



**Mid Devon  
Mobility**  
*Connecting Communities*

# Project Evaluation Report

## UK Community Renewal Fund

### STRONGER TOGETHER



## **Stronger Together Collaboration Project**

### **Project Overview:**

The project as a whole was incredibly successful, engaging and helping a total of **15,934** beneficiaries within Devon. The main aims of the collaborative Stronger Together Project were to set up and launch Volunteer Recruitment & Training Programmes - to engage and recruit volunteers of all ages to help with existing Community Transport, Community Car Schemes and other local organisations which focus on helping frail, older, disabled, young, unemployed and rurally isolated people. Alongside the Recruitment & Training Programme the project provided a new 'Give Back Scheme' enabling both long- and short-term volunteering opportunities focusing on re-employability across Devon. The other aspect of the project was to provide a huge variety of Training Opportunities for the people of Devon, with a particular focus on upskilling people to enable them to gain the skills needed to return into employment.

Volunteer Co-ordinators, Trainers & out-of-house professional Trainers delivered short & long courses for accreditation which enhanced beneficiary's employability, developed further skills, raised their aspirations and benefitted the wider community in a variety of different ways.

The courses completed included Driver Training Qualifications, such as:

- Driver Training – specifically designed to aid employability.
- MIDAS Training for Minibus/MPV Drivers
- PATs (Passenger Assistant Training for all volunteer drivers/minibus drivers
- D1 Minibus Training Opportunities for young people.
- Vehicle Emergency Evacuation Training For Trainers
- Driving Safer For Longer Courses for older volunteer drivers.

Examples of Life-Skill Training Courses Completed include:

- Level 2 Food Hygiene & Safety for Catering
- NDVS Dealing with Mobility Aids
- Deliberator & Resuscitation Training Courses
- Working with Vulnerable People
- Ipad Usage & Basic Operation Training
- First Aid At Work Courses

Above is a very small snip-it of courses taken throughout the term of the project. Additional details & statistics of courses undertaken are detailed later on in the report.

The purpose of this Evaluation Report is to showcase all the additional, unexpected outcomes which have been achieved, each organisation involved has provided & highlighted feedback received throughout the project term through insights from staff members, volunteers & beneficiaries.

Community Together Support Service – this project service was set up & developed in Mid Devon & East Devon areas, which were the two areas of researched need. The aim of this service was to support, help & befriend vulnerable people in their own homes, helping them to regain confidence to reengage with their community. The Mid Devon area encountered a few teething problems initially getting this service launched as the first appointed Community Support Engagement Facilitator left due to personal circumstances, meaning the recruitment process had to be repeated. Once the service was established it soon began to grow rapidly, with beneficiaries being signposted from a variety of neighbouring organisations, including doctor surgeries, carers & occupational therapists. The total number of beneficiaries helped through this service shows how needed this service was in the particular areas, the final figure was extremely higher than the predicted 300 people, and was in fact upwards of 1425 beneficiaries!

### **Evaluation Methods**

This evaluation has enabled our charity to access information primarily from our beneficiaries, but also the evaluation has been conducted using:

- Surveys – from beneficiaries.
- Interviews & Case Studies from beneficiaries.

- Collecting and collating project statistics.
- Reports from senior members of each organisation involved in the collaboration.

### **Project Achievements:**

The 4 organisations involved in the collaborative project ensured the activities of the project were carried out through the whole of the Devon area. The first hurdle the project encountered was right at the beginning, when 2 of the project Partners decided, for their own personal reasons, they wanted to cease their involvement within the project. This put an additional strain on the remaining partners to ensure the coordination & development of each section of Devon was done collaboratively to guarantee the training opportunities could be reached by everybody in Devon. Once a plan had been put in place & applied the activities/outcomes were achieved in these areas.

### **Project Outcomes/Impacts Achieved:**

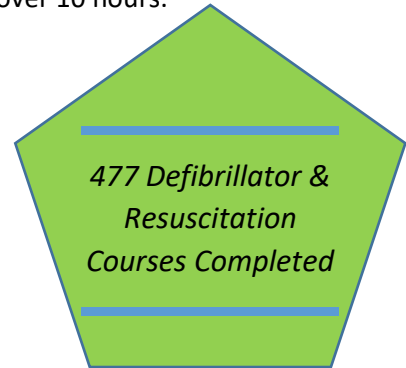
- Provided a variety of inclusive training programmes to economically inactive, unemployed & employed people throughout whole of Devon.
- Provided community sharing experiences
- Created volunteering/mentoring programmes
- Created variety of Volunteer Opportunities
- Worked with local companies to fulfil their Corporate Volunteering Schemes
- Created employment opportunities by upskilling & building of levels of transferrable skills
- Provided Low pressure work experience opportunities
- Improved self-esteem and self-confidence, wellbeing, and self-worth of people in our communities.
- Provided inclusive training programmes throughout whole of Devon
- Increased inclusion/social interaction for people within our community.
- Given 'real' improvements to communities and people, complimenting other local initiatives
- Provided extended facilities which helped build stronger, more inclusive communities.
- Provided a variety of Life-Skill Opportunities
- Provided paid employment opportunities for project staff.
- Increased awareness of Community Transport organisations and many the benefits of them.
- The Community Support Together Service, enabled people to feel supported in their own homes, increasing their independence & quality of life.

The main long-term benefit of the project occurred from the collaboration between the Organisations involved, creating a more resilient and stronger accredited volunteer programme and helping people to live more independently for longer throughout Devon.



**Training:**

Working together with Staff Skills Academy we were able to provide Free online training courses to the people of Devon. There were over 677 to choose from, with categories ranging from Computing to Animal Care, there literally was something for everybody. Courses ranged in length from 30 minutes to over 10 hours.



## FREE Online Training

Would you like to access some free training courses to further your knowledge?

**Do you live in Devon? Yes? We can help you!**

Thanks to the UK Renewal Fund our charity has the opportunity to offer FREE courses. We are working in partnership with New Skills Academy to provide online training courses to the people of Devon.

We have 2 different packages available:

- 1 Course
- Multiple Courses

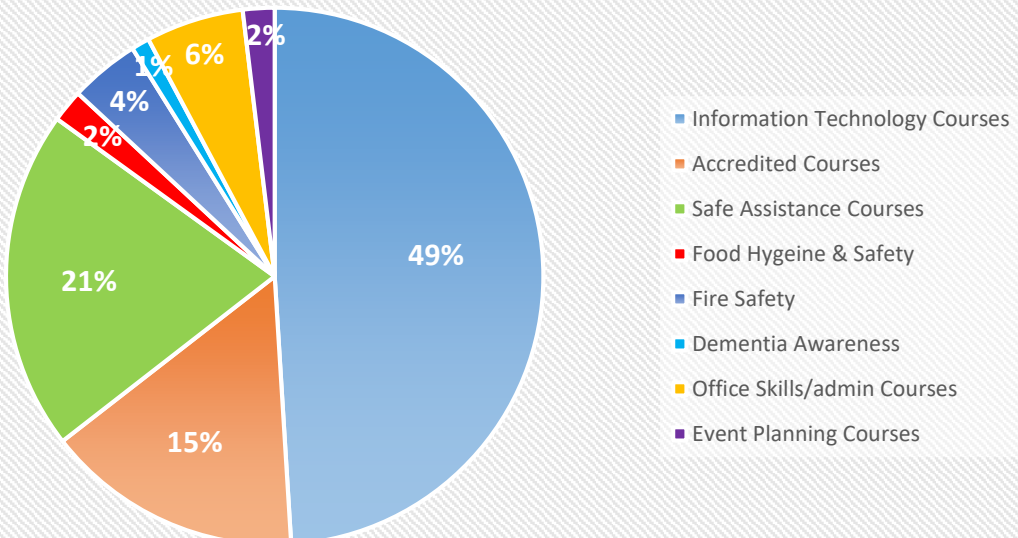
**THERE IS NO CATCH - THIS IS COMPLETELY FREE** - all we ask for is some simple details about yourself to create your log-in.



Just give us a call on 01884 242099 or email [training@middevonmobility.org.uk](mailto:training@middevonmobility.org.uk) if you have any questions or to create your log-in account.



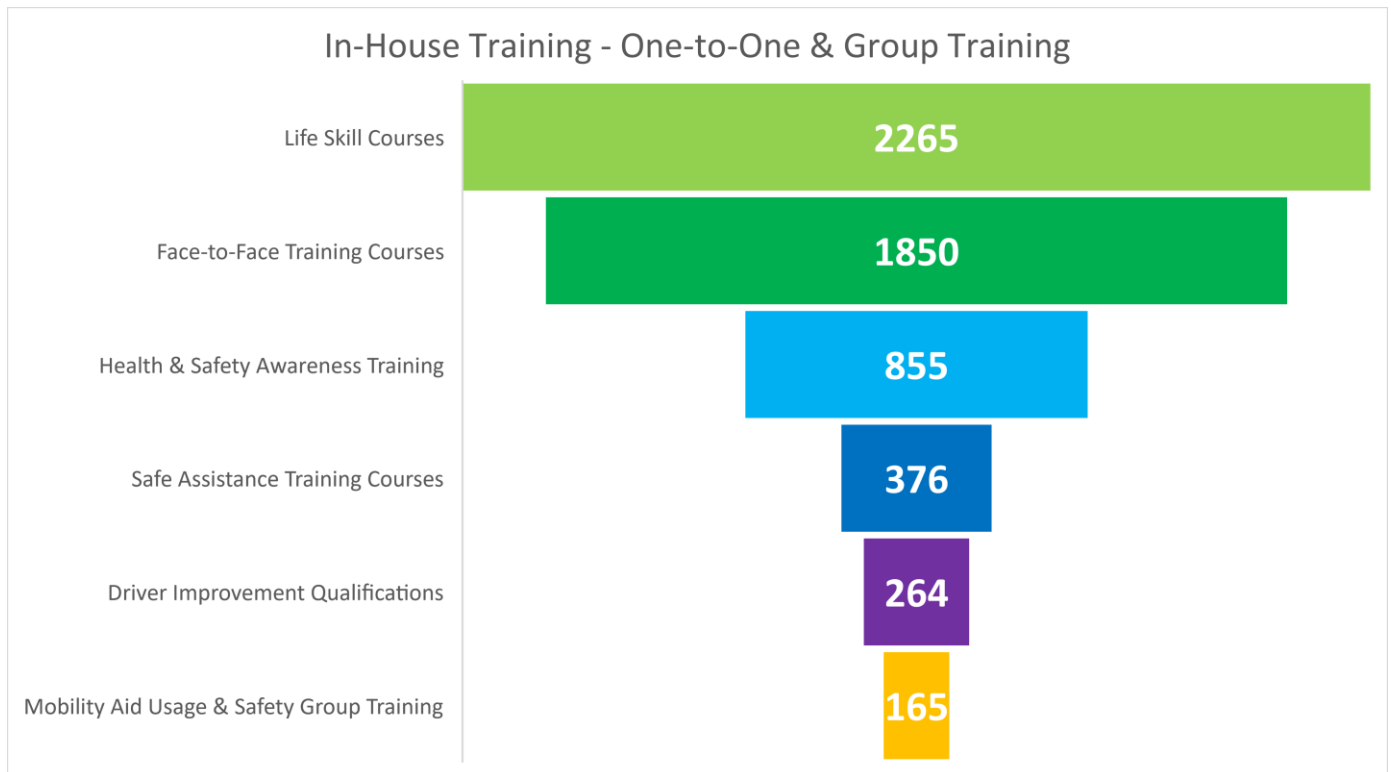
## Examples of Online Training Courses Completed



As well as the online training courses, the project also enabled us to provide in-house training either one to one or group training on a wide range of topics and skills such as:

- Mobility Scooter Operation & Safety,
- Driver & Driving training, including Vehicle Fire Evacuation, Passenger Assistance, MiDaS & Safe Transportation of Wheelchairs.
- How To Use Ipads/Iphones, Using Social Media and Chatting Online with Friends & Family.
- General Life Skills Training, including CV Writing & Preparing For An Interview.

We arranged training with other local trainers using our fully accessible Training Venue, providing courses such as: Driving Safer For Longer, MiDaS Train the Trainer, Manual Handling & First Aid Training.



#### **Feedback from Beneficiaries of Training Opportunities:**

*JS - "I am so grateful to have been able to sign up for the free online courses, as I didn't have a job my income was very low, so I could not afford to pay for courses. One of the courses I did was 'Improving Interview Skills & CV Writing' which I believe gave the skills I needed – as shortly after taking this course...I GOT A JOB! Thank you for providing this course to me."*

*PW – "I have been a volunteer driver for over 7 years and I recently took the opportunity of your Driving Safer For longer training course provided through your project. I have to say, it really opened my eyes and I feel that I have more confidence to help people and I learnt a lot. I would highly recommend this course."*

*Anon, "I have a list of the free online courses I want to take, I'm planning on a complete change of lifestyle due to my ill health. I'm not working due to Mental Health Issues and this will give me something to focus on and occupy my time. Thank you."*

*Safe Assistance for Drivers – "This is just to say thank you for arranging the course yesterday. I found it very interesting and helpful. Thank you too for transporting me to and from Newton Abbot. Kind regards, CC"*

*Dementia Online – "I am one of two Coordinators that work at the [SCOF], providing a volunteer driver / transport service to patients of the local Health Centre. This is a retirement area and my role within our Women's Institute, I am meeting many people with Dementia, so I feel learning about this is invaluable. Thank you for providing this course, CW"*

First Aid Training - *“Many thanks for arranging the free training, much appreciated. I really enjoyed it, and felt I learned a lot in the time I was there, just need to try not to forget it all now! My colleague and I both thought the trainer was great, and would recommend this course to others. Best wishes SH”*

**Project Milestones Achieved:**

The below table shows the Estimated Project Milestones, the result and the Actual Achieved. You can clearly see the success of the project from these milestones, all except one were met, with many of the original estimations being noticeably a lot lower than the actual achieved.

<u>Milestone</u>	<u>Achieved Y/N?</u>	<u>Result</u>
Recruit all staff required to deliver the project	Yes	Employed & Trained 15 members of Project Staff to run the project.
Set up Volunteer Training Programme	Yes	Volunteer Training Programmes were set up in all 4 organisations.
Assist with 30 re-employment opportunities	Yes	Exceeded this target – total re-employment exceeded 45 people.
Establish the Community Together Support Team	Yes	Community Support Together Teams were set up & developed in Mid Devon & East Devon.
Help 300 beneficiaries through the Community Together Project	Yes	Greatly underestimated this figure - beneficiaries helped through this service was actually upwards of 1425 people
Enable 18 people to obtain their D1 Driving Licence through our Give Back Scheme	Yes	Final figure of enabling people to obtain their D1 was 18
Assisted 400 people with a variety of Driving Training Courses through Give Back	No	Slightly short of target - 93% completed. With an additional month of time this figure would have been met.
Recruited and Trained 250 Volunteers to assist within the project	Yes	Total number of volunteers recruited & trained to help within the project was 378

**Additional Project Achievements:**

As with all new projects, this project was a steep learning curve and adaptations/developments have been made along the way to help improve the impact of the project. In addition to our original project Milestones, Outcomes & Outputs, the project also unveiled some unexpected, additional outcomes/statistics (outlined below):

- Volunteer Roles – Volunteers recruited to help provide project services have transferrable skills, and have gone on to provide time to other roles within the organisation.  
 KL – started off a volunteer for the Community Support Service & now is also a Volunteer Car Driver & Volunteers in our Community Hub, *“I have really enjoyed visiting Joy in her home every week, we have built up a really lovely friendship. I help her with daily tasks, but she helps me as well, as I feel like my time is being spent in a worthwhile way. Talking to the ladies in the office about their charity I learnt what other valuable services they offer. They have a Community Hub, a lovely friendly group where they do activities. I realised this is something Joy would enjoy, so I now bring her there twice a week so she can chat with other people in the same situation as her, and I volunteer in the Community Hub, making cups of tea and chatting to everyone. I am so thankful for my role as a volunteer, I absolutely love it.”*
- Train the Trainer – 22 members of staff from the organisations involved in the project have been trained to be ‘Train The Trainers’ – Newly established & qualified trainers can now provide training to others, meaning the benefits of the project can be delivered into the future.
  - 22 members of staff completed the train the trainer course in ‘Electric Tail-Lift Operation & Wheelchair Restraining in a Vehicle’ and have now taught this course to 54 additional people. This is a chargeable course we can provide to people in the future, bringing additional revenue to support our charity.



- Online Training Leading to Advocates of the organisations – An unexpected benefit we found was that many young people who came to our organisations to obtain the free training, and previously had no knowledge of our organisation and what we did, went on to become avid supporters & promoters of our charity on our social media platforms. We have found that our charity’s social media followers on Facebook & Twitter have increased greatly over the term of the project:



Additional 212 followers



Additional 119 followers

These additional followers have been engaging with our posts, sharing, liking, taking part in our competitions and fundraising posts.

- In the same respect as above, we have gained 18 volunteers through people who have accessed the free training gaining knowledge of our organisation’s volunteering opportunities. These volunteering roles are of mutual benefit, helping people to gain skills & enhance their employability, whilst helping our charities conduct various valuable services.

BS, *“I found out about the free training courses because I saw Mid Devon Mobility’s poster in my local Job Centre. I took part in five different courses to help me gain skills to hopefully get a job. When I went in to see them at Mid Devon Mobility they told me they needed volunteer drivers to take people to hospital. I love driving and this means I get to drive and help people at the same time. I am really enjoying this role. Mid Devon Mobility have said they will provide me with a reference when I apply for jobs, which is great and will help me loads. I am so glad I saw their poster and found out about them.”*

- Project Beneficiaries benefitting from our other services - People have come to us either for training or using our Community Support Service, gained knowledge of our other services and have now become members of our organisation and use our services regularly.

Photo of Brenda at the Community Hub,



Brenda was signposted to us from a dementia support service, to use our Community Support Together Service, where she was visited regularly by our volunteers. Through her volunteer, Brenda learnt of our Arts & Crafts sessions at our Community Hub, with the support of her volunteer giving her the confidence to venture out, they came to the session. Brenda loved it, she now visits our Community Hub three times a week, taking part in the activities and staying for lunch with us.

### **MDM Volunteer Coordinator Report**

#### **Volunteer Recruitment Process**

The Volunteer Coordinator was tasked with finding volunteers for all aspects of volunteering undertaken by Mid Devon Mobility and covering the whole of the Mid Devon area and slightly beyond the boundaries.

The extension of the area of focus was to ensure that those isolated and unsupported slightly beyond the designated Mid Devon boundary were included in the area of need and so that people living slightly outside the area of need, but willing to volunteer within the area of need, were not excluded from the recruitment process.

The Volunteer Coordinator initially contacted parish councils and organisations throughout the Mid Devon area and national organisations and agencies who had an active presence in the region and presented the many and varied volunteering opportunities available. There was little response from this regarding the active engagement of people willing to become new Mid Devon Mobility volunteers. The project coincided with new opportunities for funded learning and training throughout Devon. The Volunteer Coordinator used this funding stream in an attempt to engage people in specific community-associated courses with a view to the learners connecting with Mid Devon Mobility whilst upskilling and developing their new knowledge. Despite initial verbal enthusiasm and positive written responses, the uptake and engagement from this recruitment strategy were slow and minimal.

The Volunteer Coordinator then went out into the villages, hamlets and isolated businesses to raise awareness of the need for Mid Devon Mobility volunteers. The recruitment process was still seeking volunteers for all available voluntary roles. Unlaminated paper posters were displayed on information boards in bus shelters, on sheltered village and tourist information boards and in unlocked casement information cabinets at community buildings including churches and village halls. Additionally, paper flyers were delivered to village stores and public houses. Listings were made of locations of defibrillators as a potential training need. It was noticed that the villagers' main means of visual communication was via laminated posters on wooden lampposts around the centre of the village and near key buildings. However, from speaking with business proprietors and residents of the areas, the Volunteer Coordinator found this was secondary to the power of 'word of mouth'. This prompted the Volunteer Coordinator to initiate a new recruitment programme of face-to-face interactions.

Initially this new strategy of 'being present' was via high profile village visits and speaking with villagers whilst they were in their local areas. This proved successful. An approach was developed that engaged the Volunteer Coordinator in promoting Mid Devon Mobility and its volunteering opportunities to people who were walking to shops, dog walking, outside their homes engaged in gardening, car-washing and doing DIY and visiting village community centres and activities.

Although there was an increased willingness by villagers to discuss volunteering opportunities, the Volunteer Coordinator became aware that people's interest in hearing about the multiple and varied services offered by Mid Devon Mobility, and the associated volunteering roles, was time limited. The time limitation was directly proportional to their related personal circumstances and foreseen availability. The Volunteer Coordinator therefore decided to focus on recruiting for just two primary volunteering roles: Befriending and Community Car driving. The success of this focused method of recruiting quickly became evident and people were willingly and enthusiastically following-up casual meetings with the Volunteer Coordinator.

The Volunteer Coordinator developed a formal signing-up process that provides volunteers with a bespoke one-to-one session with her to meet and discuss how the volunteer envisaged their personal volunteering engagement, to identify their volunteering preferences and availability. The options for the sign-up session enable it to happen at a time and location convenient to the volunteers and reduces the perceived public aversion to on-street recruitment pressures. During the project, some signing-up volunteers chose to meet at their homes, with safe lone-working practices in place, some chose to meet at local cafés and some chose to meet at the Mid Devon Mobility premises. Those who met at the



premises were able to have a full guided tour and to meet the team. This engagement strategy reaped rewards because it generated a connection and showcased the many services and opportunities. The Volunteer Coordinator recognised the value of an office visit and established the practice of all volunteers, who were able to, visiting the premises to bring in their DBS documents to be copied. For those who had met elsewhere, this prompted a visit to the office, an opportunity for a tour of it, and the desired connection with the team. Such visits often resulted in the volunteers leaving with additional interest in Mid Devon Mobility services and other volunteering opportunities within the organisation.

Encouraging at least one visit to Mid Devon Mobility's premises has become established practice by the Volunteer Coordinator. She casually meets potential volunteers who are simply out and about, waiting for public transport or are on their way to or from social activities within their communities.

Connections with organisations, who have regular public meetings, has been established. The Volunteer Coordinator has attended such meetings as a guest speaker with a follow-up visit of passive recruitment where people self-identify as potential volunteers. Group members, with a confirmed interest in volunteering for Mid Devon Mobility, are able to make follow-up contact with the Volunteer Coordinator and this initiates the sign-up process. Meetings attended, for guest speaking and recruiting, have had present members ranging from a handful to in excess of three hundred.

The imparted information, about Mid Devon Mobility's services and volunteering opportunities, has resulted in an increase of referrals regarding service users and also an increase in volunteers. The sign-up process has enabled people to become volunteers for just the roles that they have initial interest in doing. The familiarity with the team and the premises has resulted in volunteers taking on additional volunteering roles and recommending volunteering with Mid Devon Mobility to their partners, extended family members, their friends and others in their communities.

### **Volunteering Case Studies, Learning and Successes**

Community Support Service volunteers choose whether they want to do visiting befriending or telephoning befriending or that can do both. The volunteers also determine the terms of the visits or calls and know that they can contact Mid Devon Mobility to change or cancel arrangements without fear of a negative response to such contact. This has been a considerable attraction of volunteering with Mid Devon Mobility. Volunteers have the opportunity to state if they have a gender of client that they feel most comfortable doing visits to. They are never asked to do anything that they have not said they are willing to do. The Volunteer Coordinator liaises with clients to ensure that visit days, times and durations are mutually acceptable and match the volunteers' stated availability and preferences. The volunteers' incurred relevant travel and parking expenses, by car or bus to and from home befriending visits, are reimbursed so they are not out-of-pocket for providing voluntary support to others in their communities. Those who wish to only provide telephone support can do so. Those who want to do visiting, but are not comfortable visiting clients in the clients' own homes, are given the option of visiting clients who reside in care homes. Befriending visits to residents of care homes necessarily meant compliance with care home entry requirements which generated additional administration and actions for the Volunteer Coordinator. However, visiting Mid Devon Mobility clients in care homes has also meant that volunteers have the 'safety net' of visiting vulnerable adults (VA) in a fully supported professional environment.

Mid Devon Mobility volunteers have valued the flexibility and emotional comfort of changing their minds about volunteering roles that they wish to engage in.

One volunteer changed from providing administration support at the premises to doing multiple weekly home visits directly linked to the Community Support Service project. The three newly referred Mid Devon Mobility clients had been signed-off all medical support services, regarding physical abilities and the issue of suitable equipment, but they still lacked confidence regarding walking with mobility aids. The volunteer's presence was risk assessed regarding the environments she would be working in and her role with the clients and suitability to undertake such a role in a solo capacity. For this reason, the Volunteer Coordinator accompanied the volunteer and clients for the whole duration of several of these home visits. Each client was then supported by the volunteer until fully confident and competent with their mobility aid and back to being independent. The volunteer reported back that she had thoroughly enjoyed her Community Support Service role and gained substantial personal fulfilment from the realisation that simply giving the clients her time had reopened their world to them and brightened their futures.

One volunteer initially engaged in supporting clients in the community but then felt more suited to supporting those who attended the sessions and activities in Mid Devon Mobility's Community Hub. Another volunteer supported marketing activities, then Community Hub activities and is currently doing home befriending visits. A different volunteer started as a home befriender but is now a regular volunteer at the Mid Devon Premises where she gives her time four days weekly and has been invaluable as an administrator and as an assistant in the Community Hub.

Volunteers have also chosen to continue with their original volunteering roles but have added other volunteering roles to what they have been regularly doing. One volunteer started as a Community Car voluntary driver. She then offered her time to being a volunteer deliverer of hot meals from our premises to the homes of Mid Devon Mobility service users. She has since taken on a home befriending role and visits a lady weekly. The client is incredibly grateful to have someone visit her because she is currently physically unable to leave her bed. Both the client and the volunteer have voiced their pleasure about the nature, content and arrangements of the befriending visits.

Mid Devon Mobility volunteers have also praised Mid Devon Mobility for not making them feel uncomfortable about instigating changes to the days they are available, which hours they want to do volunteering, whether they are available term-time only or all weeks, and for taking breaks from volunteering when they have had other priorities in their lives.

Two volunteers, doing befriending, have expressed their desire to visit the clients between scheduled and pre-arranged visits for occasions such as the clients' birthdays and special events. This was a concern regarding being outside the agreed remit of befriending, regarding safeguarding, lone working, health and safety and organisational insurance. This befriending need by three clients, and request by their two volunteers, was successfully accommodated by use of text to the Mid Devon Mobility office mobile telephone. This has successfully happened and has enabled the volunteers to have more flexibility regarding their visits to the clients they have been matched with, without compromise of, or detriment to, any aspects of 'best practice'.

This has also been the case regarding having children and young people (CYP) as volunteers. Linking with schools, regarding their Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) Award schemes, has enabled Mid Devon Mobility to work with those below the DBS check's minimum age of sixteen years. Mid Devon Mobility has successfully supported one CYP volunteer to conclusion of her Silver DofE Award. This entailed the volunteer supporting multiple VA and the volunteer felt so well supported, and so engaged with Mid Devon Mobility, that they have chosen to continue volunteering despite it not being required for their ongoing DofE Award scheme progression. The volunteer is now over the sixteen years threshold and a DBS certificate has been applied for and received by the volunteer. The volunteer has been an asset and is being welcomed to continue her role. Similarly, a CYP commencing their Bronze DofE Award has signed up with Mid Devon Mobility and has successfully completed their first day of volunteering.

Other young people have also been volunteers with Mid Devon Mobility and are continuing to actively do so. These have included one volunteer who was, and is, a regular mobility scooter hirer. This volunteer liked the 'feel' of the organisation when she came to hire and return mobility scooters. As a result of this, she signed up as a volunteer and became actively engaged in supporting VA directly, sessions attended by them and Mid Devon Mobility as an organisation regarding administrative activities and events. Working voluntarily at Mid Devon Mobility gave this young person experiences that enabled her to secure formal employment elsewhere, but she has said that she is still willing to assist Mid Devon Mobility as a volunteer outside her contracted working hours. For this young person, Mid Devon Mobility was also able to assist her moving into formal employment by helping her obtain a birth certificate. She had been adopted and, because of her personal circumstances and financial situation, she had been unable to get a legally accepted document as proof of her identity despite attempting to do so through multiple avenues. As part of the on-boarding process for volunteers, the Volunteer Coordinator was able to assist the volunteer and a relevant document was successfully received.

Similarly, another vulnerable young person engaged with Mid Devon Mobility to gain work experience but also had no immediate access to formal identification. This CYP had been referred by an external organisation and both the volunteer and Mid Devon Mobility had been told that the volunteer would be actively supported by a representative of that organisation whilst undertaking volunteering for Mid Devon Mobility. This was not what occurred and the volunteer was quickly overwhelmed by the situation they had been put in. Mid Devon Mobility supported the volunteer as best as able by differentiating the volunteering role but also by corresponding directly with the referral agency and concluding the volunteering when it was deemed that it was adversely impacting on the volunteer's mental health. The situation was discussed openly and fully with the volunteer and the volunteer was grateful that the volunteering role was concluding. It is always explained that 'no bridges are ever burned' and that volunteers are always welcome to take

breaks and change roles. The young person felt so comfortable with how the matter had been handled by Mid Devon Mobility that they saw the conclusion of their volunteering as a positive decision which recognised their mental health situation and supported their mental health needs. As a result of this, the volunteer returned to Mid Devon Mobility a couple of months later and discussed recommencing volunteering but doing a different role. Mid Devon Mobility has worked with this volunteer and, as with everyone, respected their working requirements. As a direct result of this, the volunteer has now successfully taken on a regular specific volunteering role. As part of being cleared to work independently for Mid Devon Mobility, the volunteer required personal identification which they had been unable to obtain because of complicated family circumstances. Mid Devon Mobility was able to assist with these difficulties and the volunteer now has relevant identification. The enhanced personal confidence gained directly through being supported by, and affiliated to, Mid Devon Mobility has meant that this volunteer is now actively seeking formalised employment.

Mid Devon Mobility is also supporting other VA members of the community via associations with local authority agencies, local branches of national organisations and specific departments of county organisations. The Volunteer Coordinator is ensuring that all referred people are appropriately supported. This has resulted in several VA securing paid employments in other sectors. A VA volunteer of no fixed abode was also successfully supported by Mid Devon Mobility and specific aspects of the signing-up process have enabled this volunteer to become self-employed.

As well as those with mental health illnesses, and those with complicated personal circumstances, people in receipt of state benefits because of physical disabilities have also been actively supported by Mid Devon Mobility's volunteering opportunities. Several volunteers have had to leave employments in other sectors because of changes to their health and physical abilities. They have spoken about the deterioration of their mental health as a direct result of no longer having a paid job. The multiple volunteering opportunities of Mid Devon Mobility, and the flexibility of volunteering for this organisation, have enabled people to feel self-worth, have enhanced self-esteem and improved self-confidence by becoming a Mid Devon Mobility volunteer.

Within the premises, volunteers have taken on active roles and are now working independently, in teams and as leaders of less experienced volunteers. In the community, volunteers doing befriending for the Community Support Service aspect of the project have commented about their enhanced sense of purpose and their personal fulfilment achieved through visiting others. One befriender was accompanied by the Volunteer Coordinator for her initial befriending visits to a resident of a care home because she was unsure about care home procedures and how her role would work in a care home environment. She now has the confidence and competence to do the visits unaccompanied and has said that she is thoroughly enjoying seeing the delight on her client's face as she arrives to spend time chatting with her. Similarly, another volunteer had low self-esteem after having to cease his physical employment for medical reasons. The Volunteer Coordinator matched him with a client who had similar interests and they both thoroughly enjoy the befriending visits. The volunteer has found that providing the befriending service has had such a positive impact on his mental health that he requested that he be matched with an additional client who was also wanting befriending. The volunteer has been matched with another client, in addition to his original client, and they are also getting along very well and are both enjoying each other's company.

The latter client had previously had a different befriender. There were no specific problems with the original befriending arrangement but the Volunteer Coordinator had been informed that the conversations had begun to be 'circular'. Both the client and the original volunteer had voiced that they were ready and willing to make a change. This is a benefit of the Community Support Service provision because it is made clear to the clients and the bendifenders that there is no ill-will in requesting a change and that it does not reflect badly on anyone to do so. The fact that it has happened and all three people involved, being the originally visiting volunteer, the newly appointed volunteer and the client, have openly and happily welcomed the change, reflects the benefits of the ethos of the Community Support Service aspect of the project and its success. The client's original befriender is now enjoying doing a voluntary administration role at the Mid Devon Mobility offices.

The ethos of the Community Support Service provision is explained to all concerned from the point of initial contact. The Volunteer Coordinator personally meets all volunteers and chats through their preferences and availability with them at length. There is an open dialogue between the volunteers and the Volunteer Coordinator throughout all aspects of the process and it is ensured that the volunteers are actively aware of how valued and valuable their engagement with Mid Devon Mobility is.

Because of the absence of the Community Engagement Facilitators, the Volunteer Coordinator has contacted the clients who had been identified as being potentially interested in wanting Mid Devon Mobility's befriending service. She has visited those who still required befrienders and risk assessments of their home environments have been done to ensure the safety of befrienders. Such visits also ensure that the arrangements for befriending visits are in place, so neither the client nor the befriender has any uncertainties or concerns. Volunteers are informed about the needs and expectations of their intended Community Support Service client, whilst also maintaining anonymity of the intended client. When the match has been agreed, both parties are involved in discussions about, and agree, the date and time of the first meeting. This is done through the Volunteer Coordinator. For health and safety purposes, safeguarding reasons and the confidence and emotional well being of both the volunteer and the client, the Volunteer Coordinator also attends the first Community Support Service home befriending visit that each volunteer does to each client. The Volunteer Coordinator departs when both the volunteer and the client agree that they are ready for that to happen. For the majority of first visits, the Volunteer Coordinator leaves within the first quarter hour of the visit. Feedback, from the befriended client and the volunteer, has confirmed that this supported period and the departure of the Volunteer Coordinator at this point, are appropriate and benefits the settling in process and the confidence to continue as just the two of them.

This has not been the situation for all Community Support Service clients and their befriending volunteers. A home visit risk assessment, undertaken by one of the original Community Engagement Facilitators, had identified that a client was a smoker. An 'updating' visit to the client by the Volunteer Coordinator, and a shadowing volunteer, identified, from a discussion that took place through an open window, that the client's expectations of the befriending provision differed greatly to what was being offered. The shadowing volunteer offered to take on a trial befriending role but requested that she be accompanied at visits because of concerns that had arisen during the shadowing visit. This was agreed by the Volunteer Coordinator. With the hope that the matters causing the concerns would no longer present problems by the time of visiting, a first fully accompanied Community Support Service visit occurred. It was immediately evident that the room, where the befriender and client would be for home visits, was an environment that presented overpowering and unavoidable extreme passive smoking, despite the client not smoking at the time of that visit. It was also established that it was not someone who could offer the remit of the Community Support Service provision that the client required. A second fully accompanied visit was arranged. The befriending volunteer attended but did not enjoy any aspect of the visit and asked to no longer be that client's befriender. This was obviously agreed. The volunteer had multiple successful home befriending visits to an alternative client. The Volunteer Coordinator had uncertainties about the client, related to potential safeguarding factors, and decided to continue visits to monitor the situation. Over several visits, it was established that the client had one-to-one external support via a personal arrangement and had regular support via relevant linked agencies. The VA client made it clear that it was not befriending at the level of 'a cuppa and a chat' that they were requiring from Mid Devon Mobility and that they were interviewing for a personal assistant to support them and their mother and to include secretarial duties, cooking, cleaning, transport and chaperoning for themselves and their mother with the two homes being in different Mid Devon towns. As the offered befriending was not what was desired, and no befriender was actively engaged with the client, the Community Support Service listing was closed when it had also been established that no safeguarding concerns were anticipated. The success of this situation is that this client has recently said that they would like to become a Community Support Service volunteer as a telephone befriender. The volunteering signing-up process has now been initiated for this person.

Another example of VA developing from people who require a befriender to being people who are befrienders, is a gentleman who was wanting someone to visit his home to play chess with him. He self-referred to be a Mid Devon Mobility client and requested a befriender to visit his home under the Community Support Service provision. As contact between the client and the Volunteer Coordinator increased, it became evident that the person was also potentially willing to be a volunteer. A home visit, by the Volunteer Coordinator to the client, confirmed this and he completed the sign-up paperwork to become a befriending volunteer. The end result of this situation is that the gentleman is now doing befriending home visits to another VA. Feedback from both the gentleman and his befriended client have confirmed that the match has been a success. The gentleman feels empowered and he and the client are enjoying weekly chess games at the client's home.

Another lady who had asked for a befriending service, because of anxiety linked to being out-and-about during and after the pandemic, has gradually reintegrated into society by use of Mid Devon Mobility's Community Car service and in-house engagement opportunities. She informed the Volunteer Coordinator that she no longer required the services of a home visiting befriender and that she would like to provide home befriending visits to others who are not leaving their homes for some reason. This is a success of the Mid Devon Mobility overall provision as well as the Community

Support Service. The willingness to volunteer, after receiving the benefits of others who have done so, is validation of the community connection people have gained as a direct result of the project.

Other knock-on benefits of the project have included a review to ensure that details of 'next of kin' and/or emergency contacts are up to date and that all documents and online records have been appropriately noted. This occurred as the direct result of a concern arising and a client's named person's contact details being out-of-date on the client's records. A safeguarding concern was immediately formally raised and handled by the appropriate agency. Potential safeguarding concerns had previously arisen when Community Support Service volunteers had been unable to get acknowledgement from the person whose home they were at to do a befriending visit. A system is in place and the volunteers are all trained for such circumstances. Volunteers have followed the procedures for not having the door answered to them by clients and have immediately contacted the Mid Devon Mobility offices. The procedure is efficiently and effectively complied with. When a number failed to connect, there was no complacency and a comprehensive review was undertaken to ensure the situation did not re-occur. It was because of the Community Support Service that the need for this review was highlighted and subsequently happened. Those doing telephone befriending, under the Community Support Service provision, also have a safeguarding process that has been successfully developed as the result of the project. Systems are in place for during Mid Devon Mobility office hours and outside those working hours.

The Community Support Service list of those wanting befriending and those who are available to do befriending has also been reviewed and annotated appropriately. The provision is strongly connected with Mid Devon Mobility's other services and it has been a positive development that those previously receiving home befriending visits have then started using the Community Cars and are now accessing the Community Hub activities.

As well as the many volunteers recruited during the project, Mid Devon Mobility part-time employees have willingly signed-up as volunteers to provide befriending services, to clients in need, outside their contracted employment. Two have done home visits directly linked to the Community Support Service aspect of the project. They have assisted with technology queries and enabled clients to become more independent regarding their online needs and current technological capabilities. One staff member, who also became a volunteer, has been a companion cyclist to accompany clients having the trishaw passenger experiences. Another staff member has engaged in befriending linked to the Community Support Service provision for visually impaired clients. The visits have had a focus of empowering the client to reconnect with services and activities previously enjoyed. The visits have now concluded because the client is now re-attending clubs and is again mixing with visually impaired others away from her home.

### **Volunteering Recruitment Summary**

The project has enabled a team of over one hundred and fifty potential volunteers to be registered with Mid Devon Mobility. The volunteers have taken on multiple roles and all voluntary roles either directly or indirectly support many of the residents of Mid Devon and the area and beyond. As well as the residents who have become clients and service users, their families have the reassurance of knowing that their VA have regular contact with fully cleared others who are potentially:

- Visiting or telephoning them to enjoy a casual chat.
- Delivering meals to them at their homes with a face-to-face handover.
- Providing transport for them to engage in social activities or attend appointments.
- Taking them on outings.
- Being company for them at our premises.
- Providing activities for them at our premises.
- Supporting them to rent powered mobility equipment to be out-and-about independently.
- Supporting them to rent auxiliary aids to promote their safe independence regarding temporary needs.
- Supporting them to purchase auxiliary aids to promote their safe independence regarding permanent needs.
- Providing administrative services to receive and process their bookings, queries and contact.
- Packaging meals prepared at our premises for safe and secure delivery to their homes.
- Discussing Mid Devon Mobility's services with them at trade stands to increase awareness of what is offered.
- Providing those with mobility issues and dexterity issues with table service regarding refreshments at Community Hub sessions.
- Providing those with mobility issues and dexterity issues with table service regarding meals in the Community Hub.

- Preparing displays for community events and sharing information with community members to increase awareness of Mid Devon Mobility services.

Equally, the families, friends, neighbours and communities of volunteers have also gained awareness of Mid Devon Mobility's vast and varied services through chatting with the Volunteer Coordinator and the recruited volunteers.

People using local facilities such as the bus station, the library, the job centre and local shops, businesses and cafes have become aware of what Mid Devon Mobility because of the 'Stronger Together' project publicity and marketing outings.

Since the project, thousands of people resident in, and visiting, Mid Devon are now able to state where Mid Devon Mobility is located. Those near the premises point it out and others explain how to get to it in terms of the location of other high-profile buildings and organisations. People are knowledgeable about Mid Devon Mobility's stock of powered scooters, wheelchairs that are powered, self-propelled and suitable for being pushed, and that other auxiliary aid equipment can be purchased or rented from the Mid Devon Mobility premises. People have become aware that the decorated windows that they have seen for many years, but previously paid no attention to, are those of the various rooms of Mid Devon Mobility's premises. They have visited the premises to see what goes on at Mid Devon Mobility and collect information and leaflets for future use. They have attended coffee mornings at the Community Hub, joined in with musical entertainment sessions and joined staff members and volunteers for festive meals. They recognise the logo on minibuses, scooters, employee and volunteer clothing, advertising and free promotional items.

The raising of the profile of Mid Devon Mobility has been one of the major successes of the project because so many people have now had either direct or indirect engagement with the many people who now make up the Mid Devon Mobility team.

The Volunteer Coordinator role has necessarily evolved to reflect feedback and need. It was a sequence of unfortunate circumstances that resulted in only one person actively being in post during the project and not able to be appointed to be in post for the whole duration of the project. Current and future need for this post has been established because of the benefits associated with it and because of the rolling programmes of recruitment and service provision which have become established because of the project.

The Community Engagement Facilitator roles were valuable because the people who undertook those posts established a need for home and telephone befriending and identified specific people who needed that service. It was a sequence of unfortunate circumstances that resulted in no one actively being in post for the duration of the project. The current and future need for someone to be in this post is established because neither the need nor the provision has concluded just because the project has.

The Administrator roles were valuable because there were many administrative tasks linked to the project has been effective and efficient and has had a positive impact on the project.

The Community Support Service has been valuable because it has connected lonely and isolated people with others. It has had a positive impact on the lives of the supported clients and the volunteers.

The increased number of volunteers has been beneficial for Mid Devon Mobility and for the supported community. Volunteers have had their lives enhanced by connecting with the Mid Devon Mobility team and feeling part of it. They have diversified into other volunteering roles and successfully become employed and self-employed outside of Mid Devon Mobility.

As Volunteer Coordinator, employed as a direct result of the project, from my personal experiences and the feedback that I have received from thousands of others who have had direct and indirect connection with Mid Devon Mobility, I conclude that the project has been a resounding success. I am honoured and delighted to have played a role in the project's success and pleased to have been able to make a positive difference to the lives of so many because of the project.

**Report completed by: JH, Volunteer Coordinator**

**Date report completed: 13/01/2023**

## **Ivybridge Report**

The Stronger Together Project Ivybridge Community Transport Associations

### Evaluation

The news of successful funding was music to our ears especially after nearly two years of intermitting lockdowns. With the project to commence in the start of January but again the Covid 19 pandemic continued to make an appearance, causing a delay with the project leading our part of the project to not get off the ground until February. However, on a positive note this did give us a chance to master the art of “Zoom meetings, which probably should have been classed as our first training event of the project”.

We spent most of January waiting for our capital purchases to arrive to help get the project up and running. These items were vital to assist the project smoothly and improve the technology of each of the partners organisations.

In February we successfully delivered our first Passenger Assistance Training to a couple of local community transport organisations, which enabled us to promote the service and engage with volunteers.

Working closely with Dawlish Community Transport and North Devon Voluntary Services (Tim Lamerton), the first joint training event took place in March, for all our existing volunteer Drivers that cover West Devon & South Devon plus a few drivers from other local schemes were able to take part to gain their certification in ‘Safe Assistance for Drivers’. It was during this training session that we recruited several new volunteers

From the first course feedback we collected, we soon discovered what training would be most useful to our area and began to offer First Aid, Automatic Defibrillators (AED) training to the wider community, these courses proved to be very popular and enabled us to engage with 17 local organisations. Due to the success of these courses we continued to provide these courses throughout the project, enabling us to be able to engage with numerous organisations in our area that we haven’t had any dealings with before, This has been a real asset to our charity and has helped to build great working relationships for the future .

Online courses have also proved to be very popular particularly the Dementia Awareness courses, which has led us to host several memory café events, which have been run by our newly recruited volunteers.

Working alongside the other ‘Stronger Together’ partners, we have been providing multiply training events and open days to publicise the project. These events along with the open days enabled us to recruit many more volunteers for various organisation around our area some of which have now gone in to employment.

To assist with the safe travel of passengers in May we hosted several training events for our staff, volunteers and other local transport related organisations. We offered a course known as PATS (Passenger Assisted Training Scheme) which focuses on the safe transportation for wheelchair users; each person that attended gained a MiDas qualification. Several Drivers have undertaken the MiDas minibus training to help promote safe driving across Devon.

The events and training opportunities have shown us just how much fantastic community spirit is out there in the rural areas. It has also given us a chance to work with our neighbouring Community Transport Schemes, creating a training programme to become a standard across Devon which in turn can allow driver and volunteer sharing.

Using part of the funding for publicity wear including branded fleeces and t-shirts has been a great asset t the project and very well received by the volunteers in particular as they have commented that they feel part of the team and are proudly answering general public questions when wearing them out and about.

Working alongside the local job centres have assisted us with providing training and volunteering opportunities for the unemployed, this is an area that in the beginning we struggled to tap in to but soon found our feet and have assisted many people back in to employment.

**Chris Varker**



## **Dawlish Report**

### Community Renewal Fund

#### Stronger Together

We are ... Stronger, Together. With a key objective being a social transport/employment hybrid project, we believe we have excelled to the best of our ability, in our element of involvement within this field. This opportunity has not only given us the support we as a Charity needed to take next steps in moving forward from the pandemic but has reached beyond our expectations. Not knowing what would be ahead for us and how we might achieve some of the outputs, the community efforts and engagement has been gratifying with unexpected benefits that were not anticipated at the outset.

Initially working particularly with Ivybridge CTA, it supported a connection within areas we would not link with as the norm, and it has enabled us to rebuild past working relationships with those closer to home. Beyond transport, it has widened our knowledge and experience of services and organisations, far wider than local services, more detail below.

Being one of the smaller Community Transport Association's within this collaboration, and although our roles and responsibilities vary from larger groups, the objectives of working in the community, for the community, were collectively similar and paramount for all. Dawlish, where we are based, is a small town covering a wide area and incorporates some rural localities known to have elements of deprivation and pockets with individuals from harder to reach backgrounds, of a wide age group.

Transportation is not usually able to offer provision beyond actual vehicles but with its grounded and strong community ethos, existing contacts, experience and faith of the community, the Stronger Together project has enabled individual people, families, groups, as well as local organisations to benefit from training and awareness sessions. And as we are all aware, the 'journey' or activity can bring far more than just the transport or reason for attending a training session.

We have delivered short interactive, valuable and meaningful sessions in informal, friendly and social settings that have predominantly been open to all, ensuring some could be attended by a wide age group; be it for knowledge, awareness or specific topics, more detail below.

Community activities and events accelerated volunteer interest; a time when staff and existing volunteers to our service were on hand to informally chat to people and share opportunities available, without pressure, empowering choice yet encouraging conversation. Social media has aided this also for us, and for individuals, including new volunteers who have come forward during the project, we have introduced and developed either new skills and/or experience and have each benefitted from at least one session; many have attended multiple which has been a fantastic outcome. In fact, a few of the new volunteers have since gone on to support other volunteers in their new roles, have digressed on to other unanticipated roles, through support and encouragement, and also moved into other organisations to assist in areas of own personal interest.

Training has led to volunteers, and staff, equipped with specific skills and certified training, to also train others (potential to deliver wider than just to our organisation). For one lady in particular much training has provided her with refreshed and new skills, and offered her an employment opportunity within Dawlish Community Transport – a very much unexpected, yet so very welcomed outcome.

Hindsight is a wonderful thing; with unexpected and unplanned situations and circumstances encroaching on our tight schedule to develop and initiate a programme of opportunities under the Stronger Together project, with a short timescale in itself, it was at times not only frustrating but disheartening when the team/time became limited in its ability to deliver. Passionate yet proportionate, holding on to the knowledge this is a 'pilot' project where learning is key and identifying achievements, acceptance of outcomes (whether positive or not) and consolidation of understanding, for potential future opportunities, our focus remained.



Our engagement has proved wholly worthwhile and if there were to be any future/further funding a programme similar to that created, could offer much potential for our community - our sole purpose is helping frail, older, disabled, young and not so young, already employed to unemployed, those living independently or in Care supported living, to those isolated, experiencing mental health concerns to those rural. With upskilling and life skill opportunities as an additional tool of support, whilst maintaining the Charity objectives, has great prospects to reach out further.

It was an unknown journey from the outset, but the overall outcome was all credit to those with the willingness, experience, commitment, generosity\* and creative thinking to bring this together, and to all the participants who attended, pushing boundaries for so many.

\*We acknowledge the gift of training by Home Instead Care Company who gifted time and expertise to offer the Dementia Awareness sessions x2 as well as a full day's First Aid Certified Course for members in the community; benefitting our team and other local charity members, thank you.

#### Outputs

Output Indicators	Total for All	Indicators for DCT set by MDM	Actual for DCT
Economically inactive	2900	80	111
Unemployed	2900	80	20
Employed	640	16	68
Total People	6440		199 recorded
Voluntary Sector engagement	22		8

#### Outcomes

Name of Outcome	Total for All	Actual for DCT
People in Education/ Training	390	2
People gaining a qualification	7	48
People engaged in life skills support	675	172
Employment increase in supported businesses	15	1
Premises with improved digital connectivity	6	1
Organisations engaged with knowledge transfer	6	1

\*Various Outcomes, additional to the outcomes targeted are highlighted within our text, and whilst not all data can be tracked by number there will by default be many advantages moving forward for those who have been part of the Project – some we will never know.

#### Publicity included:

Community Marketing/Promotion and Fundraiser/Awareness Sessions – Publicity material through posters/flyers distributed to many towns, villages, services and organisations, social media posts via our own media and publicising on various network media sites, local newspapers and x2 short \*\*videos created. Events included local store events and activities, a Charity Day, a Volunteer Recruitment Day, Jubilee Celebrations and Community Carnival participation.

Partnerships Developed, Groups linked, Re-linked & Connections Made – this cannot be entire to include each service/organisation/business but offers an overview and examples of the many different and varied efforts explored for engagement, yet mentioning some specifically where there has been particular support:

Care Agencies, housing services and local supported living establishments

Local Primary and Secondary Schools in EX6, EX7 and TQ14 as well as Mums and Tots Groups and Action for Youth

Helping Dawlish initiative – 12 partner charitable organisations/groups within our local community Surrounding Car Schemes and Community Transport services not within the ST Project collaboration All Parish and Town Councils within the postcode areas listed

All churches, Christian fellowships and ROC – religious settings within our service provision postcode areas

Dawlish Town Council for training and partnership working

Teignbridge Town Council

Local Leisure Centres to village hubs

Food banks including Dawlish Food larder, HITS, Teign Aid, Mutual Aid, Christians Against Poverty Citizen Advice Bureaus

Voluntary services, centres and venues within our direct community and our wider community including groups, activities and centres involvement to incorporate collaborate working and support; to name justa few – Volunteering in Health and the Alice Cross Centre in Teignmouth

Wellbeing Centre’s, Access Groups, local GP practices, Community Connectors, health providers and other teams

Coastal Health & Wellbeing Groups and Alliances– from voluntary organisations to DCC and CCG healthservices

Surrounding Football, Rugby, Tennis Clubs to Rotarian Groups Job Centre’s, Learn Devon, Youth Enquiry Service

Defibrillator Provisions; Jay’s Aim and Southwestern Ambulance Service, and medics

Local Fire Officer, Community Support Worker and Police

Teignbridge CVS and Assist Teignbridge (Dawlish Volunteer and Wellbeing Services) Exetec Ltd\*\* –

Video production company

Home Instead Care Company – shared working to offer training as below

Training Initiatives and Providers:

Audience:

Southwestern Ambulance Service and Jay’s Aims

Defib & CPR Sessions

All

Home Instead Care Company

Dementia Awareness

All

“ “

First Aid & Basic Life Support

Voluntary sector staff/volunteers

Data Capture

Optimise Booking System

Staff and volunteers, in-house sessions

Devon Access to Services

Safe Awareness for Drivers

Community drivers, staff and Volunteers

Total Training UK

Passenger Assistance

Selected staff and volunteer

Train the Trainer

Passenger Assistance Training Devon Access for Serviced

Staff and volunteers

Red One Driver Training Centre

Minibus Driver Training

Volunteers - new drivers

CORVSERV Notter Bridge Training Centre	Chapter 8/Traffic Management Marshall Training	All
Mobility Equipment Training Centre	Certified Training	Volunteers
New Skills Academy Staff Skills Training	Online Training	16+
DCT Volunteer Recruitment:	12 new volunteers - 2 minibus and car drivers 1 multi-talented lady – driver assistant, driver, admin, fundraiser 8 volunteer car drivers 1 volunteer car driver and Train the Trainer 2 existing volunteers upskilled through mobility equipment training Courses	

2 new volunteers have enquired since the end of project, stemmed from our publicity during that period

#### **DCT Staff Recruitment/Training:**

All DCT staff and volunteers have attended Safe Awareness for Drivers Course and all drivers have attended Passenger Assistance Training – many have also attended other sessions, by choice

1 member of staff upskilled with Train the Trainer accreditation

#### **Volunteer Hours:**

124.5 hours – these are tracked hours only; many have helped informally in so many ways

#### **Service Development:**

Restructured training programme

Revised volunteer recruitment and support processes

Improved mobile phone communications

Laptop Purchase – enabling the Volunteer Co-ordinator accessibility to technology/info off site

Introduction of office card payment systems (on site and over the phone) – a separate fund contributed to card readers within each vehicle; increasing our connectivity overall

#### **Unexpected Outcomes:**

Gifted training as outlined above; funds saved, working relationship developed and community benefits.

Recruitment of a new member of staff.

Shopmobility – a service in operation for the community; new volunteers have created new opportunities - training to enhance our service and reduce outgoing costs.

Defibrillator installation – a positive learning from training sessions held, we will be installing a Defib on our building, which is positioned within a main car park – a terrific, unexpected outcome for the community.

A wider target area with opportunities that we could offer to transport services further afield; see

‘area of coverage’ for further information.

## Feedback and Plaudits:

"You all do such a fantastic job. My husband died 15 months ago and it has been really difficult for me. There are so many people on their own like me and you are a life saver. You do cars for hospital and now I've discovered your trips out – I saw the list pinned up in the town by chance, and me and my friend tried one; we loved it. Your driver was so lovely as are all of you, I just wanted to phone to tell you how amazing you all are. I would like to book some more please." FW

"Thank you so much. 'M' took us to RD&E today. We can't drive anymore and have no relatives near. We also knew him from years ago, so it was wonderful to catch up again." Mr & Mrs N

"This is to say a very big thank you for providing such a brilliant service. All your staff and volunteers are so amazing and helpful. I want to say a special thank you to 'D' who took me to Torbay Eye Clinic. Unfortunately, my appointment was extended, yet she really went out of her way to help me. Please accept the enclosed donation (£50 received with a card) to help continue the marvellous service you provide."

"You don't know how much you've put my mind at rest. To know you can take me to my appointment; I have been so anxious. Thank you so much."

The above are not directly related to the Project, yet through the service it has been delivered by, and all it offers; and with the volunteers existing, and those new since the start of the actual Project, they are all relative.

What was most useful with the training?

"Meeting other volunteers and overall presentation, thank you."

"Hearing peoples' experiences and dealing with all categories of passengers." "I am more aware of people and their needs now."

"I didn't know the service existed. Having attended the defib training, I now also know about transport that can help my mum, thank you."

"Thank you for organising this; I was really worried in case I ever needed to use a defib; now I feel reassured. It was put in simple terms and now I understand the difference between a cardiac arrest and a heart attack."

"My husband and I have come along to find out more. He had a cardiac arrest a few years ago and there wasn't a defib nearby and it was too far for me to drive to get one; I would have lost too much time and couldn't leave him alone. We are now raising funds for our estate where we live to get a defib and this course has helped us to know what to do and to decide on what type of equipment we need." "I am a carer for my dad, who is a retired GP. He has advancing dementia and it is really hard for me and my family. He lives with us. It was lovely to be able to just let off steam, ask questions and see things clearer. I know you can't answer medical questions, but it has supported me to find the right channels to get help. I am also a medic, but it is so different when you are dealing with your own father. I've joined the dementia café now."

Please also refer to the Case Studies; just a summary of feedback from those who commented on their experiences during/after sessions held and we feel certain have benefitted from the Stronger Together Project.

Area of Coverage: Dawlish Community Transport (registered Charity name is actually 'East Teignbridge CTA' as this area is known as East Teignbridge) includes EX6, EX7, TQ12, TQ13, TQ14 predominately, for our services – Ashcombe, Mamhead, Powderham, Kenton, Kenn, Starcross, Dawlish, Teignmouth, Shaldon, Bishopsteignton, Ideford and Exminster if required, with our Ring and Ride service. Our Car Scheme can cover any of these localities and beyond if other services aren't able to; if we have capacity and it is cost effective for both the service and the passenger.

The Project has enabled us to reach out further afield of our usual area and has increased our awareness, established new links and broadened our knowledge of what is within reach to others and tous, including engagement within the postal code area of TQ9 and far expanding the areas further afield yet within the postcodes listed above – including Ashburton, Ipplepen, Kingsskerwell, Newton Abbot, Kingsteignton and Exeter (not complete).

Age Range: The youngest to attend a defibrillator awareness session was a young man who attended with his granny, aged only 12 years old, extending to the more mature, recorded as 65+ yet we know to be 85 years young.

Participants: A wide spectrum overall of attendees; individuals attending as new learners, for many to expand on existing knowledge/awareness or refresher training, including younger people to married couples, single adults, carers and those cared for came along also on occasions.

### Dawlish CT Summary

If time had allowed for a more structured timeframe, preparation before a launch date, clearer definition of the desired project expectations, examples of templates to fulfil and evidence the outcomes and benefits of the programme from the outset, it may have been more fluent and synchronized, and flowed better. Those within the collaboration could have benefited from a more inclusive approach to appreciate the collective good work being done by all; sharing of information and expertise and essential to reap the best for the overall outcome.

Yet, having the freedom to work independently and be guided and directed by the community need, and trialing new initiatives, we have gained much knowledge now of how our team would be structured if we were to enter into an exercise/project again; and could work alongside, and on many levels be incorporated within the running of our day to day operations, to enable the best balance of project activity and services established within the Charity.

The project has given us the opportunity to focus on improvement and development activities that were previously out of our reach, both due to restricted time and funding, and offered the fantastic opportunity of expanding our learning by delivering new skills and opportunities to the community. The tangible benefits and model created, have hopefully been outlined in this report but the non-tangible benefits (e.g. new and improved contacts and communications within our community) have been felt by us all throughout the duration of the project. We would welcome to be involved in something like this again/receive specific funding support and continue delivering such benefits in our community.

\*\* <https://www.dawlishbeach.com/promotional-video-for-dawlish-community-transport/>

Sally  
Preston  
Office  
Manager



## **MDM Overall Future Plans & Project Conclusion Summary:**

The project has opened many doors for our organisations, there are many benefits from the project which will continue on into the future, such as; the Train The Trainer – our staff members who took part in these course will continue to provide training, the band of volunteers we have recruited through the project term will continue to provide their volunteer roles, our Community Support Services have proven to be in high need, so we plan to research & obtain funding to enable us to continue to provide this service to our communities.

Although the project got off to a slow start - our collaboration 'Stronger Together' Project has been a huge success, it has greatly exceeded our expectations and has proven to us all that We are... Stronger, Together! This is the first time our organisations have worked collaboratively together, and although it was not without its initial teething problems, we believe it has been extremely beneficial & valuable in many ways, and not only benefitted the people of Devon...but also brought the organisations involved closer, potentially leading to other future collaborative ventures. Project Statistics demonstrate how successful the project has been - The Outcome & Output final figures show the majority of project targets have been surpassed significantly. The few targets which were not fully met were only off by a few percent. 9 out of 10 Project Milestones have all been reached, exceed in many cases – the one milestone, which was not completed fully, was in fact 93% completed, given a little more time this would have been completed. The project has achieved many unexpected outcomes, developments, statistics & feedback which have not been indicated in the Monthly Monitoring Reports, so we really welcomed the chance to showcase them in this Evaluation Report.

The project has not only strengthened the services we provide, but has also given the organisations involved the confidence to continue to adapt and develop in order to surviving & providing our much-needed services in these difficult times. We are proud of the difference our project has made to the people of our communities, we have sought to preserve our social impact on our local communities and to date have exceeded our own expectations. Our charities strongly believe in the power of communities and have provided various opportunities to work with and to help change people's lives. This project has reinforced and proven our belief that working together is key as it gives us the power to make a greater, more powerful impact to the communities we serve.