



# WELLBEING CAFÉ

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

REPORT 2/23

9 JANUARY 2023

The purpose of this Report is to recommend Members to extend the Wellbeing Café to five days a week instead of the current three and fund its Co-ordinator on full-time basis.

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**NO. DETAILS**

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**1) BACKGROUND**

- a) When the Isle of Wight Council closed its three mental health support outreach centres, including the one held once a week at the Green Room, the Town Council decided to keep it open as an Anxiety Café.
  - b) Terri Exposita was appointed as its Co-ordinator in June 2021 when it moved to two sessions a week and by the end of that year it had expanded from the small initial group of less than half a dozen to an attendance of over 30.
  - c) The January 2022 Town Council meeting responded to the clear evidence of the need for this service provision by agreeing to a recommendation to extend it to three sessions a week and the Co-ordinator's hours increased to 12 weekly accordingly.
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**2) FAMILY VOICE**

- a) The showing of the Town Council's documentary and the responsive launch of the Community Support Fund highlighted the Wellbeing Café as one of the three Town Council supported organisations at the front line of the cost of living crisis and its related issues.
  - b) By that November membership of the Café had increased to 89 and the initial meeting of the Town Council's Community Support Fund Committee allocated £5,000 of the early contributions to fund the further extension to five sessions a week and the required addition to the Co-ordinator's hours for the final quarter of the 2022/23 financial year
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**3) NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR**

- a) There is clear evidence for the further permanent extension of the service to full-time, five sessions a week provision, some of which is attached to this Report.
  - b) This would involve an extension of the Co-ordinator's employment to a full-time 35-hour a week contract and an increased salary cost of approximately £15,000.
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**4) RECOMMENDATION**

The Town Council is recommended to agree the extension of the Wellbeing Café service to five sessions a week and the consequent salary cost to fund its Co-ordinator post on a 35-hour week basis.

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# VENTNOR WELL-BEING CAFÉ

*'Where we believe you are a priority'*

## Members Testimonials

*'The café is a safe place for me, a place where I can be myself amongst people like me. It does me so much good to go to group mentally. It is the only time I get to socialise and join in with things. It makes life a bit more bearable.'*

*'The café has not given up on me as mental health services has.'*

*'To me the café is somewhere I can come and see people that I now consider as friends. Without the café I would not see many people because of where I live. It is now something that I look forward to and wish it could be more days.'*

*'The café to me is a safe place to be. I can be myself, chat to others that understand. I love the support that everyone gives each other. Feels like a family.'*

*'The Well -being Café forces me to get up, washed and out in the mornings, a purpose. I am so welcomed and made to feel safe and supported – especially when I am very unwell, have problems and may want to be quiet. The kindness I have received has been priceless. I feel the café has helped to save me ending my life on many occasions. Terri and the members are so lovely and trusting, keeping confidences. I am so grateful, thank you all.'*

*'The café to me is a safe place to be. I can come and have a chat to everyone. They have really helped with my mental health. It is good to see them every week. I look forward to seeing them all they are like family.'*

*'The café to me is a massive escape from home life in general. Nobody makes me feel uncomfortable. Quite the opposite. I can come and go as I please and just pick up from where I left off. I also get a lot of information from professionals and other visitors. I am better for the cafe and thanks to who set it up and Teri who is a massive support.'*

*'The best idea yet and the only place of its kind in Ventnor. A real family for me - full of friendly supportive members.'*

*'I would be lost without the café. On the days when I am distressed on waking- having a place to go is sometimes the only reason I get up and go out of the house. I have an eating disorder so being around food gives me the opportunity to eat early in the day. The sense of purpose (helping and chatting to other members) is so beneficial to my sense of self-worth. Plus, the help/support I receive in equal measure is priceless. Looking to the future I'm so relieved to have made new friends who totally accept me 'wart and all'. Also, to have things to look forward to. It's great to come because everyone supports you. '*



# VENTNOR WELL-BEING CAFÉ

*'Where we believe you are a priority'*

**From Rachel Middle, Clinical Quality Improvement Lead, Mental Health & learning Disabilities Division, IoW NHS Trust**

*-I worked with the group as part of work with the University of Southampton, undertaking a research project. While completing my research it became clear how important the sessions are for fostering connections and a sense of belonging in the local community. Members of the group gave examples of how the peer support from members of the group extends beyond the set sessions and they support each other outside of the group for example to feel confident to go on public transport or go to the library. I think the group is really important, as people support each other so benefit from both being supported and from supporting others. Groups like these are so important for reducing the impact of loneliness and social isolation. Lots of people commented that having the group local really helps and attending gives them something to aim for. I think having the specific mental health focus is very important because there is shared understanding and people reported it feels like a safe space. The group is proactive, and I was very grateful for their input into the research, I feel like it is a brilliant community resource in Ventnor, so welcoming and a really positive atmosphere.*



# VENTNOR WELL-BEING CAFÉ

*'Where we believe you are a priority'*

**From Jacqui Darby, Mother of a café member:**

*'We can't thank you enough for all of the hard work and support you have given Martyn.*

*Since Martyn has been coming to the café, he has greatly improved and is always praising the work and organisation undertaken there.*

*Keep up the good work! '*

*Jacqui Darby.*

**Juliette and the Weaver Family:**

*'Dear Terri, Holly and all the team at the Ventnor Well-Being café.*

*Thank you so much for all that you've done and continue to do to help Martyn – in time gone and especially recent times.*

*As a family, we appreciate all the help and hard work you've put into welcoming Martyn back home after his stay in hospital. '*

*Lots of Love , Juliette, and the Weaver family xxx*



# Ventnor Well-Being Café

## Review of 2022

### 2022 What an amazing year for the Ventnor Well-Being Café

This year has been such a resounding success for the Well-being Café in every way. The group members themselves have made the café the most welcoming place to be in town. Its warm and friendly atmosphere is a breath of fresh air to all that visit. Amongst a background of chatter and laughter between the group new friendships have been formed and this has even more helped to reinforce and further enhance the close-knit bond of the members.

The group have enjoyed a number of great outings this year, a jubilee barbeque party on the green, ran a group stall on the putting green at Ventnor Day, held a good old fashioned jumble sale and raffles to fundraise for group activities. The legendary hampers have yet again been a massive success with raffles in the lead up to Christmas this year. The Christmas lunch held at Mill Bay was an absolutely brilliant event with everyone thoroughly enjoying themselves immensely. The Christmas lunch was delicious with everyone having such a marvelous time indeed.

The membership has increased to nearly 90 with ages ranging from 18 to 80 and growing all of the time. The Ventnor Well-Being café has developed into a really special place for people to enjoy company, friendship and support from other members who are always the first to help with anything.

It's not all been without some serious business going on at the café. Regular visits from the Citizens Advice team to assist with any issues that may have been troubling members. The living Well team make a number of visits to the group and again help with any issues that may need sorting though. The support which is available to the group is fabulous and is very much appreciated indeed.

Terri Exposit

### **Ventnor Well-Being Café**

#### Fabulous trip to the Donkey Sanctuary

The Ventnor Well-Being Café had a fabulous trip out on a glorious sunny Saturday Morning this weekend. Travelling in style on an open top bus they visited the Isle of Wight Donkey Sanctuary to The Well-Being Café is a self-help group based at the Green Room at Salisbury Gardens and funded by Ventnor Town Council, helping members regain their confidence and self-esteem again, helping to make friends whilst trying and enjoying new and varied activities.

This visit was arranged by the Well-Being Café's hardworking co-ordinator Terry and was a terrific success which gave an elevated view of Ventnor, and the countryside the group had not experienced before, especially being up alongside the treetops on the journey. meet and say hello to the donkeys.

The Donkey Sanctuary was indeed a worthwhile visit for the group, taking time to walk out in the sunshine amongst the donkeys. The group had refreshments and enjoyed the pleasant surroundings whilst chatting to each other along the way. Accompanied today by the Deputy Mayor Steph Toogood and Councillor John Watkins who both support the group tremendously.



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Indeed so successful was the visit to the Sanctuary that the group have adopted a Donkey for the Well-Being Café (Pinky) who will obviously become a fully-fledged member of this fabulous group of like-minded people.

Special thanks must go to John Killick, our driver for the day, who amazingly gave up his Saturday to help the group by driving the open-top bus, also to the kind owner of the bus who donated its use for the day to the group.

Thanks to the Isle of Wight Donkey Sanctuary for being so accommodating on the group's visit.



## Ventnor Well-Being Café outing to remember !

Ventnor Well-Being Café took some of its members on a boat trip to remember on a sunny Friday afternoon in

The amazing Cowes Sailability were host for the afternoon and arranged a special treat for the group's members aboard the fabulous specially adapted 'Wet Wheels' powerboat another Charity who hail from the Hamble.

With weather to put the Caribbean to shame the group spent over an hour charging around the Solent under the watchful eye of skipper Ian and his crew. The group were treated to some very fast boating, and all had a turn at taking the helm of this fabulous craft which originated from here on the Isle of Wight from our local boat builder in Ventnor.

The smiles where almost as bright as the sunshine and the laughter could be heard all over the Solent, all of the members had a brilliant time and were as usual chaperoned by the groups co-ordinator Terri Expositie who works tirelessly for this group of fabulous people who are members of the Ventnor Well-Being Café at Salisbury Gardens.

The Sailability charity are a wonderful group who provide the chance for people with disabilities to have access to the water aboard their fleet of boats, as does the Wet Wheels charity who provide the larger power boat to make the Solent accessible for everyone who would otherwise not enjoy these experiences.



Terri Exoposite

## The Ventnor Well-Being Café have an amazing day at the Havenstreet Steam railway

Organised by its hardworking Co-ordinator Terri Exoposite, The Well-Being Café members had a wonderful day out at the Isle of Wight Steam Railway at Havenstreet last Saturday.

Members dodged the initial rain showers to enjoy rides on the steam train in its period carriages, explore The Train Story – an undercover, interactive experience and exhibition of over 150 years of railway history, including Victorian and Edwardian carriages – and finally to watch flying displays of the Haven Falconry’s birds of prey.

Thanks go to Dave Forrester and team who privately-own the open-top bus and kindly provided this transport for the day, driven by volunteer John Killick.



Terri Exoposite

## Well-Being Café Christmas Lunch Mill Bay, Esplanade



The Well-Being Café enjoy a fabulous time at the Mill Bay down on the Esplanade for their Christmas lunch this year.



The group took the short journey down to Mill Bay on the Esplanade for their Christmas luncheon which was a great highlight for the end of the year. Over 50 members came to the lunch and enjoyed a full turkey meal with all the trimmings, a vegetarian alternative was available, equally as delicious.



Members invited the staff team from VTC who all were glad to attend, the atmosphere was brilliant, lots of laughter, and chatter was helped along with a few Christmas drinks. Terri the café Co-ordinator gave a speech thanking everyone for their efforts throughout the year, her speech ended by re iterating to the group that it is them that make the Café such a special place for people and that they are the heart of the Well-Being café.

