



NEWSLETTER

July 2020 | Volunteers

This month...

Zoom Community Gathering Tuesday 7th July 2pm

Jenny will send out an email invite to all. It would be great to see as many people as possible – if you have not used Zoom before and need help with joining please let us know and a Digital volunteer can assist. We usually have time for project notices, a chance to chat in small groups and a theme to talk about.

Last month...

17 VASL Community Champions volunteers, clients and pets (dogs, parrots) and staff met online for the June Zoom Community Gathering. Jenny skilfully facilitated the meeting which offered all a chance to see each other (especially useful for new volunteers who joined after lockdown). She shared her idea of volunteers knitting miniature Community Champions dolls which could be posted to clients with a message from the volunteer. Sam offered to share resources about how to knit/crochet... People were randomly put into small groups to meet others in the project community and find out how everyone was managing lockdown and what they were missing. Swimming was mentioned .. Then Rohini gave short notices and Maureen (VASL Charity Manager) thanked volunteers for their fantastic support and explained how Trustees are in the process of considering garden visits. VASL needs to balance the health and safety of volunteers and clients so will make a decision shortly. In the meantime all were encouraged to continue with phone calls, emails and letter writing which all provided valuable social contact. In the second set of small groups people shared their diverse experiences of volunteering, including putting together a variety of quizzes. Feedback has been great: "lovely to meet everyone for the first time on the Zoom meeting today it is always nice to put a face to a name".



Clap for Carers

At 5pm this Sunday 5th July to mark the birthday of the NHS, /Together are inviting everyone to clap once more to say "thank you" to everyone from NHS staff to neighbours who've helped one another out. For more details see www.together.org.uk.



Get in touch...

Rohini, Jenny, Sam & Denise

Mon -Thurs 9am-5pm,
Fri til 4.30pm

01858 439262

champions@vasl.org.uk

1st Floor, Torch House,
Torch Way, MH, LE16 9HL



#CV19IsolatedButInspired

Leicestershire Libraries are encouraging people to get involved in their latest project 'Isolated but Inspired'. They are hoping to be able to create two films that will act as a digital time capsule capturing the feeling of the Covid 19 situation and how people are making lockdown better. To find out more see www.facebook.com/CommunityCurators/



Garden Visits Update

So far we have 12 pairs of volunteers/clients meeting face to face at a safe distance through garden or doorstep visits facilitated by the CC team. These have brought real joy and connection. Please note if volunteers live in Leicester City the new local lockdown will mean they're not able to travel. Remote contact by phone, email or letters can resume until the lockdown is lifted. Other volunteer/client pairs have felt happier and safer with continuing with regular chats by phone or friendly emails/letters and this is fine. A key strength of the CC project is its ability to be adaptable around people's preferences.

Meet Another New Volunteer!

Hi I'm Charlie and I live in Market Harborough. I've always been interested in volunteering, in fact, I used to volunteer as a student. When the corona virus started and I worked from home and home-schooling my daughter, I really wanted to volunteer but I wasn't sure what I could do. I wanted to help my community. I saw some information about VASL on Facebook and thought now would be the right time to look into this further. I chose to join the Community Champions to provide social contact by letter. I thought this would be a great way to hear from new people and hopefully provide a friendly voice and ear to those who need it. It also fits into my daily life and something I can carry on even when I go back to work. This was really important to me, because I didn't want to start something that I wouldn't be able to continue. Although I am currently furloughed, I am normally employed by the National Space Centre, as Education Manager. I love my job and I have been working there for around 14 years. I have been lucky enough to be involved in many different projects and meet some amazing people, especially the talented group of people I work with.

The vast majority of my job includes working with schools, in one way or another. We run schools workshops and activities for all ages, both in the centre and more remotely online or even as outreach directly to schools. I have been involved with organising our small space (toddler) events,

sleepovers, younger carers events and many more. During the coronavirus outbreak and lockdown a lot of this content has moved to our social media pages on Facebook and Instagram, but I look forward to my return after lockdown. I have even been lucky enough to meet a few astronauts in my time, including Tim Peak, Charlie Duke (10th man on the Moon) and Piers Sellers. As part of the Paralympics I was also, involved with running a science show when the Olympic torch left from the National Space Centre very early in the morning after a busy Brownie sleepover! There are too many of these sorts of things to mention but the thing I love most about my job is working with schools and families, inspiring that excitement, spark and passion for science and engineering. As a volunteer I want to be help people within my community. I am generally quite a sociable person, and I have found lockdown difficult, but some people might find they are in this sort of position even without lockdown. I can only really imagine what it would feel like to be isolated everyday. If I can ease that feeling of loneliness for just one person, then that's great and I hope to make friendships and learn more about the people I write to, through this too.



Learning in lockdown

In response to the restrictions of Covid 19 GoLearn! (LCC Adult Learning Service) has created NEW Online Learning resources for adults across Leicestershire to access FREE of charge. The 'Life and Learning in Lockdown' area makes available a wide range of learning materials, activities and courses which are open to all members of the public. This new site offers a range of opportunities from Digital Skills to Languages, and Wellbeing to Family Learning. If you, your service users or those in your community, would like more information please contact us on our dedicated advice line on FREEphone 0800 988 0303 or email adultlearning@leics.gov.uk to arrange a telephone appointment.

Poem

In my house in isolation
Just like folk in every other nation
We are all in a very nasty situation
Not allowed to visit a relation
So no trips to the train station
Food stocks are slow in distribution
Lots of help with many a contribution
I am knitting another creation
In trying to find some kind of salvation
Telephones help with conversation
But now we all wait in anticipation
As our Governments seek a solution
To free us from disease and Frustration
And to get our children back to Education
Having had a very long vacation
Now we wait in quiet consolation
Until we can be filled with much Elation
Good luck world to when we can Function
Live our lives again without Compunction

Thank you to Dorothy Lilly
for this poem

Are you a knitter?

We are looking for people who can knit or crochet, we can help with wool. Can't tell you why, get in touch to find out more!



We support people and communities to thrive.
The National Lottery Community Fund

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