



## Winslow Big Society Volunteer Newsletter

October 2019



Dear volunteers,

*Our latest newsletter provides an update on what's been happening over the summer. It has been a busy one, with our successful volunteering model being seen by both small and larger organisations as a success. I always say that two things make this work: firstly, doing our homework and being sure there is a need and not just an idea and. secondly, looking after our volunteers, listening to what they say and want to do and doing it all cheerfully!*

*Next year we will publish the newsletter in February, June and October. I look forward to seeing you all at our 14 November AGM, when we will be enrolling our 100<sup>th</sup> volunteer! More details below... Vron.*

### **Community Car Scheme and Wheelchair Vehicle**

The car scheme continues to thrive and grow. The need never disappears and this is such an important service that we are able to offer the people of Winslow and surrounding areas. Those who volunteer their time to drive people to WBS events, essential appointments, etc, provide a lifesaving service to people who would otherwise be trapped in their own homes. As ever though, there is a need for more volunteers, particularly with winter fast approaching; this especially applies to people who would be prepared to drive our wheelchair vehicle.

### **Young Citizen of the Year**

We are trying to promote this role much more across the town. Matthew Streeter, our Young Citizen of the Year, will be laying a wreath on behalf of the young people of the town on Remembrance Day. He will also hopefully be turning on the Christmas lights at the Christmas Fayre on 28 November. Matthew is battling with cancer and has raised significant amounts of money as well as being a family carer himself.

We will soon be thinking about next year's Young Citizen, so please think of any young people you know who might be suitable. More particularly we need someone to promote the role, as at present Vron is trying to do it in limited time. It's a job that's not onerous and only lasts from November to February, around the time of publicity and selection. Please talk to Vron if you'd like to think about it.

### **Telephone Befriending Service.**

The befriending service offered by WBS has received praise from many quarters and its effectiveness in helping those who are housebound and lonely cannot be overstated. It is clearly a model that should be replicated countrywide. As it becomes more widely known the need for volunteers obviously increases. There are benefits for not just the befriender but also the befriended. If you think you could become a befriender and offer a little time to someone who perhaps has no one else to talk to, please let us know. It's a role for those who are good listeners and not opinionated. It can be done from any phone, with your number withheld, and as often as you choose. It's a very rewarding role and suitable for anyone who is housebound to take on.

### **Gentle Walks**

In this newsletter we try to focus on our successes but sometimes we have to admit that things are not quite going as we would like. Gentle Walks sounds as though it should be a real winner and at times it really has been. We are therefore slightly flummoxed about why numbers for recent walks have dropped and any insights would be gratefully received. Walking at every stage of life has been shown to be so beneficial that we are not going to give up on this and so we need people to promote it as much as possible.

### **Hard of Hearing group**

The group continues to meet monthly and has had some good speakers, for example from Hearing Dogs for the Deaf. The group leaders are currently putting together a guide for leaders of other groups who might have members who are hard of hearing. It perhaps isn't always appreciated by those who have no problems with hearing how difficult it is to attend a group session if you don't hear well. Hopefully this guide will address some of the important issues.

### **Really Useful Guide**

Thanks to Sue Keane, this is now ready for collating and distributing. We need twenty volunteers to help circulate them during October. If you think you could do a few roads, just pushing them through each door, please let Sue know (713106).

This is an up to date guide of all the services available in the town and around, for all ages, and with a new street map and a leaflet on the Arboretum, the latter two which the Town Council have produced. Our thanks go to them for funding the booklet too. Our collaborative role with the Council is of great value to us.

### **Parent/Carer Drop In**

Attendance at this session has been very good since the beginning of September, with some returners from last year as well as new faces. Twitter and Facebook have been used to spread the word and this approach really does seem to have worked. Personal recommendation is still a good way to get people involved so please do spread the word far and wide.

### **Winter Film Shows**

This is a fairly recent activity which is proving to be very popular. Discussions are being held about films which would go down well with a wide group of people.

Ann Abraham is kindly organising these for us, after last year's success. Thanks also to Winslow Lions for the technical and set-up help. So save these dates:

- Thurs 21 November: The King and I
- Wed 22 January: TBC
- Wednesday 1 April: TBC.

All are at Winslow Bowls Club starting at 2.30pm.

### **Summer Playschemes**

A huge success! Definitely something to be repeated next year, with different activities. Well done to all those involved.

### **Other groups and activities**

If the group you are involved with hasn't specifically been mentioned it's not because things aren't going well. The reverse is true. Singing for Pleasure, Parkinson's Group, Afternoon Teas, Gentle Exercise, Friendship Lunches, Cards and Games, Memories, etc are all thriving and play a massive part in the continued success of WBS. Thank you for your ongoing commitment and hard work.

### **Roles needing filling urgently**

- Distributors for Really Useful Guide
- Ambassador for Young Citizen of the Year
- Telephone befrienders.

### **Annual General Meeting, 14 November, 2.30pm at Winslow Bowls Club.**

Please come along to hear about what's been going on, ideas (including yours) for the future and new committee members. And, most importantly, enrolling our 100<sup>th</sup> volunteer!

We will be celebrating this with a short motivational talk. There will also be lots of tea and cake and chance to chat with others who volunteer. Bring your friends who want to know about us too.