



# Action

## East Devon



Strategic business plan for Action East Devon; detailing provisions and identifying plans for new development of services in the community

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## **The Way Forward**

### Strategic Plan 2022-25



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## Where we are now?

Action East Devon (AED) is a leading local charity working with the people, communities and organisations of East Devon to create the services and support they need to live happier and healthier lives.

Our Service delivery model as of April 1<sup>st</sup> 2022 comprised two areas; older people and younger people's wellbeing. In April we took the difficult decision to cease delivery of our older people's service (Forget-Me-Not) and concentrate our resources on young people and families.

As of early 2022, our young people's service comprised peer support services for 13-18 and 18-24 year olds in Ottery St Mary and Axminster market towns. These run on a fortnightly basis, alternating for the two age ranges. AED is currently delivering a school mentoring service in Sidmouth Community College working with, on average 20, young people aged 12-18 years, every fortnight on a 1-2-1 system through the school day.

We have detailed plans to expand this service over the next three years. This document outlines our commitments to this, the methodology we will be employing and the financial requirements that underpin it.





## Background of need

Concerns about young people's mental health were recognised nationally before the pandemic. During the pandemic young people have become increasingly isolated and there has been an increase in both self-harming and demand for the counselling and welfare support services.

As the country emerges from the pandemic the national charity [Young Minds](#) has made recommendations to government which emphasise the vital role of local charities like AED in providing early mental health support, and how important it is for young people to know where and how to find support.

In March 2021 the [Department for Education](#) announced increased need for mental health support in schools. Local surveys at neighbourhood level have shown us that self-harm and suicide are increasing particularly in young men aged 16-24 in the region.

Rates of mental illness have increased in 6-16 year olds from 11.1% to 16.6% and 17-19 year olds from 10.1% to 17.4% since 2017 – [www.digitalNHS.org](http://www.digitalNHS.org)

Throughout work in Sidmouth College and ongoing networking with other education centres we have learnt there is a huge waiting list for wellbeing support in schools that simply cannot meet the need. Young people are telling us they want more mental health peer support groups and further support in school.

Our work with organisations such as the Wellbeing and Health Action Team (WHAT) in the Sid Valley and Parental Minds has shown us that mental health is not an individual concern and affects all within the family unit.





## Where are we going?

During this period our intentions are:

- **Headlight peer support services will be delivered in 3 market town locations in East Devon.**
- **School mentoring services available to all year groups at 5 secondary schools in East Devon.**
- **Regular transitional support available for those in school years 5 and 6, to help with the challenges of moving schools and the uncertainty over the last two due to the Covid-19 pandemic, in at least 2 primary settings in East Devon.**
- **Better access to resources, materials and jargon busting 'help sheets' for all care givers of young people struggling with their mental wellbeing.**
- **Supporting and collaborating with grassroots local organisations with specialist skills in supporting families and young people in East Devon.**
- **Upskilling community members and professionals alike with mental health awareness and education through quality training and workshops.**
- **Promoting youth voice in wellbeing and mental health services through specific mental health forums and social action groups.**
- **Influencing decision makers to make the right changes to better support those who need it.**
- **Ensuring the organisation has effective processes and procedures.**



## How do we get there?

### Governance and Leadership

- ✚ Continued strong trustee leadership
- ✚ To achieve our aims strong leadership and a culture of teamwork and passion are needed. AED will be conducting a workforce survey alongside our yearly staff days to capture all staff and volunteer voices. This will allow all staff and volunteers to influence the direction and development of the organisation.
- ✚ Continued engagement with staff and supporting staff to have a viewpoint. Mechanisms such as a quarterly newsletter for all staff and volunteers will be distributed to ensure that all people are aware of the services being delivered and are up to date on the news from the sector.
- ✚ Continuing a safer recruitment process and a strong, relevant training programme for all staff will increase the knowledge and capabilities of the team and better enable them to support our service users. AED will undertake regular self-assessment procedures to ensure we are performing as best we can.
- ✚ AED is now sitting on the *Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing* steering group for the new Local Care Partnership (LCP) as a Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) voice, enabling us to express service users experience and views and influence decision makers in the right way.
- ✚ AED has now appointed two Specific Point Of Contacts (SPOCs) in the core team; one for staff wellbeing and one for organisational environmental impact, to add to our culture of professionalism, energy and sustainability.
- ✚ Our streamlined delivery model and ethos are to *support, encourage and guide* to deliver real change and better wellbeing. We will do this through continued networking and collaboration with local VCSE groups and local authority and statutory organisations to deliver needs-led services.

### Fundraising and Finance

- ✚ To ensure long lasting and effective delivery AED will have an ongoing fundraising strategy in place that identifies various income streams to be explored in a timely manner.
- ✚ Our fundraising strategy combines the typical income stream of grants in addition to donations (both in person and through our website), specific sponsored event planning and attendance at local festivals and fairs.
- ✚ AED will regularly review the fundraising strategy and its operation and that this is an adaptable and dynamic document.
- ✚ AED is exploring legacy funding to take place allowing local people to leave funds in a will for service delivery
- ✚ We will be recruiting at least one specific volunteering fundraising role in 2023 to support our team in income generation.
- ✚ We are committed to ensuring that although a full cost recovery budget is essential that we do not have unnecessary management charges and continue to focus our resources into service delivery.
- ✚ Fundraising is a KPI for our core team with specific time assigned for income generation.
- ✚ Through the continued hard work of our teams AED is working hard to increase its positive reputation in order to build on its existing great working relationships and consider joint partnership funding with other local reputable organisations.



### Marketing and Digital Technology

- ✚ AED will expand its use of efficient and effective digital technologies. AED will have a new user friendly and well branded website ([www.actioneastdevon.org.uk](http://www.actioneastdevon.org.uk)) that is well managed and interactive and will enable service users and partners to better understand to work we do and how to access support. Alongside the website AED will have a coordinated approach to brand, ethos and values, with clear, well designed and professional promotional materials.
- ✚ The pandemic has prompted AED to look at hybrid working where feasible and the use of Teams/Zoom for certain meetings. AED (where possible) will encourage the use of such technology to help reduce its carbon footprint as well as to allow staff to be more efficient with their time and enjoy a better work/life balance.
- ✚ AED will promote its work regularly within a variety of media streams and will be recruiting a specific volunteer to assist with its social media presence in 2023.
- ✚ Through our continued work with other VCSE groups in East Devon AED will share regular good news stories of projects, staff impact and service user journeys to encourage recognition of achievement for all staff.
- ✚ AED's client management system will be reviewed and enhanced so that it is more effective and helpful for those using it, providing quicker access to information whilst remaining safe and compliant with data GDPR legislation.

### Service delivery

#### *Headlight peer support groups*

- ✚ AED will work with young people to develop the framework of peer support sessions to best improve young people's mental wellbeing whilst remaining a safe and fun place to be. AED is committed to the relationship building necessary for this work and as such will create opportunities for staff to have longer hour contracts to promote these relationships.
- ✚ AED will work closely with local organisations and venue providers to keep the young person's 'journey' and their needs at the core of our work, creating clear pathways to and from other services that create a 'wrap around' service for the young person and their families. This will include clear and unbiased signposting and showcasing of partners on our resources i.e. website and individual assessments.
- ✚ Regular surveys and feedback from young people and their communities will inform the 'when' and 'what' of our project delivery, AED will ensure that what we deliver is what is most beneficial for the service user.

#### *School mentoring services*

- ✚ AED will identify, through continued close working with local education centres, the ideal locations for its school mentoring services, working with the school staff to identify those at need and combining support to benefit both their mental wellbeing and academic progress.
- ✚ Where possible AED will work with the school to identify funding streams available, to enable project delivery.
- ✚ AED will work with schools, other support organisations and our service users to secure pathways and referrals that provide the most benefit to the young person and their family. For example, raising awareness of mental health and the benefits of getting support through workshops and campaigns; on to providing focused 1-2-1 support in a recognisable safe place;



onward to more social settings of peer support whilst also providing family wrap around care and signposting to pro-social activities.

*Children and families' support*

- ✚ AED recognizes that the need for mental health support for many starts early, which is why we will work with local primary schools to deliver a program of transitional support services to school years 5 and 6. Particularly focusing on the disruption caused by the pandemic to their education.
- ✚ AED will work with local partners to deliver parent and care giver support both with face to face sessions and through access to better resources. AED will create a resource pack for families containing information, advice and guidance to families and young people such as jargon busting, ideas for wellbeing and activities to encourage mental health conversations to be happening openly and safely at home.
- ✚ AED is passionate about voice and in 2023/24 will establish a young person's social action and campaign group, supporting local young people to come together and raise awareness of mental health and actively make an impact.
- ✚ In order to improve openness and understanding of mental health and wellbeing, the barriers it creates and the ways to improve it AED will be running a selection of training and workshops to young people, parents and the wider community and professionals.
- ✚ By 2023/24, AED will be running regular training events through the year.





## Fundraising Strategy

Overview:

### Areas of Focus

#### 1. *Grants*

##### a. AED grant bids

AED will work collaboratively to regularly bid to community grant holders for funds for projects. We will identify and write funding bids to trusts that will fund programmes within our services. This will focus on grants over 10K.

##### b. Joint Grant bids

CEO will identify new ways of working along with support from other staff on areas of need in the community that would benefit from joint work with partners and initiate conversations and potential SLAs with partners organisations.

##### c. Expressions of Interest

A letter will be drafted with explanation of their projects and approx. amounts of funds needed to keep services going. These letters will be sent to a detailed list of local trusts and will be for any fund less than £10K

#### 2. *Physical Donations*

##### a. Collection buckets/tins in the community

AED branded collection buckets and tins to be placed in community areas with particular focus on current service areas such as Axminster, Ottery, Sidmouth, Honiton and Seaton along with branding and information. To be identified and coordinated by AED HR and Admin Coordinator.

##### b. Collections at our office base

AED branded collection tins to be placed in offices alongside pull up banner.

#### 3. *Fairs and Event*

##### a. Village/Town community fairs

We will identify village days, fairs, festivals and events in local areas that AED could hold a small stall in for awareness raising and to include collection tins.

##### b. Exeter Chiefs Rugby Club

Online form to be completed by CEO

##### c. AED Fundraising events e.g. sponsored walks

CEO to coordinate an annual fundraising event for all staff, volunteers and the community to attend and supply sponsorship forms and information. To go out through website also.



4. *Legacy Funding*

CEO (with trustee support) to identify process of legacy funds left by local philanthropists or family members of service users

5. *Online Donations*

a. Easy Fundraising

CEO to set up an Easy Fundraising account.

Promotion of this service will go out to all staff, volunteers and partners along with this promotional work through social media and website.

b. Website donations

CEO will work with website designers to create a donation area in the new website.

6. *Ambassador Programmes*

CEO with support from other staff will identify local celebrities to act as ambassadors for AED and promote our work and services. Aiming to bring in more awareness and donations to our cause.

7. *Supermarket funding*

HR and Admin coordinator to liaise with local supermarkets and get AED listed as a charity option for the donation tokens in each supermarket.

- Tesco
- Sainsbury's
- Morrisons
- Waitrose





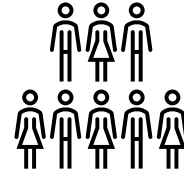
## Structure and Resources

*People (Current April 2022)*

**8 Employees**

**6 Volunteers**

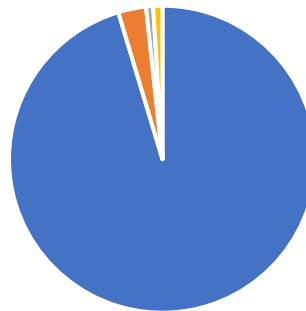
**4 Trustees**



*Income and Expenditure*

### Income

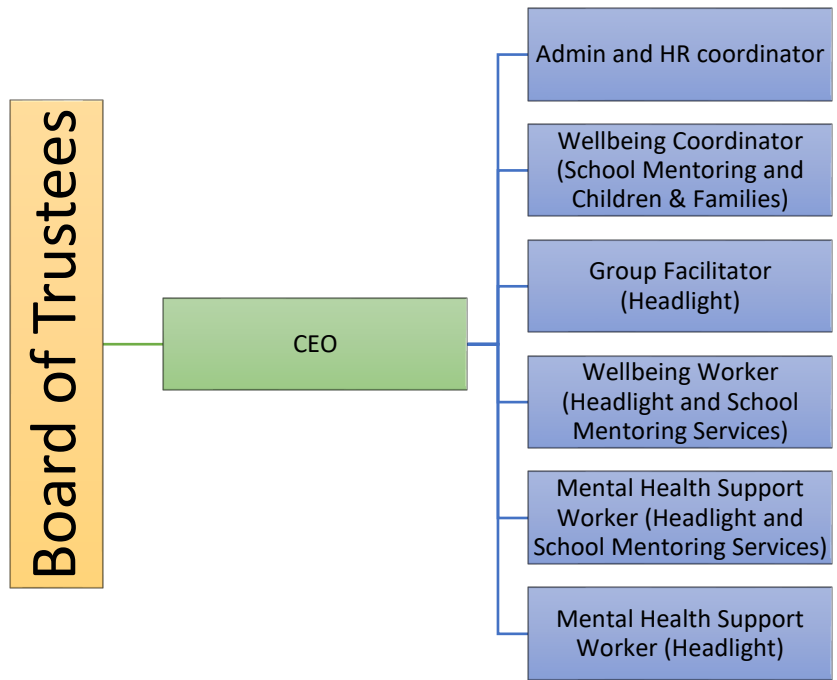
- Grants £131,952
- Donations £4,057
- Bank Interest £1,032
- Other Income £1,344



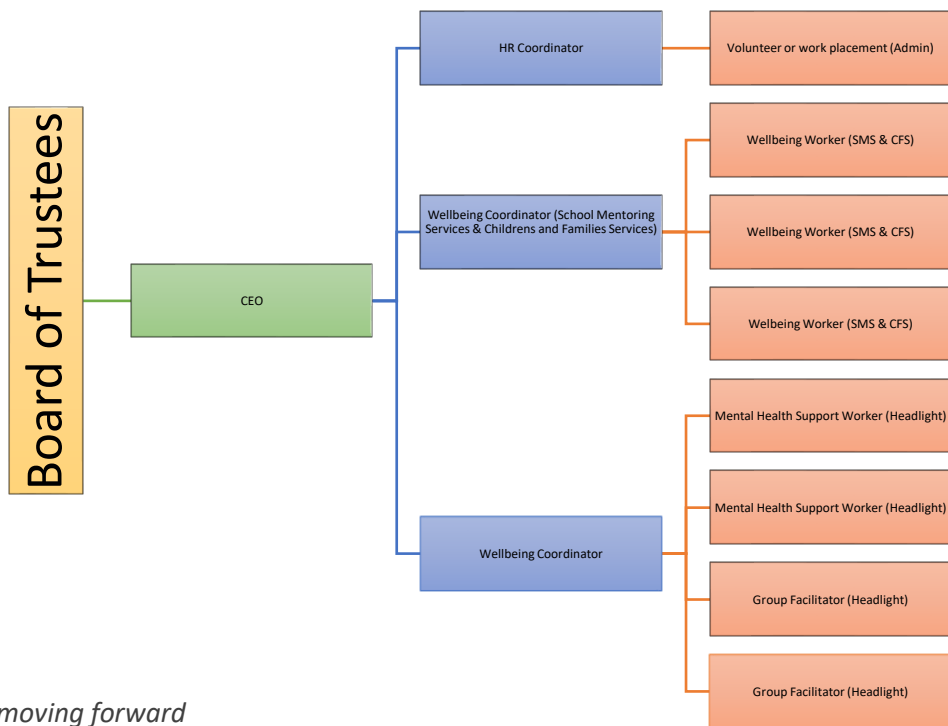
### Expenditure

- Charitable Activities





*Current as of Aug 2022*



*Proposed moving forward*