

Report for Saltash Town Council, August 2020

It's been a very hectic few months since we last reported to Saltash Town Council.

Coronavirus Action Group

When our normal activities were suspended in March, we recognised a need to support the elderly & vulnerable people in our community. We diverted our energies and resources to providing emergency help and support to the over-70s and those with underlying health issues who were being shielded. We quickly put together a team of volunteers, who hand-delivered over 5,000 leaflets to Saltash homes, highlighting the services we were providing. Our volunteers came from all walks of life, & included a teacher, university lecturer, nurse and chef.

We set up a programme to provide support and help, including;

Shopping service

Prescription delivery service

Errands

Dog walking

Delivering emergency food parcels

Delivering jigsaws, games & books to ease boredom

Distributing free face masks (handmade by volunteers)

“phone friend” service

Digital Inclusion

Over the last few months, we have realised just how important technology is, especially when you are isolated from family and friends. As a result, we are setting up a community project to offer basic training and support to help people develop the skills and confidence to use technology in the home, and benefit fully from all the opportunities that the internet and technology can provide, and help people to be better prepared and ready for the new normal.

We are concentrating on the over 60s and people in a high-risk category for COVID-19, but will ultimately roll the programme out to be available to any adult in PL12.

Our aims;

- Teach elderly and vulnerable residents to use technology for basic applications, e.g. place an online order; order repeat prescriptions online; how digital technology, apps and gadgets can help them be less isolated.
- Hire digital items out to the elderly/vulnerable once they have had the initial training, before making a potentially expensive purchase.
- Hire equipment out on a longer term to the elderly/vulnerable who cannot afford to buy it.
- Help people access grants to purchase equipment or fund broadband setup.

We have secured premises for the project, which is currently being refurbished, and have been awarded some funding. We're now in the process of training Volunteers to be "Digital Champions" and provide the digital training for people to benefit fully from all the opportunities that the internet and technology can provide.

Become a Digital Champion

If you'd like to Volunteer as a Digital Trainer, please contact us at hub@cepl12.co.uk

Belle Vue Building

Renovation works on the Citizens Advice offices have begun at full pace, with an anticipated re-opening date in September. Our sincere thanks go to Saltash Town Council for generously supporting these renovation works, vital to the future success and smooth operation of our Saltash citizens advice office.

Dementia Voice

We have continued to do our best to support our service users under the current difficult circumstances; compiling and printing military and general knowledge quizzes each week which have been widely distributed throughout the area. We have also continued to deliver jigsaw puzzles, books, and food parcels to those that need them, and have also been keeping in telephone contact with our service users and volunteers to try to offset the isolation felt.

It is unlikely that the Café, Veterans Group or Walking Group will start before the New Year. We will keep our fingers crossed that we may be able to start 'Do you mind if I sing?' before the end of the year. We will continue to give all the support we can until we are able to restart our activities.

Community Hoppers

Due to Coronavirus safety concerns, we are unable to recommence our Community Transport services for the foreseeable future. This has created quite a large void in our income stream, and it is unlikely that we will be able to resume services this year.

Many of the Transport users and volunteer drivers are in the high-risk categories for Coronavirus, and their health and safety is our primary concern.

Belle Vue Project

The Belle Vue ex-toilet block has become the new HQ for our Digital Inclusion project, which will include a Digital Library, so that we can lend donated digital kit out. We are awaiting funding to complete the renovations. This will eventually

incorporate a Library of Things; promoting a sharing economy by lending out useful stuff, & negating the need to buy things which may be used only a couple of times in their lifetime. Further details will be announced in due course.

Community Hub

During lockdown, the Hub became a very different place, as the HQ for our Coronavirus Action Group. Instead of being filled with locally-crafted gifts, it became a storage space for hundreds of jigsaws, books, games and emergency food boxes.

The hub re-opened its doors on June 19th, selling crafts & gifts hand-made locally, alongside PPE such as face masks and face shields.

Town Team; Saltash Regeneration Group

We're represented on this committee by two of our Directors, Peter Ryland & Jo Baskott, who are both passionate about Saltash and its businesses. We have high hopes that this committee will be able to achieve great things for Saltash.

AGM

Our AGM is scheduled for Wednesday 30th September. We will follow Government guidelines over whether it will be a physical AGM or an online one.

New Directors

We are currently seeking new Directors to join our Board, and are looking for motivated candidates who can work hands-on as part of our dynamic team. We would welcome any enquiries, which can be made by emailing hub@cepl12.co.uk for a copy of the application form, or call us on 01752 848348 to chat to one of our Directors.

Jo Baskott

Chair