

Message from the Chair

Welcome to our Winter Newsletter and the exciting news that we are expanding our geographical scope to include the whole of the borough of Elmbridge. We send a very warm welcome to our new friends and volunteers. See the item

below on "CHEER expands into West Elmbridge" for more details.

It has been a busy year for CHEER. So far we have helped elderly people with benefits claims of nearly £220,000. Our befriending

services, social events and the Parkinson's Group continue to be successful in reducing social isolation by bringing older people together to meet and support each other.

Many thanks to all our

volunteers, staff and friends, without whom none of this would be possible.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy 2019 to everyone involved with CHEER.

Janis Fletcher, Chair

CHEER expands into West Elmbridge

Until now befriending services in the borough have been shared between CHEER and the Visiting Friends service run by Triangle Community Services.

Visiting Friends have decided to focus their activities on the Woking area and CHEER has agreed to take over their

befriending services and PA Housing tea parties in Walton, Weybridge and Hersham.

As a result, CHEER now offers one-to-one befriending and social events, as well as signposting to other services, throughout the whole of Elmbridge.

We are delighted to welcome the volunteers and their friends in West Elmbridge and look forward to continuing to run social events for the PA Housing residents.

We are conscious that with Mark's departure (see below), this adds to the workload for our staff and volunteers. We are still integrating all the

processes and planning our events calendar so that our new clients and volunteers feel part of the CHEER family. This means that we may not be able to hold as many social events in the early part of 2019 as we would like, but we will continue to maintain our high standards of service in supporting older people in the whole of Elmbridge.



Thank you to our volunteers, some of whom are pictured at one of our events in East Elmbridge

Elmbridge Volunteer Awards

The second Elmbridge Long Service Volunteer Awards was held in October 2018 to recognize how much volunteers contribute to the community.

Two of our long-serving volunteers received awards from the Mayor of Elmbridge, Councillor Shweta Kapadia.

Congratulations to Mabel Jones and Barbara Shaw for their unstinting dedication

be on Friday 11 January 2019. He has worked for CHEER for just over 4 years and has been a hard-working and dedicated employee, helping many of

to helping the elderly. They are both Volunteer Befrienders and are passionate about making elderly people feel part of the community. They also help out with tea parties and events. The awards are one way of thanking our volunteers and showing how much we appreciate them! For more details, see: <http://vamidsurrey.org/resilience-and-sustainability-within-the-voluntary-sector-2018/>

our elderly friends and clients and supporting our volunteers.

We wish him all the best for the future.

Staff and Trustee News

Best wishes to Mark Michelmore, who is leaving CHEER.

In our Summer Newsletter we mentioned that Mark,

our General Manager, was on sick leave. The good news is that he has recovered, but sadly he has decided to leave CHEER. Mark's last day with us will



Supporting older people in Elmbridge

Winter 2018

Mark's Reflections on Volunteering

Did you think that volunteering was only about standing in the street rattling a tin, working in a shop, caring for someone's personal needs, or running a marathon?

Please take a minute to think how isolated your next door neighbour might be, how much you might have in common with someone born just a few years before you, and how you might have a quiet hour or two to

spend with them.

When I first went into a stranger's home four years ago to set up a befriending relationship with someone 15 years older than myself, we quickly established something in common: the need for a cup of tea. That broke the ice and helped me to recognise that we have more in common with each other than we might realise. From then on we began a voluntary friendship.

If you have ever lost a close relative you know the feelings of loss and isolation.

Maybe your family helped you through the first few months and this made you feel less isolated. Your skills and life experiences are a priceless resource to share with someone as a Volunteer Befriender.

Or, if you prefer, our other volunteering opportunities such as the CHEER event programme might suit your

interests, skills or available time as an alternative.

Please call Julie, Mark or Charlotte to discuss the volunteering opportunities currently available and which could be the right role for you.

Thank you to all of our Volunteers for the difference you make to an elderly person's life.

Best wishes from Mark.

APS Update

Last year CHEER began the process of seeking Approved Provider Standard accreditation.

We are pleased to report that, following a visit from the assessor on 20th

September, our befriending service has been awarded provisional approval for certification under the NCVO's Approved Provider Standard (APS), with only a few issues remaining before final approval is given, hopefully in early 2019.

The process for approval is a demanding one, and many congratulations are due to the CHEER team who put in so much hard work to ensure that we were able to meet the standard. Thanks also to the volunteers and clients who gave up their time to be interviewed in

connection with this project. APS accreditation gives everyone involved (staff, clients, volunteers and potential funders) the confidence of knowing that our befriending service is being run to the highest professional standard.

Friendships – June and Fiona

June has lived in the area for the past 10 years, having moved here from the South coast in order to be near her daughter and family. Since her early 20s, June has always adored ballroom dancing and, until she damaged her knee a few

years ago, was still dancing regularly. She used to attend Peggy Spencer's ballroom dancing school in Beckenham where "Strictly's" Anton du Beke was a teacher!

Fiona first heard of CHEER

through a previous Volunteering role at Kingston Hospital and became a volunteer in April, with June and Fiona being introduced soon after.

June says she really looks forward to Fiona's visits as they always spend their time together laughing, and



Fiona and June

Fiona is usually still laughing when she leaves!



CHEER Diary

Tuesday 8th January

12:15 – 14:00

New Year Lunch at the Marquis of Granby

TBA

12:14 – 14:00

Pie and Pint at the Marquis of Granby