

What is United in Kind?

United in Kind is a project that supports people to build community resilience across Essex to tackle social isolation and loneliness. The project is delivered by RCCE and is part of the Essex Wellbeing Service.

The target groups who are most at risk of feeling socially isolated and lonely are: Older people, Unpaid carers, People living with a mental health issue and People living with a learning disability/autism.



Essex
Wellbeing Service



Let's connect
our community
with kindness



What is a United in Kind coach?

The role of a United in Kind coach is to promote the United in Kind campaign and Essex Wellbeing Service. To encourage acts of kindness in the community. Help connect people and organisations and groups to provide greater inclusion and sustainability. Facilitate and support local activities and initiatives that reduce social isolation and loneliness. Increase volunteering across Essex. To map local need and identify any gaps and to Increase community resilience.



A little bit about our volunteers

Our projects aim to engage people helping to reduce social isolation and loneliness. Being a volunteer is often the solution to that.

We have hundreds of volunteers across the county, some who offer their time and creativity on a weekly basis, some who just dip in and out of projects ad hoc. However they choose to help, it is without doubt that we would be lost without them!



The Hug in a Shrug project

The Hug in a Shrug Project was born from a 2020 Christmas Giving project in Castle Point. One of the gifters made a shawl and sent it on to the recipient as a 'hug in a shrug' to wrap around them when they are feeling low. Since then, the project has spread across Essex with 1,800+ members of the United in Kind Facebook Hug in a Shrug project page, hundreds of knitters and crocheters across the county, face to face groups and meetings and thousands of recipients of blankets, twiddle mitts, worry worms and all things crocheted or knitted!



Dementia Awareness Week

Those living with or caring for someone with Dementia can find life very isolating.

So as part of the nationwide Dementia Awareness Week, United in Kind teams up with town councils, parish councils, businesses, schools, retailers and volunteers to Turn the High Street Blue across the County.



United in Nature

Being outdoors in nature is proven to be good for our mental wellbeing as well as our physical health. This year for Loneliness Week United in Kind linked up with community allotments, walk and talk groups, community gardens, parks, nature trails and litter picks to get people outdoors.

Creating social opportunities to meet new people and get involved with one of our many outdoor projects that run throughout the year.



Sleepwell

United in Kind are linking up with Mid Essex hospitals, to provide patients who have to stay overnight a sleeping mask to 'SleepWell'.

Our volunteers across mid Essex are busy making masks for us to donate and we have started up some no sew group sessions too! Another great opportunity to socialise and make a difference.



United in Strides

This is a walking/social group that started just over a year ago and was facilitated by our Rochford coach Corrina.

The group is now volunteer led, has received funding from Sanctuary Housing and has well over 30 people attending each week.

A great way to be social and keep fit!



Community Hubs

All over the county in even out smallest villages Community Hubs are alive and well! A place to meet with different community partners, to get information on wellbeing, social opportunities, activities and practical help and advice.

All that PLUS the opportunity to have a chat, meet new people try some crafts and have a cuppa! Ask your local coach for more information on a hub near you.



Christmas wishes

At Christmas time United in Kind collaborate with a variety of local care homes, carers, schools and churches amongst others to fulfil Christmas wishes. The wishes are placed in local businesses, churches, shops, cafés etc. for members of the public to choose a wish they want to grant.

Fulfilled wishes are then given out in time for Christmas. This project also creates the opportunity for more crafty volunteers to get involved!



Send a Smile

This project invites anyone in the community to make or write a cheerful greeting card, postcard or note of hope and kindness which will be delivered via local support services to lift the spirits of patients, carers, care home residents, and individuals who may be lonely or going through a difficult time. Post boxes are placed in local public places like the library for people pop their creation into or come together and make the cards.

This is a year round initiative with seasonal appeal!



Community trailers & pop up events

Community trailers and pop up events are a great way to get to the harder to reach parts of our county, with many rural towns and villages in Essex these offer a wonderful opportunity for members of those communities to engage with local services. United in Kind coaches are linking up with these mobile hubs throughout the county to provide valuable information about groups and social opportunities to reduce social isolation and loneliness.



Dignity Shirts

Along with our Sleepwell masks and blankets from Hug in a Shrug United in Kind volunteers are also making Dignity Shirts. These wonderful shirts are a practical, environmentally kind and dignified alternative to a disposable bib/tabard.

Community donations of shirts, are turned into Dignity bibs by our amazing volunteers which are then distributed to those who need them.

