



Chairman's message

Welcome to the latest issue of Changing Habit packed with positive stories and updates. I hope you enjoy reading about what's been happening locally in Thanet in recent months. In this issue we will cover important issues such as revitalising Addington Street, a men's befriending group, developments on defibrillators and success with Employability skills. I also provide a timeline of the development of HABIT and ask for people to get involved with the HABIT steering group to help move us forward in our challenge to improve the health and well-being of the partially deprived population of Thanet (141,000 people).

In view of the importance of our mission I am happy to continue as Chair to ensure that the steering group is re-established and functioning effectively.

TIMELINE OF THE EVOLUTION OF HABIT

March 2017	KCC Public Health HEALTHY LIVING IN THANET World Café Style Workshop which was opened by the Deputy Leader of Thanet District Council and attended by 34 Thanet movers and shakers.
October 2017	Cross Sector Senior Management Steering Group. Business, Public and Voluntary Sectors established. OBJECTIVE: HABIT, in partnership to address and improve the long-term health, equality & deprivation in Thanet.
January 2018	Steering Group agree Terms of Reference at Kent Innovation Centre, Broadstairs. Suggested Name: Health and Business in Thanet 'HABIT'. The agreed shortened version of the HABIT Terms of Reference are: "HABIT is a collective drive to determine how best to promote health and care service to all Thanet communities. Improvement will be achieved by, collaborating, inspiring supporting and empowering selfcare lifestyles which include mental wellness, exercise and healthy eating"
January 2018 – June 2019	12 meetings, hosted by Steering Group members. Chaired by Brian Urwin. At the Steering Group meeting held at the Innovation Centre Broadstairs the HR Director of SAGA proposed the name of the group to be Health and Business in Thanet.
July 2019	Chairman hospitalised.
January 2020	Covid 19. Start of Pandemic. This affected many businesses including the steering group.

If the HABIT Steering Group is not re-established. It will mean that around 100 voluntary hours and 130 hours time of highly renumerated people will have been in vain. Please get in touch. **Brian Urwin** Founder/Chairman Health and Business in Thanet (HABIT) & Life President of Think Healthy Me CIC at: brianu@thinkhealthyme.co.uk

IN THIS ISSUE...



Page 1 Chairman's Message - A HABIT Update

By Brian Urwin

Page 2 Ramsgate Men's Befriending Group

By Peter Erlam & Brian Urwin

Page 3 Revitalising Addington Street

By Cllr Becky Wing

Local Charity Points to Success with Employability Skills

By Dr Brenden Tempest-Mogg, Chairman & Trustee of Warnborough Foundation

Page 4 Defibrillators in Thanet

Public money & mental health

By Brian Urwin

The purpose of this newsletter is to:

- Make Thanet a happier place to live, work and visit
- Share good business practice in health and wellbeing, involving the next generation
- Encourage the involvement of Thanet District Council, KCC Public Health, Thanet Commissioning Group (CCG), Thanet Voluntary Sector and Thanet Businesses, including: Broadstairs College, Saga, Your Leisure, Sainsburys, Waitrose, Westwood Cross Shopping Centre and others in HABIT's steering group. Without partnership, the agreed Terms of Reference will fail.

Ramsgate Men's Befriending Group

The pandemic, over the last two years, has contributed to a significant increase in social exclusion which sometimes leads to anxiety and also depression. Community volunteers in Ramsgate have taken the initiative to set-up and nurture local befriending groups. There are seven I'm aware of - all are very different.

Social isolation, which happens when a person has little or no contact with others, is a dangerous condition. It has been linked to a host of debilitating health problems such as high blood pressure and cholesterol levels, poor sleep quality, accelerated cognitive decline and depression. (See the useful infographic produced by the World Health Organisation below).

Depression: what you should know

If you think that you might have depression, read on...

What is depression?

- Depression can happen to anyone and is not a sign of weakness.
- It's an illness characterized by persistent sadness and a loss of interest in activities that you normally enjoy, accompanied by difficulty carrying out daily activities.
- People with depression also normally experience several of the following: loss of energy; change in appetite; sleeping more or less; anxiety; reduced concentration; indecisiveness; restlessness; feelings of worthlessness, guilt, or hopelessness; thoughts of self-harm or suicide.
- But don't worry. Depression can be treated – with talking therapies, medication or both.

What you can do

- Talk to someone you trust about your feelings – most people find that talking to someone who cares about them helps.
- Seek professional help – your local health-care worker or doctor is a good place to start.
- Try to keep doing at least some of the activities that you usually enjoy.
- Stay connected with friends and family.
- Exercise regularly – even if it's just a short walk.
- Stick to regular eating and sleeping habits as much as possible.
- Avoid or restrict alcohol intake and don't use illicit drugs – they can make depression worse.
- If you feel suicidal, contact someone you trust for help, or ring the emergency services.

REMEMBER:
With the right support, you can get better – so if you think you might be depressed, seek help.

World Health Organization

Conversely, research shows that human interaction can lighten your mood and make you feel happier. It's good for your brain health and lowers the risk of dementia. It also promotes a sense of safety, belonging and security. In this edition I will describe just one group. In the summer of 2021 as the lead for Pegwell Village Nextdoor social media, I noticed a request from a single man who had recently moved from the Midlands to Ramsgate. He said he wanted to meet with local people with a hope of friendship. At the time I had no idea of how I could help him but thought I would try something different as an experiment.

Firstly, we met on my patio for a coffee on two occasions and I explained my suggestion. I commented that



It seemed that my wife had few social exclusion problems due to regular coffee mornings and her monthly book club. I was unaware of anything available locally for men. My suggestion was that I was prepared to try and form a Ramsgate men's befriending group from professional people with whom I was acquainted. I was well aware of the risk of 'failure' but prepared to try and help this musician, new to Ramsgate.

The group first met in Enoteca Harbour Parade in September 2021 and have met monthly since then. The initial purpose was to find out more about each other, including some, one to one meetings. This seemed to work well. We learnt about each other's interests and occupations, all very diverse and interesting due to the differences. We are from all kinds of backgrounds and professions. One of the members said:

"When I was invited to join the group, my initial reaction was to push back. Firstly, I wouldn't know any of the members so what's the point? Secondly, why should I make the effort to mix with a new group when I have enough contact with people already. In retrospect, I now see I had taken an entirely negative approach to what was a kind invitation. Also, it was selfish, an "I'm alright, Jack" view of life.

But in the end, I joined the group, though as a latecomer – several get-togethers had already been held. And now I'm wondering why I hadn't joined this band of brothers from the outset.

Let me explain these are males (it is a men-only group) with plenty of miles on the clock and stories to tell. And once the ice had been broken, I realised we were generally like-minded and good-humoured. An excellent starting point.

So yes, it has been a positive experience. I have made new friends, all from different backgrounds to mine, which tends to generate more interesting and stimulating conversation. In conclusion, a big thank you to the person who invited me."

Peter Erlam & Brian Urwin

Revitalising Addington Street

Addington Street was once the bustling heart of Ramsgate's main shopping area with all manner of businesses, mainly family run that provided anything from meat, fruit & vegetables, Post Office services, a blacksmith, food & drink in various pubs; The Queen Charlotte and Falstaff still remain as well as clothing and hardware goods. Over time like most high streets, it fell into decline but has seen a revival over the last decade as locals move in that want to invest.

The annual September Historical Fair that also fell into decline was revitalised initially by a small team of 3 in 2015 and has grown and grown. COVID prevented the running of the Addington Street Revival Fair in both 2020 and 2021 and many other issues prevented it happening in 2022. This has also been cited as a key catalyst in bringing people on to the street to enjoy over 80 the vintage, handmade and antique stalls, food, drink and street entertainment as well as entertainment on Spencer Square Gardens. In addition, people come to enjoy the heritage and historical buildings.

Buildings are slowly being restored and 'bucking' the national trend we saw 3 new independent shops arrive on the street during 2021. This street has a real and strong community feel and I for one consider myself lucky to live along such an iconic, progressive and friendly street.



Becky Wing

Councillor Rebecca Wing, Thanet District Council

Local Charity Points to Success with Employability Skills

The Warnborough Foundation CIO was set up in 2020 as the charitable arm of Warnborough College. It was established to advance accessible education and training among disadvantaged communities in East Kent.

Its in-house Compass programme works with long-term unemployed individuals to help them discover and build on their own capabilities and confidence. The aim of Compass is to Realign, Reset and Renew.



A key component of Compass is learning how to develop a positive growth mindset. Many participants tell of being ignored, looked down upon, and unable to break a mental ceiling before joining the programme. They are supported by friendly and experienced facilitators, coaches, and employers to reach their maximum potential.

Voluntary work opportunities allow them to function within a real working environment, collaborating with others, and (re)discovering their own abilities. Compass has had a high success rate in terms of its participants finding employment and has worked with partners like Think Healthy Me CIC. Two qualified Coaches, Associates of Think Healthy Me offered their voluntary service, free of charge to The Warnborough Foundation as part of our collaboration agreement, to deliver the pilot Compass Programme.

Its third iteration is being offered in conjunction with the Amber Foundation in Ashford to boost the employability skills of homeless and unemployed youths. We are pleased to be working with SheilaCaulfield.com and Computers4Charity to support this.

Thanks to donations and sponsorship, Compass continues to be free and impactful. Participants may even opt to receive a Level 1 or 2 Award in Employability Skills from NCFE. To learn more about forthcoming Compass training, volunteer as a mentor or coach, or donate funds, please email Sheila Caulfield at

sheila@warnborough.foundation or call 01227 762107.

Dr Brenden D Tempest-Mogg (Chairman & Trustee, Warnborough Foundation)



The deadline for articles for the next edition is 3 March 2023. Please email brad@thinkhealthyme.co.uk with your contributions

QUESTIONS FOR HEALTH COACHES

This is YOUR chance to address your health related questions to Think Healthy Me's associates. Answers will be provided in the future newsletters. Please email any questions to brad@thinkhealthyme.co.uk

Defibrillators in Thanet

During the pandemic the Steering Group of HABIT innovated several initiatives. These included the commencement of this 'HABIT Good News' newsletter about your health and the health of the wider Thanet Community. Also, the goal of putting 'unity' into 'community' and the desire to focus on encouraging defibrillators in Thanet.

In respect of the latter important goal, I was honoured to join Fran Donovan and her management team with the installation of a defibrillator outside TK Maxx (see photo). Thanet has a population of 141,000 and sadly continues to remain extremely low on defibrillators.



As someone who suffered a cardiac arrest in a foreign country and survived due to swift action, I do appreciate the importance of making defibrillators readily available in all of Thanet (in a future edition of this newsletter we will provide a Thanet location map of defibrillators for our readers).

We understand that a bill has been started in the House of Commons requiring the installation of automated external defibrillators in public buildings, sporting facilities, schools, higher education and other education and skill facilities and facilities that provide care to vulnerable people.

It would be helpful if the readers of Changing Habit could support us in joining with us and innovating positive action to increase the number of 'life saving' defibrillators available.

It is our aim to collaborate with the appropriate agencies to identify ALL defibrillators in Thanet in order to share with all our readers.

I have recently heard, through 'word of mouth' of the latest modern small defibrillator that can be used at home. I'm 'high risk' currently being linked by technology to Guys hospital by a Merlin Heart Monitor. I'm also regularly monitored by a Cardiac Nurse and a Cardiologist at Guys Hospital. Guess who is going to invest in one of these new home heart defibrillators?

These home defibrillators are called **CellAED®**. More info can be found at: <https://rapidresponserevival.com/cellaed/>

If you are able to help with the larger defibrillators, please contact me brianu@thinkhealthyme.co.uk



If you are interested in following my example and wish to purchase the CellAED® please contact Bradley O'Connell CEO of Think Healthy Me CIC. We may be able to negotiate savings with a bulk order.

Public money & mental health

HABIT is strictly apolitical. Nevertheless we 'listen' to what communities in Thanet are saying about the improvements required to health in Thanet. We are receiving and continue to receive comments, suggestions and ideas from many quarters of the local community and the media and would like to share this with our readers.

We have heard from people in the public sector and the general public of actions that can, possibly, save thousands of pounds of public money. One immediately springs to mind and is a suggestion that we favour : "Can we please ask you the local population of Thanet (both businesses and residents) to help identify areas of continuing waste of public money, for further investigation?" Crowd Funding to focus on urgent health causes has also been suggested.

If the response that we receive from this article is positive HABIT are willing to pursue appropriate follow-up actions. The worthy cause (of which there are many) is for HABIT to *Focus on mental health for the elderly in Thanet*. If you are interested in helping in any way please contact Brian Urwin at:

brianu@thinkhealthyme.co.uk

Health & Well-being Webinars via Zoom

In 2023 Think Healthy Me CIC will be running a programme of Health & Well-being Webinars. If you are interested in attending the full details will be published on www.habit.org.uk