

The Pershore Volunteer

Pershore Volunteer Centre puts volunteering at the heart of the community
to reduce rural and social isolation for local people.

May- June 2020

The Coronavirus crisis has brought unprecedented pressures to the Centre. At a time when volunteers are needed more than ever, many of us regular volunteers find ourselves having to take a back seat because we are deemed vulnerable. However much we may bridle at being denied the chance to help at this crucial time, the health of all must be paramount,

However, this wretched situation has shown the extraordinary level of goodwill in our community and as you read this Newsletter you will see just how much support has been provided.

Donna King, the Centre Manager, writes:

Firstly, I would like to start with the hope that everyone is keeping safe & well during these unprecedented times, we miss you, and we welcome our new “Covid-19” volunteers.

During March we rapidly saw a huge shift in the way we at Pershore Volunteer Centre (PVC) do things. But our aim, as ever, is:

“Pershore Volunteer Centre puts volunteering at the heart of the community to reduce rural and social isolation for local people” (PVC - Constitution).

We continue to put volunteering at the heart of the community, but we are now working towards “Supporting local people who are living in isolation”. The complete opposite! How bizarre I hear you say!

The office hours have been extended to cope with demand. The telephone lines are now open 8.30 am – 4.00 pm Monday to Thursday, 10.00am - 1.00 pm Fridays, with one team member working in isolation at any one time whilst the rest of the team work safely from home.

Contd over

Pershore Volunteer Centre

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Many of our existing volunteers had to temporarily stand down due to Government advice, so we began recruiting Covid-19 volunteers, nearly 100 individuals came forward, and we continue to receive offers.

Our Volunteer Coordinator, Angi Ballard, is working hard sourcing DBS checks and getting all the paperwork together. We hope many of our new volunteers will remain with us after the situation eases.

Around 30 of the volunteers are set up as “village contacts” to support the local GP surgeries and pharmacies by collecting/delivering prescriptions to the areas around Pershore.

Many are actively volunteering within Pershore Town working in conjunction and supporting PVC, Town Hall, Churches and the local Policing Teams and of course the two pharmacies on the high street. Tasks include collecting/delivering prescriptions, doing shopping for those unable to leave their homes, collecting/delivering urgent injections and cancer treatments, and transporting people to urgent medical appointments.

We also have over twelve “**HERE4U**” volunteers undertaking a telephone befriending service for those who may be experiencing loneliness and Mental Health issues. If you feel you can benefit from any of the above, please call the office.

We are also a collection point for the Foodbank.

Most importantly as of week 8 of lockdown (W/E 15th May) together we have supported nearly 400 client needs.

Thank you everyone for playing a part in doing such an outstanding job, you really have gone above and beyond.

In closing,

As we plan towards the future and returning to whatever the new normal will be we would like to ensure that we can operate both our Social Car Scheme and Contract minibus drives, so if you are interested in remaining with PVC in another role such as a driver (using your own car), Passenger Assistant to our Minibus drivers (full training provided) or assisting in the office with administration please contact Angi our Volunteer Coordinator at volunteering@pershorevolunteers.org.uk or by calling 01386 554299 for more information. We will welcome you with open arms.



The tasks that the Centre undertakes and organises need financing and at this time you can imagine that the Centre's finances are under great pressure.

Kate Walton is our Funding and Grants Manager. Kate writes:

It's really strange working from my home office; on the one hand I have just about everything I need, having brought essential documents and other information out of the office, so I have no excuse for being distracted by anything or anyone other than my husband bringing me copious cups of tea! But on the other hand, the single-minded focus on nothing but grants without the buzz of other project activity around me or the chance to share bits and pieces of information or bounce ideas off each other is a whole new experience.

However, I'd like to think this home-working is paying off to some extent. Interspersed with a few phone calls to catch up with colleagues, and dealing with the constant flow of emails, most of which I can only ignore once I've read them, I've been beavering away with funding applications to replace the income streams which have dried up as well as the fundraising events which can no longer go ahead. So in the time I've been working from home (2-ish days a week!) I've made 12 applications to a variety of funders ranging from national programmes (Prince's Countryside Fund) to small organisations (local councillors). To date, 7 have been successful, awarding £17250 in total; only 1 application was unsuccessful and I'm waiting for 4 more to get back to me. I'm very pleased with these results and will carry on searching for more opportunities to replenish our funds.

Congratulations!

Here are the winners of our monthly draws for March
April and May



March

April

May

£20 Jean Smethurst

£20 Hilary Halls

£20 Kathleen Tunbridge

£15 Lesley Ford

£15 Dulcie Anderson

£15 Clive Austen

£5 Hazel Hunt

£5 M. Crozier

£5 J. Emney

£5 Eileen Juggins

£5 Derek Potter

£5 Mrs Bruce-Gardener

£5 Les Edwards

£5 J. Halls

£5 C. Goodwin

Congratulations to you all and a special thank you to those winners who have re-donated their winnings back to Pershore Volunteer Centre- it is greatly appreciated!

Thank You!

The generosity of so many from our local community has been so wonderful. In particular we would like to thank:

Anthony Cosnett and Jacqui Marler from company M08 who have donated hand sanitiser and gloves and are planning to send facemasks.

Pershore Rotary Club are donating facemasks.

The centre has received donations from: Mrs Juliff, Mavis Wheatley, Steve Charlton, Murdo MacDonald, Ruth and Vic Badges, Michael Orme and Mr & Mrs Sidaway.

A special mention for Sam Nutting who has to shield due to health reasons but who has made the VE flags for the Centre window display. Sam is now busy working on our window display to celebrate Volunteers' Week which runs from 1st - 7th June.

Due to this generosity we now have personal bottles of hand sanitisers, which you keep and we can refill and are preferred to gloves (Government advice) also handmade facemasks (that you wash daily) available for volunteers. Contact Donna for collection.

A very special "thank you" to Donna who has done a fantastic job in the office responding to client needs, allocating volunteering tasks and liaising with volunteers.

But, of course, we send out thanks to all of you wonderful people who have volunteered to help our community during these extraordinary times. No "thank you" can be big enough!

Keep safe, keep well and look after one another!

And in Volunteers' Week, keep in touch with us on social media

#Cheers for Volunteers

One final thought if we may:

Pershore Food Bank is under great pressure. Donations are very welcome indeed. Food items may be left at all the Pershore supermarkets. They also appreciate cash which allows them to buy items quickly if need arises. They welcome donations by means of bank transfer (BACS) as this is speedy, doesn't need person-to-person contact and incurs lower bank charges.

Bank Sort Code 20-98-61 Name of Account: Pershore Foodbank Account Number: 5074356

<https://pershore.foodbank.org.uk/>

Thank you

