

Volunteer News

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



24th July 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.

Your Volunteer Team: Alex Daar, Nicki Bird, Amanda Feron, Jules Josephs and Julie Hayes.



Susan volunteering for Carers in Hertfordshire

Making Carers Count

For the latest advice to carers, please see our website:

www.carersinherts.org.uk/taking-care-of-you/coronavirus-guidance



Welcome

The Keep In Touch (KIT) Service continues with **2,244** completed conversations with carers made by volunteers on the phone. As always, we are very grateful for the help and support of our fantastic volunteers.

This week Amanda spoke to our volunteer Susan.

Susan initially contacted Carers in Hertfordshire for support with her caring role and started volunteering about 3 years ago. She is now a Mentor and Ambassador.

Since lockdown, she has been regularly making KIT calls to carers and said that as she is shielding it provides a structure to the day. She has found it really interesting to talk to different people and everyone she has spoken to is appreciative and thankful for the call, which makes doing the calls very worthwhile and satisfying.

Susan says, "it's been wonderful" to be able to help carers. She has joined the KIT Zoom sessions for support with this role. Over the course of lockdown, she has found that the conversations have changed from questions about food and medications to discussing physical and mental wellbeing and ways to deal with boredom.

Susan has also carried on mentoring via fortnightly phone calls and says "keeping up that regular contact has worked well".

One positive that has come from lockdown is that she has taken up painting again and this has been a real solace while shielding.

Now that lockdown is easing, Susan has visited her newly re-opened library to click and collect a book and has plans to go to the cinema and visit her local pub.

We are hoping to recruit more volunteers to make KIT calls, if you are interested please call the office and ask to speak to one of the Volunteer Team.

Alex Daar, Volunteer Manager

Spotlight on Hub Co-leaders Jo and Vicky

Jo and Vicky saw an advert in the Herts Advertiser and started volunteering in 2016. They Co-lead the St Albans Carers Hub Group. Jo has a background in nursing and was a Health Visitor; Vicky has a background in teaching.

Both say that they enjoy working for Carers in Hertfordshire as it provides a really useful service to a wide range of unpaid carers who are often overlooked.

Jo says, "it's great sharing a group with Vicky. Coming from different professional backgrounds means that we have both share people management skills which we use to create a welcoming atmosphere where carers can meet and openly share their experiences in order to gain mutual benefit. Vicky supports me when she uses her teaching skills; particularly in group discussions. I really appreciate this as she is much better at it than I am! I have learned a lot from her".

Vicky says, "we try to leave the first half hour of the meeting as a time for the carers to mix informally as this is what they find most helpful. This time also allows one or both of us to welcome any newcomers to the group, talk to them about their situation and give them information they need. I have found sharing the lead of the St Albans hub with Jo has worked really well for me [as] two heads are better than one. Jo has given support to me in dealing with sometimes upsetting client situations. We have also been able to talk through issues and support each other".

Nicki, our Hub Volunteer Co-Ordinator, says, "It's great that Jo and Vicky share the role and responsibilities and have become good friends."

If you are interested in volunteering to help, lead or co-lead a hub group please contact the office and ask to speak to Nicki or Amanda.

Amanda, Hub Volunteer Co-Ordinator



Vicky and Jo enjoying a socially distanced walk

Keeping Well Ideas

Creative Hertfordshire's new [What's ONLINE](#) section has pulled together a whole range of activities available online as part of Hertfordshire's Year of Culture 2020, including art exhibitions, activities for children, and a virtual tour of Knebworth House gardens.

Hertfordshire Sports Partnership's [Work Out from Home](#) has links to exercise videos for all levels including chair based and low impact workouts and tips and advice.

Courses

There are a few Carers in Hertfordshire Zoom sessions coming up that volunteers may be interested in. If you would like to book a space, please contact the Admin Team by calling 01992 58 69 69 or emailing contact@carersinherts.org.uk.

Safeguarding Children and Adults

We are running two refresher sessions for those who have done Safeguarding training previously. The first is on Friday 14th August from 10.30am – 12pm noon, and the second is on Tuesday 25th August from 2pm - 3.30pm.

Mindfulness for Volunteers

Enjoy a Mindfulness Moment on Zoom with Clare Teale, Carer Support Advisor, to bring balance and calm to your mind and to focus on you. 16 spaces will be available for volunteers. We will be confirming a date in late August in due course, with the evening running from 7pm - 8pm.