropriate courses, groups and activities
- Enabling self-help and recovery
- Supportive staff and volunteers, giving help and advice
- Enabling people to make and maintain a network of support

“Knowing that there is someone you can talk to, who understands your situation and can provide
Conclusions and recommendations - Wellness With A Goal

help and support if you need it, means a great deal in life to anyone”.

In conclusion, WWAG has been a local voluntary sector provider of mental health services for many years. 2014/15 was a time of change for WWAG, moving towards supporting people in different ways as well as continuing to support people who had used WWAG services for several years to maintain their well-being. The culture shift required to deliver this was underway in 2014/15. WWAG have below the county average for referrals and they have responded to this by continuing to change their services to meet the needs of local people, such as working with stakeholders to develop a business plan to further develop the work they do. At the end of March 2015, WWAG were supporting 209 people.

The data demonstrates a decline in caseload over the evaluation period (from 286 to 209) and 89% of people surveyed stated that the support they had received had very much or moderately improved their life. Specifically, WWAG enabled people to make and maintain support networks and supported self help and recovery. This was through the courses, groups and activities available and the quality of staff and volunteers.

Conclusions and recommendations

The role that these services play in the mental health pathway is crucial. They bridge the perceived gap between primary and secondary care mental health as well as providing a community based support network for individuals throughout their recovery journey. The services promote independence and work in a person-centred way to enable people to achieve their desired outcomes. They also contribute to avoidance and management of crisis and a reduction in dependence on statutory services. At the end of 2014/15, the average cost per individual accessing community connections services was £118.06.

The key conclusions of the findings outlined in this report are:

- The community connections services are cost effective
- They provide a key strategic importance in the mental health pathway
- They are valued by stakeholders and demonstrate a positive impact

Recommendations

1. Monitor, develop and continue to improve community connections services in light of national and local direction of travel
2. Adult Social Care and Clinical Commissioning Groups to continue to fund community connections services to ensure they are sustainable
3. Commissioning and procurement of future community connections services to be informed by both quantitative (numerical) and qualitative (feedback) data
4. Raise the profile of community connections services, highlighting the positive outcomes, value for money and integral role they play in promoting wellbeing and recovery
Table of contents

Executive summary .................................................................................................................. 2
Table of contents .................................................................................................................... 15
Introduction ............................................................................................................................ 16
Methodology .......................................................................................................................... 17
  Provider questionnaire ........................................................................................................... 17
  Staff and volunteer survey ................................................................................................... 17
  Service user questionnaire .................................................................................................. 17
Findings .................................................................................................................................. 19
  CornerHouse ....................................................................................................................... 19
  Mary Frances Trust .............................................................................................................. 29
  Richmond Fellowship ......................................................................................................... 38
  Richmond Fellowship ......................................................................................................... 46
  Welcome Project .................................................................................................................. 53
  Wellness With A Goal .......................................................................................................... 61
Conclusions and recommendations ......................................................................................... 68
Introduction

The community connections services across Surrey developed organically throughout the years as demand increased. In 2012/2013 commissioners of adult mental health services in Surrey undertook a strategic review to consider equity of access and provision, to develop community connections services in each district and borough within Surrey. Funding from adult social care and health was brought together to enable a tender process for services, resulting in five lead providers delivering community connections services in the 11 districts and boroughs in Surrey from April 2013. These services are an integral part of the pathway for people who experience mental health problems, often bridging the gap between primary mental health care and secondary mental health care.

The community connections services were co-designed: the outcomes and outputs that services are expected to deliver were defined in partnership with people who have experience of mental health problems, carers and a wide range of stakeholders. A consistent view from all stakeholders was the importance of enabling people to stay well in their community. The provision of local voluntary sector community connections organisations was recognised as a key way for people to make and maintain social networks, reduce isolation and access mainstream community activities, which keep people well.

As services are commissioned for the outcomes they deliver, providers work in different ways to deliver those outcomes. This evaluation analyses the impact of the different models of community connections services currently operating in Surrey in terms of:

- Improving outcomes for people with self-defined mental health needs
- Value for money
- Contribution to the delivery of the Care Act duties of prevention and wellbeing, the NHS Five Year Forward view and local priorities around mental health and wellbeing

This evaluation analyses data from the financial year 2014/15 and feedback was sought from people using community connections services and the people working in community connections services in May/June 2015.
Methodology

Service provider questionnaire

Each provider was sent a questionnaire to complete; this consisted of 11 questions which were all qualitative.

Staff and volunteer survey

This was only available online via SurreySays.co.uk. It consisted of nine questions, three of which were quantitative, the rest were qualitative. Each service was provided with a draft email which included a private URL to the online survey for them to send round to all their staff and volunteers. There were 45 submitted online and five which were printed and sent through the post which were manually entered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Paid staff responses</th>
<th>Volunteer responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corner House (in Woking)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Frances Trust (in Epsom &amp; Ewell and Mole Valley)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richmond Fellowship (in Reigate &amp; Banstead and Tandridge)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richmond Fellowship (in Spelthorne and Runnymede areas)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcome Project (in Surrey Heath, Guildford and Waverley)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellness With a Goal (in Elmbridge)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Service user questionnaire

This questionnaire was available both online via a private URL on SurreySays.co.uk and as a paper copy. Each service was provided with a draft email including the URL for them to send to all service users for whom they had email addresses. Those service users who did not have access to email or the internet were either sent a survey or provided one when they were accessing the service. 1,219 paper surveys were printed, along with a letter: these were then sealed in a stamped envelope which were given to the providers for them to address themselves.
We are unable to provide an accurate response rate as we don’t know exactly how many people were provided with the survey, however if we assume everyone receiving a service at the end of quarter four 2014/15 was provided the opportunity to complete the survey then the response rate would be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Online responses</th>
<th>Paper responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corner House (in Woking)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Frances Trust (in Epsom &amp; Ewell and Mole Valley)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richmond Fellowship (in Reigate &amp; Banstead and Tandridge)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richmond Fellowship (in Spelthorne and Runnymede areas)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcome Project (in Surrey Heath, Guildford and Waverley)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellness With a Goal (in Elmbridge)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question not answered</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Responses as a percentage of service users as at end of quarter 4 2014/15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corner House (in Woking)</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Frances Trust (in Epsom &amp; Ewell and Mole Valley)</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richmond Fellowship (in Reigate &amp; Banstead and Tandridge)</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richmond Fellowship (in Spelthorne and Runnymede areas)</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcome Project (in Surrey Heath, Guildford and Waverley)</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellness With a Goal (in Elmbridge)</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings

CornerHouse (Woking)

Local context

The total population of Woking according to the 2011 Census was 99,567. The population of Surrey was 1,132,390 which means Woking accounted for 8.8%.

The graph to the left shows the number of community connections referrals received per 10,000 population for each quarter in year 2 for Woking, as well as the county average for the same period.

There are 0.5% more males in Woking than the Surrey average.

CornerHouse received a much higher proportion of referrals from females than the county average. While the groups are open to everyone and many of the groups are generic support groups with no focus on one gender, there are some which by their nature attract more females e.g. the postnatal depression support group.

The 2014 midyear estimate of the 18-64 population for Surrey was 693,037.

The graph to the left shows the split in the 16+ population for Woking and Surrey. It also has the referrals received by CornerHouse in year two split by age. However, due to the age bands not matching direct comparisons can't be made.

To meet needs of younger adults, in 2014 CornerHouse started a depression/anxiety support group specifically for people aged 18-25 which has been successful and is now well established.
Woking has a relatively higher proportion of Asian/Asian British residents than the Surrey average. The SHIFA groups that meet at CornerHouse have a strong community of Asian women who attend regularly and obtain emotional support. The women are also provided with help integrating into the local community by attending English classes, fitness classes and work skills workshops. SHIFA assist CornerHouse in reaching those who may otherwise find it difficult to integrate or attend groups for emotional support.

The English Indices of Deprivation 2010 is an overall measure of multiple deprivation experienced by people living in an area and is calculated for every Lower layer Super Output Area (LSOA) in England.

Woking scores 9.93 meaning it is the third most deprived borough/district in the county. The CornerHouse building is approximately 5 minute walk from Woking town centre which has excellent rail and bus links. In addition to the services taking place within the main CornerHouse building, they have services taking place in the more deprived wards in Woking, such as the Sheerwater area.
About the service

In the evaluation period, on average 71% of people who used the service were not in receipt of another mental health service, such as primary care based psychological therapies or secondary mental health care delivered by Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. This would suggest that CornerHouse reach a range of people who get no other support for their mental health needs.

CornerHouse is a local voluntary sector organisation that has been established for 13 years. They have a host of different groups and charities that operate under the CornerHouse umbrella. This way of working enables CornerHouse to provide a wide range of services ranging from depression support, eating disorder support, walking groups, SHIFA (Asian women’s network), Woking Mind groups, carers support and Richmond Fellowship employment support. They have very close working relationships with all of these agencies providing a more holistic approach to care. With a focus on group work CornerHouse are able to support a wider range of needs with the resources available and are unique in that all services are available in one location. The provision of one to one work with clients eg recovery stars is also available.

CornerHouse has built good links with agencies in the local community to help publicise and help with partnership working. They are continually building on close working relationships with the community mental health services, encouraging referrals where appropriate. They have visited all GP surgeries in Woking, provided posters and leaflets for waiting areas, followed up with a letter and phone calls. Posters are displayed across as many locations as possible. CornerHouse also have an online presence where services are promoted both on the website and also on social media i.e. the CornerHouse Facebook and twitter accounts.

As well as external promotion CornerHouse keep existing clients up to date with news and information. Clients are given the option of receiving a monthly newsletter by email and printed copies are also available. At the end of support group meetings, the facilitators highlight items in the newsletter informing clients of upcoming events. Noticeboard space at CornerHouse is used to display posters/leaflets of upcoming events both internally and externally to CornerHouse.

As well as delivering and promoting services, CornerHouse also work to improve mental health awareness and reduce stigma and discrimination in the community. Linking in with the countywide programme ‘time to change Surrey’ CornerHouse has also facilitated workshops in Woking and Spelthorne on the topic of ‘Stress’. They are currently working on a business engagement programme to forge working relationships with corporate companies in the local area, helping raise awareness of mental health to support wellbeing in the workplace.

For World Mental Health Awareness week (in 2014 and 2015) CornerHouse held a stand at Woking train station with the aim of raising awareness of mental health and informing people of resources available in the area.

CornerHouse has also used the Surrey Emotional wellbeing and Adult Mental Health Strategy to assist in the development of their Business Plan. Within the Strategy there are clearly identified actions to ensure fewer people experience stigma and discrimination: CornerHouse will be working towards this goal.
CornerHouse staff and volunteers generally think awareness around mental health is good, although 35% think there is more work to be done to increase awareness. The impact of stigma was also highlighted.

“Mental health issues can be hard to communicate on, but CornerHouse have enabled the community to have a space and opportunities to share and learn together which has been extremely beneficial to the community.”

“I think Woking is the same as many areas: that mental health has a stigma attached to it and is swept under the carpet, "it'll never happen to me" and that people with mental illness are a danger to the community.”

Values and ethos

CornerHouse support groups are peer-led services in that clients are able to come to a safe place to receive support from facilitators and others who are themselves affected by mental ill health. Having the role of facilitator to oversee the group and to ensure its safety is vital, however the running of the groups is more of a peer support style where clients can meet others and receive and give support as appropriate. Next Steps depression support group members have set up a social committee which is led and attended by clients. This provides a place for people to meet outside the groups and continue with the social interactions and building of friendships.

The groups provided are self-help groups with CornerHouse staff encouraging people to be active in their own recovery. Whilst staff may signpost people to further support they encourage people, where possible, to take that active role themselves.

“My work is all person centred. the client leads and directs the conversation and I INVITE AND ENCOURAGE THEM TO THINK FOR THEMSELVES AND UNDERSTAND THE CHOICES THEY HAVE”

“I do not give advice and encourage the client to have confidence in their own decisions. I do this by using my active listening skills. I create a safe environment for the client to share their feelings, respecting their confidentiality and remaining non judgemental. I try to empower my clients with positive reinforcement and showing them unconditional positive regard. Through allowing them to feel safe and truly listened to, my clients often express thoughts and emotions they have not been able to express before.”

People can make contact with CornerHouse while they are disconnected/ withdrawn from society due to their mental health and emotional wellbeing. People are gently encouraged to attend one of the support groups to meet others who maybe in a similar situation and receive appropriate support to try and reduce the feeling of isolation. Slowly individuals build up the courage to say their first words or share a little of their stories. To have that safe place to come and be accepted can make a huge difference giving a boost of confidence and the ability to try new things.
The paid staff and volunteers survey responses indicated that most people enabled service users to connect to their communities by exploring what was available locally: by networking, reading newsletters and using the internet to search for local activities. Most shared this information by having conversations with the service user about what was out there. Some also used flyers, leaflets and other community resources promotional material available to give to people using services.

“I receive e-mails and flyers from different services. I also research appropriate services for individual client needs.”

The analysis of survey responses from staff and volunteers at CornerHouse demonstrate that they generally feel positive about working within CornerHouse.

“It can be very challenging and pressurised yet incredibly rewarding. I feel proud that I can make a difference towards helping people achieve greater emotional wellbeing. However, I feel we are receiving increasing numbers of service users with complex needs that I don’t feel our service is best placed to deal with and that I personally don’t have enough training to cope with. It sometimes feels that people seem to be passed on from service-to-service and that because they can self refer, we are seen as an option for organisations to signpost clients they don’t know what to do with. I am getting more and more service users exhibiting Borderline Personality Disorder but don’t know where to signpost them.”

“It has been very uplifting and rewarding to see the difference we make to certain members along their road to recovery.”

“The role is challenging with a large number of people coming through CornerHouse doors on a monthly basis. There seems to be more complex situations too which can (and has) taken up a lot of time due to the complex nature of the problems presented. At times the service can feel stretched however all staff members and volunteers pull together to support each other and help learn from experiences and take the service forward in a positive light.

However, the role is also very rewarding as it is possible to physically see people improve, gain in self confidence and esteem, and move on with their lives in a positive way.

Personally, I joined CornerHouse first as a client - I attended the Next Steps depression support group. I then started volunteering at a group and then became employed at the service. Both as a client, volunteer and employee at CornerHouse I fully believe that the service delivered is essential to the community. For the relatively small amount of money received (compared to, say, the NHS) we do an enormous amount of good work and, as our figures show, with the help of many volunteers. CornerHouse has been a great support to me when I was a client and even as a staff member I feel very supported and in a safe place to learn and grow in confidence.”

The graph to the left shows the volume of service users who started and ended their service with Corner House each quarter. This demonstrates that new referrals have increased each quarter and service users are enabled to achieve their outcomes and therefore no longer need this service.
The chart to the right illustrates the outcomes of people discharged from the service. 56% of people went on to be engaged in mainstream community activities with the remainder not requiring onward referral to other community services.

Future plans

CornerHouse Board members recently finalised its business plan. They have identified key objectives to consolidate, improve and develop services. The aim is to work in partnership with other key agencies to deliver a crisis care service in addition to providing a full range of mental health and emotional wellbeing support groups. CornerHouse also aim to work with local businesses to develop workplace resilience programmes strengthening links within the community. Their view is to have clear patient pathways identified supported by co-operative working relationships with GPs, the CMHRS, other partners and people who use the services. CornerHouse are looking to extend one to one services and extend usage of the Recovery Star model. Regular feedback is sought from people using the service regarding areas for development.

Community Connections services in Surrey provide a valuable resource for people to attend and gain support. It would be beneficial for the Community Connections service to be part of a recognised integrated pathway between statutory and voluntary services.

What do people who use CornerHouse services think?

Respondents to the service user questionnaire were asked which service they were commenting on and then in what borough or district they live

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42% of the 91 respondents who were responding about CornerHouse live in the borough of Woking with 25% living in Runnymede.
Most respondents went to CornerHouse to meet people and to participate in groups and activities that are offered. The qualitative feedback reinforced the importance of a range of activities being available and the attitude and approach of staff and volunteers.

“The CornerHouse is an excellent venue...the staff, paid and voluntary, all show remarkable friendliness and dedication towards others. It is an honour and privilege to work with them.”

“Supportive environments, advice, positive attitude to growth and development.”

“I originally went to well-being group as a support to a family member, and then I realised that actually, I need the support too.”

90% of respondents said CornerHouse had very much or moderately helped to improve their life. Analysing and exploring the qualitative feedback further, the following key themes that make CornerHouse a service that improves people’s lives include:

- Enabling people to make and maintain a network of support
- Enabling self-help and recovery
- Appropriate courses, groups and activities
- Provides a reason for people to get out and about
- Supportive staff and volunteers, giving help and advice

“CornerHouse provides a service very local to me that is easy to travel to where I have made new friends and have learned about Mindfulness. This has been a big help with dealing with both my anxiety and helping me to be part of the local community.”

“The service has helped me to battle through my depression. CornerHouse offers a wide variety of support, weekly group, materials and courses/talks about dealing with depression. When I joined I admit was in a very bad way, but nearly 2 years on I'm a different person. Still a long way to go, but if it wasn't for CornerHouse I dread to think what situation I would be in now.”
“It has given me an opportunity to get out and meet other people with similar issues. We can discuss our problems in a safe environment. It means I do not feel so isolated. I have also taken part in various social activities which have been arranged at weekends. These have included theatre outings, meals at restaurants and cycling events. I believe that CornerHouse is providing a vital service to those with mental health issues. The team is very enthusiastic and proactive and deserves all the support and resources it can get in order to continue to grow.”

“Supportive and welcoming staff fostering a safe environment in which you can be honest, open, and share your innermost thoughts with both staff and other users of the support groups. You no longer feel alone or feel that you are being assessed by health professionals. They have and continue to provide me with support which has improved my life by providing an environment in which I can think and discuss issues and share views and support others who are sharing similar experiences. The service has been brilliant for me, and the resources it provides including books, courses and supportive staff is fantastic. I am sure that without this service I would have required more support from the NHS.”

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“It has given me an opportunity to meet people who I would otherwise never have had a chance to know. It has allowed me to develop confidence and realise that I can help and be helped by the experience of others. It has given me a new purpose.”

“Without the support of CornerHouse, I don’t know what I would have done. As the NHS services have taken nearly 1 year to get me any psychology. So CornerHouse offered me emotional support during this time, and activities.”

“After a period of unemployment / a degree of social isolation / anxiety / depression, attending some groups at CornerHouse has helped me feel less alone with my problems, more supported and has helped with confidence, motivation, self-esteem and feeling less anxious.”

“Has helped me hugely with depression, self-esteem, relationships, life generally. A fantastic service and very much needed, long may it continue.”

“Going to groups can very hard when you can't hear. I found at the group one time. Boring and too long when they do check ins talks, but it makes more people even more stress or unset. Going to the Woking community in Old Woking library had helps when it quiet down and could have more social clubs”
CornerHouse is a well established local service. In 14/15, they developed their business plan which is aligned to the local integrated commissioning strategy for emotional well-being and mental health and they work in partnership with local statutory and voluntary services to improve mental health in Woking.

CornerHouse has above the county average for referrals and continue to develop their services to meet the needs of local people, such as starting a depression/anxiety support group for younger
adults. CornerHouse also provides specific services for Asian women through their SHIFA groups and runs groups and services in areas of deprivation within the borough. At the end of March 2015, CornerHouse were supporting 369 people.

The data demonstrates a growth in caseload (from 284 to 369) over the evaluation period and 90% of people surveyed stated that the support they had received had very much or moderately improved their life. Specifically, CornerHouse enabled people to make and maintain support networks, gave people a reason to get out and about and supported self help and recovery. This was through the courses, groups and activities available and the quality of staff and volunteers. Recovery star outcomes also illustrate the vast majority of people who used the service improved or maintained their well-being.
Mary Frances Trust (Epsom & Ewell and Mole Valley)

Local context

The total population of Epsom & Ewell according to the 2011 Census was 75,102 and Mole Valley was 85,375. The population of Surrey was 1,132,390 which means Epsom & Ewell accounted for 6.6% and Mole Valley 7.5%.

The graph to the left shows the number of community connections referrals received per 10,000 population for each quarter in year 2 for Woking, as well as the county average for the same period.

In Epsom & Ewell there are 0.5% less males than the Surrey average and 0.1% fewer males in Mole Valley.

Mary Frances Trust received a higher proportion of referrals from females in both areas covered than the county average.

The 2014 midyear estimate of the 18-64 population for Surrey was 693,037.

The graph to the right shows the split in the 16+ population for Epsom & Ewell, Mole Valley and Surrey. It also has the referrals received by Mary Frances Trust in year two split by age. However, due to the age bands not matching direct comparisons can't be made.

Groups and activities are provided with the older generation in mind, for example gentle exercise classes and the services provided are mostly accessible to people with physical and sensory disabilities.
**Findings - Mary Frances Trust**

**Epsom & Ewell** scores 8.46 and **Mole Valley** 8.02 meaning these are the seventh and eighth most deprived boroughs/ districts in **Surrey**.

Mary Frances Trust works from a variety of locations in Epsom & Ewell and Mole Valley (including Epsom and Dorking Hub) as well as offering individual appointments in locations convenient for our clients, if they find it difficult to travel (e.g. local cafes). Their services are advertised via Epsom & Ewell Borough and Mole Valley District Councils.

**About the service**

In the evaluation period, on average 28% of people who used the service **were not** in receipt of another mental health service, such as primary care based psychological therapies or secondary mental health care delivered by Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. This would suggest that Mary Frances Trust reaches people who get other support for their mental health needs as well as increasing number of those who do not.
Mary Frances Trust has been around in existence for many years. At the centre of their work is the person they provide services for, looking at an individual from a perspective of their assets and not their mental health problems; tailoring the support to help people achieve their goals and aspirations and allowing people to start their journey to recovery and progress at their own pace. They provide a “wrap around” service and a safety net for people who are already in the community.

To promote the service Mary Frances Trust provides, and to challenge stigma and “normalise” the idea of emotional wellbeing and mental health, they publicise in local press and radio. For example, they were featured on BBC Surrey, BBC Radio 4 and were a charity of the month for Surrey Hills Radio. They also participate in local events which are not directly aimed at people with mental health issues e.g. Ashtead Village Day. They believe there is a need for more events and projects that promote emotional wellbeing, events that would bring together people with mental health issues and the wider community, and that would make it clear how much mental health is linked to physical health.

They also work with other Community Connections lead providers to promote the project throughout Surrey, have a website for Community Connections Services and a leaflet which is widely distributed including in local GP surgeries, libraries, colleges and other organisations who work with general public for example SureStart.

It’s important to Mary Frances Trust that all mental health services work closer together in order to learn from each other and for the services provided to complement each other as well as giving the general public a better understanding of mental health. They feel there is a need to work more with non-mental health providers to make sure prevention and early intervention is available wherever needed.

All the staff who responded to the survey felt that the general population are aware of mental health issues, however, a number commented that there is stigma still attached although they feel this is getting better but feel that more education is needed.

“I believe most people are aware of mental health issues and a lot understand that mental health issues can affect any one of us. However I think that there is still a negative view among part of the population. Many people are also not aware of the wide range of mental health issues that can affect people and know more about the severe forms of mental illness.”

Values and ethos

Mary Frances Trust believes the support of those with experience of mental health issues can offer others is very important and so promote and support peer led services. They run a café in Leatherhead which is accessible to anyone with emotional or mental health issues and also one in Epsom where they already support the existing Brickfield Community Group.

They run self-help groups including a group for carers, people suffering from anxiety, bipolar and hoarding disorder. They have actively participated in the development of the new initiative of Crisis Safe Haven and potential new models of providing crisis care.
“Every time I volunteer at the clubhouse my aim is to help at least one person. Maybe this would consist of enhancing one of the club members confidence or offering advice in a tough situation. The only reason I do this volunteering is because people like this need someone to turn to, someone to provide support, someone to give advise and someone to make them aware that they are not alone. I am a very conscientious human with a high emotional intelligence and empathic tendency. Having this opportunity to volunteer allows me to share my caring nature with those who are in need.”

“We meet with all new referrals to discuss what services we could offer them, and discuss their individual needs. The person leaves the meeting with a plan of what support they would like to take up, and future appointment/s made.”

For Mary Frances Trust, people are always the centre of their own recovery. They always meet with those who approach the service and use the recovery star as a basis to create an action plan and set goals. They then work with the person involved ascertain how best they can support the person to achieve their goals and aspirations. Mary Frances Trust believe people should actively participate in their own recovery and not just be passive recipients. Mary Frances Trust are able to provide a service which is individually tailored to the needs of their clients and act as a springboard and well as a safety net for people to get back to the wider community.

“We have excellent relationships with partner organisations, who help keep us up to date with community services and activities. We also have a member of staff, our Learning and Skills Co-ordinator, who sets up courses/activities in the community.”

“We have close links with the publicity officer at Epsom and Ewell Borough Council and the Community officer at Mole Valley who both send out newsletters and e mails to many charities, faith groups and community groups listing services and activities. We follow many local groups on twitter. One member of staff helps people with obtaining volunteering positions and also keeps an eye on what other services and activities are available.”

All the services that Mary Frances Trust provides start from the point of promoting independence. In consultation with their Advisory Group and other professionals they are able to design services which focus on enabling and developing the individual. They tailor and provide just enough support for the person to start feeling more confident and motivated to progress into the wider community. By working closely with a variety of organisations, including improving access to psychological therapies service providers and the citizen’s advice bureau, they can help their clients with the transition as well as being able to support those already in the community.

“I have worked the organisation for over ten years and am very dedicated to my profession and having seen many changes in commissioning and models of delivery it has helped bring good perspective and has been developmentally good as ways of working have changed dramatically overall in a good way but it also helps in explaining to people who are trying to understand service changes and be able to explain what other services are available to make recovery more holistic person centred and tailored to need.”

“My role as volunteers co-ordinator is rewarding. I have enjoyed setting up our policies and procedures from scratch. As new services have developed I have enjoyed creating volunteer roles, advertising and recruiting volunteers. It has been interesting to meet many new people, some of whom have direct knowledge of mental health and others who do not. All new volunteers have an induction and are supported in their roles. Many of the volunteers have attended a mental health awareness session delivered by First Steps.

As well as working with the volunteers I assist with the day to day running of Mary Frances Trust
and enjoy working in such a supportive, friendly environment where people are encouraged and assisted to achieve their goals.”

“I would like to see regular opportunities for individuals who use the service to be enabled to participate in regular meetings again with staff and volunteers to talk about aspects of change forthcoming events etc, rather than relying on a Newsletter which may or not be remembered from one month to another. Verbal communication is key”

“This has been the most worthwhile and rewarding volunteering/work I have done in the charity sector. The treatments are really appreciated and appear to be very beneficial.”

“I just wanted to reiterate the importance I believe this service to have within the mental health world. Many service users I speak to have such positive thoughts of the clubhouse and rely so heavily on the support it offers. It gives people an outlet and a chance to meet with others in the same situation. Not only does this clubhouse act as a place for people to come to meet, it also empowers these individuals as it highlights to them that they have a role within the society. It helps to solidify their coping mechanisms.”

“I feel Mary Frances Trust provides a wide range of valuable support and services that helps people in their recovery from their mental health problems.”

The graph to the left shows the volume of service users who started and their ended their service with Mary Frances Trust each quarter. This demonstrates that new referrals in quarter four increased dramatically and service users are enabled to achieve their outcomes and therefore no longer need this service.

The chart to the right illustrates the outcomes of people discharged from the service. 81% of people went on to be engaged in mainstream community activities with the remainder not requiring onward referral to other community services.

Future plans

Mary Frances Trust’s approach has always been to have a good response to the need of their service user group. They work very closely with these users and their carers as well as other providers for example the community mental health recovery services (CMHRS). Their advisory group brings together service users (from different services they provide), carers and volunteers, as well as representatives of staff and trustees. The group works very closely with the Management Board adding their expertise to further develop Mary Frances Trust but also participates in meetings and gives opinions about mental health developments in Surrey.

The hoarders group which was developed in partnership with CMHRS Mole Valley as a response to the need of the clients. The group, after over 18 months, is a very popular source of support for
people with hoarding disorder and is the only one in Surrey providing that type of support. The feedback they are getting from the members is continuously very positive.

Mary Frances Trust has started working on developing Community Connections with other lead providers but further developments are needed. They can see Community Connections becoming part of and complementing already existing statutory services and not just individual charity organisations working separately in different parts of the county. They feel a shift in the entire culture of providing mental health services is needed, so that the additional value of services provided by voluntary sector is recognised and appreciated equally to the ones provided by statutory services.

What do people who use Mary Frances Trust services think?

Respondents to the service user questionnaire were asked which service they were commenting on and then in what borough or district they live.

As you can see above 52% of the 61 respondents who were responding about Mary Frances Trust live in the borough of Mole Valley and 31% live in Epsom & Ewell.

More than half of those responding regarding Mary Frances Trust said they wanted to go to the service to meet people, followed closely by the activities and the location.

The qualitative feedback also praised the staff and volunteers.

“Part of my living in the community well requires that I am able to meet and socialise with fellow service users. I find the support from the staff invaluable and their ability to help me with benefit claims, diet and exercise, housing, physical and mental health issues essential.”

“Staff who are interested in helping the members, rather than just doing a job.”

“Small groups with an understanding of mental health issues.”
96% of respondents said Mary Frances Trust had very much or moderately helped to improve their life. Analysing and exploring the qualitative feedback further, the following key themes that make Mary Frances Trust a service that improves people’s lives include:

- Appropriate courses, groups and activities
- Enabling people to make and maintain a network of support
- Supportive staff and volunteers, giving help and advice
- Enabling self-help and recovery
- Providing personalised help, advice and support

“I have just completed a ‘Moving On’ programme run by ESRA (which I found through MFT) which has been really helpful.”

“It has given me a focus and a purpose to aid my recovery. I am extremely grateful to all the staff - it is a lifeline.”

“Improved my self confidence and allowed me to speak more openly rather than bottling things up”

“I have bad speech impediment which makes phone use totally impractical. I am also a pensioner age 69. The staff (and members) helps me considerably to help me before any problem gets to big (ie early intervention). I've been a member of Mary Frances Trust for 16 years now and they have always helped me enormously when I have problem(s)”

“It was very helpful to have someone to talk to and be able to relate to other in a similar situation when the mental health at Dorking refused to see me as I did not have an enduring mental health issue if lifelong anxiety and depression affecting your ability to function properly is not enduring, what is. The regular massage was very beneficial. Very down to earth people, really lovely. The service is very essential to those not able to seek direct mental health service.”
“I’ve also set up a peer Facebook support group in my village following some comments received in reply to a statement I made for Time to Change day.

“There is absolutely no encouragement by staff or management to participate in any of the above mentioned! In fact, there is a real struggle to supply any form of activities.”
Mary Frances Trust is a well-established local service. From the existing base in Leatherhead, covering Mole Valley, they started delivering community connections services in Epsom and Ewell in 2013. Referral numbers in Epsom and Ewell are now slightly above the county average by the end of 2014/15, which is excellent progress for a new service. Mole Valley referral numbers are also above the county average.

Mary Frances Trust continues to develop their services to meet the needs of local people, such as starting a bi-polar support group. They also run a support group for people who have a hoarding disorder, the only one in Surrey, which attracts people from different parts of Surrey. At the end of March 2015, Mary Frances Trust was supporting 179 people in Mole valley and 136 people in Epsom and Ewell.

The data demonstrates an increase in caseload (for both areas from 261 to 315) over the evaluation period and 96% of people surveyed stated that the support they had received had very much or moderately improved their life. Specifically, Mary Frances Trust enabled people to make and maintain support networks, provided a personalised approach and supported self help and recovery. This was through the courses, groups and activities available and the quality of staff and volunteers. Recovery star outcomes also illustrate the majority of people who used the service improved or maintained their well-being.
Richmond Fellowship - east (Reigate & Banstead and Tandridge)

Local context

The total population of Reigate & Banstead according to the 2011 Census was 137,835 and Tandridge was 82,998. The population of Surrey was 1,132,390 which means Reigate & Banstead accounted for 12.2% and Tandridge 7.3%.

The graph to the left shows the number of community connections referrals received per 10,000 population for each quarter in year 2 for Reigate & Banstead and Tandridge, as well as the county average for the same period.

In Reigate & Banstead there are 0.1% less males than the Surrey average and 0.6% fewer males in Mole Valley.

Richmond Fellowship in both localities has received a higher percentage of referrals for females that the average.

The 2014 midyear estimate of the 18-64 population for Surrey was 693,037.

The graph to the left shows the split in the 16+ population for Reigate & Banstead, Tandridge and Surrey. It also has the referrals received by Richmond Fellowship in year two split by age. However, due to the age bands not matching direct comparisons can’t be made.
Richmond Fellowship works mainly with White British clients and are exploring ways to attract a greater range of ethnic groups to access the service, to reflect the population in East Surrey.

Reigate & Banstead scores 9.6 and Tandridge 10.0 meaning these are the fourth and second most deprived boroughs/districts in Surrey.

The services provided by Richmond Fellowship are promoted to a wide range of people and providers such as local faith groups, colleges, as well as young and older people services. They deliver workshops across the areas covered including art workshops in Tandridge for those who cannot travel to Art Matters in Earlswood and have an in-house IT tutor that delivers satellite IT support across East Surrey as requested by service users via their service user forums.
About the service

In the evaluation period, on average 15% of people who used the service were not in receipt of another mental health service, such as primary care based psychological therapies or secondary mental health care delivered by Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. This would suggest that Richmond Fellowship mainly reach a range of people who get other support for their mental health needs.

Before the community connections contract started there was a community links service in Redhill and Reigate, so there were established links with associate providers. The associate providers, who deliver community connections in partnership with Richmond Fellowship, include YMCA and Reigate Stepping Stones. Referrals therefore come from a range of providers and services in the area, including from primary care services in both Reigate & Banstead and Tandridge.

The services provided are promoted via the Richmond Fellowship internal marketing service, which delivers presentations and talks across east Surrey to professionals and service users. Staff also attend a wide range of meetings and stakeholder events throughout the year and hold events for Mental Health Day and many others.

82% of the staff and volunteers who responded to the survey felt that most or some of the general population are aware of mental health issues. A number went on to comment that there is still a stigma attached and that more education is needed.

“I think there has been an improvement in attitudes and awareness in the local area during the eight years I have worked for the organisation. Some charities and volunteering placements can be more supportive and understanding than others and unfortunately service users do still encounter discrimination.”

Values and ethos

The service has a holistic approach to recovery and service users are encouraged to take the lead in the process with the recovery star and also in their reviews of where they think they are at in all aspects of the star. The service user forums take place quarterly and all service users are encouraged to attend.

“When building support plans based on the recovery star, I identify with service users which domains they need the most support with, and ask specifically what support they would like in that...
Findings - Richmond Fellowship - east

Findings

“I worked with a profoundly deaf client alongside a BSL Interpreter. The client had quite complex needs so I adapted my communication style to meet his specific needs especially as there were interpreters there. I was careful to write clear, concise texts and emails as this was the client preferred mode of Communication. As BSL is his first language he could struggle with reading a little so adapting communication style was important.”

The Art Matters service within Richmond Fellowship delivers a strong peer-led service with a number of volunteers involved in the development of the business plan for the year and the overall running of the service.

Richmond Fellowship have very good links with providers of services that encourage clients to move on (when they are ready) from the service. They try to enable them to get involved in as many mainstream activities as possible while they are attending the service. In terms of Art Matters, community links advisors support service users by delivering regular presentations that inform them of what other options might be available to them during or after their attendance at Art Matters. There are strong links with East Surrey College and other local educational facilities and they work closely with Richmond Fellowship to provide more mainstream options for service users as 'part and parcel' of their recovery journey.

“Art Matters is a busy and creative environment that has excellent links with local mental health services, the creative community and its neighbours. We have an engaged Service User Involvement Forum and more then one hundred people attend a week. There are many visitors and however hard we work at processing referrals there is a waiting list. The lease on the current building on Earlswood Road is coming to a close in February and the studio may need to relocate which is a concern. My work is hugely rewarding.”

“I am enjoying working in this role, because it allows me to network with others, and I believe the more partnership agencies are involved in delivering care to people with mental health problems the better, as this increases exposure to the community, which is essentially the whole point of community connections.”

“The manager and team I work with are the most people centred I have known in the many years and variety of work I have experienced. It is a joy to come to the office and excellent hard work is delivered by all.

This attitude has a range of unrecognised benefits for myself and the others in the team: mutual support as a human and as a worker. Wisdom in how to use 'procedures' and when not to. No sign of 'jobs-worth'! There are other benefits too.

Consequently it follows naturally to treat 'service users' the same way. There is a welcoming attitude and nothing is too much to do, assuming there is enough time in the day!”
Findings - Richmond Fellowship - east

The graph to the left shows the volume of service users who started and those that ended their service with Richmond Fellowship in the north west of Surrey each quarter. This demonstrates that overall, new referrals have increased and the closures show once service users are enabled to achieve their outcomes no longer need this service they are closed.

The chart to the right illustrates the outcomes of people discharged from the service. 99% of people went on to be engaged in mainstream community activities with the remainder not requiring onward referral to other community services.

Future plans

The services as a whole have a business plan for the year and each of the services in East Surrey have a number of priorities identified at the beginning of the year to ensure they provide the best service for their clients. These are monitored via supervision, appraisals and meetings throughout the year.

What do people who use Richmond Fellowship services in Reigate & Banstead and Tandridge think?

Respondents to the service user questionnaire were asked which service they were commenting on and then in what borough or district they live.

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Waverley 2%
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Woking 0%
Reigate & Banstead 55%
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“Art Matters provides a safe, non-judgemental space, and I feel comfortable going there whatever state of mind I am in. Sometimes when I have been too stressed to concentrate on my art project, empathic staff provide non-judgemental support and have time always to listen to my stresses.”

100% of respondents said Richmond Fellowship had very much or moderately helped to improve their life. Analysing and exploring the qualitative feedback further, the following key themes that make Richmond Fellowship a service that improves people’s lives include:

- Enabling self-help and recovery
- Appropriate courses, groups and activities
- Enabling people to make and maintain a network of support

“Went to Confidence Course and met new people. Got a chance to find about different activities. Started voluntary work 8 weeks ago for elderly Day Service three days a week. I like it as I can make the old people smile and they like my jokes.”

“When I was really low and depressed my advice sessions really helped me. I had someone to talk through my issues. It has got me into getting me fit, to help me join martial arts and it has helped me stop my drinking and smoking so much.”

“The star approach has helped give structure to my recovery. The staff have been very pleasant to deal with, which has helped smooth things over.”

“It provided an opportunity to focus on something and a positive sense of involvement as well as support and encouragement.”
Richmond Fellowship is a well established local service in East Surrey. From the existing base in Redhill covering Reigate & Banstead, they started delivering community connections services in Tandridge in 2013. Referral numbers in Tandridge were slightly below the county average by the end of 2014/15, however Reigate & Banstead referrals were substantially higher than the county average.
Findings - Richmond Fellowship - east

Richmond Fellowship continues to develop services to meet the needs of local people, such as starting art workshops in Tandridge. They run a service user forum which informs service developments and are well connected with other local voluntary and statutory services. At the end of March 2015, Richmond Fellowship was supporting 531 people in Reigate & Banstead and 190 people in Tandridge.

The data demonstrates a growth in caseload over the evaluation period (for both areas from 582 to 721) and 100% of people surveyed stated that the support they had received had very much or moderately improved their life. Specifically, Richmond Fellowship enabled people to make and maintain support networks, and supported self help and recovery. This was through the courses, groups and activities available. Recovery star outcomes also illustrate the vast majority of people who used the service improved or maintained their well-being.
Richmond Fellowship – north west (Spelthorne and Runnymede)

Local context

The total population of Spelthorne according to the 2011 Census was 95,598 and Runnymede was 80,510. The population of Surrey was 1,132,390 which means Spelthorne accounted for 8.4% and Runnymede 7.1%.

The graph to the left shows the number of community connections referrals received per 10,000 population for each quarter in year 2 for Spelthorne and Runnymede, as well as the county average for the same period.

In Spelthorne there are 0.4% less males than the Surrey average and 0.2% more males in Runnymede.

There was a significantly higher proportion of referrals received for females in Runnymede than the population average for this locality.

The 2014 midyear estimate of the 18-64 population for Surrey was 693,037.

The graph to the left shows the split in the 16+ population for Spelthorne, Runnymede and Surrey. It also has the referrals received by Richmond Fellowship in year two split by age. However, due to the age bands not matching direct comparisons can’t be made.
Clients referred to Richmond Fellowship service are given the option of a venue to suit them, including one to one sessions at outreach locations in the boroughs as well as at the offices in Chertsey. All of the team receive equality and diversity training.

**About the service**

In the evaluation period, on average 40% of people who used the service were not in receipt of another mental health service, such as primary care based psychological therapies or secondary mental health care delivered by Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. This would suggest that Richmond Fellowship reach a range of people, some of whom get other support for their mental health needs and some who do not access other mental health services.
Findings - Richmond Fellowship – north west

Through one to one, face to face meetings with clients, Richmond Fellowship identifies the clients’ preferences with regard to accessing mainstream community based activities. There are also a varied range of groups provided which clients can access.

In order to promote and advertise the services provided by Richmond Fellowship, and to keep service users informed, leaflets are distributed, a two minute update is circulated electronically as well as a newsletter. Richmond Fellowship staff attend local networking events on a regular basis including North West Surrey Stakeholder meetings, Runnymede and Spelthorne wellbeing meetings and Community Links lead provider meetings. They also attend mental health awareness days held by local employers and take an active part in mental health week.

Richmond Fellowship continuously develops and promotes the service as well as developing partnership working with different external organisations. All the advisors take an active role in promoting the services of the organisation as part of their daily duties.

“Through one to one, face to face meetings with clients, Richmond Fellowship identifies the clients’ preferences with regard to accessing mainstream community based activities. There are also a varied range of groups provided which clients can access. In order to promote and advertise the services provided by Richmond Fellowship, and to keep service users informed, leaflets are distributed, a two minute update is circulated electronically as well as a newsletter. Richmond Fellowship staff attend local networking events on a regular basis including North West Surrey Stakeholder meetings, Runnymede and Spelthorne wellbeing meetings and Community Links lead provider meetings. They also attend mental health awareness days held by local employers and take an active part in mental health week. Richmond Fellowship continuously develops and promotes the service as well as developing partnership working with different external organisations. All the advisors take an active role in promoting the services of the organisation as part of their daily duties.”

Values and ethos

Richmond Fellowship is currently developing a peer support service which will run some of the groups provided by the service. These include allotments, young people’s group, mosaic group, art group, sailing group, football team and badminton. There are regular service user meetings and the newsletter is produced and edited by service users.

“I don’t think that Spelthorne is any different from any other area of the UK. Mental health issues are brushed aside by the majority and there is fear of it. Some people believe that those suffering from mental illness are just lazy and should pull themselves together.”

“Everything I do in this work is person-centred. In the depression support group clients talk about their experiences, feelings etc. and this is the springboard for our discussion. In Accord I befriend clients and talk to them about issues on a one to one basis.”

Clients are actively encouraged to be involved in their own recovery plans through regular one to one interventions and the use of support plans and the recovery star to monitor their progress. The support provided is ongoing and is dependent on the amount the client requires.

“I enjoy working in the role of a volunteer depression support worker for Next Steps in Spelthorne. The clients have commented how much they benefit from the group and the support it offers over and above other types of support eg CBT.

I believe that there is a great need for this kind of service and it should be more widely available since provision in the Spelthorne area is rather sparse. There is a need for groups such as this in Ashford and in Sunbury both during the day and at other times.”
Findings - Richmond Fellowship – north west

The graph to the left shows the volume of service users who started and those that ended their service with Richmond Fellowship in the north west of Surrey each quarter. This demonstrates that have remained fairly consistent and service users are enabled to achieve their outcomes which means they therefore no longer need this service and are closed.

The chart to the right illustrates the outcomes of people discharged from the service. 100% of people went on to be engaged in mainstream community activities.

Future plans

Richmond Fellowship is positive and proactive about ideas on how to develop the service, they actively encourage service users to contribute with ideas about what they would like with regard to services. This is via service user groups and yearly service user surveys.

In the future they would like to see improved joint working to promote services and mainstream community activities and to actively involve clients in the service delivery and development, to promote social inclusion.

What do people who use Richmond Fellowship services in Runnymede and Spelthorne think?

Respondents to the service user questionnaire were asked which service they were commenting on and then in what borough or district they live.

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Findings - Richmond Fellowship – north west

Spelthorne

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Was there anything specific about this service that made you want to go there?

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<th>Meeting people</th>
<th>Groups</th>
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<td>32%</td>
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“I was referred to Richmond Fellowship and am very grateful as it has been of tremendous support to me”

“Being in a safe environment with the help and support of those who have time, patience and understand how valuable this service is to us.”

Recovery Star outcomes

Recovery star data that is collected quarterly (illustrated to the left) reinforces the survey feedback.

93% of respondents said Richmond Fellowship had very much or moderately helped to improve their life. Analysing and exploring the qualitative feedback further, the following key themes that make Richmond Fellowship a service that improves people’s lives include:

- Provides a reason for people to get out and about
- Enabling people to make and maintain a network of support
- Appropriate courses, groups and activities
- Enabling self-help and recovery

“I don't feel so lonely and isolated. It's given me new skills and confidence”

“It helped me to realise everyone is special. It encouraged working as a team. The shame of being unemployable. Things in common e.g. never flown in aeroplane”
Richmond Fellowship was a new provider of community connections services in Runnymede and Spelthorne from 2013. Referral numbers in Spelthorne were below the county average by the end of 2014/15, however Runnymede referrals were higher than the county average.

Richmond Fellowship continues to develop services to meet the needs of local people, such as starting an allotment group. They run service user meetings which inform service developments.
and deliver 1:1 as well as group work. At the end of March 2015, Richmond Fellowship were supporting 333 people in Runnymede and 293 people in Spelthorne.

The data demonstrates a growth in caseload over the evaluation period (for both areas from 561 to 626) and 93% of people surveyed stated that the support they had received had very much or moderately improved their life. Specifically, Richmond Fellowship enabled people to make and maintain support networks, provided a reason to get out and about and supported self help and recovery. This was through the courses, groups and activities available. Recovery star outcomes also illustrate that all people who completed recovery star improved or maintained their well-being.
The total population of Guildford according to the 2011 Census was 137,183, Surrey Heath was 86,144 and Waverley 121,572. The population of Surrey was 1,161,300 which means Guildford accounted for 12.1%, Surrey Heath 7.6% and Waverley 10.7%.

The graph to the left shows the number of community connections referrals received per 10,000 population for each quarter in year 2 for Guildford, Waverley and Surrey Heath, as well as the county average for the same period.

In Guildford there are 0.5% more males than the Surrey average, 0.8% more in Surrey Heath and 0.2% fewer in Waverley.

Welcome Project in Guildford received a significantly higher proportion of referrals for males than the average population would suggest, whereas Surrey Heath and Waverley had notable fewer than their averages.

The 2014 midyear estimate of the 18-64 population for Surrey was 693,037.

The graph to the left shows the split in the 16+ population for Guildford, Surrey Heath, Waverley and Surrey according to the 2011 census. It also has the referrals received by Welcome Project in year two split by age. However, due to the age bands not matching direct comparisons can't be made.
Findings - The Welcome Project

When meeting clients, be it the first time for an assessment or one to one work, The Welcome Project are able to offer appointments at the offices, in the community or in their home. They use different venues in the community within the boroughs as well as their offices for the activities provided to make sure that services are accessible to all. They have a diverse client group with the services provided being very much client led and shaped as The Welcome Project regularly gathers feedback to see how service users can be best supported in their recovery; and what type of activities they would like on offer.

Guildford scores 9.16 making it the sixth most deprived borough in the council, Surrey Heath 6.88 and so the least deprived borough and Waverley 7.14, the second least deprived borough in Surrey.
About the service

In the evaluation period, on average 19% of people who used the service were not in receipt of another mental health service, such as primary care based psychological therapies or secondary mental health care delivered by Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. This would suggest that the Welcome Project mainly reach a range of people who get other support for their mental health needs.

The services provided by The Welcome Project vary as they are provided in three very different areas and settings. In Surrey Heath almost all services are run in the community by staff, volunteers and peers. In Waverley there is a community centre which is open three days a week so some of the activities take place here with others in the community. In Guildford the services are provided mainly through partner organisations; Oakleaf, Guildford Action and Voluntary Action South West Surrey, service level agreements are in place with all of these partners.

Promotion of The Welcome Project is done through the new website, posters, flyers, by attending meetings and events, networking opportunities, training events, workshops; liaising with statutory and other service providers and community groups, through Council, Clinical Commissioning Groups and GPs, school link workers and local businesses.

Raising awareness and de-stigmatising mental health issues is a significant part of what The Welcome Project does. This is something that most of the clients experienced and/or still do. Working together with time to change Surrey, they have supported the recruitment of Mental Health Ambassadors, as well as promoting the work across all areas. By attending events and meetings that are not necessary related to mental health, talking to people, not just to professionals and through sharing their clients’ experiences the public can be educated regarding mental health and the services on offer through The Welcome Project.

Half of the respondents to the staff and volunteer survey felt that some of the general population are aware of mental health issues with 38% responding that they don’t think many people are aware. Many commented that there is a stigma attached, with a couple saying that they felt that this is improving.

“I think that stigma still exists and that people feel ‘embarrassed’ or ‘worried’ about saying they are experiencing mental health issues. I also feel that although there is a lot of support available for people in the community, it is still somewhat fragmented. If agencies / organisations worked closer together then service provision could improve even more. This is an area we will continue to work on.”
Values and ethos

The Welcome Project offers numerous groups and activities that are peer led, these include tai chi, fitness groups, walking groups, Mindeaze coffee morning, art, photography, drama, art and glass painting, let’s talk groups, creative writing, movie review group and book club.

“When assessing a new service user I employ a person centred approach to care planning. Using the recovery star I initiate a conversation that encourages the service user to identify what goals they wish to attain and then offer them a range of ways these could be attained. This provides the service user with choice. I also highlight that the plan is something that can and should be responsive to changes and that the client has the right to change it at any point.”

“I encourage clients to bring in and / or share their creative ideas. In groups I encourage clients to be creative in their own personal space and have the option to opt out, observe and make suggestions”

“The activities I provide are client led. And if clients don’t want to make anything at all, they are very welcome to sit and chat as well.”

By using the recovery star and really embracing its ethos of focusing on what the client is prepared and wanting to work on The Welcome Project enables clients to be active in their own recovery. They also offer opportunities for people to get involved in providing some of the services and putting their new skills into practice. They are very much people focused, empowering people to get back some kind of control over their lives and personal responsibility, which in return enables them to make changes and move forward, and move on as is right for them.

The Welcome Project, when possible, will meet clients in the community for their assessments or one to one appointments. When a plan is put together for that client they will work with them to give them the best support they need, this includes accompanying them to their first activity if need be, supporting them to find different activities in the community, and running activities in their community. These goals are reviewed regularly including using the recovery star.

“Recovery is a long journey and people need time to engage with us and then to find their own pathway which can take months/years and this needs recognising if we are to able to support users effectively and not in a tokenistic way.”

The graph to the left shows the volume of service users who started and their ended their service with The Welcome Project each quarter. This demonstrates that new referrals have remained consistently high over the year and as service users are enabled to achieve their outcomes they are no longer need this service and are discharged.
The chart to the right illustrates the outcomes of people discharged from the service. 85% of people went on to be engaged in mainstream community activities with the remainder not requiring onward referral to other community services.

**Future plans**

By identifying possible gaps and needs in the community The Welcome Project will develop their service as well as working with more volunteers and identifying new partners in order to continue to provide what works best for their clients.

“**In the last year I have realised that although there is a plethora of support in the community for people experiencing mental health problems, the number of people needing intensive support, but who don’t qualify for CMHRS support is growing. How we meet this challenge with limited resources is an on-going challenge, but one that generates exciting opportunities.**”

The ideal future for The Welcome Project would see more and more people accessing the services across Surrey and mental wellbeing having its well earned place on the agenda. The vision is to have improved partnership working between statutory and voluntary sector services where voluntary services are regarded as professionals and equals when it comes to providing the best service for the client group and sharing learning and best practice with the statutory sector and getting the recognition for all the work done in the community.

**What do people who use Welcome Project services think?**

Respondents to the service user questionnaire were asked which service they were commenting on and then in what borough or district they live

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Community connections evaluation report final April 2016
“When I joined the Welcome group some 18 months ago, I was quite lonely (I'm retired and live alone) and occasionally suffered from depression. So I went along for a while and found the staff and most of the folk there quite friendly and good company. I have since made a lot of friends outside of the group and I now travel all over the country and my depression has all but gone. So yes, the Welcome group helped me get back on my feet.”

89% of respondents said Welcome Project had very much or moderately helped to improve their life. Analysing and exploring the qualitative feedback further, the following key themes that make Welcome Project a service that improves people’s lives include:

- Appropriate courses, groups and activities available
- Enabling self-help and recovery
- Enabling people to make and maintain a network of support
- Provides a reason for people to get out and about
- Supportive staff and volunteers, giving help and advice

“The Welcome Project gave me time to talk to someone on a regular basis as and when I have needed it. They have also given me help and support with practical issues concerning benefits and also as a carer for someone with dementia. I have also taken part in craft and quiz events at Christmas and Easter when my other commitment (voluntary work) has closed down over the holidays and I am on my own.”

“Coming to Oakleaf has opened my eyes to how things can be with mental health issues... Good! I have more hope, more confidence, and a chance to rebuild my life. It's only through the dedication of the staff and all the activities they do, that has helped me feel more positive and less alone.”
“Involved in various groups at Oakleaf. In process of starting me to get into volunteering. The Welcome Project had helped to start a support group for those who are hard of hearing.”

“Upholstery Course ongoing, drumming - Africana, Shakespeare workshops, Tai Chi, confidence course. All these things are at Oakleaf.”
The Welcome Project was a new provider of community connections services in Surrey Heath, Guildford and Waverley from 2013. Referral numbers in Waverley and Surrey Heath were below the county average by the end of 2014/15, however Guildford referrals were the highest in the county.

The Welcome Project continues to develop services to meet the needs of local people, such as starting peer led groups to support health and well-being. They use recovery star as a person-centred tool to enable people to be active in their own recovery. At the end of March 2015, The Welcome Project was supporting 187 people in Surrey Heath, 751 people in Guildford and 332 people in Waverley.

The data demonstrates a growth in caseload (for all areas from 876 to 1,270) over the evaluation period and 89% of people surveyed stated that the support they had received had very much or moderately improved their life. Specifically, The Welcome Project enabled people to make and maintain support networks, gave people a reason to get out and about and supported self help and recovery. This was through the courses, groups and activities available and the quality of staff and volunteers. Recovery star outcomes also illustrate the vast majority of people who used the service improved or maintained their well-being.
Wellness With A Goal (WWAG) (Elmbridge)

Local context

The total population of Elmbridge according to the 2011 Census was 130,875. The population of Surrey was 1,132,390 which means Elmbridge accounted for 11.6% of the county total.

The graph to the left shows the number of community connections referrals received per 10,000 population for each quarter in year 2 for Elmbridge, as well as the county average for the same period.

In Elmbridge there are 0.5% less males than the Surrey average and WWAG received a considerably higher proportion of referrals for females than the population.

The 2014 midyear estimate of the 18-64 population for Surrey was 693,037.

The graph to the left shows the split in the 16+ population for Elmbridge and Surrey. It also has the referrals received by WWAG in year two split by age. However, due to the age bands not matching direct comparisons can’t be made.
In the evaluation period, on average 14% of people who used the service were not in receipt of another mental health service, such as primary care based psychological therapies or secondary mental health care delivered by Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. This would suggest that WWAG mainly reach a range of people who get other support for their mental health needs.

WWAG is a user-led service with much of the direct support delivered by people with experience. This is intrinsically locally based with very good long-term knowledge of the people being supported.
Findings - Wellness With A Goal (WWAG)

Their strongest form of promotion has been through word of mouth with many people being self-referrals. Although there are a few direct referrals from community mental health recovery service staff, many choose to give out the contact details for WWAG and individuals make the first approach themselves.

In order to improve the awareness and attitudes towards mental health in Elmbridge Wellness With A Goal have been involved in the Time for Change campaign, delivery of Discovery Day as well as the Annual Art Exhibition and had involvement in Hampton Court Sing 500.

To further develop this and improve attitudes WWAG feel there needs to be work on offering preventative services for the ‘worried well’ such as Managing Stress.

How aware do you think the general population are about mental health issues?

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(4 people)

“I think some people don’t respect people with mental health problems and they do try to ignore, and that is sad.”

“There is a lot of good work going on but lack of funds means it’s difficult to access the right communities. Also, GPs are not playing a good enough role in this, if any. GPs need to be educated from the top and made to comply with the promotion of the volunteer sector for mental health.

GP are seen as the “one stop shop” for mental health but do not treat sufferers in a holistic manner instead only making referrals to mental health teams. This is where local charities can play a massive role in recovery and mental wellbeing. Much work is needed in this area to tackle the issues with GPs and the bridge to the charity sector."

Values and ethos

All services that are provided and run by WWAG are peer led: this is as a result of the organisational history.

“Over time I have learned what works for individual clients and therefore can adapt myself to their needs and situation, however to enable anyone new to be able to do the same we keep significant care records when a matter arises so that all staff are aware of the clients’ needs.”

“Depending on individual person, we recommend to do recovery star, CBT groups, organised walking groups, and morning and afternoon coffees organised by other charities.”

All clients are encouraged to participate in the recovery star approach as this helps to identify the client’s needs and from this they can then be signposted to appropriate support.

“Come from a patient background and find that working part time really helps with my ongoing recovery and hopefully gives me a career direction again.”

“I think the service we provide is unique and gives people a place to go where empathy is available as we have been where they are.”

There is a full calendar of community based social activities which are used to support clients to integrate into community life as well as IT training and citizen’s advice bureau sessions.
“We are regularly sent information from a number of sources with regards to activities in the community or provided by other lead providers: this is achieved by networking.”

The graph to the left shows the volume of service users who started and their ended their service with WWAG each quarter. This demonstrates that new referrals have increased significantly high over the year and as service users are enabled to achieve their outcomes they are no longer need this service and are discharged.

The chart to the right illustrates the outcomes of people discharged from the service. 100% of people went on to be engaged in mainstream community activities.

**Future plans**

In recent times there have been some changes to WWAG and currently there is a three year business plan undergoing consultation with partners and stakeholders to plan how to further develop the service.

**What do people who use Wellness With a Goal services think?**

Respondents to the service user questionnaire were asked which service they were commenting on and then in what borough or district they live

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Community connections evaluation report final April 2016
Findings - Wellness With A Goal (WWAG)

“I hope that WWAG, Walton obtains lots of support so that it can continue to provide an excellent mental health service to the local community.”

89% of respondents said Wellness With A Goal had very much or moderately helped to improve their life. Analysing and exploring the qualitative feedback further, the following key themes that make Richmond Fellowship a service that improves people’s lives include:

- Appropriate courses, groups and activities available
- Enabling self-help and recovery
- Supportive staff and volunteers, giving help and advice
- Enabling people to make and maintain a network of support

“This service enabled me to return to full time work after several years on benefits. It also radically changed my outlook from deeply negative to positive.”

“Knowing that there is someone you can talk to, who understands your situation and can provide help and support if you need it, means a great deal in life to anyone. I have found the volunteers at WWAG, Walton always helpful and understanding - allowing me to drop in and chat about things and by taking small steps in moving forward. I feel sure, and hope, that things will get better for me and that my confidence plus self esteem will improve in time.”

“My main activity at the moment is the Wednesday art class. It has really helped me to get out of the house and I really enjoy going. *Named member of staff* is really marvellous and encouraging and I feel it has helped my confidence. Thank you very much.”
Findings - Wellness With A Goal (WWAG)

WWAG are a well-established local service. 2014/15 was a time of change for WWAG, moving towards supporting people in different ways as well as continuing to support people who had used WWAG services for several years to maintain their well-being. The culture shift required to deliver this was underway in 2014/15. WWAG have below the county average for referrals and they continue to change their services to meet the needs of local people, such as working with...
stakeholders to develop a business plan to further develop the work they do. At the end of March 2015, WWAG were supporting 209 people.

The data demonstrates a decline in caseload over the evaluation period (from 286 to 209) and 89% of people surveyed stated that the support they had received had very much or moderately improved their life. Specifically, WWAG enabled people to make and maintain support networks and supported self help and recovery. This was through the courses, groups and activities available and the quality of staff and volunteers.
Conclusions and recommendations

What are the key aspects for delivering successful community connections services?

The data suggests all providers improve outcomes for people with self-defined mental health needs. The qualitative data gathered and analysed identified 9 key themes which are at the heart of how a community connections service improves people’s lives:

1. Flexibility for providers to design their services around local need and outcomes
2. Listening to and involving people in the design and development of services
3. Partnership working and local connections/networks with other voluntary and statutory providers
4. Helping people to make and maintain support networks
5. Giving people a reason to get out and about
6. Supporting self help and recovery
7. Providing a range of courses, groups and activities
8. Having high quality staff and volunteers
9. Providing a personalised approach and enabling people to be active in their own recovery

The chart below illustrates average cost per individual accessing community connections services (not including one off or signposting contacts). At the end of 2014/15, the average cost per individual was £118.06.

The role that these services play in the mental health pathway is crucial. They bridge the perceived gap between primary and secondary care mental health as well as providing a community based support network for individuals throughout their recovery journey. The services promote independence and work in a person-centred way to enable people to achieve their desired outcomes. They also contribute to avoidance and management of crisis and a reduction in dependence on statutory services.

Community connections services support people with a mental health need and reduce reliance on statutory mental health services by supporting people on their recovery journey and crisis prevention. An example of potential cost avoidance can be demonstrated with a typical acute psychiatric in-patient admission costing £11,300, and a year’s worth of Community
Conclusions and recommendations

Mental Health Recovery Service support costing around £4,536 per year. Just one in-patient admission avoidance, equates to the cost of 96 individuals being supported by community connections services.

The key conclusions of the findings outlined in this report are:

- The community connections services are cost effective
- They provide a key strategic importance in the mental health pathway
- They are valued by stakeholders and demonstrate a positive impact

Recommendations

5. Monitor, develop and continue to improve community connections services in light of national and local direction of travel
6. Adult Social Care and Clinical Commissioning Groups to continue to fund community connections services to ensure they are sustainable
7. Commissioning and procurement of future community connections services to be informed by both quantitative (numerical) and qualitative (feedback) data
8. Raise the profile of community connections services, highlighting the positive outcomes, value for money and integral role they play in promoting wellbeing and recovery