

# THE IMPACT OF THE VIRTUAL VILLAGE HALL ON HEALTH AND WELLBEING



ROYAL  
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SERVICE

The Virtual Village Hall is a free online activity hub and community, designed by Royal Voluntary Service to help people stay physically and mentally active, socially engaged and having fun. It is open to everyone, and helps people that face challenges getting out and about, experience social isolation or loneliness, or need support to better manage their health, including long-term health conditions.

Health & social care professionals and referrers are using it, including social prescribers, NHS teams on hospital wards, and activity co-ordinators in residential care settings.

There are 2,000 sessions to try, from exercise and dance, yoga and meditation to crafts, cooking and creative writing. Daily sessions led by expert tutors and some well-known faces take place live on Facebook, YouTube and X. Followers can take part in real time or view on-demand online. New sessions are added regularly and a weekly timetable shared.

The VVH is free for all, thanks to support from players of People's Postcode Lottery. Where activities require equipment, ingredients or materials, these are low-cost and easy to source. No sign in or subscription required.



## KEY FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY ARE:



**92%**

agree that the VVH offers something different from other online activities/classes



**92%** of those waiting for treatment/surgery agreed that the VVH helped them stay active while they wait



**91%** felt that the VVH had a positive impact on their mood and emotional wellbeing



**83%** felt that the VVH had a positive impact on their physical health



**78%**

said it has enabled them to stay active despite cost of living challenges



**73%** say that exercise & dance are their favourite activities, followed by health and wellbeing (63%) and crafts and making (51%)



**68%** of those with a Long Term Health Condition felt the VVH enabled them to better manage their health condition



**67%**

said it helps them feel less lonely/isolated; 75% for those with health conditions

**60,000+**  
followers

**7+**  
million views

**12-15 live**  
sessions per week

**2,000+** archive sessions,  
free to view on demand



Scan the QR code to find out more about the Virtual Village Hall.



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# HERE'S WHAT SOME VIRTUAL VILLAGERS HAD TO SAY

*"I took ill with anxiety inside a MRI scanner, so the scan had to be cancelled. I have dreaded returning but have been able to have a scan today using the meditation shown to me by your Laughing Yoga leader. This will make an important difference to my health. Thank you!" (Female, 55-64)*

*"I think the VVH is a godsend. It has helped me prepare for surgery and accompanied me as I heal. It has helped me manage physical ailments ... It is creative and exciting (I now do burlesque and have been introduced to the stunning beauty of harp meditations) and this has opened up my rather limited world as I don't go out too much. The VVH hosts and the class tutors are all fantastic and create such a warm, welcoming environment, I feel part of something even though I've never met you. I can't believe I didn't discover you earlier, but now I have, I feel more hopeful for an active, accompanied future. I can't thank you enough." (Female, 45-54)*

*"I feel the VVH has been a real lifeline to me as I have suffered with Long Covid for over 2yrs - because of the variety of events there is always something interesting and varied to do to help me feel less isolated and more inspired. You have been an amazing resource for my Community Support Group for people living with a neurodegenerative disease and their families - thank you so much for all you do!" (Female, 55-64)*

*"I just want to thank everyone for providing these sessions, especially as they are free of charge, as they have built my confidence in times when it's been difficult. I especially enjoy April's Pilates classes. They are something I had never tried before and wouldn't have had the nerve to go to a class, but the regular sessions have helped my flexibility and mindfulness enormously. Thank you so much." (Female, 55-64)*

*"I found out about it when I was accepting my recovery from [long] covid ... I have enjoyed the gentler things (qigong, yoga, harp meditation, chair fit, EFT tapping) and like accessing it on YouTube as I can watch on the television as I participate in my own time. But I also like it on Facebook to keep up to date." (Female, 55-64)*

*"I found it during Covid and share to PSP/CBD Support groups I run on Facebook - it helps carers and patients" (Female, 55-64)*

*"Love it. It gets my husband who has Parkinson's and dementia to get active as well as me his carer. It's priceless especially on wet days when we don't go out" (Female, 55-64)*

*"I have an illness (M.E.) which renders me housebound so it's a way to connect with others and feel like I'm joining in a community" (Female, 55-64)*

*"Alone and often house bound so it gives me the chance to do classes, without pressure and at my own pace. They are classes I would love to be able to go to but can't." (Female, 35-44)*

*"I love the flexibility that I can watch the sessions when convenient to me. The variety is brilliant and when I struggle with mental health I find the sessions really help." (Female, 35-44)*

*"Please keep it going, wonderful teachers and such enjoyable classes. I have anxiety and depression and it's really helped me to exercise and helped with my mental health. Thank you so much for providing such a fantastic resource for us all" (Female, 35-44)*



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## HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE PROFESSIONALS

*"It's a fantastic resource and I refer it on to my patients" (Healthcare professional)*

*One of our activity coordinators regularly links into various activities whether it's exercise, craft or cooking. The important thing as mental health wards is that we offer more than just medication and this gives us something really practical that people can do on the ward and take home with them, both to give them structure to their days and something to engage with when they feel they cannot get out. It's a resource we are really grateful for. Thank you"*

**Hannah Pile, Consultant Nurse / Trainee Multi-Professional Approved Clinician, Cornwall Partnership NHS Trust**

*"What a great site it is too. I support people to improve their emotional, mental and social wellbeing. I signpost and share this resource out regularly. There are loads of great fun things to learn and connect up to. I'm sure it's been a lifeline to so many. Thank you so much!"*

**Sarah Baldwin, Social Prescribing Link Worker, The Central Surgery Barton, South Humberside**