



VIC Newsletter



Making our allotment grow

EIGHT years ago, we took on an abandoned piece of land off Holcombe Road, Helmshore, and began work to turn the area into an allotment.

Now, thanks to the hard work of Sam and others, the area has new greenhouses and raised beds, flowers, fruit, veg and wildlife.

Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "The progress that has been made this year has been amazing. This is exactly how we wanted the allotment to be when we first took it over in 2015.

"At that time, it was totally derelict and was a dumping ground for asbestos and all sorts of rubbish which had to be cleared up before work

could begin.

"A number of people have been involved in the allotment over the years, but we have struggled to have time to commit to it.

"Now Sam has come on board, and can spend the time that is needed, the area has been transformed. Sam also gets a lot out of looking after the allotment."

The area used to have a polytunnel and a shed, but now has two greenhouses that have been donated, lots of raised beds that have been built with tops made to secure the young plants from bugs.

It is full of plants which are being grown to support pollinators and other projects

VIC is involved with. The area has become a haven for wildlife including damselflies, many different birds, a pair of robins and nesting bluetits.

Paving stones have been spread about to make a rough path through the area. It has been weeded and, thanks to Alan, the area has been strimmed.

Bob added: "We want to say a big thank you to Sam, it is looking great."



Working together to tackle mental health

VIC was in attendance at The Big Mental Health Connect at The Ashcroft in Whitworth.

The event, organised by Rossendale Connected and Rossendale Leisure Trust, brought together different agencies, charities and organisations who work in Rossendale.

VIC had a stand manned by Chief Executive Amanda Walton and Project Worker Bev Fowler.

Amanda said: "It is so important that mental health is being addressed and it was brilliant to be with other organisations from Rossendale and for us all to be working together to raise awareness of



this debilitating illness.

"We made lots of new connections and the talks were inspiring. I look forward to working with them in the future."



Mentioned in despatches



OUR charity has been mentioned in Parliament following last month's visit by Hyndburn and Haslingden MP Sara Britcliffe and the Leader of the House.

In the House of Commons, Sara described work that VIC does in her areas as 'amazing' and asked the leader if they could have a debate in government time on what support is given to veterans' organisations working in the community.

The Leader Penny Mordaunt said: "It was a pleasure to visit the honourable lady's constituency and in particular VIC who are an amazing organisation and

I am particularly keen to get updates and progress on the giant model railway which they are currently constructing.

"I thank her for what she has done to champion these organisations and ensure they have all they need to reach everyone in the community that can benefit from their services."

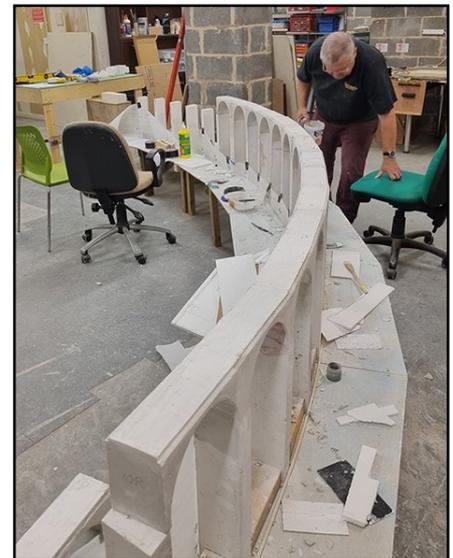
In the basement underneath the Hyndburn Drop-in at Accrington Arndale, a scale model of the Glenfinnan Viaduct, which was famously used in Harry Potter films, is being painstakingly constructed.

It is believed the bridge could be the biggest in the country.



Flying the flag

RETIRING Mayor Councillor Anne Cheetham obtained a Local Members Grant for VIC to purchase new Union Flags to display in the Memorial Gardens at Remembrance and Armed Forces Week.



Four new artists in Bob Ross class

by Charlotte Eastwood

OUR popular art classes in the style of Bob Ross this month attracted four out of five artists who had never painted before.

Attendees were a combination of veterans and former blue lights service workers.

Darren Horsnell, Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator, said:

"The classes are a way for me to give back to the community – in a way that is better than any medication.

"The sessions have allowed many people, from a range of backgrounds and ages between 11 and 86, to develop new confidence in their artistic skills and this has allowed them to adapt any piece of artwork into something of a Bob Ross style.

"The sessions are perfect for stress-relief and I encourage imperfection in the artwork that they make. It is important for them to enjoy the experience. The end result is secondary."

Sessions cost £45 with all materials and brews included and they are held every month – contact 01706 833180 to book a place.

Coffee and cake

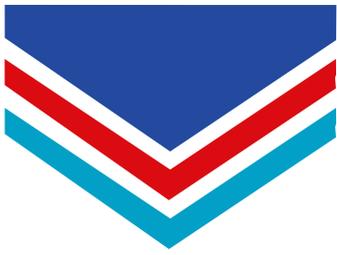
A COFFEE afternoon will be held at Haslingden Fire Station on Friday June 30 other agencies, will be present.

From 1-3pm, the station, off Manchester Road, will be open for anyone that cares for a family member or a friend to call in for a chat.

Staff will be there to give advice and sign post anyone that might need further help.

Agencies will explain about their roles and how they can help families.

There will be free blood pressure checks and visitors can have an informal chat to various partners in a relaxed environment along with enjoying coffee and cake.



Royal face-to-face with forces' pin-up



NAVY veteran Steve Butterworth was delighted to be invited to a Royal Garden Party in London held for members of the Not Forgotten Association.

The Falkland Islands veteran served on HMS Intrepid and is an Outreach Worker with VIC and also a member of SAMA82 – South Atlantic Medal Association and the Borough of Bury Veterans' Association.

Steve said: "The Buckingham Palace Garden Party was hosted by Sophie, Duchess of Edinburgh, and I attended with my wife Maria.

"My Grandad was a radio ham and he had previously attended a Royal Garden Party and my sister Daryl used to work in the Palace as a member of staff.

"My mum died last year and I would have really like to have been able to say to her, 'See, I got there too'.

"The most important part for me was that Maria got to go."

Steve met up with a

Falklands veteran, who survived the sinking of HMS Sheffield. Chris, who also attended with his wife first met Steve four years ago.

He said: "I also met the Chelsea Pensioners and the Beefeaters and the RAF Band played Beating the Retreat.

"I didn't realise how large the gardens are; it is like a park."

There were lots of celebrities in attendance, particularly TV stars including Kevin Whately, best known for starring in Auf Wiedersehen Pet and Inspector Morse.

Steve was also delighted to meet and be photographed with actress, TV presenter and former glamour model Linda Lusardi.

He said: "I told her that there was hardly a mess deck in the Navy that didn't have a poster of her on the wall."

Other familiar faces were Anthea Turner, Vanessa Feltz and Linda Robson.

He added: "I also spoke to Bruce Crompton, a military



historian who has a programme Combat Dealers on the Discovery Channel and I passed his details on to the Veterans Living History Museum.

"It was an honour to have been invited."

Korean War floral tribute

FOR the second year VIC will be creating a special flower bed in Sparrow Park, Rawtenstall, as part of Rossendale Civic Pride's national Britain in Bloom entry.

Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth has now dug over the plot in readiness for planting and Sam, who helps with our allotment, is cultivating plants.

Last year we commemorated the 40th anniversary of the Falklands' War by planting the garden bed, which is near the Cenotaph.

Our theme this year will be the 70th anniversary of the Korean War and Steve is planning to feature the Union Flag and Korean Flag.



Choir in fine tune

THANKS to the generosity of staff and customers at Tesco in Haslingden, the VIC Choir raised £265.54.

Choir members entertained shoppers while Philip

Chamberlain, Barnsey and Mary Gallagher collected donations.

The Choir will be singing at Asda in Rawtenstall on Saturday June 10 from 1pm to 3pm and collectors are required.

OpCOURAGE 

The Veterans Mental Health and Wellbeing Service

Mental health support for veterans

A specialist service for ex-armed forces veterans and service personnel who are approaching discharge, to support and recognise the early signs of mental health problems

Tel: 0300 373 33 32
Email: opcourageNORTH@cntw.nhs.uk
Scan: 

North of England Team



Recipe for fundraising

IT WAS a pleasure for VIC to be able to support the Rawtenstall Vintage and Craft Fair and a huge thank you to everyone who donated cakes.

We ran the café at the fair, which was held inside Rawtenstall Unitarian

Church and it made £218.21 and our raffle raised £75.

Chief Executive Amanda Walton said: "It is only with your help and support that we can attend events like these to enable us to carry on supporting our veterans and their families."

Hooked on fishing comp

by Charlotte Eastwood

THE upcoming carp fishing week will be organised by Darren Horsnell's children as a way of giving back to VIC for helping with their father's recovery.

Barry Horsnell is organising a charity carp fishing match in Oxford between June 6-8 in hope of raising £2,500 for VIC.

Famous carp fishermen including Ali Hamidi and Lee Jackson, will be

attending the event to give autographs and pictures.

Alongside the fishing match, Barry is organising raffles and prizes including a long weekend caravan break away worth £1,600, tea for two in a top London hotel worth £360 and a portrait artist to paint the winner of the raffle and his fish.

Barry has already arranged for this to be an annual event, having booked the venue for next year.

Darren added: "So many charities are struggling at this time

that I was shocked at the level of support for the event and a number of high-profile people are supporting us."

VIC is very grateful for the support of local supermarkets including Asda and Tesco who are donating food for the barbecue.

● **THANK you to regular attendee at the Hyndburn drop-in Paul, from Huncoat, who has donated some carp fishing gear for our members to use.**

Back in production

WORK has been carried out to repair the shed roof at the VIC Centre and the manufacturing area has been extended.

A number of orders have come in for Veterans In Productions and Aaron Lorimer made a bin store with a small planter on top while Willie and Saul made a planter for Helmshore Textile Museum.

The extended covered

area makes the outdoor space more versatile and able to be used in all weathers.

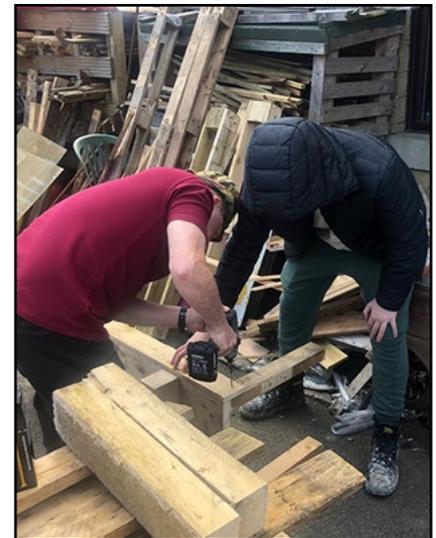
Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "While we had the remedial work to carry out, we thought it was an opportunity to be able to extend the working space in the yard and we will be using recycled wood to cover it.

"The space can also provide a covered outdoor



area when we have events at the centre."

Anyone wanting to have a bespoke item made can contact VIC on 01706 833180.

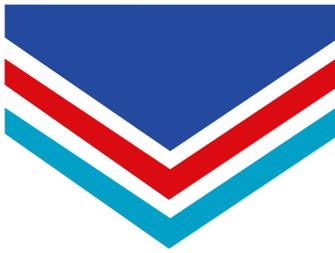


Happy tail

BENJI has now been formally adopted by VIC member Bob Brindley after he joined his family as a rescue pet. Bob has put in time to help Benji rehabilitate.



Rochdale's new Mayor and Mayoress Councillor Mike Holly and his wife Margaret visited the Veterans' Breakfast Club and VIC Outreach at Touchstones Café. He was very interested in the work we do.



Out and about

Towneley

TO MARK the start of **Armed Forces Week**, VIC will again be attending the **Uniformed Services Fun Day** at **Towneley Park, Burnley** on **Sunday June 18**.

A host of different organisations will be represented at the second fun day and last year the event attracted a large crowd. See you there.

Concert

ACCRINGTON Rotary Club is hosting an evening of music performed by the **Royal Regiment of Fusiliers Band & Corps of Drums Lancashire**, together with the **Scots Guards Association Pipes and Drums Manchester Division**.

The concert, at **Accrington Town Hall**, is on **Saturday June 17** at **7.30pm** and tickets are **£10**, contact www.tickettailor.com/events/accringtonrotaryclub

Bury fun day

VIC will be having an awareness stall at a family fun day being organised by **Bury AFC** at **Unsworth Cricket Club**.

The event is on **Sunday June 11** from **10.30am**.

Summer fair

THE proceeds of an **Armed Forces Summer Fair** at **Stanley Sports Hub, Accrington**, will jointly benefit **VIC** and the **Accrington Stanley Veterans' Programme**.

The event will be held on **Saturday June 24**.

Anyone who can help man the stalls can contact VIC on 01706 833180.

VIC members had a fabulous time when they visited Heskin Hall in Chorley.

There were antiques for sale and the owner gave a talk about the hall's history.

Afterwards, members tucked into a wonderful lunch of sandwiches and cake. Thanks to **Phil Chamberlain** for driving.

On **Wednesday June 28**, members will be visiting the **Leyland Motors Commercial Museum** where the first ever **Popemobile** is on display and visitors can sit on the actual seat used by the Pope.

There is a shop on site and afterwards we will be visiting **The Mill Cafe** at **St Catherine's Hospice** for lunch where there is also a charity shop to browse around.

The cost is **£9** but lunch is



your own expense.

Two trips are planned for July – firstly on **Wednesday July 12** we will be visiting the **Hot Ice Skating Show** at **Blackpool Pleasure Beach** – cost **£20** including transport and admission.

We are also now taking bookings for the VIC trip to **Embsay Bolton Abbey Steam Railway** on **Wednesday July**

26, cost **£19**.

There will be a piper in his kilt to meet us there. Visitors will enjoy refreshments and then take a short ride on the train to the end of the line at **Embsay** where they can browse in the shop.

Trips are arranged by **Social Inclusion Activities Volunteer Pat McEvoy**. For more information contact **01706 833180**.

Centre open so veterans can share Coronation

THREE Bank Holidays in May saw **VIC** opening its doors extra days so that veterans could have support and camaraderie.

On the Coronation of **King Charles III** and **Queen Camilla**, the **VIC Centre** was decorated and open so members could watch the Coronation and parade on our TV. They also enjoyed a buffet and spent the day with other members who would've been at home on their own.



Walks

VIC members enjoyed a couple of bumble walks, around **Towneley Park** and **Hollingworth Lake**, with a mid way stop for a brew.

The walks are carrying on over the summer and for more information check out the **VIC Facebook page** and group or call **01706 833180**.

Sped is new head of shed team

VETERAN Phil Speddy, Sped, is now **Head Sheddie** at **Beacon Dementia and Wellbeing** based at **The Whitaker in Rawtenstall**.

The charity has had a special purpose-built shed installed at the back of the museum where activities will be held for people living with dementia and their carers.



Phil said: "I will be looking at people's individual needs and finding out what their interests are and everything will be tailored."

"Where I find people have similar interests, it is hoped they will want to work together and friendships will be formed."

VIC also provided its van to collect larger items for the charity and attended the open day.



ROSSENDALE

Activities are held at the VIC Centre, Bury Road, Haslingden, BB4 5PL, unless otherwise stated.

Outreach Service

MONDAY-FRIDAY

9am-4.30pm

For a home appointment call 01706 833180

MONDAY

Crafty Chatters

10am-12 noon

TUESDAY

Art Group

10am-3.30pm

Cost £6 places limited book on

01706 833180

WEDNESDAY

Allotment

Help on the allotment in Holcombe Road, Helmshore. Contact 01706 833180

THURSDAY

Greggs RV

1pm-3pm

THURSDAY

VIC Choir (weekly)

6.30-8.30pm

FRIDAY

Art Group

10am-3.30pm

Cost £6 places limited book on

01706 833180

SUNDAY

Drop-in

10.15am-12.30pm

SECOND SATURDAY IN THE MONTH

Rossendale Armed Forces and Veterans' Breakfast Club

10am-12.30pm

Haslingden Community Link Cafe, Bury Road, Haslingden BB4 5PG (book in advance)

EVERY MONTH

Painting in the Style of Bob Ross art classes

Contact Darren 01706 833180

Walking Groups/ Social Inclusion trips

see Facebook or website for details

10am-noon

Trinity Methodist Church, Wesleyan Row, Parson Lane Clitheroe, BB7 2JY.

BURNLEY AND PENDLE

Outreach Service

MONDAY

Breakfast Club at Burnley Miners' Social Club, Plumbe Street, Burnley, BB11 3AA. 10am-noon.

Contact 01706 833180 for dates of outreach at: Burnley FC in the Community; Pendle Armed Forces Support Group, Holmefield House, Gisburn Road, Barrowford; Morrisons in Nelson and Asda in Colne.

HEYWOOD, MIDDLETON AND ROCHDALE

The Sandbag Cafe and drop-in

TUESDAY

10am-noon

Sandon House, Taylor Street, Heywood OL10 1EF.

VIC Outreach

TUESDAY

The Mess Tin - cafe and drop-in

1pm-2.30pm

The Lighthouse Project, Middleton Shopping Centre, M24 1AB.

THURSDAY

Rochdale Veterans' Breakfast Club and VIC Outreach

9am-10.30am Touchstones Cafe, The Esplanade OL16 1AQ.

RIBBLE VALLEY

Coffee Morning and Outreach

TUESDAYS

VIC – 01706 833180

Chief Executive Amanda Walton

amandawalton@vic.org.uk

Operations Manager Bob Elliott

bobelliott@vic.org.uk

07961 554 006

Administrator Amy Thompson

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Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth

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Project Worker Bev Fowler

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07741 902 343

Project Worker Ray Sharkey

raysharkey@vic.org.uk

Transformational Coach Gill Hughes

gillhughes@vic.org.uk

07741 902 411

Volunteer Support Worker Mel Fitzgerald

melfitzgerald@vic.org.uk

Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell

darrenhorsnell@vic.org.uk

VIC Choir Bookings Barry Hyde

barryhyde@vic.org.uk

Contacts

Combat Stress Helpline

0800 138 1619

NHS Military Veterans Psychological Therapies Service (NW)

0300 323 0707

The Royal British Legion

0808 802 8080 7 days a week 8am-8pm

SSAFA

email Lancashire@ssafo.org.uk

01772 260 462

Citizens' Advice Rossendale and Hyndburn

0808 278 7975 freephone Mon-Fri 9am-5pm

The Samaritans

01282 694929

Mon to Fri 9am-9pm

Freephone 116 123

Op Courage

0300 373 3332 email

opcourageNORTH@cntw.nhs.uk

Veterans UK Free Helpline

0808 1914 218

East Lancashire Single Point of Access via GP or self-referral

01282 657116

Armed Forces Support Group

01282 613132

HYNDBURN

Outreach / Drop-In/ Model Railway Club

FRIDAY

10am-3pm

VIC Hyndburn, Accrington Arndale Centre, BB5 1EX.

Accrington Stanley Breakfast Club/ Drop-In

LAST WEDNESDAY EVERY MONTH

9.30am-11am

Lancashire Carers Link, 54-56 Blackburn Road, Accrington, BB5 1LE.

BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN

Outreach Service

TUESDAY

Rovers Breakfast Hub, Legends Lounge, Darwen End, Blackburn Rovers FC, Ewood Park, Blackburn, BB2 4JF. 10.30am-noon

Want to help?

To donate to support the work of VIC please visit our website

www.veteransincommunities.org

Veterans In Communities Charity Number 1151194

VIC supported by:



Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board



Rossendalealivi
BOROUGH COUNCIL



ROCHDALE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL



Cobseo The Confederation of Service Charities



Putting people first



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