

Age UK Cornwall - 17.07.20

A new era for Day Care | Launching community outreach from the Newquay Hub



Donna Smokvina, Manager at Newquay Day Centre, explains why they have been busy helping the local community during COVID-19 and the direction in which the Day Centre will be heading.

Could you tell us what a typical day looked like?

Being based at Newquay Day Centre has always meant that I get to enjoy an awful lot of variety in any given day. The Day Centre used to collect people from their own homes and take each person home again late afternoon.

Our aim for each day was to ensure that everyone had the care and attention they needed. Typically, **this involved most of the following; sipping on an unlimited supply of hot and cold beverages, enjoying morning breakfast, eating a well-balanced hot meal around mid-day, being pampered at bath time, chatting over afternoon tea and cake, and taking part in a wealth of activities.** Clients even had the opportunity to get their hair coiffed by an onsite hairdresser or get their feet beautified by a trained Podiatrist.

We also hosted a wide variety of groups which people could attend, these included; **Carers' Group, Knit and Natter, Memory Café, iTea & Biscuits and our Happy Voices singing group on Fridays.** We took a holistic approach to Day Care, meaning that the clients had fun, laughed (a lot) and made close bonds.

How has COVID-19 impacted the Day Centre?

On a very emotional day, and following government guidance, we were advised to close our doors to the public.



However, after receiving this news, we have taken steps to remodel the service and started an essential outreach programme for every person we support.

Read on to find out how the Newquay Day Centre is making a difference...

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The difference we make

We were already making welfare calls to our existing daily clients, but now, **we have taken on new challenges (and clients), helped people with their shopping, prescription collections and offered an invaluable sitting service for anyone that is socially isolated or shielding.**

We were also put in touch with Morrisons, Newquay, who offered to help some of the more vulnerable people in and around Newquay. Every week, they would donate 40 long life food bags, for as long as the donations kept coming in from their customers.

This has been an absolute lifeline for people, especially as most couldn't get on the internet to order weekly food shops or were isolating / shielding, so they were unable to go out. **Some of the people we supported had no family members near enough to lend a helping hand.**

We would deliver to one person and they often recommended a neighbour or two, from here the demand for shopping bag deliveries simply grew and grew.

It seems like you have been supported by a great team?

Definitely! We have been so grateful to our amazing volunteers, who have given an endless amount of help, assistance and reassurance to relatives, clients and especially me. **I would like to say a special thank you to Judy, who was staying in contact with our clients during COVID-19 and to Kate, who carried out countless shopping trips and Morrisons bag drops.**

I would also like to thank Steph and her team from Morrisons (Natalie and Rebecca) who have all been amazing. They have co-ordinated donations, packed bags and delivered them to the Day Centre for distribution.

Steph said, ***"It has been a privilege and an honour to help those in need at this time."***

"We have loved every minute of it and although we are all desperate to spend time with our families, we wish we could continue this part of our job. We have all said we would like to volunteer on one of our days off and continue helping in the future".

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The recipients were so thankful that Alice (our Community Outreach & Dementia Support Facilitator) and I gathered 'Thank you' cards from them and presented them to Steph and her team for going above and beyond the call of duty.

What's next for Newquay Day Services?

As weeks have progressed, our team has been able to re-launch a digital version of our Happy Voices group. It has been wonderful to see familiar faces enjoying a weekly Zoom singing session - we plan to provide a digital version of our Memory Café very soon.

We're also beginning to look a little further forward and, as it stands, it seems very unlikely that the centre will reopen soon. **With this in mind, we have decided to rename the centre - 'Govenek', which is the Cornish word for 'Hope'. I truly believe that the Centre**

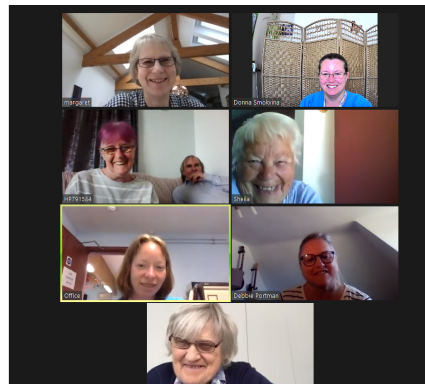
can become a place of Hope for the community. Our Centre can be a base that supports, engages and connects people like never before. We aim to offer a wide range of activities, services and resources that improve the health & wellbeing of individuals in and around Newquay.

"Under our NEW Active Living Support Service, Govenek is already delivering many essential outreach services."

Contact us

If you would like to find out more about **Govenek**, please contact Donna and her team on: **01637 876150 (Mon-Fri)**

Happy Voices - First Zoom Session



If you have any questions about this community story, please contact Lee Davies on - lee@ageukcornwall.org.uk