

# Dig for VIC Project nearly finished

**A TRANSFORMATION** has taken place at the VIC Centre and our Dig for Victory project can now lay proper roots.

Last July we were successful in securing nearly £10,000 to transform what used to be a pub back yard at the VIC Centre into an area that will become a hive of activity.

A workshop and shed has now been constructed with internal workbenches where veterans will be able to create garden furniture.

We teamed up with another veterans' project Dig In North West to create raised beds to grow fruit, vegetables and flowers.

Manager Bob Elliott said: "All we need now is someone to donate soil to fill our raised beds and we can get started on the growing project.

"In tandem with Dig In we are going to be offering training for veterans and this will take place both at the centre and, using the Crew Van for transport, it will also be held at Dig In's base in Preston."

VIC was awarded £9,979 by Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale Council for Voluntary Service for East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group from the social prescribing grant.



## Art in the community

AN ARTISTS' trip to Martin Mere, Burscough, has proved so popular two minibuses will be going.

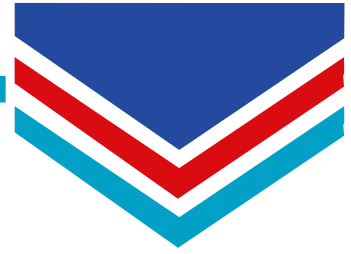
The Creative Community Hub is holding the second of its planned two trips out, funded by a grant from the Armed Forces Community Covenant.

Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell said: "The first trip to Bolton Abbey in the summer was a huge success and we had people who went come back and create artwork based on the experience.

"When we asked where to go this time several people suggested Martin Mere and it was so popular we are 24 people going. People will be sketching, painting and we will also have photography instruction."

As well as taking members on that trip, Crew Van will also be taking VIC on a visit to the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire in April.

The social inclusion team will be deciding future events they wish to attend in the coming year.



# Thank you Suzanne

## Charitable recognition

**VIC is now a member of the Confederation of British Service Organisations (Cobseo).**

Cobseo represents the whole serving and veterans' community and membership is open to charities who promote and further the welfare and general interests of the Armed Forces Community.

Business Development Manager Roger Chaney said: "We are one of just a handful of veterans' charities in the North West to become a member and the only local group from East Lancashire.

"Membership includes established organisations including The Royal British Legion, Blesma and SSAFA.

"It is an acknowledgement of the work that we are doing and will be carrying out in the future that we have been accepted while still such a relatively young charity."

**VIC members and staff would like to say a very big thank you to Suzanne Preston for the excellent work she has done for our organisation.**

Suzanne has worked tirelessly both as the Outreach and Community Development Worker for the past 11 months, and for many months before that when she worked in a voluntary capacity.

VIC Manager Bob Elliott said: "Suzanne was a real



asset to VIC but unfortunately her post was on a fixed term contract. Sadly that term has come to an end and we do not have funding in place to continue with that role.

"We all want to wish her well with future ventures and we are sure she will continue to be successful in the future.

"Personally, I would like to thank her for all the fantastic work she did for VIC and for veterans throughout East Lancashire and beyond, both paid and unpaid."



## Crew Van's Capers

**WHERE has Crew Van been this month...?**

- It was back in Colne at David Fishwick's Minibus Sales where we started work to paint the railings;

- Crew Van helped carry a second crew to assist a Prince's Trust community project at Pendle Heritage Centre in Barrowford;

- VIC members going on two walks in Rossendale with Rossendale and Pendle Mountain Rescue Team, the Crew Van was used for transport;

- Veterans were collected by Crew Van to enable them to access the centre's facilities and also assist them to participate in our community projects.

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

## Giant Poppy visits VIC

A GIANT poppy was brought into VIC this month as part of a First World War commemorative art project.

Emma Blackburn's project The Great People's Poppy was created by talented knitters, makers and fabric manipulators who contributed to a mass participatory memorial poppy.

Lancashire County Council commissioned The Great People's Poppy and it is now touring the county.



## Hard at work in Colne

**OUR community project at David Fishwick's Minibus Sales in Colne should be completed this month.**

We have discovered it is not easy to paint railings when it is freezing cold and the paint just wants to solidify so we are coming up with a strategy to help the work along.

Manager Bob Elliott said: "We had no problems building the wall but the painting is

taking an age because the paint is like tar.

"We have decided to keep the paint in a warmer environment so hopefully it will be easier to use and we can finish the job this month."

VIC has also been asked to quote on another community project this time in Helmshore.

A home for the elderly is looking to have raised beds built to make it easier for planting.





# A helping hand



## Walks with rescue team

HIKERS have taken to the hills on two walks held in conjunction with two members of Rossendale and Pendle Mountain Rescue Team.

Our regular walks are becoming more purposeful as we are learning from the search and rescue crew how the dogs work, how to look for a casualty and first aid skills.

The first walk was to Jamestone Quarry, off Grane Road, Haslingden, and the second was to Crown Point Road between Rossendale and Burnley.

## Drama raises funds for VIC

NEXT month Rossendale Players will be staging a First World War drama based on a true story.

Early One Morning will tell the tragic tale of Private Jim Smith from Bolton, who was shot following a court martial.

The New Millennium Theatre, Waterfoot, will be the venue and the production is on from April 18-25 (not Monday). Royalties benefit Combat Stress and Sunday night's performance will be dedicated to VIC. For tickets contact 01706 228720.

## Courses held

FIFTY veterans and members of the community have completed courses at VIC in the last month.

Access Ability ran three courses: mental health awareness, mental health first aid and deaf awareness. We also held a suicide prevention course and a Prevent course to tackle radicalisation.



**A GOOD army knows how to muster its troops and that is just what we did when we got a last minute call to help out our friends at the Prince's Trust.**

VIC was given just a day's notice to assist the young volunteers who were carrying out a community project at Barrowford Heritage Centre.

Fortunately, VIC volunteers were also carrying out the community project at Fishwick's, also in Pendle, so the working party was split into two groups.

Manager Bob Elliott explained: "We were asked to assist the Prince's Trust Pendle team to help build raised beds and put up a fence at Barrowford Heritage Centre.

"The raised beds will be used to grow vegetables for the benefit of the local community."

The work was completed on time and VIC members were invited to join the team at the handover presentation.

Bob added: "The crew bus was crucial for us to be able to complete these jobs on time and for our teams to be in two places at the same time."

## Choir on song

**OUR singing group is going from strength-to-strength and music project co-ordinator Peter Webster is delighted with the singers' success.**

The group now has more than 20 members and has been booked to sing at the prestigious Rossendale Business Awards in November.

They will also be on stage at Bacup and Stacksteads Carnival on June 28 and the day before will be singing in Asda for Armed Forces Week.

It is hoped they can attend Tesco during that week to also sing and collect. A further engagement at a home for the elderly is also planned.

If you would like to join the group please attend the VIC Centre on a Thursday at 6.30pm and to book the group please contact 01706 833180.



## War Graves update

THE finishing touches are being made to our Heritage Lottery funded War Graves 100 Project at Bacup Cemetery.

Chiselstones Memorials are creating the last memorial stones to honour those who are remembered and these will be installed in the cemetery.

Once complete, a website will be built to detail all the information about soldiers who fought in the First World War and are buried or



remembered in the cemetery. The details have been kindly provided by local Bacup historian and author Wendy Lord from her book 'Where Heroes Rest'.



## 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.

### Family Support

#### MONDAY - third week only

10am-noon

Maden Centre, Rochdale Road, Bacup,  
OL13 9NZ.

#### WEDNESDAY

10am-1pm

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

#### FRIDAY

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

#### WEDNESDAYS

10am-noon

Angel Project, Langley, Middleton.

#### WEDNESDAY - second, third and fourth weeks only

10am-noon

Fast Forward Cafe, Champness Hall,  
Drake Street, Rochdale OL16 1PB.

#### THURSDAY - first week only

10am-noon

One Riverside, Rochdale, OL16 1XU.

### Family Support

**New dates to be confirmed**

### Art Group and drop-in

**From Jan 21 every other Wednesday**

3pm-5pm

Bowlee Sports and Community Centre,  
Windermere Road, Middleton M24 4LA.

### Walking Group

Walks will be held on the 2nd and 4th

**Thursdays** combined with the  
Rossendale walking group.

## VIC update...



THE team is putting the finishing touches to various projects we've carried out throughout the year.

By the end of spring the garden at our Haslingden centre will be a very beautiful place to be and will offer a host of activities.

Health and wellbeing is a priority and members will be growing their own vegetables to promote a healthy eating.

We currently have various funding bids in place and are looking to attract additional income to support a wider choice of activities in 2015/16.

This, in turn, will dramatically increase the number of engaged members into our programmes and enable us to expand our delivery further into other areas of the North West.

The support we have received recently from some of our partner organisations has been excellent and we would like to extend our thanks to the Prince's Trust, Lancashire Fire and Rescue, Incredible Edible, Rossendale and Pendle Mountain Rescue and all of our volunteers who have put in a lot of hard work over this year.

*Roger Chaney*

## PENDLE

### Outreach Service

#### TUESDAY

10am-noon

Railway Street Community Centre,  
Railway Street, Nelson, BB9 9EH.

## VIC – 01706 833180

### Office and Business Development Manager

**Roger Chaney**

07800 817 941

rogerchaney@veteransincommunities.org

### Operations Manager Bob Elliott

bobelliott@veteransincommunities.org

07961 554 006

### Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth

stevebutterworth@veteransincommunities.org

### Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell

darrenhorsnell@veteransincommunities.org

### Volunteer Outreach Worker and Music Project

**Co-ordinator: Peter Webster**

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

0844 499 4121 (from a landline)

0300 456 2552 (from a mobile)

### 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


## 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*

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