



2019 – 2020 Annual Report



Helping People Make Positive
Changes In Their Lives



A welcome from our Chief Executive Officer: Kelly Round

Welcome to our 2019-2020 annual report which reflects on the period 1st September, 2019 through to 31st August, 2020, in line with our organisation's financial year.

This has been a very different and challenging period for Our Place Support, as it has for many organisations and individuals across the country and around the world, as the Covid-19 pandemic changed the way in which we both live and work.

Despite the many changes and challenges we have endured as a team throughout this period, we are extremely proud to have been able to offer continued support to our services users, pivoting our provision between remote and face-to-face delivery in line with government guidance.



1. Our Place Board of Directors

Our Place Support is managed by a Board of active volunteer Directors who meet regularly to strategically steer the organisation.

This includes creating and managing our business plan, setting an annual budget and overseeing our financial position, ensuring compliance with legislation and evaluating our social impact and overall progress.

Three Directors also hold a paid position within the organisation bringing frontline experience to strategic decision making.

For the period September 2019 – August 2020 the following individuals held roles as Directors with Our Place Support C.I.C:

KELLY ROUND FOUNDER AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

DENNIS KENNEDY CHAIR PERSON

ROBERT GREEN DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

DEBBIE CLARKE DIRECTOR OF MENTORING

BETH THOMAS DIRECTOR OF SAFEGUARDING

STELLA MUNRO DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY

LINDA HARLAND DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE

ROXANNA PARISI DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS STRATEGY

2. Our Place Community Hub

Our Place Community Hub continues to provide affordable community space aimed at facilitating advice and support services for Sutton Coldfield to benefit our local community.

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic there were 27 different organisations delivering services from the Community Hub on a regular basis and we saw an average of 735 visitors per month.

Services include counselling, mentoring, support groups, coffee mornings and a music group for adults with disabilities and their carers.

We also had four long term office tenants during this time which were The Gap*, Carers United, Great Midlands Fun Run and Birmingham Counselling Service.

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic Our Place Community Hub closed its doors for the first time in almost 9 years in line with National Lockdown guidance.

During this time our Board of Directors and Management worked to implement a phased recovery plan and implement Covid Secure measures making Our Place Community Hub a Covid safe premises in readiness for the phased reopening which commenced on 7th July 2020.

It is thanks to funding from the Heart of England Community Foundation that we were able to install required sanitising stations and signage, purchase enough cleaning consumables and fund additional cleaning services.

MOTIVATION



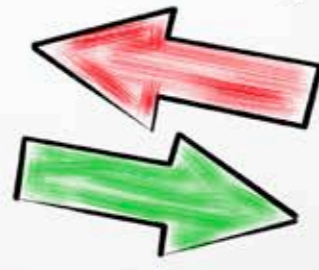
ADVICE



SUCCESS



DIRECTION



COACHING



SUPPORT



GOAL



TRAINING



MENTORING



3. Mentoring Scheme

The Our Place Mentoring Scheme provides social, emotional and mental health support to children and young people aged 6 years and over.

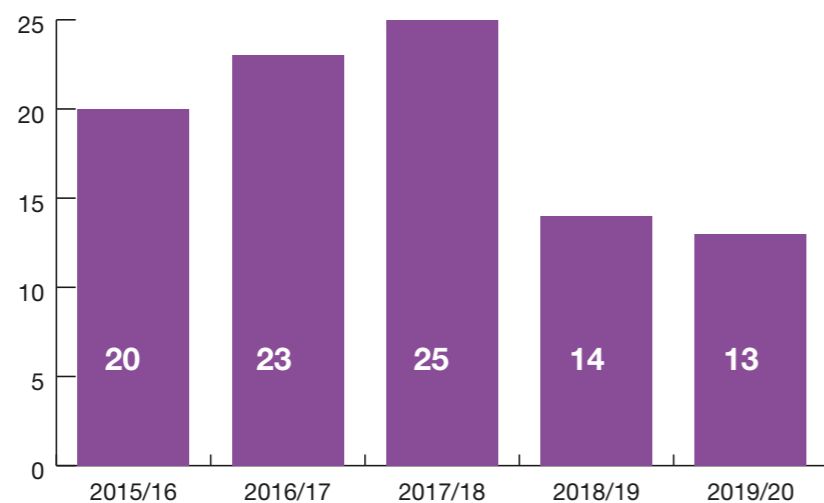
Where appropriate our service is also able to provide mentoring for adults, and parent mentoring which focuses on supporting parents to build strong, caring and positive relationships with their children.

Our Mentoring Scheme is funded by three sources: school subscriptions to the service, grant income and the sale of mentoring on a private basis. In 2019-2020 our main funder was Children In Need who funded two part time Mentors and contributed to the coordination costs of the project. As the Covid-19 pandemic impacted our usual means of delivery we required additional funding to navigate the situation and in May 2020 we received funding from Sutton Coldfield Charitable Trust, BVSC and Mind to support our Covid response.

School Subscriptions

Schools subscribing to our Mentoring support remained constant in numbers for this year. We welcomed new schools and reunited with those we have partnered in the past as we gathered together to ensure we supported children across our community. School budget reductions remained an ongoing challenge; however, little did we know of the challenge ahead as we started this new working year.

Schools Subscribed



“ Thank you also for the Zoom meeting; he found it very beneficial. We really appreciate all your continued help and support. – Parent Feedback ”

“ I like being able to talk to you again and share my thoughts. – Child Mentee ”

“ Feels a lot more positive and secure within himself and has a better outlook on day to day life. – Parent Feedback ”

Covid-19 response

As Covid-19 became headline news we remained in support of our schools delivering 1-1 and Group Mentoring until the final day when schools officially closed for the first national lockdown. It is testament to the value schools and mentees place on Our Place’s support that we were able to remain in school until the very last day and deemed as an ‘essential service’.

School closures in March 2020 meant that we needed to respond quickly by pivoting our frontline services to maintain support for our mentees with a combination of online, postal and phone support. Our firm relationships with our schools strengthened as we faced together the demands of the initial lockdown.

Building on these good working relationships we were able to rally together to quickly assess the types of support that would be most appropriate for each of our mentees. Working with

both Parents and Teachers support packages were agreed. Operationally, policies and procedures plus risk and safeguarding assessments were reviewed and amended to support this shift in delivery channels, ensuring we continued to practise safely and also incorporating Covid Secure guidelines with our team.

Mentors were trained and upskilled and recruited specifically for online support, funding was sourced to cover the additional emergency costs and an IT solution was chosen to support the flexibility and creativity we needed for 1-1 Mentoring.

A special thank you goes to Sutton Coldfield Town Football Club who reached out to support us at the very beginning of the pandemic and provided funding for the development of a series of resource packs aimed at supporting children and young people to manage their mental health wellbeing during a time of crisis and uncertainty.

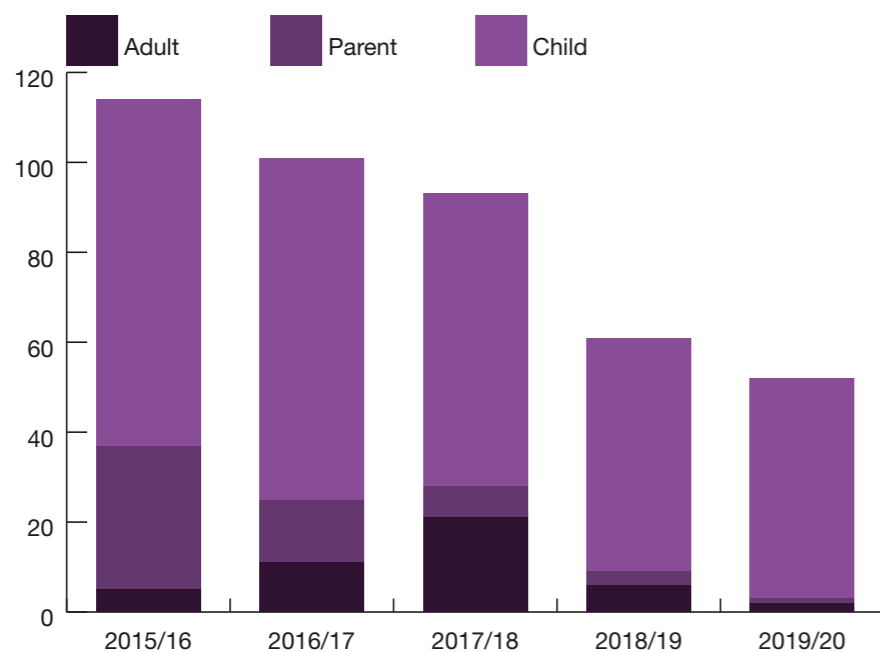
Referrals for Support

Covid-19 restrictions meant that schools closed to children from the end of March 2020 through to September 2020.

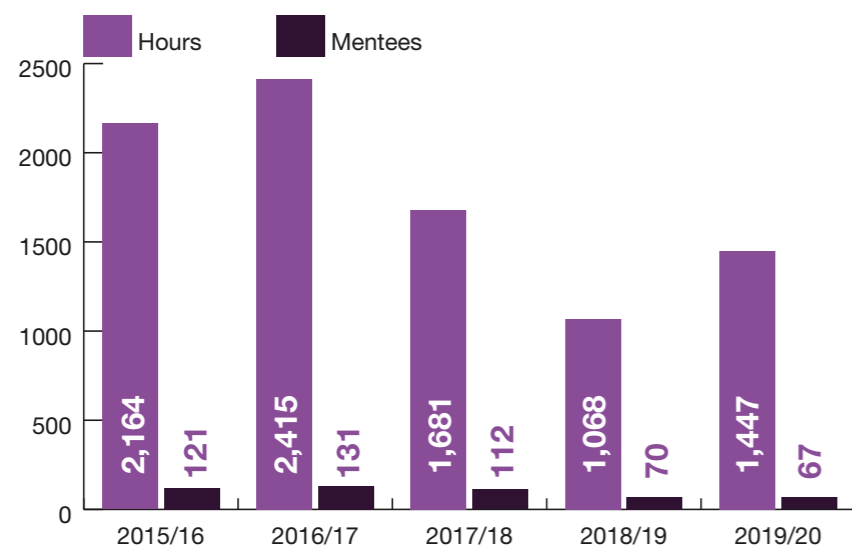
This significantly reduced the number of school referrals we saw in the summer term; however, these were subsequently resumed as schools returned in the new academic year. This gave us the opportunity to continue support

for all children currently engaged in mentoring relationships to provide consistency and support at an extremely challenging time for children and young people who were already dealing with mental health challenges. We were also able to use our resources to reach out and offer fixed term support to additional children and young people and accept referrals from parents, social workers and non-subscribing schools.

Referrals received



Mentoring hours delivered



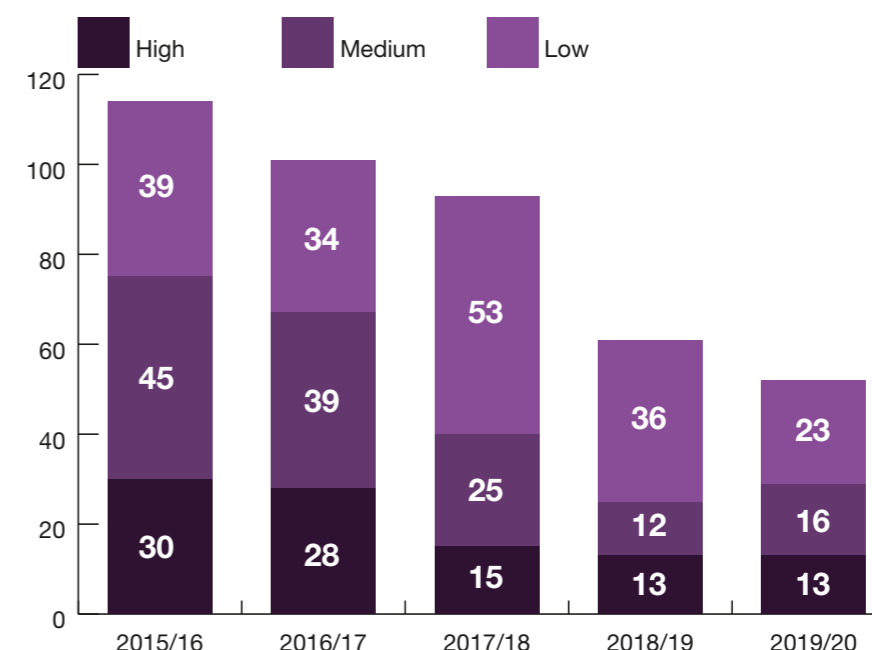
Although all referrals were supported and brought to conclusion the average amount of sessions and the hours of support increased reflecting the vagaries and challenges we came across during the first lockdown: digital poverty (data availability and access to devices), periods of illness and isolation and changing child care arrangements all impacted on the number of mentoring hours required to support mentees. In contrast to our usual delivery, this year we also committed to delivering mentoring support throughout the school summer holidays to ensure the continuation of support for our mentees and their families.

Responding to the challenges of Covid-19 we expanded our paid

team of Mentors with two new part time staff who focused on online interventions for children and we welcomed 11 new volunteer Mentors who were recruited and trained in spring/summer 2020 thanks to funding from BVSC. These new team members volunteered through the summer lockdown and were ready to support the anticipated increase in demand for September as children returned to school.

New processes, additional training and Covid-19 policies were developed to support our new and existing Mentors to continue to support our children, implement safe and best practice across the service and ensure our Mentors' own wellbeing was supported during this time

Referral risk



A further contributor to the increased time Mentors have spent with Mentees has been the increasing Risk Level that we are now seeing in the Referrals that we are supporting. 56% of our case load in this time period was identified as medium to high risk. These referrals include Suicidal Thoughts, Domestic Abuse, Parental Mental Health Issues,

Abuse, Child Sexual Exploitation, Anxiety and Bereavement.

This is a 16% uplift on last year and confirms the need for increasing our staff team, who were recruited for their expertise in these areas. This trend also continues to highlight the lack of access to stretched statutory support for those in need.

“The coronavirus pandemic has caused exceptionally challenging and worrying times for each and every one of us. The effects of social distancing, lockdown, the loss of loved ones to the virus and the over-consumption of stress-inducing media reports is taking a huge toll on our mental health and wellbeing; and will continue to have lasting effects long after lockdown is over.
 – MIND June 2020 “The Mental Health Emergency” impact of COVID-19

Impact

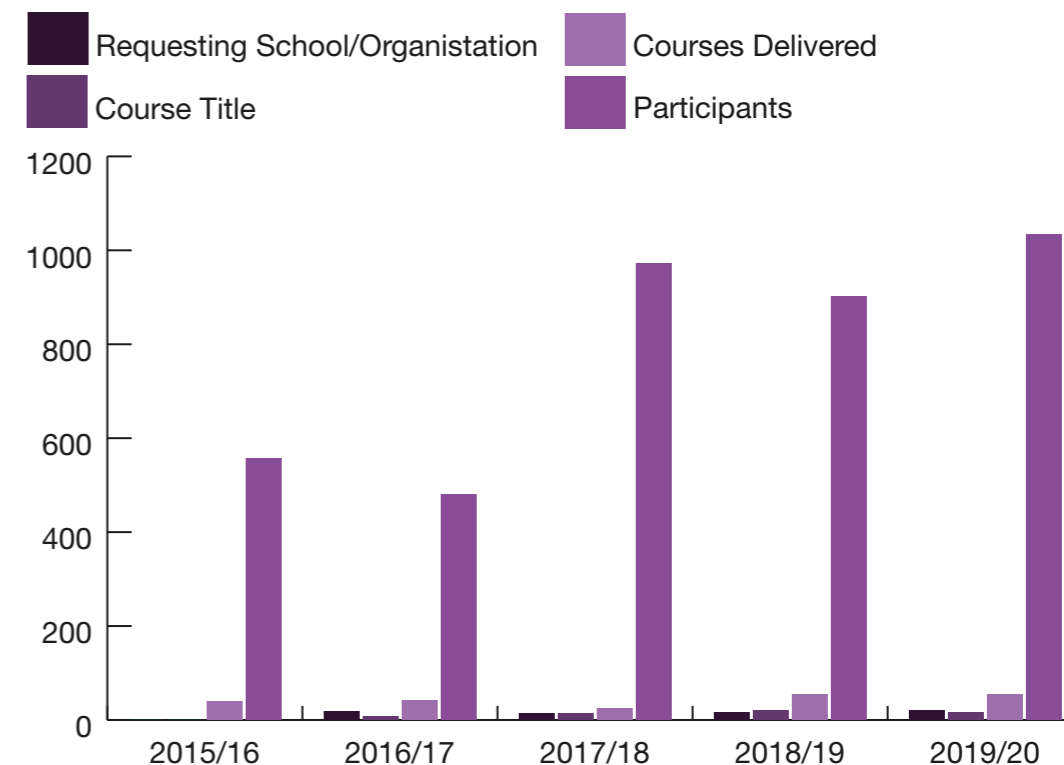
Feedback remains positive and encouraging that at a time when our support changed so quickly our Mentoring quality and relationship with schools remained high

83%

83% of mentees identified that they have experienced positive change in their lives as a result of their mentoring support.

Group Mentoring

Group / workshop delivery



Over the 2019-20 period we continued the development of bespoke mentoring workshops driven by community need, increasing our portfolio of offerings from no group work courses/workshops in 2015/16 to 14 in 2019/20.

During this year we gained additional funding for the development and delivery of Gang Prevention workshops aimed at year 6 children. Funds were granted by the Active Citizens Fund

from West Midlands Police which supported delivery to schools in Erdington and the Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council for delivery across schools in Sutton Coldfield. We delivered 22 workshops between September 2019 and March 2020 reaching 597 children.

We had many more of these workshops booked with our Sutton Coldfield schools but were unable to fulfil these due to the restrictions of Covid-19 in the spring/summer term of 2020.

“I am delighted how well the children engaged with your workshop and how well they behaved too. We love Our Place workshops and you really do pitch the content appropriately.”
 – Hollyfield Primary School

Our final group mentoring course was delivered on the last day of school opening in summer 2020. We look forward to a return to group mentoring in schools and continue to work creatively with our schools in the meantime to ensure we reach as many children as possible with this support.

During August 2020 we built a new group mentoring course for children to help them deal with change and the consequential loss experienced. This forms part of our project funded by Mind which aims to support children and young people's mental health and well-being in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Group Work and Workshops

Our menu of group mentoring courses available to support children and young people includes:

- Friendship
- My Mind Matters (Mental Health Education)
- My Money
- Peer Mediation
- Protect Yourself Respect Yourself (CSE Prevention)
- Leadership for children
- Self Esteem and Confidence
- Stay Safe
- Transition – On the Move
- You can do it (Building Resilience)
- Anti-Bullying
- Gang Prevention
- Changes (Loss and Change)



4. Advice Service

The Our Place Advice Service provides information and support on Benefits, Housing and Employment.

At the beginning of this 12 month period the Advice Service was running at Our Place Community Hub every Friday with 7 volunteer advisors, including a local city councillor and support from Carers United.

Our team of Advisors come from a variety of backgrounds and have specific knowledge of the benefits system, pensions, employment, housing, mental health, carers issues and safeguarding.

Where appropriate, we signpost service users to partner agencies for specialist support. This may include legal, financial, debt and immigration advice.

We have established strong links with three local solicitors: Bell Lax, Enoch Evans and Pickfords who each offer initial free legal advice to our service users.

Covid-19 response

In March the pandemic changed the service dramatically as the country entered the initial national lockdown and we had to pause the drop-in sessions at the Community Hub. Our team began to work from home by telephone to support current cases and receive new enquiries.

Thanks to Covid response funding from Sutton Coldfield Charitable Trust we were also able to develop and deliver a Covid Information

This year we have also strengthened our links with Central England Law Centre who, in conjunction with the University of Birmingham Law School, are undertaking appeal tribunals for a number of our service users who have had their application for benefits refused.

Furthermore we continue to work with a wide range of partner agencies in the community including the local food banks at Sutton Coldfield Baptist Church and the United Reform Church.

It is thanks to the expertise of our team of Advisors and the strong links we have established with partner agencies that **no one is turned away from our Advice Service and everyone is given as much time as needed to resolve their issues.**

Service. This provided a telephone and email support service 5 mornings a week designed to help individuals to understand the Government guidance and support packages being introduced and identify which schemes they were entitled to. This service ran for 3 months and delivered support on issues including furlough, redundancy, working from home and shielding rights. This support was then absorbed into our main Advice Service after 3 months as demand declined.

Our remote service delivery has meant that our most vulnerable, regular clients who would call in for basic needs such as having a letter explained or to have a quick chat with an advisor were no longer able to do so and many did not access the service by telephone. We undertook welfare checks with

our regular clients and signposted to support for isolation and food parcels. This has demonstrated the benefit of offering a face to face service for members of our community who are unable to engage in remote support as a means of meeting their needs.

Advice Service in Numbers

During the period September 2019 – August 2020 our Advice Service supported 195 new cases.

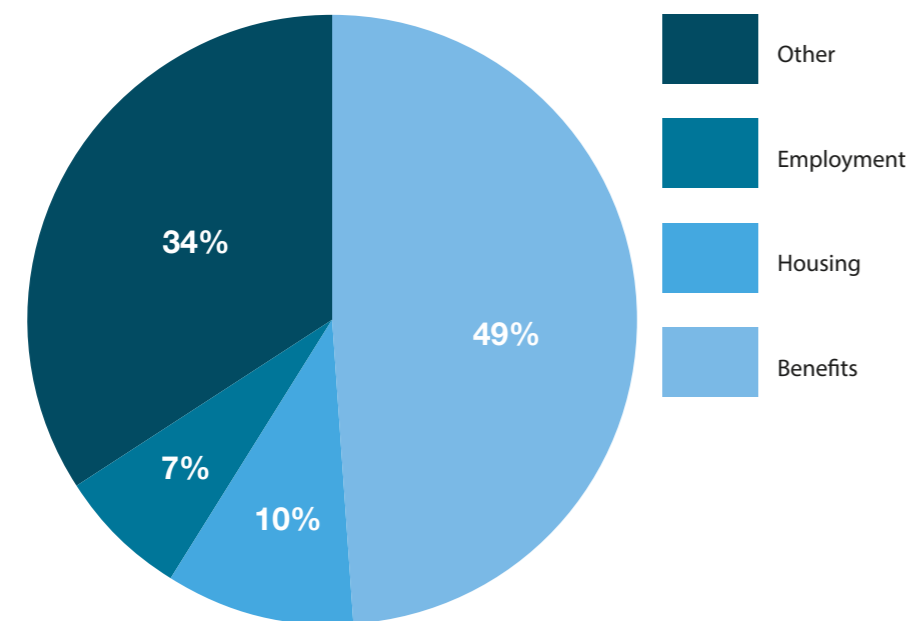
Of these cases the majority were in relation to benefits, a total of 49%, however many of these cases also had a secondary issue linked to housing and/or mental health.

We found that from April onwards we were supporting more clients who were further impacted by anxiety, partially as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and also as a result of needing to navigate the Benefits system for the first time.

A further 10% of cases were directly related to housing issues, 7% were around employment or unemployment and 34% were a mixture of issues including carers support, legal advice, financial/debt advice, mental health challenges, domestic violence and the need for emergency food and/or grants.

An Advice Service case can range from one advice session through to 12 months of ongoing support. The difference derives from the nature and complexity of the initial enquiry and the time it takes for benefit applications and appeals to be processed.

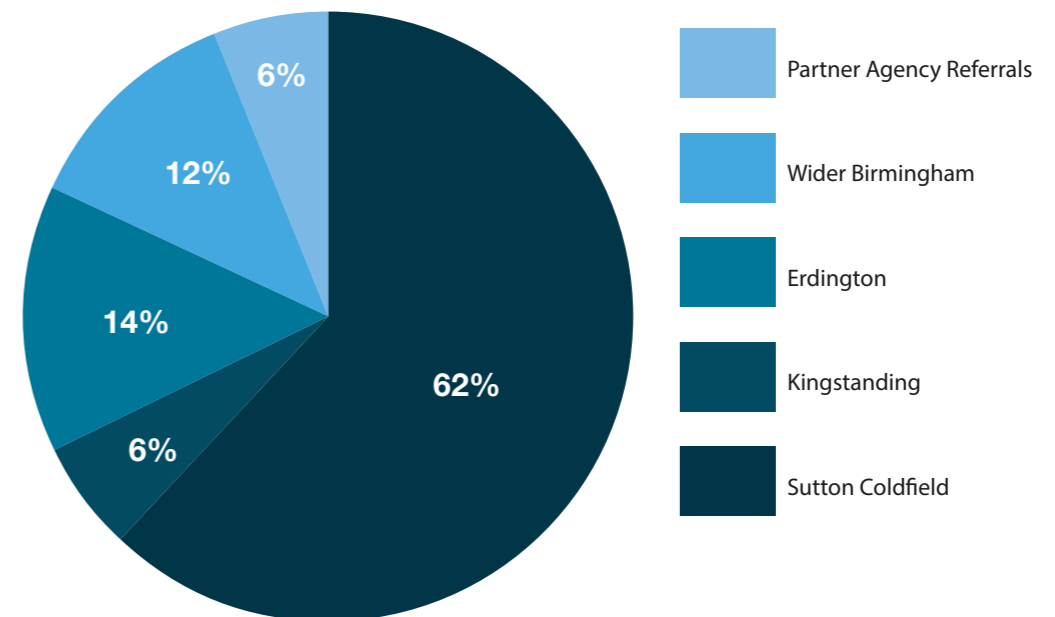
Nature of Advice Service Enquiries – September 2019 – August 2020



Location

Advice Service clients typically come from the immediate Sutton Coldfield community. However, as we have moved to remote working we have supported some individuals and families from neighbouring areas. Where we support an individual or family in partnership with another organisation it is not always necessary for us to hold and process their personal details; this is reflected in the 6% of partner agency referrals.

Location of Advice Service Clients



“ Could you please pass on my gratitude for Nigel’s fantastic advice, it has been the clearest to date and I’ll put his advice into action. – Client Feedback ”

“ Best advice service I’ve found. – Client Feedback ”

“ Many thanks (once again) don’t know where I’d be without you. – Client Feedback ”



5. Training Scheme

The Our Place Training Scheme is the trading arm of Our Place Support and has continued to develop over the 2019-2020 financial year despite being impacted by Covid-19 restrictions.

All income generated from our training scheme is reinvested into the social impact services we deliver, mainly our Mentoring Scheme and Advice Service.

We currently have a menu of 18 accredited training courses covering a wide range of subjects in the areas of safeguarding, mentoring and wellbeing, providing professional development opportunities for individuals working within a therapeutic or supportive role and those looking to build interpersonal skills in a leadership role.

All of our short courses hold Continued Professional Development (CPD) approval and our Level 3 Award in Mentoring Practice is accredited by the Open College Network West Midlands. All courses are available to be purchased by external organisations for in-house team development and we run an annual training schedule offering a selection of our most popular courses throughout the year where individuals or organisations can book places directly.

Our training courses have attracted learners from a wide range of backgrounds including Teachers, Teaching Assistants, Mentors, Counsellors, Business Coaches, Police Officers, Digital Leaders and Voluntary Sector Leaders.

Over the 2019-2020 period we delivered 15 different training courses to 122 individuals equating to 635 learning hours!

The Impact of Covid-19

Until 2020 all of our training courses were delivered on a face-to-face basis at Our Place Community Hub or within other community facilities in Sutton Coldfield and the surrounding area. Between March 2020 and August 2020 we had to cancel or postpone 12 scheduled training courses due to the Covid-19 national lockdown and subsequent restrictions. This had a large impact on the sale of our training places and our ability to generate income through training delivery.

During the period of lockdown our training team focused on pivoting our delivery to an online environment and by June 2020 we had restructured

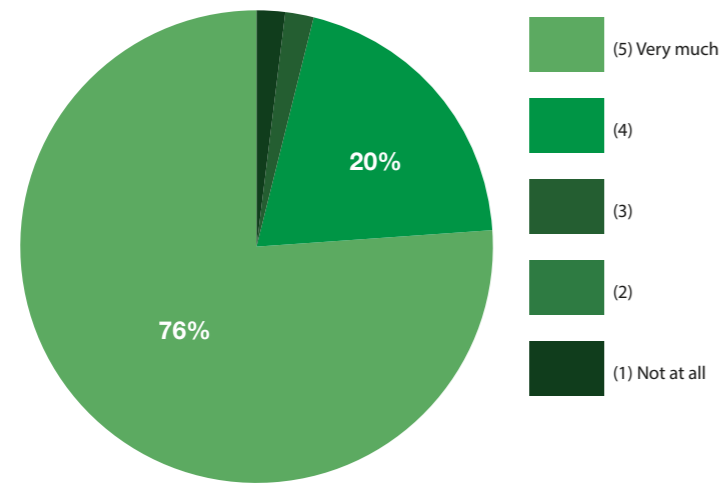
our Level 3 Award in Mentoring Practice and begun the first delivery of online training. Feedback from learners was excellent and encouraged us to adapt further training courses for online delivery.

Between June 2020 and August 2020 we delivered 5 online training courses including one 'Level 3 Award in Mentoring Practice',

two 'Safeguarding Awareness' courses and two 'Coping with Loss and Change' courses.

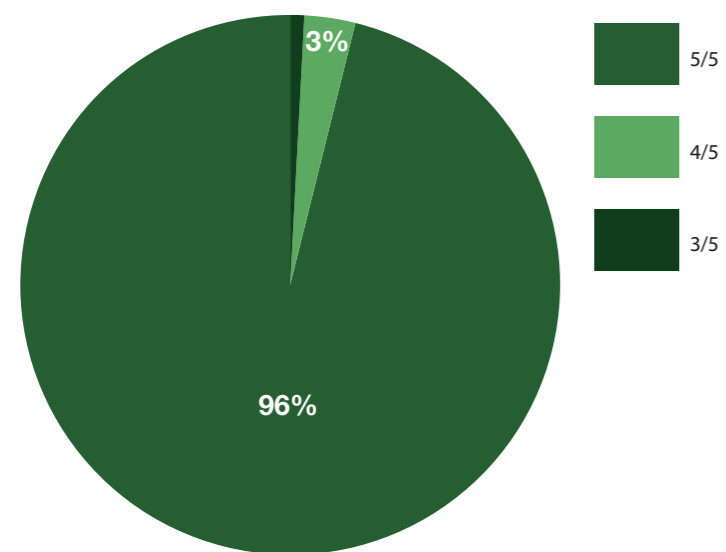
As a result of our ability to offer training online we have been able to reach learners from a much wider geographical area and have seen learners access our courses from across the UK and Europe.

Has This Course Helped You To Gain Confidence in The Subject Matter?



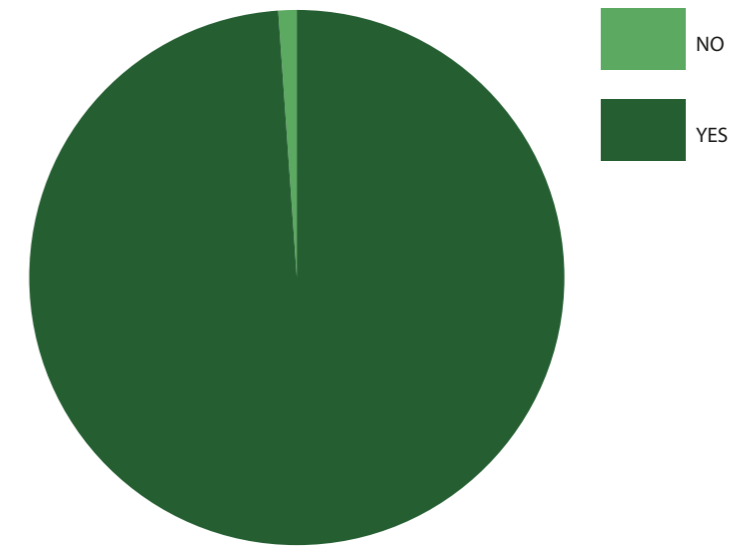
96% of learners who accessed our courses throughout 2019- 2020 identified that the course had helped them to gain confidence in the subject matter. 76% rated this question with a 5/5 and a further 20% scored 4/5.

How Would You Rate The Course Presenter(s) and Delivery



99% of learners rated our training facilitators as good or excellent, 3% scored 4/5 and 96% gave a full 5/5. And 99% said they would recommend our course to others.

Would You Recommend This Training To Others



“Just wanted to say thank you for the Safeguarding Awareness Training the other day. It's the first time we have been to you and it was a really good session.”
– Sair Reading, DigiKick

“A difficult subject presented with integrity and empathy by the tutor.”
– Client Feedback

“On reflection of my first day on this course it was enlightening, informative and a genuine pleasure to learn in such an uplifting environment.”
– Client Feedback

“I wanted to say just how successful last week's staff meeting on wellbeing/ stress management was! Debbie and Lindsay did a sterling job and the feedback was strong and positive.”
– Catherine Lewis, Head Teacher



6. Community Support

Sustaining strong community links and building community cohesion is key to Our Place Support and is a priority that runs through all of our service delivery.

Whilst we were unable to run any face to face services we looked at other ways in which we could support our local community.

During the first lockdown we launched 'Colour for your Community'. This project was open to all members of our local community and gave people an opportunity to decorate the Hub windows with drawings, pictures, and inspirational messages for our community members to see during their daily exercise or visits into Sutton Coldfield Town Centre.

In May we were invited to join with Switch radio to provide a link on their Big Birmingham Show. The day gave an opportunity to share the Covid response services we were delivering within the community and give thanks to key workers across our community.



Chatterbox Playchain

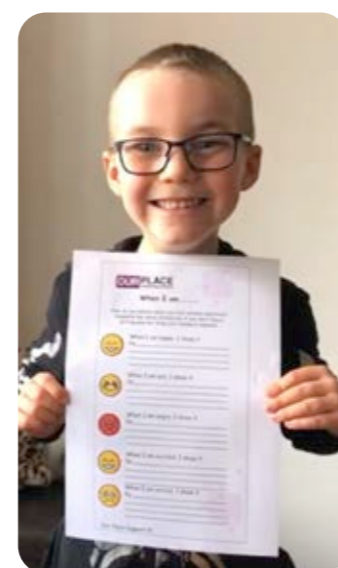
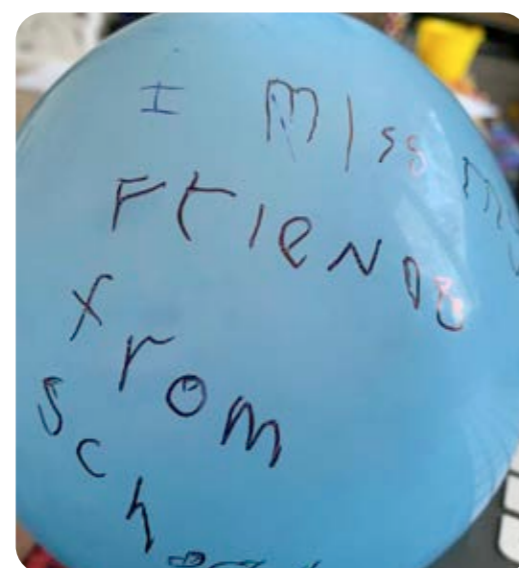
In July and August 2020 we partnered with Birmingham's Children's Quarter on the Chatterbox Play Chain project which saw our team of staff and volunteers deliver play packs to children across Sutton Coldfield and Erdington.

The packs provided a range of resources to encourage families to engage in play opportunities together and saw children and parents/carers come together to enjoy baking, growing, craft and sensory play.



Making Mental Health Resources Accessible

In an effort to support the mental health and wellbeing of children during the Covid-19 pandemic we opened up our support to the wider community and, thanks to funding from BVSC, we were able to make our mentoring resource packs available to all children and young people in the Sutton Coldfield area. Over 200 resource packs were posted or emailed to children across the area and offered children support on mental health wellbeing, managing change, friendships and transition back to school.



7. Finance

Each year our Directors set a balanced budget for the coming 12 months which includes grant income we have secured, projected income from sales and a fundraising target.

We started the year in a strong position and, as planned, we were beginning to increase our traded income helping our services to gradually become less reliant on grant income.

The closure of our Community Hub along with cancellation of training courses and fundraising events had a significant impact on our planned income streams for March 2020 onwards. We responded quickly by adapting our budget, reducing costs wherever possible and seeking grant funding to support the adaptations needed in order for us to sustain our services.

The tables below demonstrate our income and expenditure for the financial year ending 31st August 2020 compared to the previous two years.

| Financial Report - Year Ending 31st August 2020: Results for the Last 3 Years - Income | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Turnover | 31-08-2020 | 31-08-2019 | 31-08-2018 |
| Building Income | £26,217 | £33,169 | £32,694 |
| Mentoring Income | £32,726 | £37,800 | £40,318 |
| Fund Raising & Other | £78,203 | £63,383 | £60,741 |
| Training & Development | £6,996 | £7,343 | £8,349 |
| Total | £144,142 | £141,695 | £136,628 |

- **Building Income** – Building income is split between long term rentals to other third sector organisations (£9,406) and short term room hire (£16,811). The enforced closure of the Hub due to the pandemic adversely impacted our building income.
- **Mentoring Income** – The majority of our mentoring income (£24,220) is from the delivery of One to One mentoring to local schools. We also sold £6,476 of group mentoring courses. Overall mentoring income fell again because of the financial constraints faced by our local schools. However, we did double (£1,883) the amount of mentoring we sold directly on a private basis.

- Fund Raising & Other – This year, fund raising activity has been even more critical than usual. Significant sources of grant income include Children in Need, MIND, Heart of England Community Foundation and Sutton Coldfield Charitable Trust. We have been privileged to receive donations from a range of businesses and individuals, including The Townswomen’s Guild, Ian Hazel Funerals and Sutton Coldfield Town FC. Our normal summer fundraising activity through the Great Midlands Fun Run was prevented by the Pandemic.
- Training & Development – The sale of training places had been growing in the first part of this financial year, however a number of courses were cancelled due to the pandemic. We hope to see sales growth resume as the pandemic ends and as a result of our new online training opportunities.

| Expenditure | 31-08-2020 | 31-08-2019 | 31-08-2018 |
|------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Building Expenses | £26,527 | £26,759 | £24,450 |
| Mentoring Expenses | £66,869 | £64,620 | £73,450 |
| Other Expenses | £28,365 | £24,266 | £26,481 |
| Advice Services | £12,693 | £15,900 | £10,848 |
| Training & Development | £9,682 | £10,145 | £6,867 |
| Total | £144,136 | £141,690 | £142,096 |

- Building Expenses – Our largest external building expenses are the annual rental charge from Birmingham City Council, our cleaning contract and our utility bills. This year a larger proportion of our Management salary was allocated to building costs, reflecting time spent dealing with the impacts of the Pandemic. This was offset by a reduction in electricity / gas usage while the building was closed.
- Mentoring Expenses – We have employed additional paid mentors to help deliver the services supported by grants from Children in Need and Mind. School subscriptions do not fully cover the cost of delivering our mentoring service.
- Other Expenses – Significant other costs include Telephones, IT devices/software and a photocopier lease. This year we employed a part time Admin support person. They have provided invaluable support, enhancing the effectiveness of our team and dealing with pandemic related issues.
- Advice Services – We received grant support from Sutton Coldfield Charitable Trust to fund our popular Advice Service. Almost all of the costs are salaries which are essential to the delivery of this service.
- Training & Development – These expenses are mostly a proportion of the Hub managers salary plus some external training facilitators.

Our Place Income exceeded expenditure, creating a small surplus of £6.

8. Thank You

A special thank you also goes to our team members. Over this time period our team has consisted of 10 staff and 50 volunteers, who all consistently demonstrate such passion and commitment to Our Place Support and the service users and learners they engage with.

As we pivoted our services in response to the Covid-19 pandemic our team rallied together to learn new skills, adapt our resources and reach out to ensure our most vulnerable service users continued to receive support. **To each and every one of the Our Place Support team – THANK YOU!**

Whilst we have a fantastic team, the work that we undertake would not be possible without the investment of our funders, subscriptions from our partner schools and the heart-warming generosity of the many kind individuals and businesses that support us through direct donations, contributions to fundraisers and the gift of their time and expertise and so a special thank you also goes to each individual and organisation that has supported us through 2019/2020.



Our funders:

Sutton Coldfield Charitable Trust

BBC Children In Need

Mind (Coronavirus Mental Health response Fund)

The National Lottery Community Fund

BVSC

Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council

Heart Of England

Tesco Bags of Help

Jacks

West Midlands Police (Active Citizens Fund)

Carriers For Causes

Childrens Quarter

Sutton Coldfield and Erdington Lions

Sutton Coldfield Football Club

Wylde Green Rotary Club

Vesey Rotary Club

Ian Hazel Funerals

Chrysalis Business

Quinto Lounge

Sutton Coldfield Soroptomists

Currys PC World

We Are All Making A Difference

School for Social Entrepreneurs (Lloyds Bank)

Edward Oldham Trust

Townswomen's Guilds