

This is the third edition of the Team Caerphilly newsletter, and I can't quite believe how much has happened since March. I'm sure you have all heard me say how proud I am of everyone in Team Caerphilly, but I am going to keep saying it as not because you continue to shine and drive this organisation forward!



In the early stages of Coronavirus, there were so many unknowns - it was certainly nothing like I ever imagined I would have to face in my career. The focus was solely on the Covid-19 response and how we could mobilise to support the community and keep vital services running. That quickly turned to the recovery phase, which has many strands - supporting businesses and the economic recovery, supporting teachers and learners to return to education, workers returning to their previous roles and so on. This will continue to be an uphill battle but I know we are working together. We have truly transformed the way we deliver services, which has been no easy task with guidance changing daily, but we continue to respond and act as quickly as we can. I think the way we have responded as an organisation really has said a lot about who we are, we are the council that cares and we have wrapped our arms around the community!

I hope that you are all taking your leave as your wellbeing is of paramount importance. I know we all need to recharge so we are ready to face the challenges ahead, of which I am sure there will be many.

Please don't forget my door is always open, you can reach out to me via the Just Ask the Chief Executive email inbox or join one of the Digital Cwtch session.

Christina Harrhy
Chief Executive

Staff step up to the challenge!

Thank 🌈 You

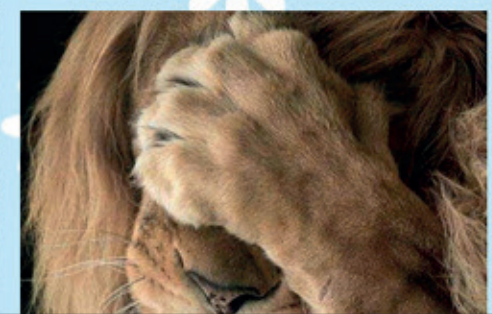
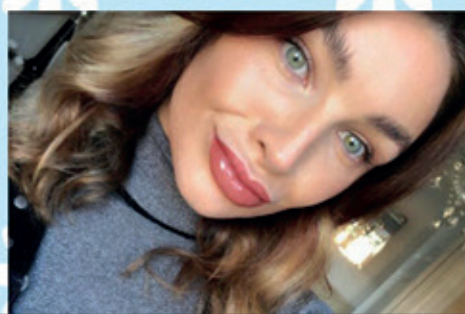
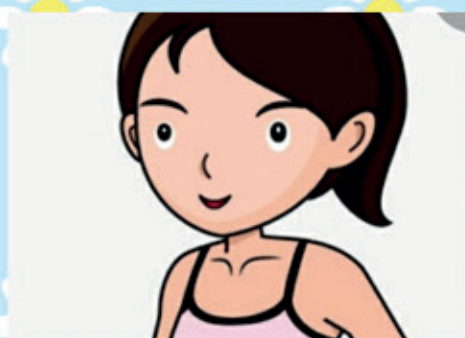
We want to say a huge well done to all teams that took part in the Corporate Step Challenge in July, the response was incredible. There were 46 teams across all council departments that took part in the competition to become CCBC's steps champion and improve employee health and wellbeing.

Taking third place was Team Idris Davies with 1,268,798 steps between them. A close second place was the A-Team with 1,285,085 collective steps. In first place, with a very impressive 1,660,596 steps, was.... Team St. Cenydd, making them this year's champions! Brilliant work all!

A huge Well done to all of teams who took part, a combined total of 40,755,351 of steps were achieved in just one week! Watch out for the next challenge in September!

Top 10 Teams

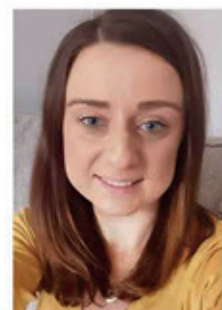
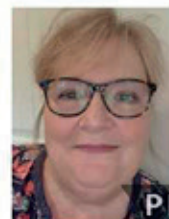
Top 10 Teams	Team Name	Results
1 st	St Cenydd	1,660,596
2 nd	A-Team	1,285,085
3 rd	Team IDS	1,268,798
4 th	Team Penllwyn	1,247,187
5 th	Llancaiach team (Controlling goats)	1,201,853
6 th	IHS Tues/Thurs Team	1,196,676
7 th	Team Awesome	1,182,712
8 th	IHS Mon/Weds Team	1,159,110
9 th	Sêr YGC	1,149,415
10 th	Sport Caerphilly	1,149,228



The Caerphilly Homes team has been busy resuming work to council tenants' homes over recent weeks, including those being delivered as part of its £260 million Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) programme. The team is currently working to clear the backlog of non-urgent internal repairs, reported prior to the service being suspended, in readiness for tenants to report new repairs from 1st September.

Works to deliver the environmental improvement element of the WHQS programme is also continuing, with contracts underway to deliver new and enhanced play facilities in Penllwyn, Trinant, Panside, Graig y Rhacca and Porset Park.

The Older Persons' Housing Team also continues to support tenants throughout the pandemic, including the Floating Support Service which provides flexible support to clients to enable them to manage their day to day affairs such as welfare benefit claims, financial reviews, debt management and to help them live as independently as possible. Sheltered Housing Officers are providing reassurance calls to all tenants in their schemes, as well as sending out 'wellbeing packs' which include puzzles, healthy eating advice, alcohol advice colouring pages, useful telephone numbers and details for food delivery services.



PIC-COLLAGE

The team delivering the council's innovative Caerphilly Keys scheme has also continued to run successfully throughout the pandemic, finding sustainable homes for those at risk of homelessness whilst helping private landlords find suitable, long term tenants. The team recently launched a campaign appealing for owners of empty properties to come forward to provide accommodation for those in need. For more information contact the team on 01443 873564 or by emailing keys@caerphilly.gov.uk



Public Protection

Officers from the Food/Health and Safety Team have successfully adapted to a new way of working. Based at home with new technology officers have linked up with colleagues from Trading Standards and worked tirelessly during the Emergency Period to deliver the following additional services either via telephone or in person:

- Investigating complaints made by members of the public in respect of social distancing concerns, poor hygiene practices, workers failing to wear PPE where required.
- Providing food safety advice to businesses adapting to providing a new "take away" service until being permitted to fully re-open.
- Assisting businesses by circulating and interpreting new guidance published by the Welsh Government prior to re-opening.
- Undertaking "spot checks" across the borough to ensure that businesses are complying with the Coronavirus legislation and the new guidance.
- Attending virtual meetings with counterparts across Wales to ensure that a consistent approach to enforcement is taken.
- Working with large manufacturers and child care settings to advise on necessary COVID controls and guidance
- Working closely with Officers and Inspectors from Internal Departments, Local Authorities, the Police, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), Public Health Wales, Aneurin Bevan Health Board and The Welsh Government.

The new legislation has required Environmental Health Officers to gain an understanding of the COVID 19 virus and to train and assist in the day to day operation of the Contract Tracing Service. These Officers have been working closely with Care Homes within the borough to advise on implementing the latest guidance published by Public Health Wales on practices, testing of staff and residents, the reporting of potential COVID 19 cases and to ensure that they have the necessary PPE they need to protect themselves and others.

With most business sectors now re-open and routine work being reintroduced Officers anticipate a very busy Autumn indeed.

Supporting the community

Christina, Cllr. Philippa Marsden and Cllr. Carl Cuss were keen to pay a visit to the Home Assistance and Reablement Team (HART Team) - one of the many Adult Services teams that have been supporting our most vulnerable residents.

The team co-ordinate the staff who provide homecare assistance for our residents allowing them to remain in their own home, something that has been of paramount importance during the shielding period of COVID-19.



Apprentice catch up

Where are they now...

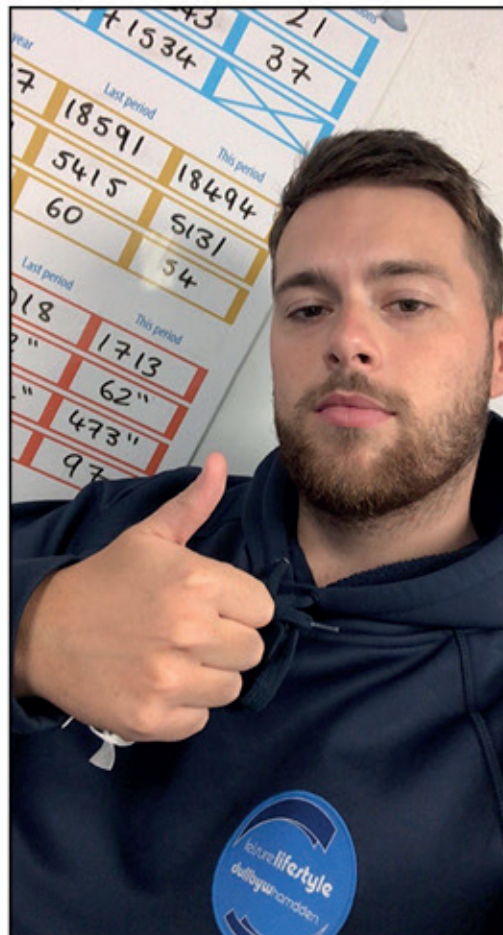


George Davis, Building Control Apprentice:

'I have really enjoyed my redeployment experience. I was helping vulnerable people during the pandemic and it felt good receiving thanks from them when delivering their food parcels. My redeployment experience also gave me the opportunity to get out during the pandemic rather than being stuck inside and enabled me to have some interaction with other people which helped my wellbeing. My redeployment experience has been worthwhile and rewarding as it has given me more experience working for different sections of the council and gave me the chance to help some of the vulnerable people living in Caerphilly.'

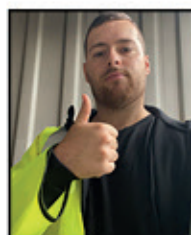


George Davis



Ryan Lowry, Leisure Centre Apprentice:

'During the COVID-19 pandemic I have completed a few different jobs within the council. These jobs include food delivery for schools during the tough times to working in waste management sites helping out when they reached a busy peak after they reopened. It's been a good experience and good to help other organisations within Caerphilly County Borough Council and see how they work and operate. It's also been eye opening to see how the council works for everybody else and how much everyone realises on the council.'



Ryan Lowry



Faye Harrison, Health and Safety Apprentice:

'I've enjoyed delivering the free school meals. It makes it worthwhile when you see the children excited seeing you carrying their meals to the door and waving at you through the window.'



Faye Harrison

Caerphilly Childcare Hubs have been keeping children busy this summer

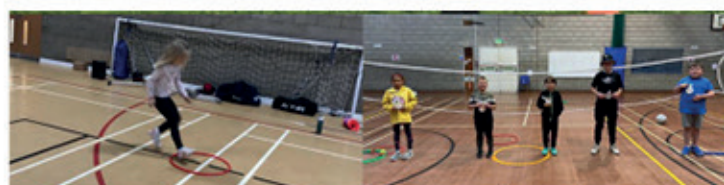
Thank  You

Sport Caerphilly ran 3 Summer Sport Hubs for the children of key workers for 4 weeks throughout the summer holidays, which came to an end on Friday 21st August. Running from Caerphilly, Pontllanfraith and Risca Leisure Centre's, the Hubs operated between 8:30am-5pm Monday to Friday.

Over the last four weeks, Sport Caerphilly organised lots of activities with the children such as drawing, dancing, badminton, Olympic games, creating TikToks and shared lots of laughter while taking part in these.

The children and Sport Caerphilly staff all had so much fun together! Please visit their Twitter @sport_leisure and Facebook page, Sport Caerphilly, to see what they all got up to during their month together.

A massive thank you to all those involved helping to look after them whilst their parents are working on the front line, we are so grateful for all your hard work."



World Mental Health Day

It's **World Mental Health Day** on **October 10th** and we want to raise awareness of the importance of our staff's wellbeing. If you have any experiences that you feel comfortable in sharing with us for publication in a special newsletter edition please contact the Communications

Team on **01443863218** or email **communicationsunit@caerphilly.gov.uk**.

Free School Meal deliveries have continued over the summer

The army of volunteers delivering free school meals have continued to turn up in their hundreds come rain or shine over the school holiday period.

Growing in popularity, the home delivery service now sees more than 5,000 children receive 5 healthy and balanced meals, fresh fruit and veg boxes, milk and bread every week!

The scheme will run to the end of September ensuring parents are able to cope with the transition back to fulltime education.

Caerphilly Council's FREE School Meals Response - In Numbers:



135,000

LOAVES OF BREAD
DELIVERED TO DATE



15,000

HOURS HAVE BEEN
SPENT PREPARING AND
DELIVERING MEALS



675,000

MEALS HAVE BEEN
DELIVERED TO DATE



481,100

PIECES OF FRUIT HAVE
BEEN DELIVERED TO DATE



25,000

MEALS ARE DELIVERED
WEEKLY



56

VOLUNTEERS FROM
COUNCIL DEPARTMENTS
HELP WITH DELIVERIES



5,200

CHILDREN RECEIVE FREE
SCHOOL MEALS WEEKLY



172

VEHICLES DELIVER
TO RESIDENTS
WEEKLY



38,700

MILES TRAVELED TO
DATE BY DELIVERY
DRIVERS



44,630

PEOPLE WERE REACHED
WITH OUR RECENT FREE
SCHOOL MEALS VIDEO

**TO SIGN UP FOR OUR FREE SCHOOL MEALS -
PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
[HTTPS://BIT.LY/3BNXJ3M](https://bit.ly/3BNXJ3M)**

Support Services

People Services have played a huge role behind the scenes in ensuring that essential services have been able to operate safely over recent months.

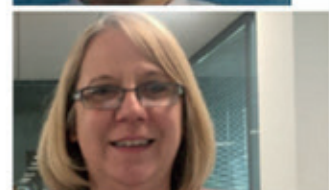
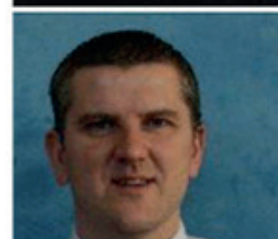
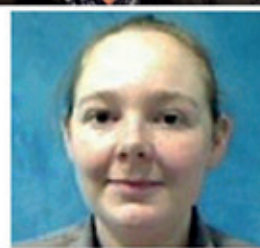
The Health and Safety Team have provided support to various service areas, including;

- Supplying face visors, masks, aprons and hand gel
- Supporting the set up and safe operation of the school and summer hubs at Llancaiach Fawr and 3 leisure centres for vulnerable children and those of essential workers
- Supporting schools with the partial reopening at the end of the summer term and for full reopening in September
- Supporting services to safely re-open facilities including drafting template risk assessment records and reviewing risk assessments from service managers in relation to covid-19

- Providing regular H&S Bulletin updates to account for changes to the legislation and official guidance from Welsh Government in relation to covid-19 in the CCBC's work activities.
- Providing a dedicated covid-19 topic page on the intranet and a website page that is accessible to staff without network access, containing various guidance for employees and managers
- Producing covid-19 related signage that site managers can print for display in CCBC premises.
- Facilitated a whole host of digital training.

The payroll team have been undertaking a vital role ensuring staff are paid and dealing with the added pressures of average pay queries and the expenses claims for those redeployed in other services.

HR services have been working remotely to ensure that business as usual continues, supporting people to return to work, providing advice and support to those who are symptomatic in-line with the latest government and those who have been shielding.





Building a positive legacy through council ‘buddy scheme’

The scheme that hundreds of staff helped to build to support the vulnerable amidst the lockdown restrictions of COVID-19 will continue.

A report recently approved by Cabinet will ensure ongoing voluntary befriending support is in place for some of Caerphilly county borough's most vulnerable residents as ‘shielding’ from COVID-19 comes to an end while working to also further strengthen links with communities across the area.

At its peak, the buddy scheme supported over 1,560 people who otherwise would have had no other support, made possible thanks to over 590 members of council staff who willingly stepped forward to support the initiative, the majority of those in a purely voluntary capacity.

Cllr Philippa Marsden, Leader of Caerphilly County Borough Council said,

“The success of the buddy scheme has allowed us to build on our understanding of the needs of our communities, and we’ve been able to build an initiative

around those needs. It has also opened up a new way of how we work with our communities. While shielding came to an end on 16th August, it affords us an opportunity to build a positive legacy from what has been a truly awful situation. It was my pleasure to visit a family recently who have been receiving support through the scheme and the staff volunteer who has been supporting them. What is clear is that staff involved in the initiative have felt a real sense of purpose and of being part of ‘Team Caerphilly’ and the feedback we’ve gained from the vulnerable people who have received support has also been overwhelmingly positive.”

The council has also helped facilitate the Welsh Government food parcel scheme and has supported a number of local community pharmacies with additional delivery driver capacity as part of its community response to COVID-19. The Community Regeneration team has also played a key role in supporting local foodbanks with resourcing, deliveries and securing additional food donations.

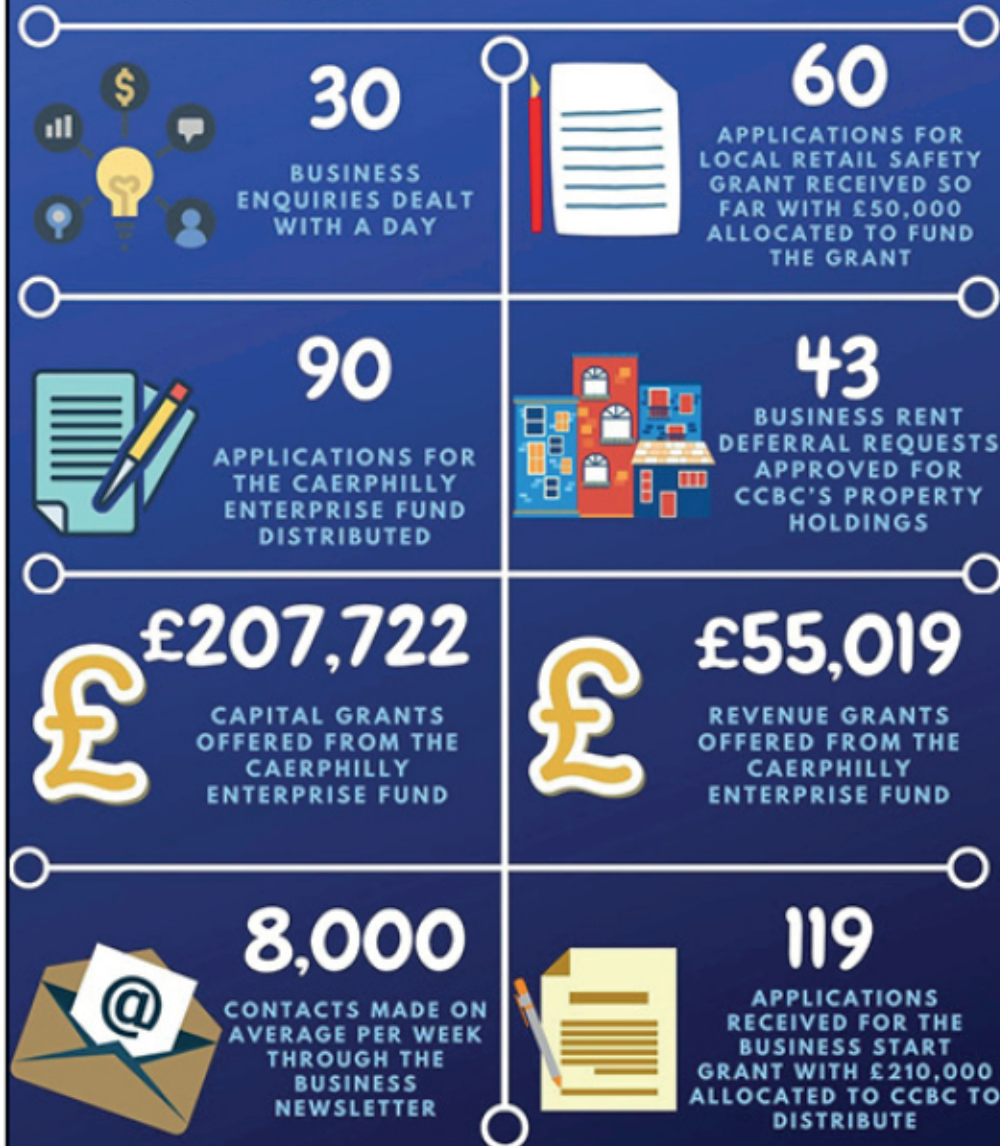
“The success of the buddy scheme has allowed us to build on our understanding of the needs of our communities.”

Supporting our business community

Thank  You

Caerphilly Council's Business Response

In Numbers:



The Business Enterprise and Renewal Team has seen a significant rise in the number of businesses contacting them for support; with the team dealing with around 30 enquiries per day, reaching a peak of 60 a day at the start of the crisis. In addition to dealing with incoming enquiries, the team also proactively sends out a weekly business e-newsletter to around 8,000 business contacts and stakeholders.

The team have had to act quickly to ensure support is in place for our business community, this has included making changes to application processes and grant approvals, and providing support to the finance team in promoting the rate relief grants scheme to local businesses ensuring that 94% of eligible businesses have been in receipt of financial support through the scheme.

They have also set up a Retail Safety Grant with a £50,000 budget to help non-essential retail & service businesses that were required to close put safety measures in place for reopening. So far over 60 applications have been received for grants up to £200.

With large numbers of the county borough's workforce currently on furlough and many employees facing an uncertain future the team has established a Redundancy Response Team to work with the many agencies who have a role to play in supporting workers that are facing the prospect of being made redundant.

The service is working to develop an Economic Recovery Plan and has engaged consultants to undertake a comprehensive Business Impact Survey that will feed into the recovery plan.



‘Go’ Team Caerphilly!

The Procurement Team have been commended for reaching the final of the UK National GO Excellence in Public Procurement Awards 2020.

The team became finalists in the category for ‘Social Value - Local Government’ after winning the same title in the GO Awards Wales in June. The Social Value Award recognises the crucial role that public procurement across the UK can play in delivering better social outcomes through the procurement function. It highlights those organisations who have embedded social and community benefit in their procurement activity and has a strong theme and evidence of benefit relating to people – for example, the creation of apprenticeships, training, full time employment, facilities or support for disadvantaged groups or

communities, whilst aligning closely to Social Value policy and drivers. The focus is on end user outcomes and benefits.

Grahame Steed, Lead Judge for the GO Awards Programme, said: “Right now, procurement is front-page news with public service delivery at the forefront of economic recovery. That is why this year, it was more important than ever for our GO Awards to take place, and once again recognise the people

and organisations making great procurement happen.

“Given that innovation is a key driver for change in public sector procurement, we took inspiration from the very people we are celebrating, through delivering a full Awards programme in an online and interactive environment for the first time ever; thanks in no small part to our many sponsors and partners.

“Congratulations to all our finalists including Caerphilly Council, for collectively showcasing the best in UK procurement.”

Changing Operations

Since the reopening of the Household Waste Recycling Centres in May the staff across the 6 sites have helped us to recycle 3,500 tonnes of unwanted items and dispose of household waste!

Christina, Cllr. Philippa Marsden and Cllr Nigel George were keen to visit the site in Penallta to see how operations have changed and adapted since the service re-opened.



Customers return to our Leisure Centres

The Leisure Team have been busy preparing to welcome back customers for gym, swim and classes.

During the coronavirus pandemic, Leisure Lifestyle staff have been busy making sure that our leisure centres are reconfigured in a way to allow for safe use. Since the beginning of lockdown, staff from across the Sport & Leisure Services have also supported a number of key service areas and have played a vital role in the council's business

continuity efforts. These efforts include supporting the Free School Meals programme, supporting the Household Waste Recycling Centres, the Test, Track and Trace programme along with providing facilities to our valued refuse and cleansing teams during their daily collection rounds. This work has also continued over the August period with the delivery of Sport Hubs for key workers at a number of Leisure Centre's.

The centres have reopened on a phased basis with some additional safety measures in place;

- Social distancing
- Pre-booked sessions
- Contactless payments
- One way systems
- Additional cleaning of equipment
- Condensed opening hours (to allow for extra cleaning)

For more information visit www.caerphilly.gov.uk.

24/7 support for residents

CCBC's Telecare Service supports residents to remain in their own home. The Telecare Installation Team provides telecare equipment, including alarm pendants, fall detectors, smoke detectors and motion sensors, while the Monitoring Response Centre Team respond to calls and alerts from that equipment.

Throughout the Pandemic, the Telecare installation team have continued to install and maintain alarm equipment, in some cases this enabled the service user to come home from hospital, safe in the knowledge they would have support

if they needed it.

The Telecare Monitoring Response Centre continued to operate 24/7, supporting our 5000+ alarm connections across the South Wales area. The team of operators pulled together to ensure business as usual.

The Centre deals with a large number of incoming calls for a broad range of issues, including falls, urgent medical support or general support and reassurance. During lockdown they have supported many service users who were unwell, anxious, or feeling

isolated as their usual support networks weren't available. The operators also had to deal with some very challenging calls including callers who were contemplating suicide. As well as supporting CCBC Telecare alarm users, the team also manage the Telecare Response Centre for two other local authorities and a number of sheltered housing providers.

In order to deal with the volume of calls, the team have trained staff from other parts of the authority who were an asset to the team during the height of lockdown.

