

Community Conference 7th July 2022

Session 2

Understanding the local support available for those struggling with mental health issues

In attendance:

Hilary Goodreid – Town Clerk

Sue Nicholls – Citizens Advice Bureau

Michelle Cliff – Support Staffordshire

Kathy Smith – Parochial Church Council for Rugeley

Cllr Christine Martin - Rugeley Town Council

Sue led the session on the support that is available for Rugeley residents who are struggling with mental health problems. It is understood that following the pandemic we are now headlong into an economic crisis which is affecting everyone. The types of help that are available through Citizens Advice include:

Signposting Information Advice Resources Ongoing Support

Specifically CAB can offer support and guidance around **debt matters**. Get support early as possible but the support workers can help with, managing the debt, managing repayments, supporting with fuel vouchers, energy saving tips, draft excluders etc.

Help to Claim service helps you to understand what financial support / benefits are available to you and help with making claims. Specialist advice for Personal Independence Payments.

Housing Support CAB will work with landlords and act as intermediary between you and them. Help with rent arrears and council tax.

Employment Issues are you struggling post pandemic / furlough – what are your rights as an employee.

Consumer Support

Victim Support

Pension Advice

You can attend the CAB sessions in person, via email, via website, via telephone and also trialling video conferencing help and support. The website for CAB is: [Citizens Advice](#)

Rugeley belongs to the Staffordshire South West branch [Local Citizens Advice details - Citizens Advice](#) and they have an office in the Rugeley Community Church which is open for drop in enquiries on a **Tuesday from 9.30am – 3pm.**

CAB are also working with the council to identify additional sites in the local area where the service can be offered. Telephone numbers for support are:

0808 278 7874

0800 144 8848

You can also get in touch by calling the CAB Adviceline on: 0808 278 7874, email call-back@citizensadvicessw.org.uk or submit a request for advice form from our website www.citizensadvicessw.org.uk

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Kathy represents several of the C of E churches in Rugeley where space is available for support groups. Churches are open 1 or 2 times per week as Places of Welcome for people to call in for reflection and guidance. Churches are also the locations for a number of clubs and groups. The churches also offer a Changing Room Service – there are 3 sessions per week based in St Augustines in Rugeley – this offers access to a mental health counsellor with 1:1 counselling sessions: [The Changing Room Counselling service - Events - St Augustine's Church, Rugeley - A Church Near You](#)

Penk Moneywise [Penk Moneywise Penkridge - Community Money Advice](#) offers guidance and support from the Friday Food Bank in the town.

The Community Church operates a directory called WOW – What's on Where directory which lists every activity and group in the town: [WOW Rugeley - Rugeley Community Church \(rugeleycc.org.uk\)](#)

All of the GPs in Rugeley have a *social prescriber* who can direct you to support groups etc as support is not always about medications, but about talking and sharing: [NHS England » Social prescribing](#)

Staffordshire County Council has a Staffordshire Connects directory that can also signpost: [Staffordshire Connects - Staffordshire County Council](#) There is also a Loneliness and Befriending Directory for Cannock Chase district: [Cannock Loneliness & Befriending Support Directory | Support Staffordshire](#) which can be used to help you make the first steps into getting out and about.

If you are a group seeking funding to help you to support those with low level mental health issues, Staffordshire Community Foundation may be able to assist: [Community Mental Health Fund for Adults – The Community Foundation for Staffordshire](#)

Cllr Martin advised that Rugeley Town Council is looking at community transport issues – this is especially an issue post pandemic when local bus services have been reduced or removed.

It is far easier to solve a problem, the earlier that individuals come for help.