

# People in Partnership Newsletter

April 2020



We want everybody with mental health challenges, their families and carers to have the opportunity to help shape the experience and quality of mental health support and provision.

## In this edition:

- \* Keeping ourselves well
- \* Hastings Community Network
- \* Have your say
- \* Spotlight on 'Staying Connected'
- \* Support during COVID- 19
- Useful contacts



## Hello Spring!

Welcome to the Spring edition of the People in Partnership newsletter!!

People in Partnership are adopting new ways of working in response to the coronavirus outbreak so that we can support our partners and continue to involve the wider community in the development and design of mental health provision.

We'll continue to provide regular updates and information through our network (if you would like to be added to our email distribution list please contact us), alternatively you can find us on Facebook @PeopleinPartnership. **The latest updates about Southdown's response to the COVID-19 pandemic can be found [here](#).**

In this edition we'll be offering some tips about how we can keep well at home.

We will also be giving you the opportunity to provide feedback and [have your say](#) on how you're managing during this challenging time and what support you need to help you stay well.

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# Mental health wellbeing

The outbreak of Coronavirus has caused a time of uncertainty for us all. Each of us will have similar concerns about how we will keep ourselves and each other well whilst in isolation.

Below are a few ideas and tips about how we can all keep ourselves well (and entertained) during this difficult time.

## COMMUNITY ACTION RESPONSE: COVID-19

5 things you can do to make a positive difference in your community



Take a break from the news!  
Continual exposure to updates may increase stress and anxiety.

Try out some free home learning.  
[Futurelearn.com](https://www.futurelearn.com) offer a variety of free courses.

Empower yourself and others by focusing on the things you can do.

Eat well and stay hydrated.  
There is loads of support and tips on the '[One You](https://www.oneyou.org.uk)' website.

Read a book

Stay connected to others in whatever way you can; phone calls, emails, texts, video calls.

Be productive. Make a list of the things you've been meaning to do but haven't got round to yet.

Take some time to plan your day & make sure you include time to do the things you enjoy doing

For the most up to date information and guidance on the Coronavirus please visit:  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

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# The Hastings Community Network

This January People in Partnership were invited to host a conversation alongside Caroline Castle (Team manager, Community Connectors) and Jacy Kilvert (Community Wellbeing Coordinator, Mind) at the [Hastings Community Network](#) event- 'The impact of Loneliness & isolation for all in Hastings and St. Leonards'.



42 different organisations came together on the day and, among other discussions, People in Partnership invited attendees to explore how isolation and loneliness impact on an individual's mental health & emotional wellbeing. One key topic was around the need for us to realise the value in making and participating in conversations and encouraging us as a society to talk more. The full report can be accessed here: [HCN Full Report- January 2020](#).

## Have your Say.... 'how are you coping during the pandemic?'

We'd like to hear from the East Sussex community about how you're coping during the current COVID19 pandemic; what support does your community need? - what's working & what isn't?

What are you doing to support your wellbeing at this time?

We'd like to learn how is the pandemic affecting your wellbeing and understand how services and organisations can best meet the needs of you and your community at this time.

We've created a short online survey for you and your community to get involved and have your say!

[Spotlight on East Sussex- how are you coping during the pandemic?](#)

Our survey can also be accessed via: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/VTF6PVG>

With your feedback we can make evidence based suggestions about the design and development of mental health support to external service providers and commissioners.

More information about People in Partnership can be found on our [website](#).

"How are you?"  
[Have your say!](#)



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## Spotlight on 'Staying connected'

This Spring we heard from one of our Strategic Representatives and Level 2 Peer Mentoring learners who reflected on her journey with Southdown and offers some comforting food for thought.

"I attended an 'Introduction to People in Partnership' session last November. At the time I knew my past, was uncertain of my present and didn't want to think about the future— all I did know was that I wanted to begin a road to recovery. It's known that through helping others, you are returned with personal growth, development or a spark which changes you. With a warm welcome from Catherine- and directions to refreshments covered almost immediately, I felt good. I began to realise the personal achievement I had made in just being there. Every story is different but each one has value; an emotional journey takes place which everyone can relate to.

By the end of the session I realised that I have a story to share; one of value and one that can make a difference. Soon I'd be able to participate in events; get people thinking- sow those seeds, be a part of encouraging action and change.

I attended a planning meeting for 'Time to Talk' day. The critical thinker that I am began to run wild! It was empowering to be able to use my knowledge, skills and experience to contribute to an event where change could begin. In planning we considered questions, challenged ideas, analysed statistics and reviewed feedback from previous community engagement activities. Together we'd consolidated our resources and knowledge and formulated a plan.

Traits that I'd only ever contributed to my own personal destruction could now be used for a greater good- my weakness had become my strength. To speak into something that I'm passionate about; that could potentially save lives, I knew that I could be part of making a difference for others but at the same time (almost covertly) feed into my own personal development.

Our 'Time to Talk day event was powerful. We heard a testimony, a young man's story. We heard from partner organisations. We brainstormed. We made pledges will make a difference in the future. The feedback we received was not only positive but progressive. We'll be excited to see these pledges being fulfilled and the impact they begin to have. Understandably, the changes may initially be subtle; a great affect not seen immediately, but to be pioneering this forward is a privilege.

In these dark and uncertain times we're all exposed to external and internal challenges- for once everyone is in the same situation. We can take time for ourselves, invest in our healing; We are not alone. The emotions and challenges that we felt no one understood are now being recognised by all. It's an opportunity for learning, for understanding, to teach, to be understood. Our weaknesses can become our strengths as we are now no foreigners to helplessness, fear or confusion. Our understanding and empathy can help others that may be new to this,"

OB, People in Partnership, March 2020

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# Support during COVID-19

Please be assured that there is an array of support that continues to be available during the COVID-19 outbreak. Many services have had to adapt ways of working that follow government guidance so please check with each provider using the details provided.

Don't forget to check out **ESCIS (East Sussex Community Information Service)** for a full directory of services in the county: [ESCIS](#)



The **Southdown East Sussex Community Network** is a group of free community-based mental health recovery services for people (aged 16+) living in East Sussex. The network works closely with local hospitals, GPs and specialist health services.

**Wellbeing Centres** – access support to develop skills and resilience to manage your mental health. Located in Crowborough, Uckfield, Hailsham, Eastbourne, Newhaven, Bexhill, Hastings & Newhaven. Contact: [ESCIS@southdown.org](mailto:ESCIS@southdown.org) / 01323 405 334 or visit Facebook to see up to date information on each centre (links can be found on the website): [Wellbeing Centres](#)



**Staying Well** – provides out of hours mental health support; offering telephone support rather than face-to-face support until further notice. Contact: [stayingwell@southdown.org](mailto:stayingwell@southdown.org) / 07384 460 994/ 07867 123 652 or visit their website: [Staying Well](#)

**Peer Support** – delivered by people with lived experience of mental health challenges, Peer Support Specialists work with you to support recovery and prevent crisis. Contact: [PeerServiceESussex@southdown.org](mailto:PeerServiceESussex@southdown.org) / 01323 405 334 / 07772 613945 or visit their website: [Peer Support](#)

**Thinking Well** - a dedicated service for people with personality disorder. Contact: [thinking-well@southdown.org](mailto:thinking-well@southdown.org) / 01323 405 344 or visit the website: [Thinking Well](#)

The **NHS Sussex Partnership Trust** has some information about how to look after your mental health during the COVID-19 outbreak– this includes useful information on how to talk to young people about the pandemic. Visit their website for further information. [SPFT](#)

**East Sussex County Council** has a dedicated webpage to local and national support and information. [Click here](#) for further information.

The latest **government advice & updates** on the outbreak can be found on their [website](#).

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