

Citizens Advice Epsom & Ewell 2023 Impact Report

This report for the EEBC's Community & Wellbeing Committee summarises our work in 2023, how we have enhanced our service, and how we partner EEBC and other community organisations to enable more local people to access the help they need. We are extremely grateful to EEBC for the support it provides.

- This year we received an additional one off £20k funding from EEBC which allowed us to increase our face to face services offered, critical for the most vulnerable in society as more and more services move online.
- We ran two Winter poverty funds in 2022/23 for clients struggling with cost of living issues and increasing energy costs. The long running Wenceslas Fund in partnership with Epsom & Ewell Rotary Clubs and a new Epsom & Ewell Support Scheme with the Good Company, helping clients by giving grants and energy advice and purchasing energy efficient appliances.
- We have been successful in bids for two new service contracts: a Surrey wide Adviceline phone service and a Financial & Wellbeing project in partnership with a local mental health charity.
- We have focussed on engaging with local organisations, including schools, banks and local companies to raise awareness of our services, raise funding and recruit new volunteers.

Key Statistics 2023:



We helped 2,548 people with 8,361 issues



Over £1m income gained for our clients



We helped 60 families with energy advice and gave £8.6k in energy grants and appliances



85% of clients said that we helped them find a way forward and 88% said they would recommend our service

Thank you so much for your tireless work on my behalf, and the kind consideration you show me. I really appreciate all you do for me.'

A thank you from one of our clients.

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Impact	Activities
Enhanced service / Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opened third day of 'drop ins' for clients Now running outreach advice sessions at three separate locations throughout the borough Surreywide AdviceLine (phone service) introduced which will increase the number of clients phone calls answered
Mental Health Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New joint project with Mary Frances Trust helping people who are struggling with both mild/moderate mental health and financial issues. Successful for further 3 year continuation funding for our Mental Health Outreach Project for those with severe and enduring mental health.
Community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ran Epsom & Ewell Energy Support Scheme with The Good Company helping clients with energy issues. Ran second year of Financial Literacy project at Epsom & Ewell High School and awarded funds to run course at Blenheim School in 2024

2024 Risks & Issues:

- The funding environment remains extremely competitive. In 2024 we will receive no increases to our income from any of our main funders whilst the costs of running the service continue to rise.
- Our ambitions to increase and enhance our much needed service are limited by our inability to plan long term with our current short term income commitments.
- The wider charity sector is struggling with loss of experienced volunteers after the pandemic and recruitment of new ones. We are no exception and the training requirements of Citizens Advice is a significant commitment. We will continue to prioritise recruitment in 2024.
- The office move from our Old Town Hall offices will require significant planning, resource and communications to ensure service continuity throughout the move.



Central Surrey Voluntary Action

Supporting the voluntary sector in Elmbridge, Epsom & Ewell and Mole Valley

Q2

Who we are

Central Surrey Voluntary Action is a local infrastructure organisation based in Surrey covering the boroughs of Elmbridge and Epsom & Ewell and the district of Mole Valley. We are a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity and were set up in 1994.

Our core functions are:



LEADERSHIP AND ADVOCACY

Mobilising and encouraging community action, strengthening our sector's voice and influence on key decision-makers and funders.



VOLUNTEERING

Building an environment in which volunteers and their communities thrive, by encouraging and nurturing volunteering opportunities.



CAPACITY BUILDING

Providing practical support and development for local people and organisations, to nurture skills and build community resilience.



PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

Creating opportunities and driving effective joint working by building networks of local organisations and strategic partners.



DBS Service

Providing a DBS service to charities for Volunteers and Staff as well as giving advice on DBS best practice.

Volunteer Overview

Registrations
200

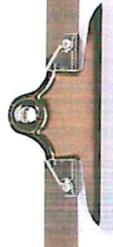
New Opportunities
58

Refferrals
240

Placements
70

We have supported 26 organisations with volunteering best practice advice

We have helped 76 organisations with volunteer recruitment



Network Events

Weve organised training events and workshops, aswell as attended community events across our area.

5 Network Events
80 Participants



7 Training Events
142 Participants



Highlights

Eamonn's Award - Better Together

Surreys Down Place award for making a positive impact within our communities. This award is for having contributed to creating working environments that lead to improvement of the health and wellbeing of residents in the community.

Eamonn worked as the Aspire lead at CSVA for the last 10 years supporting people with support needs to volunteer. He has built up relationships with referral agencies and placed over 500 people into volunteering or helped them into training or activities. His way of working has enabled placements that benefit the organisations who gain a contributing volunteer and the individual who grows in confidence, skills and experience. 25% of the people supported have gone on to paid employment. The Aspire contacts mean strong relationships have been built with organisations and CSVA. The support new CSVA projects gets is from these relationships.





Central Surrey Voluntary Action

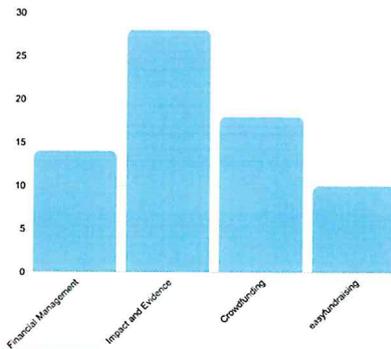
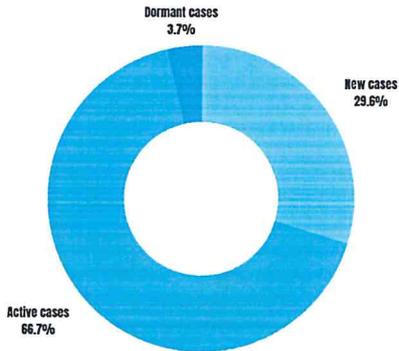
Supporting the voluntary sector in Elmbridge, Epsom & Ewell and Mole Valley

Funding Advisor - 2023

125

Organisations Supported

40 new cases
90 active cases



70

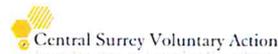
Organisations Attended Funding Surgeries

Impact and Evidence
Financial Management x 2
Learn How to Crowdfund
Easyfundraising

160

Funds Promoted Monthly

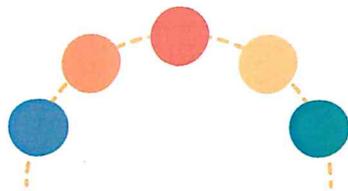
12 Funding Newsletters
25 inclusive and representative funding categories every month



Funding Newsletter
October 2023



Financial Sustainability



100

Funding Applications Supported

Advice
Ideas
Evidence and data
Content reviews
Finance reviews

£500k

Funding Income Raised

Core Revenue
Project
Capital





Highlights

Friendship and Fishing Project

This has come to a successful end for another year. Some of the attendees have arranged with the fishing group to carry on attending. Our Friendship and Fishing project in partnership with Reflections Angling at Henfold Lakes meets every Friday. Alison who runs reflections was nominated for a coaching award with the Angling Trust. To briefly detail, sessions were at Henfold Lakes, all equipment provided, Qualified Fishing Coaches provided 1-1 support. The first session was free and a £5 contribution on a Pay as you Go basis thereafter. We had six regulars with 10 other people trying out fishing over the 10 fishing sessions. We also used Mole Valley Life Community Transport to get people to the lake from their homes or Dorking station. Use of the Community Transport was £5.00 per week. <https://www.centralsurreyvoluntaryaction.co.uk/home/about-us/projects/mole-valley-friendship-and-fishing-group>



Central Surrey Voluntary Action

Supporting the voluntary sector in Elmbridge, Epsom & Ewell and Mole Valley

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Warm Hub

We started the warm hub as a way to utilize on the community space at our Dorking office, we ran this in conjunction with Age Concern Mole Valley's I.T. courses. We supported several people with affordable warm meals and a comfortable place to be in the colder months. We have since moved to providing a wider menu and frozen meals that can be taken home to heat up for the assisted living complex above our office. We have provided food for over 60 people since we started in January. We have also used this as an opportunity to signpost our visitors to relevant organisations and services.



Sparks Fund

Central Surrey Voluntary Action ran two SPARKS funds between April – September 2023 in partnership with Surrey County Council.

The Sparks fund's objective is to empower communities that have been impacted by Covid19 and its wider impacts on health and wellbeing. Enabling communities to have increased participation, engagement and a role and say in how things are done on matters that impact them and where they live through small scale community-led initiatives that benefits the local community and residents in the highlighted areas Elmbridge Mole Valley and Epsom and Ewell.

Overview of funds:

- 30 applications were submitted.
- 13 projects were approved in Elmbridge, Mole Valley and Epsom and Ewell.
- Total grant given £24,500 approx. (final total is subject to change funds are distributed)

CSR / GROUP VOLUNTEERING

Our CSR team have continued to support organisations that want to take part in employee volunteering they have had over 10 enquiries which are still being processed. The team has also continued their relationship with Atkins by meeting up with Alice and Adrian to discuss setting up more information about how we can continue to develop our partnership into the future. Atkins are also interested in Professional and Commercial Support to Charities. They have offered their meeting rooms with full AV support.

Group Volunteering so far:

- Haleon- 9 staff volunteered for 2 days
- DEFRA- 20 staff volunteered to plant 3000 bulbs



Funding & Sustainability Advice

Our dedicated Funding and Sustainability Advisor provides in depth support to organisations in Elmbridge in addition to support for organisations in Mole Valley and Epsom and Ewell.

Over 70 organisations supported with their funding needs for both core, project, and capital costs. The capital costs sought are significant and account for £1.5 million of the circa £2.5 million of overall funding sought.

Over 100 tailored funding searches were undertaken to identify appropriate funding sources and over 50 grant applications have been reviewed.

In addition to bespoke advice, a monthly funding newsletter has been distributed to 675 individuals across organisations in Surrey. The Funding Newsletter informs of funds available across a base of 25 broad categories with circa over 130 funds detailed each month.

Also the Funding and Sustainability Advisor has provided sustainability advice to over 100 organisations and hosted a quarterly Funding Surgery on a range of topics in relation to both funding and sustainability.



AGE CONCERN EPSOM & EWELL – 2023 SERVICE DELIVERY REPORT FOR EEBC

2023 saw a significant increase in enquiries through our I&A desk resulting in an increase in our client database by promoting our services at outreach settings, and increasing our marketing presence through social media channels, newsletters, and increased marketing activity. We also have seen an increase of referrals from the statutory sector including the ICP, PCN and EEBC

2023 saw our offices and services back up to speed after the pandemic with all staff and volunteers returning to normal working patterns.

Information & Advice Service - support providing a free and confidential information & advice service on a wide range of issues affecting older people, through a dedicated help desk by phone, e mail or one to one. Providing the right information at the right time we save clients and their carers time, money, as well as unnecessary worry and ensuring effective interventions. Delivered by our Information & Advice Officer supported by 6 volunteers on the I&A desk. 1513 clients made use of our I&A service. 5 office volunteers support office administration.

Home Visiting - assessing clients' needs in their own surroundings including welfare benefits checks. Increase in income by benefits successfully claimed. Improved financial circumstances a key indicator for improved health and wellbeing. Successful Blue Badge applications helping mobility. Referral to Social Services, Occupational Therapist or other specialist organisations i.e. for Dementia and Parkinson's support. Delivered by our Home Visitor. Attendance Allowance claims = 121 worth £200,000 Blue Badge applications = 59 Pension Credit claims = 5 Disability Living Allowance/PIP claims = 0 Council Tax benefit = 1 Housing Support Allowance = 0 Carers Allowance = 0

Medical Transport Scheme - service used by clients to medical appointments, or to visit family or friends in hospital or residential homes. Less medical appointments missed. Monies saved as service less expensive than taxis. Cost effective service as run by volunteers. Clients raise issues with the drivers who pass the matter onto our I&A and Home Visiting team. Overseen by our Office Manager. Supported by 22 volunteer drivers (3 volunteers have completed 2000 drives each) and 6 transport desk volunteers. 159 members, 1071 drives made.

Men's Club - dedicated to like-minded men within the borough sharing knowledge and skills and meeting to enjoy activities of their choice. Alleviating and reducing isolation and loneliness within the Borough. Delivered by our Men's Club Co-ordinator with 30 members.

Befriending Service - supporting lonely and isolated older people, who live alone, with volunteer befrienders. Delivered by our Social Support co-ordinator, supported by 48 volunteer befrienders.

Monthly Sunday Teas - providing a full tea and entertainment once a month with transport. Overseen by Social Support Co-ordinator, supported by 8 volunteers at the tea and 15 drivers. 35 members.

IT Support 'Helping Hands' – one to one support in clients' own home with computer, tablet or phone and monthly computer club. Overseen by I&A volunteers. Supported by 8 volunteers with a broad knowledge of modern technology. 35 visits made.

DIY Support - doing small DIY jobs in clients' homes. Overseen by I&A volunteers. Supported by 9 DIY volunteers. 32 visits made.

Volunteers - supporting the services that Age Concern Epsom & Ewell deliver. Delivered by our Volunteer co-ordinator supporting 143 volunteers. Volunteer hours' worth £165,000 per annum

Fundraising & Marketing – delivered by our Fundraising & Marketing Co-ordinator

Our fundraising events include: A Easter Egg Trail in Rosebery Park, Curry & Greek Night, Quiz Night, Candlelit Christmas concert, Christmas fundraising stalls, including 10 days in the Ashley centre selling knitted and crafted goods.

Local businesses have been very generous with donations, and these include: The Family Building Society, Asda.

Charities, local not for profit groups and councillors have also supported us: Epsom Rotary, Epsom Arts Society, EEBC & Surrey Councillors John Beckett, Jan Mason, and Eber Kington.

We have had very generous private donations and legacies which have been a major part of our income this year.

The Sunnybank Trust 2022/2023

We support adults with a learning disability, through advocacy, clubs/activities, a transition service as well as series of weekly radio shows run by and for our partners with a learning disability. We have also launched a consultancy called Understand Us, a group of consultants with a learning disability who can provide training, audits and bespoke projects around accessibility for customers with a learning disability.

Over the past year we have supported 227 partners across our services, including 40 partners new to our services with a further 25 since October.

Advocacy: Our advocacy team have increased their monthly average of issues reaching a monthly average in the past couple of months to an average of 180 per month, with social care and health issues accounting for over 50% of the issues each month. As we use a multi-agency approach, our network of providers and connections within social care, GPs and wider community organisations has also increased. Earlier this year, we were delighted earlier to win the SABP NHS CARE Awards for our advocacy service.

Issue	Total No. Nov22/Nov23
Accommodation	143
Finance/legal/benefits	129
Health & Medical needs	321
Care & Support	889
Transport & Mobility	15
Activities & Leisure	167
Keeping Safe	12
Homes Monitoring	73
Additional Vol support	44
External Agencies projects	20
TOTAL	1813

Choices – Clubs and activities: Within our social clubs and activities, we have provided over 311 clubs and social activities including the partner-initiated Swag disco with a 30% increase across the 11 discos of an average attendance of 43 partners. Other partner initiated and led activities include the weekly Pub Quiz and monthly online karaoke sessions. In summer 23, the drama group performed two immersive shows of Alice in Wonderland to audiences of over 130. Last year we introduced the Sunny Afternoon Club which provides activities and social opportunities for the older partners who retain behaviours from their time at the long stay hospitals. Attendance has increased by 40% with a weekly attendance of 27 different partners each week. We also hosted a summer party with over 50 partners attending and other partners running and supporting the activities.

Visits include a theatre trip for the drama group to see 'Noises Off' at the Yvonne Arnaud; a day workshop for the allotment group at RHS Wisley and a trip to the Oval by the Futures cricket team where they also had the opportunity of leading the Surrey Cricket team onto the pitch.

Futures/transition: Our group have focused on issues to support community resilience including money management and budgeting. In partnership with the Surrey and Borders NHS nurses' team, we have launched a pilot 10 week course on sex and relationships – the first course for LD in Surrey.

Outcomes include increased understanding, confidence (especially around when to say no and understanding abuse) and knowledge of where to go when there are problems. A weekly supper club was launched in the Spring to support the younger partners to budget, shop and cook food with friends - this included planning, budgeting, shopping, food preparation as well as nutrition.

Within our Futures service, we have celebrated 4 placements for paid employment, 1 move to independent living with a further 1 move where the process has started. We have also seen 3 placements into voluntary trainee roles. Partners from Futures have presented to the Job Centre and talked to them about how they could make their service more accessible.

Communications: How and what we communicate continues to be important and is driven by what our partners want to say. The Sunny Sessions Radio Shows have broadcast 126 twice weekly shows in partnership with Surrey Hills Community Radio with an average of 132 listeners per show. The shows have worked with 54 organisations and community groups in interviews and features conducted by the Sunnybank partners. The production group of 10 partners have met monthly planning shows around themes such as mental health, wellbeing, annual health checks as well as news about local organisations and events. In addition to the production team, 10 partners who have worked with the Sunny Sessions Producer have gone on to host their own shows in partnership with Surrey Hills Community Radio. We have also launched an additional third weekly show in partnership with Woking Radio to broadcast across the Woking and Waverley area.

We have celebrated recognition for our work. In the autumn of 2022 in partnership with the CCG Surrey Heartlands and an animation company Strange Beasts, we participated in a research project which resulted in a short training film for GPs around enabling good access to primary care especially with reference to Annual Health Checks. Through the voices and experiences of our partners, the animation advocated for GPs to think about adjustments that can be made. The animation won best animation documentary at the London International Animation Festival and was screened at the Mexico International Animation Festival. Other health authorities use this to promote awareness in their regions.

https://youtu.be/ZGIG_RrTuc?si=8Wmf1ErU1BX9-VXD

In July 2023, the Sunny Sessions and Understand Us had stands at the Disability Expo, Excel Centre, London. As a result we have been invited by the Sunflower organisation to develop the further work they are keen to do around learning disability. Our work with Understand Us continues to forge new connections including supporting the LD development at the Sunflower organisation for hidden disabilities as well as further work with RHS Wisley. We also featured in Community Living (link below) and the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

In Community Living Magazine:

<https://communitylivingmagazine.com/power-in-the-pounds/>

On the National Lottery Heritage Fund page:

[RHS Garden Wisley elevates accessibility and participation through collaborative initiatives | The National Lottery Heritage Fund](#)

In the autumn, we were delighted to host a day visit by Cllr Mark Nuti, Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for social care and public health.

“Sunnybank is an exceptional organisation.... I’ve learnt such a lot from them in a very short period of time, knowledge that I use day to day in advertising their good work and trying to highlight to

others the difficulties faced by those who have disabilities that in a lot of cases is not obvious or clear. “