In partnership with

Brighter Berkshire
2017 Year of Mental Health

HIGHLIGHT REPORT
Published 7th March 2018

We have spoken to and heard from thousands of people

Hundreds of comments providing positive feedback
Helped prioritise local mental health
Helped raise £200k for local mental health

Shared openly all we have done, the learning & the feedback online for others

Impact

More peer support networks created

Helped the development of a multimillion pound new investment for employment support for people in Berkshire with mental health problems with Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership Berkshire & Berkshire Community Foundation

Newbury News
Berkshire Life Magazine
Buzz Magazine
Prime Ministers Question Time
Thats Thames Valley TV

Public

Network Events

Primary School Event
Pride of Reading Publicity
You Tube
Soundcloud
Facebook
Website
Blast Radio
Breeze FM

Thames Valley Business Magazine Awards & other publicity

Costs

Survey Monkey
Admin
Stickers
T-Shirts
Postcards
MailChimp
Facebook
Banners
Website

Brighter Berkshire 2017 AIMS

Raise Awareness of mental health
Reduce Stigma of mental health
Increase Local Opportunities for people who need mental health support

Brighter Berkshire was the name for a “Year of Mental Health” in 2017 which was about helping as many people as possible engage in conversations about mental health to raise awareness and reduce stigma and by so doing, increase local opportunities for people who need mental health support.

Network Events:

- Walk & Talks
- Mentoring
- Exercise
- Tinnitus Clinic
- Music
- Film
- Artwork

Arts

Reading Fringe
What’s The Game Improv Comedy
Poetry
Art at events by people with mental Health issues
Art Exhibition
StageCoach Reading West
Working with Artistic
The Engine Room

Establishment of Wokingham Leadership & Network through Anne-Marie Gawen

Services

Voluntary Sector Meetings
Attended Various Service Meetings
Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategy
Health & Wellbeing Boards & Actions
Council Events
Newbury Suicide Action Group
Healthwatch

Workplace

Shops give out 1000 postcards in Reading, Newbury & Maidenhead
Workplace MH Award
Talks to Businesses
Walk and Talk round Reading & Newbury shops
Talks with CBI, OD, FSB & Thames Valley LEP

Funding & Support

Sponsorship for Business Awards
£5000 from charitable trust application
Sponsored prizes for song competition
Thousands of hours in volunteer time & skills
Some venue costs sponsored

Other

Berkshire Life Magazine

Young People

Spectrum

Mental Health Lesson
Reading Football Club
Primary School Event
Service Mapping with Berkshire Youth
Spoke to Youth Cabinet

Sports

Marathon Run’s
Bike Ride
Reading Football Club
Walk & Talk
Dance

Music

Phoenix Choir
Andrew Taylor Recital
Music in Reading Town Centre
Secondary School Song Writing Competition

Sports

Establishment of Wokingham Leadership & Network through Anne-Marie Gawen

Published 7th March 2018
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The year involved so many amazing people. It showed what an open door you are pushing on with the wider community to talk about mental health but that they do still need someone to take the first step and start the conversation. The more of this we do, the easier it will be to get us to a place where we have a culture of true openness about mental health. My personal hope is that we will then have a much more engaged community who will come together to ensure the right support is there when its needed. Thank you to everyone I have met along the way who I have learned so much from and I am looking forward to building on what we have done to create real social change locally around mental health and improve the lives of those who need mental health support.

Alison Foster, Founder and Volunteer, Brighter Berkshire.

“Brighter Berkshire is an extremely proactive charity and has achieved so much in terms of both fundraising for future impact changes required for mental health projects and also in raising the profile of all things mental health in the Berkshire region by way of events and volunteers spreading the word. Other charities have mentioned to myself they have been amazed and a little jealous of the widespread and comprehensive impact Brighter Berkshire has made in such a very short space of time. I have been very impressed and its improved many volunteers lives simply by giving people a sense of purpose and an increased feeling of improved self-esteem and belonging also. From a personal perspective its been the initial and now ongoing catalyst for my own improvement in many areas of my daily living when in truth I had been stagnating. Providing a purpose and a sense of wellbeing for volunteers who perhaps for a variety of reasons have been unavailable for paid employment.”

Chris Downes, Service User

Total money raised for local mental health charities £250k - March 2018
Brighter Berkshire was the name established to describe the Berkshire community coming together through networks and activities in a Year of Mental Health. The aims were to raise awareness, reduce stigma and increase local opportunities for those with mental health challenges through increasing conversations and connections across Berkshire about mental health.

If you want to remind yourself why the initiative started and how it was established there is information on our website under ‘Background’.

This report is intended to provide some highlights and insights on some of the activities and impact of the Brighter Berkshire Year of Mental Health.

We intend to use the information which has supported the production of this report, together with an evidence-based evaluation framework to get a reliable understanding of impact.

The year has largely been delivered through passionate informal network of volunteers working together with services, people who need support, carers and people in the different parts that make up our community who feel this kind of initiative will help people with mental health challenges and also help Berkshire to value mental health more as a whole.

It has not been without its challenges. Many volunteers have their own jobs and families and lives, it can be a pressure for people in itself.

It was something which had very little formal planning partly because there were not the resources to ensure delivery but, we also felt that activities should evolve directly from those in the community and we should play a facilitation rather than leadership role.

We have also had feedback from individuals who do not support our approach to the engagement of all elected politicians. But on review of the number of people who we have engaged with and have provided us with feedback, the numbers of people sharing this view with us make up less than 1% of the total number so we have continued to engage with all.

It is likely that the highlight report will not capture all of the areas we have actually touched. It aims to give highlights of the areas we are aware of and have captured evidence for through twitter, websites, event feedback, online surveys, emails and the many meetings we have had over the year with individuals, teams and organisations. We know there will be impact from many who will not have provided us with any feedback, conversations as a result of our events which will take place we will not be aware of.

There are many ways to tackle the issue of reducing stigma in mental health. We believe there is no one size fits all. Our intention was to engage in a positive way with a range of people on mental health issues and encourage the unfortunate but much needed bravery required for people to open up. We believe that once we all feel better able to do this, that it will enable help and solutions to grow. We are not prescribing those solutions, we believe they will come from communities themselves once they feel they are opening up in a supportive environment.

What is useful to try to understand from the year is if it’s worth continuing with this type of activity? For the costs and efforts involved, do the benefits make it worth it? We believe in the current climate that from what we have learned it is worth continuing.

However, it needs to move to a more sustainable model. One where there is the ability to provide consistent support for the many volunteers who do want to give their time to something like this. There needs to be consistent support to work with partners who wish to engage in something like this so that we can achieve the best out of any relationship.
We have also identified a number of areas throughout the year where there are gaps in the provision of help and support locally. Areas like

- A clear online resource which is recognised as the ‘go to’ place for Berkshire citizens for help with their mental health and emotional needs.
- Better local face to face support for people who feel they are experiencing a mental health crisis.
- Better support in the workplace for those struggling with metal health issues, better support for employers and colleagues who are struggling to know how they can help.
- More opportunities for people with mental health issues to connect with each other.
- Better opportunities for real co-production to shape and improving the support needed.

We believe with some sustainable support that some significant improvements can be achieved through bringing the different elements of the community together in some of the ways we have. But bringing the community together requires a consistent and more sustainable team. So much has been achieved on what can only be described as a shoestring. Imagine what can be achieved with a little more support to continue the work to increase awareness, reduce stigma and increase local opportunities for people with mental health issues and also through better value of mental health, then we all gain.

There is a one-page overview at the pack of this document which outlines our initial thinking on a future role and structure for Brighter Berkshire.

There are so many people to thank and they can be found on our website, dotted throughout this highlight report and some in particular listed at the back. We have tried to capture and share what we have been doing along the way through pictures, videos, bulletins, website, social media, soundcloud, youtube and more and the following is only some highlights to give a glimpse of what we did.

JANUARY - MARCH 2018

In January and in March we supported events which just fell outside of the year. But we feel they need mentioning here and signposting to the website for further information.

16 January - The Rotary Club were keen to support something which would benefit children of primary schools age and we had heard from teachers and parents about some of the issues they face in dealing with mental health. We then worked with Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Council to help bring together an event which focussed on this issue with over 100 people in attendance. The video of the talks, presentations and evaluation can be found on our website under event write up’s.

17 January - Our End of Year event in Newbury was a review of what had been delivered and achieved and a glimpse of future plans. We heard from speakers who all had experience of mental health issues who described what the benefits and impact of the year had on them. There are videos on our website of these presentations under event write up’s.

26 January - We worked with Artistic who were hosting a series of events over a number of days in Henley. The space was filled with the most amazing art work from their artists.

2 March - Berserk Productions who work with young people delivered an amazing play called Want which we were privileged to be asked to say a few words at and received a donation from the proceeds of their show.

Thank you.

Congratulations to everyone working hard to reduce stigma in mental health locally through Brighter Berkshire in such a creative & inclusive way. Stigma is a key barrier to getting help & it’s great to see engagement across the community which includes all elected politicians who represent their whole constituency. Labours campaign for Mental Health continue to fight the government hard on the devastating affects the cuts to services have on people and great to see Brighter Berkshire highlight this issue too. More and more people are being affected by poor mental health with less services to support them and more awareness like this initiative can only help, well done.

Luciana Berger MP,
President for the Labour Campaign for Mental Health
We know that we have made a positive difference for many people because they have told us. We may not be able to be precise about any of this without setting in place from the beginning some independent accredited evaluation. However, we have collected evidence along the way and continue to collect feedback through our end of year survey.

**Increase Awareness**

We estimate we have raised awareness of mental health for thousands of people. We make this assessment from the feedback from events where we have spoken about mental health issues.

- Thousands have physically attended events, participated in activities run by us or spoken to us in our walks and talk events. Thousands have also attended other events where we have spoken at
- Thousands more have seen ongoing messages on Twitter, Facebook, our website, bulletins, You Tube, promotion from initiatives such as Thames Valley Business Magazine Awards, Pride of Reading Awards and more.
- Thousands listened to the BBC Radio Show Talking Heads and continue to through our Soundcloud account.
- Thousands listening to other radio shows, That’s Thames Valley TV and BBC Politics show.

**Reduce Stigma**

This is more difficult to measure precisely but we do know from research and evidence that where you increase awareness and positive conversations about mental health issues this supports better understanding and in itself helps reduce stigma. We have received powerful feedback about how many people do feel more about to open up and talk as a result of what we have done and this means they are not feeling the stigma they were previously which was preventing them from talking.

**Increased Local Opportunities**

- We have increased opportunities for some people at work to feel able to talk to someone about their mental health challenges. We know this through the direct feedback we have received.
- We have helped increase the opportunities for people to get local service support through fundraising helping to raise £200k which will be handed out in March 2018.
- We have increased the potential for future opportunities for people out of work due to mental health issues through discussions with the Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership Berkshire. They are shaping a significant fund for local support projects focussed on improving local employment opportunities specifically for this group of people.
- We have had feedback in Newbury from the Health and Wellbeing Board and from people who use services that we have helped move to a culture of co-production which is starting to increase local opportunities for people who need mental health support.
- We have created increased opportunities for people with mental health issues to be connected to peers and support services through our information sharing and network events.
“We have known Alison Foster for almost 20 years in mental health and it’s no surprise to us that she has sought to do something creative and inclusive about mental health locally or that she has successfully engaged with people with lived experience to lead and drive this. It’s great to have something which also engages any elected politician as we know from our own experience that many still have their own fears and gaps in knowledge of mental health which can cause stigma and it’s so important to engage them all as they help make key decisions about policy.”

Angie & Tony Russell, Founders of Positive Practice in Mental Health Collaborative and Winners of 2017 Royal College of Psychiatrists Service User/Patient Contributor of the Year Award.

“I believe that Brighter Berkshire under the leadership of Ali Foster along with her dedicated team and well-wishers have done a fantastic job over the last one year. This includes but not limited to raising the profile of mental health, passionately lobbying for further investments in mental health, engaging with key stakeholders to explore collaborative work and influencing the landscape of public mental health across Berkshire. People’s mental health and wellbeing is at the heart of Brighter Berkshire’s Campaign; I believe that working closely with Healthwatch and other partner agencies they have contributed to mainstreaming of ‘coproduction’ with service users as a means to come up with solutions for the problems faced by them in the mental health care system.

Mental health is not only on everyone’s agenda but there is a concerted effort to move beyond from rhetoric to actions to improve the lives of people with poor mental health in Berkshire. I congratulate the Brighter Berkshire team and its partners to proactively leading the charge on the way people identify, relate and address mental health issues.”

Dr Anees Pari, Health of Public Health West Berkshire Council until October 2017
Developing the ‘Year of Mental Health’ in Berkshire

Early conversations and people who helped Brighter Berkshire get off the ground

**JUNE - NOVEMBER**

- Visited Hertfordshire Council Prof Jim Mac Manus to hear about their ‘Year of Mental Health’.
- Met with local Councils, health and social care services, charities, Police, Fire, businesses, friends, people with experience of mental health issues, carers, elected politicians from Conservative and Labour Parties, local Public Health Consultants and more.
- Decided on name and designed initial logo. Set up online presence, twitter, FB, Instagram, website, email.
- Met with BBC Radio Berkshire.
- Secured range of local support for the idea of having a year of mental health.
- Set up planning event in Newbury and issued open invitation to people in Berkshire.
- Met with Richard Benyon, MP Newbury who wrote to all Berkshire MPs to ask they do something for the Year of Mental Health.

**DECEMBER**

- Planning event in Newbury 16 December - 80 people attended. People with lived experience spoke. We heard from Public Health professionals, national leads on mental health and Richard Benyon MP.
- Lots of ideas from the event and afterwards which we have posted on our website.
- Agreement from BBC Berkshire to support the Year of Mental Health with a monthly programme hosted by people with lived experience.
- Launch date agreed for 16 January.

> Getting encouraging from President of Labour Campaign for Mental Health Luciana Berger who also sits on the All Party Parliamentary group for Mental Health, pictured here with Alison Foster, Hari Sewell a fellow Berkshire resident and Dr Jane Street.

Published January 2016

Early conversations and people who helped Brighter Berkshire get off the ground
In the first month many supported the idea through Twitter, increasing conversations and visibility of mental health.

Three bulletins produced and circulated with pledges, support and plans.

PLUS

- Newbury news article published.
- Lots of ideas and emails supporting the initiative, thanking us and offering help.
- Three bulletins produced and circulated with pledges, support and plans.
- Attended Labour Campaign for Mental Health.
- Richard Benyon MP writes Westminster blog promoting the initiative.
- Bracknell Forest Council talk about support in Legacy Magazine.
- Entric offer the first donation for Local Mental Health through the initiative.
- Spoke at Reading Arts and Heritage Forum.
## The Numbers

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In the first two months there were over 3 million impressions on Twitter.

### BBC Talking Heads Show

Polly, Angela and Nicky explain what anxiety is and how it can be treated. They also introduce mental health first aid. Did you know you could be a mental health first aider? The women find out about a course that can get you started.

### Featured in BBC Politics show, with Angela Ryan and Polly Falconer from the BBC Radio Berkshire Talking Heads show.

- Pete Doyle, Founder of Reading Rock Academy launches Secondary School Song Writing Competition for mental health in aid of Brighter Berkshire.
- Met with Berkshire Community Foundation to talk about partnership and help support fundraising for mental health.
- Publication of article to engage businesses in Thames Valley Business Magazine with support from Cisco Chairman.
- Two bulletins produced and circulated.
- Met with Reading West MP Alok Sharma.
- Newbury Labour Party contact all members highlighting the initiative and encouraging involvement of members.

### Met with Reading College Design and Media Students to talk about mental health and brief them to help engage in discussions about mental health through helping to redesign our logo.
March

“Highly effective at raising public awareness of mental health issues and the most positive impact it has had is getting mental health talked about and achieving a focus on MH amongst local organisations and the community.”

Cathy Winfield, Accountable Officer, Berkshire West CCG

**The first £20k raised**

**PLUS**

- Met with Slough Labour MP Fiona McTaggart.
- Met with Wokingham Conservative MP John Redwood.
- Thames Valley Business Magazine launch brand new award for Workplace Mental Health jointly sponsored by Institute of Directors and Cardinal Clinic.
- Article in Newbury news on the Walk and Talk event.
- Spoke at Reading Arts and Heritage Forum chaired by Labour Cllr Sarah Hacker.
- Spoke at ACRE women’s event for International Women’s Day.
- We spoke at West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board special meeting on mental health attended by Richard Benyon MP.
- Postcards with mental health facts and details of the campaign were produced to hand out with some mental health facts.
- Banners were produced to take to events.
MARCH READING EVENT

Our launch of the partnership between Berkshire Community Foundation and Brighter Berkshire in the year of mental health. We launched our Brighter Berkshire Song Writing Competition, to get young people talking about mental health and wellbeing, with a wonderful presentation from Pete Doyle speaking on the importance of music and mental health. We heard how Reading College students had been engaging in conversations around mental health whilst completing their graphic design project and Sir John Madejski congratulated the students and shared his passion for supporting young people and their mental wellbeing. Duncan McClarty from BBC Radio Berkshire, spoke on the positives and negatives of the press in mental health awareness and updating us on the monthly Talking Heads radio programme. Marie O’Brien bravely told us her story of mental illness and her road to recovery through Pranic Healing and finally, we heard from Helen from Sport in Mind speaking about the vital link between sport and mental wellbeing.

Our new logo inspired by the designs from Reading College Students was launched.

MARCH NEWBURY WALK AND TALK EVENT

Walk and Talk - Newbury, Over 300 postcards were handed out to public, shops and managers for staff rooms and lots of conversations about mental health.

A ‘Walk and Talk for Mental Health’ through Newbury town centre helped raise the profile of Brighter Berkshire. Volunteers engaged with as many shoppers as possible to talk more about mental health through the Brighter Berkshire 2017 Year of Mental Health initiative. Shoppers and shop workers were asked if they knew of the initiative and encouraged to make a pledge via the website. Alison Foster said: “Some of the commitments included promising to wear the Brighter Berkshire t-shirts for a few days over the year or having a fundraising coffee morning where people can talk about mental health.” Parkway shopping centre backed the Walk and Talk and Waitrose in Newbury made refreshments for participants. The day was covered by Newbury News and written about by Newbury Labour Party.

Our new logo inspired by the designs from Reading College Students was launched.

Sir John Madjeski thanks Reading College Teachers & Students for their help on our logo and having conversations about mental health which they filmed and shared.

Gerry Lejeune OBE and CEO of Berkshire Community Foundation talks about the plan for fundraising in the year ahead.

Pete Doyle talks about Music as medicine and the secondary school song writing competition.

The designs that inspired the logo development.

Thank you to the Engine Room for the lovely art by people who have experienced mental health challenges.
April

PLUS

• Met with Reading East MP Rob Wilson.
• Featured on That’s Thames Valley TV.
• Thames Valley Business Magazine opens new award for Workplace Mental Health which is sponsored by The Institute of Directors and Cardinal Clinic.

BBC Radio Show Talking Heads.

Coming just twenty-four hours after the London Marathon, Polly, Angela and Nicky speak to local runners who completed the 26.2 mile course for Heads Together, the mental health charity set up by the Duke & Duchess of Cambridge and Prince Harry. Plus, there’s news of how being active can help your mental wellbeing.

Managing mental health in the workplace

With increasing numbers of people suffering from mental health issues such as depression and anxiety, mental wellbeing is becoming a serious priority for UK employers.

Getting started

• Local area committees can be organised, either by the company or independently
• Dedicated mental health awareness campaigns
• Develop a better awareness of mental health issues
• Set up a mental health awareness week
• Organise workshops and seminars on mental health
• Ensure all managers and employees understand mental health issues
• Encourage managers to talk about mental health in meetings

Long-term commitment

• Training for staff to promote employee health
• Develop a mental health awareness programme
• Develop a mental health awareness campaign
• Access to appropriate resources, such as national mental health organisations
• Regular mental health awareness training
• Develop a mental health awareness policy

Next step:

• ‘We believe that promoting mental health in the workplace is not only good for the individual but also for the company. It helps to create a more positive and productive workplace, and ultimately leads to improved business performance and higher staff wellbeing.’

Eddie Curzon – Confederation of British Industry (CBI) Regional Director

▲ We promoted Brighter Berkshire at Slough Recovery College Open Day.

▲ We spoke with Reading Youth Cabinet.
May

PLUS

♦ Spoke at 999 event in Newbury on mental health with 60 people.
♦ Interviewed on Blast 1386 in Reading College by Eddie Winship.
♦ Waitrose and John Lewis agree support for fundraising in shops.
♦ Spoke at Berkshire East CCG event in Maidenhead to 50 people.
♦ Production and circulation of 2 bulletins.
♦ Held a Recovery Network Meeting in Reading bringing many of the recovery leads across Berkshire together.

The Wokingham Lead for Brighter Berkshire Anne-Marie Gawen announced and gets straight on to encouraging people to be open about mental health.

The Healthwatch West Berkshire Board and Chair of Healthwatch England Jane Mordue show their support for talking more about mental health.

The Healthwatch Chief Officer Andrew Sharpe, West Berkshire Council Director of Adult Social Care and Chief Executive Nick Carter show their support for talking more about mental health.

The Thinking Together event in Thatcham with 80 people who ranged from those who have had experience of services, carers, service providers, commissioners and members of the public and Liberal Democrat Candidate Judith Bunting. Brighter Berkshire worked with the Change Makers to facilitate the event as their pledge for the year of mental health. Go to this link for a comprehensive report on the event: http://www.healthwatchwestberks.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Thinking-Together-Final-June-2017.pdf

The Healthwatch West Berkshire Board and Chair of Healthwatch England Jane Mordue show their support

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Jackie Wilkinson (in the middle), Founder at Open for Hope, Mental Health Service User and Campaigner

BBC Radio Talking Heads Show

Polly, Angela and Nicky discuss the responsibility the media has on its portrayal of mental illness.

‘Brighter Berkshire brought a new and refreshing focus to local mental health, made it feel less scary for wide range of people to get involved and gave it increased much needed profile.

For the Thinking together event Brighter Berkshire brought professional resources to help bring together the local community & the report was developed by people who use services & voluntary sector such as Open for Hope, 8 bells, recovery in mind, Newbury SOBS and homeless groups. The value of Brighter Berkshire’s positive approach was in helping bring those views together, made our voices louder and it’s starting to make changes in local services.

There feels a change in the last year in the relationship between decision makers and service users and although progress still feels slow, we are feeling progress in some areas and we hope we can build on this.’

- Jackie Wilkinson, Founder at Open for Hope, Mental Health Service User and Campaigner

Jackie Wilkinson (in the middle), Founder at Open for Hope, Mental Health Service User and Campaigner

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Jackie Wilkinson (in the middle), Founder at Open for Hope, Mental Health Service User and Campaigner
MAY READING EVENTS

WE spoke to hundreds of shoppers and shop workers on the 5th and 6th May and gave out 500 postcards.

As part of our Reading Walk and Talk Event Gig Rooms invited local musicians to busk in Broad Street Mall to support local mental health.

While we played music for mental heath for the second day in a row in Broad Street Mall, both Reading Labour MP Candidates popped in to show their support for the campaign and to speak to those who attended.

We had a lovely surprise from Shamyla who organised a flash mob outside, again to draw attention to talking more about mental health.

Thank you to Waitrose who supplied some refreshments for the volunteers too
**June & July**

- **June**
  - Attended Newbury Suicide Prevention Action Group.
  - Entries open for Thames Valley Magazine Business Award.
  - One bulletin produced and circulated.

- **July**
  - Spoke at a Berkshire Business Network Event to 30 people attended.
  - Discussions with Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership about funding for people out of work with mental health challenges.
  - Thank you to Zsuzsi Page for helping us promote at Reading Fringe.

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**BBC Radio Berkshire Talking Heads Show**

The women discuss the myths attached to schizophrenia and psychosis. Angela talks about the voice she constantly heard throughout her illness.

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**BBC Radio Talking Heads Show**

If you become unwell it doesn’t mean the end of the world. Polly, Angela and Nicky hear about the services available in Berkshire to help patients make a recovery from their illness.

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- **£63k raised so far!!**
  - Thanks to Christine English who delivered an inspiring talk at Reading Fringe with proceeds at the door donated to Brighter Berkshire.
  - We held a Launch event in Wokingham - 40 people attended

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We promoted having a Yellow Day any time in July to get people talking mental health in the workplace. Some areas raised funds for Brighter Berkshire on this day.

Thank you
What’s The Game’ Improve held a comedy event in aid of Brighter Berkshire where Labour Cllr Rose Williams spoke in support of mental health and the initiative. We talked about mental health, power of the arts in supporting mental health and it raised funds too.

▲ Art Exhibition in Reading using art to communicate about mental health and the local restaurant helped to promote the event and mental health with our postcards.

▲ What’s The Game’ Improve

▲ Thank you Reading Spaces, Elaine Barre, Carly Adby and Neil Onslow for organising and the artists for their work.

▲ Fine Art Exhibition 5th-13th August

▲ BBC Radio Talking Heads Show
While our three women took a holiday in August 3 men presented the show on the topic of Mens Mental Health.

▲ Music Recital attended by 60 people. The pieces were written by people with mental health issues or about mental health. The event raised funds for mental health. Thank you Andrew Taylor for organising this and for the funds raised and donated by the event for mental health.

PLUS
- Produce and circulated bulletin.
- We produced a promotion of video for the September Bike Ride engagement and talked about it on That’s Thames Valley TV.
We ran a **bike ride for suicide prevention day** where we encouraged people to cycle indoors or outdoors and add their miles to the world suicide prevention ‘cycle around the world’ challenge and to do it wearing an awareness raising t-shirt to get people talking mental health. Our very own Kevin cycled to Newbury and Back and Linda cycled a few country miles too!

**£125k raised so far!!**

**Reading East Labour MP Matt Rodda** supports the work of Brighter Berkshire to raise awareness and reduce the stigma in mental health.

**We shared with Mayor of Clonmel** the work we are doing and got some great ideas from her too.

**BBC Radio Berkshire Talking Heads show**

If you become unwell it doesn’t mean the end of the world. Polly, Angela and Nicky hear about the services available in Berkshire to help patients make a recovery from their illness.

**PLUS**

- Interview by Newbury Labour Party published on their website.
- Spoke at Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust all staff event of 80 people.
Guinness World record attempt for world largest mental health lesson for young people at Reading Football Club. Over 500 people attended, it was live streamed on video and was watched live by a class in Barcelona. The video has since been viewed over 4500 times.

Promotion in Asda in West Reading

Pictures 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 show the bus tour of Wokingham getting people talking about mental health.

Thank you Healthwatch West Berkshire and Open For Hope for promoting Brighter Berkshire on their stall in Newbury
We went to over 60 shops in Newbury, Reading and Maidenhead and delivered over 1000 postcards and stickers which they then handed out to customers on World Mental Health Day.

Attended Fire Service Wellbeing Event.

Expression of Interest call issued for the BCF Brighter Berkshire Fund.

Presented at two-day mental health conversation at Whitley Development Association which had 80 people over the two days.

Article in Windsor and Maidenhead Newsletter to residents.
November

- Attended the launch of Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategy where 60 people attended.
- One bulletin was produced and circulated.
- Applications open for BCF Brighter Berkshire Fund.
- Item in Wokingham Housing Magazine.

PLUS

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SECONDARY SCHOOL SONG WRITING COMPETITION

£200k total for BCF Brighter Berkshire Fund

Nicky, Angela and Polly pick up their Sony Bronze Award and bump into Vanessa Feltz.

Our winner Charlotte Perry with Beccy Kean at the Secondary School Song Writing Competition Grand Final.

This was an excellent way to engage young people in thinking about and talking about mental health through music and creativity. Thank you to Pete Doyle, Founder of Reading Rock Academy for getting this off the ground and to Beccy Kean for getting us to the end and hosting the event with Matt Foster and Ian Stock. We had prizes donated and awarded to the following winners:

1st - Charlotte Perry – Chose to have a 4-hour recording session in the Studios from Damon Sawyer in Platform Studios.
2nd - Lara Mackim – Chose the 4 hours recording session in the studios in Crouch End Studios.
3rd - Katie Mitchell – Chose The Kaotica Eyeball supplied by Kazbar Systems, special thanks to Gavin Millar.
4th - Jade Illot – Bulmershe Choir – Chose the day and the London based The Songwriting Academy.

Charlotte has also felt so inspired by Brighter Berkshire that she has offered to use her time in the studio to produce her winning song professionally and sell it to donate proceeds to Brighter Berkshire.

And finally there was a small team of people behind the scenes supporting this and a big thank you to them and John Saunderson from Notting Hill Productions who as a Berkshire resident affected by a friends mental health helped to gain the sponsorship for us from the Music Industry.

BBC Radio Show Talking Heads Show
It’s the final episode and the women look back at some of the highlights from the year. They speak to Alastair Campbell about his depression and they’re joined by Alison Foster from Brighter Berkshire.

PLUS

- Consultation with volunteers and core team on future of Brighter Berkshire.
- Meeting with Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership on fund for people who are out of work due to mental health challenges and support for Mental Health training for employers.
- Attended Confederation of British Industry (CBI) Thames Valley dinner with promotion to talk more about mental health on the table brochure.
- Talking Heads show wins Sony Bronze Award
Huge impact and powerful community-led work and the most positive impact has it being community-led with service users, carers and others steering the work without the help (hinderance) of the statutory sector. This means the voice is louder, more real and carries more meaning.

Darren Gale, Suicide Prevention Lead for Berkshire

Open and inclusive with an ambitious and imaginative agenda of widening community interaction

Seamus Allen, What’s The Game Improv
HIGHLIGHTS OF MY YEAR OF MENTAL HEALTH

JANUARY
My involvement with Brighter Berkshire began with the planning session at Newbury Rugby Club. I posted my contribution on my website, fired off emails to all my Berkshire MP colleagues urging them to get involved and spoke about the campaign on the Anne Diamond show – the start of an amazing commitment by BBC Radio Berkshire which lasted all year and hopefully will continue.

On January 9 the PM made a keynote speech to the Charity Commission which set out a comprehensive package of reforms to improve mental health support at every stage of a person’s life. She talked about parity and announced new support for mental health in schools and in the workplace. A good prelude to the launch of Brighter Berkshire on Blue Monday when I was interviewed by Polly, Angela and Nicky on the first Talking Heads show. Their monthly programme was to run all year and has been continually inspiring and moving.

FEBRUARY
I raised Brighter Berkshire at Prime Minister’s Questions and was delighted to hear the PM’s supportive response. And a Westminster Hall debate on private renting solutions for homeless and vulnerable people gave me the chance to highlight the obvious connection with mental health: ‘Mental health problems can cause homelessness and homelessness can cause mental health problems’.

MARCH
Delighted to see the partnership launched between Brighter Berkshire and the Berkshire Community Foundation. As well as helping with fundraising this will provide a platform for Brighter Berkshire to continue on beyond 2017. I spoke at the day organised by Thatcham Vision for senior citizens addressing the issues that face the elderly; top of the list is loneliness and isolation - mental health issues are a lifelong challenge. On to Newbury to open the newly refurbished centre for the Samaritans which will help them deliver their vital service in our area. I spoke at the West Berkshire Health & Wellbeing Board on mental health. This is where moves to change can take place and where I can get a sense of how things are working on the ground.

MAY
I was at the first meeting of the Suicide Prevention Action Group in the Town Hall in Newbury. The Berkshire Suicide Audit for 2012-2014 included 120 deaths, 70% of which were classified as suicide by the Coroner and the other 30% were undetermined or open verdicts. There’s a lot to do and it was good to see this group taking shape. The Government announces the biggest change to the law on mental health treatment in over three decades, tackling discrimination and the overuse of detention, protecting those suffering from discrimination at work, and investing in 10,000 more NHS mental health staff by 2020.

JULY
I attended the APPG on Mental Health which gave me an insight into the use of the NHS England Mental Health Five Year Forward View Dashboard, a tool which monitors progress against delivery. It is updated every quarter and will mean I can continue to keep informed about mental health services in the constituency and identify local issues to raise with our CCG. The APPG is also doing good work looking at reform of the Mental Health Act, supported housing and the upcoming Green Paper on Children and Young People’s Mental Health.

SEPTEMBER
Good to hear the Government pledge to recruit 21,000 new mental health workers in England and to spend £1.3billion to treat an extra one million people by 2021. Mind held a Parliamentary reception at Westminster, a useful look at the campaigning work of this excellent charity. A week later, I visited Prospect Park Hospital which, although not in my constituency, is where critically ill people from West Berkshire are treated. With Ali Foster, I saw round three of the wards and met patients, staff and managers. It gave me an insight into the patient experience and useful contacts for raising constituents’ issues in the future.
OCTOBER

Excellent feedback from the Suicide Prevention Training workshop at Shaw House. If each attendee cascades this training to their own colleagues it will reach well over 11,000 employees. A great achievement by Garry Poulson and his team. It was also good to hear about the launch of the Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategy which has come together thanks to the hard work of all agencies across the county – lots of useful action points and a real sense of commitment to a zero suicide aspiration for Berkshire. Happy to put my name to Conservatives for Mental Health at Westminster, a new campaign group set up to share ideas and promote better support for mental health in our constituencies. It prompted me to write to the head of CAMHS about waiting times as different people report different experiences.

NOVEMBER

A privilege to sit in on a session of the Emotional Health Academy in Newbury, hearing how it is successfully providing early intervention and targeted help for our children and young people. A response from CAMHS about waiting times which in themselves are not bad with one ‘point of entry’ but the answer to my question whether waiting times are reducing is negative; there is clearly more to be done. Back to the Health & Wellbeing Board for an update regarding the action plan for mental health in West Berkshire.

DECEMBER

The Green Paper on Transforming Children and Young People’s Mental Health Provision sets out proposals for earlier intervention with, amongst other things, senior leads for mental health to be trained in every school and college, new Mental Health Support Teams to be put in place around schools and colleges and a pilot for a four-week waiting time standard for access to children and young people’s mental health services. Discussing plans with Ali for a Brighter Berkshire end of year event in January – a finale to an amazing year and the start of the next? This year has taught me so much about mental health – hearing people talk about their own experiences, learning from the professionals I’ve met, understanding more about the support that is out there and more about what is still needed – ‘grass-roots’ knowledge that will help me continue to engage with mental health policy both locally and nationally. Long term improvements need to be brave, non-partisan and evidence-based. Brighter Berkshire has shown how communities can come together from across the spectrum to work for change. It is an initiative that should be rolled out across the country.
I was elected as Labour MP for Reading East in June last year and I have been working to challenge the Government to do more for those who live with mental health issues.

For instance, I have pressed the Government to pause and fix controversial changes to the benefits system to introduce Universal Credit which could lead to many disabled people finding it harder to claim benefits. And, I am concerned about the Government’s reliance on disability assessments by staff who may not be medically trained, while at the same time downplaying evidence from disabled people’s own GPs and consultants.

On a wider note I am concerned that the Government’s policy of austerity is likely to have made matters worse for many people with mental health issues due to the cuts being made to public services. I’m also concerned that spending on the NHS is failing to keep up with the demand for health care and the pressure on mental health services locally reflects this.

However, Brighter Berkshire has been successful in engaging a wide community of people in conversations about mental health during these challenging times.

There were two events that particularly made an impression on me. The first was an evening of choral music held in St Lawrence’s Church in Reading, which included a considerable amount of audience participation. Music and art can play an important part in helping tackle mental health issues and the event did a great deal to bring people together and raise awareness of mental health.

The second event was the Berkshire business awards. Brighter Berkshire supported an award for businesses which help support mental health in the workplace and I felt this was an innovative way to commend employers and raise awareness of the work they are doing to support staff with mental health issues.

The event also raised the issue of mental health with hundreds of other people who attended the ceremony to receive awards for other aspects of the work being carried out by their businesses. And, I hope that Brighter Berkshire’s involvement in the awards will help lift the anxiety that people can sometimes feel when talking about mental health at work.

In both events I witnessed how important the work of Brighter Berkshire was to the people attending. It is a project that makes it easier for individuals to talk openly and without shame about mental health and for this it should be congratulated.
We used pledges as a way of asking people to do just one thing to help raise awareness over the year and here are just some of the pledges we received. They not only show the commitment from people to and to get involved and help but they provided ideas for others on how they could help too.

- I pledge my time to help the campaign raise awareness this year.
- To stand up for a Brighter Berkshire and start and join in activities and conversations.
- To speak to community groups about mental health and the need to talk about it in order to remove the stigma associated with mental illness.
- To support those with a mental health diagnosis and help break down the stigma surrounding mental health.
- To encourage councillors to take up the Mental Health Challenge.
- My personal pledge has been to help bring people together for events and to spread the message about Brighter Berkshire.
- To reach as many people as possible through training and raising awareness of Mental Health and Wellbeing, especially within diverse communities where this subject is still not talked about.
- To raise awareness of the importance of mental health and wellbeing in pregnancy and beyond.
- To encourage conversations about mental health with friends and to check in with friends I haven’t heard from in a while.
- I pledge to support the Brighter Berkshire initiative by co-hosting the ‘Talking Heads’ monthly show on BBC Radio Berkshire, support the core team and to continue to develop the ‘Recovery in Mind’ Recovery College course for people living in West Berkshire who have a variety of mental health challenges.
- I pledge to run a conference to bring all interested parties together to work together from before a baby is born to ensure the whole family develops the best mental health.
- I would be happy to talk to people about my experiences of mental health issues and what I did to recover.
- To personally think differently and to support the organisation to recognise our staff needs and ensure they are supported.
- I pledge to promote mental health awareness and work to improve the mental health of people of all ages across Berkshire.
- I will passionately sponsor the Brighter Berkshire programme at Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.
- Promote the understanding and importance for everyone to protect their mental health and wellbeing.
- To raise awareness of mental health and associated matters.
- To spread the word about Brighter Berkshire to all the businesses that I meet in the region and encourage them to pledge.
- I believe that there is no public health without mental health and will therefore work with partners to ensure mental health is embedded into practise. Through the delivery of the Year of Mental Health Action Plan, 2017. I intend to work with partners to,
  - roll out Mental health impact screening of policy across the council,
  - lead the development of the Suicide Prevention & self-harm action plan
  - ensure all managers receive MHFA training
  - reEvaluate the Mental Health First Aid Training
- Ensure awareness is raised in local schools
- Launch a recovery college
- Undertake community asset mapping

To help others with MH difficulties and support BB spread the word, going to events when I can.

We can offer volunteers to provide treatments/workshops/advice.

I pledge to give my time as a volunteer for ‘Wokingham Your Way’ and ‘Your Voice in Action’ in the Wokingham Borough, to provide support and assist with organising activities for people with mental health conditions.

Time and Skills.

I want to promote Brighter Berkshire during my book events in Reading and also on my social media platform.

I want to help people with mental health by giving advice or anything I can do to help.

I pledge to speak up about mental health and get everyone else to do that same. Better to talk than feel alone.

We’re happy to help facilitate the outcomes you’re seeking this year.

- Designing at least 5 puzzles a week and to research ways they may fund MH.
- To highlight the disastrous effect of the Conservative Governments policies have had on mental health and to hold Theresa May, Richard Benyon, and Alok Sharma personally responsible for the rise in the suicide rate.
From the very beginning this was started as and continued to be a big listening exercise. In shaping the idea and planning we had conversations with many to test the idea and how it might work. We decided to have an open planning event to bring people together, hear directly form people affected by mental health and use this experience to help shape ideas.

Throughout the year we received feedback at events, on email, through survey’s and social media engagement. The ongoing and continuous positive encouragement we received is what kept us all motivated and feeling that we were helping some people.

December 2016 - Planning Event

With 80 people in the room, sessions with flipcharts and post it notes to get ideas we got some great inspiration and practical comments, which were combined with a survey we ran online. The comments were used to develop this write up.

Aspirational ideas expressed included notions of community, working together in communities, towards a cultural shift that would see people in everyday places and activities talking about mental health. It would be necessary to generate momentum (in the practical ways described below) and take responsibility as people who use services, care for others, and as members of communities, to work with statutory bodies, political groups and professionals, in ways that support families and volunteers, and avoid relying on or exploiting goodwill.

Places important to people includes schools, colleges, workplaces, social, leisure, sports, creative spaces, as well as the casual, familiar places we inhabit.

A receptiveness to people talking about mental health would be evidenced by mental health friendly policies and practices in formal and informal settings, and in our relationships with each other. These would be informed by a deeper knowledge and understanding of both the negative effects of silence, stigma and exclusionary practices, and the positive power of openness, inclusiveness and an assertive approach to maintaining and promoting good mental health.

Practical ideas included formation of a steering group or committee, with dedicated roles, a series of events, aims and goals. Specific ideas have been offered and listed, with popular ideas including safe haven cafes, work with young people and their networks, more effective connectedness between helping agencies, education/training and social/leisure activities open to all. A new openness and visibility would characterise Brighter Berkshire’s A Year of Mental Health, particularly in everyday places and activities. Learning from others may include connecting with other regions, mapping resources, signposting and creating resources.

The need for a narrative was expressed in order to help us make connections with other important societal contributors to mental ill health, to understand the importance of context, and to offer some ideas of how the future might be different. A narrative that challenges the dominant tendency to locate mental health problems with individuals and families is overdue; one that offers new learning and understanding of the role played by communities and organisations as well as by individuals and those in positions of influence.

The importance of working with statutory partners, independent/third sector and charitable organisations was a given, however it was the perspective and insight of people with experience of ill health and of recovery/self management that enabled us to see mental health services in the most memorable ways.
Some of the ideas we had were:

- **1:4 people are affected by mental health problems**
  maybe local Mayors could commit 25% of time to promoting MH issues which would also the receive related press coverage.

- **ACCESSS Bars is an energetic body process which gently touches 32 points on the head to release current concerns.**
  A young family member suffers from depression and panic attacks and social anxiety and she enjoys having her bars run. There are also regular facilitated classes run in Thatcham West Berkshire. Dr Fannin is a neuroscientist who has researched Access Bars.

- Establishing networking structures allowing the families of people with problems to get in touch with others to share experiences and support. In many cases ongoing support for patients is left to families and professional staff are not necessarily the best people to provide long-term support and advice. In considering safe haven cafes we need to be aware that we need different provision for different demographics. For old people the need is frequently for a place where they can meet and talk, but for teenagers the requirement may be more for anonymity where they can relax in quietness and comfortable solitude. Good coffee, good wifi. Schools are frequently the place where children's mental problem first become manifest.

- **“Reduced gym memberships for everyone.** Exercise is proven to have a beneficial effect on mood and well being. Unfortunately gym memberships are very expensive. More subsidised exercise classes or gym memberships would encourage people to exercise more regularly. A rental bike scheme is the local area would also be a great way of getting people out and exercising."

- **Poor mental health costs £1000 per employee per year.** Why not companies pay £1 per employee this year to support this initiative.

- **One target could be to build mental health awareness into the professional development plans for all schools.** The aim is to produce a measurable change in early diagnosis/intervention.

- **Local College suggested this years project focus on Art and Mental Health and would like to explore a county wide competition on this with maybe local exhibitions in colleges or museums.**

- **Using connected networks, think outside current sphere of influence.** Who might you know in both your personal or professional sphere of influence to them involved.

- **Local businesses have an award, maybe a category could be for good mental health initiative, would encourage applications, surfacing what works and rewarding while profiling.**

- **Councils make pledges not only to share what they are doing but make personal pledges and also maybe have increase in mental health first aid training.**

- **Shopping centres commit to promote through flyers or whatever that its a Year of Mental Health and maybe there could be some key ones doing the ‘round up to the nearest pound’ for local charity mental health, for the year?**

- **Berkshire wide awards event.**

- **Brighter Berkshire champions in places like schools, work, leisure, who would share info with their wider network and feedback any events or activities.**

- **Working groups on areas of importance such as the desire expressed by many to have a safe haven cafe.**

- **Music festivals with mental health theme having fun, having conversations about mental health and understanding the benefits music can bring.**

- **Sporting events could be held under this banner – football tournaments, school sports days, etc with information at these on power of exercise and sport to your mental health.**

- **Library events and speaking events from writers on mental health.**
We held an event in March which saw the launch of our logo and our partnership with Berkshire Community Foundation. We again heard from many people with experience of some of the issues with having mental health challenges and the options around recovery. The comments below were in response to some of the questions asked on the day.

**How do you think the Berkshire community can improve mental wellbeing?**

- Yes - talking about it is a good start
- Continue as you have started. Keep up the profile and conversations
- More events - breaking the taboo
- Need more networking - everyone's insight is valid
- Connect and talk more
- By coming together and networking
- Promote + support events, like these and small community groups
- Educate people on vitamin D, essential fatty acids, food which contribute to depression and the nature of the mind and ego
- Just gather the momentum and move forward. Get the various charities talking between themselves and co-operating
- Awareness of mental health and what is available to help. Opening up communication lines. Education of how to deal with sufferers
- Greatly, it can give people more information
- Start informing children from earlier age - in junior schools
- Working together
- Through huge numbers of charities and self-help groups
- By supported the initiative and partnering with BB
- By linking together and sharing events/ideas
- Tackling stigma, engage networking people together so feel empowered to do things. Feel supported
- Continue to be open and accept it as an illness. Also the effect of isolation is often worse in rural areas
- By communicating to all mental health services
- Listen to a Friend' cards to hand out. How i will listen to anyone, whoever they are
- Raising awareness and joint up thinking
- Running a public event
- Communication - awareness is the key
- Keep the conversation going
- Awareness programs combat stigma
- Know where to go for help
- by supporting local organisations network and share experience. be a centre of excellence
- Communication + sharing - spreading awareness
How has our event today made you feel about mental health in Berkshire?

- Optimistic
- As a person with mental illness, I am very moved to see how many people and organisations want to work together to make a difference
- Positive
- Excited - want a plan of action and to get stuck in
- I need to do more
- Positive
- That working together is beneficial to those with mental illness
- Quite emotional but hopeful there will be improvement
- A lot more hopeful and positive
- Motivated to raise awareness and get involved
- It has inspired me to do more
- Not enough communication
- more aware of benefit of different interventions
- There is a clear need for intervention
- That there is lots to do, there is hope
- Really positive, inspired and happy
- Worried that so much needs to be done
- excited to make changes
- although inspirational, I felt depressed that I find it so difficult to do as much as I want to personally do, to make a difference
- Awareness. This is a bigger issue than many think. It encourages optimism
- reality of how far we have come but how much work there is still to do
- Encouraged that people care
- hopeful
- There is recognition that there is work to do
- Hopeful
- Very positive

Do you have any suggestions for the future of this campaign?

- Refugee led discussion fighting impact on them - RRSG
- Continue to provide information, regular email updates and communications to enable us to help and volunteer
- So far doing well especially the radio show
- keep it going!
- Keep going
- Organise more vents like this on a regular basis, and other events to engage the community
- Talk to local businesses
- I think the ‘nuts + bolts’ need to be put in place, it needs a structure and a lead to drive it forward. I see BB as the umbrella org with charities and community groups delivering the initiatives
- More counties to spread the word. + Thank you
- Time to change projects + rethinking mental health
- Keep moving it round the county and use different age groups
- just more awareness and sessions like this
- every idea is worth something - a ‘response book; contributing ideas/coping mechanisms by people with MH problems. The book could raise funds
- more regional sessions and joined up thinking and networking
- Need to think about legacy after 2017
- Keep going beyond 2017
SURVEY AND FEEDBACK

END OF YEAR SURVEY COMMENTS

What is your impression of Brighter Berkshire

- Open and inclusive with an ambitious and imaginative agenda of widening community interaction
- A very dynamic, inclusive and ambitious project which could have a lasting impact on local Mental health
- I love how it helps break down barriers to discussing and helping people’s mental health which is so vital
- They are ambitious
- Brighter Berkshire has been a fabulously positive campaign that reached right across society and has helped to draw people into conversation about how common mental health issues are and how greatly people can benefit from the right support at the right time
- It’s has raise the profile in 2017
- Sounds like a good initiative but have not heard about it until today (Jan 2018).
- Excellent campaign, run by dedicated people
- Very impressed by the passion, energy and drive of Ali and the team to make a difference in this field. It had set itself a big challenge but as it seems to resonate with many people to various degrees it is clearly needed. It is good to see the support from existing bodies and organisations. Anything that helps raise awareness & reduce stigma will benefit so many people of all ages - either experiencing or how best to support others
- That it has got a conversation going Berkshire-wide on mental health and raised the profile of mental health with decision makers.
- An excellent example of collaboration and real partnership working.
- Phenomenal
- Highly effective at raising public awareness of MH issues
- Focused dynamic and accessible charity.
- I want to find out more
- It was really active in raising awareness and funds but it took a while to understand what it was going to do with the funds it raised
- Great initiative but with patchy impact in terms of geographical coverage - less well promoted in Reading than West Berks and Wokingham
- I have heard of it but other than that it has had no impact on me and I struggle to understand what it does
- Fantastic, more work to reduce the stigma of mental health is desperately needed and to have an organisation like Brighter Berkshire is great.
- huge impact and powerful community-led work
- Excellent collaboration and some great events to raise awareness and reduce stigma
- not sure yet
- Tried to seek information and offer volunteer services but without success so unfortunately my impression of BB is not good
• Seems to be a lot of awareness raising but nothing actually emerging for people with mental health issues
• Dodgy, shallow, happy clappy nonsense probably best ignored if it wasn’t for the high Tory prominence
• It seems all good but I am worried that the government will use organisations like yours to diminish the involvement of state run support to charities and eventually privatise it to save money. A bit like they are doing with the NHS
• Simply AMAZING!
• An organisation that strives to help others & needs continuous support
• Tried to get involved but little response or interest from you
• I don’t have one - I’ve only just found out about it
• Excellent
• Unknown
• It's a useful service
• Lots of ideas but not enough investment
• Not sure what the impact has been locally as only hearing about you at the end of year
• Busy
• Great initiative. Welcoming and open to all, no pressure to get involved. Has increased my own awareness of MH
• Unsure
• Not really clear about its purpose
• No impression - not entirely clear what it was about
• Anything supportive of improving my county’s mental health is worth investigating
• The mental health lesson was extremely valuable to myself and my students who attended. The students and school really benefited from spectrum and is still a topic of conversation within the school
• Don’t know anything
• I don’t really know what you do?
• Amazing service
• Anything to get people talking about mental health is good
• Very good, nice idea to bring people together with issues
• I believe that Brighter Berkshire under the leadership of Ali Foster along with her dedicated team and well-wishers have done a fantastic job over the last one year. This includes but not limited to raising the profile of mental health, passionately lobbying for further investments in mental health, engaging with key stakeholders to explore collaborative work and influencing the landscape of public mental health across Berkshire. People's mental health and wellbeing is at the heart of Brighter Berkshire's Campaign; I believe that working closely with Healthwatch and other partner agencies they have contributed to mainstreaming of 'coproduction' with service users as a means to come up with solutions for the problems faced by them in the mental health care system
• Very helpful for raising awareness & support
• Seems like a great initiative
• Brighter Berkshire is an extremely proactive charity and has achieved so much in terms of both fundraising for future impact changes required for mental health projects and also in raising the profile of all things mental health in the Berkshire region by way of events and volunteers spreading the word. Other charities have mentioned to myself they have been amazed and a little jealous of the widespread and comprehensive impact Brighter Berkshire has made in such a very short space of time. I have been very impressed and its improved many volunteers lives simply by giving people a sense of purpose and an increased feeling of improved self esteem and belonging also. From a personal perspective its been the initial and now ongoing catalyst for my own improvement in many areas of my daily living when in truth I had been stagnating
• Inspirational
• Amazing mental health campaign
• Amazing
• A pointless exercise, in which a certain class of persons with a certain amount of power latch on to a pointless sloganeering approach to ‘having a conversation’ rather than effectively assisting anyone and build a shiny happy webpage to promote politicians and their own careers
• Organisational (ethos, aims and structure) vague and opaque. 2. Politically biased towards the Conservatives
What has been the most the positive impact of Brighter Berkshire

- What a self-serving question, in a generally poorly designed survey
- By being a local, tangible manifestation of Cameron’s Big Society and Theresa May’s Shared Society BB has highlighted the extent of the destruction of public services and the NHS, and how ready some people are to embrace and capitalise on the business opportunities that this presents
- Through diverse projects their ability to spread information across communities whilst facilitating open and relaxed dialogue
- Awareness of the issue, local engagement and raising additional funds that would otherwise not be available for local organisations
- Helped bring up the subject in a very normal way so everyone can feel less isolated
- Generating a bit of noise around mental health and wellbeing
- Many positive events and a genuine reduction in the reluctance of people to talk about mental health matters and to acknowledge problems
- Bought people together
- I have not heard about it until today (Jan 2018) so cannot comment
- Raising profile
- By being even loosely connected it is helpful to open up discussions with others to begin to reduce the stigma about living with the ups & downs of anxiety/depression and not feel so sad/guilty/ashamed. By being involved & using your own experience to help others puts issues into perspective and tunes you into how to help yourself & others. Taking more of an interest in local and national activities to promote well being again - exercise, local Tuneless Choir!, review diet, volunteering, work-life balance
- The increased awareness of mental health among local politicians, commissioners and decision makers has led to an expectation in West Berkshire that focused actions will be completed to lead to a genuine and measurable improvement in the experiences of people with mental ill-health
- People from all walks of life feeling confident and comfortable to talk about mental health
- Starting conversations. Making commissioners sit up
- Getting mental health talked about and achieving a focus on MH amongst local organisations and the community
- Brighter Berkshire has engaged ‘insiders’ to challenge the stigma surrounding mental health and has made a significant impact on raising awareness.
- Don’t know yet
- Raising awareness of mental health issues
- Getting so many interested people in the same room at the same time discussing mental health - fund raising campaign by BCF leading to specific funding programme around MH
- Unknown
- Increasing the awareness of mental health in Berkshire and to help many realise they aren’t alone in their struggles with mental health.
- Being community-led with service users, carers and others steering the work without the help (hinderance) of the statutory sector. This means the voice is louder, more real and carries more meaning.
- Bringing people together to talk about mental health issues in such a positive way
- Not sure yet
- I haven’t seen or been able to access any information to establish any impact.
- The radio shows, but I believe the BBC might have been going to do these anyway. If so BB claimed responsibility for something they had little to do with.
- The involvement of some service users it is hard to see how’s behind it and who makes decisions
- The investment and awareness that Alison has raised. She’s made real change
- Awareness
- Positive community-based training and services
- Raising awareness
- Not sure yet
- Meeting others, having open discussions with like minded people and those who have accessed MH services. Learning more about MH myself.
- Not aware of any
- None for me
- That it exists!
- Spectrum event
• I don’t know
• Having somewhere to be a part of
• Mental health is not only on everyone’s agenda but there is a concerted effort to move beyond from rhetoric to actions to improve the lives of people with poor mental health in Berkshire. I congratulate the Brighter Berkshire team and its partners to proactively leading the charge on they way people identify, relate and address mental health issues
• Going around Wokingham & others parts helping to raise awareness of your work eg. during Mental Health week etc
• Bringing people together, both online & IRL
• Providing a purpose and a sense of wellbeing for volunteers who perhaps for a variety of reasons have been unavailable for paid employment
• Getting Berkshire talking about mental health
• How driven the campaign has been
• Connecting people, finding ways for people to get involved, canvassing opinions and stories, thinking, “outside the box”, including all parts of society - mental health is everybody’s business

What would you improve about Brighter Berkshire?
• Hand the running of it over to mental health service users, or at the very least listen to them - all of them, even the awkward ones who you wish would shut up. Don’t tell people that what you do is for them without any evidence that they were meaningfully consulted
• Be specific about aims and how success would be measured and precisely who would benefit. 2) More transparency and accountability by putting the most vulnerable and needy people at the heart of things, thereby giving them a strong voice. 2) Remove all political connections, endorsements and affiliations. 3) Be honest about what you’ve done and are doing, which is to capitalise on the privatisation of services
• More support funding to them so they may have larger group of full time staff to field enquiries
• Make it a permanent entity delivering projects across Berkshire
• Have a pop shop people can drop into to discuss what’s available to help and sustain mental health. So it’s more visible and accessible
• More going on a grass routes level, more public engagement/involvement, less of a lean towards mental ill health
• I would improve the reach in West Berkshire. Events have seemed a little bit Reading/Maidenhead-centric
• I have not heard about it until today (Jan 2018) so perhaps there needs to be more information e.g. on Doctor’s Surgery Noticeboards? I read the local paper fairly regularly but haven’t noticed anything about you in there
• Think it’s doing great
• Nothing to improve, build on what has been started if there is the energy/support/finances to do so. Regular news/social media keeps it in mind. Possibly consider developing more initiatives/connections in Windsor/Maidenhead area as many seem to be West Berks/Reading way?
• I don’t know the campaign well enough to suggest improvements!
• Just carry on!
• With growth the digital capacity will need to improve
• More exposure
• More awareness of where the funds raised are being spent
• Appoint a lead in each local authority area
• Clarity of message, approachability, viability
• Just to make sure it doesn’t end in 2017 and continues its great work for many years to come
• Well, I hope it will continue - but 2018 cannot be the year of mental health because that was 2017. Therefore, a new way to create energy and market its message is required for the year(s) ahead
• It had spread deeper into business and schools
• Communication
• Spend more time actually getting support in place
• Drop the Tories, drop the politicians, start talking to people who have been in Prospect Park about the human rights abuses, start campaigning against the cuts and the impact on CAHMS and other services, publish your accounts, publish an end of year report with outcomes studies preferably done by an independent assessor and make sure any criticisms of BB’s work is included in the report
• Make the whole organisation transparent and accountable
• Just try and keep it going. Embed it into Berkshire events so it becomes the annual Brighter Berkshire this or that...... the charity people thinking about like Launchpad
like most mental health organisations there’s lots of PR etc but little to support those in the frontline or experiencing mental health difficulties

More mental health training and awareness

Needs places for people to meet and talk in the evening

Greater awareness in schools and colleges. There is a massive gap in care for children due to long wait lists

Keep saying what they’ve done, what they’ve improved, who they’ve helped. Sufferers need positive stories. More PR

Increased publicity and seek to have this as increasingly important topic across Berkshire. I.e. new funding opportunities could come with a condition that part of the funds/project go towards MH support. Continue some of the activities undertaken in year of mental health into following years

Real clarity of planned outcomes

Can’t say

Gain more support from other local residents

Make it clear what you do. Are you just raising awareness of mental health? Is very unclear

As someone who has been through Talking Therapies I would have thought it would have been promoted by TT as a resource

Is there a online forum? or some where people can ask questions or for help. Where do you go if the medical services are not helping?

I would love to see a thorough evaluation of this fantastic campaign and identify element that could be scaled up in the rest of the country. This exemplar work cries for wider dissemination and closer integration with mainstream mental health care provision

Perhaps more visibility within the work ongoing and required to be done from administrative and marketing perspectives so that more volunteers can lighten the load of others and also by attracting even more volunteers the scope can be increased too. But it’s amazing as it is today

More responsive and updated
OVERVIEW OF SOME ONLINE STATISTICS

TWITTER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number of tweets made</th>
<th>Profile Visits</th>
<th>Tweet Impressions</th>
<th>Mentions</th>
<th>New Followers</th>
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<tr>
<td>Nov-16</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>2,485</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec-16</td>
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<td>786</td>
<td>8,403</td>
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<td>251</td>
<td>203</td>
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<td>4,040</td>
<td>56,600</td>
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<td>139</td>
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<td>63,200</td>
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<tr>
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<td>558</td>
<td>19,600</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>53</td>
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<tr>
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<td>39</td>
<td>702</td>
<td>27,500</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>48</td>
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<td>Aug-17</td>
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<td>Oct-17</td>
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<td>39,000</td>
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<td>18,100</td>
<td>59</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#brighterberkshire reached over 4 Million impressions in the first month

Total number of tweets made 2978
Total followers 1194
Total number of likes 939

FACEBOOK

622 followers
635 Likes

WEBSITE

Average visits a day 150-200
Total visits 65,333
We have had so many people ask that this work continue. Reflecting with volunteers and others, the only way this can continue is to learn from what we have done, build on it and establish a sustainable model. A large group of people feel that with some effort like we have had over the last year we could really make a difference to stigma in Berkshire, helping the community come together to understand the wide range of issues affecting mental health and the support that is available to people and therefore helping people who need mental health support get the right support when they need it.

A number of those people who have worked with us over the year have come together as a Board of Advisors. They are people who have had experience of mental health challenges themselves, had experience of mental health services, know people who have had mental health challenges, worked in mental health or are interested in helping the community come together on this issue.

We will be having our first meeting before the end of March to come to a shared understanding about how we work, what we might focus on and how we will resource what we think we need to do.

1. Kathryn Baddeley – Cisco and Vice Chair at Board of Trustees for Berkshire Women’s Aid
2. Kevin Hood – Volunteer Reading Your Way,
3. Alice Clifton – Healthwatch West Berkshire
4. Chris Downes – Experience as a service user
5. Doris Allimadi, Project Coordinator at The Children and Women’s Trust and author of ‘Lost, my battle with depression’
6. Cecily Mwaniki– Community Liaison Lead BHFT, Mental Health First Aid Trainer and liaises closely with ACRE.
7. Mark Anthony Lawerence – CEO History Portal and Reading Pride Ambassador
8. Lis Allen – Author and performer of Vagina Dialogues and Stop Talking Bollox has also experienced mental health issues and passionate about early year
9. Linda Dobraszczyk – Public Health Specialist, led the Mental Health In the Womb Conference and 70/30 Wave Ambassador
10. Karen Smith – Experience in mental health in young people
11. Naomi Cross – Open University student and speaker on her experience with mental health issues
12. Caroline Gratrix, mum, experience of suicide in the family, volunteer, community activist and owner of Viva Photography
13. Lorna Crossan – Relax Kids Woodley, with experience of mental health issues and passionate about children’s mental health
14. Heidi Strickland Clarke – FastTrack Fit Camp – fitness and well-being specialist with experience of helping deliver positive impact of activity on mental health
15. Eddie Winship – Radio Producer and Presenter Blast FM and lots of experience in mental health, addictions and volunteering
16. James Cuggy – Experienced mental health issues and believes in power of the arts to help with some mental health issues
17. Lauren Hope – Experienced mental health issues and runs www.MovingOnTV.com
18. Kirsti Wilson – Managing Director at Connect Reading – connecting business and voluntary sector
19. Karen Shukla – NHS Communications Specialist and Mental Health First Aid Trainer
20. Julie Napier– Lead at Newbury Sobs, a support group for people bereaved by Suicide which Julie has had direct experience of
21. Rosie Dale – Mum, Teacher and School Governor
Below is an overview on a page of some of the ideas developed in talking with volunteers and others about what the future shape of Brighter Berkshire could look like. This will be discussed at our next Board meeting.
THANK YOU

There is not enough room on the page to thank everyone by name for the time, effort and passion they have put into the year of mental health. Many of them are listed on our website through their logo’s and pledges and there were hundreds of volunteers across all the events over the year giving anything from an hour to many days to raise awareness, thank you!

But there are some that we would like to highlight for their contribution and commitment throughout the year.

- Anne Marie Gawen
- Freya Moss
- Claire Belcher
- Jim Fyfe
- Teri Kersey
- Richard Candy
- Kevin Hood
- Shamyla
- Chris Downes
- Jackie Wilkinson
- Linda Dobraszczyk
- Stuart Carroll
- Teresa Salami
- Lisa Mc Nally
- Donna Morgan
- Darran Gale
- Andrew Sharpe
- Alice Clifton
- Jackie Evans
- Ray Booth
- Pete Doyle
- Adam Benson
- Debbie Willis
- Anna Croft
- Becky Kean
- Antonia Taylor
- John Saunderson
- Amanda Fogg
- Mani Coulter
- Agnes Gibson
- Andrew Taylor
- John Gratrix
- Dr Angus Tallini
- Andy Bell
- Joanna Birrell
- Tim Smith
- Victoria Bee Bee
- Shirley Stoddart
- Hemma Marshal
- Zsusi Page
- All those who donated
- Our new Board of Advisors
- Englefield Trust - £5000
- Healthwatch Wokingham - £400
- Healthwatch West Berkshire
- All Berkshire Councils
- BBC Radio Berkshire Talking Heads Team
- Berkshire Community Foundation Team
- Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust
- Berkshire West CCG
- Berkshire East CCG
- Reading Football Club
- Thames Valley Business Magazine
- Cardinal Clinic
- Institute of Directors
- Confederation of British Industry
- Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership Berkshire
- StageCoach West Reading
- Reading Rock and Pop Academy
- Activate College Reading
- Broad Street Mall
- Parkway Shopping Centre
- What’s the Game Improv
- Pheonix Choir
- Waitrose
- John Lewis
- Asda West Reading
- Our Reading Half Marathon Runners
- Newbury News
- Reading Youth Cabinet
- Sponsors of the Song Writing Competition
- All those who entered Song Writing Competition
- All those who entered and were shortlisted for the Thames Valley Business Magazine Workplace Mental Health Award
- Microsoft
- Cisco
- Newbury Rugby Club
- Reading Voluntary Action
- Connect Reading
- Alana Finn
- Dingleys Promise
- The Change Makers
- Catherine English
- Rebecca Ranson
- Open for Hope