

Volunteer News

The newsletter for our volunteers who support unpaid family and friend carers



27th April 2020

Over the next few months, whilst our normal work is affected by COVID-19, we will be sending you more regular Volunteer Newsletters. We would appreciate your contributions.

To contact us:

Call: 01992 58 69 69

Email: volunteer@carersinherts.org.uk

Visit: www.carersinherts.org.uk

Carers in Hertfordshire, The Red House, 119 Fore Street, Hertford, Hertfordshire, SG14 1AX.

Please note that all Volunteer and Hub meetings have been cancelled until mid-June for now, including Mentor Training on 21st May and the Volunteer Network Meeting on 3rd June.

Your Volunteer Team:

Alex Daar - Volunteer Manager and Mentoring Coordinator;

Nicki Bird and Amanda Feron - Hub Volunteer Coordinators;

Jules Josephs - Mentoring Coordinator;

Julie Hayes - Volunteer Coordinator.



Welcome

We are now 3 weeks into lockdown. Some may be getting used to the new routine, whilst others may be finding it harder to cope.

Everyone's circumstances are different but we know that carers are dealing with additional challenges at this time, and Carers in Hertfordshire are here to support them with the fantastic help of many volunteers.

We have been making 'Keep in Touch' calls to particularly vulnerable carers to check on their wellbeing. So far, 326 calls have been completed. Thank you to those who have already volunteered.

If you would like to volunteer to support carers by making a 'Keep in Touch' call, please contact us. This week we received a lovely piece of feedback for a call made by a volunteer:

"Just a word of thanks. A man called Brian phoned yesterday to ask if I was alright in the virus lockdown. As it happens, I am alright, since our two daughters live locally and have been doing our shopping, and we are also getting some local deliveries. However, it was so nice to have that call and I want to say thank you to the organisation for taking the trouble to ring around to see if folk want help.

Some things are changing dramatically because of this terrible virus and whilst a lot of that change is not good, there are some things emerging - like the way we care for each other in a damaged society - that are changing for the better. Hence Brian's call and my appreciation for his time and trouble."

If you know anyone who would benefit from this support please get in touch with us by calling 01992 58 69 69 or email:

contact@carersinherts.org.uk.

For the latest advice to carers, please see our website: <https://www.carersinherts.org.uk/taking-care-of-you/coronavirus-guidance>.

Self-isolation Activities

We have put together some ideas of activities to do at home while social distancing or self-isolating, which can be found at:

<https://www.carersinherts.org.uk/taking-care-of-you/coronavirus-self-isolation-activity-ideas>

Please send any of your own ideas to the volunteering team.

Mindfulness

Mind in Mid Herts has opened online Mindfulness workshops for all health and social care professionals in Hertfordshire, including volunteers. There are two sessions running daily, Monday to Friday, at 8:30am and 4.30pm.

You can find them at:

www.mindinmidherts.org.uk. Click on the 'Health and Social Care Workers' tab at the top of the home page and then click on 'Digital Mindfulness'.

"All About Me" - Jules Josephs

Jules, our Mentoring Co-ordinator, has answered a few "all about me" quiz questions for us:

What new discovery have you made and liked? *Podcasts, especially 'Fortunately'.*

What have you re-discovered that has helped you in the last few weeks? *Reading books!*

What are you missing the most? *My youngest son, if being we're serious, or a decent coffee, if we're being light hearted.*

What have you discovered about yourself? *I like pears!*

Describe a Silver Lining you have found? *Finding new walks near to my home*

Thank you, Julie.

Beginning Photography

If you are looking to have a break or something to do while you are isolated and stuck at home, photography may provide you with a much needed outlet, hobby, or way to relax.

Taking pictures of things is great fun and can be done with anything from a phone to a DSLR, so it is accessible to all. There are lots of things to photograph in the house and in the garden, if you have one.

Taking a "Still Life" picture is a great way to start, as you have full control picture's subject. Still Life is a composition of objects arranged in a pleasing or interesting way. You can do this on a tabletop in the house. It may be anything from a single object on a plain background to a complex sculpture, made from common household objects. A fantastic example of using a single object is Edward Weston's 'Pepper No. 30', which is a black and white photograph of a green pepper placed in front of a draped cloth (as shown at this link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pepper_No._30). Other well-known examples of "Still Life" photography and paintings can be found at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Still_life.

Here are some tips for creating the perfect Still Life piece:

1) Make sure the subject stands out from the background.

2) A torch or work light can make a good source of illumination if you do not have a flashgun.

3) Try different arrangements of lighting to get different effects.

Give it a try and share the result, and what works well, with your friends!



Photo Courtesy of Lloyd Kirby.

We did a "tabletop" Still Life session at our last Carers Camera Club meeting, and some members then took more pictures at home. The picture featured above was voted the best shown in the Camera Club online gallery.

If you are interested in joining the Carers Camera Club, please contact Carers in Hertfordshire for more details.

Sandy Robertson 2020