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Surrey supports mental health projects

20 July 2023

The Surrey All Age Mental Health Investment Fund (MHIF) has awarded funding to 10 projects providing innovative, community-focused programmes to support the prevention of mental ill health and improvement of emotional well-being across the county.

Established in 2022, the MHIF is an integrated funding programme with a total budget of £10.5m. This allocation consists of a £6.5m contribution from Surrey County Council from the specific **1% precept on Council Tax collected from 2022/2023** and £4m from Surrey Heartlands Integrated Care Board. Additionally, the Council has partnered with the Community Foundation for Surrey and secured just under £1m via a match funding arrangement.

Funding is used to support services which are non-statutory; developed by local, community-based groups. The MHIF is aligned to meeting the outcomes of Priority 2 of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which focuses on prevention, removing barriers, and supporting people to become proactive in improving their emotional health and wellbeing.

Round 1 of applications took place in December 2022. There were 55 bids submitted of which 10 were successfully awarded funding totally approximately £530,000.

The projects awarded funding include a gardening space to increase access to nature-based therapy, providing support to life-limited children and their families and expanding the provision of a hub that uses drama to support people with mental health challenges.

All bids were assessed by a panel which represents the Integrated Care Board (ICB), Surrey County Council, Cabinet members, the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE), integrated commissioning representatives and Public Health.

Mark Nuti, Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for Adults and Health, said: *"I'm delighted that the first round of funding has been allocated to a range of different organisations, all working to tackle mental ill-health with innovative, community-focused projects.*

"The successful bids cover a broad age range and are spread across the 11 districts and boroughs of Surrey. We have also approved funding a large bid investing in primary schools across Surrey as part of Round 1, and I'm pleased to say we have already had significant interest in Round 2 of the fund after going live at the beginning of June."

Round 2 of funding has just closed and bids are currently being evaluated. Information regarding any future rounds of funding will be communicated via our webpage.

Find out more about the MHIF: **Surrey Mental Health Investment Fund – Surrey County Council (surreycc.gov.uk)**

Round 1 Awards:

- **Merstham Community Facility Trust** – support groups for adults, and for children in Merstham, as well as supporting the recruitment and training of 16 further Health and Wellbeing Community Champions in the local community
- **The Lucy Rayner Foundation** – Counselling service to reach people (14-39 years) preventing them from reaching crisis.
- **Catalyst Wellbeing Garden** – Providing a project co-ordinator and a project assistant to develop the gardening space; establish, programme, and run nature-based therapy sessions, providing time and space for holistic support.
- **Prospero Theatre Community Wellbeing Company** – Prospero is an inclusive theatre company, that uses drama to improve the quality of life for adults and young people with disabilities and mental health challenges.
- **Shooting Star Children's Hospice** – Aiding the provision of mental health support for life-limited children, their family members (including parents and siblings)
- **Emerge Advocacy** – Community-based support following an A&E attendance to catch young people who have recently been in emotional or mental health crisis.
- **Peer Production** – Two full tours of each of Peer Production's mental health plays (Masking and The Space Between).
- **A2 Dominion** – Provision of 'Mind My Home' an online solutions-based therapy project, targeted at low income/social housing tenants.

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- **Appeer Community Interest Company** – A project which aims to address the social isolation of young autistics girls, provide early help and resources and support parents and care givers of autistic daughters.

Further information about the awards: **https://www.healthysurrey.org.uk/news/community-projects-500k-mental-health-investment-fund**

Image: Appeer Community Interest, Peer Productions, Prospero Friday Club.

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