

# LEARN MORE ABOUT...

## RE:CHARGE



Re:Charge started as a community group and became a registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation (charity no. 1168554) in August 2016. Our aim is to reach our community's need, primarily by creating safe spaces, building long term relationships and empowering individuals to have self-belief to achieve the very best in their lives. Re:Charge is a local charity that comes alongside people facing difficult life circumstances in RBWM and gives them the practical support they need, whilst creating an environment where no one feels judged.

Before Covid-19 we were running four sessions a week in Maidenhead: three sessions to support families, every Tuesday at the Larchfield Community Centre, every Wednesday at St Peter's Church (Furze Platt) and every Thursday at the Quaker Meeting House (town centre). Having three different venues means we can connect with many families across the Borough in their own area. Our fourth session, also on a Wednesday, at the High Street Methodist Church in Maidenhead, is our adult group called Re:Focus. This session is intended for those in recovery from addictions, as well as for any adult facing challenging situations and needing support. As with our family sessions, we aim to create a safe haven where people can share their lives, and we can further encourage people to make positive, healthy choices.

### Impact of Covid-19

Due to instructions from the Government regarding Covid-19 we had to close our sessions, and so have needed to look at different ways in which we can continue to support our families and clients while still achieving these aims and purposes. Our sessions were closed on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020, and immediately we set up supportive WhatsApp Groups, made telephone calls and generally reached out to our families who we knew would be feeling particularly anxious during this time due to the increased pressures financially, and with the added strain of home schooling and so on. We have a dedicated phone line set up and we are in regular contact with all our families, supporting them in whatever way we can. We have also been updating our Facebook page daily with simple craft ideas to do with children at



home, to help keep them entertained. We have made sure that all our ideas are simple and easy to do, so that our families do not feel limited by resources they may not already have at home. We have received great feedback.

Many of our customers who attend our adult Re:Focus session are in the early stages of recovery from addiction, and it is vital that they have regular contact for their mental health and wellbeing and to avoid any relapses. Again, we are on the end of the phone whenever we are needed, and many clients receive daily phone calls of support. Our session leaders have got to grips with Zoom and since the lockdown, three separate groups have been set up, where clients have the opportunity to share their experiences and feelings and receive advice on how to deal with these. One of the groups is a Friday evening 'Mindful Arts' session – there is brief guidance around a theme at the beginning, for example on loneliness, and then space for participants to draw or write, whilst music is playing, and then share with the rest of the group. This has been hugely successful, and we have seen a large number of new adults attend these groups, and we are hoping that they will continue to attend our sessions once we are able to open our doors once again.

To date since our sessions closed, we have been working with 30 families and 51 adults have been engaging through our Re:Focus Zoom meetings. We have seen an increased demand for food bags, and we have been continuing to work alongside Maidenhead Foodshare, to make sure everyone has food on the table. As with many small charities, we are completely reliant on raising our own funding through grants, donations and fundraising events which has become much more difficult since the start of the coronavirus pandemic.

<http://rechargerandr.org.uk/>