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Formerly known as Thornbury & District Volunteer Link - Member of NCVO – Registered Charity No. 1004285

## Annual Report 2016-2017

For the year ending 31 March 2017



# Our Pop-Up shop is back but we don't know where we'll be popping up!

**opening Saturday 27 May - Saturday 3 June 10am-4pm and Saturdays 10, 17, 24 June and 1 July 10am-4pm**

**at a unit in St Mary Shopping Centre, Thornbury.**

Keep a look-out and pop in to our shop for a bargain and a cuppa:

- 1940's themed Tea Shop serving delicious home-made cakes.
- Good quality pre-owned goods including clothes, furniture, books, jigsaws and bric-a-brac.

Call in and find out how you can volunteer and help your local community — hundreds of opportunities available. Share your time and expertise to help others and make new friends.

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### **THIS STUNNING QUILT COULD BE YOURS!**

Lovingly hand-made single bed sized quilt (no overhang) has been donated to us.

Quilt will be on display in our Pop-up shop.

We are accepting sealed bids (minimum £40). Bids must be received by Saturday 1 July. Deliver bids to the shop.



**Invites you to its  
AGM  
to be held in the  
Council Chamber,  
Thornbury Town Hall**

**at 2pm Weds 5 July**

**Guest Speaker:**

**Penny Baker**

**Project Manager**

**Krunch South West**

**Join us for tea & cake.**

**RSVP to: The Town Hall,  
35, High Street, Thornbury**  
[mail@volunteer-  
thornbury.co.uk](mailto:mail@volunteer-thornbury.co.uk)

**Thornbury Volunteer Centre** is a voluntary organisation run by volunteers with the aim of promoting all aspects of voluntary work in Thornbury and its District. As a registered charity we fulfil the Charity Commission's aim of ensuring that all charities are of benefit to the public and the communities which they serve.

#### **The Accounts**

Copies of our audited accounts will be available at our AGM on Wednesday 5 July and then on request. Please telephone or email the office for your copy.

The Centre's reserves policy is to maintain its reserves at such a level as to ensure that as at the 1 April each year sufficient funds are available to maintain at least one year's activity broadly at the level of 2016/2017, thereby enabling – if necessary – an orderly winding up of the charity to be achieved. In setting the level of reserves the costs of any statutory redundancy payments or other legal payments for which the Centre might be liable will be taken into account.

#### **Volunteer Co-ordinators**

The Centre continues to operate with a team of volunteer co-ordinators who attend the office daily on a rota basis. This year one of our team, Barbara Jones, has left us to take up the position of U3A Communications co-ordinator, we would like to offer our sincere thanks to Barbara for her help over recent years. The co-ordinators are the backbone of the Centre and donate their time on a regular basis. So to all past and current volunteers we offer our grateful thanks.

#### **The Management Committee**

The Management Committee has remained unchanged this year and meets bi-monthly, we would welcome any new volunteers, especially from disabled and minority groups. The Committee ensures that the Centre operates within the guidelines set by our Constitution, the Charity Commission and NCVO.

#### **The Office**

Please call in to the office to see us weekday mornings between 10.30am-12 noon. We have a large display of current volunteering opportunities, both locally, regionally and nationally. We also hold information on residential volunteering opportunities in the UK and abroad.

We have a large notice board in the main office which is available to local voluntary groups on a monthly basis to enable them to promote their organisations and to help them recruit volunteers. If your group or organisation is interested in using the board please contact us.

#### **Paid Workers**

Kim Webb continues to be our only paid employee working 15 hours per week and funded by South Gloucestershire Council.

#### **Internet and Social Media**

Our website has recently been redesigned and the new format is bright and cheerful and very user-friendly, fully compatible with mobile phones and tablets. The website helps to raise our profile and volunteering in general and links directly to the national volunteering database do-it.org. Volunteers and organisations are able to register with us online and all of our news and events are updated regularly.

Our Twitter following is continuing to grow rapidly and this together with Facebook help to keep us in touch with all members of the community.

Our heartfelt thanks go to our Webmaster Michael Quinion for his endless time, patience and good humour whilst he keeps us up to date with modern technology.

## Publicity

We continue to enjoy a good relationship with the local media, with ongoing articles appearing in The Gazette, local Community Magazines, local websites and regional e-bulletins.

We have mounted static displays at a variety of venues throughout the year, given talks on volunteering and we have attended and organised numerous events, details of which are outlined elsewhere in this Report.

## Events

Throughout 2016 we hosted many events, all aimed at promoting and developing volunteering in Thornbury and district. Details of these events can be found elsewhere in this Report and details of all our events can be found on our website.

## Published Material

“Sources of Help for Specific Needs in and around Thornbury” is available free of charge, and lists over 300 voluntary, charitable and self-help organisations, both locally and nationally.

**Good Practice Guide:** Prepared with the Volunteer Centre Partnership South Gloucestershire, offers advice and guidance to organisations which use volunteers.

**Employer Supported Volunteering:** Information and suggestions to guide employers in encouraging and assisting staff to volunteer in the local community.

These last 2 publications are available to download from our website.

## growing support

because gardens are good for you



Tackling social isolation and loneliness for older people and people with dementia



### Can you give 2 hours a fortnight to help?

Growing Support [www.growingsupport.co.uk](http://www.growingsupport.co.uk) provides social and therapeutic gardening activities to older people and people living with dementia.

We are looking for friendly and compassionate volunteers to help older people take part in our gardening activity sessions.

For more information or to get an application pack contact Sam Grief Mobile: **07548 206 158**  
[sam.grief@growingsupport.co.uk](mailto:sam.grief@growingsupport.co.uk)

We look forward to hearing from you.

[www.growingsupport.co.uk](http://www.growingsupport.co.uk)

@growing\_support

[www.facebook.com/GrowingSupport](https://www.facebook.com/GrowingSupport)

## Grants and Donations

This year we must thank the following people and organisations for assisting us in our work.

**Thornbury Town Council** and **South Gloucestershire Council** for their continuing support in providing our core funding.

Sandra at **The Swan** in Thornbury for allowing us to be the Wednesday Quiz night “Charity of the Month” raising an amazing £420.

**Thornbury Lions Club** for a donation of £300 to host the student volunteering Award ceremony in May.

**The Rotary Club of Thornbury** for a donation of £495 which allowed us to purchase a new laptop.

**Penny Taylor** for a donation of £94 towards computer software.

### Fascinating figures!

Last year The Volunteer Centre registered 138 new volunteers & successfully placed 73 volunteers in the local community.

We registered 126 new volunteering opportunities, and supported 32 community organisations and businesses through various events.

## WANTED

**Community minded people to join Thornbury Lions**

Contact **Colin Evans on 01454 414271** or come to any of our meetings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup>

Thursday of the month, 7.30pm at The Chantry, Castle Street, Thornbury

**Ordinary people, amazing things!**

# A look back at a successful year



## **Castle in the Community student volunteering scheme**

*Staff, pupils and representatives of host volunteer organisations at the Castle School Award ceremony.*



## **Pop-up Shop**

*Our Pop-up shop in the St Mary Centre was the best so far, raising valuable funds and taking volunteering onto the High Street.*



## **Volunteer Fair**

*Mayor Helen Harrison meeting volunteers and staff from Oxfam at their stand at our Volunteer Fair. 17 local voluntary and community groups took part.*



## **Volunteers' Lunch**

*Our Christmas volunteers' thank-you lunch was held in the Council Chamber of Thornbury Town Hall and was very well attended.*



Lizzie O'Brien with the cup awarded to her by the Thornbury Lions Club.

## Thornbury Lions Young Ambassador 2017

Congratulations to Castle School student Lizzie O'Brien in winning the Lions Club International Young Ambassador 2017 District Final, held on Sunday 8 January 2017 at the Holiday Inn, Newport, South Wales.

Lizzie is the Thornbury Lions Club selected Young Ambassador 2017, and is a shining example of how a young person can make a difference to their local community. Lizzie divides her time between playing in the Castle School Panache Steel Band, befriending residents at Alexandra Care Home and playing host to Sunday afternoon tea parties for Contact the Elderly.

Her prize is a £500 bursary which she has donated to charities in her local community.

Lizzie first came to the attention of the Lions when she was recommended as a suitable candidate by Thornbury Volunteer Centre where Lizzie was a registered volunteer. The Volunteer Centre suggested that Lizzie was the ideal candidate for this competition.

The Young Ambassador competition is organised by the British & Irish Multiple District 105 of the Lions Clubs International and the entry criteria and judging is of a very high professional standard.

Lizzie went forward to represent the District in the National final in Dudley in February and came second, an amazing achievement.

This competition is held annually, so if you know of a young person aged between 15-18 years who may be suitable please contact Thornbury Volunteer Centre.

## Vale of Berkeley Railway

### A New Railway for Gloucestershire: The Journey Begins

On the banks of the Severn at Sharpness we're creating a working railway and museum that honours the heritage of the area and recreates in authentic detail the Midland and Great Western Joint line. The Vale of Berkeley Railway plans to open a heritage railway along the Sharpness Branch line, with 4.5 miles of track running from Berkeley Road junction on the Gloucester to Bristol mainline to Sharpness.

Through partnerships with other attractions in the area and working with local people we will combine the stories of coastal trade, river port, canal and railway to provide an unforgettable experience for passengers and visitors to our museum. Visitors will step back a century to encounter steam in its heyday and discover the railway's importance for conveying passengers and goods.

We already have over 300 members and almost 100 volunteers who are hard at work bringing the railway to reality – an incredible number, achieved in a little over a year.

There are almost endless ways to get involved and help us create the railway. As well as restoring locomotives, carriages, signalling and other equipment, we need carpenters and builders, civil engineers, health & safety experts and help to maintain and enhance the lineside environment.

We're also looking for people with skills in marketing, publicity, planning, retail and commercial operations, museum and archive management, fundraising, administration and finance. Much of the work can be carried out from home, so volunteers don't need to live close by.

We offer our volunteers a warm, friendly and supportive welcome. By getting involved, you could...

Become part of a friendly and dedicated team

Meet people from all walks of life and make new friends

Enjoy new experiences and gain new skills

Janet Gough, Volunteer Liaison Co-ordinator

To find out more please contact us: The Vale of Berkeley Railway, The Old Engine House, Dock Road, Sharpness, Gloucestershire. GL13 9UD

Email: [valeofberkeleyrailway@gmail.com](mailto:valeofberkeleyrailway@gmail.com)

Web: [www.valeofberkeleyrailway.co.uk](http://www.valeofberkeleyrailway.co.uk)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/SharpnessRail](http://www.facebook.com/SharpnessRail)



## **Haven Memory Café, Thornbury**

Memory Cafés are a place where those with dementia and their carers can meet in a friendly and supportive atmosphere. They can get practical information, ask questions and share experiences with one another as well as meet friends over coffee.

There are a number of memory Cafés throughout South Gloucestershire including Thornbury Memory Café which is open fortnightly on Tuesday mornings in Thornbury Methodist Church.

However with an ever-increasing demand for activities for people with dementia and their carers, a second café is needed and so we will be opening Haven Memory Café in Thornbury United Reformed Church, Chapel Street with a launch date of Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2017. It will be complementary to Thornbury Memory Café and will be open on Friday mornings in the alternating weeks. It is supported by the Alzheimer's Society and South Gloucestershire Dementia Action Alliance and will serve Thornbury and the surrounding areas. It is a café for local people run by local volunteers.

Currently a Steering Group drawn from many areas of the local community and health professionals is meeting to set the café up. We are engaged in sourcing funding, publicity and management of the café. Most importantly, running a successful Memory Café does require a number of volunteers to assist at the café, setting it up for the morning, providing a welcome to visitors, offering a friendly chat, serving refreshments and helping with some of the activities that we would like to offer. Some volunteers will be happy doing all of these things while others find that they prefer to focus on one or two areas – all are needed and welcome.

Most volunteers feel happier when they know what is expected of them, and in order to provide a good service where users and volunteers are happy we offer training for the role. Part of that training is taking part in an Alzheimer's Society initiative which is being run throughout South Gloucestershire to become a 'Dementia Friend'. Our training day is scheduled for Friday 19 May 2017.

We hope that the Haven Memory Café will be as successful as the existing Thornbury Memory Café.

Barbara Goom, Chair, Haven Memory Café Steering Group



Involve South Gloucestershire is a new project which aims to provide the framework for local voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations to be matched with employees from private and public sector organisations supporting a mutually beneficial exchange of skills and expertise.

This will help local VCSE organisations grow and develop whilst providing private and public sector employees with opportunities to volunteer, using and developing their knowledge, experience and skills.

For further information about this project please contact Helen Black, Chief Officer, CVS South Gloucestershire at [helen.black@cvs-sg.org.uk](mailto:helen.black@cvs-sg.org.uk)

## The Alan Hudson Award 2016

The Alan Hudson Award for Volunteering Achievement celebrates the work of an individual or group who in the opinion of the Thornbury Volunteer Centre has made a valuable contribution to the local community.

**The 2016 winner is local group JIGSAW.**



*Deputy Mayor Bob Griffin and Volunteer Centre chairman Barbara Ray presenting Tor Goodman with the award at our annual Christmas lunch for volunteers.*

This year we are proud to present the Award to a relatively new Thornbury organisation, JIGSAW.

JIGSAW was set up three years ago by parents to provide support and understanding and practical help for local families who face the challenges of having a child with additional needs. Tor Goodman, founder and director, is a paediatric nurse who has developed JIGSAW and is always looking to improve and expand what the organisation does and the numbers of individuals and families they can assist.

JIGSAW has grown steadily and now includes a special educational needs and sensory lending library, social and special needs events, weekly support group and holiday activities.

On receiving the award Tor expressed her thanks and gratitude for the recognition of their achievements and how they were now looking to the future and hoping to expand and become even more successful.

## Get involved with the "Castle in the Community" student volunteering scheme.

Having just completed its fifth year, the volunteering scheme between Thornbury Volunteer Centre and the Castle School Sixth Form is growing in strength and success. The scheme encourages year 13 pupils into volunteering as part of their Extended Curriculum and helps students volunteer in their local community for two hours, once a week, during term time.

Students are placed within different community organisations in the Thornbury and District area, and carry out a wide variety of tasks.

The benefits to students and organisations are immense. The students gain valuable work experience and life skills and the organisations increase capacity and gain additional volunteer help.

We are in the process of putting together next year's programme and would love to hear from any voluntary or community organisations who feel they would like to take part and offer a student(s) a placement.

Please contact Kim Webb on [mail@volunteer-thornbury.co.uk](mailto:mail@volunteer-thornbury.co.uk) to find out more.



Contact the Elderly organises monthly Sunday afternoon tea parties for small groups of older people aged 75 and over, who live alone. They have proved so successful in the Thornbury area that they are now looking to set up a third group. To find out how to become a host or a driver contact Helen Ker-Bridges 01225 872812

## **CURRENT VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES**

Available through Thornbury Volunteer Centre

**Handy person:** needed for just 2 hours per week to assist with general maintenance. This could include some gardening, painting, mending items (both inside and outside) for a small pre-school in Thornbury.

**Befrienders/Sitters:** several local organisations seek volunteers able to spare 1-2 hours a week either to befriend an older person or provide respite to a carer.

**Restorative Justice Facilitator:** meeting victims and offenders, facilitating restorative justice sessions between them, and working alongside professionals within the community and the criminal justice system. Must have excellent communication and listening skills and need to undergo the 3 day Accredited Restorative Justice Facilitator training course.

**Scout Leader:** join a fantastic team of leaders at Almondsbury Scout Group providing lots of fun outdoor and indoor activities to a great bunch of 10 to 12yr olds. Activities including – Camping, Abseiling, Canoeing, Orienteering, Tracking and Map Reading Skills, Pioneering, Knife and Axe..... and anything else adventurous and fun that takes your fancy !

**Training Volunteers:** needed to help train adults with learning disabilities to live independently. Volunteers will assist in facilitating workshops and/or acting as support to individuals attending such events. Managing workshop activities on a one to one or group basis, supporting individuals to ensure training is fully accessible, setting up and/or clearing up at training sessions.

**Luncheon Club Helpers:** required one Thursday each month between 11.30am and 2pm to help with serving 30 senior citizens at Alveston. No cooking would be required just general help with laying tables, serving food and cleaning and washing up.

**Bookings Secretary:** 2 local Community Halls are looking for volunteers to manage their bookings. Working from home you will take bookings by phone or email and can organise your time to suit. Will be required to attend quarterly committee meetings.

**Water Vole Monitors, Orchard and Pond Surveyors:** local environmental group is seeking volunteers to conserve, restore, explore and celebrate the Lower Severn Vale levels.

**Rangers, Keepers, Face Painters:** The Wild Place is looking for volunteers to help with the summer season. Volunteers must be enthusiastic, friendly and interested in conservation and wildlife.

**Drivers:** several local organisations need drivers to help transport clients to and from social activities.

**Gardeners:** several local organisations are looking for volunteers able to undertake light gardening duties, mowing, weeding, planting and general maintenance.

**Secretary, Chair, Trustees and Leaders:** Thornbury Sea Cadets need volunteers to assist with running the Unit and help it to grow and develop.

**Visitor Reception:** 2 local museums need volunteers to welcome visitors and enhance the visitor experience.

Contact the Volunteer Centre for further information on any of the above opportunities; these are only a very small sample of the opportunities currently available.