



**Kent Coast Volunteering**

Connecting Communities In  
Dover, Thanet, Folkestone & Hythe

# KENT COAST VOLUNTEERING

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS  
2019/20

This Annual Report is dedicated to the Volunteers who enable Kent Coast Volunteering do what it does best - Connect Communities through Volunteering.



# WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

This annual report shares with you the impact of COVID-19 on Kent Coast Volunteering and our beneficiaries, and the achievements of our staff and volunteers over this period. We can be rightly proud of the speed with which we managed to pivot our services to support our beneficiaries, many of whom are vulnerable, isolated members of our community. The Volunteering response which we supported across the districts was phenomenal and ushered in a welcome step change in the way volunteers and volunteering are perceived and valued.

Volunteers have been hailed as forming a crucial response to the pandemic and we would like to echo this sentiment by dedicating our Annual Report to them.

We are pleased to welcome four new Board Members to Kent Coast Volunteering who bring a wealth of skills, experience, and enthusiasm to the table. Our new Board will approach the coming year reflecting on lessons learnt and will be updating KCV's Business Plan for the next 3-5 years alongside our Fundraising Strategy to make sure that we continue to be resilient and maintain high levels of impact within our communities. Whilst the operational context remains slightly unknown, we know that we need to remain agile and responsive. Luckily, we have an incredibly resilient and innovative staff and volunteer team so we can be confident that we are able to face the challenges ahead.

Despite the difficulties that everyone has faced over the last year we are excited and positive about the future for Kent Coast Volunteering and the role that it plays in connecting communities.



John Sutton  
Chair



Kerry Smith  
Chief Executive



## ABOUT US

Our mission is to connect communities across Kent through volunteering and community-led projects; supporting volunteers and volunteer involving organisations to meet needs and improve quality of life.

We do this by:

- Being the 'go to' place for all volunteering matters in and around the Kent coast
- Recruiting and placing volunteers where and when they are needed
- Providing essential services that promote independent living
- Supporting volunteer-involving organisations in strengthening their offer and infrastructure
- Delivering community-based projects that contribute to all aspects of health and wellbeing
- Working across all sectors to ensure that people are signposted to appropriate services
- Promoting collaboration across all sectors for a joined-up approach to resolving community issues



## OUR HUBS

Kent Coast Volunteering is proud to be the leading NCVO accredited Volunteer Centre operating on the Kent Coast. KCV's organisational structure means that we have a greater geographical coverage, can reach more people, and create stronger communities. Our Hubs can offer tailor-made local solutions since staff have expert local knowledge and are embedded into local networks. Each Hub has unique specialisms, and we can roll out successful projects at scale and share information to offer the same level of service and impact.



# OUR HUBS

Dover and District Hub - leads income generating services including Transport & DBS services

Folkestone and Hythe Hub - leads KCV's external Volunteering Services and offers a unique range of volunteer led social action projects including a volunteer gardening task force, volunteer mentoring to support debt management projects and one of Kent's Shed projects at Paddlesworth Farm.

Thanet (Virtual Tenancy) - KCV's Registered Head Office and our lead provider of innovative projects, particularly those which support independent living for vulnerable, older people and addresses social isolation.



**Ask us about Volunteering**



**We're here to help**  
**01843 609337**  
**www.kcv.org.uk**

info@kcv.org.uk @VolunteerKCV

**f Follow us @KCVolunteering**

Registered Charity: 1111800 Company Limited by Guarantee: 5392093




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# SERVICES WE OFFER ACROSS OUR HUBS

- We connect communities through a package of Volunteering Services including a searchable on-line data base of volunteering roles for people interested in volunteering.
- We raise awareness of the value, scope, and benefit of volunteering, promoting volunteering opportunities across social platforms and project networks.
- We facilitate larger scale volunteer responses, connecting communities to challenges facing society (including Covid-19, getting people to medical appointments and combatting loneliness and isolation);
- We provide training support for Volunteer Involving Organisations in the areas of volunteer recruitment, management, and retention. Our One Stop Shop approach means that we can also fulfil the DBS needs of the groups that we support. Furthermore, working with our partner organisation Stronger Kent Communities we can help community groups, charities and social enterprises find the help and resources they need to build and run their organisations effectively.
- We co-ordinate Community support services to support independent living at home for older, vulnerable, and less mobile members of our communities, KCV's Volunteer led projects support much needed and much valued volunteer driver transport, befriending, gardening services and social inclusion activities.



## OUR VOLUNTEERS

Pre Covid, over 350 volunteers were involved in the work and projects of the organisation, providing much needed community services such as transport, befriending, gardening, and social inclusion activities. The contribution of each individual volunteer at Kent Coast Volunteering continues to be invaluable to the provision of front-line support for the vulnerable and less mobile members of the communities we serve. We are open and inclusive and if we cannot help you, we will do our best to put you in touch with someone who can.



# OUR EXTRAORDINARY RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC



The Covid-19 Emergency highlighted how crucial KCV's role is within the communities we serve. Staff and volunteers worked tirelessly and imaginatively to pivot the organisation and adapt our services to respond to the situation. The result demonstrated the extraordinary skill, agility and dedication within our own staff team and the sector more generally.

From the very start of the pandemic, we worked with Local Government and the Public and Voluntary Sectors to connect potential volunteers with local volunteering opportunities across Thanet, Dover, and Folkestone & Hythe, helping communities come together in the fight against COVID-19.



# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE PANDEMIC



We secured Emergency Funding to enable KCV to adapt and respond at full throttle.



We made difficult decisions, including the closure of our Thanet office



We furloughed staff and stood down some projects as older volunteers shielded



With existing funder(s) permission, we re-purposed projects to support a wider COVID response



We quickly adapted the way we work, mastering Zoom, Teams, and finding new ways to stay connected



We took our face-to-face social groups onto ZOOM so that people could stay connected



We connected hundreds of volunteers to volunteering opportunities - Including Chequers Kitchen, where staff and volunteers cooked and delivered meals for older and vulnerable people



At East Kent Mind we connected long-term volunteers to mentoring roles, helping adults with their mental health recovery journey

# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE PANDEMIC



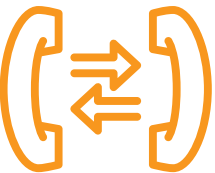
140 Volunteer Befrienders and Drivers supported our Good Neighbours Befriending Service.



We provided an additional Telephone Befriending service for Dover District Council



We kept in regular touch with over 300 older service users to check their welfare and connect them with appropriate support



We provided over 2,000 hours of telephone support to isolated older people, and, as restrictions eased, over 20% of the matches began face-to-face visits in outside locations



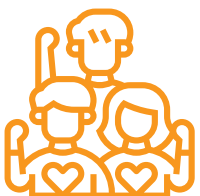
We took our Networking Lunches for voluntary sector organisations online to ensure that we continue to promote a collaborative, joined-up approach to service delivery.



We celebrated Volunteers Week in June - sending all KCV Volunteers a digital 'Thank You'.



Once restrictions relaxed, we were able to start bringing back volunteer-led services with the help of returning volunteers



We recruited potential new Trustees to formally stand in 2021-2022

# BUT WE DIDN'T STOP THERE!



## Supported Volunteer Involving Organisations:

- Registered 745 volunteering opportunities, 135 new Volunteer Involving Organisations and 179 potential volunteers on our online Volunteer Connect Platform
- Supported 10 Outreach Events designed to raise awareness of volunteering
- Co-ordinated 11 talks to promote volunteering
- Guested on numerous local and Kent wide radio programmes to raise awareness of volunteering and discuss the wellbeing factors associated with it
- Through our DBS checking service, we processed a total of 173 Disclosure and Barring Service requests for a total of 29 organisations

# BUT WE DIDN'T STOP THERE!

## Supported and connected communities:

### Networking Lunches

We co-ordinated networking lunches providing an informative networking opportunity to over 250 voluntary and public sector organisations working across the district at a time when the sharing of up-to-date information about services was critical.

### Thanet Community Support Partnership

We have continued to support the work and volunteer involving activities of 10 organisation partners through The, which provides a one stop shop of services to support and promote independent living. The service is available to older people, for members of the public, their family and friends and professionals. We made 514 referrals to facilitate access to these services.

### Centre for Ageing Better Age Friendly Volunteering Project

In Thanet during 2019-2020 KCV was selected by the Centre for Ageing Better to run a year-long project to test out ways of better engaging over 50s into volunteering. The work of this project resulted in the production of a Toolkit designed to help other organisations and groups break down the barriers to Age-Friendly and Inclusive Volunteering. Toolkit link: <https://kcv.org.uk/a-toolkit-for-social-get-togethers/>

### Thanet Support Directory

Thanet Support Directory links Thanet's older residents with trusted, joined-up services, one-to-one support, activities promoting health and wellbeing, and the wealth of community groups and volunteering opportunities the Isle has to offer. In 2019-2020 the Directory listed 587 voluntary and public sector organisations supporting older people across Thanet and has received over 48,000 visits for information

# SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITIES

## **Nepalese Digital Inclusion Project**

This project, which helps to promote wellbeing and overcome isolation, was developed to support digital access to Nepalese people of all abilities and is supported by an active Nepalese working party of 11 volunteers. The project has facilitated a digital programme designed to better connect a minority community to services and the wider community, including how to access health, financial and wellbeing services online. The recruitment of 7 trained digital champion volunteers from the Folkestone Nepalese Community breaks through language and cultural barriers. Delivery of the programme will begin with a pilot scheme towards the end of January 2021 and one-to-one virtual lessons scheduled in February 2021.

## **Thanet Over Fifties Forum (TOFFS) and Folkestone and Hythe Over Fifties Forum (FOFFS)**

- o Thanet Over Fifties Forum now engages directly with 442 members
- o Quarterly newsletters (178 by email and 264 by post)
- o The Forums have hosted visits to the House of Parliament raising awareness about engagement with the political process and 'how to get your voice heard', on issues that impact the lives of older people. It has also hosted meetings with guest speakers on topics covering 'Maximising Financial Income and Wellbeing', SCAM's and keeping safe on-line, Macular Degeneration and other sight issues as well as hearing more about the resources that can support visual impairment and independent living at home.
- o TOFFS Facebook following has increased from 349 to 472 an increase of 26.6%.
- o TOFFS is Member led, with Volunteers forming part of a Planning/Working team co-ordinating the activities of the Forum meetings above.
- o Launched in July 2020 during the pandemic FOFFS successfully recruited members and hosting Forums and attracting new members and volunteers to build an engaging and empowering Forum for the over fifties living in Folkestone and Hythe

# SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITIES

## Gardening Task Force & the Impact of Covid-19

Supported by a Team of volunteers (many of whom have special needs), the Project Co-ordinator facilitated the maintenance of over 113 gardens during a wet winter period before Covid brought the project to a halt in March 2020. Had the year progressed as normal, the Taskforce team were on track to carry out approximately 500 garden visits.

Task Force is a flagship volunteer led project for KCV; from its inception in 2005 it has evolved to become a testament of support and friendship for both service users who look forward to the visits and the volunteers who enjoy the team spirit and camaraderie. Being unable to maintain a garden signals, for many, an inability to cope and a loss of independence forcing consideration of a move from a home they love; Taskforce provides a positive alternative. Similarly, Taskforce benefits the Volunteers in equal measure, providing meaningful community engagement in a service that has enabled them to grow in confidence and develop social skills.

Taskforce naturally serves to combat loneliness and isolation, and throughout the course of the different Lockdown's the Project Co-ordinator kept in touch with both volunteers and service users; keeping individuals and communities connected.



# SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITIES



## Good Neighbours Service

- 268 active matches
- 159 befriending, shopping, dog walking, or de-cluttering – most of which transferred to telephone befriending once lockdown began in March 2020
- 109 additional telephone befriending matches since lockdown began in March 2020
- 88 new befriending enquiries made to the service
- 140 Volunteer Befrienders and Drivers supported our Good Neighbours Service during Lockdown.
- Over 3,000 hours of volunteer time given to befriending in person and over the phone
- The Good Neighbours Service achieved the Ncvo Approved Provider Standard in October 2019, recognising the excellent work of our befriending project. This was achieved in partnership with Befriending Kent Consortium.



# SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITIES

## Stronger Kent Communities

As part of the Stronger Kent Communities team, KCV led on Employee Supported Volunteering.

In the first quarter of 2019-2020 we co-ordinated: -

- o 88 volunteers from 15 employers and 5 who volunteered in their own time
- o 23 volunteering matches with Kent charities
- o 542 volunteering hours
- o During lockdown we led on a new SKC initiative matching skilled volunteers to the challenges facing charities during lockdown. A total of 118 volunteers registered and by the end of our final reporting period in September 2020, a total of twenty-two support tasks had been completed.





# SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITIES

## Volunteer Driver Transport

This is a community project which has been running for many years. It was built up in response to a need identified by older people who were struggling to access medical appointments, because public transport in our area (which covers some of the most remote and rural parts of Kent) is patchy. Last year we carried out 23,898 journeys, supporting thousands of vulnerable local people.

This year the service was massively impacted by Covid. Prior to the pandemic we had 130 local volunteer drivers. Lockdown reduced this number to below 20 as most drivers found themselves having to 'shield'. Following the lifting of restrictions, we have, thanks to returning volunteers and funding from The National Lottery Community Fund, HM Govt and Kent Community Foundation, begun to rebuild this service.



# SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITIES



## **Paddlesworth Shed**

- o 78 Shedding sessions were facilitated by our volunteers
- o We welcomed 15 new shedders in the first two quarters of 2019-2020
- o Lockdown forced a temporary closure of the Shed but by managing daily attendance and introducing PPE we were able to reopen a project recognised for its impact on mental health and wellbeing

# A SPECIAL HEARTFELT THANK YOU

## A Huge Heartfelt Thank you from the Trustees

We can do no better than repeat here the words of our Chief Executive, Kerry Smith, in her review of the year:

*This has been an extraordinarily difficult year, but one which has shone a light on the very best aspects of our community. Everyone at Kent Coast Volunteering would like to extend their thanks and appreciation to fellow **staff, volunteers, partners, supporters and funders** for everything they have done to help people and communities pull together to get through it.*

*We believe that, as a result, some of the worst impacts of the pandemic have been ameliorated for many people, and KCV has emerged as a stronger organisation - more capable of achieving our aim of connecting communities across Kent, meeting the needs of individuals and the wider community, and improving quality of life.*

*A heartfelt **THANK YOU** to everyone involved.*

The Trustees would echo every word of that and with particular thanks to Kerry for so skilfully keeping the show on the road in such difficult times.



# TO ALL OUR FUNDERS THANK YOU – WE COULD NOT ACHIEVE ALL THAT WE DO WITHOUT YOUR SUPPORT



Garfield Weston  
FOUNDATION



THE ROGER  
DE HAAN  
CHARITABLE TRUST



HM Government

In partnership with

THE NATIONAL LOTTERY  
COMMUNITY FUND



THE ROTARY CLUB  
OF THANET



advice and support for older age  
**Independent  
Age**



Kent  
County  
Council



South Kent Coast  
Clinical Commissioning Group



LUND TRUST  
A CHARITABLE FUND OF  
LISBET RAUSING & PETER BALDWIN

RG Hills Charitable Trust

# Elizabeth Somers-James



*In April 2020 it was with much sadness that we announced the news that our Chair of Trustees, Elizabeth Somers-James, had died at home on April 5th, 2020. Elizabeth, or Liz as she was known to everyone at KCV, joined Thanet Volunteer Bureau in 2013, and over the last 4 years she led the organisation through many challenges and considerable change, including the recent merger with Volunteer Centres in Dover and Folkestone, to form Kent Coast Volunteering.*

*At the time of Liz's passing John Sutton – now KCV's Acting Chair said, "Liz's steady and calm leadership of KCV will be much missed by fellow trustees, staff and volunteers and her death will be felt keenly by our CEO Kerry Smith who has worked closely with Liz over the last 4 years".*