

Case Study

April 2021



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with communities
in cumbria

Greysouthen Village Hall: Covid Support Project



Greysouthen
Village Hall,
Allerdale

'Kindness is Contagious' at Greysouthen

Greysouthen village and parish is a small community of 250 households and 650 residents between Cockermouth and Workington, in West Cumbria. The village has no shop or bus service.

The Project

During the first Covid-19 national lockdown in March 2020, the village hall committee identified that there were many residents with no access to normal services who were at risk from isolation. The village hall committee members launched an initiative that brought 90 local volunteers forward to offer their help and professional skills. This enabled the start of a community food hub that could supply and distribute food and essential supplies. The hub also offered a takeaway meal service to over 100 residents of the parish that had had to shield or self-isolate.

What has been achieved?

Through setting up the project, the group have:

- Sorted a regular supplier of food and essential products for local residents.
- Applied for grants to support the initial set up costs. Local residents also contributed over £600 to the project.
- Marketed the project via their website and Facebook page; posters around the village and on parish notice boards; through their 'Gossip' magazine delivered free to every home in our locality; by email, telephone, BBC radio and local newspaper; and by 5 different leaflet drops to the whole parish delivered by dedicated volunteers.
- Established four different food/essential packs at a value of £10 per pack.
- Used the skills of volunteers to record orders, sort, pack and deliver orders.
- Taken up the offer of a volunteer chef to produce a selection of take-away chilled meals adhering to all regulations in the preparation cooking, storage, and distribution of meals.
- Opened the village hall twice a week to allow residents to "drop in" and purchase individual essential items.
- Maintained Public Health England (PHE) and NHS guidelines at all stages through the project.



Chef Alec Anderson preparing pre-ordered take-away meals which proved very popular





Food Hub at the Hall: Table of Success

Drop-in 'shop' & Food packs:

- 60 households
- 135 orders
- 50 home deliveries
- £890 of transactions

Take-Aways:

- 32 households
- 317 portions
- 65 orders

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Jenny McCulloch, Chair of the hall committee, packing boxes of flour in the Food Hub

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Receiving the Special Recognition Award from the High Sherrif of Cumbria

Positive feedback from the community

A local resident said "This was a lifeline for myself and my neighbour Sylvia as supermarket delivery slots were all spoken for. Four separate food parcels were offered, all doorstep delivered with no delivery charge. Payment was made by bank transfer, what could be easier?"

During the second and third national lockdowns the village hall again provided deliveries. The take-away service - cooked at the hall - was well used and a fish and chip van (making a small donation for electricity) was made available in the village hall car park. While numbers needing the service reduced, the committee were still able to take individual food orders which were delivered, and to maintain a small stock of essential items in the hall, open on request or for delivery.

The village hall chairperson Jenny McCulloch said "Throughout all lockdowns the response from the volunteers has been resolute, highlighting the strength of community spirit that exists in the village. We give thanks to our funders, Cumbria Community Foundation and Allerdale Borough Council.

And we were incredibly pleased to receive a Special Recognition Award from the High Sheriff of Cumbria for outstanding activity and contribution to the community in Cumbria during the Covid-19 crisis".



Want to know more?

For more information please contact Jenny McCulloch via the website:

www.greysouthen.online



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