



ANNUAL REPORT 2016 / 2017



*Improving
the quality
of life for
people &
communities*

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Chief Officer Report— Jacqui Foile



Voluntary Action continued to provide excellent support, information and advice services to the local voluntary and community sector throughout 2016 - 17. In these challenging financial times it was a pleasure to assist local groups to access funding to continue to deliver their existing services as well as new projects. Throughout the year we have attended a number of key strategic meetings to represent and share the views of the local voluntary sector. Feedback from the organisations we work with has included comments such as “A very useful umbrella organisation for all those smaller community groups in the district” and “We are grateful for their ongoing support”.

Work commenced this year on a number of actions from our new Communications Plan, in particular using social media such as Facebook and Twitter to promote the services of Voluntary Action.

We continued to maintain the Essex Connects database which is a searchable directory of groups in the district, and Essex-wide providing community services. This has proved to be a great way for Voluntary Action’s member groups to promote their work. In addition Voluntary Action has continued to facilitate the Frontline online referral system which will enable GPs, social workers, health professionals and charities to refer patients or clients to appropriate services in the district. The system went live in May 2016 and by the end of the financial year we had signed up over 100 services to Frontline. Services included ranged from clubs to keep people active to projects to support people with dementia.

As part of Voluntary Action’s pilot Community Linking project, developed in partnership with Loughton, Chigwell and Buckhurst Hill Rotary Club and Epping Forest Chamber of Commerce, a networking event was held in Loughton. Local voluntary organisations and businesses were invited to network with the idea of developing relationships to benefit both parties.

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Work has continued this year on the Voluntary Action Winter Warmth campaign funded by Essex County Council (ECC). Referrals have been received from the Children's Centres, Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) Housing Officers, Community Agents, Health Professionals and Social Care. Support provided has included food parcels, electrical goods such as small heaters and microwaves, warm clothing and in particular this year we experienced a big demand for fuel tokens. Also a Winter Warmth information event for people with learning disabilities took place.

A number of Voluntary Sector Forums were held which gave organisations such as the Essex Credit Union the opportunity to advise attendees about their work and how people in the community can be assisted.

We were delighted this year to achieve the Investors in People quality standard which we have now held for the past ten years. I would like to pay special thanks to Debbie Smith for her outstanding contribution to this area of work.

Before drawing to a close may I take this opportunity to thank our main

funders EFDC, ECC and others who have supported us throughout the year. Partnership work continues to be beneficial and as such Voluntary Action and local groups have benefited from the professional courses delivered by Voluntary Sector Training. We have worked with the EFDC Community Safety Partnership in a number of ways, but mostly by providing administrative support.

Thanks also to the Voluntary Action staff team, volunteers and trustee board for their commitment and exceptional achievements this year. In particular, Voluntary Action has benefitted from our Chair, Gill Mann's influence and clear guidance in all areas of business.

Next year we are looking forward to working on the new ECC Specification for Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure Support Service in Essex and achieving the objectives linked to this.

We also look forward to doing more promotional work and seeing Voluntary Action achieving more media coverage. It is hoped that we will be able to expand our very successful Learning Disabilities

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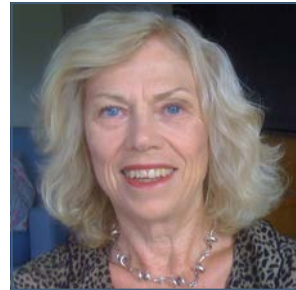
Supported Volunteering project to include volunteering for those with mental health issues.

I trust you will enjoy reading this report which highlights the great work that the Voluntary Action Volunteer Centres and projects have undertaken this year. I would like to end my report this year by thanking the many voluntary and community groups we work with for the excellent services delivered in our district which clearly continue to make a huge difference to the lives of many.

Jacqui Foyle




Chair Report – Gill Mann



Resilience, resourcefulness, determination and optimism characterise the staff and volunteers of Voluntary Action.

Times are tough and funding is in short supply with grants only guaranteed for a fixed period of time. Nevertheless every effort is being made to extend existing funding, to find new sources of funding, to generate income and make our services as efficient and as cost effective as possible.

We have a board of trustees with knowledge and experience who are working well together. Last year we welcomed three new board members, Linda Morrell as treasurer, Rachel Poulter and Sally Crone as representatives from Citizens Advice Bureau and West Essex Mind respectively. Unfortunately Rachel



has stepped down due to work commitments.

One of the key roles of Voluntary Action is working closely with partner organisations, funding agencies and member groups. We support volunteers working under the umbrella of Voluntary Action but also support volunteers into roles within other local organisations.

Jacqui Foile, Chief Officer, ensures that services evolve to meet the needs of the community and that every funding opportunity is explored to maintain and develop the services we offer. She is ably supported by the Executive Assistant, Debbie Smith and Finance Officer, David Wright.

I would also like to acknowledge the work of the wider Voluntary Action team and the important and valued contribution of volunteers. All the staff put so much effort into their work and in helping others. So many letters and comments are received expressing the gratitude of clients for the help they have received from staff and volunteers.

I recommend this annual report to you as a reflection of the success of Voluntary Action in supporting local residents and facilitating and supporting volunteers in Epping Forest in spite of the growing challenge of competing for scant resources.

Chris M. Mann



Volunteer Centres—Epping Forest and Harlow

The Volunteer Centres Epping Forest and Harlow are part of a nationwide network of independent agencies that act as “matchmakers” for people seeking volunteering opportunities and not-for-profit and charity groups needing volunteers. We match the interests, skills and time of local people with the needs of groups operating in the Epping Forest district and Harlow area. We also encourage and support organisations to operate good practice in volunteer management.

Epping Forest and Harlow Volunteer Centres are also part of the Volunteer Centres Essex network. We work closely with our Essex colleagues towards achieving greater consistency and partnership working for the benefit of our local areas and the Volunteer Centre network as a whole.

Volunteer Centre Epping Forest

Achievements

- A outstanding Volunteer Awards Evening held in October where Voluntary Action member organisations were able to celebrate the contribution of their volunteers
- Achieved an International Quality Management System Award ISO 9001:2015
- A successful outreach program developed to promote volunteering, by engaging with business and the public on the benefits of volunteering

Statistics

- Approximately 160 volunteer opportunities advertised at any one time
- 471 enquiries received for specific adverts
- 139 volunteering opportunities filled by volunteers referred by Epping Volunteer Centre

Looking Forward

- Promoting volunteering by marketing the Volunteer Centre through community meetings and events
- Setting up outreach sessions and strengthening links with other agencies
- Continuing to seek funding to promote volunteering

Volunteer Centre Epping Forest 01992 564 256

Volunteer Centre Harlow

Achievements

- Gained an International Quality Management System Award ISO 9001:2015
- Maintained and developed good relations with a variety of organisations requiring volunteers as well as agencies supporting people wishing to volunteer. These included people with health issues or those who have been out of the work place for some time
- Recruited volunteers from all age groups reflecting the diverse community in Harlow
- Held and attended various events including the National Volunteers' Week celebration and the Art of the Garden Party
- Continued weekly outreach sessions at the Harlow Leisurezone
- Staffed Charity Car Park at Harlow College to raise funds and promote the Volunteer Centre Harlow

Statistics

- 571 enquiries
- 162 interviews
- 233 referrals

Looking Forward

- Working in partnership with Harlow District Council to promote the benefits of volunteering

Epping Forest Time Bank

Time Banking is a volunteering initiative which allows members to make a difference in their community. Giving time and skills are reciprocated by members being able to make requests for something in return. It is an ad-hoc system allowing members to "do what they want, when they want".

During the year the Epping Forest Time Bank has focused on recruiting new members and setting up mini Time Banks which have worked together to achieve common goals. In addition a number of regular gatherings and activities have taken place which many members have attended. In particular the Coffee and ITea events held at Loughton Library every 6 weeks have continued to be popular where assistance to members with baffling gadgets has taken place.

During the life of the Epping Forest Time Bank project, 8305 exchange hours were generated.

Funding to sustain this very valuable service is currently being sought by Community 360 to continue and expand Time Banking throughout Essex.

Volunteer Centre Harlow 07910 075101

Supported Volunteering Learning Disabilities Project

The Supported Volunteering Learning Disability Project was established in February 2007 to provide volunteering opportunities for people with learning disabilities residing in the Epping Forest district. The project is funded by Essex County Council with additional funding from the Jack Petchey Foundation, Loughton Town Council and the Joseph & Lilian Sully Foundation.

Achievements

- The Conservation Group continues to be a valuable asset at the Royal Gunpowder Mills. Volunteers have learnt a wide range of skills and contributed enormously to the upkeep of the site as well as making it more attractive to visitors. The team have also started work with the Grange Farm Trust and the Essex Wildlife Trust on a series of conservation projects in the Roding Valley Meadows.
- The Talk and Sort Arts and Crafts group continues to work closely with Samaritan Purse Operation Christmas Child and other local charities. Last June several pieces of the group's artwork were sold to raise funds for Haven House Hospice at the Creative Haven Art Exhibition held at the Kings Oak High Beach.
- The Catering Project cafe developed with EFDC in the Civic Offices, is in its fourth successful year, providing opportunities for people with learning disabilities to gain valuable work experience with a view to building confidence and working towards a career in catering.
- The Allotment Project in conjunction with Parsonage Court Sheltered Housing Scheme for older people, had another successful year and grew a variety of crops for the residents to enjoy. The group prepared a series of separate vegetable beds making them easier for the older people to access.
- The All Together Now singing group has increased in numbers and has performed across the district at older people's clubs and homes. Last year they also performed at the Creative Expressions Art Day, Chigwell Disabled Group and organised a Valentine's Party for Voluntary Action Befriender's group.
- The Band Project has made tremendous progress and has formed a small rock group called 'Band Together'. The group has performed at Haven House Hospice Summer Fair, Voluntary Action Volunteer Rock Awards plus Birthday and Christmas parties. They now rehearse at Epping Forest College. The Upcycling Project in partnership with Epping Forest Reuse was launched in November. The project has proved very successful in the first few months, starting with four young people, a support worker and two volunteer buddies. It offers training and mentoring in restoring and upcycling. The activities of the project provide focus and develop skills. As well as upcycling furniture, the members also made

Supported Volunteering Learning Disabilities Project 01992 564 032

a series of raised beds for the allotment project with wood donated from Woods Forever.

- We have exceeded set targets and developed both new individual and group volunteering opportunities for adults with learning disabilities in the Epping Forest district.
- We have worked with many voluntary organisations in the area on a variety of community projects including Essex Wildlife Trust, Haven House Children's Hospice, the Grange Farm Trust and Epping Forest Reuse.



Statistics

- 37 clients supported by the project
- 6 group activities
- Clients have spent a total of 4136 hours volunteering between April 2016 and March 2017 in supported group placements
- 12 Individual placements
- Volunteer support staff contributed over 1440 hours in the last year

Looking Forward

- Continued development of volunteering opportunities, ensuring that they provide volunteers with a valuable experience
- The development of the project to encompass personalised budgets

Supported Volunteering Learning Disabilities Project 01992 564 032

Gardening

The Gardening service provides gardeners and volunteers to maintain the gardens of people physically unable to do so themselves, namely older people and the disabled across the district. The Gardening Administrator liaises with clients regarding gardening requirements and need. Tasks undertaken include clearing, pruning and mowing. Epping Forest District Council is the main funder for the Voluntary Action Gardening service.

Achievements

- Continued funding from EFDC to tend gardens for Council tenants
- High Sheriffs award of £730 for gardening tools and equipment

Statistics

- 132 EFDC tenants received 569 gardening visits
- 6 garden clearances were completed
- 10 volunteers worked with the gardening team
- 1,120 of volunteering hours provided gardening and administrative support to the project

Looking Forward

- Working with the Volunteer Centre Epping Forest to recruit more volunteers
- Organising a number of "Make a Difference" gardening days in partnership with the Supported Volunteering Learning Disabilities project



Home Safety

The Home Safety service assesses the needs of clients who are unsteady or vulnerable to a fall within their home in West Essex. Additionally the property is surveyed to look for any security issues and advice is given to raise awareness on bogus callers. Any hazards highlighted in the survey are eradicated where possible to eliminate potential falls and keep the occupant safe and confident within their home. The project staff supply and fit grab rails, bath assistance and stair rails if necessary. Door chains and window security can also be fitted to make residents less vulnerable in the Epping Forest district. 2016/17 was another excellent year for Home Safety however funding for this service ceased in March 2017.

Achievements

- Exceeding targets set by the funders West Essex Clinical Commissioning Group (WECCG)
- 38% above target for internal falls prevention work
- Many hospital discharges were on time or sooner as a result of speedy attendance to fit equipment
- Clients reported that our service reduced the risk of falls at home, thus keeping them out of hospital

Statistics

- 620 properties visited and surveyed for trip hazards
- 38 crime related visits
- 134 properties security checked and advice given or work undertaken
- 1044 pieces of equipment fitted to reduce falling
- 177 pieces of equipment fitted to keep clients safe within their home

Looking Forward

- To prevent a gap in service provision for some of these areas of work Voluntary Action will be launching a chargeable Home Safety / Handyman service for residents in Epping Forest



- Voluntary Action will also continue to liaise with funders in West Essex with a view to re-launching the falls prevention element of the Home Safety Service

Handyman

The Handyman service is a partnership initiative between EFDC and Voluntary Action which started in October 2012. The project is funded by EFDC and provides a handyman service to tenants of EFDC properties provided they are over 60 and / or disabled and have no one else who can assist them.

Achievements

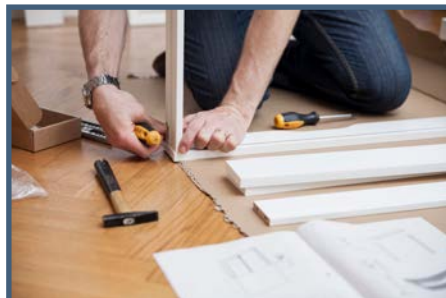
- A conservative estimate that well over £24,000 in savings made for tenants using the service rather than using commercial contractors
- Partnerships with EFDC Housing Management, scheme managers, EFDC Community Safety Partnership and Care and Repair Epping, continues to prosper with regular referrals and joint working

Statistics

- Over 300 referrals received and completed this year from EFDC Housing Repairs
- 70 referrals directly from tenants previously helped
- 20 referrals from other referrers such as other EFDC departments
- 90% completion within 48 hours
- 100% tenant satisfaction with excellent feedback

Looking Forward

- Development of a chargeable Handyman service for home owners in the district
- Continued publicity through EFDC publications and local press to maintain the profile of the service



Handyman 07552 948385

Befriending

The Befriending service aims to provide support and friendship for those living on their own or in isolation. The service offers three weekly activity clubs, which provide various activities such as seated exercises, quizzes, entertainers, games, bingo, arts and crafts as well as regular day trips out which give much needed stimulation to many whilst reducing their social/rural isolation. In addition, the service can provide a 'friend' who will be able to offer companionship by forming a trusting and supportive relationship offering a smile, a listening ear, links to other services and regular visits to the client's home. The Befriending service is funded by the Big Lottery and the Joseph and Lilian Sully Foundation.

Achievements

- Additional funding from the Joseph & Lilian Sully Foundation to provide extra trips for clients to enjoy

A number of trips were held for clients including:

- Cream Teas at Hunters Meet, Chigwell Hall and Mulberry House
- A number of canal boat trips with lunch cruising the River Lee
- Lunches at various restaurants, hotels and pubs within the district
- Various themed cabaret lunch events at Hunters Meet, Canons Brook Golf Club and Mulberry House
- A Christmas party at Hunters Meet with a four course meal and cabaret for a hundred clients
- Christmas carols with refreshments at Henry Moore Primary School in Harlow
- Joint Valentine's themed event with the Supported Volunteering Learning Disability project held at the Methodist church in Loughton which included lunch and entertainment
- Volunteers attended training courses including First Aid, minibus passenger safety, moving and handling, MIDAS transport training

Statistics

- 20 - 30 clients on average attended weekly activity clubs in North Weald, Loughton and Waltham Abbey
- Between 5 - 10 clients received regular weekly visits in their own homes
- 109 clients supported through the project
- 29 volunteers assisted the project

Befriending 01992 564 518

Looking Forward

- To recruit additional volunteers to continue to enhance the project
- To increase volunteer skills through training opportunities
- To continually strive to provide enjoyable and stimulating activities and events
- To work with new partners such as the Community Agents to seek clients for referral
- To secure additional funding for one off events or a Christmas party



Befriending 01992 564 518

Benefits Advice

The Benefits Advice service is available to those whose personal circumstances make it difficult for them to access services in their area or outside of the home. A home visit can be made and information provided on benefits available to the individual along with assistance to complete application forms. The service is available to those who live in the Epping Forest district. Referrals are received from other agencies and health professionals.

Achievements

- We met the challenge of supporting clients with changing their benefit from Disability Living Allowance to Personal Independence Payment
- An increased number of referrals from previous year

Statistics

- 204 people received advice and information on benefits
- 106 benefit applications completed
- 102 successful benefit applications

Looking Forward

- The Essex Community Foundation has awarded funding to continue the project in 2017 – 18. A further grant has been awarded by Loughton Town Council.

Disability and Carers Service Attendance Allowance for people aged 65 or over
Department for Social Development

Please fill in this claim form and send it back to us as soon as you can. We can only consider paying benefit from the date we receive it.

1 Before you fill in this form, read page 3 of the notes booklet that came with this form.

About you
Please tell us your personal details. If you are filling in this form for someone else, tell us about them, not you.

1 Surname or family name: _____
All other names in full: _____
Title: _____
For example: Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms

2 National Insurance number: _____
Letters Numbers Letter

3 Date of birth (day/month/year): ____/____/____
/ /

4 Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female

5 Address where you live: _____
Postcode: _____

6 Daytime phone number where we can contact you or leave a message: _____
Phone number, including the dialling code
Tick to show how you would prefer us to contact you: ☐ Phone ☐ Textphone
Our textphone service does not receive messages from mobile phones.
Mobile number: _____

7 What is your nationality?
For example: British, Spanish, Turkish

AA1A June 2011



Benefits 01992 564 138

Services Gallery



Voluntary Action Staff and Trustee Board



Jacqui Foile	Chief Officer
David Wright	Finance Officer
Debbie Smith	Executive Assistant and HR Co-ordinator
Nina Gavens	Funding and Information Officer
Charlotte Hyett	Project and Business Development Officer
Sally Panrucker	Supported Volunteering Learning Disability Officer
Maggie Gilchrist	Volunteer Centre Co-ordinator Epping Forest
Ray Harris	Supported Volunteering Learning Disability Sessional Worker
Mark Balkham	Furniture Recycle Project Worker
Della Nash	Volunteer Centre Co-ordinator Harlow
Julie Bristow	Befriending Service Co-ordinator
Claire Marsh	Befriending Service Sessional Worker
Trevor Felton	Befriending Service Driver
Jina Symes	Benefits Advice Officer/Gardening Administrator
Karen Macmillan	Lead Gardener
Aubrey Brandy	Gardener
Mike Kirby	Gardener
Chris Bullock	Handyman
Mark Dalton	Community Handyman
Colin Rowell	Safer Communities Partnership Secretarial Assistant / IT Support

Voluntary Action Trustee Board

Chair	Gill Mann, Individual Member
Vice Chair	Gerry Smith, Essex Boys and Girls Clubs
Treasurer	Linda Morrell, Individual Member
Jane Adair	Individual Member
Elizabeth Rawlings	Epping Forest Housing Aid
Liz Went	Royal Gunpowder Mills
Caroline Skinner	Chigwell Riding Trust for Special Needs
Dr Myrna Gilbert	Individual Member
Sally Crone	Mind in West Essex
Gaby Gold	Adviser, EFDC
Cllr Brian Rolfe	Adviser, EFDC

Our thanks and best wishes go to the following trustees and staff who left in 2016/17:
Stuart James (Treasurer), Rachel Poulter, (Trustee), Cllr Glynis Shiell (Adviser), and staff members David Bosher and Steve Cox.

Voluntary Action Volunteers

Vicky Bagnall
Marc Balkham
Paul Baxter
Jenni Brown
Alfred Burgess
Donna Castle
Zoe Chapman
Raj Chatterjee
Hayley Clark
Carol Cogan
Ricky Conrad
Tim Copeman
Marina Crawford
Christopher Daniels
Viv Davis
Ray Divine
Glenn Eaton
Jean Edwards
Margaret Emmens
Roger Emmens
Terry Esqualant
Teresa Farrar
Andrew File
Pauline Fletcher
Steph Foile
Richard Ford
Janet Fox
Raye Fry
Bianca Gombàs
Antoinette Grier
Jackie Hardy
Julie Harvey
Barbara Hollingum
Mike Kirby
Daniel Leeks
Kelly Lewis-Hall

James Ludlow
Susie Maclean
Christine McEwen
Alan Oyston
Katie Page
Sally Panrucker
Karen Patience
Emma Pavett
Christopher Pomfrett
Vera Prior
David Rees
Nick Robinson
Christine Robson
Frances Rosenberg
Diana Rumsam
Josh Russell
Merle Sharp
Daphne Shawe
Barbara Sheard
Ray Sherrard
Sophia Smith
Beverley Soutar
Eleonora Spencer
Pauline Townsend
Pauline Visvanathan
Georgia Williams
Pat Williams



Voluntary Action Members

Affiliated Members

A Vision of Britain	Loughton Town Council
ACCURO	Loughton Voluntary Care Association
Age UK Essex	Loughton Youth Project
Alzheimer's Society - Epping Forest Branch	Marie Curie
British Red Cross	Mark Hall & Netteswell Community Association
Buckhurst Hill Community Association	Mind in West Essex
Canalability	Ongar & Villages Voluntary Care
Chance UK	Ongar Town Council
Chigwell Riding Trust for Special Needs	PACT for Autism
Christian Drama Resource Centre	Parkinsons UK
CRUSE Bereavement Care Epping Forest Branch	Radio Forest Hospital Radio
ECDP - Essex Coalition of Disabled People	Restore Community Church
Elbow Grease Co-operative Ltd	Roding Valley U3A
Epping Forest Centenary Trust	Rotary Club of Loughton, Buckhurst Hill & Chigwell
Epping Forest Community Transport	Royal Gunpowder Mills
Epping Forest District Citizens Advice Bureau	Royal Voluntary Service
EFDC Countrycare	Spark
Epping Forest District Museum	St Clare Hospice
Epping Forest Housing Aid Scheme	The Abbeyfield Society Ltd
Epping Forest Reuse	The Broadway Town Centre Partnership
Epping Forest Sunflower Group (Chigwell Disabled)	The Epping Golf Club
Epping in Bloom	The Lopping Endowment Fund
Epping Ongar Railway	The Red Balloon Family Ltd
Essex Boys and Girls Clubs	The Woodcraft Folk
Friends of Epping Forest	Theydon Bois Parish Council
Gold Corner Music Arts & Culture C.I.C	Three Valleys Male Voice Choir
Grow Community Garden	Waltham Abbey Community Association
Harlow Citizen's Advice Bureau	Waltham Abbey Town Council
Haven House Children's Hospice	Waltham Abbey Youth 2000
Krueger Initiative for the Performing Arts	Woods Forever
Lambourne End Centre for Outdoor Learning	YCT Young Concern Trust
Lee Valley Regional Park Authority	Youth Plus
Lenderhand	Zinc Arts
Loughton Festival	
Loughton Foodbank	
Loughton South District Guides	
Loughton Stroke Club	

Telephone: 01992 564178

Email: admin@vaef.org.uk

Web: www.vaef.org.uk

@VAEF01

Voluntary Action Members

Non Affiliated Members

Rotary Club of Epping
South Loughton Cricket Club
Razed Roof
St Paul's Harlow Town Centre and St
Mary's Little Parndon



**VOLUNTARY
ACTION** EPPING
FOREST

Charity No: 1097376 Registered Company Limited by Guarantee No: 4689779

Voluntary Action Funders

Full audited accounts are available. Please contact the main Voluntary Action office if you would like a copy.

Our main core funders this year were EFDC and ECC. The funding contributes to Voluntary Action core and project work and also enables us to lever-in funding from organisations outside the district.

Our projects and additional work were funded by:

The Big Lottery
Epping Forest District Community Safety Partnership
Essex Community Foundation: High Sheriff's Award
Jack Petchey Foundation
Loughton Town Council
Essex Community Foundation: Acorn Fund
WECCG
Harlow Council
Joseph and Lilian Sully Foundation
Police Property Act Fund



LOTTERY FUNDED

Funded By



Loughton Town Council



West Essex Clinical Commissioning Group

Benefits

- Dear Jina, thank you for filling in the pip form. You filled it in perfectly. I received the enhanced rate for both components. Thanks again.

Handyman

- As an older person, this is the best, safe, reliable and honest service I have ever had. After the last job I phoned the council to thank them for this wonderful service they fund.
- Very pleased to be able to say that we found the service excellent in every way. Thank you very much.

Befriending

- Just a little note to say, you have worked your magic again! Just had a call from Christine (daughter) and she said her mum absolutely loves your club (indeed so does Christine I think as she said she quite likes taking her mum!).
- I just wanted to say thank you on behalf of my mum and myself for organising the Tuesday club activities and outings. As she doesn't go out any more at 91 years of age, the Club gives her a certain amount of independence especially as the minibus ferries her back and forth. When I spoke to her on Wednesday she was full of the wonderful outing and lunch at the golf club in Harlow. She enjoyed herself very much and had a lovely time. A big thank you to the fundraisers who provide the finances. The club has given mum a new lease of life and has made her more positive. Thanks again.

Gardening

- Before I had these lovely ladies and gentlemen to take care of my garden it caused me a great deal of worry when the garden was overgrown as I am unable to do it myself. They are a blessing and I am so grateful for this wonderful help. Thank you sincerely.
- My wife and I could not do without this service as we are both disabled OAPs unable to garden ourselves. Thank you very much – you are life savers.
- This service has made a lot of difference to my everyday life. I do not now have to worry about the mess of my garden. It has given me peace of mind.
- The garden looks lovely and my mum doesn't need to worry that she cannot manage the garden or hedge any more. The staff and volunteers are polite, friendly and very helpful and my mum feels comfortable with them. Aubrey the gardener is a lovely gentleman.

Learning Disabilities

- To Sally, thank you for all the help and encouragement you have given my daughter. It has really boosted her confidence, she really enjoys what she is doing and we are all proud of what she has achieved.

Volunteer Centre Epping Forest

- Hey Maggie, I just want to say that finding you guys at Volunteer Essex (actually you found me!) has been fantastic for the RVS. The volunteers you've provided me with have been a life saver! Thanks very much!

Charity No: 1097376 Registered Company Limited by Guarantee No: 4689779

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Web: www.vaeef.org.uk @VAEF01



Louis Nunn
Member of VAEF's Band Together