



COMMUNITY
CHAMPIONS

GET IN TOUCH with Rohini, Jenny or Jo
9.00—5.00 Monday - Friday
Phone us 01858 439262
Email: champions@vasl.org.uk
Or call in to
The Settling Rooms, Springfield Street,
Market Harborough LE16 7DR

Volunteer Newsletter August 2016

It's been a busy month as you can see from the updates below. We also have lots happening in the autumn, including a Community Champions Focus Group and more training.

As you may be aware, **Community Champions** is a pilot scheme this year and the response has been really positive so far, so VASL would now like to put a bid in for a bigger 5 year project funded by The Big Lottery.

To do this VASL needs to carry out a consultation with people in the District.

You can take part in this consultation by:-



- Coming to a **Community Champions Focus Group on Thursday 6 October 10.30am – 12.30 with lunch at VASL**. Please let us know if you would like us to book you a place.

- **Filling in a consultation questionnaire**

 - *Either online www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/VASLCommunityChampions

 - *or a paper version.(see attached), could you also ask your client to

complete one? Please return all completed questionnaires to us at the Settling Rooms.

- We need to use the feedback to shape the project to meet local needs so please also ask other people to complete it whatever their age and whether or not they have personal experience of loneliness.

-

If you have any questions about this consultation please contact us, we really appreciate your support in this.

There is no charge for clients to be part of Community Champions, but the donations which we have received for the project recently are much appreciated. Thank you

Community Drop in at the Evangelical Church 4th August

Our first drop in was enjoyed by those who came along. There are some things we have learnt, Thursdays mornings aren't good for some, the background noise can be difficult, mixing the group so different conversations happen is a challenge. However, the clients and volunteers who came had conversations with different people and we plan to do more.



Community Champions is part funded by VASL
and Harborough District Council's New Homes
Bonus/Community Fund



Feedback from the Support Session arranged by Julie Clarke and HDC at the end of July

What did you learn? *Lots, everything was new, I learnt about confused states of mind and people not being able to remember what they had for breakfast but having clear memories of the past*

Would you recommend the course? *Definitely if you want to gain a little knowledge on how to react if faced with this sad situation .*



Our thanks to J and his client for sharing their experience of the scheme which has grown from home visits to the client attending a group on his own.

I started visiting in December 2016. It was not an auspicious start as before my second visit he was taken into hospital. Happily he was soon back home and available for our weekly visits.

He is an affable and interesting chap who has lived in Mkt. Harborough since his family moved here when he was a young boy. I find his tales of life in Harboro' really interesting. He's had a happy, active and interesting life. He has been community minded through his involvement in local groups. His anecdotes of life in the services read like tales from the Boy's Own magazine. His exploits included saving a group of Germans from falling into the clutches of Stalin's red Army and saving a women's life!



Although not as mobile as he would like, we have managed a few trips out including a trip to Harborough Museum and a coffee and cake in Insomnia, two trips to the market for fish and chips (yummy) and a couple of Sunday talks* one about local wildlife and the other a celebration of the Queens 90th birthday. Our future plans include trying out the regular music night at Joules and attending the Tuesday Reading Group in the library. In short, I find my regular weekly visits a real joy. I'm looking forward to drinking to his health at his birthday bash scheduled for November to celebrate his 90th year. (*Tea at Three in Naseby Square)

One of our volunteers has helped to host the community Drop in.

Another is visiting a client while her regular visitor is on holiday.

A Digital Champion is supporting a client at home with two visits to consolidate what she know about her tablet.

One client has a second volunteer who takes her out fortnightly, in addition to her home visits.

We have our first pen pals writing to each other.

Get in touch and find out about new opportunities to volunteer.

Reminder – please let us have your expenses with receipts so we can reimburse you. If you take your client out in the car you **MUST** notify your insurer



Diary Dates

1st September 10.30-11.30 am Community Drop-in Evangelical Church Bath Street

1st September Loving Later Life—Leicester www.ageuk.org.uk

27th Sep, 4th & 11 Oct 10.00—2.30pm Digital Champions training

28th September 10.00—2.00 Training for new volunteers

3rd October Silver Sunday www.silversunday.org.uk/

6th October Community Champions Focus Group.

12th October Support Group for Volunteers *Harborough Lifeline*

* see VASL website for groups and activities for your clients