



Creating opportunities,  
realising potential

# ...the community stayed open

***The experience of  
Mosaic Clubhouse through  
the Covid-19 pandemic***



This report was written by Kate Jopling, a Mosaic Clubhouse trustee, based on data, insight and member testimonials provided by Mosaic staff

September 2021

# About Mosaic Clubhouse

Mosaic Clubhouse is a thriving Lambeth-based charity that provides opportunities for people experiencing mental health issues to regain the confidence and skills necessary to lead productive and satisfying lives.

It is part of the international network of Clubhouses which work to a set of closely monitored standards, central to which is the active involvement of members in every aspect of the organisation. According to the International Clubhouse community a Clubhouse is ***“a place where people with mental health issues (members) participate in their own recovery process by working and socializing together in a safe, welcoming environment.”***

## Mosaic Clubhouse works to:

- ensure that people who are affected by mental health problems have the right to be productive, achieve their potential and be respected as co-workers, neighbours and friends.
- promote and provide access to real educational and employment opportunities, and assists members in accessing and sustaining their own employment.
- offer every member a range of support and social opportunities to match their needs and aspirations.
- provide training and support to other clubhouses both in the United Kingdom and world.

Over 25 years of work in Lambeth, Mosaic Clubhouse has offered people opportunities to get out of their homes and into the workplace and community. People join Mosaic Clubhouses as members and are invited to work alongside staff to deliver and develop the Clubhouse's activities.

At Mosaic Clubhouse, members work across four units:

- Employment and Education
- Information Hub
- Business and Administration
- Café and Garden

Each unit provides a wide range of tasks appropriate to the capabilities and interests of the individual member. Staff and members work together, side-by-side, in the daily running of the Clubhouse. This enables members to gain skills, confidence and self-esteem in a safe environment.

In addition to day time provision, the Clubhouse offers an Evening Sanctuary service from 6pm to midnight every night of the week, offering a place to go for people who need emotional support. Members attend alongside staff to offer support to people who attend.

With a long history of working together, side-by-side and face-to-face, the national lockdown which forced Mosaic Clubhouse to close its doors for the first time in its 25-year history presented real challenges. Many Clubhouse members rely on the Clubhouse community for practical and emotional support, as well as for a place in which to engage in meaningful activities. However, over many years Mosaic's members have built a resilient community and a strong commitment to mutual support.

This report tells the story of how Mosaic adapted its offer, to find a new way to sustain its community away from the Clubhouse.

## At a glance



**446** people were active members of Mosaic Clubhouse

### Over the year:



**67** members took part in education and training courses



**12** members secured paid employment with Mosaic's support



**89** young adults engaged with Mosaic's young adults' programme



Members delivered **102** workshops to other members



**58** people used the Evening Sanctuary service as a crisis support service over the year, with **497** visits in total



There were **297** visits to the Information Hub



There were **21,345** 'individual support contacts' to members – by email, phone or post, providing emotional, practical, wellness and social inclusion support



**100** food parcels were delivered – mostly by one Clubhouse member to another



**89** members were provided with devices such as laptops, smart phones and dongles to get online at home



**70%** of members surveyed said Mosaic's support during this time helped them manage their mental health\*



**83%** of members surveyed said they found support from Mosaic during the pandemic / lockdown useful\*

\*94 members completed Mosaic's member satisfaction survey in 2020

# Rapid adaptation: March 2020



**83%** of members said they found support from Mosaic during the Covid 19 pandemic/lockdown useful

**70%** of members said Mosaic's support during this time helped them manage their mental health

94 members completed Mosaic's member satisfaction survey in 2020

As lockdown began, Mosaic adopted the Clubhouse International motto: ***"our building may be closed, but our community remains open"*** and started to work out what this would mean in practice.

Systems were quickly moved online and staff were provided with telephones and laptops to enable them to work remotely. Arrangements were made for the building to be secured.

The key priority for the Mosaic team was to keep in touch with members, to ensure they felt connected and to understand their support needs. Staff contacted all members regularly – offering phone calls, texts, emails, and contact by post depending on each members' needs and levels of access to technology.

Some members needed immediate support with basic needs, as well as emotional support due to the extra stress and pressures of the pandemic. Many members faced heightened levels of anxiety and depression during the pandemic. Reassuring members that Mosaic would continue to be there for them was critically important.

Keeping people connected to the community was a priority. The team started to produce a weekly virtual version of its popular newsletter *In the Mo*, replacing its fortnightly paper version, sharing a wide range of content produced by members, including poetry, and personal stories about

copng with lockdown, as well as practical information. Members also started to work on their own ways of staying connected – in line with the Clubhouse ethos of members in the lead. Members set up email art groups and writing groups, and used WhatsApp and Zoom to stay in touch and to form groups around key interests. One member, Jamille, established his own radio station, involving other members in some episodes and engaging others as listeners.

***"I enjoy radio and find it like company, it's good for my mental health. I enjoy presenting radio and playing music I like and discovering new music. Setting up the station gave me something to do. Other members did couple of shows for the radio station too."***

**Jamille – Mosaic member**

As the first lockdown continued, the team continued to adapt. The "work ordered day" which is central to the Clubhouse model had to be adapted for remote working. The Mosaic team were determined to continue to offer members ways to get involved in all aspects of the Clubhouse's work, and to give people a sense of structure.





The daily unit meetings – where work which needs to be done around the Clubhouse is discussed and allocated - and Mosaic's regularly young adults' committee meetings moved to Zoom, and the team set up remote access to key services such as the Information Hub, Evening Sanctuary and Hospital In-reach project.

By April 2020 Mosaic's "virtual Clubhouse" was up and running.

*"The past three or so weeks have been very overwhelming for everyone in different ways, real shock to our systems, but everyone has tried to create new ways of connecting with others, of keeping in touch regularly, and in as familiar a way as possible - I now feel some sort of reliable routine of connection has been created, and don't feel as alone and freaked out as beforehand.*

*"Many thanks to Mosaic Clubhouse staff and members and everyone else who has done their best to enable*

*activities and communications to continue, albeit in different forms for the time being."*

**Mosaic member (April 2020)**

*"I am just so grateful that Mosaic remains active during the lockdown and has found different ways to reach out and engage its members. Without Mosaic I dread to think what would have happened to my mental health."*

**Sarah – Mosaic member**

*"I am pleased to have staff from Mosaic phone me during lockdown, it makes me feel that I have people who care about me. I don't have a laptop or a smartphone, so I felt cut off from everything and everyone."*

**Janet – Mosaic member**

# Meeting basic needs

The Mosaic Clubhouse café normally offers members access to high quality, healthy home cooked food for reasonable prices. During lockdown the café could not operate. With lockdown and isolation requirements leaving some members short of basic supplies, the team recognised that food provision would remain a priority.

Initially Mosaic staff and members gave away café supplies to members facing food shortages, but as some members continued to struggle, more regular food deliveries became part of the day-to-day offer and members started to get involved in organising and delivering packages themselves.

***"I've been struggling, I fled domestic violence, I have issues with debt. I was stuck for food, I told my worker and she said Mosaic could deliver a food parcel. I'm also shielding, and I don't like going out on my own. Getting a food parcel helped in a lot of ways, physically, emotionally. It was a godsend, I even got some cat biscuits for my cats!"***

## Mosaic member

Mosaic Clubhouse was also able to take part in the wider community response to the pandemic, offering its kitchens to Streets Kitchen, a local charity proving meals to homeless people placed in temporary housing, to use while it was closed.

# 100

food parcels were delivered – mostly by one Clubhouse member to another



# Virtual Clubhouse

With the virtual Clubhouse up and running, Mosaic was able to continue its day-to-day work, in new ways.

## Employment and education

The Employment and Education unit continued to support members to look for, or sustain, work throughout the year. The team shared job opportunities on Slack, offered one-to-one sessions on interview skills on Zoom and ran workshops with Volunteering Matters and other Mosaic partners including Barclays.

The team also continued to connect members with external and internal learning opportunities, and enabled members to deliver workshops for their peers.

**12**

members secured paid employment with Mosaic's support



**67**  
members took part in training or education courses



Members delivered  
**102** workshops to other members

***"The Employment and Education team at Mosaic referred me to Dress for Success who gave me a couple of outfits, which I used for the interview. It was an amazing contribution for making me feel confident for the interview. Mosaic staff also did a Zoom mock interview with me. It was brilliant, it really helped me feel***

***confident for the interview questions, something that I have always struggled with."***

**Julia – Mosaic member**

## The Information Hub



**297**

Visits were made to the Information Hub

Prior to lockdown around 80% of requests for information and advice were made in person, so the move to telephone-only support was a significant shift.

Within weeks, it became apparent that a key issue for many callers was a basic lack of digital access, which left them struggling to find the information they needed, not only about specific issues (such as housing, debt etc.) but also about the pandemic restrictions and how these affected services people regularly used.

A significant need, early in the pandemic, was help with housing applications and Emergency Support Scheme forms. The team also noted a steep rise in the number of referrals for money advice and local foodbanks.

As lockdown continued, the team started to receive more calls looking for support with mental health and with isolation. At the same time, they dealt with an increase in calls seeking advice on noisy neighbours and supported people experiencing relationship breakdowns with family members and housemates.

In the winter months the team saw a rise in debt issues and requests for help with energy costs. Unemployment also led more people to contact Mosaic in search of support such as therapy and counselling.



## Young adults



**89** young adults engaged with Mosaic's young adults' programme

While lockdown was a struggle for members of all ages, Mosaic's young members found it particularly hard to engage with the virtual Clubhouse. While some younger members were interested in online courses – taking part in courses from cybersecurity to plumbing – others became less engaged.

Young members told staff that they particularly missed the social aspects of life at Mosaic Clubhouse and found that connecting online was not the same.

The heavy burden of the pandemic on young adults' lives, in particular their employment prospects, means that Mosaic staff expect many young adults in Lambeth to need support as the nation emerges from pandemic restrictions. To prepare for this, and to support young adults in re-engaging with Clubhouse, a dedicated intern has been recruited to support outreach among young people.

### Christmas at Mosaic

A core part of the Clubhouse ethos is that the clubhouses should remain open to members on public holidays. Every year Mosaic serves hot lunches on Christmas Day. However, in 2020 it was not possible to open the Clubhouse.

Fortunately, a partnership with Age UK Lambeth meant that 60 Mosaic members were provided with a Christmas dinner cooked by Age UK volunteers, which helped to soften the blow of the Clubhouse's closure.

### The Evening Sanctuary

Mosaic Clubhouse's Evening Sanctuary has been a vital addition to the Clubhouse offer,

offering people in mental health crisis a place to be from the early evening to late at night, with access to food, activities and emotional support from staff and members, who act as peer supporters.

However, when lockdown began in March 2020, the Sanctuary was forced to physically close and staff and members began offering a telephone-based service.

***"Lockdown was quite challenging for me. There were lots of things going on. I found the lack of structure really hard, I missed social interactions and services. I felt isolated and alone. I could no longer see my GP, when previously I had regular contact with them, for my mental and physical health. I ended up having a mental health crisis and seeing the Home Treatment team. I also started to get support, by phone, from the Evening Sanctuary."***

***"I found these calls really helpful. The Evening Sanctuary did a great job under extreme circumstances. They listened and understood me, they were compassionate. They also knew me, as I have used the Sanctuary service before, which made it easier for me to connect to them. They gave me time, it made me feel like somebody cared. They also suggested that I join the daytime unit meetings on Zoom that the clubhouse were running."***

***"As the lockdown restrictions eased and people were able to meet outdoors I felt things become easier. I could meet up with friends, other members from Mosaic, in the park, and see the Community Mental Health Team. Things started to fall into place a bit. I'm really grateful for the amazing work that the Evening Sanctuary team did through such difficult times."***

**Maria – Mosaic member**

## Hospital In-Reach



In August 2020 the Hospital In-Reach project supported more than **60** inpatients and nearly **30** in the community

Since October 2019 staff and members have been working to provide support to patients of Lambeth hospital who are experiencing mental health crises, both on the wards and in the community. Visiting the hospital and inviting patients to the Clubhouse has been central to this model, but when lockdown began the team moved to providing telephone-based support.

Staff and peer supporters offered emotional support, general reassurance, information and a listening ear to patients on the wards. For outpatients, in the community, they were also able to offer practical support including foodbank referrals and food parcels.



*“Whilst working as a Peer Volunteer with the Hospital In-reach team I was tasked with connecting with patients, (providing a listening ear) and facilitating their transition into the community by informing them of the help and support they can get from Mosaic and other organisations (e.g. Connect & Do).*

*“The opportunity enabled me to practice active listening skills, boundaries and confidentiality as part of the Peer Mentoring course I was attending alongside the hospital visits. It was a pleasure to see patients come out of their shells whilst doing karaoke or engaging with them whilst on escorted leave during shopping trips, walks or visits to Mosaic for lunch. We know when our engagement has been successful by the laughs and smiles to be had or the degree to which patients open up about their personal life and struggles with mental ill health. Overall, I would say that I benefitted most from doing the job of offering hope and connection as it has facilitated my own mental health recovery. I feel less anxious and more comfortable being around people with mental ill health than I do around the public at large.”*

**Mosaic member and Peer volunteer**

# Digital inclusion

Digital exclusion had long been recognised as a key challenge for many Mosaic members, however lockdown exacerbated these issues for many, as they could no longer come into the building to check emails, access services online or look for work, or participate in the Mosaic community.

While Mosaic moved many of its activities online, not all members had the equipment, data or digital skills to engage. Digital inclusion therefore became a key area of work – vital not only for keeping members connected, but also enabling them to access services, training and work both during the pandemic and into the future.

With funding from the Coronavirus Community Support Fund, Mosaic was able to establish a Digital Inclusion project, run by the Employment and Education Unit.

The new funding enabled Mosaic to provide members with laptops, smartphones and dongles for internet connection. Mosaic's ongoing partnership with Morley College, the local Further Education provider, enabled it to offer skills training and support to members.

*"I truly appreciate doing this course in December. I've learnt a lot of things on the iPhone and smart phone – how they function and how to use the phone confidently. I've learned the phone is like a mini-computer and it can support me in many ways, like with my spelling. I've learned to use the diary, the clock and alarm, how to switch the phone on and off, how to add a security number to keep my phone details private."*

**Mosaic member**



Between December 2020 and March 2021 Mosaic provided devices to

**89** members

Digital inclusion work will now remain a priority for Mosaic Clubhouse.





# Covid-19 support

Throughout the pandemic the Mosaic team has worked to keep members informed about the pandemic, the restrictions in place and how to keep safe. The team included regular updates in the In the Mo newsletter, around the latest restrictions and advice and, as roll out began, about the vaccine programme.

Conscious of the disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on people with mental health issues and on people from ethnic minorities, Mosaic Clubhouse staff have placed particular emphasis on countering misinformation and offering reassurance to members.

This included:

- Sharing stories of staff and member experiences of vaccination
- Hosting a pop-up NHS vaccination centre for people with mental health issues
- Taking part in a session for the black community alongside trusted community and health experts hosted by Brixton Reel

***"It was important for me to be on the panel as a black member of the Mosaic team whom both members and staff trust to share information. My main concern during this pandemic was people needing to know the true impact of Covid and not being overwhelmed with false information."***

**Beverley – Mosaic staff**





# Reopening the Clubhouse

In mid-2020 as the first wave of Covid-19 started to ease and the lifting of restrictions came on to the horizon, members and staff formed a 'Back to 65' working group, to carefully plan a return to the Clubhouse building (at 65 Effra Road).

The Mosaic Clubhouse first reopened in July 2020, but closed again in line with local and national restrictions in November, and again around Christmas 2020. The clubhouse reopened in April 2021.

First to reopen in July 2020 was the Evening Sanctuary, and then the daytime offer. However, for the first time, due to reduced capacity, Mosaic asked members to book ahead of coming to the Clubhouse.

Each unit took responsibility for developing Covid-safe ways of working, taking into account the Clubhouse's reduced capacity and the need for social distancing.

## Reopening the Clubhouse during the day

The Café and Garden Unit took the lead in preparing the building, from deep cleaning to sourcing personal protective equipment (PPE) to implementing a one-way system and signage.

The Unit also led on installing hand-sanitising stations and a temperature check and questionnaire for everyone entering the building.

With not enough space to run the café as normal, the Unit also developed a takeaway lunch option which proved popular.

*"During the lockdown I was on my own: I was just eating and sleeping. But I have also done some drawings, reading, watching TV, and listening to the news most of the time. I was tired of not doing anything. It was not easy. I had no one to talk to. I live in a B&B, so I was just sitting down in my*

*room. I would like to thank you for having me here. It is great coming to Mosaic. It is for a good cause. Helping in the kitchen and café is very good for me. I have learnt some new skills like cooking and serving. Mosaic is a lovely place, and everyone is friendly."*

**Petal – Mosaic member**

*"I'm happy and proud to say that I've worked in the Café and Garden Unit. It made those boring days manageable giving me something to do with myself and yes, I could have done something else in another unit, but I wanted to do something different and there's nothing like a bit of good ol' fashioned manual work to boost your blood circulation and mental stimulation. I do look forward to Mosaic reopening so I can further develop my skills. Who knows maybe I'll be serving your next meal there."*

**Paul – Mosaic member**

## New processes

Mosaic's Business and Administration unit led on the management of new systems to support the reopening of Clubhouse including managing the new booking system and enhanced reception processes.

When Mosaic had to temporarily close due to a positive case the Business and Administration unit also led on informing members about the closure and the need to self-isolate.

*"I felt very happy about the reopening of Mosaic because being at home all the time felt like being in prison. I could not see my friends and socialise with them. I am glad to go to Mosaic to do some form of work, even if it is just answering the telephone."*

**Peter – Mosaic member**

## Sustaining the Clubhouse together

None could have predicted how the Clubhouse community would survive the upheaval of lockdown, but while many members and staff have faced personal challenges the Mosaic team report that the community is stronger than ever. This has enabled the community not only to maintain its existing activities, but also to branch out into new and vital areas.

## Community fundraising and partnership

In 2020 Mosaic launched its first community fundraising campaign, to raise funds to support members through the winter – in particular by providing food parcels. They were delighted to raise over £2,000 and this early success has galvanised the new Fundraising Group of staff and members, which continues to develop new ideas for fundraising for the future.

Mosaic has also developed new partnerships with corporate partners including Asda who supported Mosaic's food deliveries, and Bridgepoint who are supporting its ongoing digital inclusion work.

The Charity also benefitted from the ongoing support and flexibility of approach of its existing corporate, trust and foundation supporters who allowed the flexibility needed to adapt the Clubhouse's work through this unique year.

## Race and equality

In summer 2020, in the wake of George Floyd's murder, the Mosaic community decided it was important to engage in further work to understand member and staff experiences in relation to race and equality. A project was conducted with the support of the National Lottery Community Fund.



The project was designed as a Community Conversation on Racial Inequalities which was led by consultant Dr Darren Sharpe.

In April 2021 Dr Sharpe presented his findings to the Mosaic Clubhouse Board of Trustees who endorsed a plan of action for the future including work on Board diversity, greater inclusivity around cultural celebrations and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion awareness training for staff.

# Lessons of the pandemic

At the time of writing, almost all Covid-19 restrictions in England have now been lifted and Mosaic Clubhouse is open. However, in response to member feedback, and ongoing concerns about the rates of infection, Mosaic continues to operate with restricted capacity and additional hygiene measures in place.

The Mosaic community has been pleased to return to the Clubhouse and to start to connect in person once again. However a lot has been learned during the pandemic, not least about the opportunities of the virtual world, and the vital importance of digital inclusion.

The experience of the pandemic has also demonstrated members' individual resilience and the resilience of the Mosaic community. While the hope is that the Clubhouse will not have to close again, Mosaic has demonstrated that the Clubhouse can operate effectively outside its building, providing virtual support and a work-ordered day for members to participate in.

The flexibility and determination of its members and staff, the strength of its community, and the support of its funders and commissioners enabled Mosaic Clubhouse to weather an incredibly challenging year.

***The community stayed open.***



**Mosaic**

Clubhouse

Mosaic Clubhouse  
65 Effra Road,  
Brixton  
London,  
SW2 1BZ

T: 020 7924 9657  
E: [Infohub@mosaic-clubhouse.org](mailto:Infohub@mosaic-clubhouse.org)

F: [@mosaicclubhouseUK](https://www.facebook.com/mosaicclubhouseUK)  
T: [@MosaicClubhouse](https://www.facebook.com/MosaicClubhouse)  
I: [@mosaicclubhouse](https://www.facebook.com/mosaicclubhouse)