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Gosport Voluntary Action & Gosport Food Partnership Distribute £10k of HCC's Vulnerable Families Funding in Just Two Weeks



Thanks to Hampshire County Council's £10k vulnerable families grant—allocated to the Gosport Food Partnership (GFP)—and the effective/timely support from Community First colleagues, GFP partners between them have directly supported hundreds of local families—including via key local schools, who currently support some of the c1661 Gosport pupils in receipt of free school meals (some of whom struggle with food poverty).

This has been achieved by the GFP partners working effectively together—GVA collating/sorting the vouchers (ordered online by Community First) and then coordinating the distribution/collection of the Morrison's, Asda

and Aldi vouchers. GVA added value to this process by engaging/securing additional donations of fresh fruit and veg from Morrison's in Gosport, and a variety of other core food provisions that some GFP partners were running short of from Asda in Gosport. Amazingly this was achieved and families in need were being helped all within a 2-week period and during a global pandemic.

There has been some really positive GFP partner feedback to date concerning the impact the HCC funded vouchers have had on local families in need. Many of the local families access food and other services via the GFP partners who played an active part in the voucher distribution: Abri, Citizens Advice, Friends of the Homeless, Gosport Borough Council, Gosport Voluntary Action, Gosport Borough Football Club, Gosport Salvation Army and Jacob's Well Store Cupboard. Here is one example of the impact this initiative has had on a local family: ***"It's been brilliant. The kids never stop eating and this helps us to have proper meals. Thank you so much."***

Produced by Hampshire Councils for Voluntary Service, who would be delighted to have your feedback. Please contact Julia Allan 023 8090 2457 jallan@1community.org.uk
Featured articles represent the views of the contributing CVS



**HAMPSHIRE
CVS Network**
Supporting the voluntary and community sector

Support for Vulnerable Families Across Hampshire



Gosport Voluntary Action's front page story is representative of the work by CVSs across the county to ensure that Hampshire County Council's Vulnerable Families Funding went to families in need in respect of the half term break. We supported 55 organisations across the County to access £101,000 in grant funding.

Pictured on the front page are the Mayor of Gosport (GFP Chair) and a representative from Gosport Voluntary Action, Citizens Advice Gosport and Morrison's Gosport with the HCC funded vouchers

Together While Apart: Timebank Gets Creative in Lockdown



Lockdown may have kept local people apart – but community spirit has brought them closer together than ever. Since the onset of Coronavirus, the pandemic has changed the way people interact with many of our social events and meetings held online.

Even though staying at home is not always easy, The Woolmer Forest Timebank (www.cfirfirst.org.uk/woolmer-forest-timebank/) has been coming up with some creative ideas for keeping busy. The Timebank is a friendly network of individuals and organisations who support each other around the Bordon area in East Hampshire and share skills and knowledge in return for time credits, which can be “spent” on themselves or donated to a community pot to benefit others.

With the country going through such uncertain times, the Timebank members were keen to celebrate the positives

that have come out of lockdown. In one of their regular online social meetings, they came up with the idea of creating a digital collage showing photographs of how lockdown has encouraged people to take up new hobbies, try out new ideas or just take some time to relax. The Timebank encouraged people to send in their photographs of activities that have kept them busy while we were all forced to spend time apart. This resulted in a multitude of different images, with many different themes.

Elyssia has been a valued member of the Timebank for over a year, and has a keen interest in photography and art. She came up with the title for the collage: “Together while Apart”. Elyssia said, “In these trying times we wanted to look at the lighter side of lockdown and focus on the positives. The digital collage brought many of the Timebank members together when we could not meet in person. It’s nice that we have something to show that brings back some memories from this trying time.”

Woolmer Forest Timebank is funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, led by Community First and supported by seven partner organisations—Furniture Helpline, Kingsley Organisation, Nextdoor Whitehill and Bordon, Radian, Timebanking UK, Whitehill & Bordon Community Association and Whitehill & Bordon Community Trust.

Blooming Marvellous and Lockdown

Blooming Marvellous (BM) is a supported volunteering gardening project. BM supports its clients with mental health and wellbeing challenges, giving them a sense of purpose and of belonging. After the first lockdown, for some of their clients it was a huge relief to get back together and be outdoors at their allotments and civic gardens. The challenges for these clients have included forgetting social distancing rules and boundaries in their determination to resurrect some form of normality to their lives.

For others, their retreat into the safety of their own home, life and minds was far greater. For some of these clients, just going through the front door, out of their known safe zone, into the unsafe and unknown outside has been the hardest obstacle to overcome, again. This time, from their perspective,



with the added risk of an invisible terror. Other difficulties for their clients have ranged from fear, panic and anxiety attacks, complete communications withdrawal, financial confusion to family control, transportation fears and medication reactions.

Lead support worker Hazel Chant and her assistant Suzie Wright have worked collaboratively and consistently with each of their clients, guiding, supporting, reassuring, signposting and encouraging. They are delighted that up until the second lockdown all their volunteers had returned to at least one session, almost all had come back to regular sessions.

With the second lockdown, the challenge for all of them is greater. Thankfully, as a vital mental health support group they are allowed to continue. They are complying with all the restrictions to make this possible. The greatest challenge now is to find a venue that will allow them access, out of the winter weather. The winter programme includes making Christmas gifts like sweets, wooden planters and cards, as well as planning for spring and getting outside as much as possible. They continue gardening in the community, supporting less able residents to get their gardens winter ready.

Pictured above are Pumpkins donated by ASDA Farnborough and carved by Blooming Marvellous.

Remembrance Day in Rushmoor



Rushmoor's COVID 19 Responders stepped up to the plate once more. They quietly and gently supported VIPs to be COVID-safe as Remembrance Day Marshals at three sites in Aldershot, home of the British Army, at the Municipal Gardens Cenotaph, The Military Cemetery and Garrison Church. Amanda Hanson from Rushmoor Borough Council said: "The sparkly, smiley eyes shone out behind the masks. They were all brilliant and nothing was too much to ask."

The Responders felt privileged to be taking part, considering the Lockdown restrictions. Sam Trussler said: "I was really pleased to be able to help. We normally lay a wreath for the Military Wives Choir but understand it had to be restricted this year, so was happy to be there. It was also lovely to see

everyone that I haven't been able to see during the lockdowns and all of the volunteers were lovely too."

Another Remembrance Day volunteer Martin Cure said: "It was a pleasure to have helped out. Glad to have played a minor role in ensuring such an important event went ahead."

Hart WI group knitted 120 poppies for people unable to leave their home at this time. RVS Dial-A-Ride drivers delivered them to sheltered accommodation homes and the Veterans supporting Veterans project. The Drivers also delivered to ORCA Responders so they could give these special poppies to vulnerable residents they are helping with shopping and pharmacy collection.



Pictured above are Leader of the Council, Cllr David Clifford and ORCA Responder Samantha Trussler



Community Lottery Coming to Fareham

One Community has been awarded funding to set up a Community Lottery in Fareham aiming to raise funds for local good causes such as charities and community groups. The Council’s Executive Member for Leisure and Community, Cllr Sue Bell, agreed to award One Community £10,040 from the Community Fund to establish the lottery which will not only help raise funds for community groups and charities that register for the scheme, but will also give those who buy a ticket a chance of winning a cash prize.

Registered groups will receive 40% of a £1 ticket value by encouraging those purchasing Fareham Community Lottery tickets, either online or through the Community Lottery call centre, to select their organisation as the primary recipient. From the remainder of the ticket value, cash prizes of up to £25,000 will be given to those that enter the weekly draw and match the numbers.

Groups will be able to register by contacting info@1community.org.uk and residents will be able to buy tickets on the website from February 2021.

Positive Pathways—Involving Military Veterans in the Work of Voluntary Organisations



Unity Volunteering, based in Andover and Romsey, has launched a new project to encourage military veterans to become volunteers in heritage and cultural projects and activities across Test Valley.

The project is funded by The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust and will work closely with voluntary organisations and new volunteers to harness the wide-ranging individual skills of military veterans to improve their individual wellbeing and bring new skills to voluntary organisations and projects. Skills on offer are wide-ranging and will include: IT, engineering, construction, driving and first aid.

Involving military veterans in community projects will add strength and diversity to

organisations. For the volunteers there is the opportunity for them to integrate with the civilian community, find new routes to employment and break the cycle of social isolation often experienced by military veterans.

Pictured are Veteran Volunteers re-enacting a scene at an event last year (Armed Forces Day).

Volunteers Marshalling at Flu Clinics



Two Hampshire CVSs have fielded teams of volunteers to help with flu vaccination sessions. Unity helped Shepherd Spring Surgery in Andover, providing 2-3 volunteers per session, to marshal weekend flu clinics throughout October and November for a total of five Saturdays.



One Community assisted the Sovereign Healthcare GP practices in Fareham with their drive-thru flu clinics at Fareham Community Hospital, with 22 volunteers over five weekends in September and October.