



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

Client Newsletter November 2018

 Your Local Charity Improving Lives

### October Gathering

32 people met at the Fox Pond in Oadby on 3 October for the Community Gathering.

Over cakes and drinks people caught up with each other's news and talked about the recent Dog walk, Laughter Yoga course, volunteer visits and the autumn colours.

Rohini explained this gathering was to celebrate the UN International Day for Older Persons (1 Oct) and Silver Sunday (7 Oct) and also to reflect on the power of befriending as a way of connecting people. Clients and volunteers were invited to write what befriending means to them on banners, and these would be used to promote Befriending Week (1 – 7 November). Jenny and Sam shared leaflets about community events and Maureen helped distribute refreshments.

There was plenty of time for proper conversations: *'Thanks its been great I have met 3 new people today' 'Such a lovely afternoon. New people to chat to and everyone happy. Thank you all so much'*

Rohini thanked everyone for their help in organising the event – VASL Drivers, volunteers and the CC team.



### Dog Walk

On a beautifully sunny autumnal day just as the leaves were turning, a group of us met with our dogs to walk around Welland Park. We took a relaxed stroll along the river, turning to let the dogs off in the dog walking area provided, before making our way back to the Welland Park café for refreshments.

We all know that fresh air, light exercise and enjoyable activities enhance our well being and general health and the benefits of having an animal in your life are well documented.

This was backed up by the feedback from the group who shared that they thoroughly enjoyed the walk and the company of both dogs and humans on our afternoon stroll.

*'It was great fun and everyone seemed to have a good time' 'had a lovely time yesterday and thoroughly enjoyed it – thanks so much'*

Everyone chatted about their dogs and their different personalities and idiosyncrasies, sharing tips on all doggy related matters. We are now looking forward to meeting again and inviting more of the Community Champions community to join us.



**VASL**  
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Community Champions is funded by the Big Lottery



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Company Registration No. 7517828



### In other news...



◇ Sam and Rohini attended the Rural Community Council's awards recently, gaining runners up in the Rural Service Award for Community Champions.

◇ Maureen, Charity Manager, was invited to parliament on behalf of Community Champions and VASL, as one of the charities that helped to influence and shape the Loneliness Strategy which was launched by the new Minister for Loneliness, Tracy Crouch (pictured).

◇ Jenny was interviewed on BBC Radio Leicester about Community Champions pen pals and other opportunities the project offers.



**Mystery Drive** Community Champions and Transport volunteer, John Stevens offered to support us with trialling the mystery drive, taking a couple of people out for a drive in the country side. John planned a brilliant route taking in local landmarks and pretty villages to create an interesting drive. With two passengers from Harborough we weaved our way through the autumnal countryside to Uppingham, spotting Red Kites circling the fields on the way. After stopping for coffee, we continued down through the Welland Valley with beautiful views and picturesque villages, John pointing out interesting sights on the way. Conversation flowed, and our passengers fed back *'what a lovely afternoon'*, *'it's so nice to get out'*. We look forward to developing this aspect of the project, thanks to the volunteers and passengers that supported us with this.



**Diary Dates** **Effective Communication** 31 October 2-4pm Torch House, call to book  
**Community Gathering** **NOTE CHANGE OF DATE DUE TO TRANSPORT ISSUES:** 20 November 2.30–3.45pm Kibworth Golf Club, Weir Road, Kibworth, LE8 0LP. **Salt and Sugar** Healthy eating session 21 November 10am–12pm Torch House, call to book places and transport.

**Community Gathering** 4 December 1.30—3.30pm Methodist Church, Northampton Road, LE16 9HE

**Local info** **Tea @ Three** Sundays, November 25th 'Greater Love: Edith Cavell', December 16th 'Christmas Carols and Cakes' tel David Palmer 07505 968767 for details  
**Angel Ears Bereavement Support** Thursdays 7-9pm Nov 29th, Dec 20th, meets at Enigma, Coventry Road, MH, all welcome tel: Nic 07534 26309 for details. **Adult Learning** courses available at venues across the district see leicestershire.gov.uk/GoLearn for details or tel: 0800 988 0308. **Armistice day events** around the area:  
**Congregational Church** coffee morning and exhibition 10 November 10am—12pm.  
**Harborough Museum** 10 November 10am—4pm exhibition and more

**Digital Training** This month we have trained two more volunteers who are willing to help people to improve their computer skills, or to use technology for the first time. The most important thing we talk about at the training is patience, our volunteers understand that we all learn at different speeds and that it can take a while for things to click. So why not get in touch and tell us what you would like to know.