

A Year in the Life of SP/LWs in Derby & Derbyshire

By the Derby & Derbyshire
SPLWs

Introduction



- When most of us started our journeys as SP/LWs none of us would have guessed how much things would have changed. A lot of SP/LWs were new/newish to the role and had expectations around the role that we would be doing.

Very quickly, we have had to learn to:

- Adapt
- Improvise
- Overcome
- Be Resilient

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- At a time when the vast majority of individuals have been unable to come together, community groups and social activities have stopped and even services have been struggling to adapt their support, SPLWs have had to change the way we work.
- Pre COVID-19, a fifth of GP appointments were for non-medical needs. Our roles Pre COVID-19 offered an opportunity to support people's wider needs to help reduce the need for GP non medical appointments.
- COVID-19 has highlighted the need for a proactive approach to building personal resilience, wellbeing and capability, it's highlighted how important being connected to the local community is, and the importance of the social and non medical model plays within someone's personal health journey.
- It has also meant that we have had to find innovative ways to connect and interact with individuals and new ways to support them.

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So what have SP/LWs in Derby and Derbyshire been doing



- The role across the City and County has been different for many of us. SP/LWs have been doing anything from:
- Safe and Well calls
- Running online groups
- Online zoom 1 to 1 meetings
- Telephone support
- Supporting the Covid-19 community Response
- Referrals to national and local support groups
- Relationship Building
- Community and Partnership building over zoom.

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Midday Meander



Midday Meander was set up by one social prescriber, the idea was to set up a small walk every 2 weeks in a different park in Derby with a limited amount of patients (4) to walk and socialise (with physical distancing) People were able to bring their dogs and the rules were, no fixing and chat and drink tea too!

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Online Wellbeing Cafe



The care café was run via zoom and brought people together with a guest speaker, the idea was to share ideas on how to maintain a positive wellbeing during this time.

Also it was a great way for people to come together as peers to chat to each other.

The guest speaker discussed mindfulness and other ideas.

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Digital Connections



Connecting People
and Communities

Digital Connections Project

WHY IS IT NEEDED?

Derbyshire Dales has high rates of loneliness and isolation, particularly for:

- The elderly
- New parents
- People not in work

WHAT HAPPENS DIGITALLY?

46% of adults find health information
63% increase social connections

HOWEVER

80% of non-users are over 65
56% of non-users are disabled



WHAT WILL WE DO?



Has been developed, and is run as part of the New Connections Social Prescribing service across Derbyshire Dales.

Aims of Digital Connections Project:

- To increase access to internet and devices
- To increase confidence using the internet and devices
- To improve the skills of community groups to delivery online activities

Strand 1: Access to Devices for people on low incomes and with disabilities

- We will support people to receive a device:
 - Digital Connections funding
 - Other funders e.g. Wavelength
- Direct to BT Basic Wifi (£10/month)
- 3 month dongle if necessary

Strand 2: Developing skills using volunteer Digital Buddies

- Foundation skills
- Communicating – emails, video calls, social media
- Transacting – shopping, banking
- Finding Information – i.e. health and hobbies
- Problem solving – recipes, fixing things

Strand 3: Supporting groups or clubs to:

- Develop online groups on Zoom or video call
- Feel confident using social media to communicate with existing members
- Be visible to new members online

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Online Creative Writing



To help build new coping mechanism around wellbeing a creative writing workshop has been run over zoom.

Working with a social prescriber and two spoken word artists we co-ran not only the creative writing course but also a online spoken word event.

The idea was not only to bring people together but also allow people to be able to vocalise how they were feeling through creative writing in a safe environment.

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Case Study



MM is a 62 year old man who lives on his own and has done for some time. He lives in a private rented flat and has done for some 15 years. He has a good landlord who understands him and MM feels safe there.

- MM was referred to me a few months ago, prior to the Lockdown we have all been going through. Initially, he was seeking some support for his debts and some welfare advice and having had a lengthy chat with him at home, it transpired that he had some considerable debts with his rent. By his own admission, he told me that he had spent his rent money on alcohol.
- MM has some health issues and can struggle at times with isolation, but he loves Derby County and that keeps him going.
- MM wanted some advice on debts and welfare and I signposted him to Derby CAB for both debt and welfare advice.
- During the lockdown, MM was struggling to get out and buy food, so I signposted him to the Covid-19 support HUB, where he received food on a regular basis throughout the lockdown. His phone also packed up during lockdown and I managed through volunteers to get him a new phone, which he is very pleased with and is still using.
- I kept in touch with MM throughout the lockdown with regular phone calls and MM really appreciated the calls and support.
- MM called me to say, he is feeling loads better and more sorted now and he just needs to get his hair cut now!

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Case Study

Community Action

- This lady is 54 years of age and was referred to me due to lots of stress related challenges going on for her during lockdown.
- She has a dog and lives on her own, HS loves her dog and this is what keeps her going most of the time. She has a grown up daughter who she sees a lot and she helps where she can, they have a good relationship
- HS has a few friends and goes out walking when she can, but this is a struggle because she uses a walking frame
- HS has a number of physical health issues and she can struggle around the home at times but wants to something other than just sitting around. HS had expressed an interest in volunteering and helping people
- We discussed what this would look like for her and she could see herself working in a charity shop. We explored this together and we found that the Padley Homeless Charity were looking for volunteers again as we were coming out of lockdown. We contacted the Padley and managed to arrange an informal interview for HS
- This went well and HS is currently working 2 days a week in the shop in Derby City centre, HS is enjoying it. I popped into the shop on her second shift and said hello as all the work we had done was over the phone during lockdown
- HS would now like to work on a proper plan because she struggles to reach out for help and is struggling at home more and more and would like more support in the long term
- HS is also coming out on a 'Midday Meander' every 2 weeks with other ladies that have been struggling during lockdown

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Case Study



- The 60 year old gentleman was referred to me due to a lot of challenges being faced. These challenges had only got worse due to covid 19.
- He lives on his own in a property that is rundown and needs a lot of work done on it.
- He has a history of sleeping rough (even when having a house) and tends to eat at the soup kitchens around derby city.
- He says that his only friends are rough sleepers as well and due to covid 19 he is not getting to see anyone or able to go to the soup kitchens.
- His home has no cook facilities or gas, we discussed about looking for support to carry out the work needed in the home and reconnect his utilities but he did not want this. His main concerns was not having any clean clothes or food in the house. He did not want anything that he had to cook.
- He turned down support from Social Services and laundry services and his only focus was waiting until the homeless projects like Padley where reopened.
- I managed to obtain a small grant to pay for new clothes for him.
- Arranged a couple of food shops to be done for non cooked food. I also managed to get him to agree to have a toaster so he could at least have toast (this is the only thing hot that he wanted.)
- Also I arranged for him to have a local volunteer through the local food bank to visit and make sure that he had food. He turned down any other support.

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Conclusion



It's been a very challenging time for social prescribers across Derbyshire and Derby City but there has been some innovative solutions to issues we never thought we would encounter.

This ability to adapt and find solutions is a real indicator of how important social prescribing is for Derbyshire and the City not only now but also post COVID-19, where more individuals are going to need support around the non-medical personal approach.

Thank you for listening and comments or Questions.

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