



COMMUNITY
CHAMPIONS

GET IN TOUCH with Rohini, Jenny or Crystal
9.00—5.00 Monday - Friday
Phone us 01858 439262
Email: champions@vasl.org.uk
Or call in to First Floor, Torch House,
Torch Way, Market Harborough LE16 9HL

Volunteer Newsletter September 2017

Making a difference

Christine first heard about the VASL Community Champions project through Park Run where VASL were doing a local consultation about people's views on tackling loneliness.

Christine asked about becoming a volunteer, had an interview and was accepted as a Community Champions volunteer. As she was working during the day she could not attend new volunteer training but this was delivered in one to one sessions with the Community Champions Team. Christine was also introduced to another volunteer who was able to share her experiences of volunteering.

Christine was then matched with a client Kathleen, aged 92, who shared her love of travel, reading, gardening and the local community. Christine sends the Community Champions team a weekly email summarising each visit:

"It never ceases to amaze me how quickly time goes when I'm visiting. Sorry I don't stick to one hour but we're never short of anything to chat about and continue to have many laughs throughout."

Kathleen also gives glowing feedback about her involvement in the Community Champions project. *"I really enjoy Christine's visits. We have so much to talk about the time just flies. I really look forward to catching up with her. I also love the monthly Community Gatherings when I get a chance to talk to project friends and make new pals. Having a Pen Pal is also fun"*.

Kathleen and Christine through their enthusiastic engagement in the Community Champions project have made new local contacts, learnt from each other's life experiences, learnt new skills and enhanced their well-being. They demonstrate that people come to Community Champions as individuals, and become members of a thriving community



Christine starring in our latest film!

Rohini went to MH U3A coffee morning and talked about VASL/CC. New Digital clients and volunteers have come forward and people took away lots of leaflets.

Please let us know if there are other community groups who would like to know more about VASL/Community Champions

Feel Alive from 65 Week

25th September-1st October aims to encourage older adults to increase their physical activity levels. 290 taster activities in Leicestershire

<http://www.lrsport.org/files/40992/lrs-feel-alive-from-65-2017-print.pdf>



Community Champions is funded by the Big Lottery

VASL Registered Charity No. 1141274

Company Registration No. 7517828



August Gathering

17 people from the project community gathered at The Roebuck – this included 5 clients, 5 volunteers, 5 friends and 2 staff.

As always there was a buzz of conversation about summer breaks, travelling in on the Harborough Community Bus, volunteer visits, Movie Makers films, recent training etc

Rohini gave out new newsletters and information about Shop Mobility and an Age UK luncheon club.

Jenny explained the project celebration in September and asked everyone to vote for the Harborough Movie Makers films they wanted to see. She also distributed Digital client posters and Digital business cards.

Then Maureen Weaver talked about the Community Spirit group, a group for people interested in spirituality.

A packed hour ; enjoyed by all. Thank you to Isobel for delicious cakes

People enjoyed travelling together on the Harborough Community Bus



Local MP

Maureen O'Malley
the Charity Manager

and Rohini met with Neil O'Brien, Harborough's new MP to talk about how Community Champions tackles loneliness.



Neil talked about his interest in tackling loneliness in his maiden speech and is keen to know what happens locally.

Neil has agreed to co-host an event with us during the Befriending Week on Friday 3rd November 2-4pm to celebrate the difference that volunteers make. We have also invited other local MPs. Details to follow.

◆ **Shopmobility** are now based in Roman Way and have scooters and wheelchairs available for long or short term hire. It may be useful for our clients on outings. 0116 305 2343

◆ **Independent Age** have a very useful website with practical help www.independentage.org

◆ **Silverline** has a 24 hour phone line for older people who are lonely, this can be useful if people are struggling to sleep 0800 4 70 80 90



Community Gathering Tuesday 19th September at the Conservative Club, Fairfield Road MH. 1.30-3.30 to celebrate our five year funding. It will include 40 minutes of films from Harborough Movie Makers and a time to share.

New Volunteer Training 13th September, if you know of anyone who might like to volunteer with us, please ask them to contact us before this date.

1st October Silver Sunday, although we are not part of this event there will be a lot of national publicity about loneliness. www.silversunday.org.uk

Thursday 5th October **Community Gathering** 10.30-11.30, at Palmers Garden Centre at Ullesthorpe, LE17 5DR. **Please note we have changed the date to enable more people to attend**

Friday 3rd November 2-4pm **Befriending Week Event** with local MPs.

If you need transport please let us know one week in advance

Diary Dates

VASL filming

VASL is making a film and Community Champions have been involved at the Greenhouse and in one to one interviews. We are very grateful to everyone who has taken part so far, please let us know if you would be willing to be involved next time.



Skills exchange

One of our Community Champions was able to show her client how to use her ipad, in the course of the conversation the volunteer explained that she was having difficulty with her knitting pattern, the client was able to sort it out for her. Both are making progress and enjoying learning from each other.

