



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

Diary Dates

Effective Communication 31 October 2-4pm
Torch House, call to book

Digital Peer Support Group 7 November
10.30am The Angel Hotel, Market Harborough

Community Gathering **NOTE CHANGE OF DATE DUE TO TRANSPORT ISSUES:**

20 November 2.30 – 3.45pm Kibworth Golf Club, Weir Road, Kibworth Beauchamp, 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

Volunteer Newsletter

November 2018



Your Local Charity Improving Lives

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.



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.



Community Champions is funded by the Big Lottery



VASL Registered Charity No. 1141274

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.

◇ 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', 'how beautiful with the afternoon sun on the trees as the leaves are changing'. We look forward to developing this aspect of the project, thanks to the volunteers and passengers that supported us with this.



Digital Training

This month we held another training session for digital volunteers. Over the last two years the training has changed in response to feedback from the volunteers and to ensure that the sessions are practical eg setting up an email address, which we have all done, but it might be ten years ago and it is good to have a refresher. We also cover staying safe on line, using social media and the different ways people learn. Thanks to Kath, one of our digital volunteers, who helped with the technical side of the training. 'Delivered professionally in a relaxed style'

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, Jan 17th, Feb 28th, March 28th meets at Enigma, Coventry Road, MH, all welcome tel: Nic 07534 26309 for details

Adult Learning courses available at various 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

What I enjoy about being a volunteer..

'To have my client really look forward to my weekly visits. To see her always open the door to me with a smile and glistening eyes with excitement regardless of how she felt or what might be going on in her life. To get to know her well, learn about her life experiences and adventures, enjoy general chat about this, that and the other thing and learn from all her knowledge/interests and thoughts about goings-on. To see her feeling comfortable and the ease/flow of talk about anything and everything while in my company. To be able to leave her at the end of my visits, after enjoying brilliant chat, being a listening ear - as a problem shared is a problem halved - as well as enjoying a tonne of laughs and banter, knowing I had boosted her morale to help her cope with the days that lay between then and the time I was to return to visit again. To see her respond to suggestions I make of events she might enjoy within the community. To give her the strength, courage and determination to mix and enjoy various outings/activities that enhance her friendships and fellowship' recent feedback from a volunteer.



1 - 7 November 2018