



COMMUNITY
CHAMPIONS

Client Newsletter January 2017

GET IN TOUCH with Rohini, Jenny
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

Congratulations to our Patron Maggie Philbin who received an OBE for her work with TeenTech which brings the world of technology to life for young people. We are very fortunate that she gives her valuable time to VASL in amongst all the other things she does.



Maggie appeared on BBC's Tomorrow's World as well as children's TV.

Did you have a piece of technology for Christmas, a new phone, a tablet or a laptop?

Would you like one of our volunteers to visit you and help you to work out how to use it?



Our volunteers are very patient and won't assume that you know how to switch it on. If they don't know the answer to your problem they will find out.



So far they have helped people to set up and use email, to look at doing food shopping online, watching TV programmes on BBC i-player and searching for information.

There is no charge for these visits.

Talk to Rohini or Jenny to find out more.



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

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Our **December Community Gathering** was a great success with 14 attending – for the first time we had equal numbers of men and women, clients and volunteers. We all enjoyed warm mince pies and a hot drink.

Two ladies sparkled in their Christmas jumpers and conversations included whether Thurnby / Bushby are two separate villages, the Gareth Malone Choir programme, a client's 90th birthday party, what people had been doing (eg going out for walks, visiting coffee shops) and using slide rules than calculators.



We were able to introduce some of the digital champions to their new clients so that they could get to know them and find out about their interests.

We aim to meet once a month in a variety of venues and after listening to your feedback the next meeting will be at the Methodist Church where we have a room of our own with small tables to see if we can reduce the background noise and make it easier to hear. We will want to know if you prefer this or whether you enjoy going to a café.

Graham had a stroke which meant he lost his mobility. He is fortunate in having lots of family members who live locally and pop in to see him regularly. He also has various professionals who come to support him. However Graham missed getting out of doors to watch the seasons changing and to exchange greetings with neighbours.



Through VASL's Community Champions Project, a volunteer called Jonathan agreed to accompany Graham for a short walk and wheel chair outing each week. This has made a massive difference. "It's great to get away from the four walls of my house and be out in the community again" says Graham. "Jonathan is such a nice chap and we get on really well".

They come along to the Community Gatherings and Graham also has a digital champion visiting him to explore the latest upgrade on his computer..

How do we measure whether the project is making a difference?

Some things we can count, since May we have made 38 introductions

We've had 110 attendees at events we have organised.

But we really need you to tell us about the difference it makes to you.

