



COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

GET IN TOUCH Rohini, Jenny or Sam 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

Client Newsletter June 2018



YOUR LOCAL CHARITY IMPROVING LIVES

Our story

A Befriending volunteer Lisa visits Barbara weekly and takes along her son during the school holidays.

Usually the Lisa and Barbara talk about their family, local news, their holidays and their bargain buys. A recent conversation focussed on what accessories would look best with a dress bought in the sales!

When the Lisa's son also visits the conversation turns to what he has been doing at school and his hobbies. He has met the client 10 times so feels comfortable sharing his news.



He says "I really enjoy visiting Barbara because it makes me warm inside to make people happy. She's interesting to listen to and we have a laugh."

Barbara reflects "it is always lovely to catch up with his news - he does so much there's plenty to chat about"

Lisa gives the Team weekly feedback about each visit: "I had a lovely time today. She was wearing a fabulous silver necklace which she had made herself many years ago. It was interesting to discover this hidden skill of hers. She missed my son as he is back at school now, but they will be able to see each other in the May half term."

Rural Update

10 of us met at the Old Black Horse in Houghton on the Hill, a lovely country pub close to several of the people that joined us. There was much discussion about the upcoming royal wedding, sport, gardening and many other topics. Attendees shared lots of ideas about good places to meet, interesting groups and activities that

'what a lovely bunch they are! I had some really good chats!'

are happening near them as well as sharing their thoughts generally on the project and other services locally. We were joined by volunteers from both the Community Champions project and Lutterworth Transport Scheme. We'd like to thank them for making

our time together possible as without the drivers and volunteer support we couldn't offer these types of events.

'thank you so much for enabling me to come today, I really enjoyed it, I so rarely get to go out'



Community Champions is funded by the Big Lottery



VASL Registered Charity No. 1141274

Company Registration No. 7517828



May's Sing a long Community Gathering

32 people (12 clients, 9 volunteers, 3 Community Friends, 5 guests from Kibworth Ladies Choir, 2 staff and a VASL volunteer photographer gathered at the Community Church for a lively Gathering.

We needed 2 Harborough Community Buses to bring people and volunteers helped host the event by organising refreshments, setting up and clearing the room. Other volunteers drove clients to the event. It was wonderful to see new clients coming on their own and familiar Community Friends.



After everyone had had a chance for a quick cuppa and chat Linda F, a Community Champions volunteer and member of Kibworth Ladies Choir introduced her friends and they gave a performance of 5 songs and invited people to join in. People smiled, feet tapped and a few brave souls also joined in with the singing. Feedback has been positive:

“Just to say a huge thank you to all of you for yesterday. So enjoyed it and I know that others did too. Well done. Xx”

“The gathering yesterday was great fun...”

“Lovely to be able to attend a Community Gathering & I was delighted to see it sooooo well attended”

We also had a VASL volunteer photographer Mike who took action shots that we hope to use in the 2019 calendar.



One of the choir ladies also wants to become a PenPal so all in all a fun and productive afternoon.

The Big Lunch

Loneliness is very much in the headlines at the moment; The Eden Project has been working since 2009 to encourage people to host a lunch which encourages people to get to know others in their community. Last year an amazing 9 million people attended in venues all over the country.

If you haven't been invited to an official 'do' (we can't see any in Harborough but you may know of one) why not invite someone to lunch on 3rd June?

www.edenprojectcommunities.com/thebiglunchhomepage

Confidence Training

Eight of us, volunteers, clients and staff had a very interesting and enjoyable morning considering the things which dent our confidence, the ways we can build it up again and how we can move out of our comfort zone.



I suspect that I wasn't the only one who wasn't sure what I had signed up for, but Jayne the trainer from Adult Education soon had us at ease and we all contributed to the discussion and more importantly came away with things to think about. One of the best aspects was when we identified the things that are stopping us doing something new, and between the group we were able to remove some of the obstacles for one participant with very practical suggestions.

“Just to say a big thank you for the hospitality and training this morning. Really beneficial to me and inspiring. Amazing people...”

“I'm going to make a plan to start something new”

“The thing I enjoyed was the interaction between the course members”

The next course Jayne is leading is about dealing with stress on 20th June 10-12noon, let us know if you would like to come along, we can provide transport.

Rohini went to **Stoneygate School** in Great Glen for a special assembly to receive the £350 they have raised from their Bring and Buy sale for VASL. They would like most of this to go to Young Carers as they like supporting local projects for young people with the remainder for Community Champions.



A BIG THANK YOU to June Wicks, Community Champions volunteer, whose daughter Sophie suggested VASL as the charity for the school to fundraise for. We really appreciate your support June and this money will make a positive difference.

Local events

Harborough Carnival is on 9th June, the procession leaves at 12noon and will be on the High Street before going to Symington's Rec, entrance from St Mary's Road. VASL is very pleased that we have been selected as one of the charities which will benefit from the day.

Tea @ Three June 24 Vive la difference! French day contact David delicious French

pastries and a number of different activities 3-5pm note time. David Palmer can arrange transport

07505 968767

HarboroughFM is arranging a **coach trip** to Skegness on 19th August, the cost is £16 more details from 01858 464666. Sea and sand - but sunshine is not guaranteed!



shutterstock - 77530576

If you would prefer to receive this newsletter in larger print please let the team know.

Pen Pals

How many of us have a bundle of letters tied up with ribbon, but now only seem to get bills and adverts?

Would you like to get back into the habit of writing and receiving letters?



We have recently had four or five more people approach us who would like to be a pen pal so please get in touch if you are interested.

The current penpals write about once a fortnight but you set the pace. The letters are sent through the office so your address is not shared.

Diary Dates

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

Tuesday 5th June 2-3.15pm

Community Gathering The Roebuck, Rockingham Rd, Market Harborough LE16 7XY

Weds 20 June 10-12 noon **Stress and You** course Torch House-open to clients and volunteers

Weds 4 July 10.30-11.45 **Community Gathering** MH Golf Club, Great Oxendon Road, Market Harborough LE16 8NB

ROME0 is a new lunch group for men on their own which will meet at the MH Golf Club on Thursday 14th June, It is £8.50 for 2 courses by you must book by 7th June by contacting David Palmer on 07505 968767. (Transport can be provided)

#Retired Older Men Eating Out in case you were wondering!

Kath's volunteering story

Kath saw an article in The Harborough Mail about VASL and was

drawn to the Digital Volunteers aspect of Community Champions because her professional background was as an IBM IT Project Manager and she is currently on a career break. She felt motivated to help older people develop their digital skills so that they could email people, research information, download music etc

Kath contacted VASL Community Champions, was interviewed, accepted as a volunteer and attended the training.

Kath reflects: "My volunteering with Community Champions has really given me a purpose and it is wonderful to meet diverse clients with different needs. I like the flexibility of this volunteering which can be fitted in around my family and other community commitments"

The Digital Volunteers also meet regularly as a peer support group. "Its great that we can ask each other any technical questions or ideas for support" says Kath

Kath has seen 5 Digital clients, helping them to get online "I now realise how important the social chat is, as well as the digital help" she says.

Kath and a Digital client were also filmed by BBC East Midlands and appeared on regional television explaining how the Community Champions Digital support works.



Kath's contribution is really valued by VASL and all her clients.