

THE RESTARTER

A monthly update from
Suffolk Community Restart

READY & RESILIENT A New Era for 2022

With news of a further Covid variant coming to our shores over recent days, our team are here to remind you of the help available for your safe and sustainable restart and to ensure your resilience to operate going forward.

Hundreds of groups and projects have resumed over the course of the last eight months, and the last thing any of you would want is to be closing your doors and turning away your community again.

All our support packages, training, advice & grant provision remains in place, but now you'll see even more emphasis on helping communities thrive in a resilient manner, no matter what the evolving Covid journey brings in 2022.

For now, as the world waits to hear more detail of how the new virus strain may change daily life, here are our three top messages to keep your Suffolk community supported and resilient:

1. Continue to closely follow government recommendations for the provision of any event, activity or interaction with others.

2. [Click here to book onto our Lunchtime Funding Surgery on December 13th to explore how best your organisation can benefit from a grant in the year ahead. We will give you a whistle stop tour of where other VCSEs have been successful, help you understand the criteria involved and how to apply for subsidised training and PPE. Lunchtime Restart Funding Surgery – Community Action Suffolk.](#)

3. Ensure you keep up to date with the raft of training and advice that is available from Community Action Suffolk. [Upcoming Events](#) [Click here to find out what's available](#)

FACT!

A total of 63 groups have requested subsidised PPE since the start of the restart project



Red Rose Ready to Share Their 'Treasure'

If you're lucky enough to have tickets for this year's online Christmas performance by Red Rose Chain, you're certainly in for a treat.

This wonderful Suffolk theatre company is bringing viewers a spectacular version of Treasure Island – prepared using innovative and exciting green screen filming, and a laugh-out-loud script.

Red Rose's Avenue Theatre still remains closed at the current time, due to Covid, but thanks to the Restart programme, the team were able to purchase live streaming technology and camera equipment to help make this festive performance one of their most impressive yet.

Participants in the show have included adults with mental health difficulties, disadvantaged young people, and those with learning disabilities.

We're thrilled to have been able to make this performance happen, and we wish the Red Rose team every dose of luck for their festive show.

Watch this space as they progress their plans in 2022 and get their live shows back up and running at The Avenue once more.



FACT!

Nine Suffolk schools have been awarded funding to support keeping their sports facilities open to the community



United in Grief – and Football

A TEAM of Suffolk fathers who came together in united solidarity after each losing a child, are now back on the football pitch in Ipswich, thanks to a Restart grant.

The Sands United FC Ipswich team was created in February 2020, bringing together any dads who had experienced baby loss, and who wanted to build friendship and a support network over a game of football.

Ipswich's team started at Gainsborough Sports Centre, only a few weeks before the onset of the pandemic, which caused a halt to their weekly sessions. Since restarting after the lockdown the team has grown from a few players to 20+ men.

Complexities around Covid safety and risk prevention made it difficult for the men to fully return, even once sports clubs were allowed.

The club was accepted for a Suffolk Community Restart grant – worth £475 – which has allowed them to purchase 12 further footballs, a new set of bibs, and re-useable water bottles.

Andrew Wilesmith, Founder of the club, says: "The Covid pandemic meant that there were many months when the men

were unable to play and missed out on the opportunity of the friendship and support from other men that had been bereaved as well as all the great health benefits provided by playing football.

"We were delighted to be able to approach Community Action Suffolk about the Restart grant and were quickly approved to get more kit and balls, so that we would have less sharing of items to do and could maintain Covid safety."





Team Profile

With every newsletter, we bring you the profile of a team member who is actively involved in helping organisations 'restart' in the community. This time, it's Alex Downing.



Name:
Alex Downing

Where in Suffolk do you live?
Woodbridge

What's the best thing about living and working in the county?
We're so lucky to live in Suffolk. In Woodbridge, there's the beautiful river, the forest and, of course, the sea, all close by.

Your role for Suffolk Community Restart:
I am a Community Restart Development Officer

What do you do?
I advise charitable organisations on how to present their grant applications and ensure that they meet all the criteria of the Restart Grants before they go off to the district councils. Having worked in marketing for many years, including Development Director for Colchester Zoo, I also deliver 1:1 Marketing Surgeries for VCSEs needing marketing and communications advice.

What do you enjoy most about the role and your work with restart?
I love the variety of organisations that I am working with and chatting to them about their plans. I do feel that we are genuinely making a difference to the charitable sector in Suffolk to by matching everything that CAS has to offer to the groups applying for grants. I've worked on the Covid vaccination programme and gained a good understanding of the needs in the local community as we try and come out of the Pandemic and these grants are so desperately needed.

Get in Touch

We're always keen to hear from anyone who wants to find out more about Suffolk Community Restart, or who is keen to share their story about putting their Restart grant to good use. Email us on vcsesupport@communityactionsuffolk.org.uk

Events

While December and the Christmas season in particular might be a little quieter for scheduled training and information events, you should continue to look out for opportunities via our social media and website, where we'll keep you posted on any workshops, webinars or courses being established.

In the meantime, here's a little feedback from one of our recent training events – the Covid Health and Safety and Risk Assessments course.

"The course made me think about situations that may present a risk that perhaps hadn't been thought of, such as transporting clients in our minibus. It also made me think about other ways to ventilate during the colder months, and how it isn't necessarily via having the windows open all day! It will be easier to complete a full risk assessment with simpler guidelines, and easier to relay the information to clients and visitors" **Bury St Edmund's Women's Aid**

"The hall is run by volunteer trustees and the guidance given by CAS has been so useful as none of us have any experience of this type of "risk" before Covid 19."
Freckenham Village Hall

"This will make me more confident in implementing Covid measures"
Westhorpe Village Hall

FACT!

Some 411 people have attended our workshops, forums, 1-1 specialist surgeries or been matched and booked on to subsidised training courses

And Finally...

Before we all disappear to celebrate the festive season, we would like to say a very big thank you to each and every one of you who engaged in training sessions, shared your stories, provided peer support to another organisation, or used funding to get great projects back up and running in the community.

Here's wishing you a safe and happy festive season.
The Restart Team

