



End of Grant Report

Name of organisation: Communities First Wessex

Project name: Positive Pathways

Project ID: 10292847

Reporting period: 1st August 2017- 31st January 2023

Project Overview

We support Havant Borough residents aged 18+ who need a little bit of help and support to volunteer in their community. Our goal is to increase wellbeing, reduce isolation and teach new skills through participation in volunteering, especially for those who are disconnected from their communities, often through drug/alcohol misuse, poor mental health and long-term unemployment. Supporting residents who want to reconnect with their community but do not have the confidence to do it alone.

The project takes an individualised strength-based approach supporting residents to create their own pathway to live fuller healthier lives, increase their aspirations and work towards their future goals. When clients join, they are invited to:

- Create a personal plan setting their own goals allowing the team to create a bespoke 'positive pathway' for each individual client
- Join team volunteering, training or mentoring for individual volunteer roles
- Attend drop-in sessions to make new friends and get involved in planning projects
- Gain valuable work experience
- Eventually undertake individual volunteering roles or move closer to employment.

Positive Pathways & Pfizer Employees



Clients benefited enormously from taking part in Team Volunteering days alongside local Business, nervous at first clients gained confidence from volunteering alongside full time employees.



Hear from the clients themselves on the impact of the project can be found online at:

[Heart of the Park Play Café](#)



Since beginning in 2017 we have supported **314** clients, 160 men and 112 women (the rest preferred not to say). All have been unemployed or unable to work with 29 of them identifying as having caring responsibilities.

We have created personal plans with **188** of the clients who have set individual goals and **134** clients received 1-2-1 mentoring

Team Volunteering

Team volunteering events have proved a popular holistic mechanism for supporting wellbeing, they give the clients the chance to make new friends, learn new skills and make a difference in their communities, building confidence and improving overall feelings of wellbeing. They also support the local community, improving local places and relieving isolation.

We planned **203** Team Volunteering days recording **820** attendances by **120** clients

The types of team volunteering undertaken have included gardening, decorating, tending the garden at the Hayling Island War Memorial, befriending, coffee and activity afternoons in sheltered accommodation, Beach cleans, Macmillan Coffee Mornings, litter picks, designing and delivering a Positive Living event, tree planting at Havant Thicket Reservoir

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Bedhampton Methodist Church



Gardening at Riders School



Organisations Supported by the Positive Pathways Team

Age Concern, Bedhampton Social Hall, Bedhampton Methodist Church, Havant Pastoral Centre, Hollybank (mental health residential care), Trostant, Riders, Sharps Copse School (painting classrooms) Park Community, Mill Rythe Schools and Hayling College with Hayling Horticultural Society, Grow Together Project, Waterloooville Girl Guides, Billy's Lake and Waterloooville Community Centre, Sheltered Accommodation Tweed Court and Lyndhurst House, Hermitage Stream, Lyndhurst House, Staunton Country Park, Hayling College, Malmesbury Lawn Day Care, Bushy Lease, South Downs and Queen Elizabeth Country Parks, Tuppeny Barn, Havant and Bedhampton Methodist Churches, Portsmouth Water, Portsmouth City Council Resident Participation Centre, Friends of Nore Barn Wood, Friends of Langstone Harbour, Final Straw, Havant Borough Council (litter picks)

Training & Workshops

Bespoke workshops were developed to support the journey of our clients, in total we delivered **74** training sessions, with **415** attendances by **91** clients.

Workshops delivered included:

Working as Part of a Team, Gaining Control with Confidence, Communication and Interpersonal Skills, Personal Presentation, Skills and Strengths Workshop, Customer Service Skills, Interview Skills, Computing for Beginners Using Internet and Email, Time Management and Assertiveness Skills, Interview Skills and CV Building Workshop. Positive Thinking, Goal setting, Managing Anxiety, Skills checks with NCS, Multiply training – fun workshops with embedded maths skills...included Easter Challenge and Shopping list Activity. 2 customers have been referred to the Read Easy programme offering 121 support to those who find it difficult to read or write. Budgeting workshops, Meditation for Mindfulness and Wellbeing, Reducing the worry about social situations and how to communicate in different situations, Building Personal Resilience, Structuring your Day,

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Strengths and Weaknesses, Using your Skills, Initiative and Problem Solving, Rebuilding Self Esteem, Setting Boundaries,



Summary of highlights each year

Year 1

- Launched the Project – Two new staff appointed, including one who had previously been supported by our Supported Volunteering Programme, she has now gone on to full time employment with Portsmouth City Council.
- The official launch was well attended by local organisations, Councillors and the Mayor of Havant. Guest speakers included NHS wellbeing, a volunteer from our previous project who has gone on to be employed by Vivid Housing as an Employment and Training Advisor. Our new volunteers found her speech inspiring. One of our clients who had a long term schizo-affective disorder also spoke on stage about his disorder, his journey and how Positive Pathways was helping him. Since leaving the project he has moved on from sheltered housing into his own accommodation and became a garden volunteer at another Community Centre
- Prior to the launch our volunteers helped produce a video which highlighted some of their barriers and how they were being supported by the project and how it was helping to improve their confidence.
- Two long term unemployed people went into employment. One as a taxi controller and another as a Chef

Year 2

- Positive Pathways won Large Team of the Year at the Havant Volunteer Awards. Some of our clients attended and were very proud to be on stage to collect their award.
- A Positive Living event was held to promote awareness of suicide prevention and positive mental health – over 20 support organisations attended. Our clients helped set up, prepared, and served refreshments and acted as greeters. Two sisters who had very high support needs, and social anxiety were stars of the show and chatted to several

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organisations and attendees. They continued to develop in confidence and helped with the initial setting up of Park Play

- Heart of the Park Social Enterprise – Park Play and Café launched in July 2019. The café is utilized as a volunteering & training facility for clients ready to leave Positive Pathways who want to further develop skills and confidence. They are trained in preparing food, till operation and Barista training. Social skills are also developed further by serving and taking orders for food by interaction with parents. Volunteers in the café also gain certification in Food Hygiene and Allergen Awareness
- Skills Checks delivered to volunteers by the National Careers Service. Our clients found this helped them identify their skills and personal strengths that they previously weren't aware of, helping them to think about their future goals more clearly.

Year 3

- Covid 19 Pandemic started with lockdowns ensuing a few months later. During this time, we held an online storytelling competition to help keep volunteers motivated. We also sent a list of free online training courses to our customers and ran a volunteer of the month award which was posted on Positive Pathways Facebook page for them to see and share with friends and family.
- Art and craft kits were donated by the charity Making Space and were given out to volunteers, encouraging many of them to try a new skill. They produced some lovely pictures which were posted on our Facebook page.
- Heart of The Park Garden was completed and refurbished with outdoor play equipment to support Park Play. Volunteers helped with building and setting up play equipment and helped with planting the pots and raised beds with flowers and vegetables.
- Wellbeing calls were made weekly throughout the pandemic period to support mental health and wellbeing and prevent social isolation, with extra support offered to those with the highest need.
- We took on the local Charity Allotment to offer our clients the opportunity to learn more about horticulture, and to produce fresh fruit and vegetables for the Park Play Café.

Year 4

- Pandemic restrictions were eased, and activities and social drop ins were gradually re-introduced with social distancing where necessary. We introduced a rota for activities, to ensure all clients had the opportunity to attend. Our customers felt this really helped their wellbeing after such a long time spent indoors and isolated.
- Activities re-introduced at the allotment, focusing on redesigning the plots and planting winter vegetables.
- Additional funding was secured from ESF to set up a Skills & Employment Hub.

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Year 5

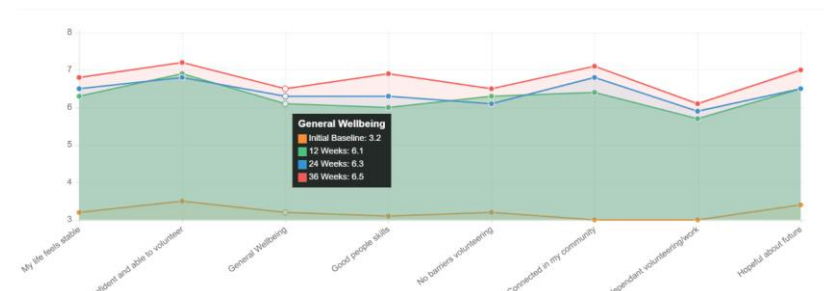
- Registrations started to increase, activities resumed, and clients started to return slowly but steadily. Some clients returned having previously left the programme, having suffered significant setbacks with their mental health following the isolation of lockdowns.
- The needs of those referred to Positive Pathways were significantly increased following the pandemic, many had more complex mental health, substance misuse needs.
- One client Steph has written a book about her struggle with poor mental health, referencing support from Positive Pathways and had it published, currently on sale via Amazon. She has raised over £500 through sales which she is donating to local mental health charity Havant MIND

Measuring Outcomes

An outcome measurement tool was developed in our CRM database specifically designed for this project, this enables us to record the personal goals set by our clients when they join the project, them monitor and record their progress with a 12 weekly progression tool.

All 314 clients completed a baseline score (on the progression tool) when they joined the project, against the outcomes below, 81 clients have repeated the process at 12 weeks, 60 at 24 weeks and 51 at 36 weeks. This enabled us to monitor the distance travelled with the outcomes based on feedback of the clients themselves.

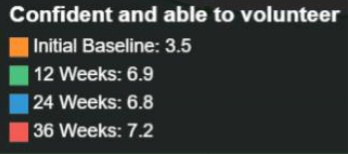
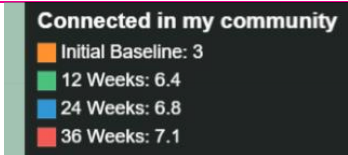
Group Outcomes for all clients over the 5-year period are in the graph below. The orange line represents client scores at the start of the project, green at 12 weeks, blue at 24 weeks and red at 36 weeks. Highlighting that we make the biggest difference to the lives of our clients during the first 12-week period, following this their circumstance stabilised, but improved more gradually.



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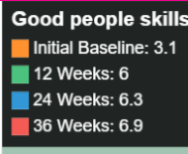
Project Outcome 1

Individuals with mental health problems/history of substance and alcohol misuse will benefit from increased confidence and self-worth, and re connect with their community.

| <p>People using the service will report increased confidence and wellbeing</p> <p>The chart to the right shows that upon joining clients rate their confidence as 3.5 out of 10, after 36 weeks support these increases to 7.2 out of 10.</p> | <p>Confident and able to volunteer</p>  <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Time Point</th><th>Score</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Initial Baseline</td><td>3.5</td></tr><tr><td>12 Weeks</td><td>6.9</td></tr><tr><td>24 Weeks</td><td>6.8</td></tr><tr><td>36 Weeks</td><td>7.2</td></tr></tbody></table> | Time Point | Score | Initial Baseline | 3.5 | 12 Weeks | 6.9 | 24 Weeks | 6.8 | 36 Weeks | 7.2 |
|--|--|------------|-------|------------------|-----|----------|-----|----------|-----|----------|-----|
| Time Point | Score | | | | | | | | | | |
| Initial Baseline | 3.5 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 12 Weeks | 6.9 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 24 Weeks | 6.8 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 36 Weeks | 7.2 | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>People will report reduced use of mental health and crisis services</p> | <p>Mental Health and NHS teams have continued to refer their clients to us throughout the project having witnessed the positive impact the project has had on their clients mental health. Direct quotes from the services can be found below.</p> | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>People using the service will feel better connected with their communities and less isolated</p> <p>When asked how connected clients feel to their community upon joining they rate this as 3 out of 10, after 36 weeks support when asked the same question, they rate their community connections as 7.1 out of 10</p> | <p>Connected in my community</p>  <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Time Point</th><th>Score</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Initial Baseline</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>12 Weeks</td><td>6.4</td></tr><tr><td>24 Weeks</td><td>6.8</td></tr><tr><td>36 Weeks</td><td>7.1</td></tr></tbody></table> | Time Point | Score | Initial Baseline | 3 | 12 Weeks | 6.4 | 24 Weeks | 6.8 | 36 Weeks | 7.1 |
| Time Point | Score | | | | | | | | | | |
| Initial Baseline | 3 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 12 Weeks | 6.4 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 24 Weeks | 6.8 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 36 Weeks | 7.1 | | | | | | | | | | |

Project outcome 2:

Individuals with complex needs will increase their chances of undertaking voluntary work.

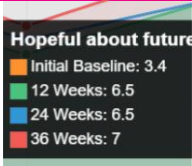
| <p>People with multiple needs will have improved social skills.</p> <p>When they join clients rate their people skills on average clients rate themselves as 3.1 out of 10 This increases to 6.9 out of 10 after 36 weeks</p> | <p>Good people skills</p>  <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Time Point</th><th>Score</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Initial Baseline</td><td>3.1</td></tr><tr><td>12 Weeks</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>24 Weeks</td><td>6.3</td></tr><tr><td>36 Weeks</td><td>6.9</td></tr></tbody></table> | Time Point | Score | Initial Baseline | 3.1 | 12 Weeks | 6 | 24 Weeks | 6.3 | 36 Weeks | 6.9 |
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| Time Point | Score | | | | | | | | | | |
| Initial Baseline | 3.1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 12 Weeks | 6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 24 Weeks | 6.3 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 36 Weeks | 6.9 | | | | | | | | | | |

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| <p>People will be confident enough to volunteer alone</p> |  |
| <p>People with complex needs will take part in some form of volunteering</p> | <p>Almost all Positive Pathways have complex needs, 120 have taken part in Volunteering</p> |

Project outcome 3:

Long term unemployed people will undertake training to further their personal development and increase their wellbeing and chances of finding voluntary work or employment.

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>People who are long term unemployed/ or with low confidence will report feeling more resilient and optimistic</p> <p>When joining clients rate how hopeful there are for their future at 3.4 out of 10, following 36 weeks of support that increases to 7 out of 10</p> |  |
| <p>People will increase their chance of finding volunteering opportunities or work.</p> | <p>The project has increased the chances of volunteering through training and mentoring.</p> |

Project outcome 4:

People who have been homeless will re-engage with their community and improve their skills towards volunteering and work readiness

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|---|--|
| <p>People who have been homeless will report being better connected with their community and less lonely</p> | <p>27 clients in total (22 men & 5 women) identified as having been or were currently homeless</p> |
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Commented [MH1]: @Ina Allum how many homeless people have we supported

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People who have been homeless will take part in some form of volunteering

All 27 clients participated in team volunteering as well as receiving mentoring 1-2-1 support. 2 who continued to be homeless were signposted to local homeless support agencies, as well as support for ongoing issues that had been the cause of their current positions.

Commented [MH2]: @Ina Allum how many of the homeless people have taken part in the volunteering?

Commented [3R2]: 22 male and 5 female reported having previously been homeless. 2 males were homeless at the time of attending the project

Referrals

Positive Pathways is open access, anyone can contact us to join, we also receive referrals from DWP, Southern NHS Trust (including Hollybank mental health residential and Parkway community mental health), MIND, Richmond Fellowship (mental health support), Orion Centre (NHS substance misuse), YOU Trust, Two Saints (homeless support), SeetecPlus and Havant Borough Council.

Feedback from our referrers includes:

Hi Ina, I just want to say thank you to you and the team for supporting my two clients that have attended Positive Pathways. It really helped provide some important community-based activities which made a real difference to them both. I hope that the project can continue as we have very little community-based groups locally and these are important for social interaction, social networking and, more generally, beneficial for the client's mental health and wellbeing. I wish you and the team all the best for the future. Many Thanks David Thompson Mental Health Practitioner Social Worker Care Coordinator.

I'm writing as the Care Coordinator of many clients who have benefited enormously from the Positive Pathways service. They have had different histories, diagnosis, and abilities which the programme has enveloped and valued. Each individual has developed and identified strengths they were unaware of. Positive Pathways has facilitated positive change, via a structured and enabling service, that has been invaluable for each person undergoing the programme. Many thanks, Nikki. Southern Health

As a Disability Employment Advisor within the Job centre both myself and several staff have sign posted customers to Positive Pathways and continue to do so. Feedback from customers has always been very positive and customers have clearly moved forward in securing jobs in the future after working with you and your team. If I ever have a customer who wants to do voluntary work Positive Pathways always comes to mind. We have customers currently who are long term unemployed working in the café at Positive Pathways who really enjoy working there and are finding the work experience invaluable. Thank you for your support and may it long continue. Lisa Seager Disability Employment Advisor – Havant Department for Work and Pensions Havant Jobcentre

I would like to express my thanks for the invaluable support Positive Pathways has provided to my clients. They have supported clients to rebuild their self-esteem and confidence in the community. They provide classroom training opportunities to support their recovery pathway, hope for the future and resilience. The service is client centred providing voluntary roles in a peer group setting

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and sole voluntary roles. I would like to thank Ina Allum who is a vital part of the service. She speaks passionately about Positive Pathways and the support it provides the community. **Tracy Nutbrown Occupational Therapist Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust Parkway Centre**

Over the past few years many of my clients have accessed Positive Pathways and the feedback we have received, and the reason we continue to refer to them, has many overwhelmingly positive (indeed I cannot think of a negative comment from any of my clients!) From the initial introduction to the programme the clients have found the staff welcoming and positive and have enjoyed the activities on offer which have served to boost my clients mental wellbeing, provided structure and a focus to their weeks, have given them a reason to leave their homes and have given them a safe environment to discuss matters of interest and learn new things. I would have no hesitation in continuing to recommend their service. **Colin Robson Seetec Pluss**

Client Stories

Steph



Steph first joined the Positive Pathways team in February 2019. She quickly became involved with our activities and connected easily with the other volunteers, making her a well-liked, approachable member of the team. She has worked previously as a qualified Nurse, as an office worker and in a café, but her continuing struggle with poor mental health has made future employment more difficult, although ultimately, Steph would like to go back into part time paid work.

Steph submitted numerous poems and short stories into our Poetry and Short Story Competition which were very well received. She won Runner Up and attended the award ceremony, where judge Neville Atkinson presented her with an award and a certificate. Steph was also interviewed by The News about suicide awareness and the effect it can have if the signs go unrecognized. Steph is passionate about supporting and helping others through mental illness and is still keen on volunteering and helping Positive Pathways.

Further to taking part in the online competition Steph has written her own book which has been published and is available to buy on Amazon. Steph also designed the cover as she has a keen interest in art. Steph recently held a couple of book launches, including one at Heart of the Park and raised over £500 for MIND through sales. Steph is already writing her 2nd book!

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David

'I just want to give some feedback about what Positive pathways has done for me. Since I had to leave work and came onto positive pathways you and your team have helped me with confidence and have helped me with my anxiety. Since I have been with you and working with positive pathways you and the team have given encouragement to do things that will help me back into work. I have found understanding and empathy with fellow members and you have always helped me do the things I do like art music writing. And get me out and about doing volunteering jobs. And since I have been with the program it has helped me understand my mental health due to the training you have given me. coping with stress and other types of mental health problems. All of which I have tried to go to and hopefully helped other people with similar problems. As you know I have social anxiety and going to train and drop ins and doing little jobs here and there has helped me deal with my health. I like to thank you all for your help and that I hope Positive Pathways will still be around.'
Many thanks **David E**

Mark



Mark joined the Positive Pathways programme in June 2018. Since then, he has attended over 20 activities with the group including conservation in Hayling Island and gardening in various venues in the Havant Borough. He has also attended 7 training courses, which have included Cookery and Health and Safety. Mark has recently begun volunteering in Heart of the Park's Café as a Kitchen Volunteer. He prepares food, drinks and serves customers with a smile. Mark has come a long way since registering with Positive Pathways and has achieved so much.

Mark is a friendly, approachable member of Positive Pathways and now is a part of Heart of the Park's Monday and Friday teams of café volunteers. Mark says, *"It's made quite a bit of difference because I was quite shy. It has brought me out of my shell a bit. I do like working with other people. I like the different personalities and new personalities who come into the team and I seem to work well with most people. It has helped my mental health massively."*

Mark has become an efficient, reliable volunteer within both teams and is always willing to support others and learn new skills. Mark is very busy these days volunteering with Heart of the Park Café and Positive Pathways, he is beginning to think of his future beyond Positive Pathways which is an amazing achievement. Positive Pathways aims to motivate and encourage volunteers with support needs and to help realise their potential.

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Irene



Irene first joined the Positive Pathways team in June 2018 after being referred by her keyworker, Nikki, from Choice Care and Support. Irene wanted to build her confidence and feel more comfortable socialising with others. Initially, Irene was wary about working in a large volunteering team due to her social anxiety and a learning disability. In the beginning she wouldn't attend without her support worker and travelled in her support worker's car as she didn't feel comfortable travelling with others she didn't know. She attended mainly gardening activities and loved doing outdoor work. Irene helped with building a sensory garden at Hollybank, gardening at the allotment and helping at Park Community School's smallholding.

Eventually, she was keen to volunteer within the Heart of the Park's social enterprise café.

She now comes along for her shifts entirely by herself without Nikki. She loves working in the kitchen and has made new friends and has gotten to know customers and their specific orders. She has developed numerous skills including making barista coffee, customer service and food preparation. Irene's confidence has improved dramatically, and now comes in as emergency cover on a regular basis.

On one occasion, a customer had collapsed in the play area. Jo and a couple of the volunteers supported the lady while the ambulance was called. Irene, without being asked, took care of the lady's son; playing with him while the ambulance team helped his mum. Everyone was impressed by her initiative, calmness and the way she cared for the child. Irene has been a real success story for Positive Pathways and is great asset to the kitchen team at Heart of the Park.

Last year we had a visit from schoolchildren at Glenwood, a school for learning difficulties which Irene had previously attended. She spoke to the children about her role and gave a demonstration of how to make Barista coffee. She was really nervous but did a great job...a huge achievement for Irene. She is now acting as a mentor for new starters in the café, showing them the daily routine and giving advice and tips on how to manage daily tasks.

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Challenges

Covid

The biggest challenge faced throughout the project was the impact of the Covid pandemic, particularly on the most vulnerable clients whose mental health deteriorated during lockdowns. The project was unable to continue in its current form, however the staff took a number of actions to mitigate the impact as much as possible.

One of the biggest barriers was IT, clients did not have the equipment or knowledge to engage online. Whilst we offered support and the loan of equipment this was not widely utilised by our clients, but most could use a smart phone, so steps were taken to ensure regular contact, and promote wellbeing including:

- Regular telephone wellbeing calls, including weekly to the most vulnerable clients.
- Online poetry and story competition run on Facebook.
- Art & Craft bags supported by a local charity were delivered to clients
- Online quiz on google hangouts
- Once restrictions allowed small socially distanced groups, with rotas to ensure all clients had the opportunity to participate.
- The Community First allotment was used for small outdoor socially distanced meetings when restrictions allowed.

Lack of Volunteering Opportunities for Clients

It was apparent early on in the project that opportunities to volunteer independently for our clients was limited due to their ongoing support needs.

We addressed this challenge by investing some underspent funding on developing Park Play & Café, to give the clients the opportunity to volunteer supporting the local community, learn new skills such as cooking, customer service and barista coffee making. This has been a huge success and continues to be a hub for local families to meet, play and make friends, whilst supporting the volunteers.

We also secured the community allotment, offering volunteer roles to clients, and the allotment has continued to run with volunteers taking the lead.

Clients not moving through the project

Providing an individualised strengths based approach to supporting clients and trying to move them through the project has always been a challenge, this remains to be the case. We are currently redesigning the project to give it more structure albeit a flexible structure to ensure the clients still feel able to move along a pathway that supports their needs. Managing expectations at the start will go a long way to addressing the issues of clients wanting to stay with Positive Pathways, it shows they value the support and the outcome measures show it has a huge impact on their wellbeing and aspirations for the future, but for many a clearer more structured approach to independence would be beneficial.

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