

Project Manager's Message

This year has been an exciting year for me as we have had many new projects start and our team has continued to expand.

We were delighted to be given the opportunity to distribute the DWP Winter Grant alongside our colleagues at CAWS, which saw us employ remote-only staff for the first time, alongside distributing £200,000 of essential support to West Sussex residents.

Our new energy service launched in January 2021, which has continued to go from strength to strength. Our partnership with the West Sussex Fuel Poverty Coordinator and Citizens Advice 1066 has been crucial in ensuring we reach more people and reduce fuel poverty in West Sussex.

November saw us recruit a brand new full-time trainee debt adviser, thanks to distributed funds from the Money and Pension Service. Expanding our debt advice capacity is a priority due to the financial impact of the pandemic and believe this service will be more needed than ever over the coming year.

Our innovation project saw us develop a video advice service, as well as advance our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion objectives, as we translated our appointment request form into Polish and provide Interpreters for a whole host of languages, including British Sign Language.

We've now been delivering our home visiting our service for over a year, the majority of which we haven't been able to visit clients' homes! Our team have been kept busy supporting disabled clients and their carers remotely, and where needed, picking documents up from them. The team have developed new ways of completing forms remotely and have become confident in using 3-way calling to help clients who need support talking to third parties. As we return to home visiting, we'll continue to save time by using new ways of working, combined with seeing clients in person.

This year saw us deliver our Big Energy Saving Network project exclusively online for the first time. The first few months were challenging,, trying to engage clients to change their energy-related behaviour, but we found working in partnership with other organisations allowed us to reach many more people. Building on the success of this, in 2021-22, we are delivering the regional lead role alongside our partners at Citizens Advice 1066.

All of this has happened alongside so many other things – Help to Claim, Social Prescribing, Sage House outreach, Digital Money Coaching and more – whilst building relationships with other organisations and opening funding opportunities for 2021-22..

The next year looks to continue to be a busy one, full of new developments and opportunities. I'm so grateful to have a team of passionate and dedicated project workers, with so many different skills and experiences, without which none of this would be possible.



Charlie Young
Projects Manager