

One year with Covid-19: Experiences of **community support services (including Kingston Stronger Together)** in Kingston before and during the coronavirus pandemic (January 2020 to March 2021)

One year with Covid-19: What you told us about your experiences of community support services in Kingston (including Kingston Stronger Together)

PLEASE NOTE: The complete 15-month report brings collates experiences of health and social care services shared with Healthwatch Kingston through two surveys we ran between 1 January 2020 and 30 November 2020, along with additional experiences, views and concerns shared via our website, received in voice messages, emails and during virtual engagement events between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021. You can read the full report [here](#) but we have also published a series of subject specific mini reports.

Healthwatch Kingston is pleased to be able to share this mini report about your **experiences of community support services** with you.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES (e.g. advocacy and safeguarding)

In summary: There was limited feedback from respondents to this service area but included dissatisfaction with the lack of community based mental health support services while praising Hestia for their advocacy support regarding this.

Of those that responded to our 'Share your experiences during COVID-19' survey (1 April to 30 November 2020), seven people provided feedback on this service area but only four answered the following questions.

One year with Covid-19: Experiences of **community support services (including Kingston Stronger Together)** in Kingston before and during the coronavirus pandemic (January 2020 to March 2021)

Access to community support services

It was easy to access the help and support I needed from this service

Answered: 4 Skipped: 3

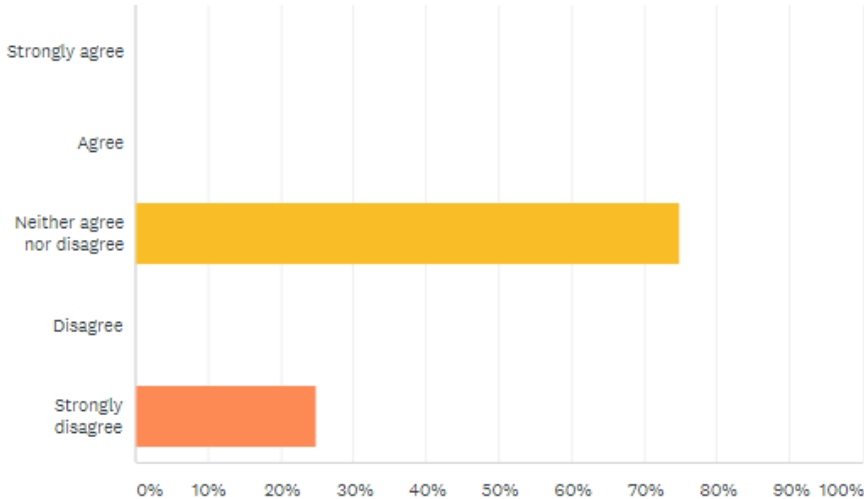


Figure 16: Experiences of access to community support services in Kingston.

Figure 16 shows that out of the small sample of 4 respondents who rated community support services, 3 neither agreed nor disagreed and one strongly disagreed it was easy to access the help and support they needed from community support services.

Some experiences of poor access to community support services

- “I didn't need support and I was surprised to be told in the first place that I was in the shielding group.”
- “Could contact Community Mental Health Trust and psychiatrist and care coordinator but not enough time allocated for support.”
- “Had to chase up to have telephone appointments. I had to have support from Hestia to speak to the correct professional on numerous occasions.”

One year with Covid-19: Experiences of **community support services (including Kingston Stronger Together)** in Kingston before and during the coronavirus pandemic (January 2020 to March 2021)

Quality of community support services

How satisfied were you with the care you received?

Answered: 4 Skipped: 3

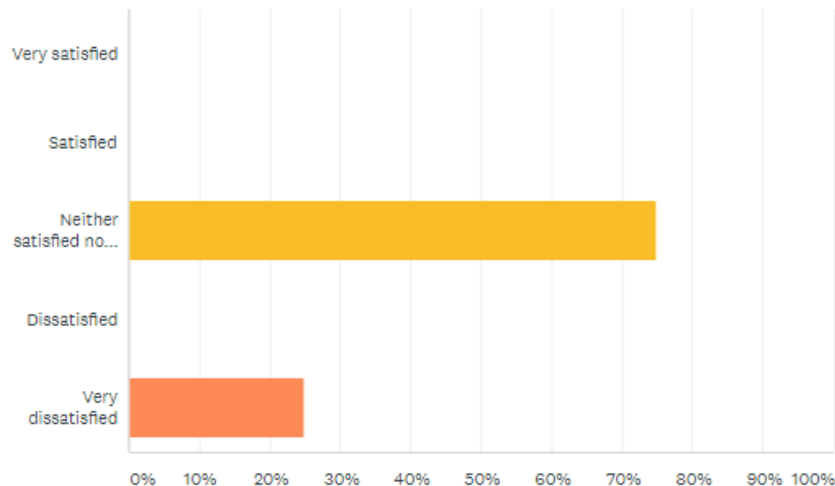


Figure 17: Experiences of the quality of community support services in Kingston.

Figure 17 shows that 3 respondents were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 1 was strongly dissatisfied with the quality of care provided from community support services.

Some experiences of the quality of community support services

- “I needed more support than was available.”
- “Satisfied with the direct care that my daughter received. Very unsatisfied with safeguarding, learning disability team discussing - 'What if?' Regarding my daughter going to Hospital, getting Covid19 etc.”
- “Support for my husband from Mind in Kingston, found through my buddy.”
- “Thank you, Kingston Churches Action on Homelessness.”
- “There was an agreed medication increase about 6 weeks ago, but this hasn't happened, I keep chasing with support from Hestia and still hasn't happened. I feel like I have been completely let down by the mental health services. I am vulnerable and shielding and no one contacted me for the first two and half months of lockdown, my GP contacted me asking if I have symptoms and asked if I had been contacted by mental health services which I had not, this prompted the Tolworth CMHRT to contact me a week later. Hestia had to support with contacting my psychiatrist. Letter from

One year with Covid-19: Experiences of **community support services (including Kingston Stronger Together)** in Kingston before and during the coronavirus pandemic (January 2020 to March 2021)

meeting with psychiatrist and psychotherapist pre-lockdown was received 3 months after meeting and following Hestia highlighting that it was outstanding.” (This quote is placed here as it illustrates the good quality community work Hestia had done considering the person said they had been let down by their mental health services).

Community support services aftercare

Were you satisfied with any further treatment/care/support that you were offered?

Answered: 4 Skipped: 3

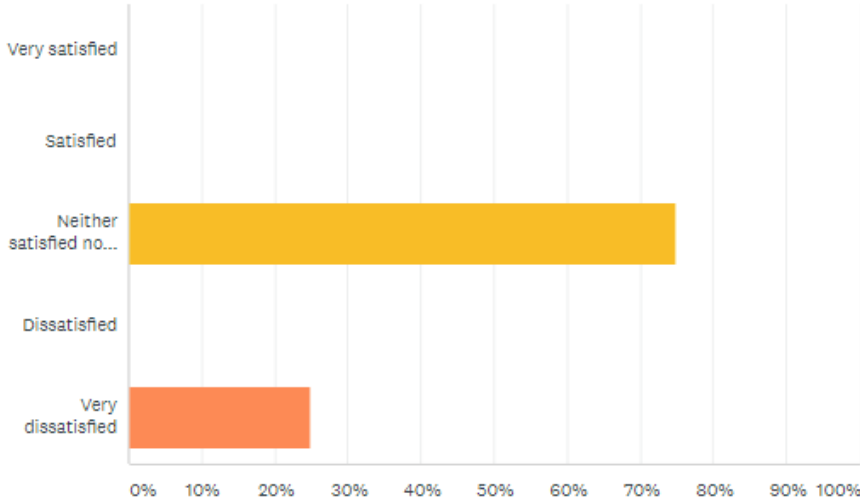



Figure 18: Experiences of community support services aftercare in Kingston.

Figure 18 shows that 3 respondents were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 1 was strongly dissatisfied with the aftercare provided from community support services.

An experience of community support services aftercare

“Medication still hasn't been increased - 3 months outstanding.”

One year with Covid-19: Experiences of **community support services (including Kingston Stronger Together)** in Kingston before and during the coronavirus pandemic (January 2020 to March 2021)

 *Kingston Centre for Independent Living (KCIL) has provided support in terms of telephone calls and a service offering creative suggestions while shielding.”*

 *Your Health Care service support. A GP phoned a courtesy call to ask general health and social care questions.”*


KINGSTON STRONGER TOGETHER

In summary: The Kingston Stronger Together Support Hub is run in partnership between Kingston Council, Kingston Voluntary Action, Volunteering Kingston and other community groups. Together they offered help to Kingston residents who could not leave their home due to COVID-19 and needed extra help on top of what friends, family, trusted neighbours and other local services were providing. Most experiences shared about Kingston Stronger Together, although limited in number, were positive. Respondents really appreciated being contacted if they were vulnerable and not able to access food and other services during the pandemic. One respondent said, “They called me to offer help in a difficult time.”

9 people responded to the access/quality and aftercare questions about this service in the ‘Share your experiences during COVID-19’ survey (1 April to 30 November 2020), of which 5 people provided 18 experiences. 7 of these experiences were negative and 11 were positive.

Some experiences of Kingston Stronger Together

About Kingston Stronger Together:


 *Regular phone calls from a volunteer supported, and continue to support, me.”*


- “The help was regular and can be relied upon.”
- “I appreciated having regular calls to check that the buddy service was continuing to work for me.”

One year with Covid-19: Experiences of **community support services (including Kingston Stronger Together)** in Kingston before and during the coronavirus pandemic (January 2020 to March 2021)

 *They called me to offer help in a difficult time.”*

 *They rang me to check I was OK and had everything.”*


 *They helped me when I had difficulties with my son.”*

 *We appreciated the kindness they showed us at this time of uncertainty.”*

ADDITIONAL KINGSTON STRONGER TOGETHER EXPERIENCES SHARED from other HWK sources:

“Just want to say a massive thanks to the Kingston Stronger Together service. They have been exceptionally helpful during lockdown; their packages of food have been a lifesaver. Whilst I really appreciate the support originally, I had only asked for help getting a delivery slot and not free food. The boxes have been great, but I did notice that there is only ever one tin of meat and whilst we were more than happy to make do for a few weeks a heavy diet of carbs is a struggle with Irritable Bowel Syndrome.”

“Is there a way that the service (Kingston Stronger Together) could support cases people in need of delivery slot that do not fit the criteria? My father was in a vehicle accident two weeks ago and during lockdown his unique circumstances meant he still needs that extra help?”

 *I have asthma, I don't drive and am a single mum with two kids. Getting to a shop was practically impossible. I felt bad taking food when I could have paid for it, I just didn't have a way to pay? PS. we did laugh when we kept getting men's razors and shaving kits in the packages (as I said I was a single mum).”*

Healthwatch Kingston sources:

- ‘Experiences of NHS and social care services in Kingston before and during the Coronavirus pandemic: Snapshot report #1’.

One year with Covid-19: Experiences of **community support services (including Kingston Stronger Together)** in Kingston before and during the coronavirus pandemic (January 2020 to March 2021)

OTHER SERVICES


In summary: Five people shared experiences of other services (one on maternity services, one on care for older people, one on direct payments/personal budgets, and another on '111' service and sexual health services). There were other examples of '111' in action provided within responses to other parts of the survey. A challenge appeared to be that access to information about 'other services' was either difficult to find or only online. This raised concerns about access to information for the digitally excluded.

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCES shared about **OTHER SERVICES** from the 'Share your experiences during COVID-19' survey (1 April to 30 November 2020).

Poor Access to social care information (Care for Older People):

 *I'm trying to find services on RBK website, nothing available."*

Poor Quality of social care information (Care for Older People):

 *I cannot find any information about applying for an emergency device for people living alone to alert emergency services while not being able to make contact with anyone i.e. an accident at home and unable to move toward a phone."*

Good Access to social care - Your Health Care (Direct Payments):

 *Easy to make contact through a telephone call provided through a 'one-stop' person approach. This is so useful in terms of getting a professional service quickly, and especially in an emergency."*

One year with Covid-19: Experiences of **community support services (including Kingston Stronger Together)** in Kingston before and during the coronavirus pandemic (January 2020 to March 2021)

Thank you, and next steps!

Healthwatch Kingston would like to thank everyone that has shared their experiences with us. Everything we say and do is informed by what local people tell us.

So sensitive issues that have been shared can also contribute to identified areas requiring improvement, Healthwatch Kingston will meet with Kingston GP leads from the South West London Clinical Commissioning Group, hospital, social care and other leads to discuss specific issues about services raised by local people.

During this period, whilst maintaining our independence, Healthwatch Kingston has also worked collaboratively with a range of organisations including Kingston Council, NHS south west London, schools and Kingston voluntary and community sector organisations on other Covid-19 related engagement work with residents. These included:

- [Young People's Wellbeing During the Covid-19 Crisis](#)
- [Tell us what you thought about Test and Trace and the NHS Covid-19 App](#)
- [Tell us what you think about the Covid-19 vaccination](#)
- [Residents, family, and friends' experiences of Care Homes during Covid-19.](#)

One year with Covid-19: Experiences of **community support services** (including **Kingston Stronger Together**) in Kingston before and during the coronavirus pandemic (January 2020 to March 2021)



healthwatch
Kingston upon Thames

“Tell us what you think about NHS and social care.”

Healthwatch Kingston upon Thames
Suite 3, 2nd Floor, Siddeley House
50, Canbury Park Road
Kingston upon Thames
KT2 6LX

www.healthwatchkingston.org.uk

t: 020 3326 1255

e: info@healthwatchkingston.org.uk

Twitter [@HWKingston](https://twitter.com/HWKingston)

Facebook [/HWKingston](https://www.facebook.com/HWKingston)

© Healthwatch Kingston upon Thames, July 2021