# Stroud District Community Hubs Network Meeting

# Meeting notes

**10am, 6th November 2024**

## Welcome

Thanks for coming along to our recent meeting, and sorry for those that were unable to attend this time. It was great to see quite a few new participants, especially those representing groups which have not attended previously.

Emma Keating Clarke, Community Health & Wellbeing Manager from SDCStroud District Council, introduced the meeting and welcomed everyone along. She introduced Nick from Creative Sustainability and Lizzie who have are facilitating the Community Hubs Network Forum meetings. Thanks to the Stonehouse Community Centre for use of the hall, and also to Jacky from APT for arranging the venue and food.

## Winter support presentations

We had presentations from three speakers who kindly came along to share the scope of support over the winter period. Thanks to all three for their time and effort in coming along and sharing information about their organisations and the available support. Links to presentations and materials are on the website: [strouddistrictcommunityhubs.net/forum-meetings](https://strouddistrictcommunityhubs.net/forum-meetings/)

### Age UK

Age UK are often the first point of call for elderly residents. They are able to give support with forms such as Housing Benefit, Attendance Allowance, Pension Credit and Blue Badge applications. They can give out shopping vouchers and work with other groups such as Severn Wye to give out grants.

They do not have a base in Stroud at present to operate from and it would be useful for them to have somewhere. If you are interested in hosting an Age UK session please contact either [mnelson@ageukgloucestershire.org.uk](mailto:mnelson@ageukgloucestershire.org.uk) or [vsavage@ageukgloucestershire.org.uk](mailto:vsavage@ageukgloucestershire.org.uk) .

[ageuk.org.uk/gloucestershire](https://www.ageuk.org.uk/gloucestershire/)

### Severn Wye Agency

Sharon Letori explained that Severn Wye are a community advice service focussing on energy - from information supply and heaters to smart meters. They will gather information on housing type, tariffs and heating set-up and offer help such as radiator reflectors, draught excluders and care bags. They can also help with fuel debt support.

Their Warm and Well service helps with home improvements to help reduce energy usage and costs. Find out more here:

[severnwye.org.uk/advice-support](https://severnwye.org.uk/advice-support/)

### Citizens Advice

Steve Brawley told us that the Citizens Advice service for Stroud and Cotwolds is part of the larger CA network and give advice for carers and those they care for on the benefits they are entitled to.

They are partnering with local CA groups to launch a Financial Advice FIrst Aid scheme where local reps can be trained and supported by the CA Case Workers to delivery advice and support on financial matters. These reps could be community hubs, social prescriber, councillor or even hairdressers - wherever people may connect with support.

More information on this will be coming very soon, with the first training planned before Christmas.

[citizensadvice-stroudandcotswold.org.uk](https://www.citizensadvice-stroudandcotswold.org.uk/)

## Christmas provision

Everyone in the hubs works so hard all year and deserves time off with their family, so there really is **no expectation or pressure** on groups to provide services, especially to pick up gaps when statutory provision closes over the period.

We collected some information about Christmas but think that we need to be a bit more comprehensive on this.

We have created a short form to collect more details about your Christmas provision. Please note if your offer is limited to specific groups, current visitors or other criteria such as referrals or bookings. Also please include any close down or re-opening dates if available.

Our aim is to collect this as soon as possible and put it on the website so groups know who to signpost to nearby.

**Please visit the survey here:**

[**https://forms.gle/2pb422TsbgL3HfYCA**](https://forms.gle/2pb422TsbgL3HfYCA)

## Sharing of ideas and practices

Participants were asked to work in groups around the table and answer the following questions about winter activities over the past two years. It was great to see a real buzz as everyone chatted about this. Please use the contact list to continue these discussions over the coming weeks.

1. What Worked and What Didn’t Work with previous provision over winter
2. Do you have any Asks or Offers

### Do you have any ASKS?

* **Asks** Transport -> Rodborough
* **Asks** Volunteers (kitchen, chats, setup), ideas for one off talks or demos - The Well
* **Asks** Map of all the hubs - [strouddistrictcommunityhubs.net/community-spaces-map](https://strouddistrictcommunityhubs.net/community-spaces-map/)
* **Asks** Ideas of support for vulnerable girls in the community, 11+ age – Louise Slender
* **Asks** Pagan Hill – items for Christmas hampers

### Do you have any OFFERS?

* **Offers** Pagan Hill – volunteer opportunities

## Collated discussion notes

### What worked?

* Running a “Café space” to remove any ‘warm space’ stigma
* Food deliveries on Christmas Eve, was given out to 80+ families
* Marah ran longer opening hours over the winter as a warm space with guest helpers
* Signposting to places well in advance of Christmas because of coming closures
* The Prince Albert carols were well attended
* Trinity Rooms ran a great Christmas lunch
* CAP (Chrisitian against poverty) money coaching course launching this Friday (addressing debt at Christmas) - (see website [www.capuk.org/get-help/money-coaching](http://www.capuk.org/get-help/money-coaching))
* Dursley Tab run a sessions called “Communitea” every other Tuesday
* Stroud do similar thing on a Tuesday
* Encourage & aid people to get out - tackling loneliness, depression and mental health
* Offering Things (i.e. toasties, cup-a-soup) as part of session without making it a big deal
* Cooking classes work - Guideposts ran paid courses, 3rd spaces run regular cooking
* Peer-to-peer works well – LIVED EXPERIENCE
  + Owen running Teen Kitchen @Brimscombe Mill was an apprentice on placement
  + Volunteers at The Well successfully used it as a stepping stone back into work

### What didn’t work?

* Requests for men’s clothing exceeded demand - trainers, jeans waterproof coats
* Events at Marah and Trinity were overwhelming for some- too many people
* It would be good to have a drop-in in the centre of town
* Pagan Hill running ‘warm spaces’ but uptake not so good – existing sessions are better
* “Warm spaces” label put people off
* Opening over Christmas is hard – staff need a break too
* Want to be able to give out small appliances, such as heaters, air fryer, slow cookers
* Difficulty covering extra costs of existing sessions, and extra bits - i.e. toaster and toast

**Other thoughts**

* It’s really hard to reach people who most need support. Many will be housebound and just don’t know about us, and often also not on social media.
* Can we leaflet-drop every home. Sharing information with groups and agencies also helps people know about what is available.
* Some people don’t carry cash - QR codes for small donations – a cuppa or a meal

**Operating as a virtual space**

Uplands is ‘virtual hub’ - they don’t have a fixed space so are working in other spaces

* Working with the local allotments to collect food for soups
* Using the local school to give out vouchers. Unfortunately only for families
* Holding a monthly cafe in the Independent Living Hub (Grange View)
* Running a community craft session at the Fountain pub mostly women/ new mums
* Talking to local educational Project (The Grove) about using their space at weekends
* Sharing a questionnaire with community to help grow and get ideas and volunteers

New Activities

* Nailsworth Friday market 8-12 – home made goods and refreshment on a social table
* Stroud Top of Town TOTS 9.30-11 Tue/Fri (food hub next door) and Craig’s Forest School

## Website

Please visit our Stroud District Community Hubs Network website for information. We really want to develop the site to match the needs of the network so please get in touch with any ideas.

[www.strouddistrictcommunityhubs.net](http://www.strouddistrictcommunityhubs.net)

* Map – list of hubs and their details – opening times, contact, what support and service are provided. Please let us know if you are not on the list or want to change any details.
* Library – a list of resources to help groups and hubs around different aspects of organisation and support. We are in the process of updating the documents and adding further resources. If you have useful information, manuals, processes to share please let us know.

## Next meeting

Please put Wednesday January 29th for the meeting at Minchinhampton Community Centre. The topic will be on Financial Inclusion and we will run from 10:15 – 12:30, followed by a free buffet lunch.

We aim to vary the locations and days on which meetings are held to enable as many people as possible to attend. We know this is again on a Wednesday and appreciate that this may be difficult but no other days were available at this location. The next meetings will be on an alternative day.

A [briefing note for the January meeting](https://strouddistrictcommunityhubs.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/SDCHN-Meeting-January-29-2025-Financial-Inclusion-.docx) is available.

### Future Venues

We are keen to find out more about spaces and group across the District so If any group would like to host this meeting, we can pay room hire costs and for the lunch. We need to be able to accommodate 25-40 people, in an accessible venue and with accessing parking. We always try to support local catering providers by using someone nearby.who can provide sandwiches and such like.

We are collecting the details of these spaces and they’ll be available shortly on the website.

## Attendees

| Amanda Wragg | awragg@grcc.org.uk | GRCC Community Development Officer |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Amy Harris | AHarris@ageUKGloucestershire.org.uk | Help Team Advisor |
| Anna Bonallack | anna@cscic.org | Creative Sustainability, Stroud |
| Cathy Iddles | cathy.iddles@fgr.co.uk | Community Development, Nailsworth |
| Charlotte Potter | lottiepotter321@gmail.com | Uplands Community Hub |
| Chris Moore | stroud@fairshares.org.uk | Fair Shares, Stroud |
| Ed Sauven | ed@thegracenetwork.org.uk | The Grace Network, Brimscombe Mill |
| Elaine Blatchford | el.blatchford@gmail.com | TOES, Rodborough |
| Emma Keating-Clarke | emma.keatingclark@stroud.gov.uk | Community Health & Wellbeing |
| Emily Forgione | assistantclerk@cainscross-pc.gov.uk | Cainscross Parish Council |
| Gill Thomas | cllr.gill.thomas@stroud.gov.uk | District Councillor, Minch |
| Helena Petre | helena.petre@nhs.net | Social Prescriber, Stroud |
| Jacky Edwards | jacky\_edwards@btinternet.com | APT, Stonehouse |
| Jacqueline Natt | jackienatt@hotmail.com | Marah Trust, Stroud |
| Jane Court | jane@coracle.me.uk | The Well, , Stroud |
| Jenifer Marshall | clerk@cainscross-pc.gov.uk | Cainscross Parish Council |
| June Clarke | june.clarke17@btinternet.com | Trinity Rooms, Stroud |
| Lizzie Dyer | lizzie@forgingequitablesolutions.com | Hubs Network |
| Louise Slender | louise.slender@gloucestershire.gov.uk | GCC Early Help |
| Mel Warren | mel@strouddistrictfoodbank.org.uk | Stroud Food Bank |
| Naomi Skelton | naomi.skelton@dursleytab.org.uk | Dursley Tabernacle |
| Nick Turner | [nick@cscic.org](mailto:nick@cscic.org) | Digi Support & Hubs Network |
| Nikki Andrews | thekeepersow@gmail.com | The Keepers, Wotton |
| Sarah Millar | sarahlouisemillar@hotmail.co.uk | Uplands Community Hub, Stroud |
| Sharon Baker | sbaker@guideposts.org.uk | Guideposts |
| Sharon Letori | sharonl@severnwye.org.uk | Severn Wye Agency |
| Shirley Margerison | shirley.margerison@nhs.net | Social Prescriber, Stroud |
| Simone Shephard | thekeepersoutreach@gmail.com | The Keepers, Wotton |
| Stephanie Smith | stephfyc@outlook.com | Frith Youth Centre, Chalford |
| Steve Brawley | Steve49.brawley@gmail.com | Citizens Advice, Cots & Stroud |
| Tosca Cabello - Watson | tosca@cscic.org | 3rd Space Youth Hub, CS |
| Tricia Watson | cllr.tricia.watson@stroud.gov.uk | District Councillor, Chalford |
| Viki Lee | viki@paganhill.org.uk | Pagan Hill Community Hub |
| Ruth Millett | ruth.millett@stroud.gov.uk | Museum in the Park, Stroud |

### Christmas Openings

Please see info above about collective more detailed information on openings over the period

| **Marah** | |
| --- | --- |
|  | 20th Christmas lunch from noon – about 100 people drop-in |
|  | Christmas food parcels from Marah (not for everyone) |
| **Museum in the Park** | |
|  | Festive winter weekend 7-8 at Museum – free events for families |
|  | 7th Community Carol singing 3:30 |
|  | 13th Christmas talk, folklore (£) |
|  | 14th-15th SDC event in the park |
|  | Wellbeing courses |
| **Frances Lynch** | |
|  | Church rooms - monthly lunch on the hill |
|  | Chalford Sports & Social. Loads going on but we don’t know – Chalford Hill website |
| **Keepers in Wotton** | |
|  | Christmas Eve café |
|  | Christmas Day - lunch – PAYF |
|  | Open during Christmas break |
|  | 16th Nov - Toyswap for Christmas presents |
| **Nailsworth** | |
|  | Lunch at Arkell centre Christmas Day – local resident organising – could he use the collective? |
| **Pagan Hill** | |
|  | 25th Xmas day meal – need to book through Trinity Rooms and St Albans |
|  | 27th Food Hub and Breakfast club |
|  | 30th Food Hub and Breakfast club |
|  | Closed 31-12 – 2-01 |
|  | Food Hampers / Toys and gifts in December by referral |
| **Trinity Rooms** | |
|  | Christmas day meal |
| **Foodbank** | |
|  | Signposting to Foodbank in December – Christmas hamper treats |

## Winter activities raw notes

### GROUP 1

**What worked**

Café space - change ‘warm space’ stigma

Food deliveries – Christmas Eve -> 80+ families

5th Dec event with P & C A + Housing, CA, Age Uk ()invited), Neighbourhood warden

+ family café / toddler groups

The Prince Albert -Carols well attended

Trinity Rooms - Christmas lunch

CAP – Money coaching course launching this Friday (addressing debt at Christmas)

**Asks and Offers**

Transport -> Rodborough

### GROUP 2

**Asks and Offers**

Transport -> Rodborough

Tackling loneliness

Depression. mental health - encouraging / aiding folk to get out.

Communitea – Tuesday 6th @ Dursley Tab, every other Tuesday

Stroud – do similar thing on a Tuesday

### GROUP 3

**What worked**

Marah drop-in, longer opening hours winter, warmth – guest helpers, policy developed

Signposing to Severn Wye

Signposting to a safe and well

Signposting to places before Christmas, because of coming closures

**What didn’t**

Requests for clothing men’s clothing exceeded demand - trainers, jeans waterproof coats

Marah, Trinity, etc overwhelming for some

No drop-in at centre of town

Too many people - electricity failure on Christmas day

### GROUP 4

Really hard to reach people who most need support. How to reach them?

Housebound, just don’t know about us, not on social media

- need leaflet drop to every home

- Referrals from Statutory agencies

Some people don’t carry cash - QR codes for small donations – a cuppa or a meal

**Allotments – food for soups**

Vouchers are going through Uplands School – working but obviously only for families

Pubs – community crafts – i.e. meet up for a drink – mostly women, mums, new to the area

The Grove – Educational Project – questionnaire given to community to help group grow

Want to setup more regular food and activities

**New Collectives**

Uplands Community Hub

Monthly Cafe at grange view

Fortnightly Community Crafts at Fountain pub

Stroud Top of Town TOTS. Tues and Fri – 9.30-11 (food hub next door)

Craig forest school – Top of Town

Nailsworth Friday market 8-12 – home made goods and refreshment which are a social table

### GROUP 5

Pagan hill – still running ‘warm spaces’ but uptake not good – existing sessions better

“Warm spaces” label put people off

Opening over Christmas is hard – staff need a break too

Want to be able to give out small appliances, such as heaters, air fryer, slow cookers

**Needs** Pagan Hill – items for Christmas hampers

**Offers** Pagan Hill – volunteer opportunities

Difficulty pulling in and covering extra costs of existing sessions, and extra bits - i.e. toaster and toast

Offering Things (i.e. toasties, cup-a-soup) as part of session without making it a big deal – this works

Basic cooking skills missing

Cooking classes work - Guideposts ran paid courses, 3rd spaces run cooking sessions regularly

Peer-to-peer works well – LIVED EXPERIENCE

* Owen now runs Teen Kitchen @ Brimscombe Mill was an apprentice on placement
* The Well has a success story with volunteers using it as a stepping stone back into work

**Needs** map of all the hubs and time to visit

**Needs** ideas of support for vulnerable girls in the community, 11+ age – Louise Slender

**Asks** Volunteers (kitchen, chats, setup), one off interesting ideas of talks or demos - The Well