

Giving Community Wickham Market Charity

September 2021

I (CEO Anna O'Neill) wanted to start a charity that offered different services for the local community like a drop in cafe focusing on helping people struggling with mental health challenges because I had faced them myself and had felt alone at the time.

I came across the Worry Tree Cafe in Framlingham, ran by the Hour Community. I read all the information provided on the website and on Facebook and though this is exactly what I would like to do in Wickham Market. I got in touch with CEO Nick who agreed to mentor me in the process of starting up something similar in Wickham Market.

I did some local market research and apart from The Good Neighbourhood Scheme, Wednesday play group, some church activities (some not running again post Covid) Friday Drop in and some regular classes ran in the village hall such as Zumba, sewing class there is service provided in the community with a mental health focus. I have met many people in Wickham Market who have said they personally suffer with anxiety or depression, isolation which have become worse since Covid 19. I therefore felt a mental health focused drop in cafe is very important to respond to the increased number of people living with mental health.

First meeting

We had our first meeting September the 8th 2021 calling anyone interested in starting a local charity connecting community with a mental health/wellbeing focus! We had a great turn out at the meeting with 11 people interested and many committing as volunteers! Giving Community Wickham Market was born! We produced our mission and vision together.

Mission Statement

A place that provides a safe space for people to start building friendship, have fun, and learn empowering skills that can help support them from mental health challenges.

Vision

To see a community that is connected in many different ways, all inclusive, with different generations learning from each other and a place where people feel safe and connected and thrive.

Where are we based?

Giving Community is located in Wickham Market Suffolk and is a charitable foundation (application in process) dedicated to helping those in need with a mental health focus. Our Charity helps to connect and support our local community in Wickham Market and surrounding villages through various services and events. With the dedication of our volunteers we strive to improve the lives of everyone who needs help within the community.

Our story so far....

October 2021 we sent out a local survey to Wickham Market residents. 13 November 2021 Launch date! We had our official launch stating our mission and vision with the local community!

We invited adults and children to enter an art competition describing their interpretation of Covid 19 and their experiences/memories. We had some poems, and great art work handed in to be judged by a local artist from Wickham Market.

We had local politicians such as Carol Poulter, local parish councillors, other charity members and lots of interest local people came along with was wonderful!

We raised funds to get Wellbeing Tree Cafe through asking for donations for refreshments and cake. Giving Community made the EAST ANGLIAN DAILY TIMES! October 2nd 2021 See the link for the full article.

https://www.eadt.co.uk/news/health/giving-community-wickham-market-to-be-set-up-8375904?fbclid=IwAR38UHE8q51Zzut57LeukOQ7NcPxjNr6Q0hjush8WH5xHlawb1nCAS_OA44

We started our own Facebook group, we post regularly advertising upcoming events, pictures of our sessions and regular encouragement. We have found that other charities use it to promote their local events which is great. We currently have 155 members!

Wellbeing Tree Cafe is launched!

We decided to start a drop in cafe where people from the local community could come and meet others, connect, share and engage in a wellbeing activity.

We started our first few sessions in the library but found the environment did not accommodate our needs so we were given permission to use the Aspire Centre every Wednesday free of charge which was amazing!

We ran our drop in cafe in the Aspire Centre every Wednesday 10-12 for tea/coffee cake and a good time together. We have had regular friends of the cafe attending and enjoying the different sessions that we run each week. We now have a monthly schedule that runs each month

Week 1 Quiz

Week 2 Craft

Week 3 Coaching or Guided Meditation

Week 4 Singing Together

We have put on fun days during holidays too, we did an easter egg treasure hunt that was well attended by adults and children!

Fundraising Events

We participated in organising and holding a picnic for the Queens Jubilee which was very successful despite the weather. We held a plant and cake sale and raised £96.74!

Volunteer team

We have an amazing group of dedicated volunteers who help to the run the session every Wednesday! We have lots of fun together and have made new friendships through volunteering together. It makes a being difference to our lives, helping and giving back to the community. We meet together for meetings to share ideas and get organised but we also have lovely socials too!

Looking ahead

Getting charity status- We are still waiting for our charity status which means we have not yet got a bank account meaning we have not been able to secure any grants towards our community work. We are hoping an existing charity or Parish council may hold money for us while we wait to open our own bank account so we don't miss out on any more grant money. We would like finding towards advertising leaflets, website, more training, and lots of equipment for the cafe and the community allotment.

Day trips out!

We are organising a day trip to Snape Malting for friends of our Wellbeing Tree Cafe, we are organising transport as many attendants do not drive.

We are starting a community allotment!

We want to build a community of people who come together to garden together and form friendships. A place people feel welcome and safe.

Our first planning meeting was Tuesday 12th July at 2pm at the Glebe allotment car park, we have a few local people interested which is a great start.