



connect

Keeping the VCC friends connected & up to date

Spring
Edition
2011

Managers Blog

~ *New Look issue of the VCC 'Connect' Spring Newsletter*

As spring approaches, and the flowers and trees announce to us spring is truly underway, we at the VCC are undergoing some changes and growth developments of our own. With your help, we continue to make a difference in so many peoples lives throughout the seasons, but in particular the challenging and difficult winter season we've just come through.

~ *VCC Staffing Update*

Evelyn Brady. I have been the VCC Centre Manager for over 16 years (although I have been here for over 22 years in total in various roles). Over the years there have been many changes and developments, none more so than in recent times! So for this reason I have put together a list of the current VCC staff and their availability, to be of assistance to you when you need to contact us.

Sarah Thompson is our full-time Volunteer Coordinator and has extended her maternity leave until September 12th 2011. Sarah says *"as much as I miss my friends at the VCC, I feel that I don't want to miss this opportunity to spend this time with baby Billy"*. We look forward to welcoming her back.

Stephen Oldfield is our New Driving Scheme Coordinator. Stephen started in the post at the beginning of May and he is currently familiarising himself with all the processes and procedures as well as finding time to get to know the volunteers and service users. Stephen's working week: Tuesdays, Wednesday and Friday

Julia Coggins is our Mental Health Coordinator for both the Deptford weekend drop-in and the Stepping Stones wellbeing projects. She is also working with other team members and volunteers to support the Volunteer Coordinator's Role on a temporary basis. Julia's working week: Wednesday Thursday, Friday (some evenings and weekends at Deptford as programmes dictate).

Ruth Bertie is our temporary Team Support worker, Ruth's role is to support the Manager and Coordinators by providing cover and administration support. Working Week: Monday Tuesday and Wednesday mornings.

Volunteer Receptionists & Office Support Workers. We have a team of volunteer receptionists who each cover either one morning or afternoon session a week. Our team of office support volunteers' tasks range from filing/database inputting to supporting on volunteer recruitment and volunteering placements.

Volunteers Big Tea Party

Have you got your invite? This is enclosed for all volunteers to invite you to the big event part of National Volunteers Week to express our



appreciation to you for all your hard work over the year. This is a lovely opportunity to socialise for a few hours, and encourage new volunteers by extending an invite to your friends as guests..

As you'll be well aware, we are Sainsbury's Forest Hill Charity partner for this year, and they are contributing to the event by supplying some Tea Party food. We'd like to encourage you to bring a tea time favourite item of food to share

This promises to be a real social occasion at St Saviours Church Sunday 5th June, 3 – 5pm. It's important you get your RSVP in as soon as possible!

Stepping Stones in Lewisham ~ a Wellbeing and Happiness Programme

(Run in partnership with the South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust)

The first Stepping Stones in Lewisham Programme launched on Saturday 5th March and ran for 10 weeks on Saturdays until 7th May at The Compass Centre, Deptford.

The aim of the programme is to help people dealing with issues such as stress, anxiety and depression to improve their lives, move forward with their goals, and to feel happier.

Each Saturday there has been a wellbeing workshop, followed by a 1-1 session with a Mentor. The programme is free to people living in the London Borough of Lewisham. People are referred through their GP or a Health Professional.

Wellbeing workshop topics have included:

Goal setting and action planning, ideas to improve happiness and well-being, confidence building and assertiveness, tackling limiting beliefs, cultivating optimism, sleep, dealing with anxiety, healthy eating/healthy living, and managing stress effectively.

The purpose of having a Mentor:

Is to provide 1-1 support and encouragement to help participants set life goals, and then be supported moving forward with their goals and actions over the course of the programme.

The programme has received fantastic feedback, including comments such as:

"Overall a brilliant programme. I have gained many skills and techniques that I will continue to use."

"Brought colour back into my life."

"Really enjoyable, 10 weeks flew by, had a great laugh."

"My confidence has grown through the workshops and I've become a happier person."

"Put thoughts into action."

"I really enjoyed the course and have made new friends as well as have new information on how to deal with depression."

"My Mentor supported and challenged me to set and reach goals."

"Helped me share experiences and learn from others." "Chased the blues away." "Helped me meet new people"



Julia Coggins (third on the left) & some of the participants

The next Stepping Stones in Lewisham Programmes start on:

- **Wednesday 1st June 2011 (8 weeks)**
3.45pm start at St Saviours Church, Brockley Rise, Forest Hill (Workshops and Mentor)
- **Saturday 28th May 2011 (6 weeks)**
10.15am start at The Compass Centre, 32 – 34 Watson Street, Deptford.
(Workshops Only)

Welcome to the Following Volunteers

Josephine Mumford
Mercy Quaynor
David Wheeler
Jonti Small
Andy Logan
Amal Issa
Simone Calame
Sara Ames
Kelly Douglas
Claudine Claus
Stephanie Makalwala
Lucia Cabrini
Francis Fields
Paul Mabb

Iona Vita
Dahlia Thompson
Lucie Irambona
Mary Manning
James Bal
Jackie Oliveira
Mary Manning
Aoife Gilbride
Gloria Jean-Pierre
Scholastica Anwa
David Ogonna
Sherryll Dhava- Ogonna

Farewell and Thank you



Delores Joseph
Velma Miller
Sandra Flaxman

Ideas for Support the VCC's Fundraising

British 10k London Run

This year the VCC will be entering a team for the British 10k London Run, which takes place on run



Sunday, 10th July 2011. We are therefore looking for **volunteers** to join our team and help raise much needed funds for the VCC.

You do not need to be a serious runner to enter, and

everyone is welcome to join us. The main aim is to have fun together at the same time as fundraising.

What a great way to get a bit fitter, enjoy the sights of central London, and give something back to your community. Julia Coggins, who has done the 10k previously, said that she really enjoyed the experience and felt a great sense of achievement when she crossed the finishing line.

If you are interested in joining our team, call us on 0208 291 1747 or email

info@voluntarycarecentre.co.uk for more information. We look forward to hearing from you.

Other way that you can help with fundraising

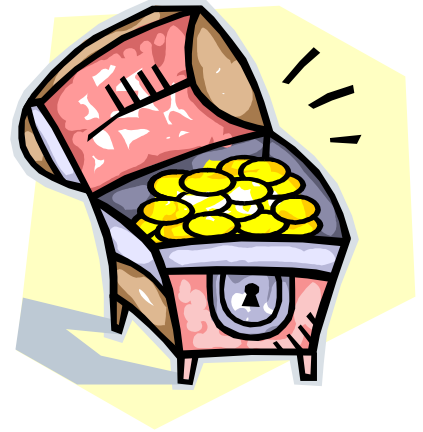
Sometimes when people hear the word fundraising they tend to think of people shaking buckets at train stations or the street collectors who tend to stop you at lunchtime when you are out shopping and try to get you to sign up to direct debit a monthly donation.

But it is possible to find other ways to fundraise. At VCC we are trying to use both traditional and more modern means of fundraising like dropping your spare coins in a box. We have a number of these at some local shops and with our Charity Corporate sponsor of the year - Forest Hill Sainsbury.

Currently one of our volunteers is dropping all bronze coins she gets into a box which when it is full she intends to take into VCC. Whilst another

VCC staff member is taking part in 10K run and is looking for sponsors to help him raise £200+

A more simple idea we hope you might consider is to save your change once a week from your lunch or newspaper purchase and if you did this over the space of a 48 weeks in a year that could amount to £24 if you had saved just 50p a week. But if you did this each day for 48 weeks that would be £120.



But if you wanted to do something else perhaps you might consider if you use ebay selling an item and donating a portion of the money you receive to VCC. Our VCC ebay id is VCCfundraising.

Or if you are on our website www.voluntarycarecentre.co.uk perhaps you might like to donate money via the new paypal button which we have recently created. Here you can also pay your VCC Friends subscription via paypal. Please note that you do



not need your own paypal account to make a paypal payment. We are hoping that our supporters might consider also asking their friends and family to consider making a

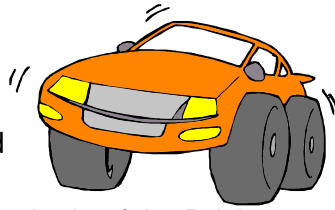
donation in their name perhaps instead of being bought gifts for their birthday's, weddings, anniversaries etc.

We aren't expecting you to adopt all of the ideas but if you selected just one and put it into practice. Each of us individually could raise a little and together we could make a big difference.



Keeping those Wheels Turning...we are Getting People There!

Shortly after our previous Driving Scheme coordinator Valerie Oldfield left us back in September 2010, I took on the 'caretaker' role of the Driving Scheme (I had previously been in administration at the VCC). During the time I was involved with the scheme I can honestly say I enjoyed getting to know the volunteer drivers and service users. I've loved chatting with them on the phone (don't tell the boss), arranging drives, and doing whatever it took to keep things moving and get the 'drives' done.



When it came to keeping the service users mobile and less isolated the volunteers were just so amazingly supportive, and understanding of the changes and pressures back in the 'hub' (the VCC office) as it were!

A few weeks ago we welcomed Stephen Oldfield (no relation to our former member of staff) and as we enter this new exciting phase the responsibility is gradually being handed over to Stephen with support and an induction from Evelyn. He has already begun to understand the real needs of both service users, driving volunteers, and management requirements of the role, demonstrating his ability to hit the road running' (as it were). I know that Stephen is looking forward to meeting you all at the events, socials and meetings planned for the near future (see dates for diaries).

So finally I thank you for helping me over this period. Also thank you in advance, for your support of Stephen as he gets to grips with the VDS and begins to make his own mark on the role. Together we'll 'keep those wheels turning...we are getting people there!...and back!' - serving our community and importantly, making a huge difference to peoples' lives!

Attention All Volunteers

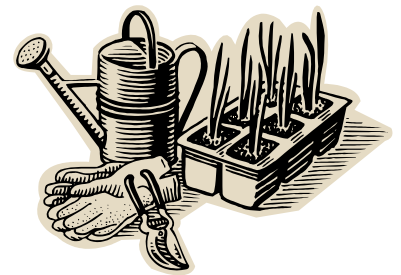
Your timesheets are enclosed

Please remember to send your timesheets back in regularly and include not only any regular commitments you have made, but also any one-offs undertaken. Thank you

Helpers Needed to Grow Gardening Project

Now the weather is warmer many of us look forward to spending time outside in our gardens, and our service users are no exception. However, many of them suffer from ill health or disabilities which prevent them from maintaining their gardens themselves. Our team of garden helpers visit people every two weeks or so to help with mowing grass, pruning and cutting back shrubs, weeding and perhaps planting bulbs or plants. One of our intrepid gardeners is even helping a lady to reclaim her garden from an invasion of bindweed!

Unfortunately we have many more requests for help than we have volunteers available, so if you would like to help on this



project which runs from March to late September, please call the office. No gardening expertise is required, just enjoyment of the outdoors and a willingness to help.

Dates for Diaries

Volunteers Week Big Tea Party
Sunday 5th June 3-5pm
at St Saviours Church Brockley Rise SE23

VCC Annual General Meeting
23rd June 7.30pm at the Grove Centre Church
Jews Walk Sydenham SE26 6PL

Everyone is welcome... why not bring a friend

Blythe Hill Fields Festival Saturday 2nd July VCC
Stall 11am- 3pm

Volunteers needed to help on the day

Lewisham Peoples Day Saturday 9th July
Mountfield Park **Volunteers needed to promote the VCC on the day**

British 10k London Run
Sunday 10th July **Volunteers needed to raise money in sponsorship for the VCC**

