



Impact report 2024

Working together to end social isolation

Welcome from our CEO

Where to even start with 2024! It has been a year of new projects and partnerships, as we continued to focus on our vision to end social isolation in Christchurch.

We launched a weekly Christchurch Community Partnership lunch club at Homelands residential complex, in partnership with the wonderful Friendly Food Club; introduced a monthly Sunday Roast project for those alone at weekends; brought seated exercise classes to Bure House sheltered housing complex; and expanded our Coffee Connections events further, with a new venue at Wise Guys Café in Purewell.

Once again we held three simultaneous cream teas to mark the International Day of Older People in October – but this year we went even bigger and better, thanks to our partnership with Christchurch Town Council. The council not only provided generous funding but also organised displays from Mundeford Guides, Christchurch History Society and the Red House Museum for the venues, and booked the Funky Little Choir, who we transported to each venue to entertain the 150 guests! We also showcased the amazing Vintage Idols photography project, which went viral and received coverage on national TV, radio and press.

Our two minibuses have been busy too. They have been out four or five times a week getting our isolated residents to seated exercise classes and lunch clubs, but have also been able to deliver trips this year, which have gone down a treat!

A major highlight of the year was the Christchurch Soup event in October, which was themed around children and young people. The event saw over 100 guests join the many participants to hear from eight amazing projects pitching for funding. Guests voted with their soup bowls, and enjoyed entertainment from the fabulous Swing Unlimited!

We are so grateful to all our funders for enabling us to reach even more isolated residents this year. We couldn't have done it without you, our absolutely incredible volunteers and our amazing staff team, so thank you all!

Rev Sandra Prudom, Chief Executive

“We’re so grateful to all our funders for enabling us to reach even more isolated residents this year”

Sandra Prudom, Chief Executive



About our work

At Christchurch Community Partnership (CCP) we provide a range of services to reduce isolation and loneliness. We also connect organisations within our local community, so we can work together for the benefit of local people. Our services include:

- **Transport:** We provide essential door-to-door transport to those who would otherwise struggle to get out. We have two minibuses that provide our Dial-a-Bus service, manned by a team of volunteer drivers and Bus Buddies. Our fantastic volunteers also drive clients to activities in their own cars, via our Neighbour Cars scheme.
- **Community events and social activities:** A friendly chat and a bite to eat can have a big impact on wellbeing, so we deliver a range of social activities and events that allow people to enjoy good company and a meal or hot drink. These include our popular Sunday Roast events, weekday lunch clubs, and Coffee Connections, hosted at venues around Christchurch. We also offer seated exercise classes and day trips, to help people to keep active and well.
- **Christchurch Angels and Helpful Neighbours:** Our amazing team of Christchurch Angels empower people to reconnect with others, by helping them to get out and about. We also provide practical support where it's needed via our Helpful Neighbours scheme, which offers support with one-off practical tasks, from fixing a shelf to helping with form completion.
- **Connecting organisations:** To support collaboration and partnership working, we host events including Christchurch Conversation and Christchurch Soup. These allow us to connect with other organisations and our community, to identify gaps in provision, support new projects, and form new collaborations to better serve the community we all love.

In order to better understand and demonstrate the impact of our work, CCP commissioned Shephard & Moyes to develop an evaluation framework and support the production of this impact report. The framework helped us collect robust data in order to demonstrate what we have achieved over the last year, and how we have achieved it. The report also includes feedback from our many partner organisations across the statutory and voluntary sector.

Who we support

Over the last 12 months, CCP has directly supported 354 people, many on a regular basis, some less frequently. 90% of them are aged 50+ but most people who access our support are from older age groups, with half (51%) aged 80+ and a quarter (26%) aged 90+. Half of CCP's clients (50%) have a disability or health condition. Nearly two-thirds (64%) are female. Although the majority (90%) are White British, we engage a greater proportion of people from ethnic minority communities than the general population in Christchurch (5%).

Christchurch is not a particularly deprived area, however 7% of neighbourhoods are in the top 20% of most deprived in England, according to the 2019 Index of Deprivation. Postcode data from our clients shows that 6% of clients live in these deprived neighbourhoods, which indicates that CCP is reaching people from less affluent areas of Christchurch.

Overall the data shows that we are successfully reaching people from groups who are most at risk of becoming isolated or lonely.

354 clients



50%

with a mobility issue,
disability or health condition

“CCP's reach is incredible, particularly in reducing isolation and proactively addressing new issues.”

CCP partner

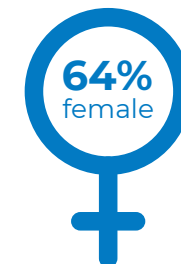
Referrals

We receive referrals from 19 statutory and voluntary sector partners, including adult social care, GP surgeries, social prescribers, NHS mental health teams, housing associations and other charities supporting vulnerable people in Christchurch. For many, CCP is the 'go to' organisation to refer or signpost vulnerable older people to. In addition, we accept self-referrals through word of mouth or as a result of marketing activity.

Over the last 12 months, CCP has received 200 referrals or self-referrals, with the vast majority (89%) being eligible for support. Those ineligible were mostly as a result of being housebound or having significant physical or mental health conditions that mean they would be unable to engage in our services. In these cases, people were signposted to more appropriate support. The fact that the majority of people referred are now receiving support shows that referral processes are well understood by partners, and that messaging and marketing methods are effective at relaying who could benefit from CCP's support.

51%

aged 80+



Meeting a local need

The negative impact of high levels of isolation and loneliness are well understood at a national level. There is a significant evidence base that shows that loneliness can increase the risk of early mortality and put people at greater risk of poor mental health. A BCP residents survey found that 12% of residents felt isolated, and CCP's own research for the 2023 Christchurch Conversation event highlighted loneliness and isolation as one of three key issues in the town.

Although loneliness and isolation can affect any age group, older people, particularly those with health conditions or caring responsibilities, are more likely to be affected. The 2018 Hidden Dorset report found that 1 in 20 adults in Dorset reported feeling lonely or isolated, but that number increased to 1 in 10 amongst older adults. As Christchurch has the highest proportion of people aged 65-95 in Dorset, the need to support older people with access to social activities is particularly high. Conversations with partners demonstrate this need, and CCP's place in the wider system around reducing isolation and loneliness. Many partners pointed to the high levels of demand for the support that CCP provides.

As well as this direct support to clients, we also indirectly support wider family members, by keeping in touch and providing reassurance that their family member is receiving support. This is particularly valuable to those who do not live nearby.

“The transport and befriending services they provide are vital, particularly for older people, as we, like many others, have identified that loneliness is one of the biggest issues for older people. In BCP there aren't a huge number of organisations providing this type of support, and I haven't seen anybody who is doing the same job as them”

CCP partner

2024 highlight: Loneliness Awareness Week

During Loneliness Awareness Week (10-16 June) CCP hid 10 bouquets of flowers around the town for local residents. The flowers were accompanied by a note urging residents to give them a good home, either with them or with a friend or neighbour who might be lonely.

CCP Chief Executive Rev Sandra Prudom said: “We hope that in a small way, the flowers allowed people in Christchurch to reconnect, and to think about friends or neighbours who might struggle to get out and see others.”



CCP placed bouquets of flowers around Christchurch during Loneliness Awareness Week for local residents

Making a difference in 2024

What has been delivered

In 2024, we delivered or supported a total of 190 events and activities including:

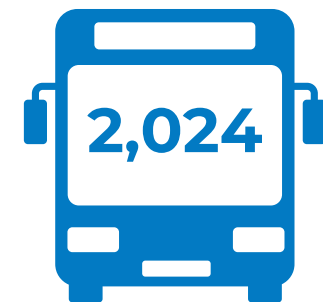
- **Lunch clubs:** 101 weekly lunch clubs at community halls based in a retirement complexes; we also transported clients to access two other lunch clubs in community centres
- **Coffee Connections:** 33 monthly coffee mornings at a range of community locations including sheltered housing complexes
- **Exercises classes:** 33 weekly seated exercise class at an extra care scheme, for residents and other local people
- **Sunday Roasts:** Nine monthly Sunday Roasts offering a weekend lunch club in response to research demonstrating increased loneliness at weekends
- **Trips:** Nine day trips to local garden centres, the New Forest and shopping centres as well as 'Cycling Without Age' bike trips
- **Events:** Five one-off community events in partnership with other community organisations and support services. These have included a cream tea for the annual International Day of Older Persons, a Christmas Day lunch, and hosting Christchurch Soup, a community fundraiser for local children and young people's projects
- **Christchurch Angels and Helpful Neighbours:** Our Christchurch Angels volunteers support older people to connect to social activities in their local area, and our Helpful Neighbours lend a hand with practical tasks at home. They also provide support completing attendance allowance or other forms, and completed 48 such forms during 2024.
- **Transport:** Our minibuses allowed local residents to make 2,024 trips over the year, to activities including exercise classes, lunch clubs, and day trips. In addition, our Neighbour Car drivers transported 60 people on 370 trips, and travelled some 3,450 miles.



Coffee Connections events



Lunch clubs including Sunday Roasts



trips by local residents on our minibuses



Successes and challenges

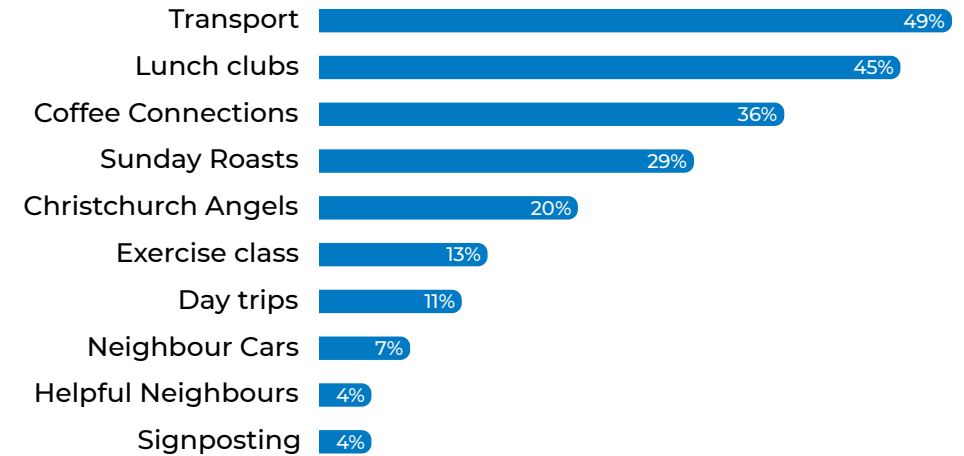
2024 has seen the introduction of a number of new activities, including the Homelands Lunch Club, new Coffee Connections events and the regular Sunday Roasts. Day trips out have gained in popularity and a waiting list is now in place. The ability to take up to two electric wheelchairs onto the bus has been a particular success in the last 12 months.

The chart on the right shows the extent to which clients are using our services and support. The most popular service was transport, followed by lunch clubs and coffee mornings. Transport plays an increasingly critical role in supporting residents to access services and activities.

Although 20% of clients have used the Christchurch Angels service, we have changed the way this support is delivered. In order to ensure volunteers don't become overwhelmed, the support is now much more focused on providing short-term help to access social activities or connect clients to other community support. Rather than 12 weeks of support, volunteers spend two-three weeks maximum with clients, to empower people to reconnect to the community.

As well as reducing dependency, this approach also means that volunteers are available to support other CCP activities, offering them more variety and supporting more integrated services.

Use of our services in 2024



A new Coffee Connections event launched this year in Purewell

Case study: Christchurch PCN

Christchurch Primary Care Network (PCN) covers four surgeries, with a patient base of approximately 49,000. The demographic includes a high percentage of patients over 65, many of whom have savings which mean they do not qualify for social services support.

Louise Ahrens, Health & Social Care Lead at Christchurch PCN, explains: “The work that CCP does is marvellous – if someone is socially isolated, they will help. Social services can’t help with attendance allowance forms, but CCP can.

“Demand for CCP’s services often outstrips their capacity, but they have never turned away someone genuinely in need. They have a high-quality, hands-on approach. They are empathetic, and support is tailored to individual needs, with a strong focus on holistic care.

“CCP’s services help our patients by providing social activities and support, leading to a domino effect of positive outcomes. For health and social care professionals, CCP’s efforts reduce workload by handling social isolation cases, allowing us to focus on other aspects of care.

“The collaboration between CCP and social prescribers is particularly beneficial, with CCP often referring clients back to health services for further support. They create a supportive environment in supported living places, fostering a sense of community and reducing isolation, making a tangible difference to patients and the workload of health and social care professionals.”

Partnership working

At CCP, we have two broad priorities that support our vision to end social isolation: firstly, to support isolated residents directly, and secondly, to facilitate collaboration and networking across a large range of support services in Christchurch. For example, the Christchurch Soup event was led and delivered by CCP, and was attended by 110 people (read more about this on page 10).

CCP is connected to the Christchurch community at both a strategic level and operationally, on the ground. We work closely with the local Age Friendly and Access to Food Partnerships, offering us information, collaboration and networking opportunities, as well as the local Health and Wellbeing Locality Group, BCP Council and Christchurch Town Council. In addition to these strategic partners, we have a range of referral partners (detailed on page 4) and proactively collaborate with community organisations including schools, churches, housing associations and other charities.

By connecting with other organisations, we have a good understanding of the needs of the local area. We also have excellent relationships with a range of statutory and voluntary sector organisations, and are able to work with partners to support and signpost vulnerable people to the support they need.

“CCP is the only organisation in the area providing the specific services they offer – there are no other comparable organisations in Christchurch. Their clear focus on social isolation and their ability to signpost to other services make them an essential resource for the community”

Christchurch Primary Care Network

Volunteering

Our incredible volunteers are at the heart of our work at CCP and are hugely valued. We rely on volunteers to support activities, whether they give their time at coffee mornings and lunch clubs, on our transport services, in the office, or as Christchurch Angels.

We currently have 60 regular volunteers who have contributed over 2,500 hours of support in the last 12 months. Most volunteer support is delivered through Neighbour Cars (708 hours) and lunch club support, which includes Bus Buddies (794 hours). There is a relatively even gender split of volunteers, with 59% female and 41% male. Although the majority of volunteers are older people themselves, 33% are of working age, and just under 10% volunteer to improve their CV or gain work experience. People volunteer regularly, with over half supporting CCP on a weekly basis or more.

Introducing new activities such as the Sunday Roast and the International Day of Older Persons events has opened up new opportunities to volunteer outside of working hours, allowing more young people and families to volunteer.

Why people volunteer



“I have changed as a person, I am happier and more outgoing”
CCP volunteer



Volunteering successes and challenges

The main reasons for volunteering are to support the work CCP does, to help people and to give back, as shown in the chart on page 11. The shift away from Christchurch Angels to more lunch club and social activity delivery has seen an increase in people volunteering over the last 12 months; as people do not need to commit as much time as before. The addition of Sunday Roasts has also seen an increase in volunteers who work during the week, which is something CCP has been trying to achieve.

However, some roles are more challenging to recruit to than others; for example, Bus Buddies and volunteer bus drivers are extremely challenging to find, due to the long days and need to be physically fit and active. As such, CCP now plans to recruit a paid Bus Buddy, due to the challenges in finding suitable and willing volunteers and the increased use of the buses on a weekly basis. The priority for the next 12 months is to recruit a Volunteer Coordinator, who will take on responsibility for volunteer recruitment, management and support.

“I feel valued and part of the community” CCP volunteer

2024 highlight: Christchurch Soup

Eight initiatives to support local children and young people were awarded almost £3,500 of funding at the Christchurch Soup in October, hosted by CCP in partnership with Christchurch Town Council. The 110 attendees heard funding pitches whilst enjoying a bowl of soup, and then used their empty bowls to vote. The overall winners on the night were MyTime Young Carers, but every project received a portion of the funding.

Cllr Paul Hilliard, Mayor of Christchurch, said: "The Soup event was such a fantastic way to hear from young people and those supporting the youth in our community. It was great to see such a wonderful turn out and I'm so pleased Christchurch Town Council was able to support this meaningful and magnificent event."



Satisfaction survey results

38 clients and 23 volunteers completed a survey from Shephard & Moyes, which explored what people liked and what could be improved about the support CCP provides. The results were extremely positive.

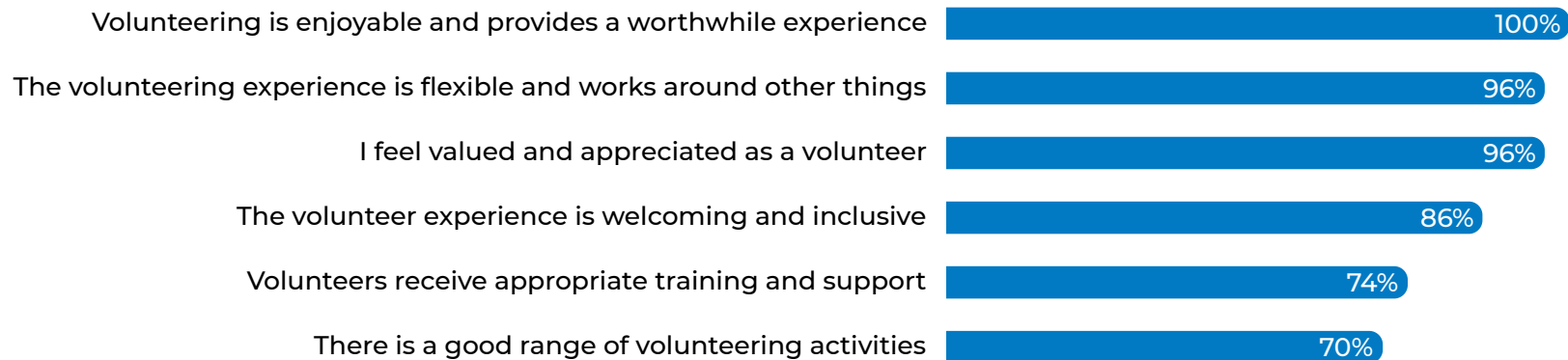
Client satisfaction

- **91%** enjoy taking part
- **100%** find venues comfortable and welcoming
- **100%** find staff and volunteers friendly and supportive
- **97%** feel respected and treated as an individual

There were no suggestions for improvement amongst clients.

Volunteer satisfaction

The chart below shows that 100% of respondents find volunteering enjoyable and worthwhile. 96% find volunteering with CCP flexible and feel valued and appreciated. While the majority of volunteers are satisfied with the range of opportunities (70%) and the support and training they receive (74%) there are opportunities to improve on these results. The new Volunteer Coordinator role should provide a focus on these areas.



“Everyone is so helpful and kind”
CCP client



Our new Sunday Roast events bring people together at the weekend

Impact on clients

Shephard & Moyes' survey and conversations with clients also explored the impact CCP has on reducing isolation and improving wellbeing.

Improving health and wellbeing

CCP helps to improve people's health and wellbeing. As a result of taking part in our activities:

- **70%** are more physically active
- **79%** are more mentally active
- **82%** feel happier
- **75%** feel more optimistic
- **69%** are managing their physical or mental health better
- **85%** feel more independent

In addition, the provision of a high-quality nutritious meal at lunch clubs means that 84% of clients agree that they are eating more healthily.

Reducing loneliness & Isolation

CCP is helping to connect people, supporting them to make new friends and reducing isolation and loneliness:

- **100%** enjoy connecting to others and meeting new people
- **97%** have made new friends 81% feel less lonely

Improving connections to the community and access to support

As a result of taking part in CCP activities or services:

- **89%** of clients feel more confident to attend community events
- **85%** feel more connected to their community
- **77%** are more aware of what support services are available and how to access them

“They have helped me to get out and about instead of being stuck in my flat all day”

CCP client

Impact on volunteers

The impact on volunteers is also significant. Volunteering for CCP is helping to support the 5 Ways to Wellbeing:

- **Connect:** 96% have enjoyed connecting with other people and 70% feel more connected to their community
- **Be active:** 65% agree volunteering keeps them physically and mentally active
- **Learn:** 32% have learnt new skills and 38% have gained useful work experience
- **Be present:** 52% have noticed a positive difference to the way they feel
- **Give back:** 82% are more likely to volunteer for other charities or community activities in future

It is also clear from the feedback that volunteering helps to reduce isolation and loneliness amongst older people who are able to support the community.



2024 highlight: Serving up a treat

Local residents came together to enjoy cream teas on Sunday 6 October for International Day of Older Persons. In partnership with Christchurch Town Council, CCP served up no less than three different spreads at local venues, and had so much fun along the way, with wonderful entertainment provided by the Funky Little Choir! Guests enjoyed displays included the Vintage Idols photography project



Raising awareness

The Reaching Communities funding has enabled us to focus resources on marketing and communications. We have a new website, logo, printed materials and a regular volunteer newsletter, as well as a social media strategy.

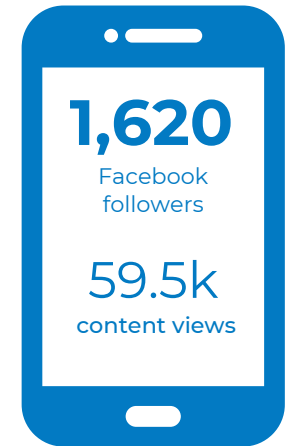
Over the last 12 months, a focus on social media has seen an increase in Facebook followers (202 new followers taking the total to 1,620) as well as high levels of engagement. The CCP website had 2,923 views and 710 unique visitors.

Supporting larger events, like the International Day for Older People and the Christchurch Soup event along with partner organisations, has provided opportunities to raise awareness of CCP's work and has attracted considerable media attention.

The impact of this investment in marketing has been an increase in awareness of what CCP delivers, greater brand awareness (moving away from the old 'Christchurch Angels' and Dial a Bus brands) and an increase in self-referrals and volunteer enquiries.

“Their ability to keep up with modern practices, such as maintaining a strong social media presence, whilst maintaining empathy and responsiveness to community needs is a real strength”

CCP partner



Case study: Bure House

Over the last 12 months, CCP has delivered a range of activities to residents of Bure House, an extra care housing scheme in Christchurch. We provide a weekly seated exercise class and a monthly Coffee Connections event, as well as trips out, transport to a weekly lunch club at a nearby community hall and transport to the monthly Sunday Roasts. Residents explained what they valued about CCP's support and the difference it has made to them (see right).



“There was nothing to do before CCP started coming here. There’s this nice big space for socialising, but there was nobody in it. If there’s nothing happening people just stay in their rooms... There’s now lots going on. We do the armchair exercises, we have the coffee morning and lunch club and we’ve been out on trips.”

“I can only really get out if I get a taxi, but it’s expensive... I have a free bus pass but there isn’t a bus stop nearby. What CCP does is really important.”

“Before I came here, I never used to go out at all, apart from the shops to get my food. It’s so nice to have things to do, something to look forward to.”

“Nobody could ask for anyone to do any more than Sandra and team do. CCP have made such a difference to the quality of life of people here... It means a lot – there are 44 dwellings here but there were never any activities. Then CCP came along and it’s taken off from there. Now we’d be lost without them. I had a stroke three years ago and I have good days and bad days. I can’t go to the lunch club today, but I went out on the bus yesterday. And two of us in wheelchairs can now go on the bus. CCP have got me going out again.”

Bure House residents

Shephard & Moyes' summary

CCP provides a range of support to help reduce and prevent loneliness and isolation.

Over the last 12 months over 350 people have benefited from a range of social activities, transport and one-to-one support to access support and reconnect to the community.

The last year has seen an increase in services and support provided, and an increase in volunteer hours. The investment in marketing and communications has seen an increase in followers and web traffic, and stronger brand awareness. Existing strong partnership working has continued, with new partnerships formed and a number of events delivered.

The evidence collected from clients and volunteers clearly demonstrates how CCP is helping to reduce isolation and loneliness, improve health and wellbeing, and increase awareness and connections to other support services and community activities. Feedback from partners demonstrates the impact CCP has on the wider system.

Learning from this year's evaluation demonstrates what makes CCP unique:

- The focus on building connections – between people and between organisations, both on the ground and strategically
- Its strong vision around reducing isolation and loneliness and ensuring that all services and support is aligned to this
- Being the 'go to' organisation in Christchurch for support around loneliness and isolation
- High-quality support delivered by empathetic, caring and dedicated staff and volunteers
- Ability to flex in order to respond to changing needs in the community

Our next steps

We are justifiably proud of what we have achieved this year, particularly in being able to reach and engage more isolated residents through our work with several local housing associations. However, we are aware that there is much more to do.

In order to do this we need to both expand our staff team capacity and our wonderful team of volunteers. Plans include recruiting a dedicated Volunteer Coordinator which will contribute to both of these aspirations, particularly in the recruitment and support of volunteers.

Given the increasing priority and use of our transport services, we have also just recruited a paid Bus Buddy. We will continue to build upon existing relationships and develop even more partnership working, as this is essential for the eradication of social isolation.

We will also proactively work towards developing intergenerational projects as capacity allows.

“The evidence collected from clients and volunteers clearly demonstrates how CCP is helping to reduce isolation and loneliness, improve health and wellbeing, and increase connections to other services”

Shephard & Moyes





www.christchurchcommunitypartnership.org.uk



Impact Report 2024
Prepared with support from Shephard & Moyes

Registered charity no: 1149162



Christchurch
Community
Partnership