



PRESS RELEASE

Date: 6 June 2019

Subject: Volunteering – A Gift to the Community!

The setting was beautiful and the weather perfect for a group of nine volunteers from local company Pfizer to help at Billy's Lake, Waterlooville.

The Billy's Lake Project is a local community initiative to improve and maintain the formerly neglected body of water and surrounding woodland area situated in Waterlooville, known as Billy's Lake.

Over the last few years, a fantastic team of volunteers have worked hard to make the area into a tranquil place for locals to enjoy. With a huge amount of tasks to be constantly undertaken, the group are always grateful for help from extra volunteers. Pfizer, a large pharmaceutical company based in Havant, have been supporting the project for the last few years as part of Community First's Employee Volunteering Scheme. They are always willing, enthusiastic and keen to get stuck in.

On this sunny day in May, the tasks were to install two benches around the lake. The benches are made from recycled plastic; a great way to reuse materials that otherwise would be thrown away, a hot topic in the press recently. The team also cleared an area that will be used to create a wildflower garden.

Gordon a volunteer from Pfizer said, "It's been my first time volunteering and it has been a great experience so much better than I expected. The weather could not have been better and it has been great working in such a beautiful environment." The regular volunteers at Billy's Lake are a fantastic group to work with and it has been good to spend time with my colleagues in a totally different setting, I would thoroughly recommend everyone takes up volunteering to help their community."

Roger a volunteer with the Billy's Lake Project was so pleased with the help from Pfizer saying " the amount of work that the team have achieved today has saved us so much time and means we can we can move bigger projects forward beyond general maintenance. Having a different group of volunteers joining us gives our small team a bit of a boost and makes us feel like we are not so alone in what we are trying to achieve."

If you are a community project and would like the help of a business, or you are a business that would like to do something similar in your local community, contact Rachel Taylor at Community First rachel.taylor@cfirst.org.uk or telephone 01730 774057

Community First is the trading name of Communities First Wessex

Registered Charity no 1147527 Company Registered in England and Wales 8071971 at
3000a Parkway, Whiteley, Fareham, Hampshire PO15 7FX

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Photos:



Notes for Editors

1. Communities First Wessex (known as Community First) provides support and advice to local voluntary and community groups, charities and social enterprises in order to build their capacity and ensure a thriving and successful voluntary sector across East Hampshire, Fareham, Havant and Winchester. We also provide a one stop shop for all aspects of volunteering; helping recruit and place volunteers throughout our local communities and providing specialist training for voluntary organisations.
2. Communities First Wessex also delivers critical community services including:
 - a. Community Transport and Dial a Ride in East Hampshire, Fareham, Gosport, Havant, Winchester and Basingstoke
 - b. Shopmobility in Fareham, Havant and Chichester, and Winchester



- c. Health and wellbeing services including surgery signposting with GP surgeries in Bordon, Fareham and Waterlooville, Walking 4 Health in Fareham, and a Home Help and a Gardening Service for vulnerable people in Fareham.
 - d. Support for Community Buildings and managing agents for Leigh Park Community Centre in Havant
 - e. Rape and Sexual Abuse Counselling services
 - f. Specialist youth work including support for young people's mental health
 - g. Work and skills based training and support for unemployed people
 - h. Supported volunteering for people with a range of needs including mental health, drug and alcohol abuse, and those with a physical or mild learning disability.
3. Communities First Wessex employs 116 staff, has more than 80 regular volunteers and has a turnover of £2.6m. Its main sources of income are local authority and government grants and contracts, Big Lottery Fund and a range of charitable trusts.
4. For further information contact:
Tim Houghton, Chief Executive, Communities First Wessex
07467 941018 or email tim.houghton@cfirst.org.uk

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