

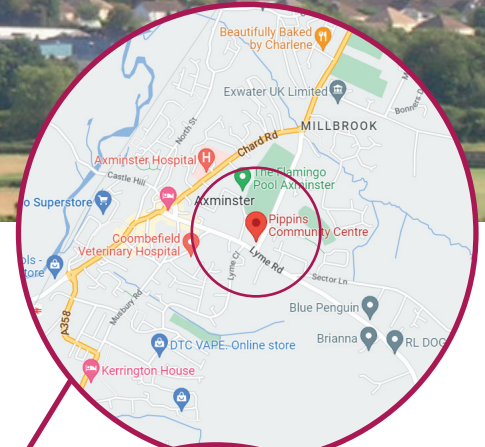
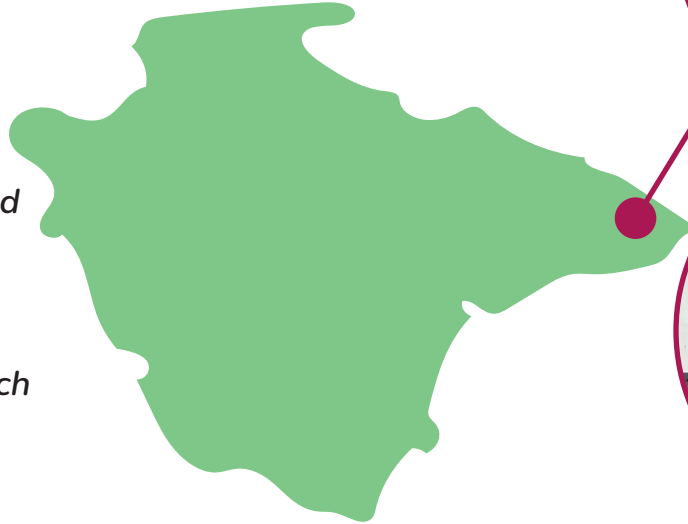
Public Health Outreach Team Insight Snapshots 2023

#5 AXMINSTER

PROJECT: BROKERING CONTACTS

“

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IN A NUTSHELL...

Pippins is a local community centre in the working town of Axminster, East Devon. It is a bustling hub for the local community and home to a wide array of community groups and support services. The key individual supporting Pippins is Rev Kay d'Albertanson, Centre Director for Pippins and Minister of The LIFE Community, a local Baptist Church that gathers at Pippins.

Pippins holds strong links with other local organisations and especially with their local PCSO who founded The Axminster Hub; a weekly Drug and Alcohol Recovery Project with a strong partnership working between the Neighbourhood Police Team, the local church café team (led by Rev Kay) and Together Devon drug and alcohol service. This nurturing approach centred around food has resulted in a reduction in minor crime incidents in Axminster over the last few years and many success stories of people who have come out of the other end of recovery and are now stable enough to give something back to the community that have stood alongside them in their recovery.

NEEDS, GAPS AND BARRIERS

Conversations with Rev Kay d'Albertanson have highlighted the following issues:

- Lack of trust into health care provision of people leading complex lives, often tied up with feelings of shame and being judged by health care professionals
- Gap in provision of oral health and mental health support. Need access to a sympathetic dentist who can carry out work to relieve pain and address the negative effects of methadone treatment
- Difficulty to navigate complex and flawed funding system and secure funding, to maintain the level of service and look after the Grade II listed building Pippins is housed in
- Need to support and train volunteer staff, who are overworked

COMMUNITY VISION – WHAT ARE THEY TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

- Pippins as a safe and nurturing space, where people in the community who need help most, feel welcomed and are known by name, start to belong and feel empowered to make their own decisions, and start to flourish
- Work within the community to be seen as a long-term commitment from all agencies involved

ROLE OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH OUTREACH TEAM

From the initial meeting with Pippins in September 2021 a list of priorities for the Outreach Team evolved:

- Become a trusted face and build relationships with The Axminster Hub and their clients.
- Introduce holistic clinics to provide additional services, particularly Oral Health, Mental Health and Vaccinations, at the weekly Tuesday Hub day
- Enable The Axminster Hub to build their own relationships with health service providers and to take over running of holistic clinics in future

IMPACT AND LEARNING

The Outreach Team has been successful in building a relationship of trust with The Axminster Hub and their clients and in providing advice with funding applications. Due to enormous time pressure on the Pippins Grants Team, and grant funding now having more and more hurdles, these applications have not been successful as yet

Despite the Outreach Team working extensively on setting up holistic clinics and trying to get health services committed, this effort was let down by the inability of services to provide a consistent outreach function. Only two of the five organised clinics were attended by the Vaccinations Team and one by Oral Health – all referrals for further dental treatment were declined at a later stage. This confusion around referral pathways, paired with a lack of reliability, has reinforced negative perceptions of service provision by the community. It has left Pippins' community provider Rev Kay and The Axminster Hub clients feeling disappointed and judged, adding to the feeling of generally being overlooked in Axminster, a town close to the border of three counties

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMMISSIONERS

Pippins Community Centre as a whole is providing a vital function for health inclusion groups in Axminster and requires long-term, sustainable support. As a key resource partner working at a grassroots level of their community, they would welcome a dialogue with commissioners early in the commissioning process and stronger links with other DCC Departments, including Social Services, to come up with a joint approach on how to tackle issues, such as addiction earlier in life.

Health service providers, especially Oral and Mental Health, should be encouraged to invest in developing a consistent outreach function to reach people living complex lives in the Axminster area. Informative discussions and clarity about referral pathways are also crucial.

Community Support by Kenneth Harris and Louise Williams of Devon Public Health Outreach Team. Snapshot Designed by Devon Communities Together.

