



COMMUNITY
CHAMPIONS

GET IN TOUCH Rohini, Jenny,
Sam or Denise

9.00—5.00 Monday - Friday

Phone us 01858 439262

Email: champions@vasl.org.uk

Or call in: First Floor, Torch
House, Torch Way,

Market Harborough, LE16 9HL

Volunteer Newsletter

February 2019



Your Local Charity Improving Lives

Diary Dates

Community Gatherings, for Project Members only,
please call by 5pm on 28 Jan to book transport

5 February 2 - 3.15pm The Roebuck, Rockingham

Road, MH, LE16 7XY

5 March 2.30 - 3.45pm Kibworth Golf Club, Weir Rd,
LE8 0LP

20 February 10am -12pm **Effective Listening Training**
Torch House, Conference Room.

20 March 10am - 12pm **Fraud and Cyber Prevention
Information Session** Torch House, Conference Room

Call the office to book places and transport

January Gathering

45 members of our Project Community met at the Market Harborough Golf Club for the January Gathering. Volunteers hosted tables and made sure that clients were served with drinks and cakes. People chatted about their Christmas news – some had been away to visit family, whilst others had stayed local. Health news, politics, family developments and holiday plans were eagerly shared. New introductions were made and some people recognised old friends. Rohini gave a few notices; from now on the Community Champions team would not be ringing people to remind them to book transport or a place at the gatherings. You can add your name to the list that will be circulated at each gathering and if you miss this please call the team to book a place by 5pm on Monday 28 January. This enables the Community Champions team to make transport arrangements and organise catering for the next gathering. If the Community Buses are full by the time you call, names will be added to a waiting list.

Helen Murray (pictured) from Leicestershire Libraries then gave information about lots of **free** groups and resources that are available in the library and online, for example a new craft group on Fridays and the Home Library Service delivering books and more to people's homes. For more information see: www.leicestershire.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/libraries/find-a-library/market-harborough-library. Helen encouraged everyone to visit their local library as libraries are now important social hubs for all ages. Rohini thanked the drivers, volunteers and staff who made these events possible. She also thanked Helen for her informative talk.

"Thank you so much for organising this event. I have really enjoyed talking to new people and the library lady".

"It is my first time today and everyone has been so friendly. I am definitely coming again".

"Joining Community Champions is the best thing I've done since I moved here, I am so glad I got in touch with VASL, I've had a bad time recently and this has helped so much, thank you so much".



'Solo' visit Jenny was invited to go along to the Solo Group which meets weekly at St Nicholas Church in Little Bowden. This is a lovely informal group who meet for a cup of tea and a chat on Monday mornings from 10 -11am. The brief was to talk about VASL and as always as soon as Volunteer Drivers were mentioned people wanted to share their very positive experiences. The group was very aware of the problems of loneliness and could understand what a difference a regular volunteer makes. At the end of the session we gained a potential new volunteer and a digital client, anyone in Little Bowden will be welcome to join. Well done Jenny!



Community Champions is funded by the Big Lottery



VASL Registered Charity No. 1141274

Company Registration No. 7517828



Effective Listening

On 20 February 10am -12pm, here at Torch House, Linda Pentland will be leading an interactive session about developing effective listening skills. Linda is a 'Soul Midwife' and has undertaken training to be with people that are dying and conversing with them. The session will include learning how to listen 'deeply', sharing an object with the group and talking about it, as well as developing our skills for having 'tough conversations'. Linda suggests that each attendee brings with them a small item that represents what drew them to Community Champions. However, no one will be expected to speak if they prefer to listen and Linda will have pens and paper for people to use as an alternative to sharing an object. If you wish to attend, please contact the team to put your name down and book transport if required.

Positive Connections

The Community Champions team recently submitted a quarterly report (Oct - Dec 2018) to the VASL Trustees. We know from regular feedback that the project makes a massive positive difference to the lives of both clients and volunteers and it's nice to see that reflected in our numbers. 23 new relationships were created during this period, equating to 11 Befrienders, 8 Digital volunteers, 1 Pen Pal, 1 Email pal and 2 telephone befrienders. There are 76 active relationships overall, including 45 befrienders and 11 digital relationships. There was good turnout for training sessions and Community Gatherings during this period. A huge thankyou to our committed volunteers for making all this possible.

Community Friends

After about a year we do a review of volunteer client relationships. When a client has had a Community Champions volunteer for some time, they often develop a friendship. We see this as a real success. Becoming friends means that any project restrictions are lifted, for example you can see each other when you like and swap phone numbers. From a project point of view, we need to record that this relationship is now a friendship. As a Community Friend we will still send you newsletters and welcome you to project gatherings, training and celebrations. We already have 20 Community Friends so if you want to know more about how it works, we can introduce you to them – just let us know.

Local Info

Friendship Lunch 2nd
Wednesday of each month
12 - 3pm 13 February The
Royalist, Western Ave, MH,
tel 01858 438080 to book,
£7 for 2 course meal, raffle
etc.

Tea @ Three 27 Jan, 24
Feb, tel David 07505
968767 for details

Angel Ears Bereavement
Support Thursdays 7-9pm
Feb 28, March 28 meets at
Enigma, Coventry Road,
MH, all welcome tel Nic
07534 26309 for details

Move 2 Music Monday
mornings Little Bowden
Bowling Club see
www.move2music for
details and charges

VASL News

Shopping on Amazon? Use this link to donate a percentage of your shop to VASL:
smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/1141274-0

Support for Carers have been nominated for the Leicester Mercury Carer Awards in the Special Recognition category. Winners will be announced at an event on 31 Jan, congratulations and good luck to all the team (pictured).



NHS campaign

This winter, NHS England and Public Health England are helping the public to better understand what actions they can take to manage their own health and get the best out of their NHS with the 'Help Us, Help You' campaign. Dr Dawn Harper said: "It's our job to make sure the public are properly informed about the full range of services available to them, and it's the public's job to make good use of those services when needed. Our hope is that this winter, we can help improve the speed and availability of A&E care for those who truly need it, together." The campaign hopes to highlight the different ways patients can get care: NHS 111, extended GP hours and Community Pharmacies can all help with common illnesses during winter and relieve pressure on A&E departments. For more information see www.nhs.uk/staywell