



# VIC Newsletter

## Open all Hours

**THANKS to a grant from the Ministry of Defence, we are now operating 'Open all Hours'.**

The grant, for £19,885 from the Armed Forces Covenant, was awarded in December and enabled us to open the centre on several days during the festive season.

We had 34 veterans make use of the centre in Haslingden to play board games,

watch films and often to just have a chat.

Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "We also had a quiz, organised by our Chief Executive Liz Hamilton, and we had 10 people attend.

"Volunteers manned the centre over Christmas and New Year because it is these times that can be some of the worst for veterans because the usual services are no longer available.

"We received donations from Asda and both Rossendale Tescos and these provided Christmas presents for families as well as snacks over Christmas.

"We also made and distributed 10 food parcels using supplies we had at the centre, but most came from Mary from the Spirit of the Community in Darwen."

Open all Hours



Last night of the Proms

was such a success VIC is looking to repeat it at Easter. The funding will also help towards the cost of outdoor and social inclusion activities planned by the charity for the next year.

The New Year was

brought in with a social inclusion trip to Preston Guild Hall after Outreach Worker Claire Wright managed to get 10 complimentary tickets for the Last Night of the Proms. A great night was had by all.



Liz Henson Photography

## Celebrations

**A FANTASTIC 32 members of VIC enjoyed a Christmas day meal at the Game Cock in Great Harwood.**

This was the largest turnout to date and it was a very enjoyable few hours.

A special thank you was paid to Dorothy Mitchell for her support over the last four years. VIC wouldn't have developed without Dorothy's help.

A raffle was held and presents were given to members with children.

The meal couldn't have gone ahead without Ivy Limbrick, who organised everything. On behalf of everybody, a very very big thank you.

On the same day, Chief Executive Liz Hamilton represented VIC at a Christmas Dinner for community organisations.



Art on show

**RESIDENTS of Jubilee Court sheltered housing in Haslingden paid a special visit to Touchstones Art Gallery in Rochdale to see our art exhibition.**

Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell has run an art group at Jubilee Court as part of the Creative Community Hub.

Darren said: "There is a wide range of paintings in the exhibition and they are from artists of all abilities. What was heartening for the ladies was seeing that

everyone can have their work in an exhibition and that boosted their self-esteem."

Paintings have been sold at the exhibition and there is still time to see the display because it is on until Saturday February 6.

We also held our second art exhibition at the Salford Veterans' Breakfast Club at St Thomas's Church, Pendleton.

The Salford club is now looking at starting an art group at the church on Sunday afternoons in the New Year.

**JANUARY SALE NOW ON AT POSITIVE ART SHOP**



## Art class

A FOURTH painting class in the style of Bob Ross will be held on Saturday January 23 at our Positive Art Shop in Rawtenstall at 11am.

The classes cost £25 for VIC members and £35 for non members. All materials are supplied and you will be able to take home this painting of a winter scene at the end of the day.

A packed lunch is advisable but tea and coffee is supplied.



**WHEN Peter Webster first approached me at the beginning of last year with the idea of forming a veterans' choir, I sent him away to see whether he could get some interest from members that we had at the time.**

Ronnie Barker and Barry Payton, who are both trustees, came to the first rehearsals to support Peter. I must admit, I was unsure whether we could get enough interest to form a choir. We already had an art group that was gaining in numbers and was a great way to raise awareness of VIC.

We noticed that our Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell was gaining so much confidence and his health was improving... we all know where that art group is now, three weekly art sessions,

funded by the MoD and most recently the opening of the Positive Art Shop.

Not only did I see Peter's confidence grow, but others were commenting on the positive changes.

The group started to increase in number and their first performance was the VIC Centre launch; less than six months after the first practice.

A decision was made to call themselves the VIC Singing Group and not a choir.

I have seen them sing many times, but I can honestly say that their Christmas performance at Tesco in Haslingden was the best I have seen.

Well done to all those involved in the singing group, just like the art group, the singing group is another successful VIC project.

**Bob Elliott**



## Crew Van's Capers

WHERE has Crew Van been this month...?

- It took members of VIC to the BASCO quiz for the carnival;
- Members used Crew Van to get to a walk in Haslingden;
- Crew Van took members on our social inclusion visit to the Last Night of the Proms;
- It helped four VIC members to move house;
- Crew Van was invaluable in helping our Open all Hours over the festive season.

**Give us a wave if you see Crew Van in your area.**



## New year walk

**OUR first walk of the year was a short ramble around the reservoirs on Grane Road in Haslingden.**

It was a bit damp but still enjoyable. Our next walk is on January 21 when we will be climbing Pendle Hill.

Outdoor Activities Co-ordinator Ivy Limbrick has put together a complete programme for the year ahead, which is available on our website.



**A LOVELY Christmas cake was specially made for VIC by residents from Kemple View Care Home Blackburn. Veteran residents visit the centre on a weekly basis.**



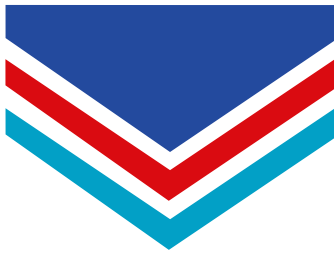
Liz Henson Photography

WE JOINED our good friends from Bacup and Stacksteads Carnival to help raise money for June's event.

We might not have won, but we all

had a fantastic night and will be attending the carnival in Bacup when we will have a stall, an assault course and the VIC Singing Group will be performing.

**Check out our updated website [www.veteransincommunities.org](http://www.veteransincommunities.org)**



# Review of 2015



## FUNDING

At the start of the year we secured funding for a third year from East Lancashire CCG and from the Social Investment Funding from Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale.

## TRAINING

Members qualified in: Mental Health First Aid, Level 2 in Understanding Own Health Improvement, First Aid, Royal British Legion Caseworker training, Dementia and Deaf Awareness, Community Reporters, Safeguarding, Photography, Bronze Award in Navigation and WRAP, how to recognise radicalisation.

## SINGING GROUP

The group has performed to the public on over 20 occasions and membership has grown from 16 to more than 26 with many supporters from the local community.

## CREATIVE COMMUNITY HUB

The art group is now two days a week, and has an additional session at a residential home in Haslingden. VIC developed its first social enterprise – the Positive Art Shop in Rawtenstall, selling arts and crafts materials, alongside adult colouring books. Taster sessions are also held at the shop. Art exhibitions have been held across the country.

## COBSEO

VIC became members of COBSEO, the Confederation of Ex-service organisations in February.

## PRINCE'S TRUST

We worked alongside the Prince's Trust teams on a number of community projects in Barrowford, Haslingden and our WW1 project in Bacup.

## KARTFORCE

We were invited by Kartforce (a team of serving and ex-

serving injured troops that race in karting events around the country) to join them at Sandown Park to race against celebrities.

## SOCIAL INCLUSION

*Trips have included: fishing, Martin Mere and Brockholes nature reserves, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, The National Arboretum, Leeds Armoury, Bolton Abbey, Skipton Castle, Liverpool Museum, and been on a canal trip.*

## MBE HONOUR

Our chairman Ronnie Barker received an MBE for the outstanding work he has done in the community.

## DEMENTIA EXPERIENCE

*We hosted a Virtual Dementia Experience in September to raise awareness and give participants practical experience of living with dementia.*

## CEMETERY PROJECTS

We organised two personal dedication services in Bacup Cemetery for three families who lost a family member during WW1. To mark the completion of the WW1 project in Bacup, we held a Commemoration Service which was attended by local dignitaries, families, some representatives of the other ex-service organisations and members of the local community.

## COMMUNITY PROJECTS

*We have completed a number of community projects working in residential home managed by Anchor Homes; Westbourne in Haslingden and Bridgewood in Heywood. We constructed raised beds and cleared a border. Members helped Alternate Forces to renovate and decorate an outdoor centre in Rochdale, and built a partition wall at Haslingden Swimming Baths. In Colne we built a wall and painted railings.*

## REMEMBRANCE

We were involved in Remembrance services across Rossendale, Greater Manchester, Lancashire. One of our members also returned to the Falkland Islands. With support from two retired members of Rossendale and Pendle Mountain Rescue Team, we have developed our outdoor activities, increased walks and joined an assessment day showing equipment and techniques used to search for missing persons, mapping skills and first aid.

## WEBSITE

*VIC website is now updated regularly; other social media has also seen a large increase in followers. At the start of the year we had 28,000 and we have increased this to 55,000.*

## CREW BUS

We took delivery of our Crew Bus that was funded by the Armed Forces Community Covenant Grant. It has been fitted with a roof rack, awning and tow bar that not only allows us to develop the community projects but can be used as our outdoor stand.

## NEW STAFF

*VIC recruited three full-time members of staff: a Chief Executive Officer, a Project Worker to manage a new NHS project in Greater Manchester and an Administrator to help VIC with our growth for 2016.*

## VIC ON FILM

VIC was part of a film produced with Armed Forces Community Covenant funding, to show how projects funded by the MoD could have a positive outcome for veterans and their families. The film was made by Peter Carruthers.

## DIG FOR VIC

*The Dig for VIC garden project was completed and we had our first crop of vegetables. We are planning to*

*build on this by getting an allotment and greenhouse to grow more produce that can be sold locally.*

## OPEN ALL HOURS

We received our fourth Armed Forces Community Covenant Grant to help us open the centre during the evenings and weekends. The 'Open All Hours' project was started over the Christmas period with a range of different activities.

## AWARD NOMINEES

*VIC and the Positive Art Shop were nominated for a Rossendale Business Award; VIC was a finalist in the Community Business category.*

## HELPING OTHERS

We have helped a number of veterans move home, supported benefit claims and appeals, given in excess of 20 food parcels and responded to people in crisis. We were approached by Rossendale Hospice to provide marshals for their fancy dress walk during the summer.

## STONEFOLD

We were asked by a local councillor to carry out work in a cemetery in Stonefold where the graves had become overgrown and it was difficult for families to find relatives buried there. There were also a number of WW1 graves that had been lost. We worked with AccRoss College's 'Military Preparation Programme' to clear and locate the lost graves.

## MANCHESTER PROJECT

*At the end of the year we were approached by the Military Veterans Services in Bury to be part of a five month NHS England pilot 'Overcoming barriers', other partners included Walking with the Wounded and Inspiration NW. We now work across Greater Manchester areas and have developed Peer Support.*



## ROSSENDALE

### Outreach Services

#### MONDAY-FRIDAY

11am-1pm

VIC Centre, Bury Road, Haslingden, BB4 5PL.

#### WEDNESDAY

10-12 noon

Central Methodist Church, Burnley Road,

Bacup, OL13 9AH.

### Tai Chi

#### TUESDAY

2pm

VIC Centre, Bury Road, Haslingden, BB4 5PL

### Singing Group

#### THURSDAY

6.30-8.30pm

VIC Centre, Bury Road, Haslingden, BB4 5PL.

### Art Group and drop-in

#### TUESDAYS AND FRIDAYS

11am-3pm VIC Centre, Bury Road, Haslingden, BB4 5PL.

### Walking Group

Walks will be held on the 2nd and 4th

**Thursdays.** Weather permitting.

## HEYWOOD, MIDDLETON AND ROCHDALE

### Outreach Service

#### THURSDAYS

10am-12pm

1 Riverside, Rochdale OL16 1UB.

### WEDNESDAY - every week

11.30am-1.30

Lighthouse Project, Warwick Mill,

Middleton M24 1AZ

### Walking Group

Walks will be held on the 2nd and 4th **Thursdays** and are combined with the Rossendale walking group.

## PENDLE

### Outreach Service

#### TUESDAY

10am-noon

Pendle Rise Shopping Centre, Nelson, BB9 9SL.

## VIC – 01706 833180

### Chief Executive Liz Hamilton

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07731 730 442

### Operations Manager Bob Elliott

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07961 554 006

### Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth

[stevebutterworth@veteransincommunities.org](mailto:stevebutterworth@veteransincommunities.org)

### Outreach Worker Claire Wright

[clairewright@veteransincommunities.org](mailto:clairewright@veteransincommunities.org)

### Admin Support Zainab Hussain

[zainabhussain@veteransincommunities.org](mailto:zainabhussain@veteransincommunities.org)

### Volunteer Outreach Worker Tony Stubbs

[tonystubbs@veteransincommunities.org](mailto:tonystubbs@veteransincommunities.org)

### Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell

[darrenhorsnell@veteransincommunities.org](mailto:darrenhorsnell@veteransincommunities.org)

### Volunteer Outreach Worker and Music Project

Co-ordinator Peter Webster

[peterwebster@veteransincommunities.org](mailto:peterwebster@veteransincommunities.org)

### Combat Stress Helpline

0800 138 1619

### NHS Military Veterans Psychological Therapies Service (NW)

0161 253 6638

### The Royal British Legion

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

### Rossendale Citizens' Advice Bureau

03444 889 622

### The Samaritans

01706 830999

### Mental Health Helpline

0500 639000 Mon to Fri 7pm - 11pm Sat & Sun 12 noon to 12 midnight

### Royal Air Forces Association

01772 426930

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

01282 657116

## Positive ART

One Stop Art Shop



VIC has its own arts and crafts shop based at 4 Bury Road, Rawtenstall, BB4 6AA near the junction with Bacup Road.

### Opening times

<b>Thursday</b>	10am-5pm
<b>Friday</b>	10am-5pm
<b>Saturday</b>	10am-5pm
<b>Sunday</b>	11am-3pm

Tel: 07437874696

[positiveart@veteransincommunities.org](mailto:positiveart@veteransincommunities.org)

## Want to help?

If you want to donate to support the work of Veterans In Communities please visit our website and click on the secure PayPal link

[www.veteransincommunities.org](http://www.veteransincommunities.org)

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