



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

Volunteer Newsletter August 2018



YOUR LOCAL CHARITY IMPROVING LIVES

Bereavement Training

7 people took part in the Bereavement Awareness session run by Sadaf from the Shama Women's Centre in Leicester. We talked about different types of loss, eg, retirement, relationship breakdown, financial and disability, and circumstances when death may lead to people making negative judgements eg, due to drugs/alcohol, obesity-related, suicide, sudden deaths.

We talked through the process of loss and the range of emotions and stages that people go through. We learnt the importance of self-care, making time to do things for our well-being eg meditate, exercise, listen to birds sing, take up hobbies.

Practical suggestions included:-

Using a positive affirmation eg "What other people think of you and say about you is none of your business. What matters is what you think of yourself"

Breathing through the nose and exhaling through the mouth to slow ourselves down

Using apps eg, Breathe, Mindfulness to help us release pressure and relax

Keeping a grief journal

Showing gratitude for what we have

Getting rid of toxic people in our lives

"Thank you so much, that course has been really helpful" "I have got some ideas for things to try"

Rural Update

Our mini gathering met recently at The Well in Kibworth. Nine clients, volunteers, and

drivers met at this local village community café run by a local church. This is an accessible venue recently refurbished with various activities provided through the week. I was interested in introducing some of our clients in the villages to this venue, as there are several groups and organisations that meet there for interest, support and socialising. The staff were brilliant - very accommodating and welcoming, and the cakes and refreshments were great. We met for an hour and discussions covered latest news, local events, personal stories and memories.



The mini gatherings run every other month for people living in the villages north of Harborough to discover new places to meet, make local friends and offer another way of socialising for people that are already using the project.

'I really enjoyed coming out today, I haven't been out for ages, and everyone was so nice'

Local MP

Sam and Rohini met with Alberto Costa, MP for South Leicestershire.

He is keen to help promote VASL projects to his constituents and wants to encourage people to get involved in Community Champions.

Do you know of people in the Lutterworth and Broughton Astley



areas who might want to volunteer with us, or like some company? Please let us know....



Community Champions is funded by the Big Lottery



VASL Registered Charity No. 1141274

Company Registration No. 7517828



July Gathering

26 clients, volunteers, friends, drivers and VASL staff met on a hot afternoon at MH Golf Club for the July gathering. Two Harborough Community mini-buses brought people to the venue. At the suggestion of one of the group name badges were given out and we shared the home-made cakes and hot/cold drinks. Rohini explained that it was the end of the first year of Big Lottery funding so we had the cakes to celebrate the project's progress. Our results look really good and we will be reporting back on numbers and case studies. Thank you for making our project community so welcoming and warm. She thanked clients for their improvement ideas (eg, wishing Happy Birthday to people each month)

Jenny then gave out leaflets of local events and future training opportunities and encouraged people to give details about other community groups they are involved in .

Topics of conversation included the summer heat, England's progress in the World Cup football after winning at penalties, the Mystery Drive, summer outings and volunteer visits.



Feedback has been appreciative:

"It is so good to have these occasions and great that you organise them. I honestly only very rarely went out before, and of course my wonderful (volunteer) is so good and I do appreciate her very much. My life has certainly changed for the better in the last year or two so thank you very much."

"Thank you all for another wonderful gathering. Made some more friends and really enjoyed the lovely venue along with the tea and cakes."

"Thank you never seems enough. So much to look forward to these events and meeting other people. Thank you also for the transport without which i would not be able to access some gatherings."

Thanks to all the volunteers for helping on the mini-bus, driving and hosting and to Sam organised all the transport – great team work!

Sight loss training

"The training was excellent. There are five people attending our church who are totally blind and three have severely impaired vision , so I now feel I have a greater understanding of how best to support / assist them. Thank you for the opportunity to participate. Much appreciated."

Diary Dates

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

Community Gathering 8th August 2.30-3.45 Café Ventoux, Wood Lane, Tugby,

Leics, LE7 9WE www.cafe-ventoux.cc

Leics Fire and Rescue Service Training Torch House 10-12 noon, 15th August for vols and clients

Shopmobility session for volunteers 30th August 10-12 a chance for vols to see what is on offer.

4th September Community Gathering 2.30-3.45 and VASL AGM 5pm

Penpal training

Three new volunteers were recently trained to become penpals. We met at Champions HQ, Torch House, for just over an hour and covered many of the topics volunteers will be familiar with from the mandatory training. Each subject was geared towards penpals, the role, interesting topics to write about and how to support the client and be aware of any changes in their well being through their letters. Penpals can write 'old fashioned' pen and paper letters, type letters or email, whatever suits the client receiving the letter. All expenses are covered by the project, including stamps and paper. We currently have two clients interested in having a penpal and they will shortly be matched with our recent trainees. If anyone is interested in becoming a penpal contact the project for more details.

"My letter writing pen pal wrote a lovely letter to which I replied. Waiting with anticipation. Again thank you for that introduction. Love it "