

WSSSEN

Social Enterprise of the Month

HORSHAM MATTERS

Horsham Matters is a social enterprise that was set up in 2009 by Horsham Churches Together to enable the 29 member churches to demonstrate 'God's love and concern for the local community' in practical ways.

They are committed to helping those who are unable, for whatever reason, to help themselves and do not make any judgement on why they are in the situation they are in. Horsham Matters aims first to meet their practical needs and then, working with partner organisations, to help them with wider issues such as debt advice, pregnancy counselling or addiction.

Their first venture was the Community Charity Centre that offers good quality second hand furniture, white goods and household items at reasonable prices, with a range of discounts available to those on benefits or with lower incomes. They work with partners such as the HDC Housing Department, WSCC Adult and Youth Services or the Y Centre to take referrals for those in desperate need, aiming to provide them with whatever they need at a price they can afford, however little that may be.

Horsham Matters also offers work experience, training and short term paid employment for younger people within the centre, with a view to helping them, through regular mentoring, to secure full time employment before their contract has finished. The Centre also provides an opportunity to reuse furniture and goods that are no longer required, thereby reducing the need for items to go to waste.

Money raised from the Charity Centre is used to provide new services for local residents and they have recently launched an Advocacy Service for young people working with the HDC Community Development team, WSCC Youth Services and Connections. They also run Horsham Children Can Do on behalf of HDC and WSCVYS and provide support for the Horsham Youth Support Team, a multi-agency team working with young people in Horsham parks on summer evenings. Further plans are in place for a number of other services targeted at specific groups and they are working with a variety of partners to try to put these into practice.

Horsham Matters also provides support to other local initiatives through grants and donations. They have made grants to the Horsham Debt Advice Service, the Salvation Army's Hope In project and Eliv:8 (an early intervention programme designed to raise aspirations and prospects of young people, particularly those undergoing demanding transitions or challenging situations). In addition they have made donations of goods to a number of other local groups.

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