



Lunch Clubs Hackney

Hackney Lunch Clubs Network

**Satisfaction Survey Impact Report 2021
with focus on the support provided during
the COVID-19 Pandemic**

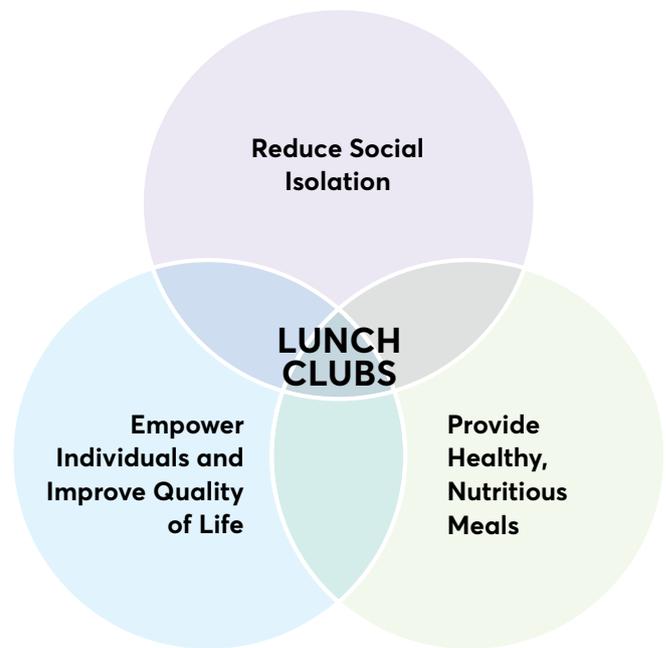
**Lunch Clubs Service that decreases social isolation and promotes
the health and well being of older people living in Hackney**

Summary

Like many other organisations and people this has been an extremely difficult year for the lunch clubs and their members. As well as the fear around catching the Covid-19 virus, many of the lunch clubs members have been worried about where their next meal was going to come from and how they would cope with the increased isolation. This survey report does not delve into in-depth research into the effects of the pandemic on older people. As part of the service contract with LBH its main purpose is to measure service user satisfaction levels. In addition to the normal survey questions a few more were added around Covid-19 considerations.

The various lockdowns meant that the lunch clubs were open to members for intermittent periods throughout the year. Where possible lunch club kitchens remained open to deliver hot meals to their members and to the wider community in Hackney. Lunch clubs maintained regular contact with their members through wellbeing phone calls to offer tips on staying physically and mentally well, providing additional support where needed. All lunch clubs provided support to members with shopping and medicine deliveries.

Generous food donations were received by the lunch clubs from supermarkets such as Sainsburys, Morrison's and many smaller Turkish and Chinese shops, with some lunch clubs delivering food parcels. Other specific small food donations were made around Christmas and Easter, and again packages were delivered to members.



Digital exclusion has proven to be a significant challenge for members, because many were not online, due to lack of hardware, Wi-Fi access, skills or a combination of all three, resulting in many becoming isolated. Gradually more and more members were able to engage digitally as they were supported by the clubs, family members, personal networks, or wider local initiatives supporting people to get online. This increased participation in a variety of online activities like Arts and crafts, with arts packages delivered to them beforehand, exercise classes, online cookery and juicing, and many more. WhatsApp proved to be a popular tool, and groups were set up for members to stay in contact with each other as well.

By the beginning of April 2021, the overwhelming majority of members, staff and volunteers have been vaccinated, and the lunch clubs are scheduled to re-open to members week beginning 17 May 2021. Most of the members are very keen to return to the lunch clubs and see them as 'their home'. Conversely some will need reassuring that it's safe to return. During the periods the lunch clubs were able

to open, all lunch clubs carried out risk assessments for their centres, put in place appropriate safety measures and received PPE supplies from LBH.

Ageing Well

The lunch clubs are a highly important part of older people's lives in Hackney, helping members to lead fulfilling and dignified lives in the company of others. Engaging in communal social and health activities enhance their sense of wellbeing. For many members the lunch clubs' interactions are the most valued social participation they have outside of family settings. For those members without family support, lunch clubs are a vital source of a support system that helps to maintain their sense of connectedness, improve confidence and overall general health and wellbeing.

Community Cohesion

Linking with health services such as GPs via Primary Care Networks, Homerton Hospital, City & Hackney CCG and other health professionals, LBH adult social care teams, and other departments, and pharmacies has ensured that the local health & social care integrated care system is adopting a person-centred approach for supporting for older people to live well and independent lives.

Prior to the pandemic many of the lunch clubs were engaged in a variety of intergenerational work; such as Salvation Army CH working with the Museum of the Home (formerly Geffrey) with school children and older people sharing 'the games we used to play' and another session 'the way we used to work' – it was excellent and the children were so interested. They have also done

a skills exchange with kids teaching older people about their mobile phones and older people teaching kids how to knit! During the pandemic, intergenerational interactions took place mostly through phone and home visits with young volunteers from the lunch clubs.

Joining networks such as the Food Justice Alliance, Migrant and Refugee forum, Digital Inclusion Network and many others has furthered co-ordinated community support for older people. Lunch Clubs Network meetings invite a variety of service providers to present their services that may be beneficial for the lunch club members. Participation in focus groups, research, and surveys that support services for wellbeing of older people have also been offered to lunch clubs, and their members. Lunch clubs are an essential part of the Hackney community.

Prevention

The health and social activities the lunch clubs provide help to reduce isolation and loneliness. Activities such as exercise classes, health information sessions, festive celebrations, arts and social activities, trips to places of interest, and signposting and advice support to the day-to-day issues that their members face all contribute towards preventing physical and mental ill health. During the pandemic the regular phone calls, hot meals and food packages deliveries, online social and health classes have all helped to prevent deterioration in members physical and mental health.

Suj Ahmed

Development Coordinator, Hackney Lunch Clubs Network

About Lunch Clubs

Hackney Lunch Clubs serve the diverse communities in Hackney by providing lunches and reducing isolation for older people by (subject to social distancing restrictions) providing leisure and health activities, regular meeting places and opportunities to make new friends.

Whilst some Hackney Lunch Clubs are tailored to meet the needs of specific Ethnically Diverse communities, all lunch clubs are open to all Hackney residents aged 55 and over, irrespective of gender, sexual orientation, faith or religion, and residents are free to choose whichever club they feel best meets their individual needs.

All Lunch Clubs hope to achieve outcomes that improve health and wellbeing by:

- Reducing the number of older people becoming isolated and socially excluded
- Empowering individuals to influence the design and delivery of the service they receive
- Improving individuals' quality of life
- Ensuring Lunch Club services are accessible to disadvantaged groups including people from Black and Minority Ethnic (Ethnically Diverse) communities

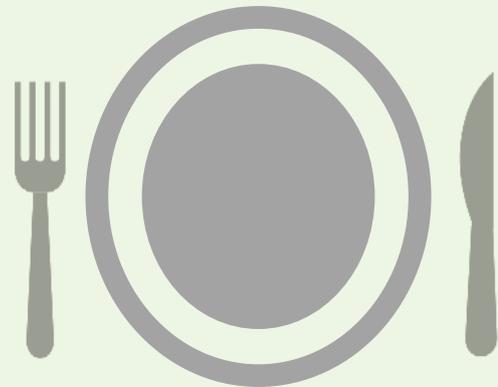
As well as hot lunches cooked on the premises, the lunch clubs provide health and wellbeing classes and awareness sessions on a host of topics that benefit their members. As well as outings to places of interest locally, regionally and trips to the seaside.



During the Pandemic, these services were severely disrupted but many clubs continued to provide support in as many ways as possible. Hot meals and food packages were delivered to member's homes. Shopping and medicine runs for those members who needed them. Regular wellbeing checks on all members. Online zoom classes and activities provision. These are detailed later in the document

Network Partners include:

- An Viet Foundation
- Chatsworth Road Methodist Church
- Hackney Caribbean Elderly Organisation
- Hackney Chinese Community Service
- Hackney Cypriot Association
- Halkevi
- Holly Street Lunch club
- Hotline Meals Service
- Nightingale Lunch club
- North London Muslim Community Centre
- Salvation Army Cambridge Heath
- Salvation Army Hoxton
- Centre 151 (formerly VLC)
- Woodberry Down – Lunch up



14
Lunch clubs

About Satisfaction survey

- 479 participants completed the annual survey from all 14 lunch clubs. Owing to the social distancing restrictions, the majority of the surveys were conducted over the telephone, with staff or volunteers completing members responses on the forms. This may therefore impact the responses given. Some surveys were also delivered to peoples' home for them to complete.
- There was some discrepancy as to whether participants responded assessing the Lunch Clubs during "regular" vs. "Covid" times. For example if a service wasn't currently being provided (hot meals) they may have indicated they were dissatisfied, although their



479
Responses

comments suggested they usually enjoyed the meals at the centre during regular times.

- Some respondents did not wish to complete the demographics section and in particular felt the sexuality section impertinent.

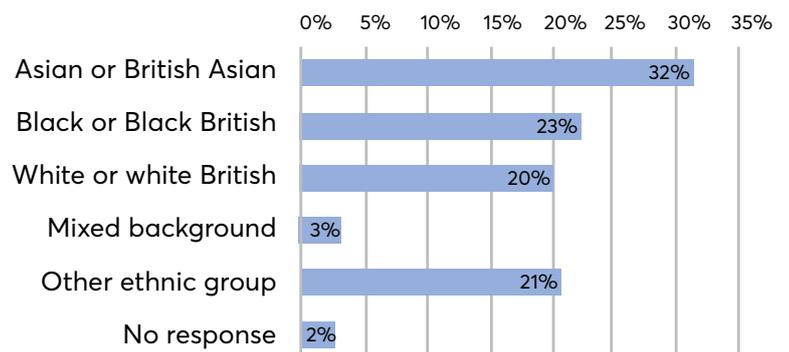
Sati satisfaction Report 2021(Pandemic)

Demographics

One of the objectives of the Lunch Club service is to ensure they are accessible to disadvantaged groups including people from Black and Minority Ethnic (Ethnically Diverse) communities. The demographics from the respondents were analysed and found to be as follows:



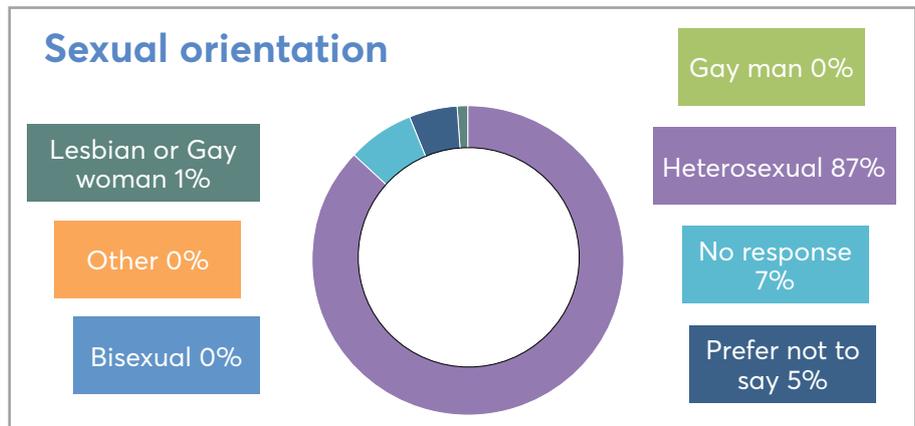
Ethnicity



Gender identity

63% No response
37% Same
0% Different

Sexual orientation



Disability (Based on Equality Act 2010)		
Yes	No	No response
23%	67%	9%



Carer Responsibility		
Yes	No	No response
12%	77%	11%

Religion or Belief

- Aethist / No religion - 20
- Christian - 41
- Other - 3
- Buddhist - 17
- Jewish - 2
- Noresponse - 34
- Charedi - 0
- Muslim - 14

Lunch Clubs During the Pandemic

Support

During the Pandemic, these services were severely disrupted, but many of the clubs continued to provide support in as many ways as they were able. All clubs regularly telephoned their members to reduce the feeling of social isolation and to provide further information regarding the restrictions, guidelines, and vaccination information; many arranged group zoom calls or activities, some were able to assist with food and medicine supplies and a few clubs were able to provide regular hot meals, including Christmas Lunch.



Lunch clubs activities during the pandemic

The following list of activities and support sessions delivered by the lunch clubs are just some of the support the lunch clubs have offered their members over this difficult pandemic period of restrictions and stop and start disruptions.



HEALTH AND WELLBEING	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise classes • Dementia awareness session • Dental hygiene sessions • First Aid session with St Johns Ambulance • Flu Jab sessions with local GP practice • Head Massage Course • Health checks including blood pressure & diabetes • Healthy eating sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linking with Alzheimer's Society • Memory loss support group • Mental Wellbeing sessions • NHS Workshop – bowel screening. • Orthopaedics consultation/treatment sessions • Pedicures and foot care • Personal hygiene sessions • Physical therapies and meditation



GENERAL SUPPORT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signposting • Advocacy, Advice and casework support • Form filling support • Translation and dissemination of Covid-19 and vaccination information • Cultural newspaper dissemination • Older peoples' magazines dissemination • Online newsletters • Computer learning training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Census rehearsal • Mutual aid group • Digital Inclusion training for basic uses of zoom, smartphones, Gmail, Google Maps, weather, bus routes, music, YouTube and Facebook etc. • Religious festivals celebrations for all the major religions. International Women's Day, International Mental Health Day etc



LEISURE, GAMES, ARTS AND CRAFTS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art classes online • Mah Jong, Card Games, Chinese Chess Game • Table Tennis • Gardening • Dance classes • Arts and crafts workshops • Singalong sessions online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor planting and gardening • Music sessions • Outdoor music workshops and performances • Online dance • Online Bingo • Reading sessions • Online gardening club. Planting and gardening tips

Satisfaction Survey Results:

Questions and Responses:

This year questions were separated into two sections. In section one, 8 questions focused on the wellbeing of members during the pandemic and their social media/technology usage. In section two, 11 questions assessed the service users' overall satisfaction with the lunch clubs.

Members were asked to rate their responses using the scale: "Strongly Agree", "Agree", "Disagree", "Strongly Disagree" and "Not Sure". Questions left blank were recorded as "No Response". A comments section was available for each question, as well as an overall comments area.

Pandemic Related Questions:

Q1 I feel the lunch club has supported me well during the pandemic. (479 Responses)

59% respondents **"Strongly Agreed"** that they felt supported during the pandemic by the lunch club, whilst **34%** **"Agreed"**. 4.4% were not sure or did not respond.



93%
Agreed

They have been a lifeline for me as I don't see anyone else during the day. I have a hot dinner every day – and I get to see a friendly face.

Nightingale

Phoned to see I'm OK. Great Support. I could always call if I had a problem and it would be sorted out.

Chats

They supported to translate letters or call housing repair when my bathroom was leaking.

VLC Centre 151

Thank you volunteer. They helped me pick up my prescription and deliver it to my door.

VLC Centre 151

Yes, especially after my fall – a LIFE SAVER!

Salvation Army CH

Phoned me. Sent food. So caring.

NLMCC

We are still supported with reading letters, hot food, food parcels, phone calls. God Bless.

Hackney Cypriot Association

Q2 I have maintained my physical health during the pandemic

13% disagreed with this notion, whilst **81% agreed** that they had maintained their physical health during this period. 6% were not sure or did not respond.



Comments indicated that some members had felt fearful to leave their homes owing to the risk of the virus to the older population, and so had found it harder to complete their usual exercise. Many mentioned they missed their regular exercise classes at the Lunch Clubs, but had used the techniques they had learnt there at home.

Everything gone worse

Hackney Cypriot Association

I'm afraid to go out
Chinese Community

Have been in hospital in the pandemic

Need to get back to the club to improve my health by keeping fit

Try to exercise but the lack of encouragement is a hindrance

I've continued the exercise we did at lunch clubs

Chats

I try to keep myself active – try to adjust. I'm slower.

Caribbean Elderly

Q3 I have maintained my mental health during the pandemic

16% disagreed with this notion, whilst only **60% agreed** that they had maintained their mental health during the pandemic.

18% did not respond to the question, 6% were unsure.

Unfortunately one centre (68 questionnaires) failed to ask this question which contributed to this high level of no-response.



I feel a lot more down during lockdown. Its been so hard.

Salvation Army Hoxton

Struggling with my mental health and addiction. Found it hard – depression worse.

Salvation Army CH

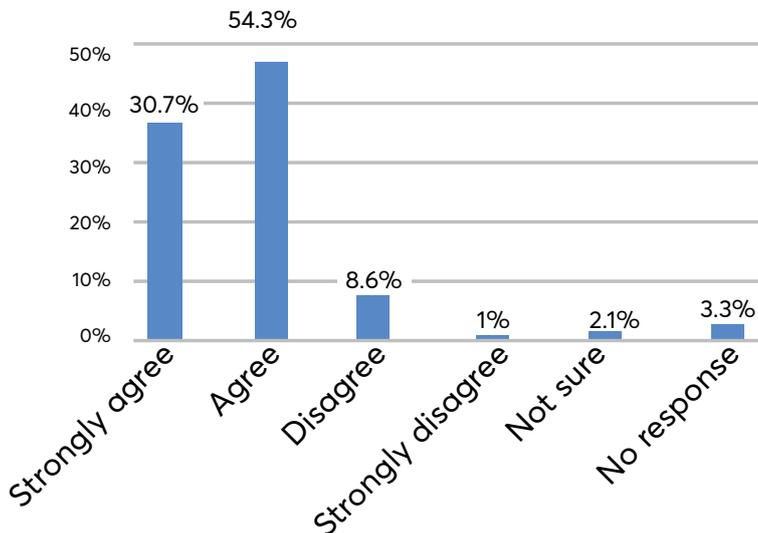
Worst year of my life. Anxiety and stress of not knowing what will happen to me and my friends

Developed mental health problems such as anxiety and depression.

Covid-19 has affected my mind and feelings especially as not able to go to funerals of loved ones.

Halkevi

Q4 I have been able to communicate well with others during the pandemic



In total, **85%** agreed that they'd been able to communicate well during the pandemic, but nearly **10% disagreed**. This will have led to increased feelings of isolation and loneliness.



- Only the phone calls I receive from HCA
- Just able to speak to a few friends

Hackney Cypriot Association

- It's been hard and my broken English hasn't helped

Salvation Army Hoxton

- Felt isolated. Family lives abroad, but neighbour was good
- Lost touch with many
- None – my phone out of credit

Salvation Army CH

- Not too much as I only use my telephone
- I've stopped calling my friends as it's not the same
- I try to but some of my friends aren't tech savvy

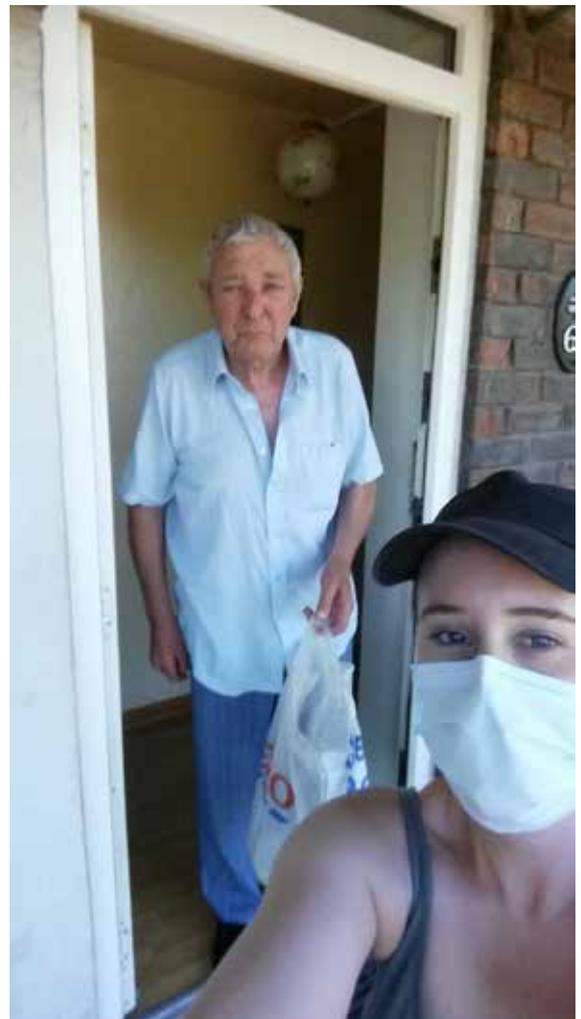
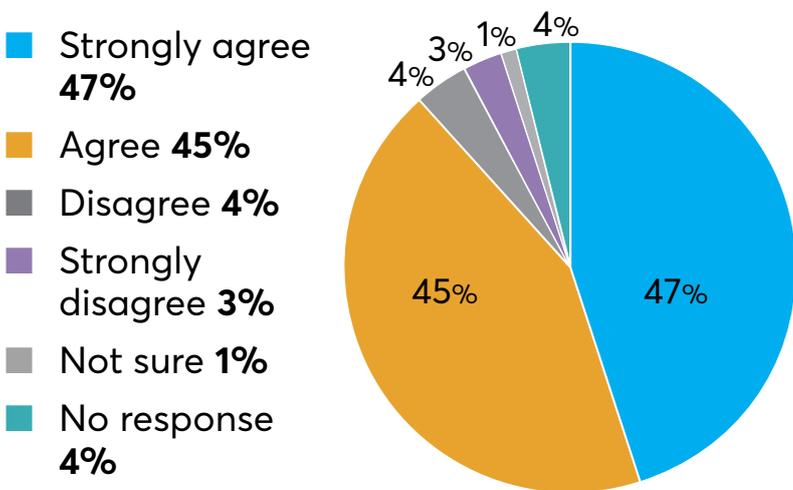
NLMCC

- My close friends usually share their thinking about cooking, garden jobs. I learn some dishes during lock down
- I live with my children so I feel comfortable

VLC Centre 151

Q5 I have received support from family and friends during the pandemic

Heart-warmingly, **92% agreed** that they felt they had received support from family and friends during the pandemic, although from the comments it was felt as though the Lunch Clubs were included within this category. **4% disagreed.**



• **Even close friends withdrew their support as everyone is shielding. The only support I got was from Halkevi**

• **Kids drop my shopping by the door if I need anything NLMCC**

• **My family lives far away, so I rely strongly on the lunch clubs for social and nutritional needs**
 • **Only the lunch club manager asked how we are Hackney Cypriot Association**

• **I only have a brother so the club is very important to me**
 • **My contact was from the club mainly**
 • **My friends at the club Nightingale**

• **Only from the Salvation Army Salvation Army Hoxton**

Q6 What (if any) new social media/ other communication skills have you learnt during the pandemic? (526 responses as some noted more than one)

Communication	Number	Comments/analysis
None	187	<p>36% respondents noted that they had not learnt any new technology during lock down. In some instances this was because they were already proficient in the skills they needed (email, WhatsApp, WeChat were discussed in particular). A few commented that they felt they were too old to learn new technologies, or had impairments which prevented them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Other" referred to WeChat, WhatsApp, and the NHS Apps for Covid Advice, Online Prescriptions and Health Advice. Some also stated they were not sure what social media they could learn. • "Internet" referred to general internet usage, but also YouTube and one club set up an online newspaper.
No Response	115	
Other*	92	
Zoom/Video Calls	66	
Internet/Websites	46	
Facebook	19	
e-Mail	1	

43%
learnt new
technology



**33% would
like to learn
more**

Q7 What new social media/ other communication skills would you like to learn?

Communication	Number	Comments/analysis
No Response	172	<p>Again, the majority of respondents (67%) either did not provide a response or stated that they did not want to learn any further social media/ communication skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Other" referred to WeChat, WhatsApp, Computer classes including improving confidence in using smart phones. • "Zoom" users mentioned they'd like to learn how to host their own Zoom calls. • "Internet" also referred to online shopping
None	150	
Other*	62	
Zoom/Video Calls	55	
Internet/Websites	22	
Facebook	17	
e-Mail	1	

A few comments indicated barriers to using/learning new technology which included not being able to afford to upgrade basic mobiles to smart phones, not owning tablets/laptops at home or having poor internet speed at their accommodation.

Q8 What else could the lunch clubs have done to help me during the pandemic? (483 responses as some noted more than one)

41% felt that there was **nothing more** that the Lunch Clubs could have done during the pandemic. An overwhelming proportion of the comments expressed tremendous gratitude to the staff and volunteers at the Lunch Clubs for the varied support that they offered during that period.

29% did not respond. Again, it should be noted the surveys were largely conducted by telephone with a member of Lunch Club staff which may have impacted responses. **2%** stated they wanted the lunch clubs to remain open throughout.

The remaining **29%** "Other" responses varied between centres, dependent on the level of support provided during the pandemic, and whether English was the first language.

Typical responses included:

- More Information about vaccinations, general lockdown, mental health
- More frequent phone calls
- Hot meal delivery
- More online activities and zoom chats

I truly believe they did more than they should have for all of us. The club is really great to all of us and they couldn't support us any more if they tried
Nightingale

I hope the funder realises what a great job they do at this club
Nightingale

The support from members that run the club is superb; genuine which is a wonderful thing
Chats

They've helped me so much and kept me going. thank you
Salvation Army Hoxton

Non-Pandemic Related Questions

(479 responses each)

Q1 I feel I am treated with respect and dignity as an individual when attending the service.



98%
AGREED

(67% Strongly Agreed, 31% Agreed, 2% no response)

Q2 I feel less isolated and more socially connected as a result of the service.



97%
AGREED

(63% Strongly Agreed, 34% Agreed, 1% Disagree, 1% Not Sure, 2% no response)

Q3 I am involved in decisions about what activities and food are provided at the service.



75%
AGREED

(31% Strongly Agreed, 44% Agreed, 7% Disagree, 13% Not Sure, 3% no response)

Q4 I have a greater awareness of other services outside of the lunch club that can help me in my life.



85%
AGREED

(35% Strongly Agreed, 50% Agreed, 5% Disagree, 6%)

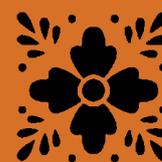
Q5 I feel that the food and drinks served at the service are healthy, nutritious and enjoyable for me.



95%
AGREED

(63% Strongly Agreed, 32% Agreed, 1% Disagree, 3% Not sure, 1% no response)

Q6 I feel that my cultural needs are met and understood.



96%
AGREED

(49% Strongly Agreed, 47% Agreed, 3% Not Sure, 1% no response)

Q7 I am clear about the role of lunch clubs in meeting my needs and what they offer.



95%
AGREED

(2% not sure, 3% no response)

Q8 I feel confident to make a complaint which would be taken seriously and appropriate action is taken.



94%
AGREED

(3% Not Sure, 3% no response)

Q9 I feel safe and secure while receiving this service from the lunch club.



96%
AGREED

(4% no response)

Q10 I come to the club by which primary means of transport? (479 Responses)



147 Walked



**35 Dial-a-ride/
community transport**



41 by Car



228 by Bus

**16 Other
12 No response**

Q11 I attend the lunch clubs for the following reasons (all that apply) (2338 Responses)



422
Companionship/
Feindship/
Socialising

**339 Fun /
Interesting
activities**



325 Chance to get
out /change of
scene

307 Support
and Advice



295 Cost of
the meal
(affordability)



159 Warmth/
Heating in
Winter



286 Tastiness
of meal



13 Other



192 Convenience
(not having to cook)





Members case studies and feedback during the year

These case studies and feedback comments demonstrate how vital lunch clubs are to older peoples' lives, and how the lunch clubs do much more than just provide meals. The examples below are not all, but just some, of the comments and case studies recorded over the past year.

A regular local AVF Lunch Club user became really frustrated and depressed during Covid-19. Because he received an official council letter and form which he didn't understand. On top of that, he is not very good at using his smart phone. Before the pandemic, he could come to the centre for lunch and could seek our assistance with any problems he had. We told him that we maintained a member of staff at the office during the Covid-19 period for answering telephone enquiries to support members. Fortunately, during the Supporting Call Service our staff helped him resolve the matter. He is really looking forward for our re-opening.

A member who always behaved badly, did not respect the staff and the centre as a whole. He never followed any rules. However, our constant effort to support him by telephone and in person at the Centre throughout the Covid-19 lockdown, changed his attitude towards the staff and the Centre totally. After the lockdown, he became a gentleman, very polite to all the staff and other members, follows the Centre's rules and the extra Covid-19 guidelines. He told us that he felt warm and had no worries at the centre. During the lockdown, he felt so isolated, and he doesn't want to be alone again; and that he really appreciated what our Centre did and is happy it is opened again.

A member who had not contacted Lunch Club since the Covid-19 lockdown a year ago, came back to contact us. This was due to the Covid-19 information leaflet which we sent to him. During the contact, we found out that he has a deteriorating health problem and need help. As with most cases, the basic problem is the language barrier. We immediately assisted him with GP/Hospital appointments and letters and liaised with them about his needs. We also noticed his anxieties and stresses. With our limited knowledge of mental health first aid, we managed to put a smile back on his face.

An Viet Foundation

During this quarter, one of our service users; who so far had seemed to cope well with the situation; had a nervous breakdown, requiring medical intervention. Most of her relatives are based outside London and it had been really difficult for them to meet in the current circumstances. Her family had asked her whether she would join them, but she had constantly refused to do so, claiming her independence. She seemed to be faring well compared to other members, was on the phone with peers regularly and gave us regular updates. She did not hesitate to contact our staff/volunteers whenever she needed any help. However, she suddenly disappeared and stopped picking up her phone. We got worried and contacted her son who lives in Newcastle and we were told that she had been taken to hospital after a serious anxiety attack that had left her unaware of where she was. She stayed in the hospital for a few days and was finally released. Apparently, she was constantly asking for news from other

service users whilst in hospital. Following this incident, she moved to Newcastle with her son, though she is hoping this will only be a temporary solution as she misses her flat and friends. In the meantime, she has been able to reconnect with the VLC group and it really helps her to keep her connection with her usual life in London. In that sense our befriending service is a success as it allows service users wherever they are and whatever their physical abilities to continue connecting and laughing together with their friends.



One of our members had recently joined our lunch club in February 2020 and therefore it was quite disappointing for her when we shut down in March 2020. She was in a very difficult state of mind at that time since her husband has just passed away and she felt terribly lonely. However, our phone befriending programme really helped her to improve her mental health. She decided to become a volunteer with us and proactively support others during this crisis. She became one of the central coordinators, helping us to look out for the members who seemed the most distressed and needed the most attention. In return, we saw her own mental health improve as she revealed a very chatty personality which brought a whole new energy within the volunteer group and the community.

Centre 151 (formerly VLC)

Additional support is being given to a club member whose wife passed away during the second lockdown. This gentleman speaks of the difficulties and challenges he is having to deal with on a daily basis; especially trying to come to terms with his wife and companion of 52 years, is no longer here with him. He feels very isolated because he now lives on his own, and with more restrictions being imposed he becomes very emotional when he thinks of the family and friends he is unable to have personal contact with during his time of grief. He is thankful to everyone at Chats Lunch Club for regularly keeping in touch with him by telephone.

One gentleman decided to form his own walking group. He invites 3 other club members to join him twice a week to walk for at least 45mins. He said the walks have encouraged him to become fit and helps him to feel less isolated.

A 63 year old male member with learning difficulties, lives alone, has no friends and his family live far away. He hates staying at home, he enjoys going out and being around people. So, he usually attends several Day Centres and Lunch Clubs 5 days a week. Since the pandemic he calls continuously stating he feels isolated and sometimes becomes depressed because he has no one to talk to. He says when he does go out, he sits in busy shopping areas such as Tesco car park hoping to have a conversation with someone. Every night he goes to bed fretting and worrying. He tells himself his present situation is just a nightmare and when he wakes up his life will be back to normal.

A club member who has been shielding throughout the pandemic, has felt extremely isolated because she lives

alone and has been unable to leave her home. She shared with other club members, that due to her religious beliefs and her doubts around the vaccine that she would not consider taking the vaccine. After speaking to her GP and the support from family members, and by speaking to other club members she has reconsidered and recently received her vaccine. She explained that she feels less anxious and is a lot happier knowing she will be able to meet with some of her family, and also attend the lunch club. She is extremely thankful to those members who shared their own experience and for the encouragement and support she received.

Chatsworth Road Luncheon Club

Mr A is an 83 year old male member and volunteer of over 15 years at our club. He is also a carer for an even older family member. Mr A has a chronic health condition and needed to be hospitalized recently. We have been delivering lunches to Mr A since lockdown and regular telephone calls. Because of our close contact with Mr A and awareness of his health situation and responsibilities, one of our male volunteers is specifically assigned to



Mr A. The volunteer was quickly able to arrange for the ambulance to take Mr A to hospital and be the contact person on his return home. The volunteer is ringing Mr A regularly throughout the day, collecting medication, providing meals, shopping and other essentials. For this Mr A has expressed his gratitude and sent a message thanking the club for their support and especially for the volunteer. He said, "As you know, I am a proud man and like to look after myself and Mr X, but I want to thank [the volunteer] for taking care of things and being there for us".

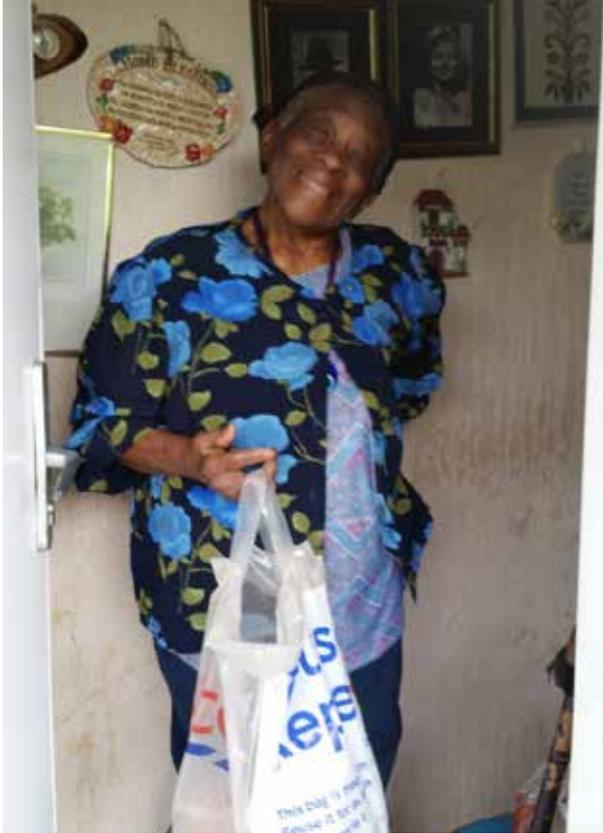
Two staff members visited B (male) & L (female) an elderly couple in their early 90s and mid-80's respectively, to deliver lunches and activity bag. B and L were overjoyed at seeing them. L was especially glad to receive the bag and going through the contents. B and L hadn't seen anyone since lockdown and were very happy for their visit. During lockdown, B had reverted to sitting in his chair, or staying in bed, not wanting to communicate or engage in any activity. L reported that B really missed his friends at the centre. Since coming back in September, he has begun to liven up, he is communicating more, engaging in activities and moves to his favourite reggae tunes played when he is at the Centre. L said that she was "very grateful for the support that she receives from staff at HCEO and for the Arts & Craft."

Appreciation of Activity Packs: Our Arts & Crafts tutor and staff have been putting together arts & craft activity packs to keep members engaged and stimulated. Included in the packs are word search, colouring books & pencils, glass jars which can be painted &

personalised with various stickers and name labels, patterns for embroidery. One member is so keen and involved with her activities that she requires a new activity bag every week. She is so pleased with her accomplishments that she calls in the week for staff to take pictures. Feedback from other members on the activity packs include: "Oh my Lord, I am so happy it's like winning the pools". "Look at all this activity things, we are so blessed" "I love colouring, this will keep me busy" "This is a wonderful thing. HCEO is doing a fantastic job...we are so grateful; my family is so thankful".

Mrs E who is living with dementia, particularly enjoys the arts activities. We celebrated "Women's International Day" with both groups on the theme of "What advice you would pass on to your daughters/granddaughters". We obtained many great insights such as "Accept what life brings, work hard, have courage and hold fast to the Gospel and the Universe". "Culture - don't forget where you come from: your history, language, food". We have also re-engaged with a member who had stopped attending the centre having suffered a stroke. Her grandson went out and bought her some more art materials after seeing how much she enjoyed the session. He saw that with a little help she could in fact continue to be creative. Much to her delight he now visits her more regularly, helping with cutting out shapes and patterns for paper art.

Hackney Caribbean Elderly Organisation



One of our members had been diagnosed with kidney disease and was starting the haemodialysis. During the Covid-19 period, his mental health deteriorated. He lives with his son. Due to his mental state, their relationship is deteriorating as well as their communication. It became difficult for them to understand each other. He became anxious, desperate and depressed. This also affects his willingness to learn/use the modern technologies. He doesn't speak English and doesn't know how to use social media. The only activity he enjoys is the Karaoke at our centre. However, due to the National Lockdown, he was not allowed to come to our Centre. During this period, we called him at least once a week. We usually spend over an hour chatting with him every time. During the telephone conversation, we need to comfort him, listen to him, encourage him with positive thinking, provide him with the correct disease information and refer him to specialty counselling. After a few months hard work, he is much better mentally and physically. He starting to accept his new lifestyle. His relationship with his son improved.

He is willing to learn more about Digital Communications. We are still in contact with him regularly; we can hear his happy tone over the phone now.

A single mother has become anxious and it affected her relationship with her teenage daughter during Covid-19 lockdown. We invited her to join our WhatsApp Chat group and to share her feelings and experiences. Other members of the Chat group also shared their parenting experiences and mentally helping each other. We noticed that the mother became more positive and seems to have an improved relationship with her daughter. After the lockdown, they both attend our Centre and both volunteer for many tasks.

A capable 93-year-old HCCS Lunch Club user who lives alone and does not understand English. She cooks and eats by herself. Although her daughter buys her food every week, we put her under our Vulnerable Members List because of her age and health. During the Covid-19, we call her every week to make sure she is healthy and is in good spirit. About a month ago, she did not feel very well and ran out of her regular medicines. She became anxious and depressed. We found out her situation during the Support Call Service. We called her GP on her behalf and explained her situation. Her GP sent her prescription to the pharmacy electronically and arranged for the medicines to be delivered directly to her home. She is sound and well now.

Two Lunch Club members are mother and son. The mother is in her 80s with poor health, and the son is in his 50s. After his father passed away, they have issues with other members of the family and being harassed by them. They came

to our Lunch Club before the national lockdown. HCCSA earned their trust and we provided our support to them in advice, physical health and mental health. During the lockdown, the son was worried his mother's mental health was affecting her physical health. We decided to form a Support Bubble with them so that they could come to our Centre on a regular basis during the lockdown. According to their feedback, the support bubble helps so much for her physical health and also provides mental relief. They are very happy, and the son becomes our handy volunteer. (Notes: They are British!).

Hackney Chinese Community Service

I was talking to M. who is a shielding person, and she has told me that her medication was supplied, but as the appointments were done online, she was worried because her legs were getting swollen. Covid19 restrictions meant that monitoring the dosage was not done. She was scared to make the journey to see her doctor. I advise her that she should get the appointment as the message is 'the NHS is not closed'. She was given the appointments. They also forwarded her a podcast on 'how to deal with Coronavirus' in Turkish.

It was really emotional to finally get to see people again. In one home visit S. said to us that she was talking with the pigeons all this time and she was grateful for our phone calls. She said that she would be very happy to attend to the centre again and if restrictions are to be introduced again to receive food delivered to her.

One couple from our members, both had long term health conditions and while going to their appointments both

got Covid 19. Once we got this news, we arranged to do their shopping, collect their medication and of course take them hot food. You can see in their faces and their words that they are really happy with the support they receive.

R has many long-term health issues and is finding shielding even more difficult. Through our hot food deliveries, we kept in contact and managed to assist him with filling the census form, booking Covid jab, shopping and emotional support. He said to me: " Thank god you are here otherwise I would not know what to do."

Hackney Cypriot Association

Due to the lockdown, one user requested dog food and two users requested cat food. When we went to deliver what they had requested we found out that they themselves were eating dry bread and marmalade/tin baked beans for the last two weeks. Yet they did not request meals or any provision for themselves. They were only concerned for the health of their pets. One elderly lady that I have visited made me cry. We start providing hot meal, veg. and fruits twice a week.

The case was an elderly man requested that we pay his TV Licence as he was worrying that (after receiving a threatening letter from the TV Licence authority) he was going to lose his TV. His TV was his link to Turkish channels- a satellite TV and this was his only thing that he had to connect to the outside world. He is 84 and still shielding. Once a week we are providing hot meals in containers for seven days. He keeps them in his fridge and is able to warm them up when needed.

Halkevi

"Thank you for all that you're doing to keep the lunch club going". G, calls us weekly to place her order and calls again on the day to make sure that her meal delivery service is guaranteed. She says, "I'm happy that you're delivering the meals because I can't go out to shop for myself".

A, rang to request meal delivery as dial-a-ride transport can only take one passenger trip, which prevented A arriving in time for lunch. She told the volunteer, "Thank you so much for bringing my meals, it's a long wait for the dial-a-ride".

D, is a new member, "I love the meals and it's nice here". "I was very lonely I was asking for somewhere to go and my doctor recommend this place". A , a new member joined the club in August 2020. She says that she benefits from coming to the club because it prevents her from being alone at home. She says



it's a good thing her son lives nearby and can take her, otherwise she would not be able to come on her own. "I was very lonely I was asking for somewhere to go and my doctor recommend this place".

The garden has been a space where the members go to sit more now, due to social distancing, and have a talk or water the plants. E and A often meet in the garden to catch up on how each other were coping. A says that 'being out in the garden is much better than sitting at home alone'. E says that she likes the garden and 'can't wait for the summer to see the lovely flowers blossoming'.

In this period a couple of interesting issues arose. People who were shielding requested petfood for their pets instead of hot meals for themselves. We took a decision to provide both.

Our users are still scared to come back. Most of our time is spent communicating the rules and restrictions and vaccination information to our reluctant users.

Holly Street Lunch club

Whilst the grandchildren of Mrs Fox (name changed) can't yet come in to see her face to face the mother - Mrs Fox's daughter - was able to come in and support her elderly mother during the baking classes. PPE had to be worn at all times, however this lifted the spirits of Mrs Fox and her friends tremendously. Now that Mrs Fox has had her first vaccination jab, she is feeling so good with herself and can't wait to have the second jab so that she can start seeing her grandchildren once again and hug them. This was a very challenging time for Mrs Fox and her friends; however, they can now see the light at the end of the tunnel with the vaccine rollout.

Mrs White (name changed) was finding it quite difficult to adjust to the new reality Coronavirus brought in its' wake. She was isolated in her room, couldn't have any visitors and was thus feeling very down. We worked very hard on the weekly program to combat these negative feelings (which many other residents were feeling too). Many musical entertainers were brought onto site, and we introduced the 'get away' program. This was very well received by the residents as it gave them the breather they all so desperately needed.

Mrs Stone (name changed) unfortunately contracted the virus and had to be hospitalised. Upon her release we arranged for her to go to a community facility where she was washed every day and had carers coming to socialise and chat with her each day. Instead of being left alone and isolated, she was cared for with much love and given the attention needed. This brought her back to life and encouraged her to eat healthily.

Mrs Kahn (name changed) was constantly complaining about her aches and pains. The staff decided to increase their regular weekly music and singing to bi-weekly. The nurses reported that since Mrs Kahn joined in these sessions, she was more cheerful and stopped focusing on her aches and pains.

Hotline Meals Service

TR – "Having hospital treatment for cancer and this club is absolutely amazing. They even have done dinner for me at 7 o'clock at night when I get back from hospital. I seriously cannot thank them enough. My carer was concerned about me when I didn't answer my phone and she called Michelle and Michelle came to my home

to check that I was alright. It is really nice to know that these people care so much about us".

TS – "This club is a lifeline for a lot of us, they were absolutely brilliant, they only closed for Christmas Day and New Year's Day, they even cooked Christmas dinner for some members that needed it from their own homes, meaning they shared their own dinners with some of those who need it most".

BM – "It was my 80th birthday on Christmas Eve and the club made sure that I got a lovely cake and gave me a brilliant day that I will remember. I think this place is absolutely marvellous and would like to say thank you for everything you do for us. Even though we are at home having our dinners it is still lovely coming to sit in the gardens everyday having a cup of tea and a chat".

PS – "I appreciate everything that everyone who is involved with this club does for us that are less able. I would like to say a big thank you for my Birthday cake and gift, it was really appreciated".

DH:" I am so truly grateful to this club. The things they have done for us members during these times, they really are amazing. They even delivered us Christmas dinner on Christmas day".

KH: "Our club is brilliant, they do so much for all of us. A lovely hot dinner every day".

L: "What an amazing roast dinner we get! Mind you all the food is great, just my favourite is roast".

SA: "I really look forward to the ladies coming with my dinner and standing having a lovely chat on the doorstep with me, they are so lovely and friendly".

Nightingale Lunch club

AM is an elderly resident who has been referred to our Luncheon Club. She has mental health issues and is also struggling financially. She got in touch with our Luncheon Club, and we were able to refer her to our food parcel service, where we provided people in need with pantry staples including pasta, rice, tinned tomatoes, and sanitary items. She was very grateful to receive these items from us, and they have helped her make ends meet.

RD is an elderly lady who accessed our luncheon club. She has been shielding and could not attend the club premises because she is very vulnerable and has additional risk factors. During the lockdown we provided her with meals, and after reopening our lunch club the attendees have helped ensure that she had the activity packs and food delivered to her. She has also been referred to our Advice & Advocacy services, through which she was able to access additional support through a local charity.

Mr MI is an elderly resident in Hackney. He has underlying health issues and was shielding during the lockdown. He relies on support from his daughter who was unable to visit him due to the lockdown, and his wife who is also elderly and has some underlying health issues. Mr MI and his wife have accessed services at NLMCC for several years and were supported throughout the lockdown with meals and with deliveries of fresh fruit and vegetables, milk, bread and other essential items which they could no longer shop for.

In early January 2021 we received news that the husband of a club member had sadly passed away. He too had been a member of the NLMCC men's lunch

club. We have since been supporting this family to sort out housing and benefits issues. Throughout this time, we have made sure that we engage with all members of the lunch and social club, either through telephone calls or via Zoom and have dropped off meals to them regularly. We have a timetable of events planned for June 2021 onwards including a six week 'Jam to Jar' course with Made in Hackney at their new site on Clapton Common.

North London Muslim Community Centre

P is wheelchair bound and continues to recover valiantly from a stroke. Along with 7 other lunch club members, we teamed up with the Geffrey Museum (now the Museum of the Home) to deliver a four-week craft pack for each to complete at home. This project aimed at helping with isolation was much appreciated. Unlike many, P has family at home with her but loves crafts and enjoyed doing them with her granddaughter. In following up we discovered that the family oven had "died" and so we arranged for the delivery of a full cooked Christmas Meal and helped until a new oven was obtained.

E, underwent complicated hip surgery and had hoped to be home in time for her 90th birthday. There were complications which meant she had to remain in and so in liaising with family who were unable to visit because of lockdown, we delivered (sanitised) cake, cards and gifts which were shared with E by the nursing staff. She finally made it home after Christmas and is doing well.

M, a lunch club member was discharged from Homerton Hospital and returned to his home with no food or clean clothes. We provided a restock of food and took round clothes from our Charity Shop for

him to wear - taking his old ones to wash here at the Centre.

J, one of our members sadly lost her daughter E. Due to a case of cancer treatment delayed by Covid - having cared for her at home the daughter died in the ambulance on the way to hospital, leaving mum and her four sisters devastated. We have supported by taking the funeral and paying for some of the costs and provide ongoing care and support.

M, is one of our oldest members - born and bred Hackney, she now has no relatives to care for her. We phone her every Monday for a chat and to ask what she needs. We then shop for her and take round a food parcel every Tuesday. She takes a little walk each day but is unable to carry heavy shopping home. The SA has set up a Food Hub at Hoxton Salvation Army and this has meant getting access to supplies for all our food parcels.

S, another member of our lunch club has been devastated to lose her brother and (shortly afterwards) her sister-in-law to Covid. Unable to get to the funeral, we visited on the day - took flowers and simply took time to listen and support. Wrestling with depression, this ongoing support has in her words "kept her afloat"!

Salvation Army Cambridge Heath

One service user needed assistance when he was admitted into hospital for heart surgery. We assisted by caring for his cat, doing necessary shopping on his release from hospital and calling him to check on his wellbeing. Obviously, this support is vital and ongoing.

A service user is continuing to find Covid-19 really difficult, and we

have supported her over the last quarter by allowing her in a socially distanced space, providing her adult colouring opportunities and giving her refreshments and a safe place to be. Whilst also working with her support worker team in the effort to keep her mentally well.

One service user could not cope with the isolation right at the beginning. Due to his learning difficulties, he rang for an ambulance every day for a week almost. We came alongside him and contacted Hackney Learning Disabilities team to sort out extra care in the evening for him. We contacted his GP who put in a telephone call to him weekly. We encouraged him to go out for a walk every day for exercise and for a majority of days he has come for tea and hot refreshments. We have called him almost every day too during the past quarter and the reading group we run here at the centre in normal times, read to him over the phone weekly... We have also contacted the learning disabilities team again recently in the hope they can assess him asap for assisted housing near to us.

We had an enquiry for a new member this quarter. This has resulted in us doing their shopping weekly (due to their special diet) for them as they are shielding. We hope that when we re-open, and when safe for them to do so, they will attend our club as their first enquired to do. We have also supplied food parcels to the other new enquiry this quarter.

One service user has used our employment plus local/computer area on a one-to-one basis for support with housing issues and wellbeing issues.

We have provided support to friends and family of our service users who have recently passed away. This is ongoing and the stress of limited numbers at the services has taken its toll on so many. There are many continuing to suffer mentally and emotionally just now, and our service users / lunch club members are no exception to this reality, but we are working hard to support those in need currently.

M, is a 57-year-old man recovering from a stroke at home after being released from hospital. He is receiving on-going practical support from us as he recovers at home. M is keen to join in with the lunch club when it reopens as a part of his ongoing rehabilitation. Sadly, like lots of people within our local community, M was unaware of what help was available for him. He talks of feeling scared, lonely and isolated throughout his illness and recovery.

C, is a 60-year-old man who was referred to us by some concerned friends in Suffolk. C is undergoing treatment for leukaemia. With no friends or family locally, C was struggling to source basic food supplies on a regular basis, partly due to pride and then severe sickness. This has been compounded by the financial problems that ensued due to the pandemic. We have been able to offer practical support with food and medication collection as well as emotional support on difficult days. We have also been able to liaise with other charitable organisations to work with C on his financial difficulties. This has been of great help to him, as it has been the cause of great strain and constant worry for him. Up until C's illness he had always worked and had very little to no involvement with any community groups

or his community. So, it's been rewarding for all involved in helping him to connect with a community and network of organisation's that are all happy and willing to help.

Salvation Army Hoxton

One of the ladies who comes in for her meals, also helps in delivering to her neighbours. She brings in food labels for us once a week for the ready meals delivered. She enjoys the meals provided.

When we deliver meals to a lady in Sheltered housing, she always wants us to come for a cup of tea. She very much looks forward to seeing us and the support she receives.

Referral from HCVS of an elderly woman in upper Clapton is now getting hot meals daily. She is isolated and needed support with meals and human contact. She is very happy to receive the support.

R who has had his meals delivered to him from last year March said, " I don't know what I would have done without this service".

Woodberry Down Lunch-up

Report compiled by Suj Ahmed and Claire Brown.

For further information please contact **Suj Ahmed** on Tel: 020 7923 1962
Email: suj@hcv.org.uk

